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DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY  
NATIONAL SECURITY PERSONNEL SYSTEM  
CIVILIAN HUMAN RESOURCES MANUAL

SUBCHAPTER 9XX.X

STAFFING AND EMPLOYMENT

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- References:
- (a) DODI 1400.25-M, DoD Civilian Personnel Manual, Subchapter 1950, "Staffing and Employment"
  - (b) 5 U.S.C. 2301 and 2302
  - (c) Title 5 CFR
  - (d) DODI 1400.25-M, DoD Civilian Personnel Manual, Subchapter 1911, "Conversion into NSPS"
  - (e) DODI 1400.20-1-M, DoD Program for Stability of Civilian Employment Policies, Procedures and Programs Manual
  - (f) DODI 1400.25-M, DoD Civilian Personnel Manual, Subchapter 1910, "Classification"
  - (g) DON CHRM, Subchapter 9xx.x "Pay Administration Under the National Security Personnel System"

Cancellation: None. The OCPMINST 12335.1 of 26 Nov 86 and OCPMINST 12300.1 of 17 Aug 81 do not apply to staffing and employment actions taken under the National Security Personnel System.

1. Purpose. This subchapter provides staffing and employment policy, authority, responsibilities, and requirements under the National Security Personnel System (NSPS) within the Department of the Navy (DON). It must be read in conjunction with reference (a) and the provisions in both documents must be adhered to when taking staffing and employment actions.

2. Policy. It is the policy of the DON to use all available NSPS staffing and employment flexibilities and tools to attract and retain the skilled workforce necessary for the accomplishment of its many and diverse missions. Policies, procedures, and guidance will ensure that hiring, promotion, and placement actions foster equality of opportunity and support merit system principles and avoidance of prohibited personnel practices.

3. Definitions. Definitions are contained in Appendix A.

4. Applicability. This subchapter applies to actions taken under NSPS. Actions covered include competitive recruitment and appointment to civilian positions, qualifications, evaluation, referral, assignment and other staffing, employment, and merit promotion actions taken by management. Rules and procedures not specifically addressed by this subchapter are still applicable and must be applied using subchapter identified in references (a) through (g) and other regulatory cites.

5. Employment (General).

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a. Requesting Initial Probationary Periods of Longer Than One Year. RESERVED.

b. Establishing or Modifying a Qualification Standard. Requests to establish new or modify existing qualification standards require approval of the DoD and are to be submitted via the chain of command to Director, Office of Civilian Human Resources (OCHR) or designee. Requests must have the approval of the applicable Echelon 1 or 2 commands. The OCHR will review, endorse, and forward (as appropriate) to DoD for approval. The request will include at a minimum all the factors described in reference (a).

6. Recruitment, Selection and Placement (General). Appendix B provides a checklist of options and considerations when filling jobs.

a. Automated Systems. To the maximum extent possible, recruitment within the DON will be supported from point of announcement to selection through the use of automated systems in order to streamline the evaluation and referral of applicants.

b. Application Methods. The DON accepts resumes for posted vacancy announcements both in electronic form from its employment website or hardcopy by United States mail. Resumes must conform to the DON Job Kit requirements. An organization may utilize other application methods with the approval of the servicing Human Resources Service Center (HRSC) and OCHR for special recruitment efforts such as SES.

c. Resume Policy. Except for resumes submitted against vacancies filled through Competitive Examining, an applicant may only have one active resume on file with the DON. An active resume expires six months from date of receipt unless an applicant extends it during the 30 days prior to its expiration date. At the time of consideration, the latest resume received will be used for evaluation and referral. When a candidate is selected for a permanent position, the resume is made inactive and a new resume must be submitted to be considered for other positions.

d. Self-Certification. Applicants must self-certify their hiring category eligibility, citizenship, Veterans' Preference, education, as well as other requested eligibility information at time of application. The Human Resources Resource Office (HRSC) will use this information and the resume to make eligibility and qualification determinations. Supporting documents substantiating selections (e.g., SF-50, DD214), will be required from the selectee prior to a final job offer.

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e. Assigning Veterans Preference. A combination of the Veterans' Preference and military information provided in the resume will be used to assign the appropriate tentative preference. Veterans' Preference will be awarded only if information supporting the evidence is provided in the military information section of the resume to support the claim. Documents supporting claims of Veterans' Preference (e.g., SF-15 and DD214) are not required at time of application but will be required for verification prior to the final job offer.

