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NAF HUMAN RESOURCES OFFICE
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What is military spouse preference?

Military spouse preference provides priority in the employment selection process for military spouses who are relocating as a result of their military spouse's PCS. Spouse preference does not apply to separation or retirement moves. Spouse preference may be used for most vacant positions in DoD and applies only within the commuting area of the permanent duty station of the sponsor. Spouse preference is not limited to the branch of military of which the sponsor is serving or to only those who have previously worked for the Federal government. Spouses must be found best qualified for the position and may exercise preference no more than one time per permanent relocation of the sponsor.

Preference does not mean that positions will be created or made available especially for the military spouses or that spouses will be given any special appointing authority. Preference does not provide any guarantee of employment.

When does spouse preference apply?

Spouse preference eligibility begins 30 days prior to the sponsor's reporting date to the new duty station and continues throughout the spouse accepts or declines a continuing appropriated or non-appropriated fund position (lasting one year or longer) from any Federal agency in the commuting area. In foreign areas, spouses do not receive preference until they actually arrive at the overseas location. Spouse preference eligibles must specifically designate whether or not they are interested in temporary positions.

Preference applies to the initial employment at the location. Once the spouse accepts or declines such a Federal position at the new duty station, eligibility terminates, whether or not the position was obtained through spouse preference.

To what positions does preference apply?

Preference applies worldwide to most DoD appropriated fund (APF) positions at grades S-15 and below (or equivalent wage grade positions) in the competitive or excepted service. Certain positions are excluded, for example, positions in intelligence related activities and those that require mandatory mobility agreements.

Military spouse preference also applies to positions in non-appropriated fund instrumentalities (NAFI) at grades UA-8 and below (or equivalent grade levels). NAFIs include positions established in the Army/Air Force Exchange System (AAFES) at the exchanges and retail stores, as well as in NAFIs at clubs, snack bars, recreation centers and sports facilities, and related activities throughout DoD. At some installations, NAF employment offices may be referred to as Human Resources Offices (HRO) and may not be co-located with the appropriated fund Civilian Personnel Office. Be sure to ask where NAF employment offices are located, and contact those offices directly if you are interested in NAF employment or need more information about NAF activities before seeking employment.

Am I eligible for military spouse employment preference?

If you are the spouse of an active duty Armed Forces member (including the Coast Guard) and relocating to his/her new permanent duty station, you are entitled to spouse employment preference as long as you are among the best qualified for the position. You must have entered into the marriage with the military sponsor prior to his/her reporting date to the new geographic area.

What determines the extent of the commuting area?

The commuting area for spouse preference includes the military sponsor's duty station and the surrounding localities to which the spouse has determined he/she is willing to travel back and forth daily for employment, as demonstrated through application for employment, with or without a request for preference.

What paperwork will I need when I register?

You will need a copy of your spouse's official Permanent Change of Station (PCS) orders, you will need to upload to USA-jobs website. You must have been married before the new orders were issued so that you will be listed on current orders. Official PCS orders will be verified.

How do I register for military spouse preference?

You will be able to register on the USA jobs website when you create your online account. All you will need to complete the registering process is to upload a copy of the military members current PCS orders. There is a specific area within the documents and resume tab on your USA jobs profile for you to upload specifically PCS orders. Once the orders have been uploaded you will be able to select military spousal preference on the website when applying for positions. The PCS orders will be verified during the qualifying process.