

## **Planning Your Next Steps**

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### **Planning Your Next Steps**

As you transition from your role with the IRS, we want to ensure you have the resources and support needed for future success. This guide provides information about your benefits, potential career opportunities, and next steps.

### **Unemployment Benefits Overview**

Recently separated employees may become eligible for unemployment compensation. State unemployment compensation requirements differ. Some states require a one-week waiting period before an individual qualifies for payments. In general, the law of the state in which an employee's last official duty station in Federal civilian service was located will be the State law that determines eligibility for unemployment insurance benefits.

Agencies or employees should submit questions to the appropriate state (or District of Columbia) office. The Department of Labor's website provides general information about unemployment compensation at [How Do I File for Unemployment Insurance](#) and links to individual state offices at Unemployment benefits, [CareerOneStop](#).

Documents to have ready

- Social security card
- Official notice of recent employment with a federal agency
- SF-50 form of separation or notice of nonpay status (if available)
- Earning and leave statements or similar documents that indicate employment history

The IRS Human Capital Office automatically sends needed and appropriate verification files to state unemployment offices.

### **Accessing Earning and Leave Statements**

Obtain your latest W-2 form and Earning and Leave statement from the National Finance Center (NFC) by accessing the [Employee Personal Page](#). If you forgot your username or password, you may use the automated tools to request them online or by email. Employees who do not have an alternate email address established and cannot retrieve their password may contact NFC at: 1-855-632-4468 and select option #1 for EPP.

### **Thrift Savings Plan**

For information on TSP withdrawal options, visit the [TSP website](#) and read the booklet [Distributions \(PDF 371KB\)](#).

### **Career Transition Assistance Plan (CTAP)**

The [Career Transition Assistance Plan](#) (CTAP) provides selection priority for employees that are affected by downsizing or restructuring. CTAP provides selection priority for vacancies within an agency (Treasury). You will have selection priority for Treasury vacancies if you meet ALL of the following conditions:

- Have a RIF, CES notice, a notice of proposed removal for declining a transfer of function or a directed reassignment or other certificate of expected separation;
- Have a current performance appraisal of at least fully successful;
- Apply for a vacancy at your permanent grade level or below;
- Occupy a position in the same commuting area of the vacancy;
- Determined to be well-qualified for the position.

To be considered for selection priority, you must APPLY for the vacancy within the established timeframes and attach a copy of your eligibility notice. You will have selection priority for the vacancy within the commuting area. For IRS vacancies only, IRS employees can also be considered for positions outside of their commuting area. However, the selection priority provided is lower than that found for positions within the commuting area.

#### **Length of eligibility**

Your eligibility for CTAP will expire when one of the following occurs:

- The RIF separation date;
- You are selected for a permanent position without time limits;
- The RIF is cancelled;
- The eligibility notice is rescinded; or
- You leave the IRS rolls prior to the RIF separation date.

Information will be provided on how you will be notified about vacancies within IRS and the other Treasury bureaus before RIF or other eligibility notices are issued. You can view job announcement information from other Treasury Bureaus and the IRS on [USAJOBS](#).

You must apply for vacancies, submit all required paperwork timely, and include a copy of your eligibility notice. Questions regarding other Treasury Bureau job announcements should be directed to the point of contact in the job announcement. IRS personnel will not be able to assist with questions about or requests for forms for other Treasury Bureau job announcements.

Federal employees who have been RIFd should update their USAJobs profiles to reflect eligibility for Career Transition Assistance Plan (CTAP) or Interagency Career Transition Plan (ICTAP). In their USAJOBS profiles, they can indicate this eligibility under the Federal Service section and make their resume and profile searchable for Agency Talent Portal (ATP) users by selecting a saved resume under the Documents tab.

### **Grade/Band Retention**

There are two types of [grade/band retention](#) - **mandatory** and **optional**. For a period of 2 years, an employee entitled to mandatory or afforded optional grade/band retention keeps the benefits of the grade/band held immediately before being placed in a lower grade/band. This means that an employee's retained grade/band is treated as their grade/band for all pay administration purposes even though the employee is assigned to a lower-graded/banded position description and performing lower-graded/banded work.

A General Schedule (GS) employee on grade retention may be eligible for annual pay adjustments and within-grade increases (WGI) that become due in the retained grade.

[\(5 CFR 536.205\)](#)

The retained grade/band is not used in any further reduction in force (RIF) procedure, or to determine whether an employee is exempt from the Federal Labor Standards Act (FLSA).

[\(5 CFR 536.205\)](#)

An IRS Payband System (IR) employee on band retention is eligible to earn performance-based increases (PBIs) in the higher retained payband based upon performance in the permanent lower paybanded position of record. An IR employee reduced to a lower GS grade is no longer entitled to PBIs and may be eligible for annual pay adjustments and WGIs that become due in the retained GS grade.

[\(IRM 6.536.1.3.4 \(5\)\)](#)

At the end of the 2 year period of grade retention, the employee then becomes potentially eligible for mandatory pay retention. [\(5 CFR 536.301\(a\)\(1\)\)](#)

### **Pay Retention**

There are two types of pay retention - **mandatory** and **optional**. An employee afforded pay retention retains their rate of basic pay when that pay rate would have otherwise been reduced. An employee who is entitled to mandatory or afforded optional pay retention is entitled to keep a rate of basic pay which may otherwise be reduced. The retained rate continues until a terminating event occurs ([IRM 6.536.1.4.8](#)).