(1) To receive tentative 10-Point preference, applicants must provide information supporting the evidence as identified in the Application for 10-Point Veterans' Preference (SF-15) and completed in the military information section of the resume. Applicants who do not provide supporting information for their claim of 10-Point preference will be granted either 5-point tentative preference or no preference.

(2) To receive tentative 5-Point preference, applicants must complete the military information section of the resume. Applicants who do not provide information to support their claim of 5-Point preference will not receive preference credit.

f. Evaluation of Candidates. Prior to the recruitment process, an authorized management official (i.e., subject matter expert) in consultation with HR will perform a job analysis as required in references (a) through (c). The job analysis shall identify the primary duties of the position, the knowledge, skills, abilities, or competencies required to do the work and of the knowledge, skills, abilities, or competencies identified, which would indicate the most highly qualified candidate. The final job analysis with Subject Matter Expert (SME) approval must be maintained as part of the case file. Approval documentation may be in the form of an e-mail from the SME, documentation of verbal approval that includes date of discussion, or actual SME signature and date on job analysis or crediting plan.

g. Evaluation based on Selective Factors and Quality Ranking Factors

(1) If used, selective factors (SF) must be documented in the Position Description (PD) and in the individual vacancy announcement.

(2) Quality ranking factors (QRF) may be used to reduce a large number of candidates to more manageable levels. Applicants who meet the QRF may be ranked or referred ahead of those candidates who

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do not possess the QRF.

h. Selection Certificate Expiration. Merit promotion and competitive examining selection certificates will have an initial expiration date of 30 calendar days and can be extended an additional 30 days if unanticipated events delay selection. Requests to extend a selection certificate must be provided to the HRSC prior to the expiration date and will not be allowed if requested after a certificate has expired. When a longer period than 30 - 60 days is needed due to a large number of vacancies or other business related reasons, the certificate may be issued with an extended expiration date to reflect the business need as agreed to by the HRSC. Certificates issued with an extended expiration date expire on that date and will not be extended. An expired certificate will result in closing the recruit action (i.e., the RPA).

i. Reuse of Selection Certificates. Certificates issued from open continuous announcements (OCA) may not be reused once the Selecting Official has returned the certificate, with or without making a selection, to the HRSC. This does not preclude using a certificate issued from an OCA for multiple vacancies that occur during the life of the certificate (i.e., a long term certificate retained by the selecting official and from which multiple selections are made before the certificate is returned to the HRSC or expires). A new certificate may be issued from an individual or case announcement to make additional selection(s) in situations where the selectee(s) has declined or an additional vacancy occurs for the same position within 90 days of the initial certificate's issue date.

j. Job Offers. Employees who are first hired into an NSPS covered position, but who will not be rated because they will not have performed the minimum period of service required before the last day of the appraisal period will be advised they are ineligible for the performance payout for the current appraisal period. Additionally, a final job offer cannot be extended until all pay setting approvals are obtained as required by reference (g).

### 7. Competitive Examining

#### a. Public Notice

(1) Local Commuting Area. If an organization restricts the area of consideration (AOC) to the local commuting area, the geographical boundaries of the local commuting area must be formally defined in writing prior to issuing the vacancy announcement. The appropriate Commander, Navy Region will define local commuting areas for activities/commands within a Command Navy Region and where

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multiple commands/activities exist within a local commuting area (as defined by reference (b)), the local commuting area for all will be identically defined. The geographical boundaries of the local commuting area must be defined based on city, state; zip code; and/or area code; or city, country geographic boundaries and must be sufficiently broad to ensure the availability of sufficient qualified candidates taking into consideration the nature and level of the position.

