



U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE TRANSMITTAL SHEET

PART 223 FW 10	SUBJECT Employment Federal Career Intern Program	RELEASE NUMBER 425
FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT Division of Human Resources		DATE July 10, 2003

EXPLANATION OF MATERIAL TRANSMITTED:

This chapter provides policy and procedures governing the Federal Career Intern Program.

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FILING INSTRUCTIONS:

Remove:

None

Insert:

223 FW 10, FWM 425, 07/10/03 (3 pages)
Exhibit 1, 223 FW 10, FWM 425, 07/10/03 (1 page)

**FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
PERSONNEL**

Personnel

Part 223 Employment

Chapter 10 Federal Career Intern Program

223 FW 10

10.1 What is the purpose of this chapter? This chapter establishes policies and procedures for implementing the Federal Career Intern Program in the Fish and Wildlife Service. As used in this chapter, the term “we” refers to the Fish and Wildlife Service and the terms “I” and “you” refer to managers and supervisors.

10.2 To whom does this chapter apply? This chapter applies to all Federal Career Intern Program participants, managers, and supervisors.

10.3 What is the Federal Career Intern Program? Executive Order 13162 established this program in 2000 to attract to Federal service exceptional individuals from a wide variety of academic disciplines and to prepare them for careers in analyzing and implementing public programs. You can use this authority to fill two-grade interval positions, beginning at grade levels GS-5, GS-7, or GS-9. Individuals are appointed to a 2-year excepted service appointment and after successfully completing an internship, may be eligible for noncompetitive conversion to a permanent position in the Service.

10.4 How does the Federal Career Intern Program differ from the Presidential Management Intern (PMI) Program? The Office of Personnel Management is not the central source for career intern opportunities; appointments may be made at any time during the year; and the Federal Career Intern Program has no nomination process and is not restricted to individuals with graduate degrees.

10.5 How does the Federal Career Intern Program differ from the Student Career Experience Program (SCEP)? Career interns are not required to be enrolled in school; the Federal Career Intern Program is a 2-year internship that requires a 2-year formal training and development component for participants; and the intent of the program is to recruit individuals who already have diverse professional experiences, academic training, and competencies.

10.6 What are the authorities for this program?

- A. 5 CFR 213.3202(o).
- B. 5 CFR 315, Subparts B and G.
- C. Executive Order 13162

10.7 Who is responsible for administering the Federal Career Intern Program?

A. The **Office of Personnel Management (OPM)** establishes Governmentwide policies and regulations, provides oversight of the program, and approves requests for extensions beyond the 2-year internship.

B. The **Director** is responsible for Servicewide direction of this program and approves internship extensions for up to 120 days to cover rare or unusual circumstances.

C. **Assistant Director-Budget, Planning and Human Resources** has overall responsibility for effective administration of this program in the Service and ensures compliance with all applicable laws, regulations, and policies.

D. The **Chief, Division of Human Resources** is responsible for hiring and employment policies and procedures for the program, and reviews the requests submitted for higher level approval.

E. The **Director, National Conservation Training Center** is responsible for policy and procedures regarding Individual Development Plans.

F. **Regional Directors** and **Assistant Directors** are responsible for planning, coordinating, implementing, and monitoring Federal Career Intern Program activities, which includes identifying appropriate positions in their respective Region/program.

G. **Regional Human Resources Officers** are responsible for carrying out the policies and procedures of the program within their respective Region.

H. **Managers** and **supervisors** are responsible for implementing and documenting the training program for participants, and informing the career intern of what is expected during the internship, including developmental assignments and performance requirements.

10.8 Can I use the Federal Career Intern Program to fill entry level jobs? You may use the Federal Career Intern Program only to fill two-grade interval positions, starting at the GS-5, 7, or 9 grade level, in which a 2-year formal training program is appropriate. You have the authority to use this program to recruit from a variety of sources and to locate candidates that would most likely meet the mission and needs of your organization based on recruitment needs in specific occupational series, grades, competencies, geographical locations, and diversity goals. Such recruitment needs may be identified through workforce planning efforts.

10.9 What type of appointment does a career intern receive? We appoint individuals hired under this program to the excepted service under Schedule B authority found in 5 CFR 213.3202(o), for a period not to exceed 2 years. Initial appointments must be made to a position starting at the GS-5, 7, or 9 grade level. See Exhibit 1 for additional information on appointment procedures.

**FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
PERSONNEL**

Personnel

Part 223 Employment

Chapter 10 Federal Career Intern Program

223 FW 10

10.10 Is public notice required when filling positions under the Federal Career Intern Program? No. Public notice is a statutory requirement only when filling positions through the competitive examining process. However, you must follow merit principles when filling vacancies under this program. You must recruit and select participants in this program in accordance with the regulations established in 5 CFR 302, Employment in the Excepted Service. Refer to Exhibit 1.

10.11 Does veterans' preference apply in the selection of career interns? Yes. Veterans' preference applies to the selection of individuals for this program. Since career interns are appointed to positions in the excepted service, you must follow procedures described in 5 CFR 302.201.

10.12 When filling positions covered under the Luevano consent decree, do I have to use the Administrative Careers with America (ACWA) approved assessments? Yes. You must use the appropriate ACWA assessment or rating schedule when filling positions covered under the Luevano consent decree through the Federal Career Intern Program. However, public notice is not required when filling these positions.

