SOX/RAFA Restructure
Questions and Answers (Q&As)

The following link provides detailed information related to organizational changes: https://liteblue.usps.gov/humanresources/organizationalchanges/oc_home.shtml

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SOX/RAFA Restructure
Questions and Answers (Q&As)

SOX/RAFA Restructure Information

1. **Was the announcement on Friday, June 5, recorded?**
The session was not recorded, but the presentation was sent to impacted employees by email after the call. Information sessions are being held regularly to answer questions. Questions can be sent to the OE Organization Restructure Request (gfv8c0@usps.gov) email box. Managers are also available to answer questions.

2. **Are the job descriptions for the new jobs available on JD Online?**
Yes, job descriptions are now available on [http://hrishq.usps.gov/jdonline/](http://hrishq.usps.gov/jdonline/).

Reduction in Force (RIF) Process

3. **When will I be notified that I am impacted?**
The June 5 announcement was the official notification that you are impacted. Specific RIF Notices were mailed on June 12, and included notification of your RIF placement or separation.

4. **How can I find out if I am an impacted employee?**
The managers in the Sarbanes-Oxley (SOX) and Revenue Assurance and Field Accounting (RAFA) departments will notify you if your job is impacted and will keep you informed as we move through the organizational-change process.

5. **Where can I find more information about the organizational-change process?**
Use the following link for more information: [https://liteblue.usps.gov/humanresources/organizationalchanges/oc_home.shtml](https://liteblue.usps.gov/humanresources/organizationalchanges/oc_home.shtml)

6. **If I receive a Specific RIF Notice with a placement position, when will I be placed into that job? Will I continue to do my current job, or will I start my new job immediately?**
RIF placements will be effective August 22. Talk to your manager regarding timing for transfer of duties.

7. **What happens if I cannot find a job by August 21? Can I apply for unemployment compensation?**
If you do not find another job by August 21, you will be placed or separated, as indicated in your Specific RIF Notice. If you are separated, you may apply for unemployment compensation. Your eligibility to receive unemployment compensation is determined by state law. You may, however, also be eligible for a retirement (including discontinued service retirement (DSR)), and federal law requires a state to reduce your unemployment compensation if you also receive any pension, retirement pay, or any other periodic payment attributable to a "base period employer," including the Postal Service. For more information about unemployment eligibility, you should contact your state unemployment office.
8. If impacted employees are placed into positions as their RIF assignment, will those positions be posted?
   No. Any positions that have been identified as RIF placement positions will not be posted. All positions that are posted on June 15 are available positions.

9. After I am placed into a job, am I still considered impacted?
   No, once you accept a job and the Form 50 is processed, you are no longer considered impacted.

10. Why haven't I been offered a special retirement incentive?
    The Postal Service did not feel it was needed for this re-organization. The incentive is used as a repositioning tool by the Postal Service to encourage retirement or other separations.

Job Postings / eCareer

11. I requested a non-competitive lateral for a job in another district, but was told I had to apply in eCareer. Then when I applied in eCareer, I was told that I do not meet the eligibility requirements. Aren't I eligible because it is a lateral? Aren't I eligible because I am impacted?
    When applying competitively to jobs in eCareer, you must meet the eligibility requirements stated on the posting. The eligibility requirements are applicable regardless of whether you are impacted and regardless of whether the job is a promotion, lateral, or downgrade.

12. When will the eCareer sessions occur? Will these sessions be recorded?
    The eCareer sessions occurred on June 10, 2015. The first session was from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. EST; the second session was from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. EST.

13. When will the new vacancies be posted?
    The limited-area-of-consideration postings will open June 15, 2015, and close June 26, 2015. The postings will be open to any impacted employee whose current position of record is in the Controller’s competitive area.

14. How do I apply for other vacant positions?
    Apply using eCareer and monitor for new postings every Tuesday. Also talk with managers about available opportunities.

15. Can I apply for jobs in the District? Will there be preference given to impacted employees? Should I attach a copy of my Specific RIF Notice?
    Yes, you can apply for District vacancies. HQ and HQ-related employees who are domiciled in a district/area are also eligible to apply to district/area-wide postings. The Area HR Managers have been notified that impacted employees will be applying, but preference is not necessarily given to impacted employees. You may include in your application that you are an impacted employee, but it is not necessary to attach your Specific RIF Notice.

