



UNITED STATES OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT  
Washington, DC 20415

The Director

Friday, May 7, 2021

**MEMORANDUM FOR: HEADS OF EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES**

**FROM:** Kathleen M. McGettigan, Acting Director

**Subject:** Interim Guidance - E.O. 13932; Modernizing and Reforming the Assessment and Hiring of Federal Job Candidates

On June 26, 2020, [Executive Order \(EO\) 13932 - Modernizing and Reforming the Assessment and Hiring of Federal Job Candidates](#), reminded agencies of their legal obligation to use valid, competency-based assessments and directed them to scale back reliance upon educational qualifications as a substitute for competencies in the Federal hiring process. The U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) is evaluating its options for implementing this executive order.

As you are aware, the EO in Sec. 3., Improving the use of Assessments in the Federal Hiring Process, directs heads of all executive departments and agencies to ensure that within 180 days of the EO issuance, candidate selection decisions shall include assessments that do not rely exclusively on educational attainment to determine the extent to which candidates possess relevant knowledge, skills, abilities, and competencies. The heads of all executive departments and agencies are directed to develop or identify assessments to serve as alternatives to educational qualifications.

1. In assessing candidates, agencies are directed to refrain from relying solely on candidate self-assessments of their qualifications (e.g., occupational questionnaires). Applicants are to clear other assessment hurdles in order to be considered qualified in examinations and thus eligible for preference and referral.
2. Agencies are also directed to continually evaluate the effectiveness of different assessment strategies to ensure the quality and integrity of their hiring process.

OPM is currently finalizing the General Schedule Qualifications Policy so that candidates will now be able to qualify for employment on the basis of competency-based assessments when there are no legal educational requirements to perform a job. While many agencies already use skills and competency-based assessments, many agencies also have expressed concern about implementation of this EO.

Therefore, I am authorizing an extension for the implementation of the above requirements until December 31, 2021, to allow additional time for the development of your agency assessment strategies. OPM will soon plan a session to provide agencies with an overview of our updated guidance regarding the implementation of the remaining sections of this EO, which will include a list of assessment tools and guidance that your agencies may use in the interim.

If there are any questions about the strategies detailed above, please contact Kimberly Holden at [kimberly.holden@opm.gov](mailto:kimberly.holden@opm.gov) or email [Fedclass@opm.gov](mailto:Fedclass@opm.gov).

Cc: Chief Human Capital Officers (CHCOs), Deputy CHCOs, HR Directors and Chief Executive Officer Councils