

# Reduction in Force Employee Career Transition Programs (CTAP-RPL-ICTAP)

June 2025



## The Reduction in Force (RIF) Learning Series

RIF Policy Advisory Team

Workforce Policy and Innovation

U.S. Office of Personnel Management

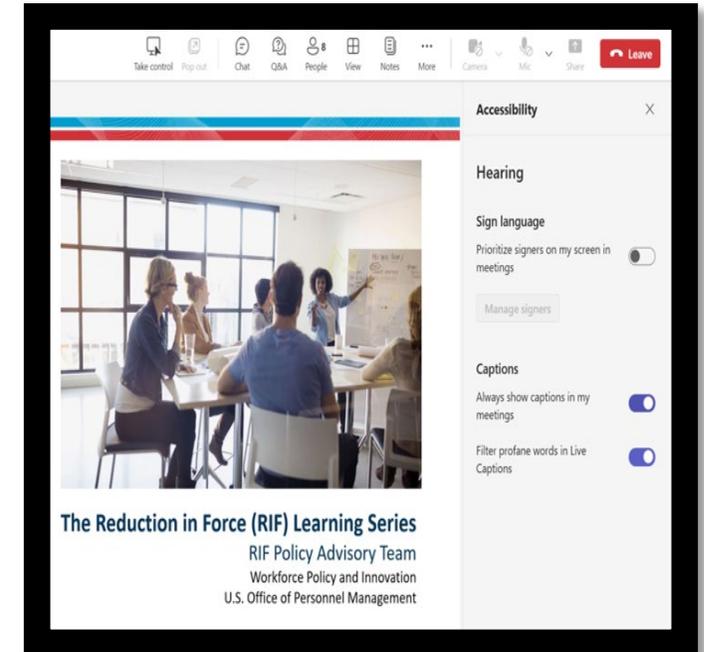
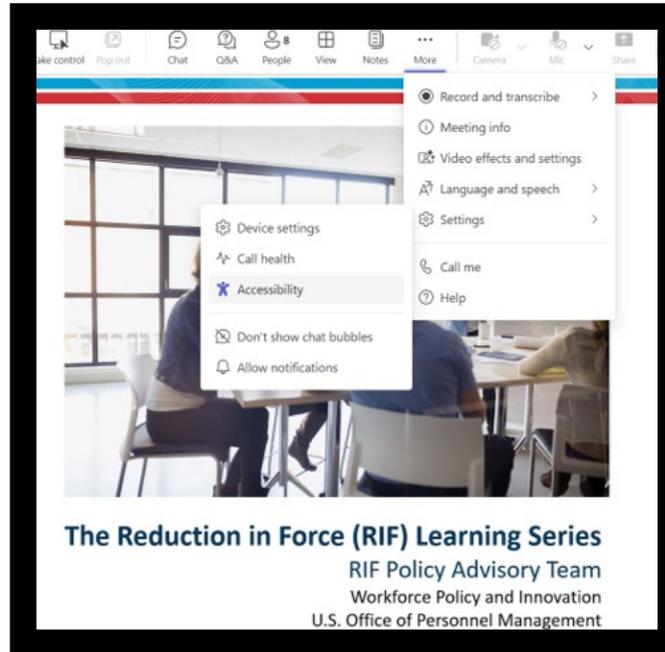
# Enabling Live Captions (Closed Captioning)

A recording of this session with ASL interpreters may be found out <https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/workforce-restructuring/reductions-in-force-rif/#url=Resources-Templates>.

