



UNITED STATES OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

Washington, DC 20415

Employee Services

March 29, 2023

Memorandum for Human Resources Directors

From: Veronica E. Hinton
Acting Associate Director

Subject: Delegated Examining Certification Requirement Waiver for Small Agencies that Contract with an Established Agency Shared Service Provider

All agencies that fill competitive service jobs through a competitive process open to all U.S. citizens using delegated examining (DE) authority are required to hold an Interagency Delegated Examining Agreement (IDEA) with the U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM). The IDEA gives agencies DE authority and among other items, requires agency personnel responsible for conducting DE activities to maintain DE Certification.

OPM revitalized the DE Certification Program in July 2019 with the intent for staff performing DE activities to pass the DE Certification Assessment in order to conduct DE work independently. Some small agencies who hire infrequently contract with a shared service provider to accomplish the work on their behalf. These agencies have been required to maintain at least one person on their staff with DE Certification to review work done by the shared service provider and be accountable for the DE work itself.

This notice announces a change in policy that waives the requirement to maintain at least one person with DE certification when the small agency uses an established Federal agency shared service provider and meets additional criteria below. This change also allows for the annual audit requirement to be met by the shared service provider in lieu of the small agency. However, the small agency holding the IDEA with OPM is still ultimately accountable for the work, the appointments made, maintaining related documentation, and taking any corrective actions necessary. Of note, this change does not affect agencies that do not have an IDEA and therefore contract with OPM HR Solutions. In these instances, OPM conducts the examining under its authority so these agencies do not have the requirement to maintain DE-certified staff.

Small agencies that meet the following criteria are not required to maintain a staff member with DE certification, as long as agency staff do not conduct DE activities. The small agency:

- Must be a small independent agency, defined as having 200 or fewer employees;
- Does not have the capacity and/or resources to develop a single staff member to maintain DE certification; and
- Must use OPM HR Solutions or an established Federal agency shared service provider for DE activities and ensure the provider has:
 - DE-certified staff that will conduct the DE work on behalf of the small agency;

- An internal accountability system, quality assurance processes, and/or control mechanisms in place to assure that the use of DE authority is in compliance with law and merit system principles; and
- An established audit process in place and conduct audits, at least annually.

If your small agency elects this option, please send a letter from the Human Resources Director to DE.Recertification@opm.gov certifying that your agency meets the criteria above. In accordance with paragraph (aa) within the IDEA, agencies must notify OPM of changes in delegated examining offices, including new delegated examining offices, termination or other changes that impact their DE work, such as changes to their servicing provider.

If you have any questions or need further information about the information in this memorandum, please contact Ms. Michelle Strom at Michelle.Strom@opm.gov or 202-936-3428.

cc: Chief Human Capital Officers
Deputy Chief Human Capital Officers
Small Agency Council