16. How do I find out the selecting official for a job posted in eCareer?
    Check the job posting, or contact someone within that organization.
17. How do I find out about other jobs that may be available in my district but not posted?
   Area HR Managers have been notified about this RIF. You are encouraged to reach out to your
   Area or District HR Manager to find out about other job opportunities that may be available.

18. In eCareer, will a second set of KSAs (for a second job application) overwrite original KSAs (for
    a first job application)?
   Yes, they will if they are included as an attachment. Only the current attachments are available
   to review committees and selecting officials; once you remove the attachments, they are no
   longer available. It is suggested that you use the Summary of Accomplishments and Work Experience
   sections of the online form to address the KSAs or otherwise tailor your application to the job; these
   sections are not overwritten.

19. What if I apply for a job competitively, but they don't make a selection decision until after the
    RIF effective date?
   Selection decisions for jobs posted within the Controller group will be made prior to the RIF
   effective date. For postings outside of the Controller group, managers are being notified of this
   RIF and encouraged to make selection decisions before the RIF effective date.

20. Will field offices be required to post every vacant position?
   No, field offices are not required to post every vacant position. Field offices will assist
   Headquarters with identifying placement opportunities for impacted employees.

21. Will the positions that are not filled by assignment under the RIF laws and regulations be filled
    competitively?
   Yes. The positions that are not filled by assignment under the applicable RIF laws and
   regulations will be filled competitively.

22. Can impacted employees apply for EAS-19 vacancies outside of the area in which they are
    currently domiciled?
   Yes. Impacted employees may apply for any vacancy posted during the limited-area-of-
   consideration (LAC) posting period, June 15 to June 26, 2015. Impacted employees may also
   apply for vacant positions listed in eCareer outside of the LAC period up to the RIF effective
   date, August 21, 2015. However, when applying competitively for jobs in eCareer, you must
   meet the eligibility requirements stated on the posting.

23. If someone who has been selected for a Revenue Assurance position decides to take another
    job, how will subsequent selections be handled? Would it be through an alternate selection
    from the original package or would there be another round of postings, and is this dependent
    on any type of timeframe?
   Handboook EL-312 section 743.19 allows for another selection to be made from the same
   package if it is still within 120 days of the posting.
24. When you follow the steps to withdraw an application in eCareer it instructs you to read the application policy carefully before withdrawing, however the link to the application policy is not working. What repercussions, if any, are there to withdrawing an application, especially during a RIF? Where can the application policy be located?
When you withdraw an application, you are removing yourself from consideration for the vacancy. Your application cannot be reinstated at a later date and you’d only have the opportunity to submit a new application for the position if the job posting is still open in eCareer. We will clarify the language on this screen in eCareer.

25. For those of us who have been trying and continue to try to find placement, if not successful, will we be offered placement? If yes, how accommodating will that placement be? What defines “accommodating”, “reasonable”?
If you are not placed in a new position between now and the RIF effective date, August 22, 2015, you will be subject to the RIF action listed in your specific RIF notice (i.e., separation, demotion, or reassignment).

26. Can a selecting official not select an individual based upon whether they have been offered a different position?
Selections should be based on candidates’ qualifications, without consideration to other potential job offers.

27. Please share the average process time as it relates to a job posting.
Reviewing applications and conducting interviews can take 3-4 weeks.

28. How long does it take to finalize a PS Form 50 after applying for a job?
An applicant who is selected for a vacant position is officially placed into that position when a PS Form 50, Notification of Personnel Action, is processed. The Form 50 can be processed as soon as a selection is made. Placements can be made up to August 21.

29. Based on the average processing time, when would it be feasible for me to assume that I will not secure a position before August 21?
Human Resources will work with you to place you into jobs up until August 21. Contact Joseph Bruce or Paulette Rhynehardt if you are concerned about expedited placement.

30. If I don’t secure a job before August 21, may I apply for bargaining-unit positions?
It is difficult for EAS employees to secure bargaining-unit positions because of certain restrictions in the national collective bargaining agreements. If you are interested in a particular bargaining-unit position, you should contact Human Resources directly. Human Resources will provide you with more specific guidance.

If you do not secure a position by August 21 and you separate from the Postal Service, you may apply to any external job posting—bargaining and non-bargaining. Most external bargaining-unit job postings are for non-career positions.
Requests for Laterals / Downgrades

31. Can I submit a lateral/downgrade request before a job is posted?
   Yes you can. However the selecting official may wait until after the job is posted to make a selection decision, and may ask you to apply and be considered competitively.

