

CHAPTER 5

MERIT PROMOTION

Refer to the Fort Bragg Internal Placement Plan for additional governing provisions.

5-1. GENERAL.

OPM requires that each agency develop a Merit Promotion Plan for promoting agency employees based on merit factors. While there are certain minimum standards that must be met, each promotion plan is unique to that agency. Fort Bragg's Internal Placement Plan sets forth policies and procedures concerning the recruitment and placement of employees in compliance with merit system principles and the requirements established by OPM and Department of the Army (DA). The Internal Placement Plan sets forth the procedures for competitive promotion actions such as permanent promotions; temporary promotions over 120 days and details to higher graded positions. A competitive action is one in which an individual must compete with other qualified and interested applicants for a job or promotion and must be among the best qualified to be referred. Some general provisions are outlined below:

a. A detail is the temporary assignment of an employee without any change in pay status to perform duties not covered by his job description.

b. A temporary promotion is the temporary assignment of an employee to a higher graded position during which the employee will receive a higher rate of compensation. Any temporary promotion which will result in an employee serving in a higher grade for over 120 days during the preceding 12-month period must be made under competitive merit promotion procedures.

c. A reassignment is the change of an employee from one position to another without promotion or demotion. Reassignments can be made at the request of either management or the employee with the supervisor's knowledge. The reassignment has to be competitive only if the position to which the employee is being reassigned has more promotion potential than the one currently occupied.

d. A change to lower grade is a personnel action, which moves an employee to a position at a lower grade or to a position with a lower rate of basic pay. A position may be filled by a change to lower grade because of reorganization or reduction-in-force in which an employee is offered a lower grade position in lieu of separation. There are also instances in which an

employee may request consideration for a specific lower grade position, such as through Upward Mobility procedures or the Internal Placement Program or by submitting a request in writing through the immediate supervisor to the Civilian Personnel Advisory Center (CPAC).

e. The Merit Promotion process begins with internal announcements to the workforce. Activity managers are responsible for seeing that vacancy announcements are posted in prominent locations. Vacancy announcements are distributed daily through the Fort Bragg electronic Bulletin Board. This includes Merit Promotions and Nonappropriated Fund (NAF) announcements. Each organization is responsible to download and distribute these announcements to their employees. Employees on Fort Bragg may also learn of vacancy announcements by dialing the 24-hour recording, telephone 910-396-8866, which lists all Merit Promotion vacancy announcements for which applications are being accepted. The sources of applicants will determine the method used and can include advertising the vacancy at other Army installations or other Federal agencies. For positions included in Career Management Programs, CPAC submits a request for a referral list to the appropriate major command or higher level. Procedures are established which automatically consider everyone registered in the particular occupation.

(1) Employees must submit a completed RESUMIX resume of no more than 3 pages in length to be considered under merit promotion. See Internal Merit Promotion Plan for specific details and established procedures. Every candidate who meets or exceeds the minimum established standards is considered basically eligible for the position. Any candidate who does not meet the requirements is ineligible for further consideration. A selective placement factor is an additional basic qualification requirement that is essential if minimum satisfactory performance is to result. An example of a selective placement factor might be a requirement to be fluent in more than one language. Qualifications of individuals to determine basic eligibility are reviewed by the Southeast Civilian Personnel Operations Center (SECPOC).

(2) There is no limit on the minimum or maximum number of Best-Qualified Candidates referred to the selecting official. The rating panel and the SECPOC specialist will determine this number or assistant who will consider such factors as the scores of the candidates and the break points or gaps between scores.

(3) Once the best qualified determination has been made the Referral List and Selection Register is provided to the selecting supervisor. The referral register will list the best

qualified candidates for the vacancy. The candidates will be listed in alphabetical order and by recruiting source.

(4) Once the referral list is received, the selecting supervisor may select any of the candidates referred. The selection must, however, be based on one or more legitimate job-related reasons for the selection.

f. Interviews: Fort Bragg policy and procedures governing interviews are covered in the Fort Bragg Internal Placement Plan and in the Fort Bragg Pamphlet, "Selection and Interview Techniques."

g. Selection: Once an individual has been selected, the referral list must be returned to the CPAC, identifying the candidate selected and indicating that the selection was not influenced by any non-merit or non-job-related factors. Notification of selection will be accomplished by CPAC only, after final administrative review of the action has been accomplished by the SECPOC. Therefore, supervisors or other persons involved in the selection process or those having knowledge of the selection will refrain from premature or inappropriate release of selection information. Once selected, the individual's reporting date will be arranged by the CPAC. Supervisors will be notified of the reporting date.

5-2. LIMITATION ON CHOICE OF HIRING METHODS.

There are a number of hiring methods available to the selecting official for filling a competitive position except when that choice is limited by statute or OPM regulations. When a vacancy arises for which a registrant in any of the programs listed in paragraphs 1 through 4 below is qualified and available, that registrant will be offered the position, barring any exceptions allowed by law and approved by the CPAC.

a. Mandatory Placement Actions.

(1) Individuals having statutory, regulatory, or administrative reemployment or restoration rights, or to whom a like employment obligation exists (e.g., employees returning from overseas assignments with return rights).

(2) Employee placement actions required in connection with reduction-in-force.

(3) Individuals in the DOD Priority Placement Program. These are current or former career or career-conditional employees who have been adversely affected by actions required for the effective management of the Department of Defense, such

as, but not limited to, reductions-in-force, base closures, consolidations, contracting out, position classification decisions, rotation from overseas, transfer of functions, military spouse preference eligibles and other DA family members.

(4) Individual placements directed by appropriate authority, provided that the placement does not violate established law or regulation.

b. Special Consideration Placement Actions. The placement actions listed in 1 through 4 below will precede efforts to fill the vacancy by other means, except when another employee or former employee has a statutory or regulatory right to be placed in or considered for the position, as described above.

(1) Individuals who are entitled to priority consideration for failure to receive proper consideration in a merit promotion action.

(2) Employees repromotable to grades or positions from which demoted in DOD without personal cause.

(3) Former employees on Reemployment Priority Lists (RPLs) will be considered before candidates under a new placement action.

(4) Employees who are medical reassignment eligibles (i.e., who have provided a doctor's statement certifying their inability to continue in their present position and received approval of their medical reassignment packet) receive special consideration for reassignment.

5-3. EFFECTING PROMOTION ACTIONS.

One of the major concerns of managers and supervisors is the length of time required to effect promotion actions. Selectees will normally be released no later than the second pay period after the date of notification.