(2) Sufficient Qualified Candidates. Selecting officials have responsibility to determine if there are a sufficient number of qualified candidates within the local commuting area and whether the AOC needs to be expanded. When the minimum AOC is the local commuting area (or the local commuting area and targeted recruitment source(s)) and this results in the selection certificate having a small number of candidates (e.g., one or two), the selecting official may make a selection if they can articulate a business-based or mission-related reason why that number was sufficient. This justification must be documented on Appendix C, Management Official Accountability Certification, and maintained in the case file.

a. Open Period of Public Notice. There is no minimum announcement period. However, if the announcement is open less than three calendar days, documentation must be maintained in the case file providing justification why the period is sufficient.

b. Designating Post Marked or Received Date. If the announcement open period is less than five calendar days, the HRSC must allow receipt of applications or resumes postmarked by the closing date. A statement to this effect must be included in the vacancy announcement.

c. Traditional Rating and Ranking Procedures. RESERVED.

d. Category Rating and Selection Procedures. Category rating may be utilized in place of traditional rating and ranking using the procedures set forth in reference (a) and other DON guidance issued.

e. Excepted Service. Consistent with Part 302, reference (c), DON organizations that routinely examine for excepted service positions may develop procedures similar to category rating. A copy of any developed procedures must be forwarded via the chain of command to Director, OCHR or designee. The OCHR will review and forward as appropriate to the Civilian Personnel Management Service.

f. Reporting Requirements. The HRSCs will prepare quarterly

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and annual reports using the same format and procedures as non-NSPS reports. Copies of reports submitted to the Office of Personnel Management and DoD will be provided concurrently to OCHR.

8. Merit Promotion. The procedures described in reference (a) and supplemented below form the DON's Merit Promotion Program for NSPS.

a. Documenting Assignments. An official personnel action (e.g., reassignment, temporary promotion) must be completed in accordance with requirements of reference (a) or when a specific assignment and its tasks will last longer than 90 days and results in a change in a PD with a commensurate change in performance objectives. This does not apply to changes occurring as a result of the performance cycle itself or changes in objectives due to completion of previously assigned objectives, change in mission/organizational focus or similar situations where the PD does not change.

b. Determining Levels of Work. Reference (a) provides that comparable level of work for employees or applicants from other pay systems may be determined using guidance found in references (d) and (f). If movement is to a pay band or pay schedule other than that determined to be comparable, use reference (a) to decide if the action is competitive or noncompetitive and whether the type of action is a promotion, reassignment or reduction-in-band. Use the permanently held highest graded non-NSPS position and follow paragraphs (1), (2) and (3) below for additional assistance in application:

(1) Movement from General Schedule (GS), Acquisition Demonstration Project, and Alternative Personnel System. Use the DoD NSPS conversion guidance, reference (d), to determine the equivalent NSPS career group, pay schedule and pay band.

(2) Movement from the Federal Wage System (FWS). Reference (f) states that level of work for WG-1 through WG-8 is considered equivalent to YE-1; level of work for WG-9 through WG-12 is considered equivalent to YE-2; and level of work for WG-13 through WG-15 is considered equivalent to YE-3. It further identifies immediate and intermediate supervisory pay bands as YF-1 or YF-2, respectively. Where reference (f) does not help in determining comparable level of work, use the representative rate pay chart for the losing organization's geographic area to determine the equivalent GS grade level of the employee's current position at the losing organization. Then, use reference (d) to determine the equivalent NSPS pay schedule (i.e., YE for nonsupervisory and YF for supervisory) and pay band.

(3) Movement from Other Demonstration Projects. Use the conversion rules applicable to the demonstration project for the

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employee's position and convert the pay level to the equivalent GS grade. Then use reference (d) to determine the equivalent NSPS career group, pay schedule and pay band.

c. Methods for Identifying Candidates. Candidates may be located using a wide range of methods, which may vary with the type and frequency of the vacancy and occupation. Management may also use noncompetitive candidate sources such as reinstatement, reassignment, Veterans Recruitment Appointment (VRA), etc.

(1) Open Continuous Announcement Method. Positions that have recurring vacancies will be filled through the use of DON-wide Open Continuous Announcements (OCA). The OCHR, with support of HRSCs, will conduct ongoing analysis of recruitment requests and trends to determine which positions are effectively filled through an OCA. The evaluation and identification of a recurring or hard-to-fill position will be based on a DON-wide serviced community perspective. Organizations may supplement recruitment efforts of an OCA using recruitment flyers or other types of marketing for their specific vacancy.

(2) Case-Specific Method. This method provides for positions to be filled by individual vacancy announcements that have specific opening/closing dates and unique requirements (e.g., selective factors) or are occupations that are not covered by an OCA. These positions are normally hard-to-fill or are filled infrequently at the grade or location where the vacancy exists.