A retained rate of basic pay is based upon the highest applicable rate range (includes locality or special rate (SR)) and may exceed the maximum step of the grade of the position to which the employee is assigned. However, it may not exceed the rate payable for Level IV of the Executive Schedule nor may it exceed 150% of the maximum rate (i.e., step 10) of the highest applicable rate range of the employee's new POR.

([IRM 6.536.1.4.6](#))

A retained rate is considered to be an employee's rate of basic pay for pay administration purposes to include computing or applying retirement deductions, life insurance premiums, premium pay, severance pay and other similar provisions as described in [5 CFR 536.307](#).

([IRM 6.536.1.4.7](#))

**Note:** *It is common to hear references to employees being on grade/band **and** pay retention; however, that is technically incorrect. Employees are on either grade/band **or** pay retention and each benefit has different regulations, which must be applied.*

*There are circumstances where employees become entitled to pay retention while also serving a period of grade/band retention. Also, it is important to note that grade/band and pay retention have different entitlements.*

### **Reemployment Priority List (RPL)**

Through the [RPL](#), the Department of Treasury (which includes the IRS) gives reemployment priority consideration to its competitive service employees separated (or about to be separated) by a RIF, who have registered for the RPL and who have received a rating above unacceptable as their last annual performance rating of record.

Employees who receive a CES notice when a RIF is the expected outcome, can also register for the RPL. This benefit gives employees consideration for two years.

Should a Department of Treasury agency hire external candidates for any temporary or permanent position within the local commuting area, program registrants who are evaluated as minimally qualified for the position, will be given priority consideration over certain outside job applicants. Consideration will be for vacancies which are at no higher grade and have no greater promotion potential than the position from which the

employee was or will be separated, and which have the same type of work schedule as the position from which the employee was or will be separated.

If you wish to be considered for this placement assistance, you must register for the program. To register, you must complete and submit an application to the office indicated on the form. A copy of an application form will be attached to your RIF separation (or CES) notice. You may enroll in the program any time after you receive your specific RIF separation (or CES) notice, and no later than your RIF separation date. If you fail to submit a timely application you will not be entitled to be placed on the RPL. The Department of Treasury will maintain and issue the RPL for Treasury-wide use. You will automatically be referred for Department of Treasury vacancies that become available in your local commuting area.

If you choose to enroll in the RPL while you are still on the IRS rolls, this registration should not be confused with applying for internal job vacancies. You must still watch for new announcements posted on USAJOBS and APPLY for these internal job vacancies within the IRS and other Treasury Bureaus. Remember, the RPL is for external job announcements for the Department of Treasury (including the IRS).

If you resign prior to the RIF effective date, you will not be eligible to enroll in this program. Additionally, you will not be considered for vacancies if you cannot be reached by the agency. For this reason, please advise your servicing personnel office of any changes to your address and telephone number.

A copy of your RIF separation (or CES) notice must be submitted with your RPL application form. You are also encouraged to submit a resume that describes your work history. This information will be used in determining your qualifications for job vacancies.

### **Education and Training Opportunities**

- If you are interested in upskilling, the Department of Labor's CareerOneStop ([www.careeronestop.org](http://www.careeronestop.org)) offers free courses and certifications.
- [Federal Employee Education & Assistance Fund](#) (FEEA) scholarships may be available for further education.

### **Networking & Professional Growth**

- Leverage [LinkedIn](#), [Idealist.org](#), [Indeed.com](#), alumni networks, and professional associations to stay connected and discover new opportunities.
- Consider joining government retiree or federal employee alumni groups to maintain connections.

### **Job Boards**

- [USAJOBS](#): As the official federal government job board, USAJOBS is a primary resource for federal jobs, including those in the competitive service, where reinstatement opportunities might exist.

- [CivicMatch](#): This site specializes in connecting top public sector talent with essential state and local government jobs nationwide.
- [Indeed](#): This general job board has a wide range of positions, including both government and private sector jobs, making it a good place to start your search.
- [LinkedIn](#): A professional networking platform, LinkedIn is also a job board, with a focus on professional and senior roles, and social recruiting.
- [Monster](#): This is another general job board with a wide range of positions, including government and private sector jobs.
- [CareerBuilder](#): This job board has a robust search function and a long history of posting jobs.
- [ZipRecruiter](#): This job board uses AI to help match job seekers with suitable positions.
- [Clearancejobs](#): This job board specializes in jobs that require security clearances, which may be relevant for some federal employees.
- [FlexJobs Corporation](#): This job board focuses on flexible and remote work opportunities.
- [Glassdoor](#): This job board provides insights into company culture and salaries, which can be helpful when researching potential employers.
- [Simply Hired](#): This job board aggregates job postings from various sources, providing a wide range of options.
- [Snagajob](#): This job board focuses on hourly and entry-level positions.
- [TheLadders.com](#): This job board focuses on professional and executive level jobs.
- [Google for jobs](#): Google for Jobs is a search engine that helps job seekers easily find their next jobs.