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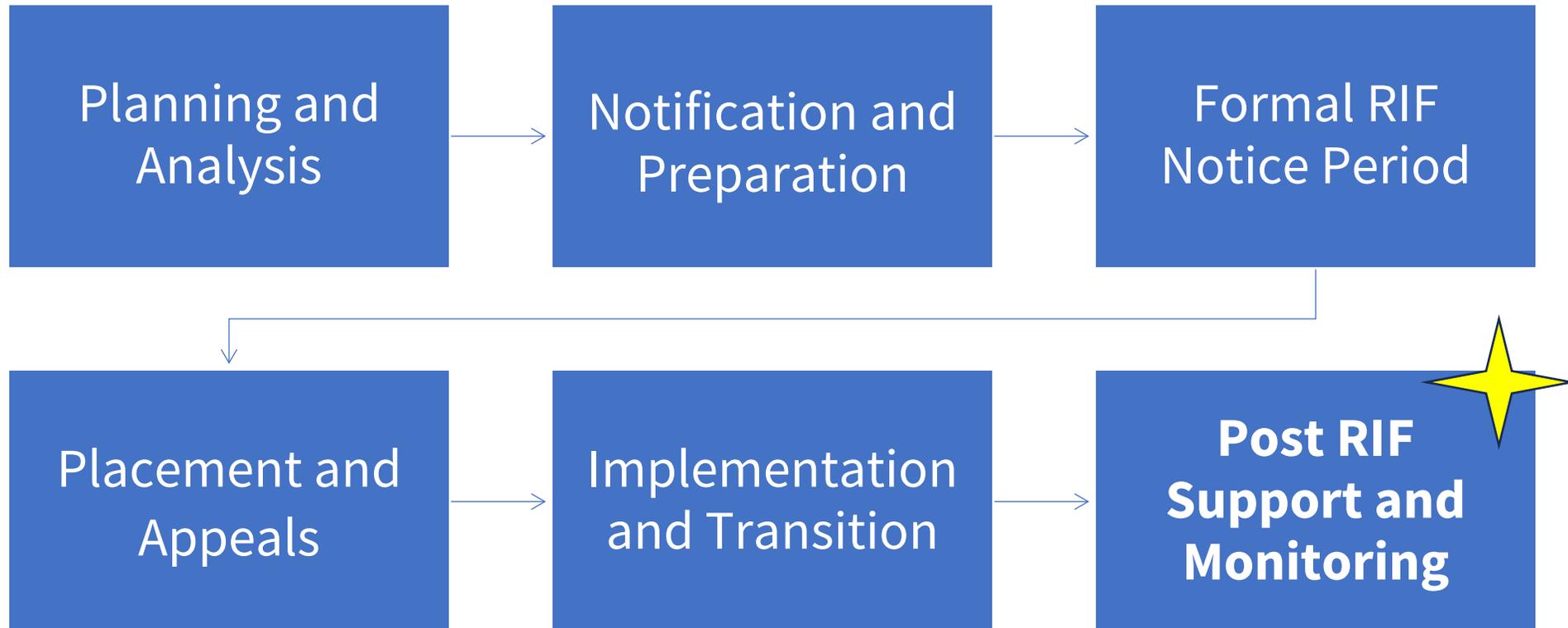
# Housekeeping Items

- A copy of this slide presentation is posted on OPM's [Reductions in Force \(RIF\)](#) Resources and Templates page.
- Ask questions in the Q&A, but please wait until a topic is covered so you're not posting a question that's already been answered.
- We'll respond to as many questions as we can; however, we cannot answer agency-specific or individual-specific questions.
- A recording of this webinar may be found on OPM's [Reductions in Force \(RIF\)](#) Resources and Templates page.
- RIFs are currently in active litigation. Please consult your agency OGC for the latest information before taking any RIF action.

# Agenda

- Overview of RIF Process
- RIF Communications
- Overview of Employee Career Transition Programs
- Agency Career Transition Assistance Plans (CTAP)
- Interagency Career Transition Assistance Plans (ICTAP)
- Reemployment Priority Lists (RPL)
- Priority Reemployment Lists (PRL) (excepted service)
- Eligibility
- Wrap-up: Final Questions & Resources

# RIF Process



# RIF Communications

# RIF Communications

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Consult with Human Resources, General Counsel, Facilities, and Security to develop appropriate procedures for delivering RIF notices to impacted employees.

Ideally, agencies will notify employees impacted by RIF either in-person or through a virtual town hall.

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Coordinate a communication plan to provide timely, accurate, and complete information to all parties on issues related to the organizational change.

- Communication will include agency contacts for e-OPF and SF-1150, instructions to register for RPL, career transition resources, etc.
  - Request employees' personal email – and permission – for future communications (e.g., RIF-related messages).
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Consider designated core hours and how receiving notices outside of these hours may impact employees.

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Develop a plan for how to communicate with employees on leave.