32. To whom should I send a request for non-competitive lateral/downgrade into the new SOX Compliance and Revenue Assurance positions?
   Submit non-competitive requests for the SOX Compliance positions to Maura McNerney, and for the Revenue Assurance positions to Janet Meddick.

33. Is there a sample letter for non-competitive reassignment?
   HR will provide a sample letter for non-competitive reassignments.

34. If I request a downgrade assignment, can the selecting official ask me to compete?
   Yes. Selecting officials can ask you to compete competitively with the other applicants of the vacancy package.

35. If I am interested in a lateral/downgrade, is it prudent to also apply to the job competitively?
   Yes, it is prudent to also apply competitively and make sure you address all of the KSAs in your request. It is expected that multiple people will apply to jobs, and therefore the selecting official is likely to want to review all candidates competitively.

36. If I accept a voluntary lateral or downgrade, will I still be eligible to apply for the limited area consideration (LAC) postings?
   All impacted employees under the Controller are eligible to apply for the LAC postings. Once you are selected and placed into a job (i.e., Form 50 processed) you are no longer considered impacted.

37. If I am covered by FERS and I am downgraded during the last three years of my postal career, will my annuity be based on (a) my salary during my last three years of service, or (b) the 3 consecutive years in which I drew the highest average salary?
   Your annuity is based on your "high-three." The high-3 is based on your highest three consecutive years of salary, whenever that was in your career. The annuity estimate given to you by the postal service, however, will reflect only the last three years of your postal career. Nevertheless, your annuity will be based on your actual high-3 when the Office of Personnel Management calculates your annuity.

38. If I am an impacted employee and I accept a job, but then decide to accept a different, lower-level position before a PS Form 50 is processed and effective for the first job, am I still eligible for saved grade and saved salary for two years?
   Yes. If you are an impacted employee, you accept an offer of a position, and then later wish to accept a different, lower-level position, you will be eligible for two years of saved grade and saved pay under ELM section 415.21 if you accept the second, lower-level position before you are officially placed into first position—i.e., before a PS Form 50 is issued placing you into the first position.
39. It’s August 7 and I don’t have a job yet. At this point, should I be focusing primarily on non-competitive placement options?
Yes.

Grade / Pay Retention

40. If I take downgrade with two years’ saved-grade/saved-pay, but then change jobs within the two years, do I keep the saved-grade/saved-pay?
You will maintain your saved-grade/saved-pay status if the new job is the same grade or higher than the downgraded position, unless the new job carries a higher grade or rate of pay than your saved grade or rate of pay. However, if you voluntarily take another downgrade (i.e., move to a position with a lower grade or rate of pay), then you will lose the grade/pay retention.

41. Is there a limit to how low you can downgrade from your current pay grade during an organizational change and still get saved-grade/saved salary?
No. For nonbargaining positions, there is no limit on how many grades an employee may drop from his or her current grade and still be eligible for saved grade and pay. But the employee may not be eligible for saved grade or pay if he or she accepts a downgrade into a bargaining-unit position. For further guidance, refer to ELM Section 362 Change to Lower Level; ELM Section 415 Rate Retention and Change to Lower Nonbargaining Unit Grade; and the Organizational Change FAQs on the Organizational Changes web page.

42. If I take a downgrade from a job that is exempt from the Fair Labor Standards Act’s (FLSA’s) overtime requirements to a job that is not exempt from those requirements, how does the Postal Service determine my FLSA status?
Your FLSA status is determined by the job you currently hold. Therefore, if you change from an exempt job to a non-exempt job, then your FLSA status will be non-exempt.

43. What happens to my grade and salary if I am assigned during the organizational change process to a position at a lower grade than my current position and I do not have any grade or pay retention from a prior organizational change process?
Except as noted below, the following applies if you are assigned to a position at a lower grade than your current position during any component of the Postal Service’s organizational-change process, including the following:

- you are demoted as a result of the RIF process; or
- you take a voluntary downgrade during a RIF avoidance-minimization period, Specific RIF Notice period, or RIF-related 30-day nonduty, nonpay status period. This includes if you are issued a Specific RIF Notice of demotion and you instead elect to take a voluntary downgrade to a position at:
  - the same grade as your RIF demotion;
  - a lower grade than your RIF demotion; or
  - a higher grade than your RIF demotion but a lower grade than your current position.
In accordance with current policy, you will receive two years of saved grade at the grade of your current position, starting on the effective date of your new assignment. During the two-years saved grade period, your salary can continue to increase up to the maximum of the saved grade. At the end of the two-years saved grade period:

- your grade will be reduced to the grade of your new position; and
- your salary will be reduced to the maximum of the grade of your new position if it exceeds the maximum at that time.

