

**MEDICAL RESEARCH & MATERIEL COMMAND
LABORATORY PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT DEMONSTRATION
PROJECT**

**Hiring Engineers and Scientists with an Advanced Degree Using Direct
Hire Authority [DHA]
Under Section 1108, 2009 National Defense Authorization
Act and Under Section 1107, 2014 National Defense
Authorization Act**

PURPOSE AND SCOPE

To establish implementing guidance for permanent or term appointments to Engineer and Scientist [E&S] positions (Appendix B) in the DB-02 through DB-04 pay bands or grades GS-09 through GS-15. The authority is for candidates with **advanced degrees** whose combination of education and experience qualifies them for such appointments. The authority may be used at Professional Society meetings, recruitment booths, during university/college recruitment trips, etc., and may be used until the annual allocation of 5% for the entire Command is exhausted. Current employees initially appointed to a term position under delegated examining may be converted to a permanent appointment via DHA, if they meet eligibility requirements, and DHA allocation is available. Managers who wish to use DHA to initially hire an individual on a term appointment via DHA MUST request and obtain a second DHA allocation in order to convert individual from term to permanent appointment. Note: Management retains the option to convert individuals on a term appointment who initially competed under delegated examining to a permanent position via PDP rules.

GENERAL

Eligibility Requirements: Candidate must be a U.S. citizen; have an advanced degree in engineering or science, i.e., master's or higher, from an accredited institution in a field of study directly related to the duties of the position being filled; and meet OPM qualification requirements for appointment to a position in a series listed in Appendix A.

Application Procedure: The candidate must submit a resume/Curriculum Vitae and a copy of their college transcripts from an accredited institution. Candidate may also be required to submit a list of publications, if requested by the selecting official.

RESPONSIBILITIES AND PROCEDURES

1. The USAMRMC HQs will be responsible for maintaining the 5% annual allocation for the Command. The USAMRMC units must contact the USAMRMC DCSPER to request an allocation when interested in hiring an engineer or scientist using the E&S DHA. The request must include the position description, resume of candidate if not currently working for MRMC, statement of whether the candidate is currently employed with the Federal government and if so where, if the position will be filled as TERM or permanent, the name of the requesting official, the name of the hiring official, and a justification as to why DHA is being requested. The justification needs

to be specific in regards to the impact of the position to the mission and the criticality of filling the position using DHA vice the traditional hiring process (NOTE: Incomplete requests will be returned to the unit without action). The information provided will be evaluated by the Principal Assistant for Research and Technology in making his recommendation to the Commanding General as to the approval of the DHA allocation. If an allocation is available and granted, the unit will receive an allocation number which must be entered in Part D of the Request for Personnel Action (RPA) as described in paragraph #3 below. If the unit does not use the DHA allocation within 90 days from the date the CG approved it, the unit forfeits use of the DHA allocation and must seek another recruitment method to fill the position.

2. USAMRMC HQs will post a continuous public notice [Appendix C] on the USAMRMC HQs website, along with a document that outlines the Incentives, Benefits and Continuing Education Opportunities [Appendix D]. When recruiting for talent at job fairs, during university/college recruitment trips, etc., a public notice [Appendix E] should be provided to the university/college or job fair location 1-2 days in advance of the event for publication, outlining more specifics about the position for which seeking qualified candidates. While on-site at the recruiting event, copies of Appendices D and E should be available for potential candidates.
3. RPA submission.
 - A) Existing position description. The USAMRMC unit will submit a Request for Personnel Action (RPA) to the CPAC prior to using the authority. The RPA, Part D, must include the following citation: “E&S DHA – Advanced Degree, DHA Allocation # _____, approved (date CG approved the DHA request).” In addition, ensure all required information regarding the position and recruitment effort is properly annotated and included with the RPA, i.e., completed Gatekeeper. The RPA **must** be received in the CPAC **5 business days** prior to using the DHA if the selecting official is using an existing classified position description. Upon receipt of the RPA, the CPAC will conduct a cursory classification review and check the DoD Priority Placement Program (PPP) and Reemployment Priority List (RPL) for PPP/RPL matches before a tentative job offer is extended. If there is a name request, i.e., management has a candidate he/she wishes to consider for hire, the CPAC will do a one-time PPP clear. If there is NO name request, the CPAC will continually clear PPP until management submits the necessary information to begin the pre-employment process. It is strongly recommended the selecting official contact the servicing CPAC HR Specialist to let them know the RPA is being submitted and to provide them any additional information needed to successfully complete the hiring action. Failure to notify the CPAC Specialist in advance may result in delaying the DHA process.
 - B) New Position Description. The USAMRMC unit will submit a Request for Personnel Action (RPA) to the CPAC prior to using the authority. The RPA, Part D, must include the following citation: “E&S DHA – Advanced Degree, DHA Allocation # _____, approved (date CG approved the DHA request).” In addition, ensure all required information regarding the position and recruitment effort is properly annotated and included with the RPA, i.e., completed Gatekeeper. When the position description is new, the RPA **must** be received in the CPAC **20 business days** prior to using the DHA.