(3) Alternative Forms of Competition. Organizations may elect to use Assessment Boards, Alternate Certification or Exceptional Performance Promotion as provided in reference (a). These methods are normally used when the source of high quality candidates is likely to be internal to the organization and the selecting official or selection board possesses enough information about knowledge, skills, abilities, competencies, and experience of candidates to ensure each are assessed fairly and equitably. The provisions of the DoD Priority Placement Program (PPP), reference (e), apply to positions filled under these methods.

(a) Assessment Boards. This method requires documentation to be maintained by the organization, including names and titles of members serving on the board, dates the board convened, a list of employees considered and how employees were identified, method and criteria used to assess employees, individual ratings, and categorized referrals created as a result of the assessment. Referrals must include expiration date and annotation of selections made. Selection documentation for each selectee will be included on

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Appendix C and maintained with the referrals. A copy of Appendix C is also to be forwarded to the HRSC with the Request for Personnel Action (RPA).

Selections from referral lists created annually for future opportunities are subject to a one-time PPP clearance upon receipt of the RPA and selection by the HRSC. If an Assessment Board convenes for the purpose of filling current vacancies, the RPA (or electronic equivalent) will be forwarded to the HRSC as soon as it is determined a board will be convened and the action will be cleared against PPP until a referral is generated for selection.

(b) Alternate Certification. This method may be done with assistance of the HRSC or by the selecting official.

(1) When HRSC assistance is desired, the process is similar to that of requesting the HRSC to issue a certificate from an OCA. The selecting official forwards the RPA (to include the employee's name and SSN) with the vacancy information (e.g., PD number), assessment criteria (skills), source of employees (e.g., AOC such as UIC), any other desired search parameters and identification of what constitutes the highest quality group to the HRSC. The HRSC enters the appropriate information into the automated tool to determine if the name-requested individual would be in the highest quality group and on the certificate if issued. If the result is positive, the RPA is annotated and the selection is processed. The selecting official must justify use of this method on Appendix C and attach it to the RPA. The action is subject to PPP clearance from receipt of the RPA until verification by the HRSC that the employee is in the highest quality group.

(2) If the selecting official desires to carry out procedures under this method their self, Appendix C, must be completed and documentation maintained. Documentation to be maintained includes source of employees and list of employees considered, method and assessment criteria used to assess employees, individual employee ratings, identification of what constitutes the highest quality group, and selectee's name. As soon as it is determined this method will be used, the RPA (or electronic equivalent) must be submitted to the HRSC and it will be subject to PPP clearance until the selecting official provides a copy of Appendix C and the RPA (if not already provided) to the HRSC.

(c) Exceptional Performance Promotion. Use of this method requires completion of Appendix C which is maintained by the organization along with documentation of the AOC, list of employees within the AOC, method and criteria used to assess the employees, and

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documentation of how the functions of the selected employee's current position are similar to the position being promoted to. As soon as it is known a current vacancy will be filled using this method, the RPA (or electronic equivalent) will be forwarded to the HRSC and the action is subject to PPP clearance until the selecting official provides a copy of Appendix C and the RPA (if not already provided) to the HRSC.

d. Area of consideration. Area of consideration is the organizational and/or geographic location from which applicants will be considered. It must be sufficiently broad to ensure the availability of high quality candidates taking into consideration the nature and level of the position. Organization is defined minimally as a recognizable subdivision or unit.

(1) Sufficient High Quality Candidates. Selecting officials are responsible for determining if there are a sufficient number of high quality candidates and whether the AOC needs to be expanded. When the AOC results in a small number of candidates (e.g., one or two), the selecting official may make a selection if they can articulate a business-based or mission-related reason why that number was sufficient. This justification must be documented on Appendix C and maintained in the case file. If this situation involves the use of an alternative form of competition (see paragraph 8.c.3. of this issuance), a copy of Appendix C must also be attached to and forwarded with the RPA to the HRSC.

e. Selection Procedures

(1) Interviews. The selecting official may interview none, any, or all of the referred candidates on the selection certificate.

(2) Release of Employees. Once a selection is made, selectee(s) may be given a tentative offer with the final offer being confirmed by officials at the HRSC. Normal timeframes for release of DON employees after selection are:

- (a) Promotion - 14 days;
- (b) Reassignment or reduction in band - 30 days;
- (c) Overseas assignments - 45 days.