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# Content of Employee RIF Notices

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The action to be taken, the reasons for the action, and its effective date;

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The employee's competitive area, competitive level, tenure group, subgroup, service date, and three most recent ratings of record received during the last 4 years;

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The place where the employee may inspect the regulations and records pertinent to this case;

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The reasons for retaining a lower-standing employee in the same competitive level under 5 CFR [§ 351.607](#) or [§ 351.608](#);

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**Information on reemployment rights and career transition information**, except as permitted by 5 CFR [§ 351.803\(a\)](#);

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Information on applying for unemployment benefits and a severance pay estimate (if eligible);

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The employee's right, as applicable, to appeal to the Merit Systems Protection Board under the provisions of the Board's regulations or to grieve under a negotiated grievance procedure. The agency shall also comply with 5 CFR [§ 1201.21](#).

# Overview of Employee Career Transition Programs

# Displaced and Surplus Employees

Current career or career-conditional competitive service employee in tenure group I or II who holds a GS-15 or below (or equivalent) who has received:

## Displaced

- A specific notice of separation by RIF
- A written notice of proposed removal (including a final decision) by adverse action for declining a directed reassignment, transfer of function, or other similar reason, outside of the employee's current local commuting area

## Surplus

- "Certificate of Expected Separation" (CES)
- An agency certification that you are in a surplus organization or occupation
- A notice that your position is being abolished
- A letter saying you are eligible for discontinued service retirement

# Employee Career Transition Programs

- Priority selection for competitive service positions to employees impacted by reduction in force.
- Access to services and resources to help surplus and displaced employees find other employment.

**Reemployment Priority List (RPL)**

**Agency Career Transition Assistance Plan (CTAP)**

**Interagency Career Transition Plan (ICTAP)**

# Agency Responsibilities

- Human resources offices should have information on their agency's specific services and programs.
  - Agency Career Transition Services
  - CTAP selection priority
  - RPL
- Agency human resources representatives should also be able to answer employee questions about ICTAP selection priority.
- Workforce planning should include consideration of priority placement responsibilities proactively.

# Questions

# Agency Career Transition Assistance Plans (CTAP)

# Components of an Agency Career Transition Assistance Plan



# Agency Career Transition Services



Orientation Session



Skills Assessment/  
Retraining Options



Resume Preparation



Job Search  
Assistance



Counseling



Excused Absence to  
Use Transition  
Resources

# Overview of Selection Priority under CTAP

Occurs **prior** to an employee's Reduction in Force (RIF) separation effective date.

- Begins when the agency issues:
  - RIF notice;
  - Proposed removal for declining a directed reassignment or transfer of function;
  - Or Certificate of Expected Separation
- Expires when employee separates from the agency.

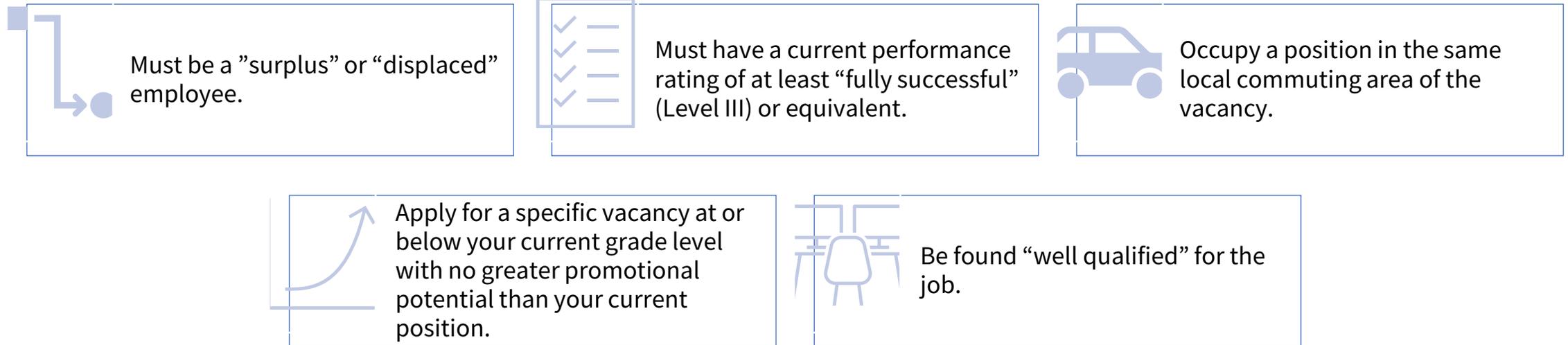


Special Selection Priority includes **all agency components** in the same commuting area.

