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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
U. S. Army Corps of Engineers
Washington, D. C. 20314-1000

ER 690-1-955

Regulation
No. 690-1-955

20 June 1997

Civilian Personnel
CORPS OF ENGINEERS REAL ESTATE CAREER PROGRAM

1. Purpose.

a. This regulation provides policies, responsibilities, and requirements for the administration and management of the Corps of Engineers Real Estate Career Program for realty specialists and appraisers, as well as requirements for the Real Estate Career Intern Program.

b. Career referral procedures as well as guidance for completing the registration forms and referral requests are included in EP 690-1-810, Corps of Engineers Real Estate Career Program Handbook.

c. EP 690-1-810 also provides the Real Estate Training, Education, and Development System (RETEDS) for realty specialists and appraisers along with suggested training plans.

2. Applicability. This regulation applies to HQUSACE, major subordinate commands (MSC), districts, and field operating activities having real estate responsibilities.

3. References.

- a. OPM Qualification Standards Handbook
- b. DOD 1400.20-1-M
- c. AR 690-335-1
- d. AR 690-400
- e. AR 690-950
- f. ER 350-1-420
- g. EP 690-1-810

4. Distribution. This regulation is approved for public release. Distribution is unlimited.

This regulation supersedes ER 690-1-955, 30 September 1987

5. Program Coverage.

a. The Real Estate Career Program covers positions with the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers in Series 1170, Realty Specialist or Realty Officer, and Series 1171, Appraiser. Employees not currently serving in real estate positions in Series 1170 or 1171 but otherwise qualified, including employees in the excepted service who possess personal competitive status, may participate on a voluntary basis.

b. Non-Corps Federal employees, former employees with reinstatement eligibility to the competitive service, and non-status applicants for Corps of Engineers GS 1170 and 1171 positions at grades 12 through 15 may be considered under outreach procedures outlined in paragraphs 14d, e, f, and g.

c. This regulation does not cover positions or employees in the Senior Executive Service.

d. AR 690-950 sets forth Department of the Army general policy and requirements for the administration and management of Army civilian career programs. Any change in that regulation will have application to the Corps of Engineers Real Estate Career Program.

e. Recruitment, development, assignment, and promotion opportunities at all grade levels will be provided entirely on the basis of individual fitness and merit, without regard to race, religion, color, lawful political or other affiliation, marital status, sex, age, national origin, or handicap.

6. General. The real estate mission in the Corps of Engineers involves four major functional areas: acquisition, appraisal, management and disposal, and planning and control of real property for the Department of the Army, the Department of the Air Force, and for other agencies as assigned. The functions are defined as follows:

a. Acquisition. The acquisition by purchase, lease, donation, exchange, or condemnation of real property and interests therein necessary to the mission assigned. Assisting in assessing land credits and title matters with local sponsors under Project Cooperation Agreements. Participates in the negotiation, preparation, and administration of relocation contracts. Responsible for the administration of Public Law 91-646.

b. Appraisal. The preparation and defense of valuation estimates relied upon by the Corps of Engineers in the acquisition, management, and disposal of real property, and for assisting in assessing land credits on cost-shared projects. Includes detailed real estate estimates utilized in planning documents supporting testimony before congressional committees, and for economic, financial and market analysis, and other such documents.

c. Management and Disposal. The management and disposal of real property under the jurisdiction of the organization. Management includes the negotiation, preparation, and administration of outleases, easements, licenses, permits,

concession leases, and agreements by which others utilize lands under the administrative jurisdiction of the organization. Also includes surveys and inspections pursuant to law, executive order, or regulation designed to determine the level of utilization being made. Responsible for managing and implementing actions for the resolution of encroachments. Responsible for disposal of excess real property. May also include the disposal and utilization of base closure real property. May also include administration of applications under the Homeowners Assistance Program and the disposal of property acquired under that program.

d. Planning and Control. The preparation of real estate planning documents, real estate budgets and budgetary input to the organization's budget, manpower estimates for real estate projects, the preparation and accuracy of real estate maps and legal descriptions, the preparation and submission of recurring real estate status reports, the accountability of real property under the jurisdiction of the organization, and the preparation of real estate audits of projects. Serves as the focal point and repository of permanent land records, historical files, statistical data, and map records of real estate transactions for projects within the jurisdiction of the organization.

