SENIOR EXECUTIVE SERVICE (SES) FEDERAL CANDIDATE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM (FED CDP)

APPLICANT FAQS

UNITED STATES OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

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Federal Candidate Development Program FAQs

Based on inquiries received, OPM developed the following additional frequently asked questions and answers (FAQs) pertaining to the application process and other issues related to the Federal Candidate Development Program (Fed CDP) recruitment, Vacancy Number PH192544.

This document will be updated if we receive new questions from applicants not covered by existing FAQs. Please refer to this document frequently to find the answers to any questions you may have. If your questions are not covered in this document, please send your inquiry to the Fed CDP email address (fedcdp2@opm.gov). Specific questions may be rephrased for clarity without changing their essence. Questions received in the last few days of the vacancy opening may not be reflected in this document.

FAQs Regarding the *Previous* (January 2008) Fed CDP Recruitment

1. **I applied to the previous Fed CDP recruitment, but received an April 3, 2008, email notifying me OPM had stopped the processing of the Federal Candidate Development Program. Why did OPM take this action?**

On the date the Fed CDP vacancy announcement was scheduled to close, OPM had received fewer than the expected number of applications. The "irregularities" in the process arose from OPM's well-intentioned effort to increase the number of applications by extending the vacancy announcement period by three days. As part of that effort, OPM staff arranged to have automated emails sent to any individual who had begun to fill out the on-line Fed CDP application, but had not submitted a completed application. The email reminded its recipients that their applications had not been completed or submitted and reiterated instructions on how to do so. Thereafter, OPM management concluded that extending the open period may have advantaged those applicants who had not yet completed their application but decided to do so after learning of the extension as compared to those who submitted a completed application before the announcement was scheduled to close. In addition, the emails OPM sent to individuals who had begun but not submitted their applications may have inadvertently conferred an advantage on those who received the emails as compared to those applicants or potential applicants who had not received them. Accordingly, OPM determined the best course of action was to discontinue the processing of applications and issue a new vacancy announcement to ensure each applicant had equal time to complete the application and equal access to information regarding how to do so.

OPM reviewed applications and made determinations about qualifications in accordance with the merit system principles. OPM reviewed applications against the qualifications outlined in the vacancy announcement. A quality-control review indicated OPM applied rating determinations and scores accurately and consistently. Additionally, test security was not compromised during the process.

2. **Will those who previously submitted an application package and gone through the entire assessment process have to start from the beginning and re-apply? Will my previous assessment scores (structured interview and Assessment Center) carry over to the current Fed CDP recruitment?**

All individuals interested in being considered for Fed CDP, including individuals who went through the structured interview and Assessment Center processes previously, must reapply during the new vacancy announcement's open period. Scores will not be carried over from the previous announcement.

3. **Will I receive any comments or feedback on my previously submitted application, interview or Assessment Center results?**

OPM will not provide feedback on individual applications. Nor will applicants receive their prior assessment scores. OPM has prepared an Applicant Guide regarding the Fed CDP application and selection process. You can find it at the Fed CDP webpage: http://www.opm.gov/fedcdp/applicantguide.asp.

4. **I applied to the Fed CDP program when it was offered in January 2008. Can I obtain access to the materials I submitted then and resubmit them for this new recruitment?**

You may access your previously submitted documents through Application Manager: https://applicationmanager.org. Log-in, select your previous application package and click on the "Details" tab. There you will see the documents you submitted during the first announcement period for Fed CDP 2. You can open and view those documents, save them to your computer, and then upload them again with your new application package.

FAQs Regarding the *Current/New* Fed CDP Recruitment

5. **When will the new Fed CDP vacancy announcement open and when will it close?**

The new Fed CDP announcement opened on June 6, 2008.   Details on the program can be found at the Fed CDP webpage: http://www.opm.gov/fedcdp/. The open period runs through 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time on June 26, 2008.

