



ENERGY FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM



U.S. Department of Energy
Office of the Chief Human Capital Officer
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PURPOSE:

People are the Department of Energy's (DOE) most important resource when accomplishing its multifaceted mission. To maintain its readiness and overall workforce vitality, the Department must continually attract new talent to replenish and supplement its workforce. Given the need to establish and successfully manage the development and maintenance of our workforce, the Office of the Chief Human Capital Officer has developed the Energy Fellowship Program (EFP).

The EFP will address immediate needs to recruit and retain new talent, specifically college juniors/seniors and recent college graduates. The Department encourages all prospective applicants to apply, especially veterans and individuals with disabilities. This program will be included under the DOE intern programs framework and complement organizational workforce planning and talent acquisition strategies. This reference document is to assist managers, supervisors, and human resources professionals in understanding the scope, hiring authority, and processes under the EFP.

PRINCIPLES

Program and servicing human resources offices shall comply with basic principles of recruitment and merit system principles. In addition, the following principles are established to foster accountability and program transparency:

- Managers and servicing human resources offices must be accountable for efficient and effective human resources (HR) decision-making that supports the DOE mission in accordance with merit system principles as it pertains to the implementation of this program.
- All hires made under this excepted service authority must be consistent with federal statutes and regulations, as well as with relevant OPM and DOE guidance.
- DOE's Office of the Chief Human Capital Officer seeks a strategic, corporate, and integrated approach when executing the following functions in support of this program:
 - 1) Workforce and succession planning;
 - 2) Recruitment and marketing;
 - 3) Hiring and on-board processing; and
 - 4) Training and development



RESPONSIBILITIES:

If a servicing human resources office recruits for an Energy Fellow, managers, supervisors and human resources specialists shall comply with the following responsibilities to assure the success of the program framework:

Hiring managers and servicing human resources offices will:

- Participate in the coordination and execution of recruitment, marketing, and outreach events and initiatives
- Share ideas and expose Fellows to various DOE lines of business.
- Provide program participants substantive work assignments for their professional development as well as documenting and utilizing an Individual Development Plan (IDP) to track learning progression.

Specifically, servicing human resources offices will:

- Monitor, track, and share data with the Office of the Chief Human Capital Officer as it pertains to:
 - 1) Projections on proposed special hiring program usage;
 - 2) Reports on actual special hiring program usage;
 - 3) Proposed recruitment event participation;
 - 4) Workforce plans and succession plans; and
 - 5) Veterans' Preference adjudication processes for special hiring
- Maintain responsibility for executing the recruitment strategy for developing a pool of applicants.
- Adjudicate veterans' preference as part of the competitive process.
- Deliver staffing and classification services to selecting official prior to announcing a job vacancy.
- Post job announcements for vacant positions.
- Provide assistance to hiring managers in the development of interview questions and/or the development of rating criteria.
- Issue tentative and/or final job offer letters.
- Process all personnel actions associated with this authority including, but not limited to, hires, promotions, terminations, reassignments, recruitment incentives, etc.



- Maintain recruitment case files.
- Comply with merit system principles

PROGRAM OVERVIEW:

The Energy Fellowship Program is an entry-level program in the excepted service (Schedule A, 5 CFR 213.3102(r)). Fellows may be appointed either at the GS-4, GS-5, GS-7, or GS-9 and equivalent levels. At the GS-4 grade level or equivalent, the Program offers an opportunity to attract recent graduates from associate degree programs and vocational/technical institutions as well as to recruit juniors and seniors from bachelor degree programs. Because of the Department's complex mission, hiring officials need a variety of resources to effectively maximize recruitment outreach. .

At the GS-5/7/9 levels or equivalent, Fellows must have a bachelor, post-graduate or law degree (depending on the grade) from an accredited academic institution. They must have graduated no more than one year from the date of entry (EOD), which must be one year or less from the date of graduation.

Veterans, who due to their military service obligation, were precluded from participating within the one-year period may do so after obtaining a qualifying degree within three (3) years. The Department of Energy strongly encourages veterans and people with disabilities who express an interest in becoming Energy Fellows to apply.

Some key developmental components are:

- Orientation
- Training
- Individual Development Plans (IDPs)
- Mentoring
- Networking activities and sessions designed to expose the employee to other areas of DOE

BASIC ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA:

Applicants appointed to the Energy Fellows Program must meet the following basic eligibility requirements:

1. Be at least 18 years of age.
2. Be a United States Citizen.
3. At the GS-4 level, the student must, at a minimum, be a junior (having completed two (2) years of academic study) at an accredited college/university OR have received an Associate degree from a community, technical, or vocational institution.