Certain circumstances may require exceptions to this policy. Exceptions will be agreed upon between the losing and gaining organizations.

9. Priority Consideration. The following circumstances as supported by reference (e) require referral of individuals who by law or

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regulation must be considered before other candidates in the order indicated and according to applicable regulations in the selection of candidates. Officials at the HRSC and Human Resources Office (HRO) administer these programs for selecting officials:

- a. Law, court, or other regulatory agency ordered referral.
- b. Agency decision or settlement between parties.
- c. Employees who did not receive proper consideration for promotion in a prior case due to procedural, regulatory, or program violation.
- d. Employees or applicants registered on the Reemployment Priority List and in the DoD Priority Placement Program (PPP).
- e. Employees who have been impacted by downsizing at other agencies and are located through the Interagency Career and Transition Program (ICTAP) as described in 330 Subpart C of reference (c).

### 10. New Appointing Authorities.

- a. Requesting Severe Hiring Authority or Critical Hiring Authority. Requests to use or extend use of either of these authorities require approval of DoD and are to be submitted via the chain of command to OCHR. Requests must have the approval of the applicable Echelon 1 or 2 command. The OCHR will forward as appropriate to the DoD for approval. The request will include at a minimum all the factors described in reference (a).

Requests for extensions must be forwarded to OCHR at least 180 days prior to expiration of the authority.

- b. Non-citizen Hiring. Before appointing a non-citizen under this provision, activities must exhaust all sources of recruitment to include both competitive examining and merit promotion sources. Announcements must be open a minimum of 30 days nationwide to all sources applicable to the type of recruitment (e.g., all U.S. citizens for competitive examining or all appointable sources within the United States for merit promotion). Status of Forces Agreements must be adhered to when using this authority.

- c. Requesting Additional Appointing Authorities. RESERVED.

11. Appointing Authority and Approval Responsibility. Exercise of the following authorities includes responsibility for adherence to merit system principles and avoidance of prohibited personnel practices in advising managers and supervisors or taking authorized actions. These authorities may be further delegated to persons within the organization whose training and experience enable them to

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validate and determine whether legal and regulatory requirements are met. Redlegation of authority must be in writing, clearly define the extent of the authority, include the criteria under which the authority would be revoked, and be in accordance with chain of command guidelines.

a. Delegation of Appointing Authority. The HRSC Directors are delegated authority to authenticate, authorize, approve and effect personnel actions, and to issue Notifications of Personnel Action (NPA) or electronic equivalent. The HRSC Directors may also initiate, review, and authorize RPAs for serviced organizations when necessary for effective and timely service delivery.

b. Initiating, reviewing, and approving Requests for Personnel Actions. The authority to initiate, review, and authorize RPAs is delegated to the Chief of Naval Operations (CNO), the Commandant of the Marine Corps (CMC), the Assistant for Administration, Under Secretary of the Navy (AAUSN), the Heads of Major Commands (Echelon 2 Commands) and all Heads of commands and activities. The HRO Directors are delegated authority to initiate, review, or authorize RPAs for activities/commands for whom they serve as human resources service providers, consistent with local service provider agreements.

c. Oaths of Office and Appointment Affidavits. The HRSC and HRO Directors are delegated authority to administer oaths of office and appointment affidavits required by law in connection with employment in the DON. This authority may be further delegated as necessary (e.g., remote site office with no onsite HR).

12. Recordkeeping. A record of each position filled will be maintained and sufficient to allow reconstruct through either hardcopy or electronic methods as required by reference (a). Officials at the HRSC are charged with maintaining records for Competitive Examining and Merit Promotion methods 1 and 2 (paragraph 8.c.(1) and (2) of this issuance). Management officials are responsible for maintaining records for Alternative Forms of Competition (paragraph 8.c.(3) of this issuance). The HRO officials will provide advice and assistance to managers to ensure records are maintained in compliance with these requirements. Where there is an identified third party action, records shall contain all appropriate documents to allow full reconstruction and shall be maintained until all forms of adjudication have been completed.

a. Disclosure of Information. Disclosure of information will follow guidance contained in the privacy and freedom of information acts. All candidates must have equal access to information on

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selection process and procedures. Information that might give some candidates an unfair advantage (e.g., crediting plans) shall not be released.

