

# DEFENSE CIVILIAN INTELLIGENCE PERSONNEL SYSTEM INTERCHANGE AGREEMENT (DCIPS IA)

## INTRODUCTION

This guidance is intended to assist Human Resource Specialists in implementing and administering the DCIPS IA, which became effective on February 13, 2019. The agreement allows certain excepted service DCIPS employees to be appointed to General Schedule (GS) or equivalent positions in the competitive service. These employees must be in pay plan GG and serve in one of the Department of Defense (DoD) Components covered in this agreement. Additionally, this interchange agreement will allow competitive service GS or equivalent employees in the DoD Components covered in this agreement to be appointed to excepted service GG positions under DCIPS.

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### **Q1. What is the Defense Civilian Intelligence Personnel System Interchange Agreement?**

A1. The DCIPS IA is an agreement between the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) and DoD. It is an agreement of limited scope that allows employees serving in DCIPS positions in pay plan GG on permanent excepted service appointments in the DoD Components of the Agreement to be appointed to competitive service GS or equivalent positions in and among those DoD Components without needing to compete as external, non-federal applicants. It also allows employees serving in competitive civil service GS or equivalent positions in the DoD Components of the Agreement to be appointed to DCIPS positions in and among those DoD Components.

### **Q2. What is the purpose of the DCIPS IA?**

A2. The DCIPS IA is intended to remove barriers to movement between the excepted service DCIPS and competitive service GS or equivalent systems for employees on permanent appointments in the DoD Components of the Agreement. It is mainly intended to expand development and career progression opportunities for DCIPS employees in professional, administrative, and support occupations that have more GS opportunities in the DoD Components of the Agreement, and to attract GS employees in those occupations to DCIPS opportunities. It also provides management some flexibility to consider known and proven DCIPS talent for GS assignments in response to mission shifts and critical resource gaps, regardless of the system of their original appointment. In a manner of speaking, the DCIPS IA is “fenced” to only allow movement of DCIPS GG and GS or equivalent employees in and among the DoD Components of the Agreement.

### **Q3. Which DoD Components can use the Agreement?**

A3. The agreement only covers DCIPS GG employees belonging to the Defense Security Service (now the Defense Counterintelligence and Security Agency), the National Reconnaissance Office, the DoD Consolidated Adjudication Facility, the Office of the Secretary of Defense, and in the Military Departments (Army, Navy (including the Marine Corps) and Air Force) and GS and equivalent employees also belonging those organizations.

### **Q4. Does the DCIPS IA cover positions and employees in other personnel systems such as the DoD personnel demonstration projects (e.g., AcqDemo or Lab Demo)?**

A4. Yes. The IA covers employees and positions in the graded GS or equivalent competitive service systems, such as the Acquisition and Laboratory Demonstration Projects in the DoD Components of the Agreement.

**Q5. Does the DCIPS IA cover positions and employees in senior civilian pay plans (SES, SL, ST, DISES or DISL)?**

A5. No. The IA does not cover any positions or employees in the senior civilian pay plans.

**Q6. Can DCIPS GG employees use the DCIPS IA to transfer to GS positions outside of DoD?**

A6. No. The DCIPS IA is only for movement of DCIPS GG and GS or equivalent employees in and among the DoD Components of the Agreement.

**Q7. Why doesn't the DCIPS IA cover any of the other DCIPS Components?**

A7. The three DCIPS combat support agencies (CSAs), namely the National Security Agency, the National Geospatial Intelligence Agency, and the Defense Intelligence Agency, chose not to participate in the DCIPS IA because their DoD civilian employees are entirely in DCIPS, and are not the mixture of GS and DCIPS employees found in the Military Departments. The DCIPS populations of the three CSAs are sufficiently large to create robust career progression opportunities across virtually all occupations. Other DoD Components, like the Missile Defense Agency and the Defense Threat Reduction Agency, have very few DCIPS employees who almost exclusively perform intelligence work. As such, their career advancement opportunities already exist within the other major DCIPS Components, or among the non-DoD elements of the Intelligence Community.

**Q8. What are the requirements for an excepted service employee to use the DCIPS IA?**

A8. DCIPS employees in the listed DoD Components of the Agreement must be serving under an excepted service permanent appointment and must have served continuously for at least one year before they can be appointed to a position in the competitive civil service in and among those DoD Components under the authority of the DCIPS IA. Temporary and term DCIPS employees are not covered by the DCIPS IA.

**Q9. What are the requirements for a competitive service employee to use the DCIPS IA?**

A9. GS or equivalent employees in the DoD Components covered by the Agreement must have completed the required probationary period with their career or career-conditional appointment before they can be appointed to DCIPS positions in and among those Components under the authority of the DCIPS IA. Temporary and term GS or equivalent employees are not covered by the DCIPS IA.