Any rights you may have to Pay-for-Performance (PFP) awards will be determined in accordance with the PFP Pay Rules in effect for the relevant fiscal year (updated April 22, 2015).

**NOTE:** You will not be eligible for two years of saved grade in any of the following situations:

- you are notified that your current position:
  - is not being abolished; and
  - will not be in an over-complement situation, but you then take a voluntary downgrade before Specific RIF Notices are issued in your competitive area;

- you take a voluntary downgrade after you are issued a Specific RIF Notice of reassignment (i.e., assignment to a position at the same grade as your current position), even if your RIF reassignment is to a position outside your local commuting area; or

- you are not issued any Specific RIF Notice and therefore will remain in your current position but you then take a voluntary downgrade.

**44. If I downgrade from EAS-19 to EAS-17 with saved grade/salary, and then accept a promotion to EAS-21 within two months, what will be the basis for the computation for the salary of my EAS-21 position?**

You would be considered a grade EAS-19 for purposes of determining the allowable % increase. The dollar amount of the increase will depend on your salary at the time you accept the promotion.

**45. If I downgrade from EAS-19 to EAS-17 with saved grade/salary, and then accept a promotion to EAS-19 within two years, what will be the basis for the computation for the salary of my EAS-19 position?**

You will not receive any promotional salary increase if (a) you are receiving saved salary when you accept the promotion, and (b) the promotion is to a position at a lower or the same grade level as the position at which your saved-salary rate was established.

**46. If I downgrade from EAS-23 to EAS-21, and then accept another downgrade to EAS-19 within the two years, will I maintain my saved-grade (EAS-23) status?**

No. As per ELM Section 415.41, the retained rate is terminated if the employee chooses to change to a lower grade.
47. If I downgrade from EAS-19 to EAS-17, do I list my grade as EAS-19 on my applications when I apply for jobs?
Yes.

48. How do I know my saved grade/save pay was properly coded on my Form 50? If it was not done correctly, how do I get the update made?
Your Form 50 will show a code “H” (saved grade NTE) under #68 – special salary code and a statement will be placed in the remarks section reflecting the reason. All inquiries should be directed to the HRSSC.

Veterans Preference

49. Are Veterans’ preference rights being recognized? I am preference eligible, but am not listed in WebCOINS.
Yes, the Postal Service applies veterans’ preference rules in the same manner and under the same conditions as those rules would be applied under the provisions of title 5 of the United States Code. Entitlement to veterans’ preference for RIF purposes is based on the Veterans’ Preference Act of 1944. Preference is given to veterans who are preference eligible for RIF purposes.

Employees who believe they are veterans’ preference eligible for RIF purposes should review their RTR Employee Detail Report in their official personnel folder (eOPF) and contact the HR Shared Service Center 1-877-477-3273, option 5, to correct any error in your RIF Vet Preference Code.

50. Will each employee who is eligible for veterans’ preference be notified of his or her reduction-in-force (RIF) assignment?
Yes. Each impacted employee who is eligible for veterans’ preference will be notified by phone of his or her RIF assignment. He or she also received a specific RIF notice. The specific RIF notices were sent out on June 12, 2015.

51. Will all veterans’ preference eligible be placed?
Yes, each impacted preference-eligible employee will be placed in the position to which he or she has assignment rights under the applicable laws and regulations.

Relocation

52. If I accept a job in another location, will relocation be available?
Relocation will be made available in accordance with Postal policy. For additional information (including contact information for questions), refer to the Relocation website (http://blue.usps.gov/accounting/relocation.htm), Handbook F-15-A Relocation Policy for EAS Employees (http://blue.usps.gov/cpim/ftp/hand/f15a/welcome.htm), or eMail address RELOCATION F47R00@usps.gov.
Job Offers/ Effective Dates

53. As an impacted employee, I know I am eligible for relocation benefits, saved grade/saved salary if I take a voluntary downgrade, and I have the option to take a VER. However, I have applied for multiple jobs, and might not get my preferred job as my first offer. What can I do to keep my options open?

