



## UNITED STATES OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

Washington, DC 20415

The Director

March 01, 2023

### MEMORANDUM FOR HEADS OF EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES

FROM: Kiran A. Ahuja  
Director

Subject: Extension of the Coronavirus COVID-19 Schedule A Hiring Authority

The U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) is extending the use of the excepted service Schedule A Hiring Authority under 5 CFR 213.3102(i)(3) for hiring additional staff into positions needed in response to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic until May 11, 2023. OPM is extending this authority to reflect the Administration's announcement of its intention to end the COVID-19 public health emergency and National Emergency on May 11, 2023 ([SAP - H.R. 382 H.J. Res. 7 \(whitehouse.gov\)](#)). OPM understands that during this time, agencies need more tools to conduct strategic, targeted hiring for specific, short-term roles to meet mission and/or hiring needs. OPM has determined that it is justified to allow the continued use of the authority until the public health emergency and National Emergency end as currently anticipated on May 11, 2023.

Agencies may continue to use this authority to fill positions on a temporary basis for up to 1 year as needed in response to, or as a result of, COVID-19. These appointments may be extended up to 1 additional year. No new appointments may be made under this authority after May 11, 2023, when this public health emergency and National emergency are expected to end. Appointments are limited to individuals needed in direct response to the effects of COVID-19.

As a reminder, agencies must apply the provisions of 5 CFR part 302 and follow the procedures in 5 U.S.C. §3318(c) and 3319(c)(7) as described in the [Delegated Examining Operations Handbook](#) when using this authority. For more information on the use of this authority please visit the OPM Fact Sheet - [COVID-19 Excepted Service Hiring Authority](#).

Agency headquarters-level human resources offices may contact OPM at [employ@opm.gov](mailto:employ@opm.gov) with additional questions or clarifications. Agency field offices should contact their appropriate headquarters-level agency human resources office. Individual employees should contact their agency human resources office.

cc: Chief Human Capital Officers (CHCOs), Deputy CHCOs, and Human Resources Directors

# COVID-19 Excepted Service Hiring Authority Fact Sheet

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## Why is OPM extending this authority?

On January 30, 2023, the President announced his intention to end the national emergency concerning the COVID-19 pandemic on May 11, 2023. OPM is extending this authority to coincide with the May 11, 2023, end. The COVID-19 National Emergency and public health emergency continue to be in effect. OPM recognizes the ongoing circumstances of COVID-19 requires that agencies can conduct strategic, targeted hiring for specific critical, short-term roles to meet mission and/or hiring needs.

The authority expires May 11, 2023, and no new appointments may be made after this date. Appointments made prior to May 11, 2023, however, may be extended beyond that date.

## What is the COVID-19 Governmentwide Hiring Authority?

OPM has authorized the use of excepted-service appointments under 5 CFR 213.3102(i)(3) to address the need for hiring additional staff into positions to respond to the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19).

## What positions can be filled under this Authority?

Any positions needed in direct response to the effects of COVID-19.

## What makes this Schedule A authority different than competitive hiring?

- ✓ No Public notice (posting on USAJOBS.gov) is required; however, agencies can advertise if they choose and should conduct other appropriate recruiting activities.
- ✓ Agencies must follow procedures in 5 CFR part 302, including veterans' preference and pass overs of certain veterans, when using this authority.
- ✓ Make appointments on a temporary basis for up to one year.
- ✓ Extend appointments for 1 additional year (if needed).

## Are employees hired under this Authority eligible for benefits?

Employees hired under the authority may be eligible for the following benefits:

- ✓ Federal Employees Health Benefits
- ✓ Federal Long-Term Care Insurance
- ✓ Flexible Spending Accounts

Please contact your agency Benefits Officer to determine eligibility.

### **What limitations apply to the continued use of Schedule A authority?**

- ✓ Agencies should use this authority in the same manner that they would use any other excepted service authority.
- ✓ Agencies must have excepted service policies in place prior to using this or any expected service authority, which governs the process for receiving/processing applications; making qualification determinations; making selections; and the application of veterans' preference (including pass overs).
- ✓ These hires are subject to the same suitability/background investigation process as other applicants.
- ✓ Appointments made prior to May 11, 2023, may be extended beyond that date.
- ✓ No new appointments may be made after May 11, 2023, when the public health emergency terminates.
- ✓ When documenting the SF-50 "Notification of Personnel Action" for such appointments use "W9R/Sch. A, 5 CFR 213.3102(i)(3)" as the first authority and "W9C" as the final authority.

### **When does the COVID-19 Schedule A Hiring Authority expire?**

- ✓ The authority currently expires on March 1, 2023, but is now being extended until May 11, 2023. No new appointments may be made after this date.

### **What effect will the expiration of the COVID-19 Schedule A Hiring Authority have on agencies hiring related to COVID-19?**

- ✓ No new appointments can be made using the authority after May 11, 2023
- ✓ Appointments made prior to May 11, 2023, may be extended beyond that date.
- ✓ Any applicants who have received offers of employment must be appointed on or before May 11, 2023
- ✓ If an agency has applicants in the pipeline (who have received a job offer but have not been appointed) then an appointment must be made before May 11, 2023, or the tentative job offer must be rescinded.
- ✓ After May 11, 2023, an agency must use other hiring authorities to appoint staff needed for COVID-19 related work

### **What effect will the expiration of the COVID-19 Schedule A Hiring Authority have on employees appointed under the authority?**

- ✓ Employees currently appointed under the authority may remain employed until the expiration date of their temporary appointment and any approved extension.
- ✓ Appointments made prior to May 11, 2023, may be extended beyond that date.