10.13 If the Federal Career Intern Program is an excepted service program, why must I use Luevano approved rating schedules and assessments? Doesn't the use of these instruments defeat the purpose of an excepted appointing authority? The Luevano consent decree specifies that alternate examining procedures be used when filling any position covered by the decree. The language of the consent decree does not make any distinction between the competitive or excepted services when filling covered positions. For this reason, you must use the Luevano approved rating schedules and assessments. Also, on the advice of the Department of Justice, OPM considers all covered occupations, even positions that are removed from the competitive service, as still covered for purposes of applying the alternate examining procedures. Finally, the decree states, "...the defendants shall not be relieved of their obligations under the Decree by any subsequent executive order or regulation."

10.14 Can we use the Outstanding Scholar authority to fill career intern positions in the excepted service? No. If you use the Federal Career Intern Program to fill positions in the excepted service that are otherwise covered by the Luevano consent decree, you may not use the Outstanding Scholar authority as a supplement. You may use the Outstanding Scholar authority only as a supplement to competitive examining for Luevano covered positions.

10.15 How are career interns notified of the conditions of the program? Individuals selected for a position in the Federal Career Intern Program must sign FWS Form 3-2243 (Federal Career Intern Program Statement of

Understanding), to acknowledge that they understand the provisions of the program and specific action to be taken if they fail to successfully complete the program for reasons unrelated to misconduct or suitability.

10.16 Can I hire a career intern above the entry level? OPM established GS-5 through GS-9 as the entry level for this program. You may submit a written request to cover additional grades to meet unique or specialized needs to the Chief, Division of Human Resources through your servicing human resources office.

10.17 Are career interns subject to a probationary period? The 2 years the intern spends in the program (excepted appointment) will serve as the probationary period.

10.18 Are career interns subject to a new 2-year internship period if they move from one career intern position to another position under this program? No. In the case of an intern transferring from another Departmental bureau or Federal agency to the Service, time previously spent under the Federal Career Intern Program counts toward the completion of the 2-year period if the career intern is reappointed without a break in service. However, we may require additional training for the intern to ensure that the intern meets our requirements.

10.19 Can I extend the internship for more than 2 years?

A. The Director may approve extensions up to 120 days to cover rare or unusual situations such as:

(1) A permanent position is not immediately available.

(2) The intern is not fully prepared for conversion to a permanent appointment and there is an expectation that these circumstances will abate within 120 days.

B. OPM approves any extension beyond 120 days.

C. If you wish to extend an internship, submit a written request to your servicing human resources office, with specific reasons for the extension. Submit all requests to the Chief, Division of Human Resources through the appropriate Regional or Assistant Director for approval by the Director. The servicing human resources office will retain the request and approval for an extension in the intern's Official Personnel Folder and provide a copy to the supervisor.

10.20 Can I promote career interns? You may promote interns to the next higher level if they meet all qualifications and eligibility requirements necessary for promotion, and have successfully completed applicable training requirements.

**FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
PERSONNEL**

Personnel

Part 223 Employment

Chapter 10 Federal Career Intern Program

223 FW 10

10.21 How do I document training requirements?

A. You must complete an Individual Developmental Plan (IDP) and share it with the intern within 30 days of the date he/she enters the position. The intern and others participating in the training should participate in the development of the IDP.

B. The IDP must cover the full 2-year period and may be modified or supplemented throughout the internship. All changes to the IDP must be in writing and communicated to the intern within 30 days of the change.

C. You should hold periodic evaluation and counseling sessions with the intern to review progress, to receive feedback regarding training effectiveness, and to discuss career goals. At a minimum, hold these sessions every 3 months. Document and use these evaluation sessions in conjunction with the employee's annual performance and results report.

D. Provide copies of the IDP, changes to the IDP, and similar documents to the intern.

10.22 What should the IDP include? The plan must include the following:

A. Title, series, and grade of the target position.

B. Purpose and objectives of training, including the competencies needed for successful performance in the target position.

C. Training objectives related/linked to competencies.

D. Specific training and development activities and tasks that will be assigned to accomplish these objectives.

E. Length of training.

F. Method and frequency of evaluation to assess the intern's development.

G. Target dates for completion of the objectives.

10.23 What happens at the end of the 2-year internship if the intern completes the program? If the intern successfully completes the internship and meets all qualification, suitability, and performance requirements, you may convert him/her to a permanent position in the Service.

10.24 When can the conversion be effective? This noncompetitive conversion will be effective on the date the 2-year service requirement is met, or at the end of the extended period, as applicable.

10.25 What happens if the career intern fails to complete the internship?

A. If the intern held a career or career-conditional appointment within the Service immediately before entering the program and fails to complete the program (for reasons unrelated to misconduct or suitability), we must place the employee back in a position of equivalent status, tenure, and pay as the position the employee left to accept the internship.

B. If the intern is not converted or returned to a position at the same grade and pay as appropriate, you must terminate the appointment unless OPM grants him/her a longer extension. You should notify your servicing human resources office as soon as you anticipate that you may need to separate an intern.

C. Interns hired from another Departmental bureau, who accepted a position in the Federal Career Intern Program with the Service, will not have placement entitlements in the Service if they fail to successfully complete the program.

D. Interns selected from another Federal agency will not have a placement entitlement.

10.26 Do interns who are separated for reasons of performance or misconduct have appeal rights? An intern who has completed 1 year of current continuous employment in the same or similar position may appeal to the Merit Systems Protection Board.

10.27 What are the recordkeeping and documentation requirements?

A. Interns must sign FWS Form 3-2243. The servicing human resources office must file the statement of understanding in the employee's Official Personnel Folder and provide a copy to the intern's supervisor.

B. You must maintain the IDP, modifications to the IDP, records of evaluation and counseling sessions and similar documents.