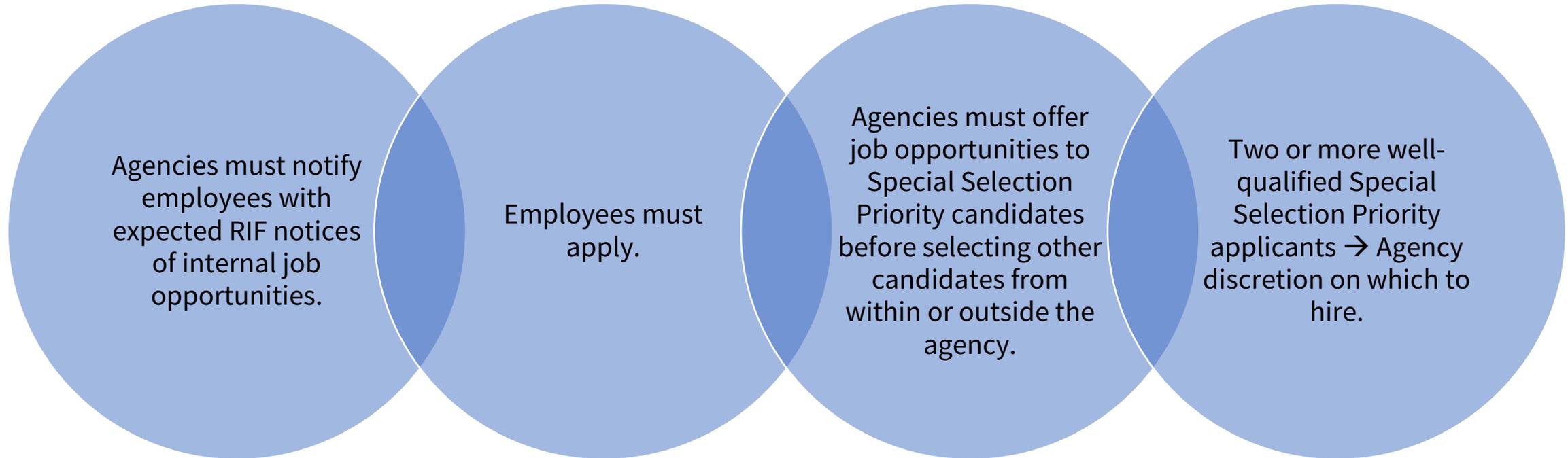


*NOTE: DOD uses the Priority Placement Program to fulfill the special selection priority requirements.*

# Selection Priority under CTAP



# Applying CTAP Selection Priority



# Exceptions to CTAP Placement Priority

An agency is not required to use CTAP placement priority when:

- No well-qualified CTAP eligibles apply
- Temporary appointments and promotions of less than 120 days
- Position changes involving current permanent competitive service employees within the agency (details, reassignments)
- Appointments made under an excepted service appointing authority
- Noncompetitive conversions from the excepted service

Full list of exceptions found in [5 CFR 330.609](#)

# CTAP Special Selection Priority: Example

Agency XYZ – Component B

Vacancy: GS-11-301 (FPL 12); Chicago, IL

Carla	Edward
<b>Agency XYZ – Component A</b>	Agency XYZ – Component C
Received RIF Notice	<b>Accepted Reassignment</b>
GS-12-301	<b>GS-11-301</b>
Exceeds Fully Successful	Fully Successful
Well Qualified	Not Qualified
Chicago, IL	Chicago, IL
<b>Eligible - YES</b>	<b>Eligible - No</b>

# Questions

# Interagency Career Transition Assistance Plans (ICTAP)

# Interagency Career Transition Assistance Plans (ICTAP)



Occurs **prior to and after** an employee's RIF separation effective date.

- Begins when an employee receives a RIF Notice or formal notice of proposed separation for declining a directed reassignment or transfer of function



Selection priority for jobs at the same or lower grade in **other agencies** in the same commuting area.