7. Objectives. The Real Estate Career Program is designed to meet current and future staffing requirements through:

a. Planned Intake. The availability of highly qualified candidates for future technical and managerial positions requires a commitment from commanders, program managers, and supervisors in terms of available resources.

b. Career Appraisal. Real estate careerists will be rated against specific knowledge, skills, and abilities determined through job analysis to be essential for satisfactory performance in the position.

c. Career Referral. HQUSACE will establish and maintain an inventory of career records for real estate employees, and other eligible employees, at grade 11 and above interested in and qualified for referral to vacancies at grades 12 through 15 in Series 1170 and 1171. Requests for referral will be submitted in accordance with the procedures outlined in EP 690-1-810.

d. Career Development. A Master Intern Training Plan for real estate interns is provided (see paragraph 12). Progression in the career field beyond the intern level may be limited to one occupational area or may include experience in all four functional areas. A Master Training Plan for the further development of real estate careerists beyond the intern stage is included in the RETEDS in EP 690-1-810.

8. Responsibilities.

a. Local commanders are responsible for providing the necessary support to accomplish the objectives of this career program, subject to funding. This includes the necessary funding for travel, per diem, and tuition for their real estate employees to fulfill the recommended training specified in Appendix A of this regulation and in the RETEDS in EP 690-1-810.

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b. The Director of Human Resources, HQUSACE, is responsible for convening the Corps-wide real estate rating panels and for the issuance of referral lists to fill position vacancies at grades 12 through 15 in Series 1170 and 1171.

c. Chiefs of Real Estate at districts are responsible for assuring that interns are receiving training in accordance with the Master Intern Training Plan (Appendix A), and that other careerists are afforded training and developmental assignments as required. Guidance on individual development plans and developmental assignments is in ER 350-1-420. The Real Estate Career Program Master Training Plan for real estate careerists beyond the intern stage is provided in the RETEDS in EP 690-1-810. As activity career program managers, Chiefs of Real Estate are responsible for career program manager duties shown in paragraph 1-22 of AR 690-950.

d. Employees. Employees in positions covered by this career program will work with supervisors in preparing objectives and strive to improve knowledges, skills, and abilities through self development and training.

9. Registration and Referral.

a. Registration in the career program is a prerequisite for referral to vacancies in Series 1170 or 1171 at grades 12 through 15. Registration is accomplished by completion and submission of ENG Form 4897-R, Real Estate Career Program Career Appraisal; DA Form 2302-R, Civilian Career Program Qualification Record; and DA Form 4338-R, Civilian Career Program Availability Statement. Instructions for completing and processing the forms are contained in EP 690-1-810.

b. Referral lists to be used in filling vacant positions in Series 1170 and 1171 at grades 12 through 15 will be issued by HQUSACE (CEHR-C). A reasonable number of best qualified candidates for promotion will be referred to the selecting official. A separate group of candidates who have indicated interest in reassignment or change to lower grade may also be referred.

c. Instructions for requesting and processing referral lists are contained in EP 690-1-810.

10. Selection.

a. Selecting officials may choose any candidate on the competitive referral list. When selection is from a group of competitive promotion candidates, selecting officials must write the reason(s) for their selections. These reasons must be based on one or more legitimate, job related reasons as to why the selectee may be expected to perform the job most successfully.

b. Management is not required to select from the candidates on the referral list. Management may fill a position through transfer, reassignment, reinstatement, or selection from an OPM register, except as limited in paragraph 10e below.

c. Selecting officials having referral lists for the position of Chief of Real Estate will consult with the Director of Real Estate, HQUSACE, before a final selection is made.

d. All candidates will be notified by the local Civilian Personnel Advisory Center (CPAC) of selection/nonselection and of the name of the selected employee.

e. Selecting officials will not transfer, reassign, reinstate, or select from an OPM register any individual to the position of Chief of Real Estate without first consulting with the Director of Real Estate, HQUSACE.

11. Training and Development. The objective of training and development is to develop employees who will acquire a broad general knowledge of Army operations, a specific knowledge of real estate functions, and technical competence in specialized real estate occupational areas. Guidelines for training and development for real estate careerists beyond the intern stage are set forth in the RETEDS in EP 690-1-810.