This will allow the CPAC time to properly classify the position, build new specialty codes as necessary, and check the DoD Priority Placement Program (PPP) and Reemployment Priority List (RPL) for PPP/RPL matches before a tentative job offer is extended. If there is a name request, i.e., management has already found the candidate he/she wishes to hire, the CPAC will do a one-time PPP clear. If there is NO name request, the CPAC will continually clear PPP until management submits the necessary information on their selectee to begin the pre-employment process. It is strongly recommended the selecting official contact the servicing CPAC HR Specialist to let them know the RPA is being submitted and to provide them any additional information needed to successfully complete the action. Failure to notify the CPAC Specialist in advance may result in delaying the DHA process.

C) For DB positions, the guidance outlined in PDP Policy # 16, DB Position Review, will be followed.

4. When on-site at the recruiting event, it is management's responsibility to retrieve a copy of the candidate's transcripts documenting an advanced degree in the appropriate engineering or science discipline from an accredited institution, and that any required experience is at the appropriate GS/pay band-equivalent level. The servicing CPAC HR Specialist will assist in making these determinations. **No tentative offer of employment will be made until the CPAC confirms mandatory placement programs (PPP and RPL) have been cleared.** The tentative job offer may be made verbally but must be followed up in writing [Appendix F]. **NOTE: the CPAC will need an official transcript from the college or university before a job offer may be finalized. In addition, if the education was acquired outside of the United States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, a trust territory of the Pacific Islands or any territory of possession of the U.S., the education must be evaluated for foreign equivalency to that gained in conventional U.S. education programs. For more information, go to <http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ous/international/usnei/us/edlite-visitus-forrecog.html>**
5. Any CPAC official, or USAMRMC, USAMRIID, USAMRICD, USACEHR, USARIEM, USAARL, USAISR, or WRAIR employee designated in writing as so authorized [Appendix G] may make a **tentative** job offer to a candidate meeting the eligibility and qualification requirements. Should a candidate not meet the eligibility or qualification requirements after a tentative job offer is extended, JAG review will be required to withdraw the job offer.
6. Once a tentative job offer is accepted, the CPAC will begin the pre-employment process, i.e., clearing security, medical, etc. As soon as all applicable rules and regulations have been applied such as confirmation of eligibility, clearance of mandatory placement programs, security, etc., the **official job offer will be extended and will only be made by the CPAC.**
7. A "Quick Guide" for E&S DHA Advanced Degree is available at Appendix A. This guide provides an overview of the process.

8. POC – MRMC PDP Manager

9. Enclosures

1. Appendix A – Quick Guide for E&S DHA-Advanced Degree
2. Appendix B – E&S DHA Covered Occupational Series
3. Appendix C – Public Notice – MRMC and Unit Websites
4. Appendix D – Incentives, Benefits and Continuing Education Opportunities
5. Appendix E – Public Notice – Recruiting Event
6. Appendix F – Tentative Job Offer Memo
7. Appendix G – Designation Memo to Make Tentative Job Offers

JOHN F. GLENN, PH.D.
Principal Assistant for
Research and Technology

[Appendix A]

QUICK GUIDE FOR E&S DHA-Advanced Degree

Step 1. Determine the need.