6. **Will there be a "cut-off" when a certain number of applications have been received? For example, in the January 2008 Fed CDP recruitment, application submission was cut-off when the number received reached 500.**

The current announcement (PH192544) does not have an application cut-off other than the closing date listed on the announcement.

7. **I have questions I cannot find in the Fed CDP Applicant Guide. Who do I call and what is their telephone number?**

To maintain fairness in the recruitment process, we are accepting questions and comments only via email. Please email your questions to fedcdp2@opm.gov.

8. **I am only interested in applying for one of the openings. Am I required to complete all sections of the Occupational Questionnaire?**

In the Occupational Questionnaire, you only need to respond to the questions that apply to the Occupational Specialty(s) for which you are applying. You may skip questions by selecting the "Next" button on the page if you are applying online through Application Manager or by not filling in answers to those questions if you are completing the paper application.

9. **When I apply to this announcement, will I be considered for all of the positions, or must I specify the position in which I am interested?**

You must indicate on your application (in the Occupational Questionnaire) which agency/occupational specialty(s) you are interested in. You may indicate more than one agency/occupational specialty.

10. **Is there a limit to the number of characters that can be used in the narrative responses to each question on the Occupational Questionnaire?**

No. The narrative text boxes in the Occupational Questionnaire have no character limit.

11. **The questionnaire leaves a blank space for writing a description. Is there any guidance as to the form or length required for the answer?**

There is no specific format required for the answers to the narrative text boxes in the Occupational Questionnaire. Please provide brief, but complete, details as to how you meet the qualification outlined in the question previous to the narrative response.

12. **I see that the dates for the one-day Assessment Center are August 13 through August 22. Will there be flexibility in scheduling my particular date?**

The dates for the one-day Assessment Center are August 13 through August 22. Our team will work with you to find a day during August 13 through August 22 should you be selected to move on to that round.

13. I am unable to upload some of my supplemental documentation (such as transcripts and resume). I have scanned the documents into a PDF file, but I think the resulting PDF file is too big. Should I just fax these documents to OPM?

Yes, please fax your documents to (478) 757-3144 if you are unable to upload them.

14. I have submitted some of my documents by fax, but they do not appear on Application Manager. Do I need to resubmit everything, or are they not listed on Application Manager because of a processing delay?

Try re-faxing and use Application Manager to track all portions of your application to ensure it is complete. Please remember it does take one business day for faxes to be processed.

15. Can you contact me to verify that my application has been fully and correctly submitted?

To ensure fairness and equal access to information, we will not verbally confirm receipt of documents. We recommend you carefully review the vacancy announcement and other materials on our webpage, including the Applicant Guide, at www.opm.gov/fedcdp to map the actions you need to take to submit a complete application. After submitting your application, you may check Application Manager for the status of your application.

16. Do I qualify for the current announcement?

You must meet all qualification requirements to be considered. If you do not meet the GS-15 or equivalent requirement, we will, unfortunately, be unable to consider you for this program. Please refer to the Applicant Guide, which should help you sort out your eligibility for this program: http://www.opm.gov/fedcdp/applicantguide.asp.

17. I am not covered under the General Schedule (e.g., military or U.S. Postal Service employee). How do I know if my current grade or rank is considered "equivalent" to a GS-15?

Please consult the Applicant Guide: http://www.opm.gov/fedcdp/applicantguide.asp for more details on finding grade equivalents. Alternatively, you may contact your human resources office for guidance.

18. Is the "current GS-15 or equivalent in the Federal civil service" requirement absolute? Does the program consider one's past experience or is application strictly limited to employees serving at the GS-15 level?

Fed CDP is only open to current Federal employees, so if you are an employee of a state, you are not eligible for consideration for this program. The program is only open to current GS-15 (or equivalent) Federal civil service employees. If you are not currently a GS-15 or equivalent, you cannot be considered for this program.

19. Can the one year supervisory experience requirement be non-federal?

Yes. The requirement is simply one year of supervisory experience where you were the supervisor of record.