12. Career Intern Program.

a. The Real Estate Career Intern Program is designed to provide a cadre of well-trained, highly-qualified employees to meet future staffing needs of the Corps' real estate mission, and to provide employees with the knowledges, skills, and abilities required to advance to and successfully perform at the journeyman and above grade levels. To assure adequacy and consistency of intern training, a Master Intern Training Plan (MITP) has been developed (Appendix A). The plan consists of specific rotational assignments for pre-determined periods of time, and is a combination of on-the-job, off-the-job, and formal classroom training. This MITP is mandatory for all real estate interns.

b. Costs supporting real estate interns are funded by the local district.

c. The MITP covers a two-year period, dependent upon the entry grade of the intern. Most interns are selected at the GS-5 level. Some individuals may qualify for GS-7 based on academic preparation and/or experience. Employees entering the program at either GS-5 or GS-7 will be afforded at least 16 months of rotational assignments in the functional areas of real estate. A formal training plan substantially in accord with the outline furnished at Appendix A will be established and maintained for each intern. Upon the successful completion of the first 12 months of the training plan, employees hired at either GS-5 or GS-7 may be considered eligible for promotion to the respective GS-7 or GS-9 level.

d. Following successful completion of the 16-month rotational period, interns are to indicate a functional preference for assignment; however, placement is determined based upon local organizational needs. Management should accommodate employee desires where possible. The intern will then complete his or her internship in the assigned functional area or, at the discretion of the

Chief of Real Estate, may continue to participate in rotational assignments. However, if the intern is to be assigned to the appraisal function, the remaining eight months of internship must be spent in the appraisal function. After successful completion of the training plan, the intern may once again be considered eligible for promotion.

e. Because interns are considered to be in an official training status throughout the internship, their performance must be evaluated more frequently than on an annual basis in accordance with the Total Army Performance Evaluation System (TAPES). This appraisal serves to meet the requirement for probationary appraisal after eight months of employment as required by AR 690-400, Chapter 430.3. Supervisors must certify retention or removal of interns serving a probationary period during the ninth month of employment. The intern's immediate supervisor will serve as the rating supervisor. The Chief of Real Estate will serve as the approving official, and may also be the reviewer.

f. Supervisors will establish performance expectations to reflect the training to be accomplished for each rating period. Requirements will be provided to the intern at the beginning of the rating period, and will be based on the MITP.

g. Performance that fails to meet set expectations is unacceptable. Corrective action in the form of either delay in the rotation or removal is required. Any rotation delay impacts on eligibility for promotion and permanent assignment. If a fair or unsuccessful performance rating is contemplated, supervisors should seek guidance from the local CPAC.

13. Functional Trainees.

a. Local conditions such as manpower restraints, specific organizational needs, and pending mission changes may dictate consideration of hiring functional trainees. Functional trainees are hired to train for a specific function in the real estate organization. They are not considered to be career interns and therefore are not subject to the intern rotation requirements established by this regulation, nor are they eligible for noncompetitive promotion to the target grade unless locally justified and included in the local merit promotion announcement.

b. Authority to approve the appointment of functional trainees instead of career interns is vested in the Chief of Real Estate for the respective district after consultation with the Chief of Real Estate in the division office.

14. Merit Placement and Outside Recruitment.

a. Interns.

(1) The primary source for recruiting interns into the real estate career field will be from accredited colleges and universities throughout the United

States. The minimum qualifications for evaluating real estate interns will be those specified by the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) for the grade and class of work to be performed. Applicants with degrees or major studies in the following areas are considered desirable for assignment at intern level in the real estate career field:

- Real Estate
- Agricultural majors (i.e., landscape architecture)
- Business Administration
- Finance
- Forestry
- Natural Resources Management
- Engineering majors (i.e., environmental, civil, etc)
- General Economics
- Business Economics
- Law

(2) Interns will normally enter the program at grade GS-5. However, applicants who qualify at GS-7 may be appointed at that grade.