4. At the GS-5/7/9 level, the student must either have received a Bachelor, Masters, or Juris Doctor degree. They must have graduated no more than one year from the date of entry (EOD), which must be one year or less from the date of graduation. Veterans, who due to their military service obligation, were precluded from participating within the one year period may do so after obtaining a qualifying degree within three (3) years. The degree must compliment the occupational field for which an applicant is applying. For information regarding school accreditation, managers should contact their servicing human resources office to ensure the school is accredited. If the institution is not accredited, any offer of employment will be invalid pursuant to the OPM Operating Manual for Qualification Standards.

NOTE: For additional information on grade and qualification determinations, please refer to the Energy Fellow Track on page 8.

5. A minimum cumulative grade-point average (GPA) of 3.0

Relatives: Students who are related to DOE employees are eligible for positions in which there is no direct reporting relationship and the relative is not in a position to benefit from, influence, or control the student's appointment, employment, promotion, or advancement.

International Education: U.S. citizens who gained part of their education internationally must have their foreign education interpreted by a credential evaluation service. For specific guidelines regarding this qualification, please refer to <https://www.opm.gov/qualifications/policy/ApplicationOfStds-04.asp>.

APPOINTMENT:

Energy Fellows are appointed in the excepted service under Schedule A 213.3102(r). Appointments are not-to-exceed two (2) years, with a provision of one additional extension of up to two (2) years for a total amount of four (4) years. Fellowships cannot be extended beyond a total of four (4) years.

Appointment	Sch. A, 5CFR 213.3102(r)
Duration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not-To-Exceed 2 years • Extension of an additional 2 years for a total amount of service of 4 years
NOA	171 (NTE 2 years)
LAC	W9S
Additional Remark on SF-50	Energy Fellowship Program



Limitations: Service under this authority confers no rights to further federal employment in either the competitive or excepted service upon expiration of the appointment. Energy Fellows **cannot** be non-competitively converted to the competitive service or to another appointment. Because the fellowships are time-limited, non-permanent appointments, Fellows do not acquire competitive civil service status. Fellows may be eligible for career ladder promotions depending on how the position is advertised. The full-performance-level must be noted on the SF-50 and the position description. Fellows must be placed in a classified position for the duration of their appointment.

In addition, fellows cannot be non-competitively converted to a new appointment under this authority after the four (4)-year period. For example, if an applicant was hired as a Fellow (Budget Analyst) and the four (4)year period is approaching, the employee cannot be re-appointed or converted to a new fellowship appointment (Management Analyst). The use of this authority will be monitored.

Workforce Planning: Managers shall assess long-term workforce needs by their Full-Time-Equivalent (FTE) usage to determine if an Energy Fellow placement is warranted. An Energy Fellow should be used to fill critical competency and skill gaps as they pertain to long-term projects with a defined duration.

Recruitment and Classification: Energy Fellowship appointments are made at the GS-4, GS-5, 7, or 9 levels (and equivalent). The full performance level of a Fellow cannot exceed the GS-13 or equivalent level. Appointments at the GS-4 level provide developmental opportunities through hands-on work experience and academic studies. Any targeting of specific individuals in an effort to circumvent fair and open competition is strictly prohibited. Managers may not target a specific individual for an Energy Fellowship Program appointment, and pre-selection in lieu of fair and open competition is impermissible. Information about advertising these fellowships may be found in the *Hiring and Application Process* section.

Qualification requirements for a particular grade level are determined by OPM's Qualification Standards. Hiring managers should consult with their servicing human resources specialist to ensure the recruitment strategy and grade level are appropriate. The primary use of these appointments is to hire for positions that support the mission of the DOE, specifically mission-critical occupations (MCO) such as:

- Accounting
- Acquisition
- Apprentice
- Budget
- Contracting
- Engineering
- Federal Technical Qualification Program (TQP) jobs
- Finance
- Human Resources
- Information Technology



- Physical Science

Energy Fellows may only be appointed to a mission critical occupation, and the applicant's academic studies or degree must directly relate to the position. The hiring authority cannot be used to fill short-term administrative positions. Additionally, in light of merit system principles, the Office of the Chief Human Capital Officer requires that all Energy Fellowship Program positions be advertised broadly to ensure fair and equitable access. Recruitment for these positions will be conducted by servicing human resources offices and subject matter experts from the hiring office. Requests for assistance with developing recruitment and marketing strategies as well as using corporate recruitment materials can be made to the Office of the Chief Human Capital Officer, Office of Strategic Planning and Policy's Employment Solutions Division (HC-13).

