



# United States Department of the Interior

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY  
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## Personnel Bulletin No. 09-04

**SUBJECT:** Presidential Management Fellows Program

**1. Purpose.** This establishes Department of the Interior (DOI) policy for the Department's Presidential Management Fellows (PMF) Program. The Department recognizes the value of the PMF Program as a mechanism for attracting and retaining outstanding men and women with leadership potential. This policy provides for systematic PMF Program practices and procedures to help address the increasing need to bridge competency gaps in the DOI workforce and to replace the Department's managers and supervisors who are becoming eligible for retirement. This policy applies to all DOI managers, supervisors, and PMF Program providers and participants. Additional information about the Federal Government's PMF Program may be found at [www.pmf.opm.gov/Documents/GuideForAgencies.PDF](http://www.pmf.opm.gov/Documents/GuideForAgencies.PDF).

This supersedes Personnel Bulletin 05-04, Presidential Management Fellows Program. Personnel Bulletin 05-04 is cancelled.

**2. Authorities.** Executive Order 12645, 5 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 213.3102 (ii), 5 CFR 362, 5 CFR 531.203 (c), 5 CFR 315.708.

**3. Background.** The Presidential Management Fellows Program, established by Presidential Executive Order 12645, was created in 1977 as a means to attract to Federal service individuals of exceptional management potential from a wide variety of academic disciplines. The U.S. Office of Personnel Management PMF Program Office (OPM Program Office) is responsible for the overall management of the Federal Government program, including nationwide recruitment, PMF orientation training, and a PMF graduation program. Those selected as Presidential Management Fellows receive an initial 2-year Excepted Service appointment, and after successfully completing the program and obtaining certification by the Department's Executive Resources Board, are eligible for conversion to a full time permanent appointment in the competitive service. To be eligible for a PMF appointment, a candidate must:

- a. Complete a graduate course of study by August 31 at a college or university that meets the accreditation requirements in the Office of Personnel Management Operating Manual: Qualification Standards for General Schedule Positions;
- b. Receive the nomination of the dean or academic program director of their qualifying college or university; and
- c. Successfully complete an assessment process administered by OPM and be selected by OPM as a PMF Finalist

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**4. Program Requirements.** PMF appointees count against personnel ceilings. To hire a PMF, supervisors must have an approved permanent full-time position available at the time a selection is made. Additionally, OPM requires payment of a reimbursement fee which covers costs associated with the recruitment, selection, placement, orientation, and graduation of Fellows. Reimbursement fees are paid by the Bureau or Office when the PMF reports for duty. The Department's Deputy Assistant Secretary for Human Capital, Performance and Partnerships, Office of Human Resources (PHR) serves as Program Policy Office and is responsible for developing and implementing PMF program policy and guidance. The Department of the Interior University (DOIU) serves as Departmental Program Coordinator and is responsible for managing and administering all aspects of the Department's PMF Program. The Deputy Assistant Secretary for Human Capital, Performance and Partnerships will provide accountability oversight for the program.

**5. Program Responsibilities.**

**a. DOIU** is the liaison office between the OPM Program Office and DOI Bureau or Office PMF Coordinators. The Departmental PMF Coordinator in DOIU is responsible for monitoring and facilitating recruitment, hiring, and employment policies and procedures across the Department for the PMF program. The PMF Coordinator is responsible for coordinating bureau participation in OPM's annual PMF Job Fair and representing the Department during this process. The PMF Coordinator is responsible for designing and conducting a Program Launch on the DOI mission and structure as early as possible for all newly appointed Fellows as well as designing and conducting a Departmental Graduation for each class of PMFs.

**b. Supervisors** will identify positions in their organizations to be filled through the PMF Program. Supervisors may participate in the annual PMF Job Fair and will be empowered to make on-the-spot PMF selection commitments. To balance the development of Fellows and enhance their performance, supervisors will:

- (1) Develop with the Fellow an Individual Development Plan (IDP) for each PMF selected within 30 days of appointment;
- (2) Design and monitor a Developmental Assignment of 4 to 6 months that is full-time, outside the Fellow's normal duties, and provides managerial or technical responsibilities consistent with the Fellow's IDP;
- (3) If the developmental assignment is performed in the bureau or office in which the PMF is employed, ensure the PMF is provided at least one 30-day rotation outside of the bureau or office.
- (4) Ensure the PMF is provided 80 hours of formal classroom training in each of the two years that are in keeping with the Fellow's IDP and ensure completion of required training;

(5) Prepare performance plans and performance evaluations;

(5) Support the Fellow's participation in mandatory program components, including the Department's Program Launch and Graduation programs, OPM's Orientation program and various developmental activities, including OPM's Career Development Group (CDG) component of the PMF program; and

(6) Convert the Fellow to a permanent full-time position after certification by the Department's Executive Resources Board that the Fellow has successfully completed the program.