After the Form 50 effective date of the new job, you will no longer be considered impacted; you may therefore no longer be eligible for certain benefits, such as saved grade or pay based on any subsequent voluntary downgrade, relocation benefits, or voluntary early retirement (VER).

If you are offered a job after you have received a specific RIF notice, you may request that the Form 50 effective date be set to August 8. In this situation, you will remain impacted until the Form 50 is processed. Therefore, you will remain eligible for relocation and/or downgrade with saved grade/saved salary up until August 8, and VER up until the application deadline (July 10).

Alternatively, you can also ask the selecting official if he/she can wait and give you time to consider the job offer, until you hear back about the other positions.

For example: You receive a job offer for a same-grade position that will require you to relocate. You are interested, but it is not your #1 choice. You would prefer to take a downgrade if you can remain in your current domiciled location. You may tell the selecting official that you are interested, but ask if he/she can wait to make a final decision until you have heard back about the downgrade position. You may also let the selecting official for the downgrade position know that you are very interested but have received another offer, and you can ask him/her for an estimate for when he/she will make a decision.

If you find yourself in a specific situation and would like more personal guidance, please reach out to your manager or HR for help.

If you accept a job and the Form 50 is cut placing you into a position that is outside the impacted competitive area, you will no longer be considered impacted after the Form 50 effective date, and therefore will no longer be eligible for impacted-employee benefits. If you find yourself in this situation unexpectedly, please reach out to your manager or HR for help.

54. Can I see a Form 50 action in my eOPF before I receive notification in the mail?

Notifications of personnel actions (that is, Form 50 actions) update to the eOPF the first Sunday of the pay period in which the action is effective. A copy is also mailed to employee’s address of record.

55. Once I am placed into a job, when will I receive a Form 50 in the mail?

Allow at least one full pay period after the effective date for receipt of the Form 50 to your address of record.

56. What is the definition of a reasonable offer?

The term “reasonable offer” has different meanings in different contexts. The definition of a reasonable offer for discontinued service retirement (DSR) purposes is provided in organizational change FAQ #38 (page 37).

For severance pay, ELM Section 435, Severance Pay, does not use the term "reasonable offer." It does provide, however, that an employee will not be eligible for severance pay if he or she is offered and declines a position in the Postal Service or in any other federal agency of like seniority, tenure, and pay within the same commuting area.

If you receive a job offer and want to know if it meets one of these definitions, contact HR.

57. Can I apply for other positions after being accepted for a position? What if I apply for multiple positions, accept one, and then get offered another?
Yes, you can apply to multiple positions. If you receive an offer for another position after you accept a position, you will need to coordinate with the selecting officials when making your choice.

58. If I accept a position, is there a timeframe that you have to remain in the job before applying for or accepting another job?
No, unless you accept a job with relocation. If you accept a job with relocation benefits, the relocation policy applies.

Other Federal Agencies

59. Do I get preference with other Federal government agencies, since I am impacted?
Click on the following link for detail information: Questions 40 - 43

Voluntary Early Retirement (VER) / Discontinued Service Retirement (DSR)
For more information on DSR, refer to OPM’s website or the Organizational Changes/RIF FAQs on the Organizational Changes webpage. Note: Link to recording of VER/DSR Information Session:
https://uspsmeetings.webex.com/uspsmeetings/lsr.php?RCID=e4e680a8e5fd4f6dbe07dee2da21f63e (1 hr 47 min 47 sec)

60. What is the VER timeline?
The irrevocable date for VER requests is July 10. However, if you receive a job offer after July 10 and before the VER effective date, you will be allowed to revoke your VER request to accept that job.

61. What is the Voluntary Early Retirement (VER) effective date?
July 31, 2015.

62. Can I withdraw my VER paperwork if selected for a job?
Yes. Employees may withdraw VER paperwork once selected for a job, even if it is after the VER irrevocable date.

63. What is the date and time of the webinar that will discuss VER/DSR/severance?
The date and time is June 25 at 11am EST to allow time for VER eligible employees to receive their VER packets.
64. What is the penalty for voluntary early retirement (VER)?
An employee who retires under a VER Authority from a CSRS-covered position is subject to a 2% pension reduction for each year he or she is under 55 years of age on his or her retirement date. The same reduction occurs if a CSRS-covered employee elects a Discontinued Service Retirement (DSR). These reductions do not apply to FERS-covered employees (unless the employee’s annuity has a CSRS component).