Energy Fellowship Track				
	GS-4	GS-5	GS0-7	GS-9
Fellowship Eligibility	<p>Junior or Senior in college OR Associates Degree</p>	<p>4 academic years above high school leading to a bachelor's degree</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Bachelor's degree ***</p> <p><small>*Scientific and professional grade qualifications will vary. Refer to OPM's Qualification Handbook</small></p>	<p>Bachelor's Degree OR 1 academic year of graduate education ***</p> <p><small>**Scientific and professional grade qualifications will vary. Refer to OPM's Qualification Handbook</small></p>	<p>Masters Degree (or equivalent degree such as J.D., LL.B) OR 2 full years of progressively higher graduate level education**</p> <p><small>**Scientific and professional grade qualifications will vary. Refer to OPM's Qualification Handbook</small></p>
	3.0 GPA	3.0 GPA	3.0 GPA	3.0 GPA
	Specialized area of study as it pertains to the position	Specialized area of study as it pertains to the position	Specialized area of study as it pertains to the position	Specialized area of study as it pertains to the position
Responsibilities	Individual Development Plan (IDP)	Individual Development Plan (IDP)	Individual Development Plan (IDP)	Individual Development Plan (IDP)
	80 hours of technical training	80 hours of technical training		



<u>Overview</u>	<u>Energy Fellows</u>
Administered by	DOE
Eligibility	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 18 years of age 2. US Citizen 3. Recent college/university graduate. The date of entry on duty will be one year or less from the date of graduation. Veterans, who, due to their military service obligation, were precluded from participating within the one year period may do so after obtaining a qualifying degree within 3 years. <p><i>**Note: The grade level determines qualification requirements and recruitment strategy. Hiring managers should consult with the servicing human resources office</i></p>
Primary Length of Appointment	Two years with opportunity to extend for an additional two years. Requires background investigation prior to start date.
FTE Required	Yes
Grade level eligibility for Appointment	GS-4, 5, 7, 9 (and equivalent) based on educational requirements and/or experience.
Program Availability	Year round
Announcement Required	Yes
Veterans Preference	Yes
Work Schedule	Full-Time or Part-Time
Annual and Sick Leave Accrued	Yes
Benefits	Yes
Eligible to convert to competitive federal service	No
Recruitment bonus eligible	Yes
Retention and Relocation incentive eligible	Yes
Trial Period	Yes
Required Paperwork	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - SF-52 (recruit action) - Résumé - All Position descriptions up to Full Performance Level (FPL) - Official transcripts - Proof of citizenship



APPOINTMENT DOCUMENTATION:

The following documentation is required to appoint an Energy Fellow:

- OF-612, Optional Application of Federal Employment or résumé.
- Official documentation verifying enrollment or completion of degree, diploma, or certificate program at an accredited school may include:
 - Official transcript
 - Letter from the Registrar's or Dean's office***Note: The grade level determines qualification requirements and recruitment strategy. Hiring managers should consult with the servicing human resources office*
- Evidence of good academic standing (generally a GPA of 3.0 or higher).
- If claiming veterans' preference, the submission of a DD-214 or an SF-15 is required to adjudicate veterans' preference.
- Evidence of U.S citizenship.

HIRING AND APPLICATION PROCESS:

Although a public notice is not required to fill excepted service positions, merit system principles require that agencies provide fair, open, and equitable access to these types of federal job opportunities. To ensure veterans are aware of these opportunities, the Office of the Chief Human Capital Officer requires that an Energy Fellow position be advertised for no less than 3 days either on:

- USAJobs or
- an agency web site, or
- a job board or
- print media, or
- radio or
- television

As part of DOE's outreach efforts, servicing human resources offices must provide notifications to veteran groups and groups serving people with disabilities on the particular college campuses where recruitment is taking place. Whatever the method of advertisement, it must be documented and filed in the case file. The intent is to ensure that the process is open and fair to all applicants and does not target a specific individual within the workforce. In addition, these appointments are not subject to Interagency Career Transition Assistance Program (ICTAP) Requirements.



Managers and staff from program offices **are not** authorized to extend any informal or formal offer of employment. Only servicing human resources offices are authorized to make job offers and appointments. Basic human resources functions such as job classification, adjudicating veterans' preference, establishing and issuing referral lists, and tentative and formal job offers are functions that must be performed by the servicing human resources office. These functions cannot be re-delegated to management.

Managers do not have delegated authority to assume these role and responsibilities that are designated to the servicing human resources offices via DOE Order 320.1.

Selection Criteria: Servicing human resources offices must use a category rating system to evaluate candidates. The servicing human resources offices are responsible for documenting the rating results in the case file and must ensure the procedures are consistent in use of this authority. Procedures must be documented and applied consistently to avoid any appearance of impropriety. It is important to note that veteran's preference must be adjudicated. Even though the position is in the excepted service, veteran's preference does apply. Managers should consult with their servicing human resources offices for questions regarding the adjudication process.