20. I have prior military experience equivalent to the GS-15, do I qualify for this program?

Applicants must currently be serving in a GS-15 or equivalent position to be considered for Fed CDP. If you are not currently a GS-15 or equivalent, you cannot be considered for this position.

21. If you work for a Federal agency that is not one of the Fed CDP participating agencies listed in the Senior Executive Service Fed CDP Application Guide, are you eligible to apply for this program opportunity?

Yes, you may apply to Fed CDP even if your agency is not one of the sponsoring agencies.

22. The vacancy announcement lists only four agencies as participating in the Fed CDP recruitment. Does this mean that all other Federal agencies are excluded, or that only the four organizations mentioned are taking advantage of this opportunity?

Only the agencies listed in the vacancy announcement #PH192544 are participating in the program at this time, meaning they are the agencies currently offering slots in the Fed CDP program. You do not, however, have to be an employee of one of the participating agencies in order to apply.

Important Note: As of 6/17/08, the Department of Labor position is no longer available under the PH192544 vacancy announcement. Please do not answer any items related to the Department of Labor position. Though no applicants will be considered for the now-unavailable Department of Labor position, those who requested simultaneous consideration by another participating agency (i.e., EPA, NRC, and OPM) will continue to be considered for the Fed CDP vacancies in those three agencies.

23. The new vacancy announcement does not make reference to, or have a link to, the five long-standing ECQs of Leading Change, Leading People, etc. When writing to each of the five ECQs, how many of the five competencies in the vacancy announcement must be addressed? For example, for Leading Change, do I need to address each of the five competencies? Or, just one competency for each ECQ, making sure all five competencies in the vacancy announcement have been addressed through the five ECQ write-ups?

All of your questions are addressed in detail in the Applicant Guide: http://www.opm.gov/fedcdp/applicantguide.asp. Please see pages 12 - 16 specifically.

The competencies are subsets of the ECQs, meaning they are smaller parts or examples of the broader ECQ. Your accomplishments should reflect your capability in the five specific

competencies listed in the Accomplishment Record instructions in the vacancy announcement. If you write to the ECQs instead of the competencies listed in the vacancy announcement, your score for the Accomplishment Record may be adversely affected.

You must submit written narratives describing accomplishments that reflect your capability in the five specific competencies related to the ECQs. You may submit only one accomplishment for each competency, and you must provide a different Accomplishment Record narrative for each competency. If you provide more than one accomplishment for a competency, only the first accomplishment listed will be evaluated.

24. Are the Fed CDP developmental assignments restricted to Federal Government or may I consider state or local levels or non-profits for an assignment?

Each candidate will complete at least four months of developmental assignments involving challenging leadership responsibilities outside their positions. Assignments are designed to expand the candidate's understanding about the functions of Government, its operations, and the role of senior executives in public policy formulation and administration, as well as to build executive skills. Each assignment will be selected by the candidate to address specific goals in her/his Executive Development Plan.

25. If selected for the program do I become an employee of the sponsoring agency?

Applicants who are accepted into Fed CDP become employees of the agency that selected them for the program.

26. Is the USAJobs resume template sufficient to address the requirements listed in the Fed CDP vacancy announcement?

Yes, the electronic resume template from USAJobs is sufficient.

27. What is the Manual requirement?

The Manual Field is a place-holder in Application Manager, a system to manage applications during the vacancy announcement period and beyond. The Manual Field is for OPM's internal use only. You cannot submit anything to the Manual Field.

28. I thought I followed the instructions for faxing documents precisely, but they have not showed up on Application Manager. I even received a confirmation that the fax went through. My transcripts already have my Social Security Number on them, but I confess I did not want to write the vacancy announcement number on the original transcript, in case I wanted to use them again. I did put both the vacancy announcement number and the last four digits of my Social Security Number on the required cover sheet. Would it have been rejected for that? They definitely got transmitted somewhere.

Please review the instructions in the How To Apply section of the vacancy announcement regarding the fax cover sheet requirements.

