

**BY ORDER OF THE
SECRETARY OF THE AIR FORCE**

**DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
INSTRUCTION 36-120**



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Personnel

**CIVILIAN PERSONNEL
MANAGEMENT WORKFORCE
SHAPING POLICY GUIDANCE FOR
REDUCTION IN FORCE AND
TRANSFER OF FUNCTION**

COMPLIANCE WITH THIS PUBLICATION IS MANDATORY

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This publication implements Department of the Air Force Policy Directive (DAFPD) 36-1, *Appropriated Funds Civilian Management and Administration*, and is consistent with Department of Defense Instruction (DoDI) 1400.25, Volume 351, *DoD Civilian Personnel Management System: Reduction in Force*. This publication applies to Appropriated Fund Title 5 employees, Title 10 employees, Air Force Reserve Command employees, Air National Guard employees, and employees of Combatant Commands (CCMDs) supported by the United States Air Force (USAF) or United States Space Force (USSF). It does not apply to positions in the Senior Executive Service, Non-Appropriated Fund employees, and employees covered by an alternative personnel system (e.g., the Acquisition Demonstration; Science and Technology Reinvention Laboratories; and the Defense Civilian Intelligence Personnel System). The authorities to waive wing/Space Force equivalent/unit level requirements in this publication are identified with a Tier (“T-0, T-1, T-2, T-3”) number following the compliance statement. See Department of the Air Force Instruction (DAFI) 33-360, *Publications and Forms Management*, for a description of the authorities associated with the Tier numbers. Submit requests for waivers through the chain of command to the appropriate Tier waiver approval authority, or alternately, to the requestor’s commander for non-tiered compliance items. Ensure all records generated as a result of processes prescribed in this publication adhere to Air Force Instruction (AFI) 33-322, *Records Management and Information Governance Program*, and are disposed of in accordance with the Air Force Records Disposition Schedule, which is located in the Air Force Records Information Management

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Chapter 1

CIVILIAN PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT WORKFORCE SHAPING OVERVIEW

1.1. Overview . This instruction establishes guidance, delegates authority, assigns responsibilities, defines roles, and prescribes procedures concerning Reduction in Force (RIF) and Transfer of Function (TOF) actions for appropriated funds positions.

1.2. Department of the Air Force Guidance. RIF and TOF shall be conducted in a manner that minimizes adverse impact on employees and limits disruption to the operations of as few organizations as possible, consistent with employees' assignment and displacement rights.

Chapter 2

GENERAL GUIDANCE

2.1. Approving Authority. Approval and announcement of RIF and voluntary separation programs is delegated to Deputy Chief of Staff of the Air Force, Manpower, Personnel and Services (AF/A1), with the exception of actions specified in Headquarters Air Force Management Directive (HAFMD) 1-24_Addendum-A, *Re-Delegation of Authorities, HAFMD 1-24, Assistant Secretary of the Air Force (Manpower and Reserve Affairs)*.

2.2. Consider Using Workforce Shaping Tools. The proactive use of programs such as Voluntary Separation Incentive Program (VSIP), Voluntary Early Retirement Authority (VERA), waiver of qualifications, and retraining programs, are designed to minimize involuntary separations and are encouraged.

2.3. Outplacement Assistance. Outplacement assistance will be provided for employees affected by RIF or declination of TOF if they cannot be placed within the Department of the Air Force to include registration in the Department of Defense Priority Placement Program (PPP).

Chapter 3

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

3.1. Civilian Force Management Directorate (AF/A1C):

- 3.1.1. Develops policy, manages programs, and provides regulatory guidance and direction pertaining to workforce shaping programs. (T-0).
- 3.1.2. Ensures approval and coordination of all workforce shaping actions and notifications to Congress occur in accordance with DoDI 1400.25-V351. (T-0).

3.2. Civilian Policy and Management (SF/S1C):

- 3.2.1. Coordinate on out-of-cycle VERA/VSIP requests, as applicable to USSF.
- 3.2.2. Coordinate on USSF workforce shaping actions and notifications to Congress.

3.3. Air Force Personnel Center (AFPC):

- 3.3.1. Provides operational guidance and assistance to major commands (MAJCOMs), combatant commands (CCMDs), field commands, (FLDCOMs), direct reporting units, field operating agencies, and Civilian Personnel Sections (CPSs). (T-1).
- 3.3.2. Executes pre-RIF, RIF and post-RIF processes and procedures in accordance with the AFPC Procedures Guide. (T-1).
- 3.3.3. Determines qualifications for RIF assignments to include experience and training, physical requirements and security requirements, and undue interruption determinations. In addition, Air Reserve Technician (ART) positions will require a military qualifications determination from the appropriate military personnel office. (T-1).
- 3.3.4. Obtains additional work years and funding to support retraining programs. (T-3).
- 3.3.5. Accomplishes TOF determinations when a transfer impacts more than two bases across more than two MAJCOMs/FLDCOMs. (T-1).