65. How is the Discontinued Service Retirement benefit calculated?
That information was provided in the webinar on June 25th at 11am EST (link to recording is above).

66. Am I eligible for Discontinued Service Retirement (DSR) benefits? How long do DSR benefits last?
You may be eligible for Discontinued Service Retirement (DSR) benefits if you are involuntarily separated; have 50 years of age with 20 years of service, or if you have 25 years of service (regardless of age) as of your separation date; and do not refuse a reasonable job offer. The term “involuntary separation” means any separation against the will and without the consent of the employee (including a RIF separation) other than “for cause” for misconduct or delinquency. A “reasonable job offer” is an offer of a position for which you are qualified that is (a) in the Postal Service, (b) within your local commuting area, and (c) no more than two or more grade or pay levels below your current grade or pay level. There is no time limit on receiving DSR benefits. DSR benefits are provided until the annuitant passes away.

67. Who should I contact if I do not receive a VER package?
If you do not receive a VER package, you may contact the HR Shared Service Center 1-877-477-3273, option 5.

68. If we don’t get any jobs before the RIF date, available jobs are not suitable, can we apply for Discontinued Service Retirement (DSR)? If we can, what will be the retirement effective date?
You are eligible for DSR if you meet the qualifications established by the Office of Personnel Management (OPM). Those qualifications are as follows: (a) you are involuntarily separated from a FERS- or CSRS-covered position; (b) you meet the age and service requirements (i.e., you must be at least 50 years old and have at least 20 years of creditable service, 5 years of which must be civilian service); and (c) you do not decline a reasonable offer of a position. If you are subject to CSRS, you must also have spent at least one of the last two years in a CSRS-covered position. The retirement effective date for the DSR will be August 21, 2015. A discontinued service annuity commences on the earlier of the day after separation, or on the day after pay ceases and the applicant meets the age and service requirements for the annuity.

Optional Retirement (FERS/CSRS)
Refer to the Retirement section on LiteBlue using the link below for detailed information about planning and applying for retirement. https://liteblue.usps.gov/humanresources/retirement/home.shtml

Optionally eligible employees (who meet the age and service requirements for “regular” retirement and can choose to retire anytime) may go to eRetire via LiteBlue and view an annuity estimate and/or request a specific date estimate which will be available for viewing the next business day. They may also
call the HRSSC at 877-477-3272, Option 5 and request an estimate for August 1 and/or start the retirement process. HRSSC will then mail a retirement kit and/or annuity estimate.

Link to recording of FERS information session: https://uspsmeetings.webex.com/uspsmeetings/lr.php?RCID=93c9b0a59d4642f4a40059276e058f5c (1 hr 58 min 18 sec)

Link to recording of CSRS information session: https://uspsmeetings.webex.com/uspsmeetings/lr.php?RCID=4ddbb17f987f4188a60286d3a6b23236 (2 hr 4 min 38 sec)

69. Will I be eligible for the FERS Special Retirement Supplement?
Under FERS, if you accept early retirement, you will become eligible for the supplement when you reach the minimum retirement age (MRA) if you have not already reached your MRA by your retirement date. This is automatically paid by OPM (not Social Security) when you reach the MRA.

70. How is the FERS Special Retirement Supplement calculated? Is sick leave or years as non-career USPS employee included in the years credited to the Social Security supplement?
There is no calculator, but an approximate formula is the number of years toward FERS, divided by 40, times your Social Security benefits at age 62. For example if your estimated Social Security benefit at age 62 is $1,000 per month and you worked 30 years under FERS, OPM will divide 30/40 and take the results of 0.75 and multiply ($1000 times 0.75 = $750 monthly). Sick leave, non-career service, and military service are not included. The only service that is taken into account is civilian service in a FERS-covered position.

71. I am an impacted employee who plans to retire before the RIF effective date. Do I need to take any action prior to the RIF effective date?
Yes. If you are optionally eligible you can retire on any date of your choosing but no later than close of business (COB) on the RIF effective date.

72. Is there a deadline for optionally eligible retirees to change their mind?
Only if you have submitted a signed Application for Immediate Retirement and no longer wish to retire. Your written request to withdraw your retirement application must be received at the HR Shared Service Center no later than close of business (COB) on the effective date of your retirement.