**c. Bureau PMF Coordinators** are responsible for advising on and communicating PMF Program requirements to supervisors, and for coordinating their organization's PMF recruitment and appointments. By established deadline dates each year, Bureau PMF Coordinators will advise the DOIU Departmental PMF Coordinator of their projected positions and enter those positions in the OPM automated system, "PMF Projected Position System." At the time of a PMF appointment, Bureau PMF Coordinators will immediately complete OPM Form 1616 (Interagency/Intergovernmental Agreement) to pay the required reimbursement fees, and forward the form to the DOIU Departmental PMF Coordinator for further review and processing. Bureau PMF Coordinators must immediately notify the DOIU Departmental PMF Coordinator of any PMF hires and provide the appointment dates.

**d. PMF appointees** participate with supervisors in developing their Individual Development Plans. Fellows will participate in various OPM and Department-sponsored program activities, such as formal and informal orientations, training, graduation, rotational and shadowing assignments, and other developmental activities. Fellows should participate in OPM's Career Development Group activities and assist with planning and organizing other meetings and workshops that contribute to their development.

**e. DOIU** will conduct an annual Departmental PMF Program Launch. DOIU will develop and design a training curriculum to meet the professional development requirements of the program. DOIU will include Fellows in other developmental activities, such as educational brown bag lunches.

**6. Appointments.** Fellows are appointed to the Excepted Service (5 CFR 213.3102(ii)). Initial appointments may be made at the GS-9 to GS-12 grade level in the General Schedule based on the applicants' qualifications. OPM assesses PMF applicants for general eligibility and initial appointment at the GS-9 grade level. To make an initial appointment above the GS-9 grade level, the Bureau or Office servicing personnel office will determine that the PMF finalist meets the applicable qualification standards for the position at a higher grade level, e.g., GS-11, or GS-12. A higher step within the GS-9 pay range may be permissible if the PMF had prior, higher level Federal civilian service. The Bureau or Office servicing personnel office will determine the

permissible rate based on application of the highest previous rate rule. Bureaus and offices may make superior qualifications appointments above the minimum rate at any grade level covered by this personnel bulletin as long as the increase does not exceed 20 percent of the candidate's existing pay. Superior qualifications appointments at any rate above 20 percent of the candidates existing pay may be effected only with prior approval of the Assistant Secretary for Policy, Management and Budget. Bureaus or Offices must make PMF appointments no later than 12 months after selection as a finalist.

**7. Veterans' Preference.** Veterans' preference is adjudicated by OPM and annotated on the resumes of PMF finalists. Bureaus or Offices will apply Part 302 CFR when a veteran expresses an interest in a PMF position. "Expresses an interest" means a veteran contacts the agency in person, by phone, or provides a resume requesting consideration for a PMF appointment. If the veteran is then not selected, the Bureau or Office will prepare a written justification documenting the reason(s) why the veteran was not qualified or did not meet the criteria for the position. A copy of the justification will be provided to the veteran, if requested. A request by a Bureau or Office to pass over a preference eligible who has a compensable service-connected disability of 30 percent or more must be sent to the Department for review. The Department will assess the case. Final approval is required by OPM to sustain a pass over request.

**8. Promotions.** Bureaus or Offices may promote a current PMF when it is determined that the incumbent meets the appropriate qualification standards for the next higher grade, regardless of the length of time the PMF has served at the current grade level and has performed satisfactorily. Bureaus/Offices must establish career ladders with target positions. The career ladder and target position may be changed or modified during the fellowship. Promotions are permitted during the Fellowship up to the GS-13 level or equivalent although Fellows may be appointed to career ladders beyond the GS-13 level. Career ladder promotions above the GS-13 can occur only on or after the date of conversion to the permanent position. Conversions to competitive service appointments are not allowed prior to successful completion of the requirements of the program and the Executive Review Board certification of the 2-year appointment.

**9. Individual Development Plan (IDP).** A Fellow's IDP will be completed within 30 days after the PMF enters on duty. Supervisors will prepare the IDP in consultation with the Fellow. IDPs are designed for the 2-year appointment and tailored to the competencies of the occupation or functional discipline in which the Fellow is targeted to be placed. As necessary, IDPs should be updated to include previously unforeseen training and development requirements.

