

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE

Interim Procedures

ADVANCED STEP PLACEMENT for INITIAL APPOINTMENTS UPON MOVEMENT OF WORK FROM THE EXEMPT SERVICE TO THE CLASSIFIED OR PARTIALLY EXEMPT SERVICE

ADVANCED STEP PLACEMENT-INITIAL APPOINTMENT UPON MOVEMENT OF WORK FROM THE EXEMPT SERVICE TO THE CLASSIFIED OR PARTIALLY EXEMPT SERVICE

A. Purpose

The purpose of this Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) is to provide guidelines and required procedures to departments for requesting advanced step placement when two conditions are met; 1) the work performed by an individual is transferred from the exempt service to the classified or partially exempt service and, 2) the individual who performed the work at the time it was transferred is appointed through a competitive hiring process to perform that same work in the classified or partially exempt service.

Advanced step placement is an exception to the normal starting rate of pay in a salary range for new employees. The purpose of allowing for advanced step placement under these conditions is to give management flexibility in recognizing the work performed by individuals in the exempt service when that work is moved to the classified or partially exempt service and the same individual is appointed to perform that work through a competitive hire process.

Advanced step placement is an exception to the merit principle and is strictly controlled in order to assure consistency in the pay plan providing like pay for like work. Approval of advanced step placement must be based on exceptional qualifications as demonstrated by creditable state service as described elsewhere in this SOP.

In order to qualify for advanced step consideration under the provisions of this SOP, individuals must move directly from the exempt service to the classified or partially exempt service, with no break in overall state service. Placement into the classified or partially exempt service must be made through a competitive hire process and the individual must be appointed to perform the same work that he or she was performing in the exempt service.

B. Scope

The requirements in this SOP apply in all cases where exceptional qualifications of the applicant, as demonstrated by creditable state service, exist. Advanced step placement under the provisions of this SOP is limited to initial appointment in the classified or partially exempt service. Step placement based on the provisions of this SOP may not be combined with advanced step placement as defined in SOP 9-I – Advanced Step Placement – Initial Appointment. No advanced step hire may be authorized for nonpermanent employees unless the request is thoroughly documented and found to be an extremely compelling argument (Personnel Memorandum 90-8).

For purposes of this SOP, "initial appointment" means the first appointment of an individual from a position in the exempt service to a position in the classified or exempt service performing the same work.

C. Authority

Personnel Rule 2 AAC 07.320, Article 21, Section 6(A), of the General Government Unit Agreement, and Article 24, Section 7, of the Supervisory Unit Agreement provide for exceptions to placement at the minimum rate of pay in a salary range for initial appointments.

D. Guidelines

When the work performed by an individual moves from the exempt service into the classified or partially exempt service advanced step placement may be authorized for the individual providing the individual is hired through a competitive process to perform the newly classified work without a break in service. Advanced step placement for initial appointments must be based on the exceptional qualifications of the appointee, as demonstrated by creditable state service, and must be approved prior to the appointment.

1. Advanced step placement shall be based on creditable state service.

For purposes of movement between the exempt service and the classified or partially exempt service, creditable state service is time served in regular employment in the exempt service and permanent or probationary employment within the classified or partially exempt service which demonstrates progressively greater value to the State as this phrase has been interpreted for granting performance incentives within the classified and partially exempt services. Such work must be at or above the level of the job class of the position to which the individual is moving. All work performed that is continuous with the work performed in the exempt service may be considered for creditable state service purposes.

2. Creditable state service cannot be used as a basis for granting longevity increments.

E. Procedures

1. Determination of advanced step placement for individuals moving from the exempt service to the classified or partially exempt service shall not be delegated.
2. The appointing department is responsible for requesting and obtaining approval for the advanced step from the director of the Division of Personnel prior to the appointment and for providing the justification and documentation required to support the claim of creditable state service. Documentation may include any evidence that demonstrates the kind and level of work necessary to support the claims of creditable state service as described in D(1) above. Files containing the documentation for advanced step placements approved by the Division of Personnel will be maintained within the Division of Personnel.