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## APPENDIX A

### DEFINITIONS

**Active Resume:** A resume that is available for job vacancy consideration. Except for resumes submitted against vacancies filled through Competitive Examining, an applicant may only have one active resume on file with the Department of Navy (DON). When an applicant submits a new resume, the previous resume on file becomes inactive and the newest resume becomes active.

**Authorized Management Official:** The manager or supervisor authorized to recommend or hire, assign work, promote, and take other staffing and employment actions. An authorized management official may also be the Selecting Official or Subject Matter Expert.

**Hard-to-Fill:** Positions for which there is an insufficient number of well-qualified applicants responding to a vacancy announcement, or there is an established history of high turnover or insufficient number of applicants even after repeated advertising efforts and use of a variety of recruitment sources.

**Job Kit:** The guidelines published for applicants to follow in applying for the DON civilian positions.

**Job Analysis:** A systematic method for gathering, documenting, and analyzing information about the content, context, and requirements of the job. It demonstrates that there is a clear relationship between the tasks performed and the competencies and knowledge, skills, and abilities required to perform the tasks. Job analysis information is used to develop employee selection procedures, identify training needs, and define performance objectives.

**Recruitment Flyer:** A specific vacancy announcement posted to market a particular vacancy and which directs applicants to apply to the appropriate DON open continuous announcement.

**Selection Certificate:** A listing of applicants referred to the selecting official.

**Selecting Official:** The individual authorized to make a selection for the position being filled.

**Subject Matter Expert:** The individual who has expert knowledge about what it takes to do a particular job.

**Targeted Recruitment Source:** Targeted refers to the source(s) of candidates (e.g., college recruitment, professional organizations,

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persons with disability, veterans) to obtain an adequate number of well-qualified candidates for the position.

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## APPENDIX B

### MANAGER'S CHECKLIST

- Does a vacancy exist?
- Is there funding?
- Is the need temporary or permanent?
- Is the need full-time, part-time, seasonal, or intermittent?
- Should I talk to an HR practitioner about my recruitment needs?
- Is the Position Description accurate?
- Are there activity/command or other instructions that must be followed in filling a vacancy within my organization?
- Should the vacancy be filled at the journey-level or should it be structured to allow for pay progression and promotion potential?
- Do I have qualified employees who can be placed into the vacancy without competition?
- Do potential applicants exist within the organization or are the applicant sources external to the organization, DON, DoD or the Federal sector?
- If applicants exist within the organization, would an Alternative Form of Competition (i.e., Assessment Board, Alternate Certification or Exceptional Performance Promotion) be an appropriate method to fill the vacancy?
- Does the DON already have an open continuous announcement as a source of applicants?
- Are there targeted recruitment sources that would provide quality candidates (professional/technical associations, web-sites, schools, etc.)?
- Is filling the vacancy subject to clearing a mandatory placement program (e.g., PPP, RPL, ICTAP, Priority Consideration)?
- Do I need to consider pay setting options or flexibilities?
- Will interviews be a part of the selection process?
- Do my intended actions support equality of opportunity and affirmative employment?
- Do my intended actions incorporate Merit System Principles?
- Do my intended actions avoid prohibited personnel actions?
- Have I considered my organization's commitment to workforce diversity and Equal Employment Opportunity goals?
- Have I initiated and forwarded the request and all information needed to fill the vacancy? Does it meet my current workforce-planning model?

## APPENDIX C

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## MANAGEMENT OFFICIAL ACCOUNTABILITY CERTIFICATION

Name:

Activity/Command:

NSPS Action(s) Taken:

- Selection from Certificate with 2 or less candidates
- Assessment Board (include selection documentation under Reason/Justification section below)
- Alternate Certification (include justification for use of this method under Reason/Justification section below)
- Exceptional Performance Promotion (include justification for use of this method under Reason/ Justification section below)
- Other:

Reason/Justification:

My records contain documentation sufficient to reconstruct the action and will be maintained in accordance with DoD and the DON implementing issuances.

I certify that I am making use of this NSPS flexibility for sound business-based reasons and that it meets the requirements and intent of Department of Defense and Department of the Navy NSPS staffing and employment policy and that this action is cost effective and in the best interest of the Government.

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Selecting Official Signature/Date