73. What is the last day to start the retirement process in case a position was not obtained? How does one start the process? Is there enough time to schedule a counseling session and receive the retirement packet? (What is the timeframe to receive a counseling session?)
If eligible, you may start the retirement process immediately. If you ask to retire on a specific date, you have until the close of business on the date you requested to withdraw your request.

If you are interested in retiring, we recommend that you contact the Human Resources Shared Services Center (HRSSC) immediately. HRSSC specialists will explain your options and guide you through the retirement process.
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74. What do I do if I don’t want to retire, but don’t find a job by August 21 and so choose to retire? Will there be a special retirement session? When do I start counseling?
   If you are considering retirement, you should start counseling as soon as possible. Counseling does not commit you to retirement; it just enables you to get the information you need to make an informed retirement decision.

Separation Benefits

Note: Link to recording of Deferred/Severance Information Session: https://uspsmeetings.webex.com/uspsmeetings/lsr.php?RCID=a681e69b349b494d9f09b12d763a0520 (23 min 33 sec).

75. Can I apply for unemployment compensation after being separated?
   Your eligibility for unemployment compensation is a matter of state law. For more information, you should contact your state unemployment office.

76. Am I eligible for severance if I am not eligible for retirement?
   You may be eligible for severance pay if not eligible for an immediate annuity and you meet the other conditions listed in Employment and Labor Relations Manual (ELM) section 435.1.

77. If I am married and am separated from the Postal Service, can I get on my spouse’s insurance?
   Yes. If you are involuntarily separated as part of the RIF, this is considered a qualifying life event for which changes are allowed. Use the following link for more information. https://liteblue.usps.gov/humanresources/benefits/insurance/benefits_insurance_fehb.shtml

78. Will the Postal Service pay severance pay to eligible employees who are involuntarily separated?
   Yes. Any employee who meets the criteria in ELM Section 435 Severance Pay and is involuntarily separated will receive severance pay.

79. How does severance pay work?
   Refer to the Employee and Labor Relations Manual Section 435, Severance Pay, for an explanation of severance pay, including eligibility requirements, creditable service, paid allowances, pay rate, duration, and intervals.

80. If I am separated, where will my terminal leave check be mailed?
   Your terminal leave check is mailed to the address of your administrative finance number. Because the Controller jobs are all Headquarters jobs, your checks will be mailed to Headquarters. Headquarters will then mail the check to your home address on file. Submit a PS Form 3077 if you would like the check mailed to a different address.

81. If an impacted employee accepts a downgrade to a lower-level position and then retires within the two years of saved pay at the lower-level position, what would the terminal leave check be based upon?
   The amount of an employee’s terminal-leave payout is based on the employee’s salary on the date he or she separates from the Postal Service. For more information about terminal leave, please see ELM section 513.732.
82. If an employee who has 30 years of creditable service, but who has not yet reached the minimum retirement age (MRA) under FERS, is separated by RIF, may he or she apply for an annuity when he or she later reached the MRA?

An employee who has sufficient creditable service but has not reached the MRA as of the RIF effective date may apply for a FERS annuity when he or she later reaches the MRA. Such an employee would not, however, be eligible for the FERS social-security supplement. He or she would also not be able to reinstate his or her health- or life-insurance coverage.

Note: An employee who has sufficient creditable service but has not yet reached the MRA may be eligible for a Discontinued Service Retirement (DSR) annuity. For more information about DSR eligibility, please see the Office of Personnel Management’s website and the Organizational Changes/RIF FAQs on the Organizational Changes webpage. Please also see Question 65 of these Q&As.

83. The VER window period has expired but I haven’t yet secured a position. What are my options? Can I retire? Is a severance package available?

If you meet the Office of Personnel Management’s regular-retirement eligibility criteria, you may retire anytime. You may also be eligible for a Discontinued Service Retirement (DSR). For more information about DSR eligibility, see the Office of Personnel Management’s website and the Organizational Changes/RIF FAQs on the Organizational Changes webpage.

84. What options do I have after I’ve separated from the USPS? How do I remain connected to any job postings for potential re-instatement?