Determine the need to fill a vacancy using the E&S DHA. Contact the USAMRMC DCSPER to obtain an allocation.

Step 2. Contact your servicing CPAC HR Specialist to alert them of the need for recruitment via DHA.

Step 3. Ensure a public notice is posted at the recruitment event 1-2 days prior.

Step 4. Submit the RPA w/ required information and ensure position description is established. If not, work with the CPAC to establish the job description 20 days prior to the recruitment event. See the implementing guidance for the specific timelines.

Step 5. When you find a qualified candidate you are interested in hiring, you may ONLY extend a tentative job offer. Follow the guidance outlined in the implementing plan.

Step 6. Notify CPAC of selection. CPAC will complete pre-employment process. When all pre-employment requirements are met, the CPAC will extend the final job offer and establish an EOD date.

[Appendix B]

E&S DHA-Advanced Degree Covered Occupational Series.

0110 Economist
0180 Psychology
0190 Anthropologist
0401 Biologist
0403 Microbiologist
0405 Pharmacology
0408 Ecologist
0410 Zoologist
0413 Physiology
0414 Entomologist
0415 Toxicology
0440 Genetics
0601 General Health Science
0602 Medical Officer
0603 Physicians Assistant
0610 Nurse
0630 Dietitian and Nutritionist
0633 Physical Therapist
0644 Medical Technologist
0662 Optometrist
0665 Speech Pathology and Audiology
0680 Dental Officer
0701 Veterinary Medical Science
0801 General Engineer
0808 Architecture
0830 Mechanical Engineer
0855 Electronics Engineer
0858 Biomedical Engineer
1301 Physical Scientist
1306 Health Physics
1310 Physicist
1320 Chemist
1520 Mathematician
1529 Mathematical Statistician
1530 Statistician

[Appendix C]

US ARMY MEDICAL RESEARCH AND MATERIEL COMMAND (USAMRMC)

CIVILIAN EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR SCIENTISTS AND ENGINEERS WITH an ADVANCED DEGREE

******ACCEPT THE CHALLENGE!******

USAMRMC serves as Army's medical materiel developer, with responsibility for medical research, development, and acquisition and medical logistics management. Highly qualified scientists work in one of the six medical research laboratories that execute the science and technology program to investigate medical solutions for the battlefield with a focus on various areas of biomedical research, including military infectious diseases, combat casualty care, military operational medicine, medical chemical and biological defense, and clinical and rehabilitative medicine. The USAMRMC's expertise in these critical areas helps establish and maintain the capabilities the Army needs to fight and win on the battlefield. Become a member of the USAMRMC community whose mission is to ensure our armed forces remain in optimal health and are equipped to protect themselves from disease and injury, particularly on the battlefield. The USAMRMC Headquarters is located at Fort Detrick, Frederick, MD, with laboratories located at Fort Detrick, MD; Silver Spring, MD; Fort Rucker, AL; Natick, MA; Fort Sam Houston, San Antonio, TX and Aberdeen Proving Ground, MD.

The USAMRMC motto, "Protect, Project, Sustain," emphasizes the Command's priorities in support of the war fighter. Visit the MRMC's website at <https://mrmc.amedd.army.mil/index.cfm> to explore the various areas of research conducted by MRMC.

******APPLY TODAY! ******

The USAMRMC periodically has openings in a wide range of scientific and engineering positions for US Citizens with advanced degrees (Master's or higher). Scientific disciplines in demand include Biologist, Microbiologist, and Chemist. Resumes will be accepted during special recruitment events, such as job fairs, or may be emailed to usarmy.detrick.medcom-usamrmc.list.dha@mail.mil. If emailing your resume, be sure to include the location(s) you are interested in being considered for employment. All resumes and supporting documentation become the property of the Department of the Army and will not be returned once submitted. For a listing of upcoming recruitment events, go to MRMC's website above.

US Citizenship is required for employment with the Department of the Army. Candidates must meet the minimum qualification standards as described in OPM's operating manual, "Qualification Standards for General Schedule Positions" and possess a Master's or higher degree from an accredited college or university in a field of scientific or engineering study directly related to the position for which applying; and meet any selective placement factor identified for the position to be filled. Salary is set commensurate with selectee's background, experience and market considerations. The USAMRMC is under an approved Department of Defense Laboratory Personnel Demonstration Project.