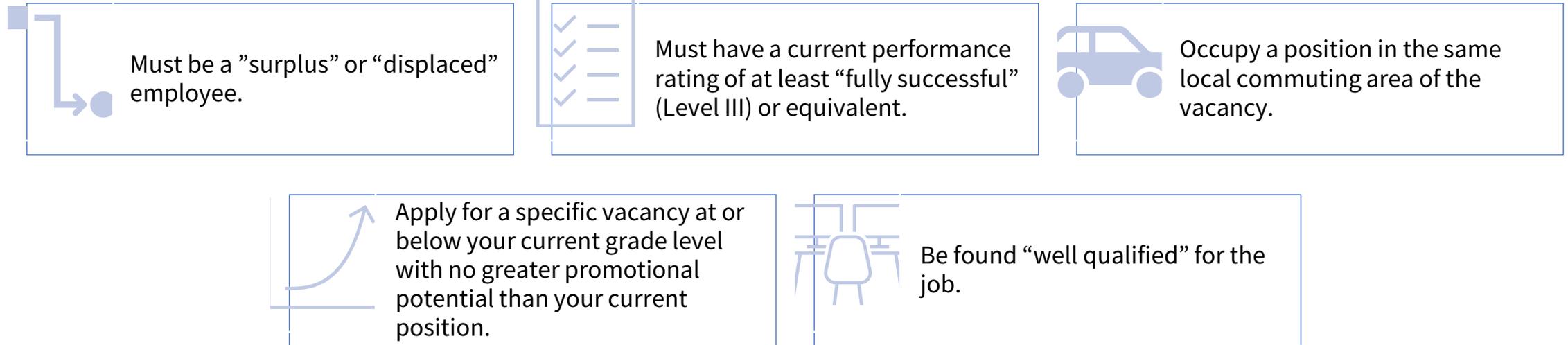


Agencies must give ICTAP eligibles priority before filling a competitive service position through competitive examining, noncompetitive appointment, transfer, or reinstatement.



ICTAP eligibility lasts for 1 year after RIF separation.

# ICTAP Eligibility



# ICTAP Selection Priority

To receive selection priority in other agencies through the ICTAP, your current or last position must be/have been career (tenure group I) or career-conditional (tenure group II) in the competitive service, **and** you must fall under one of these categories:

## RIF

You have been (or are being) involuntarily separated from an Executive branch agency through reduction in force

## Transfer of Function/Directed Reassignment

You have been (or are being) separated under adverse action procedures because you declined a transfer of function or directed reassignment to another local commuting area

## Injury Compensation

Separated due to work-related injury, your worker's compensation benefits have stopped because you recovered, and your former agency is unable to place you through its RPL (see Section 3 B of this Guide)

## Disability Annuitant

Retired with a disability and your annuity has been /will be terminated because OPM considers you recovered

## RIF Retired

Received a RIF separation notice and elected either optional retirement on the RIF effective date, or discontinued service retirement on or before the RIF date

## Military/National Guard Technician

Military Reserve or National Guard Technician and now receive a special OPM disability retirement annuity

# How ICTAP Works

- Agencies post vacancies on USAJOBS.
  - Vacancies can be listed as ICTAP only, or agencies can create a custom announcement that is only accessible through a designated link.
  - ICTAP eligibles may apply to regular USAJOBS announcements.
- Eligible employees must apply and complete appropriate assessments.
- If **well-qualified**, eligible applicants must be selected.
  - Two or more well-qualified ICTAP applicants → Agency discretion on which to hire.

# ICTAP Example

Agency XYZ – Component B

Vacancy: GS-11-2210 (FPL 12); Philadelphia, PA

<b>Samantha</b>	<b>William</b>
<b>Agency ABC</b>	Agency XYZ – Component A
Received RIF Notice	Received RIF Notice
GS-12-2210	GS-12-1550
Exceeds Fully Successful	Exceeds Fully Successful
Well Qualified	<b>Not Qualified</b>
Philadelphia, PA	Philadelphia, PA
<b>Eligible - YES</b>	<b>Eligible - No</b>

# Exceptions to ICTAP Placement Priority

An agency is not required to use ICTAP placement priority when:

- Filling a vacancy through RPL
- Position changes involving current permanent competitive service employees within the agency
- Appointment of 10-point veteran preference eligible through appropriate appointing authorities
- Appointments limited to 120 days of fewer, including all extensions
- Appointments made under an excepted service appointing authority
- Noncompetitive conversions

Full list of exceptions in [5 CFR 330.707](#)

# Questions

# Employee Career Transition Program Eligibility

# Eligibility for CTAP and ICTAP

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Employees are eligible for priority selection if they are in the **competitive service**, and:

Received official notice of:

- Reduction in Force separation;
  - Proposed removal for declining a directed reassignment or transfer of function; or
  - Certificate of Expected Separation;
- 

CTAP and ICTAP: At least **Fully Successful** rating (Level 3) or equivalent

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Apply for a vacancy at or below current grade level with no greater promotion potential than current position;

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Determined to be **well-qualified** for the position for CTAP/ICTAP;

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Located in the same commuting area as the abolished position.