29. **I was informed my agency may have had problems with its fax line on Monday 6/16/08 when I faxed these documents to OPM as requested for additional information on my application to the SES Federal Candidate Development Program. Would you kindly ensure these get added to my on-line application?**

We cannot accept documentation via email. Please refer to the Applicant Guide and Vacancy Announcement for instructions on how to upload and/or fax supporting documents. You may check to see if your documents were received by logging in to Application Manager (https://applicationmanager.org), selecting the Fed CDP application package, and then clicking on the "Details" tab. You may open and view your submitted documents from that tab.

30. **I am trying to upload documents, and it is taking a long time. Is there a problem with Application Manager? Thanks.**

There have been no reported issues with Application Manager during this Fed CDP vacancy announcement. Please note it takes approximately one hour for documents uploaded into the system to complete the virus scan. Please allow at least one business day for any documentation that was faxed in to be uploaded into the system.

31. **Could you tell me whether any of the FISD positions associated with announcement number CDP PH192544 are based completely or partly in Boyers, PA?**

The OPM/FISD position is based in Washington, DC but requires frequent travel to Boyers, PA.

32. **Is the Accomplishment Record single space or double space relative to the 2 page limit?**

The two-page limit for the Accomplishment Record narrative is two single-spaced pages per narrative.

33. **What is the preference (right justify, left justify, center, etc) for documenting the vacancy number and last four digits of my SSN for the resume? Also, what is the preference (right justify, left justify, center, etc) for documenting the last four digits of my SSN for the Accomplishment Records?**

There is no preference as to the formatting or justification of the Vacancy ID number and last four digits of your Social Security Number on your resume or Accomplishment Record narratives.

34. **Last time when I applied to Fed CDP, I was able to fax my bar card and transcript. Is there a number where I can do so again this time?**

All documentation must be submitted through one of the methods outlined in the vacancy announcement. If you wish to fax documentation, please review the instructions in the How To Apply section of the announcement regarding the submission of faxes.

35. If I want to change my occupational questionnaire, do I have to submit a new application?

If you would like to amend your answers to the Occupational Questionnaire, log-in to Application Manager (https://applicationmanager.org) and select the Fed CDP application package on the "My Application Packages" screen. On the Application Package Status screen, select the "Change My Answers" button. Follow the instructions on-screen and update your Occupational Questionnaire as needed. Remember to select "Submit My Answers" after the Upload Documents screen to transmit your new Occupational Questionnaire to us.

36. If neither option under question 22 on the Occupational Questionnaire applies to an applicant, is the correct course of action to leave it blank?

Question 22 is not a mandatory question. Your application may still be submitted and processed if you do not answer this question.

37. The application manager uploaded my resume from USAJOBS automatically, but that resume has an incorrect work phone number and e-mail address (due to recent changes within my agency). My application contains the correct information. Is it necessary for me to upload a revised resume, solely to get this information correct? If so, how can I get the application manager to reload the resume from USAJOBS - the browsing function does not take me to that resume source.

OPM will use the contact information you provided in the Occupational Questionnaire should we need to contact you.

38. I am interested in applying for the SES Fed CDP. Are there positions available in Orlando, Florida?

Please review the Fed CDP vacancy announcement at http://www.opm.gov/fedcdp/ for the list of available duty locations.

39. Can documents be submitted and uploaded in Application Manager as MS Word files?

Yes, documents can be submitted through Application Manager as MS Word files.

40. If my former supervisor of record has left Government and is unavailable, how should I address the requirement to list my former supervisor of record on my resume?

Please provide the last known contact information for those individuals or an alternate contact.

41. Will faxed applications be reflected on Application Manager?

Applicants who do not submit the Occupational Questionnaire through Application Manager will not have a record in Application Manager.

42. What types of positions are available at OPM?

Please review the Fed CDP website at http://www.opm.gov/fedcdp/agencies/ to learn more about the agencies participating in this program.