USAMRMC is an EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER

All qualified candidates will receive consideration without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, marital status, political affiliation, sexual orientation, or any other non-merit factor.

[Appendix D]

Supplemental Information **Information should be reviewed to ensure it is current prior to sharing with potential candidates**

Incentives, Benefits, and Continuing Education Opportunities

The following incentives, benefits and continuing education opportunities may be available based on regulatory guidelines and granted at management's discretion.

Incentives

In addition to the pay levels associated with appointments under the Direct Hire Authority and payment of travel and relocation expenses, the following incentives that may be available are:

a. Recruitment Incentive: Up to 100% of initial salary in exchange for a 4-year commitment. The Selecting Official must submit a request for approval of this incentive to the USAMRMC Principal Assistant for Research and Technology [Dr. John Glenn] specifying that, absent the incentive, the Selecting Official would encounter difficulty in filling the position. The Selecting Official must consider and document the following, as applicable: [a] success of recent efforts to recruit candidates for similar positions, [b] recent turnover in similar positions, [c] labor-market factors, [d] special qualifications needed in the position, and [e] the practicality of using pay setting alone or in combination with an incentive.

b. Repayment of Qualifying Student Loans: Up to \$10,000 per year with a maximum of \$60,000 in a lifetime. In order to use this incentive for recruitment purposes, a determination to offer the incentive must be made before the employee enters on duty. Written justification is required and must include the following statement: "In the absence of student loan repayment, USAMRMC would encounter difficulty in filling the position or retaining an employee in that position." A list of qualifying student loans is listed at the end of this Appendix.

Reimbursement for Travel and Relocation Expenses

A new appointee [i.e., new to federal service], moving from his/her place of actual residence at the time of appointment, may be reimbursed for a portion of moving expenses; i.e., for [a] travel, transportation, and mileage for the appointee and his/her family; [b] transportation and temporary storage of household goods, normally up to 18,000 pounds; and [c] per diem for the newly appointed employee [employee only, not the family, and only for the time required to travel from the actual residence to the new duty station].

New appointees are not entitled to reimbursement for other expenses incurred as a consequence of relocation, although these entitlements are available for current federal employees. Real estate expenses, house hunting trips, temporary quarters subsistence, and miscellaneous expenses are among the items that are not allowed for new appointees.

Benefits

Federal positions provide access to a comprehensive benefit package that may include: retirement plan; health, life, long-term care, dental, and vision insurances; dependant and health care flexible spending accounts; and a Thrift Savings Plan (a 401-type savings plan).

a. FERS [Federal Employee Retirement System]. This is a retirement plan that provides benefits from three different sources: a *Basic Benefit Plan*, *Social Security*, and the *Thrift Savings Plan* [TSP]. Two of the three parts of FERS [Social Security and the TSP] are “portable”; i.e., they can go with the employee to his/her next job if leaving federal service before retirement. For more information on FERS, see <http://www.opm.gov/retire/pre/fers/index.asp>

b. FEHB [Federal Employees Health Benefits]. Employees may enroll in a health insurance plan at the time of appointment. Under FEHB, pre-existing medical conditions may not be excluded from coverage. Employees may elect from a variety of plans and coverages. Another advantage is that they pay their portion of premium cost with pre-tax dollars. The government pays a significant portion [roughly three-fourths] of the cost of FEHB coverage. For more information on health insurance, see <http://www.opm.gov/insure/health/>.

c. FEGLI [Federal Employee Group Life Insurance]. FEGLI provides group term life insurance. As such, it does not build up cash value or paid-up value. It consists of basic life insurance coverage and three options for additional coverage, including one for spouses and children. New federal employees are automatically covered by basic life insurance unless they waive coverage. Enrollment for optional insurance is not automatic. For more information on life insurance, see <http://www.opm.gov/insure/life/index.asp>.

d. FLTCIP [Federal Long-Term Care Insurance Program]. This program provides long-term care insurance to help pay for costs of care when enrollees need help with activities they perform every day, or should they develop a severe cognitive impairment, such as Alzheimer’s disease. For more information about the FLTCIP, please contact Long-Term Care Partners at [800] 582-3337, or visit their website at www.ltcfeds.com.