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# Eligibility for CTAP/ICTAP

- **Well-Qualified** means the CTAP/ICTAP eligible:
  - Meets all the minimum qualification standards and eligibility requirements; and
  - Possesses skills that clearly exceed the minimum qualification requirements for the position.
- Job announcements must clearly define the qualification standards and eligibility requirements for the position
  - Including defining well-qualified for CTAP/ICTAP purposes, and
  - Any medical qualifications, suitability, and minimum educational and experience requirements.
- If an CTAP/ICTAP application is determined not well-qualified, then the agency must conduct a second review of the application.

# Questions

# Reemployment Priority Lists (RPL)

# Overview of Reemployment Priority List (RPL)



RPL helps eligible former federal employees regain employment after separation due to reduction in force (RIF) or compensable injury.



Applies to career or career-conditional competitive service employees who were separated involuntarily and meet registration criteria.



Individuals must register within set timeframes (before separation or within 30 days of recovery) and specify desired positions and locations.



Agencies must check and give priority to RPL registrants before hiring external candidates for similar jobs in the same commuting area.



RPL status typically lasts up to 2 years unless the registrant declines a valid job offer or becomes otherwise ineligible.

# Reemployment Priority List (RPL)



Applies to competitive service employees.



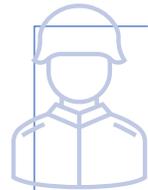
Occurs **after** an impacted employee's separation effective date.



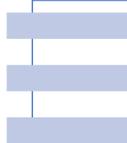
Employees separated through reduction in force must **register** for their agency's RPL on or before the RIF separation.



All agency components in the commuting area are responsible for giving priority consideration to RPL registrants.



Selections may occur in retention standing order or based on rating and ranking including veterans' preference.



RPL eligibility lasts for 2 years after RIF separation, or when a RPL eligible declines a job offer.



Eligibility **ends** when placed in a career, career-conditional or excepted position without time limit at any grade or pay level in the agency.

# Applying RPL Placement Priority

- Required when filling permanent and time-limited positions in the competitive service
- RPL applicants have priority placement over non-RPL applicants unless the action is an exception in [§ 330.211](#)
- An agency must document that there are no RPL placement priority candidates available before offering appointment to someone not on the RPL

# RPL Example

Agency XYZ – Component B

Vacancy: GS-11-1102 (FPL 12); Denver, CO

Robert	Veronica
<b>Agency XYZ – Component A</b>	Agency XYZ – Component A
RIF Separated	RIF Separated
GS-12-1102	GS-12-342
RPL Registered	RPL Registered
Well Qualified	<b>Not Qualified</b>
Denver, CO	Denver, CO
<b>Eligible - YES</b>	<b>Eligible - No</b>

# Exceptions to RPL Placement Priority

An agency is not required to use RPL placement priority when:

- Filling a vacancy through detail or position change
- Appointments when current/former employees are exercising:
  - restoration rights based on return from military service or recovery from a compensable injury or disability within 1 year; or
  - restoration rights based on other statutory or regulatory reemployment rights
- Non-competitive conversions of employees under authorities such as VRA, 30% or more disabled veterans, and appointments under 5 CFR 213
- Extensions of temporary or term appointments
- Appointments under an excepted service appointing authority

# Questions

# Priority Reemployment Lists (PRL)

# Priority Reemployment List (PRL) (1 of 2)

- Applies to excepted service employees.
- Required for preference eligibles who have been furloughed or separated from a continuing appointment without delinquency or misconduct and applies for reemployment.
- Inclusion of non-preference eligibles who have been furloughed or separated from a continuing appointment without delinquency or misconduct is optional at the agency's discretion.
- Occurs **after** an impacted employee's separation effective date.
- Selection priority for excepted service jobs at the same or lower grade in the same commuting area.

# Priority Reemployment List (PRL) (2 of 2)



Eligible employees separated through reduction in force must **register** for their agency's PRL on or before the separation date or within 30 days after the date of injury, compensation benefits stops; or the Department of Labor denies an appeal for continuation of injury compensation benefits in accordance with 5 CFR §353.301(b).