3.4. Civilian Personnel Section (CPS):

- 3.4.1. Conducts pre-RIF, RIF and post-RIF processes and procedures in accordance with the AFPC Procedures Guide. (T-2).
- 3.4.2. Accomplish TOF determinations when a transfer impacts two bases within a MAJCOM/FLDCOM. The losing and gaining CPSs will coordinate and agree on the final determination. (T-2). See myPers knowledge article regarding Transfer of Function at https://mypers.af.mil/app/answers/detail/a_id/28997 for additional information.
- 3.4.3. Establishes and maintains RIF competitive areas. (T-2).
- 3.4.4. Publicizes competitive areas at least annually and 90 days before conducting a RIF. (T-2).
- 3.4.5. Notifies AFPC of employees within an impacted competitive area who have physical restrictions, unsatisfactory performance, conduct problems, and other non-documented conditions that may affect their RIF placement. (T-2).

3.4.6. Notifies AFPC of employees who will require exceptions to the regular order of release in RIF. **(T-2)**.

3.4.7. Maintains accurate valid vacancy information in the Defense Civilian Personnel Data System (DCPDS) and verifies the accuracy of this information when requesting RIF actions. **(T-2)**.

3.4.8. Requests exceptions to the Department of Air Force standard lines of promotion. **(T-1)**.

3.4.9. Notifies AFPC when RIF assignments may result in “undue interruption” to an impacted organization. The CPS also provides statements from the organization to document the critical elements of the position they believe cannot be learned by a newly assigned employee within 90 days. **(T-2)**.

3.4.10. Notifies AFPC when commanders/management officials approve discretionary exceptions to RIF retention order. **(T-2)**.

3.4.11. Exceptions to the stockpiling of vacancies may be requested if 1) the use of vacancies are mission critical; 2) will not provide a valid RIF assignment right; and 3) will result in skills imbalance or other unique workforce shaping problems. Requests for an exception will be submitted to AFPC for review and forwarded for approval by AF/A1CP. **(T-1)**.

3.5. Commanders and Management Officials:

3.5.1. Conduct pre-RIF and post-RIF processes and procedures in accordance with the AFPC Procedures Guide. **(T-2)**.

3.5.2. Effect workforce shaping actions in the fairest and least disruptive way possible. **(T-0)**. See the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) *Workforce Reshaping Operations Handbook* and the Defense Civilian Personnel Advisory Service (DCPAS) *Workforce Reshaping Guide: DoD Manager’s Guide for Civilian Restructuring and Downsizing*, for additional information.

3.5.3. Waive or modify OPM qualification requirements to place employees in vacancies to avoid RIF, except minimum licensures and/or educational requirements, to assign employees to vacancies both within and outside their competitive area. **(T-0)**. The servicing personnel office and appropriate management officials must agree on the placement. The employee must have the capacity, adaptability, and skills needed to perform the duties of the position. **(T-2)**.

3.5.4. Select displaced Department of the Air Force civilian employees, from other competitive areas for vacancies in their organization to lessen the impact of RIF. **(T-2)**.

3.5.5. Assists and supports the delivery of RIF notices to affected employees within their organization.

3.5.6. Identifies vacancies restricted from fill action and the reason for restriction; i.e., funding limits, manpower reduction and work year utilization. **(T-2)**.

Chapter 4

REDUCTION IN FORCE

4.1. Competitive Areas.

- 4.1.1. USAF and USSF activities in a commuting area serviced by the same CPS constitute one competitive area, regardless of command jurisdiction.
- 4.1.2. USAF and USSF activities within the same commuting area, serviced by different CPSs, are in separate competitive areas.
- 4.1.3. USAF and USSF remote positions outside the commuting area, serviced by the same CPS, are in separate competitive areas determined based on the official remote worksite codified on the Standard Form 50, *Notification of Personnel Action*.
- 4.1.4. Serviced activities of a different agency or DoD are in separate competitive areas.
- 4.1.5. Competitive areas smaller or larger than those described above must be approved by AF/A1C. **(T-1)**. Requests for exceptions are submitted to AF/A1C for approval by the CPS through AFPC.
- 4.1.6. Requests for changes in competitive areas that require OPM approval must be submitted to AF/A1C 90 days prior to the projected issue date of RIF notices. **(T-0)**.
- 4.1.7. Competitive areas must be made a matter of public record by the CPS and information must be readily available to employees and labor organizations. **(T-2)**.
- 4.1.8. Servicing personnel offices must keep employees informed of the competitive area in which they will compete for retention in RIF. **(T-2)**. Competitive areas must therefore be publicized prior to RIF and when changed. **(T-2)**.