e. FEDVIP [Federal Employees Dental and Vision Insurance Program]. Employees may enroll in supplemental dental and/or vision coverage at the time of appointment. To learn more, visit the FEDVIP Homepage at <http://www.opm.gov/insure/dental/index.asp> and <http://www.opm.gov/insure/vision/index.asp> and the BENEFEDS website at <https://www.benefeds.com/>.

f. FSA [Flexible Spending Accounts]. These accounts allow employees to set aside pre-tax dollars for out-of-pocket health care and dependent care expenses. Employees may choose either a health care FSA for out-of-pocket medical expenses such as co-pays, over-the-counter medications, etc., and/or a dependent care FSA for child and/or adult daycare expenses. To learn more or enroll, employees must contact FSAFEDS at <https://www.fsafeds.com/fsafeds/index.asp> or by phone at 877-FSAFEDS [372-3337].

g. TSP [Thrift Savings Plan]. This is a retirement savings and investment plan for federal employees. The purpose is to provide retirement income. Federal employees are offered the same type of savings and tax benefits that many private corporations offer their employees under “401[k]” plans. Contributions are made with pre-tax dollars, and there are a variety of investment options. Employees covered by FERS [Federal Employees Retirement System] receive agency automatic contributions immediately after starting employment. In addition, matching contributions begin as soon as the employee begins making contributions. Retirement income from the TSP is dependent on how much is in the account at the time of retirement and withdrawal options selected by the employee. For more information on TSP, see <http://www.tsp.gov/>.

Continuing Education

USAMRMC places great emphasis on continuing education for its engineers and scientists. Graduate-level education opportunities are readily available from institutions nearby and often associated with USAMRMC. Typically, education costs are paid by USAMRMC, and there may be some flexibility to attend classes during duty time.

Additionally, USAMRMC annually considers applications from employees for Long-Term Training opportunities. These opportunities are typically for a year of study at the PhD level with expenses paid by USAMRMC, to include salary while participating in the program.

Qualifying Loans for Repayment of Student Loan Incentive

The Higher Education Act covers three families of loans, such as:

Federal Family Education Loans [FFEL]

- Subsidized Federal Stafford Loans
- Unsubsidized Federal Stafford Loans
- Federal Plus Loans; and
- Federal Consolidation Loans

William D. Ford Direct Loan Programs [Direct Loans]

- Direct Subsidized Stafford Loans
- Direct Unsubsidized Stafford Loans
- Direct PLUS Loans
- Direct Subsidized Consolidation Loans
- Direct Unsubsidized Consolidation Loans

Federal Perkins Loan Program

- National Defense Student Loans [made before July 1, 1972]
- National Direct Student Loans [made between 7/1/72 and 7/1/87]
- Perkins Loans [made after July 1, 1987]

Loans covered under the Public Health Service Act include:

- Loans for Disadvantaged Students [LDS]
- Primary Care Loans [PCL]
- Nursing Student Loans [NSL]
- Health Profession Student Loans [HPSL]
- Health Education Assistance Loans [HEAL]

[Appendix E]

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******APPLY TODAY!******

The USAMRMC periodically has openings in a wide range of scientific and engineering positions for US Citizens with advanced degrees (Master's or higher). Scientific disciplines in demand include Biologist, Microbiologist, and Chemist.

During this event, we are seeking candidates with advanced degree(s) in (MAJOR) to work as a (POSITION TITLE) (GRADE LEVEL) performing the following duties: (DUTIES)

Resumes are being accepted at this event or may be emailed to usarmy.detrick.medcom-usamrmc.list.dha@mail.mil. All resumes and supporting documentation become the property of the Department of the Army and will not be returned once submitted.

US Citizenship is required for employment with the Department of the Army. Candidates must meet the minimum qualification standards as described in OPM's operating manual, "Qualification Standards for General Schedule Positions" and possess a Master's or higher degree from an accredited college or university in a field of scientific or engineering study directly related to the position for

which applying; and meet any selective placement factor identified for the position to be filled. Salary is set commensurate with selectee's background, experience and market considerations. The USAMRMC is under an approved Department of Defense Laboratory Personnel Demonstration Project. This specific public notice will expire on (DATE OF RECRUITING EVENT).