**10. Orientation, Training and Development.** Supervisors will provide a minimum of 80 hours per year of formal classroom training for each Fellow. OPM-sponsored PMF training and the Department's PMF training count toward the 160 hour requirement. Fellows will attend the following training:

**a. OPM's Orientation Training Program (24 hours).** Each PMF will complete this training

during the first year of employment. This orientation session provides an overview of the Federal government's PMF program and Federal government operations, and the session provides valuable networking opportunities.

**b. DOI Program Launch** (24 hours) conducted by DOIU. To be completed during the first year, this training covers the Department's mission, organizational structure, and strategic plans.

**c. OPM's PMF Program Office** training forums and graduation ceremony (16 hours) to be completed during the second PMF year.

**11. Developmental Activities.** In addition to formal training, development includes activities such as: on-the-job training, mentoring sessions, career management counseling, rotational assignments, educational brown bag lunches, cross training, career broadening assignments, and attendance at conferences, workshops, and off-site meetings. Bureaus or Offices may provide additional informal training and development through participation in other activities, such as:

**a. Career Development Groups.** Career Development Groups are established by the OPM Program Office to provide educational and developmental activities, programs and experiences for Fellows within assigned groups. Fellows should participate in Career Development Groups to enhance their training and development and to network with other Fellows.

**b. Shadowing Assignments.** Fellows may complete shadowing assignments of short duration, such as one week. By shadowing managers, Fellows gain insight regarding the scope of managerial responsibilities and management approaches.

**c. Readings and Seminars.** Fellows may meet informally with their supervisors, organizational staff and other Fellows to discuss books or articles on areas of interest such as public administration and management and natural resource conservation.

**d. Meet-the-Manager Sessions.** Fellows may meet with other managers outside their organizations to discuss managerial duties and responsibilities, current Departmental issues and recommendations regarding the Fellow's career development.

**e. Program Impact Paper.** At the end of the first and second years of the program, Fellows may be asked to prepare a short paper discussing their experiences and observations.

**12. Performance Management.** When establishing performance plans and accomplishing annual performance appraisals for Fellows, supervisors will adhere to policy guidance in 370 Departmental Manual, Chapter 430, Performance Appraisal System. During the program, a two-way feedback process between the supervisor and the Fellow should be implemented to address the Fellow's developmental progress and the adequacy of development experiences. Supervisors must monitor the Fellow's work progress and provide feedback on how well the Fellow is

performing in meeting the learning objectives of the IDP. Supervisors must also identify areas needing improvement so that any less than fully successful performance can be addressed and corrected before the end of an appraisal period. Fellows must be evaluated and rated satisfactorily on their work performance prior to advancement in grade levels, and prior to conversion to the competitive service.

**13. Developmental/Rotational Assignments.** Developmental assignments are intended to broaden the Fellow's perspectives on the work of the Department, produce a more insightful employee and eventually a more effective leader. Bureaus or Offices must provide a PMF at least one developmental assignment of 4 to 6 months with full-time management or technical responsibilities consistent with the Fellow's IDP. Other rotational assignments of 1 to 6 months to other occupations or functional areas are encouraged, but are scheduled at the discretion of the supervisor and the PMF. The nature of the rotational assignment should be mutually agreed upon by the supervisor and the PMF. While rotational assignments may not directly relate to the Fellow's present position or current field, assignments will relate to the overall career path identified by the supervisor and PMF in the IDP. The Fellow's supervisor and host organizations should mutually agree on the timing of rotational assignments to preclude conflict with work in the home organization. If the developmental assignment is not performed outside the home bureau or equivalent office, a separate rotational assignment of at least 30 days will be established and completed outside the home bureau or equivalent office. A performance plan will be developed for the developmental assignment and any other rotational assignment scheduled to last longer than 120 days. (Developmental or rotational assignments are considered the same in this paragraph.)

In coordination with the PMF and the supervisor, the host organization will prepare a written plan for the Fellow's developmental assignment to include:

- a. Dates of the assignment;
- b. Duties that the PMF will perform;
- c. Relationship of the developmental assignment to the Fellow's career goals;
- d. How the Fellow's performance will be appraised during the assignment; and
- e. Long-term benefit to the Department of the Fellow's developmental experience.

