

REDUCTION IN FORCE:

The Office of Personnel Management has published two handbooks which provide an in depth discussion of all aspects of the reduction in force and transfer of function process. One handbook provides Guidance, and the other describes Required Procedures. For definitive guidance on any aspect of reduction in force, see the OPM Handbooks at <http://www.opm.gov>

In General, Reduction in Force procedures are used when it is necessary to reduce the number of civilian employees due to budget constraints and/or a reduction in personnel authorizations, lack of work, reorganization, reclassification of an employee position due to erosion of duties under certain circumstances. An employee placement rights are determined using RIF seniority rules. These rules require the grouping of employees by tenure group, subgroup, and adjusted service computation date, as defined below.

(1) Tenure Group

Career employees (with 3 or more years of service)
Career-conditional employees (with less than 3 years of service)
Term employees (on time-limited appointments for more than 1 year)

(2) Subgroup

Disabled Veterans (with 30 percent compensable disability)
Veterans (other veterans who meet eligibility for veterans preference)
Nonveterans (or veterans such as most retired military who are not eligible for veteran preference) Adjusted SCD - Length of creditable service plus additional service credit for the last 3 annual performance appraisals granted within the preceding 4 years. Exceptional ratings add 20 years to the service computation date (SCD); Highly Successful ratings add 16 years; and Fully Successful ratings add 12 years. The average years given for the last 3 ratings is then added to creditable service.

The seniority order of RIF considers all the above factors in successive order. Employees are first placed in tenure groups, with each group having higher seniority than the next group(s) (i.e., Career first, Career-conditional second, and Term last). Within each of the tenure groups, employees are then placed in order by subgroup (i.e., Disabled Veterans first, Veterans second, and Nonveterans last). Finally, employees within each tenure group and subgroup are arranged in order by their service computation date, as adjusted for performance appraisals.

After arranging employees in RIF seniority, placements are determined using three methods: displacement, bumping, and retreating.

(1) Displacement occurs when the most senior employee in a particular competitive level, whose job is abolished, displaces or takes the job of the most junior employee in the same competitive level. (A competitive level (CL) is a grouping of jobs in the same pay plan, series, and grade with essentially the same duties or qualifications.)

(2) Bumping occurs when an employee whose job is abolished, or who is displaced from their job, bumps an employee in a lower tenure group or

subgroup, provided they are fully qualified for the junior employee's position. (Only permanent employees can bump; Term employees have no such rights.)

(3) Retreating occurs when an employee whose job is abolished, or who is displaced from their job, retreats to a position that is essentially the same as one previously held, that is occupied by an employee in the same tenure group and subgroup. (Term employees have no retreat rights.)

When bumping and retreating, employees can normally be placed at their same grade level or no more than three grade intervals lower than their current grade.

Prior to a RIF , management may choose to use all, some, or no vacancies in the RIF process. If management chooses to use vacancies in a RIF , the SECPOC may offer vacancies in lieu of displacement, bumping, and/or retreating. Employees affected by RIF must be given advance notice of their RIF placement (or separation if no placements are available) at least 60 days before the effective date of RIF .

As shown by the above explanations, RIF procedures and placements involve a series of complex steps. If you are affected by a formal RIF action, these rules and others will be explained to you in detail.