

Schedule Policy/Career

What it means for you as a supervisor or manager

Why we're talking about Schedule Policy/Career



A new category called Schedule Policy/Career (Schedule P/C) has been created.



Some federal jobs that focus on policy work may be moved into this category.



This briefing is about what that means if you supervise or manage employees whose positions will or have been moved to Schedule P/C.

What is Schedule P/C in simple terms?



Schedule P/C is a way the government classifies certain career jobs that:

- Help shape or carry out Presidential policies, or
- Involve a high level of confidentiality or policy influence.



These are career, non-political jobs (not Schedule C).



They are still career federal positions with most of the same benefits as other federal jobs.



Only the President can decide which positions are placed in Schedule P/C.

Implementation Timeline



Regulations are published in the Federal Register.



Regulations become effective.



Presidential action places positions into Schedule Policy/Career.



Employees move with their positions.

What stays the same for employees?

Many important things do not change if a position becomes Schedule P/C:

- **Hiring:** Jobs still use merit-based hiring processes (competitive or excepted) as before.
- **Veterans' preference:** Veterans' preference continues to be applied as required.
- **Pay and benefits:** Employees still earn pay, leave, and retirement credit as before. Agencies can still use many pay flexibilities, where allowed.
- **Awards and flexibilities:** Employees may still be considered for most awards.
- **Telework:** Schedule P/C does not automatically change telework; agency policy determines eligibility.
- **Training:** Employees can participate in external training, with limits on academic degree programs.
- **Workplace Protections:** EEO, whistleblower protections, and protections against prohibited personnel practices apply. You must continue to prevent and address discrimination, harassment, and retaliation.
- **Unions and Bargaining Unit:** Being in Schedule P/C does not automatically remove an employee from a union or bargaining unit. Honor all existing Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) provisions unless and until the position is removed from the bargaining unit.
- **Reduction In Force (RIF) Protections:** RIF rules still apply & employees may qualify for severance pay.

What is different in Schedule P/C?

There are some important differences, mainly around accountability and appeals:

- At-will employment.
- How performance issues may be handled.
- Appeal routes and whistleblower protections proceed under agency policies required by Section 6 of E.O. 13957, as amended.
- Rules for new incentives and student loan repayment agreements.

At-will employment

- Schedule P/C employees are at-will, which allows you to act more quickly on serious performance or conduct issues.
- The procedures under chapters 43 and 75 no longer apply, including the requirements to utilize performance improvement plans or provide advance notice of an action.
- You must be fair, follow law and policy, and base decisions on performance, conduct, or job or mission-related reasons.

Performance management and conduct

- Standards of conduct, agency policies, and performance expectations do not change because of Schedule P/C.
- You are still responsible for setting expectations, coaching, and holding employees accountable.
- You must continue to provide guidance to and set clear expectations for Schedule P/C employees' conduct and performance.
- Employees in Schedule P/C are still rated in accordance with the agency appraisal system.
- Disciplinary actions should follow agency procedures.
- Still prohibited from making personnel actions based on race, religion, sex, partisan affiliation, and other prohibited factors.

Employee accountability

- Schedule P/C employees are excluded from the procedures established under 5 USC 4303 and 5 CFR Part 432 when addressing unacceptable performance.
- This means that supervisors and managers will generally not use performance improvement plans (PIPs) to address performance issues.
- Consult HR (and, when appropriate, labor relations and counsel) before taking significant personnel actions affecting Schedule P/C employees.

Appeals and whistleblower protections

- Schedule P/C employees are not covered by some of the usual statutory appeal processes for certain actions.
- However, employees are still protected from prohibited personnel practices (PPPs) and retaliation.
- Agencies are required to set up internal policies to provide protections similar to these protections.
- Employees still have EEO rights and can use external complaint processes for discrimination and harassment issues.

Incentives and student loan repayment

- Employees who already have a recruitment, relocation, or retention (3R) incentive or a student loan repayment agreement usually can continue that agreement when their position moves into Schedule P/C.
- New 3R or student loan repayment agreements for positions already in P/C cannot be initiated.
- Employees may still be eligible for other pay flexibilities and awards, consistent with agency policy.
- Check with HR to learn more about these agreements and specific conditions that apply to your employees.

How to recruit and hire

- Schedule P/C positions continue to be filled using merit-based hiring procedures.
- Positions formerly in the competitive service continue to use competitive hiring procedures.
- Positions formerly filled in other excepted schedules (e.g., Schedule A or B) continue to use those same procedures.
- Veterans' preference is applied as provided under Title 5.
- HR will let transfers and new hires know about Schedule P/C characteristics, and employees must acknowledge receipt.
- Employees serving in Schedule Policy/Career positions remain in the career civil service.

Talking to your employees about Schedule P/C

- Talking to employees about change is easier when you are prepared with the facts.
- Be ready to describe, in plain language, what Schedule P/C is, what it changes, and what it does not change for them.
- Emphasize that their position remains a career, non-political role.
- Many important things stay the same: pay, leave, and benefits continue as before.
- The mythbusters on the following slides address common concerns.

Myths and facts about Schedule P/C (part 1)

Myth: “Schedule P/C means I became a political appointee.”

Fact: Schedule P/C jobs are career positions. Employees remain career federal employees, not political appointees.

Myth: “Because I’m at-will, my supervisor can fire me for any reason.”

Fact: Managers must still follow law and policy and cannot act for illegal or retaliatory reasons. Decisions must be based on performance, conduct, or job or mission-related reasons and be fair.

Myths and facts about Schedule P/C (part 2)

Myth: “I lose all protections if I report a problem.”

Fact: Agencies must still protect employees from retaliation and other prohibited personnel practices through internal agency procedures.

Myth: “Being in Schedule P/C automatically ends my union coverage.”

Fact: Schedule P/C status alone does not automatically remove a position from a bargaining unit; union status depends on duties and labor relations rules.

Where to get help and more information

If you have questions about Schedule P/C, you can:

- Contact your Human Resources office.
- For bargaining-unit and union-related issues, contact labor relations.
- Contact your agency's EEO office for questions about EEO rights and responsibilities.
- For complex or high-risk situations, your HR office or leadership chain may refer you to agency counsel for assistance.