**14. Program Mentors.** PMF Program mentors are senior-graded volunteers who can provide leadership, insight and guidance to Fellows during their internships and thereafter. Mentors serve as role models and personal advisors to convey positive information about the Department's mission, policies, rules and regulations. PMF supervisors and PMF coordinators will assist Fellows in identifying appropriate mentors and will ensure the PMF/mentor relationship has been established. Fellows may also be paired with other skilled and experienced

employees for networking and developing other insights and skills in preparation for managerial and supervisory positions.

**15. Certification of Completion.** Upon a Fellow's completion of the Program, the Department's Executive Review Board must evaluate each Fellow and determine whether it can certify in writing that he or she has met all of the requirements of the Program, including the performance and developmental expectations set forth in the individual's performance plan and IDP and, if so, make that certification. All certifications are forwarded to the DOIU Departmental Program Coordinator for final processing.

**16. Conversions.** Decisions to convert Fellows to permanent appointments are based on satisfactory completion of the program and certification by the Executive Review Board. Conversions to competitive service appointments are not allowed prior to successful completion of the requirements of the program and the Executive Review Board certification of the 2-year appointment. Fellows are noncompetitively converted to full time career or career conditional appointments. In rare instances, a Fellow may be converted to a position different than the target position based upon the needs of the agency subject to meeting qualification requirements. Conversions are effective on the date of the expiration of the appointment, including extensions.

**17. Appointment Extensions.** Under rare and unusual circumstances, heads of Bureaus or Offices may extend the 2-year appointment for up to 120 days. Requests for extensions for more than 120 days and up to 1 year must be submitted in writing to OPM and received at least 90 days before the end of the appointment. Requests are submitted to the DOIU Departmental PMF Coordinator. The request will include specific reasons for requesting the scheduled extension. At anytime during an extension, the PMF may be converted to a career or career conditional appointment if performance is satisfactory and certification is granted by the Executive Review Board.

**18. Terminations.** Either the supervisor or Fellow can terminate the PMF appointment. If a proposed termination is initiated by the supervisor, the basis of the termination will be related to misconduct, poor performance, or suitability. Supervisors must notify the Fellow and the DOIU Departmental PMF Coordinator in writing at least 30 calendar days before the scheduled end of the appointment. The DOIU Departmental PMF Coordinator will inform the Departmental Human Resources Program Policy Office of the termination action within 30 calendar days of the end of the appointment. Fellows terminated from the program may not be reappointed to the PMF Program.

**19. Movement to Other Federal Agencies.** Fellows may move from one agency to another during their appointment. However, movement must be without a break in service, and the 2-year appointment is continued at the new agency.

**20. Resignation.** Fellows who resign during their appointment do not have reinstatement eligibility for competitive service positions and cannot be reinstated into the PMF program.

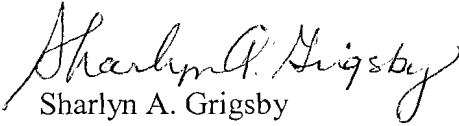
**21. Student Loan Repayment Program.** Bureaus or Offices are authorized to repay Federally-insured student loans. The Departmental policy can be found in Personnel Bulletin Number 02-4, and 04-08, Departmental Policy on the Student Loan Repayment Benefit Plan.

**22. Citizenship.** Non-citizens may receive PMF appointments and complete a 2-year appointment, but they **must** possess full United States (U.S.) citizenship at the time of conversion to permanent, competitive appointments. Regulations do not permit the extension of an appointment for the purpose of obtaining U.S. citizenship. Without obtaining U.S. citizenship after a 2-year period, Fellows must be terminated from the program.

**23. Fully Successful Performance.** To progress in a grade and complete the program, Fellows must attain a rating of at least “Fully Successful” for all the elements established in their performance plans. Supervisors cannot allow a conversion action to occur if the Fellow’s performance is less than fully successful.

**24. Travel Expenses.** Agencies are authorized, but not required, to pay travel expenses for pre-employment interviews and first post duty stations. However, travel expenses incurred to attend OPM and Departmental-sponsored training, are responsibilities of the Bureau or Office.

The PMF Program Policy Officer is Rosemary Downing, who can be reached at (202) 208-4231, or at [rosemary.downing@ios.doi.gov](mailto:rosemary.downing@ios.doi.gov). The PMF Departmental Program Coordinator is Alisa Ballew Rawlins, who can be reached at (202) 219-0097, or at [alisa\\_b\\_rawlins@nbc.gov](mailto:alisa_b_rawlins@nbc.gov).

  
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