**Q10. Who has the delegated authority to use the DCIPS IA?**

A10. Appointing officials of the DoD Components listed in the Agreement can use the DCIPS IA.

**Q11. When does the DCIPS IA expire?**

A11. The DCIPS IA expires on December 31, 2023, unless extended by mutual agreement.

**Q12. Can the DCIPS IA be used for the purpose of Management Directed Reassignments (MDRs) from the competitive to excepted service?**

A12. No. An MDR from GS or an equivalent competitive service appointment to GG excepted service would affect the rights of the affected employee. Therefore, the authority of the DCIPS IA is not intended for MDRs.

**Q13. Can the DCIPS IA be used for the purpose of conversions to and from competitive service to excepted service?**

A13. Yes. The DCIPS IA can facilitate conversion actions from competitive to excepted service when GS or equivalent positions are being moved into DCIPS as GG positions, or for conversion actions when DCIPS GG positions are being moved into the competitive service as GS or equivalent positions, in and among the DoD Components of the Agreement.

**Q14. What minimum qualification standards and requirements must be met for competitive and excepted service employees undergoing an appointment using the DCIPS IA?**

A14. Under the DCIPS IA, excepted service DCIPS employees must meet the qualification standards and requirements for the competitive service GS or equivalent position they are being appointed to in accordance with OPM established regulations for transfer of employees within the competitive civil service. Competitive service GS or equivalent employees must meet the regular standards and requirements established by the DoD Components of the Agreement for appointment to DCIPS GG positions.

**Q15. Is an employee who is serving a probationary/trial period eligible to undergo an appointment using the DCIPS IA?**

A15. DCIPS employees must have served continuously for at least 1 year in positions in the DoD Components of the Agreement before they can be appointed to a competitive civil service GS or equivalent position under the DCIPS IA authority. Employees in GS or equivalent positions in the competitive civil service in the DoD Components of the Agreement must have completed the required probationary period connected with their career or career-conditional appointment before they can be appointed to excepted service DCIPS GG positions under the DCIPS IA authority.

**Q16. Will a competitive service employee appointed to the excepted service via the DCIPS IA lose their career status?**

A16. An employee in the competitive civil service who has career status and is subsequently appointed to an excepted service DCIPS GG position under the DCIPS IA will retain their career status in the GS or equivalent grade last held for purposes of returning to the competitive service at a later date. GS or equivalent employees who have not gained competitive career status before being appointed to a DCIPS position under the DCIPS IA will not have any career status to retain.

**Q17. Can an employee negotiate steps upon accepting an appointment via the DCIPS IA (i.e., GS to GG or GS/GG to AcqDemo)?**

A17. The GS and GG grades and steps are considered equivalent for purposes of pay setting. If selected for reassignment under the DCIPS IA, the individual's grade and step will remain the same. If selected for promotion under the DCIPS IA, the individual's grade and step will be set in accordance with the rules of the system to which promoted. If selected for a position in an alternate personnel system equivalent to GS, pay will be set based on the rules of the new pay system.

**Q18. Will the DCIPS IA allow a covered DCIPS employee whose position is being downsized to be placed into a GS position to avoid involuntary separation through Adjustment-in-Force?**

A18. Yes. If there is no vacant DCIPS position in the competitive area for the employee, the Component can offer the affected DCIPS employee a vacant GS or equivalent position in that Component as a valid offer using the DCIPS IA, or, if no GS position is available, can allow the affected employee to register for GS positions in the DoD Priority Placement Program, after the rules of that program are amended.

**Q19. Is there anyone else the DCIPS IA applies to?**

A19. The DCIPS IA also applies to former DCIPS employees who have been involuntarily separated without personal cause within the preceding year from permanent excepted appointments in the DoD Components of the Agreement.

**Q20. If employees or managers still have questions regarding the DCIPS IA, who should they contact?**

A20. Employees or managers should contact their servicing civilian human resources office for questions regarding the DCIPS IA.

## CONTACT

For additional information, human resources offices should contact: The DCIPS Human Capital Management Office (HCMO) at 703-692-5494 or [osd.pentagon.ousd-intel.mbx.hcmo-dcips@mail.mil](mailto:osd.pentagon.ousd-intel.mbx.hcmo-dcips@mail.mil) or DCPAS advisory support at 703-545-7487 or [dodhra.mc-alex.dcpas.list.ec-field-advisory-support@mail.mil](mailto:dodhra.mc-alex.dcpas.list.ec-field-advisory-support@mail.mil)