Several options are available to you. First, you may retire if you are eligible for optional retirement. To be eligible, you must meet certain age and service requirements. If you are covered by the Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS), you must be (a) at least 55 years old with 30 years of creditable service, (b) at least 60 years old with 20 years of creditable service, or (c) 62 years old with at least 5 years of creditable service. If you are covered by the Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS) you must be (a) at least 60 years old with 20 years of creditable service, (b) 62 years old with at least 5 years of creditable service, or (c) the minimum retirement age with at least 30 years of creditable service (the minimum retirement age depends on your date of birth). Under FERS, you may also be eligible for a reduced annuity if you are the minimum retirement age with at least 10, but less than 30, years of creditable service.

You may also be eligible for discontinued service retirement (DSR). To be eligible for DSR, you must (a) be involuntarily separated from a position covered by FERS or CSRS; (b) be at least 50 years old with 20 years of creditable service or any age with at least 25 years of creditable service, 5 of which must be civilian service; and (c) not decline a reasonable offer of a position. If you are covered by CSRS, you must also have spent at least one of the last two years in a CSRS position; the one year need not have been continuous.

You may also continue to monitor www.usps.com for externally posted positions in the Postal Service. If you retire, you may still apply for those positions. But you should keep in mind that if you retire and then secure a new position in the Postal Service, you will likely be considered a “reemployed annuitant.” Except in very limited circumstances, reemployed
annuitants’ salaries are off-set by the amount of their retirement annuities. For more information about being a reemployed annuitant, please see the Office of Personnel Management’s website, www.opm.gov, or contact Postal Service Human Resources.

Finally, if you are involuntarily separated, you may be eligible for reinstatement by one of two methods. First, you may ask to be placed on a reinstatement list (RL). For more information about RLs, please see ELM section 354.27. Second, you may also be eligible for reinstatement under Handbook EL-312 section 233.32. Former career employees are generally eligible for reinstatement under section 233.32 for three years from the date of their separations. Moreover, a former employee has unlimited reinstatement eligibility if he or she either (a) served in a career position in the Postal Service for more than three substantially continuous years, or (b) is eligible for veterans’ preference. Reinstatement under section 233.32 is never guaranteed; rather, it is at the discretion of the selecting official.

85. If I am separated through a RIF, may I come back and work for the Postal Service in the future if I am offered a position?
   Yes. Being separated by RIF does not preclude you from applying for vacant positions in the Postal Service as an external applicant. If you are interested in returning to work for the Postal Service, you should monitor external job postings on www.usps.com.

Reinstatement

86. How does the reinstatement register work?
   The organizational change FAQs #38 explains reinstatement eligibility and FAQ #39 explain the reinstatement list.


   For the general rules, see OPM’s Reemployment Priority List regulations at 5 C.F.R §§ 330.201–214 (applicable only to preference-eligible employees) and the Postal Service’s Reinstatement List rules at ELM § 354.272. If you have specific questions, please contact your manager or Human Resources.

Performance Evaluation System (PES)/ Pay for Performance (PFP)

The Postal Blue web site contains EAS PFP Pay Rules at: http://blue.usps.gov/hr/pay-benefits/policies-procedures.htm#pb-pp-pp

87. If my manager is no longer with the Postal Service at the end of the year, who will do my performance review?
   The performance review will be performed by your former manager’s evaluator or your new manager. If you wish, you may ask your manager to conduct a performance review and document/share information about your performance with your new manager before he/she leaves.
88. If I take a downgrade with saved grade/saved salary, am I entitled to PFP increases?
Yes, you will be eligible for PFP salary increases if your salary is below the saved grade maximum during the two-year saved grade period. Depending how close your salary is to the saved grade maximum, some of your PFP increase may be converted into a lump sum payment.

89. If I take a downgrade with saved grade/saved salary from EAS-19 to EAS-17, then what is the maximum that my salary can reach with PFP increases?
You can receive PFP salary increases until you reach the maximum salary of the saved grade position (in this example, EAS-19) during the two-year saved grade period. Depending how close your salary is to the saved grade maximum, some of your PFP increase may be converted into a lump sum payment.

90. What happens if I am separated on August 22, 2015. Will I receive my Pay-For-Performance for FY 2015?
No. Employees must be in an eligible position at the end of the fiscal year – September 30, 2015 – to be eligible for PFP.

91. What happens if I am in a bargaining unit position or other non-eligible postal position at the end of the fiscal year? Will I get PFP for FY 2015?
No. PFP is only provided to employees that are in an eligible position at the end of the fiscal year.