4.2. Competitive Levels.

- 4.2.1. Special qualifying conditions for the position will be considered in determining the appropriate competitive levels where applicable. Air Reserve Technician (ART) positions, Personnel Reliability Program positions, and positions with OPM-approved Selective Placement Factors or Federal or state licensure or certification requirements will be in separate competitive levels from those in the same series and grade that do not have the same qualification requirements.
- 4.2.2. See the OPM *Workforce Reshaping Operations Handbook* for additional information.

4.3. Retention Standing.

- 4.3.1. When a single pattern rating is used, the CPF will establish a cut-off date for the acceptance of appraisals prior to submitting the RIF request package to AFPC. **(T-2)** This will preclude the need to rerun a RIF if an employee with an appraisal from a different pattern is added to the rolls. Employees added to the rolls of the competitive area after the established cut-off date will receive credit for performance in the RIF in accordance with the rules for the single rating pattern used.
- 4.3.2. When using a multiple rating pattern, additional retention service credit will be the same for all rating patterns (A through H) to ensure equity.

4.3.3. Additional service credit for employees who do not have three ratings of record during the 4-year period prior to the cut-off date period will be determined by the modal rating for the competitive area. **(T-2)**. For equity purposes, the modal rating is the summary rating level assigned most frequently among the actual ratings of record given in the competitive area.

4.4. RIF Assignment Rights.

4.4.1. Employee assignment rights will be determined by AFPC upon release from a competitive level. **(T-1)**.

4.4.2. Position data within DCPDS will be used to identify available positions to satisfy employee assignment rights and for use in placement in lieu of RIF separation.

4.4.3. Vacant positions at all grade levels in other competitive areas within the USAF and USSF will be used when there are no positions available to satisfy RIF assignment rights and there is no vacancy in the competitive area for placement in lieu of RIF separation. **(T-1)**. Vacancies in other competitive areas on the installation will be considered first and then within the commuting area.

4.4.4. AFPC will use only positions submitted for fill action to identify vacancies for consideration. Both the gaining and losing CPS must agree with the placement offer. **(T-1)**.

4.4.5. Because there is a three-grade or grade-interval limit on assignment rights (except for 30% disabled veterans when determining retreat rights), AFPC will establish USAF and USSF standard lines of promotion for each series and grade. **(T-1)**. These standards will be used for all RIFs unless different lines of promotion are submitted by the CPS.

4.4.6. Pipeline-funded positions are not available for RIF assignment of employees who are not receiving workman's compensation. These positions are funded solely to reemploy employees who are receiving compensation. The funding ends if another employee is placed in the position. Since the position is not expected to last at least 90 days, due to lack of funding, it does not meet the definition of an available position.

4.5. Alternative Offers.

4.5.1. Alternative offers may be made in lieu of RIF separation or other RIF actions for positions within the competitive area or in other Air Force or Space Force competitive areas in and outside the commuting area.

4.5.2. Grade limits that apply when offering an employee their RIF assignment rights do not apply when making an alternate offer in lieu of RIF separation or other RIF action.

4.5.3. Alternative offers to other competitive areas outside the commuting area are not subject to any RIF retention order.

4.6. Use of Vacancies.

4.6.1. Vacancies in different work schedules may be used for placement in lieu of RIF separation when it is determined that an employee has no RIF assignment rights in their present work schedule.

4.6.2. An employee reached for RIF may not displace another employee if an available vacancy exists in the competitive area that will satisfy their assignment rights.

4.6.3. Vacancies in other USAF or USSF competitive areas will be used as alternate RIF offers to place employees to avoid RIF separation. Vacancies will first be considered in competitive areas on the same USAF or USSF installation and then in the same commuting area.

4.6.4. Placement of employees in vacancies serviced by another CPS will be done only with the concurrence of the selecting official. **(T-2)**.

4.6.5. Vacancies within an employee's competitive level and elsewhere in the competitive area will be considered for pre-RIF placement as a management reassignment.

4.6.6. Vacancies in other competitive areas may be used as pre-RIF placement only with the concurrence of the servicing CPS and selecting official.

4.6.7. Vacancies not used for RIF placement may be considered for retraining programs designed to avoid RIF separation.

4.6.8. An employee reached for RIF may not displace another employee if an available vacancy exists that will satisfy the employee's right of assignment.

4.6.9. See the OPM *Workforce Reshaping Operations Handbook* for additional information regarding use of vacancies.

4.7. Qualification Determinations.

4.7.1. The servicing CPS should consult with management officials of vacant positions used for RIF placement when determining whether an employee has the capacity to perform the duties of the position without causing undue interruption to the organization.