All agency components in the commuting area are responsible for giving priority consideration to PRL registrants.

Veterans' preference still applies.

PRL eligibility lasts for 2 years after RIF separation, or when a PRL eligible declines a job offer. An agency may provide eligibility for a longer period.

# How PRL works

- Agency enters eligible employees on the PRL
- Agency must consider employees on the PRL before it can refer other candidates
- Candidates on the PRL are listed in veterans' preference order
- An agency may make an exception to choosing from the PRL when necessary to obtain an employee for the position without undue interruption

# Questions

# Program Summary

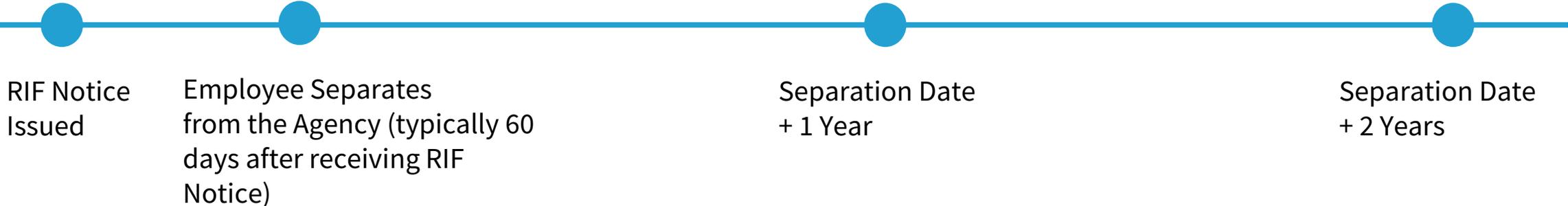
# Order of Selection

- Selection priority order when filling vacancies:
  - CTAP → RPL → ICTAP → All other external candidates

CTAP Priority Selection Eligibility

RPL Priority Selection Eligibility begins with Registration

ICTAP Priority Selection Eligibility



# Eligibility for RPL, CTAP, ICTAP Comparison

Criteria	RPL	CTAP	ICTAP
Program Type	Reemployment list for former employees	Intra-agency placement program	Inter-agency placement program
Eligibility Group	Former (or current) agency employees involuntarily separated	Current agency employees in surplus positions	Former federal employees separated due to RIF or similar action
Current Federal Employee	Yes (eligibility continues for 2 years after separation)	Yes	No
Separation Notice Required	Yes (or Certification of Expected Separation)	Yes (or Certification of Expected Separation)	Yes
Agency Coverage	Agency-specific	Agency-specific	Applies across all federal agencies
Local Commuting Area Restriction	Yes	Yes	Yes

# Eligibility for RPL, CTAP, ICTAP Comparison – Cont’d

Criteria	RPL	CTAP	ICTAP
Performance Rating Requirement	Must be “Fully Successful” or higher	Must be “Fully Successful” or higher	Must be “Fully Successful” or equivalent
Priority Placement	Yes (if registered and qualified)	Yes (must be “well-qualified”)	Yes (must be “well-qualified”)
Vacancy Announcement Requirement	Not required	Required	Required
Definition of “Well-Qualified”	Not used	Yes, agency-defined	Yes, agency-defined
Appeals Rights/Notice	Limited	Yes – if not selected	Yes – if not selected

# Online Resources for Agencies

- RIF law - [5 U.S.C. 3501 – 3504](#)
- RIF regulations - [5 CFR part 351](#)
- RPL-CTAP-ICTAP regulations – [5 CFR part 330](#)
- PRL regulations – [5 CFR 302.303](#)
- [Reductions in Force \(RIF\)](#) pages on OPM's website - various policy guides, including new, updated resources and templates and webinar recordings of OPM's RIF Learning Series
- [OPM Workforce Reshaping Operations Handbook](#)
  - [Appendices to the OPM Workforce Reshaping Operations Handbook](#)
  - [OPM Workforce Reshaping – Supporting the Workforce](#)
- [The Employee's Guide to Career Transition](#)
- [OPM Delegated Examining Operations Handbook](#)

# Questions

# Thank You

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**Please take a moment to complete a short survey** to provide your feedback on today's session:

<https://surveys.opm.gov/se/5B5534D430AD87A9>



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