(3) The area of consideration to be used in filling intern positions will vary dependent upon the needs of a particular organization, local labor market conditions, and local affirmative action and Federal equal opportunity recruiting plans. In-house candidates, if considered, will be evaluated under procedures established by the local merit promotion plan.

b. Technical Specialists (GS-9 and GS-11). Recruitment for positions above the intern level and below the HQUSACE mandatory referral level may be accomplished through local merit promotion procedures, reassignment, use of OPM registers and/or outreach procedures. Authority to determine the area of consideration is delegated to local commanders. Evaluation of candidates for these positions must be based on a job analysis of the position to be filled and, as a minimum, must comply with local merit promotion plans.

c. Senior Level Positions. Senior level positions, grades 12 through 15 in Series 1170 and 1171, will be filled by use of the Real Estate Career Program referral inventory maintained by HQUSACE, except as authorized in paragraphs 15, 16, and 17.

d. Local commanders are authorized and encouraged to pursue the recruitment of well-qualified minorities and women at all grade levels. Local announcements for positions at the mandatory referral level issued to accomplish this outreach must contain a notation to the effect that current employees of the Corps of Engineers will be considered under the procedures established by this regulation.

e. Employees of the Department of the Army not currently serving in positions covered by the USACE Real Estate Career Program may register in the

inventory on a voluntary basis. Registration and appraisal procedures are outlined in EP 690-1-810.

f. Non-Army status applicants being considered for positions higher than the grade last held must be competitively considered. For this purpose, external status applicants must register in the USACE Real Estate Career Program as directed by paragraph 9a. Registration forms received in response to specific outreach announcements from these applicants for position vacancies at the mandatory referral level will be forwarded to HQUSACE (CEHR-C), WASH DC 20314-1000, and, for each outside status applicant, a copy of the letter prepared at the local level which provided the supplemental instructions to the applicant. Applicants will be instructed to return completed documents to CEHR-C within two weeks. Applicants should be further advised that failure to return the documents within the prescribed time will result in no further consideration.

g. Candidates eligible for consideration from an OPM register will not be ranked with career program registrants and may be appointed without requesting a career referral list or competition with current Federal employees. See paragraph 10e regarding selection of candidates for the position of Chief of Real Estate.

15. Exceptions to Competitive Procedures at Mandatory Referral Levels.

a. Competitive procedures will not apply to the following:

(1) Promotion of a qualified employee resulting from the upgrading of an occupied position (without any major change in duties and responsibilities) because of:

- (a) issuance of a new classification standard, or
- (b) an initial classification error.

(2) Promotion of a qualified employee because of a classification change based on unique qualifications and ability of the employee (See OPM Introduction to the Position Classification Standards, Section III, paragraph k).

(3) Reassignment of a qualified employee resulting from the downgrading of an occupied position because of:

- (a) issuance of a new classification standard, or
- (b) an initial classification error.

(4) A position change made under the reduction-in-force (RIF) regulations.

(5) Promotion resulting from special consideration for repromotion. (See paragraph 16)

(6) Promotion after failure to receive proper consideration (priority consideration). (See paragraph 17)

b. Referral procedures normally will not apply to the actions below if the individuals are otherwise qualified for the position. The activity CPAC, in consultation with the Chief of Real Estate, may make a decision to apply local competitive procedures to these actions.

(1) Details to higher grade positions for 120 days or less.

(2) Temporary promotions for 120 days or less.

(3) Position changes to avoid adverse actions under RIF procedures, transfer of function (TOF) procedures, or discontinuance of activities. (NOTE: Assignments to positions of higher grade or to positions with known promotion potential are not included under this provision).

(4) Promotion of an employee when his or her position is reclassified to a higher grade because of added duties and responsibilities. However, in these cases, the conditions below apply:

(a) There are no other employees in the organization, supervised by the selecting official, performing duties similar to the duties of the position to which new duties and responsibilities are to be added.

(b) The employee continues to perform the same basic function while the duties of the former position are administratively absorbed into the new position.

(c) The addition of the duties and responsibilities does not adversely affect another occupied position, such as abolishing the position or reducing its known promotion potential.

(5) Assignment from a position having known promotion potential to a position having no higher potential.

c. Competitive procedures need not apply to the actions listed below:

(1) A reassignment or a change to lower grade (CLG) to a position with no known promotional potential.

(2) Promotion without current competition when an employee was selected earlier for a position classified at a lower grade for recruitment purposes, provided:

(a) the area of consideration for recruitment at the lower grade was at least as broad as the HQUSACE mandatory referral level for recruitment at the full performance level;

(b) the promotion potential was made known to all potential applicants; and,

(c) the recruitment plan was documented to show the intended career ladder.