4.7.2. If management officials determines that a preference eligible with a compensable, service-connected disability of 30% or more is not able to fulfill the physical requirements of a position, they submit notifications through AFPC to AF/A1C for processing to OPM in accordance with Title 5, Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 351.702 (d). **(T-0)**. See the OPM *Workforce Reshaping Operations Handbook* for additional information.

Chapter 5

TRANSFER OF FUNCTION (TOF)

5.1. See myPers knowledge article regarding Transfer of Function at https://mypers.af.mil/app/answers/detail/a_id/28997 and the OPM Workforce Reshaping Handbook for additional information.

5.2. Volunteers may be used whenever possible in identifying personnel to transfer to competitive areas outside the commuting area. The action will be processed as a management reassignment. (T-1).

5.3. A minimum of 60 days' notice will be given to employees affected by a TOF outside the commuting area. (T-1).

5.4. TOF notices will be prepared by the CPS and sent to the losing management officials for signature and delivery. (T-2).

5.5. Employees who decline TOF will be considered for vacancies within their competitive area, at their present grade and lower grades, from the date of their declination until the date of transfer.

5.6. Employees who decline TOF not included in a concurrent RIF will be considered after RIF candidates for vacancies, at their current grades only, in other Air Force or Space Force competitive areas within the commuting area.

Chapter 6

SEPARATION INCENTIVES

6.1. Out-of-cycle VERA/VSIP requests will be coordinated through the MAJCOM/CCMD to AF/A1CP. The FLDCOMs will route requests through SF/S1C prior to submission to AF/A1CP. (T-1). See MyPers Knowledge Article “Out-of-Cycle Requests Reduction in Force and Voluntary Separation Incentives” at https://mypers.af.mil/app/answers/detail/a_id/50167/kw/50167 for additional information.

6.2. Employee requests to decline/withdraw separating by VERA after signing applicable forms will be forwarded by the CPS through AFPC/DP3C to AF/A1CP for review and approval on a case-by-case basis. (T-1).

6.2.1. Requests will only be considered under the following circumstances:

6.2.1.1. The position the employee is occupying has not been offered and accepted by an employee scheduled to be separated.

6.2.1.2. The position has not been committed to a PPP registrant.

6.2.2. Requests are submitted for approval no later than 120 days before the separation effective date.

6.3. Incumbents of abolished positions and employees expected to be involuntarily separated (and other employees in positions for which these incumbents qualify for placement) may be offered VSIP payments prior to issuance of RIF notices in accordance with the *National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2003*. (T-0).

John A. Fedrigo
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Attachment 1**GLOSSARY OF REFERENCES AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION*****References***

DAFPD 36-1, *Appropriated Funds Civilian Management and Administration*, 18 March 2019

Air Force Instruction (AFI) 33-322, *Records Management and Information Governance Program*, 28 July 2021

DAFI 33-360, *Publications and Forms Management*, 1 December 2015

Title 5, CFR Part 351, *Reduction in Force*, current edition

DoDI 1400.25-Volume 351, *DoD Civilian Personnel Management System: Reduction in Force*, 24 June 2021

OPM *Workforce Reshaping Operations Handbook*, March 2017

DCPAS *Workforce Reshaping Guide: DoD Manager's Guide for Civilian Restructuring and Downsizing*, November 2019

HAFMD 1-24_Addendum-A, *Re-Delegation of Authorities HAFMD 1-24, Assistant Secretary of the Air Force (Manpower and Reserve Affairs)*, 26 June 2018

National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2003

Prescribed Forms

None

Adopted Forms

AF Form 847, *Recommendation for Change of Publication*

SF Form 50, *Notification of Personnel Action*

Abbreviations and Acronyms

AF/A1—Deputy Chief of Staff of the Air Force, Manpower, Personnel and Services

AF/A1C—Civilian Force Management Directorate

AFI—Air Force Instruction

AFPC—Air Force Personnel Center

ART—Air Reserve Technician

CFR—Code of Federal Regulations

CCMD—Combatant Command

CPS—Civilian Personnel Section

DAFI—Department of the Air Force Instruction

DAFPD—Department of the Air Force Policy Directive

DCPAS—Defense Civilian Personnel Advisory Services

DCPDS—Defense Civilian Personnel Data System

DoD—Department of Defense

DoDI—Department of Defense Instruction

FLDCOM—Field Command

HAFMD—Headquarters Air Force Mission Directive

MAJCOM—Major Command

OPM—Office of Personnel Management

PPP—Priority Placement Program

RIF—Reduction in Force

SF/A1C—Civilian Policy and Management

TOF—Transfer of Function

USAF—United States Air Force

USSF—United States Space Force

VERA—Voluntary Early Retirement Authority

VSIP—Voluntary Separation Incentive Payment