USAMRMC is an EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER

All qualified candidates will receive consideration without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, marital status, political affiliation, sexual orientation, or any other non-merit factor.

[Appendix F]

OFFICE SYMBOL

Date

MEMORANDUM FOR [fill in name of individual]

SUBJECT: Tentative Job Offer

I am extremely pleased to inform you that you have been tentatively selected for the position of [fill in title and pay band of position; e.g., Research Civil Engineer, DB04] with the [fill in name of laboratory]. This offer is based on our Direct Hire Authority under Section 1108, 2009 National Defense Authorization Act, which requires an advanced degree and position-appropriate experience. For GS positions this offer is based on our Direct Hire Authority under Section 1107, 0014 National Defense Authorization Act, which requires an advanced degree.

The starting salary for your position will be [state in terms appropriate to the time frame of the offer; e.g., an exact amount, such as “\$98,000”, if it can be specified at the time, or language such as “the equivalent of GS12, step 10, on the salary table in effect at the time of your appointment”]. Your reporting date will be established when all eligibility and pre-employment requirements have been met. [In addition, we are offering you assistance in repayment of qualifying student loans [see the attached listing of qualifying student loans] in the amount of { \$ } per year with a lifetime maximum of { \$ }, provided you sign an agreement to work for the [fill in name of laboratory] for at least three years, you do not voluntarily end your employment with the [fill in name of laboratory] during this period, your job performance remains at an acceptable level, and you are not separated for reasons of misconduct or unacceptable performance.] [Also included in this offer is a one-time cash recruitment incentive of { }% of your initial salary in exchange for a four-year service commitment from you.] [Finally, we will reimburse you for a portion of your moving expenses incurred in relocating to your duty station. The Civilian Personnel Advisory Center (CPAC) will provide specifics about this benefit when they extend the official job offer.]

I am looking forward to having you as part of our team. The CPAC will be in touch with you shortly to obtain any additional information requested to verify your eligibility and make an official job offer. Please do not take any irrevocable action, to include resigning from your

current position or selling your home, prior to receiving an official job offer from the CPAC.
Should you have any questions about this tentative job offer, you can contact me directly at [fill
in phone number and e-mail address of Selecting Official].

Name of Selecting Official
Title

CF: Civilian Personnel Advisory Center

[NOTE: The sentences highlighted above in this example of a written tentative job offer are to illustrate how to include an incentive as part of the job offer. The determination of whether to include any incentives must be made separately by the appropriate officials within USAMRMC in accordance with the policies governing such incentives.]

[Appendix G]

MCMR-RT

Date

MEMORANDUM FOR [fill in name of individual]

SUBJECT: Designation to Make Tentative Job Offers Under the Direct Hire Authority-Advanced Degree

1. You are hereby authorized to make, on my behalf, tentative job offers to candidates using the Direct Hire Authority [DHA] granted by Section 1108, 2009 National Defense Authorization Act (for PDP positions) or Direct Hire Authority [DHA] granted by Section 1107, 2014 National Defense Authorization Act (for GS positions) whom you determine meet the eligibility requirements for appointment, as specified in the enclosed guidance. When in doubt as to whether the candidate meets eligibility or qualification requirements, you must consult the Fort Detrick Civilian Personnel Advisory Center (CPAC). You may sign written tentative job offers on my behalf.
2. This authorization is effective until I either revoke it in writing, I am no longer in my current position, or you are no longer in your current position.
3. You must coordinate with the USAMRMC DCSHR Office to ensure a Direct Hire allocation is available for use. Please coordinate your activities in this regard with our CPAC Specialist and particularly notify him/her, as far in advance as possible, of your intent to exercise this authority so that he/she can assist you in the timely processing of applications. You are reminded that ***only the Fort Detrick CPAC can make official job offers*** under the DHA.

Encl

JOHN F. GLENN, PH.D.
Principal Assistant for
Research and Technology

CF: Civilian Personnel Advisory Center
MRMC-PMC/Christi Roberts