16. Special Consideration for Repromotion at Mandatory Referral Levels.

a. Selecting officials will give special consideration for repromotion to eligible qualified employees before choosing to fill vacancies by competition.

b. Employees due special repromotion consideration are referred to the selecting official before those due priority consideration. (See paragraph 17).

c. Placement of eligible qualified employees at the employing activity may take precedence for DOD Priority Placement Program registrants in priority status 1, 2, or 3. (See DOD 1400.20-1-M)

d. Eligibility.

(1) Special consideration for repromotion will be given to employees who have been involuntarily placed in lower grade positions without personal cause and not at their request. Acceptance of a lower grade position in place of RIF, TOF, or demotion because of classification error is not demotion at employee's request. Involuntary placement at a lower grade may be caused by:

(a) RIF;

(b) correction of a classified error;

(c) return from overseas; (See paragraph (4) below);

(d) declination of reassignment outside the commuting area under transfer of function; or

(e) handicapping condition.

(2) Candidates must be a current DA employees, be in the area of consideration for the position, and be qualified for the position to be eligible for special consideration for repromotion.

(3) If the employee is qualified and interested, special consideration must be given for positions:

- (a) at or below the grade from which demoted,
 - (b) in the pay group or schedule that covered the employee before placement in the lower grade position.
- (4) Employees who have returned from an overseas area are eligible if they are qualified for the position and if they have:
- (a) been placed in a lower grade position by exercising their reemployment rights;
 - (b) not been offered another position in the Continental United States (CONUS) that would have retained their grade.
 - (c) completed an overseas assignment under terms of the present agreement; and
 - (d) not returned to CONUS early for personal reasons.
- (5) Eligibility will not be granted to employees demoted to correct a procedural, regulatory, or program violation.
- (6) Employees will not be given special repromotion consideration for positions that offer promotion potential beyond the grade held at demotion.
- (7) An employee who has been involuntarily reduced in grade at any time and who is receiving pay, grade, or salary retention benefits will be granted repromotion consideration for either:
- (a) two years from the date of the CLG, or
 - (b) until retention benefits cease; whichever period of time is longer.
- (8) An employee who has been involuntarily reduced in grade on or after 15 January 1981 and who is not receiving pay, grade, or salary retention benefits will be granted repromotion consideration for a two-year period following the CLG.
- (9) If an employee declines a valid job offer, repromotion consideration will end at and below the grade level of the position declined.
- (10) A valid job offer is a full-time continuing position at the grade level for which the employee has expressed interest and availability. Valid job offers do not include offers such as:
- (a) an offer that, in the opinion of the employee's servicing CPAC, would create an unreasonable difference in working conditions such as excessive travel, hazardous work, or extreme physical requirements;

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(b) an offer of a position to which another person has reemployment or return rights;

(c) an offer of a position at any activity that has been identified for closure, major RIF, or relocation; or

(d) an offer that requires a mobility agreement when the employee is not serving under a mobility agreement.

e. Procedures. Employees who have been involuntarily placed in lower grade positions must request special consideration for repromotion. Requests will be made using DA Form 4343-R, Civilian Career Program Repromotion Registration. (See Appendix I, AR 690-950 for form and instructions).

17. Priority Consideration.

a. Priority consideration, as defined by AR 690-950, will be given to an employee if the employee was qualified for the position and was not properly considered in a previous competitive promotion action. For example, the employee's name was not referred and should have been, or the selecting official did not receive accurate information from the referral activity on the candidate, etc. These employees will be considered for the next appropriate vacancy before the competitive list is referred to the selecting official. An employee is due one priority consideration for each time he or she failed to receive proper consideration.

b. An appropriate vacancy is one for which the employee is considered well qualified and for which he or she has declared geographic mobility.

c. An employee's promotion by means other than priority consideration to the grade for which he or she failed to receive proper promotion consideration eliminates the need to grant the individual further priority consideration for promotion.

d. Employees eligible for priority consideration may submit updated career program registration forms when new rating panels are announced.

FOR THE COMMANDER:



1 Appendix
APP A, Master Intern Training Plan

OTIS WILLIAMS
Colonel, Corps of Engineers
Chief of Staff