CASE FILE MANAGEMENT:

The servicing human resources office must maintain the recruitment, selection, and hiring records for each Energy Fellow appointment for a minimum of three years. Each of these hiring actions should document the following items:

- SF-52 and SF-50
- Position descriptions
- Recruitment plan/strategy
- List of applicants for the position
- Referral list including adjudicated veterans' preference
- Selection criteria for the position
- Transcripts

These appointments are subject to accountability audit; therefore, it is critical that all servicing human resources offices apply a uniform approach.

PAY ADMINISTRATION AND BENEFITS:

Work Schedules:

Fellows may work full-time or part-time. Participants may work up to 80 hours per pay period. With supervisory approval, schedules for full-time employees may be flexible or compressed.



Pay:

Participants must be paid according to the criteria set forth in the appropriate General Schedule, pay band, wage grade, or other pay plan for the job. Typically, an Energy Fellow will be employed at Step 1 of the General Schedule grade level for which they qualify based on a combination of education attainment and relevant work experience. Fellows will be eligible for a GS-4, GS-5, GS-7, or GS-9 appointment depending on a combination of their course credit completion and work experience. Managers and supervisors should work with their local servicing human resources offices early in the recruitment process to assist them in making qualification determinations. Human resources specialists can refer to the following web site for additional assistance in determining qualifications: www.opm.gov/qualifications.

Student Loan Repayment/Recruitment/Relocation Incentives:

Energy Fellows may be eligible to receive student loan repayments, relocation, and/or recruitment incentives (i.e. advanced pay rate, recruitment bonus, student loan repayment, tuition remission). Such incentives are to be used when, in the absence of their use, it would be difficult to recruit for the position. The Office of the Chief Human Capital Officer recommends the incentives be utilized judiciously in keeping with budgetary constraints, critical skill needs, and fairness. If management wishes to offer an incentive, servicing human resources offices must document the process and receive written justification from the manager as with any other incentive. Both management and HR staff must comply with DOE pay policies and procedures (DOE Order 322.1C). Additionally, the program office must seek a continuing service agreement. The servicing human resources office will be responsible for ensuring the Energy Fellows receive a copy of the offer of employment. Managers should consult with their servicing human resources office before offering any of these incentives to ensure eligibility compliance.

Tuition Assistance:

Energy Fellows may be eligible for tuition assistance as long as the coursework is directly related to the occupation as well as the overall mission and function of the office. Additionally, the program office should seek a continuing service agreement. Program Offices should consult with their training liaison and servicing HR office for additional information.

Advance Pay Rate:

DOE recognizes that not every developmental employee is equal in competency, education, and/or professional experience. Prior to their initial appointment, Energy Fellows are eligible to receive a pay rate above the minimum for the grade level for which they qualify. This slight increase in pay rate must be a result of the appointee's superior qualifications or to meet a special need. In situations where an advance pay rate (also known as an advance in-hire rate) is requested, the following criteria should be considered and documented in the case file prior to setting pay higher than a step 1:



- Education and grade point average
- Directly related work experience
- Qualifications of the individual
- Labor market
- Scarcity of candidates
- Organizational need
- Fiscal accountability

Managers should consult with the servicing human resources offices for any additional guidance pertaining to advance-in-hire rates. Servicing human resources offices are accountable for keeping proper documentation.

Annual and Sick Leave:

Energy Fellows are eligible to accrue annual and sick leave.

Federal Benefits:

Energy Fellows are eligible to receive health care benefits, basic life insurance benefits, retirement benefits, and participate in the Federal Government’s Thrift Savings Plan.

BENEFITS SUMMARY INFORMATION FOR NEW FELLOWS

Type of Benefit	Enrollment Timeframe	How to Enroll	For more information
Health Benefits (FEHB)	Within 60 days of new hire date	New hires complete SF-2809	www.opm.gov/insure/health
Federal Dental and Vision Coverage (FEDVIP)	Within 60 days from new hire date	www.BENEFEDS.com or call 1-877-372-3337	www.opm.gov/insure/dental www.opm.gov/insure/vision
Flexible Spending Account (FSAFEDS)	Within 60 days of new hire date	Register on-line at: www.FSAFEDS.com or call 1-877-372-3337	www.opm.gov/insure/flexible
Federal Employees Group Life Insurance (FEGLI)	Automatically covered for basic life insurance until you cancel. You may select additional insurance options within 31 days from the new hire date	New hire completes the SF-2817	www.opm.gov/insure/life
Federal Long Term Care Insurance Program (FLTCIP)	Apply within 60 days from new hire date under the abbreviated health exam underwriting	Only opportunity to enroll without a full medical examination is during the first 60 days from new hire date	
Annual Leave	Automatically earn 4 hours per pay period		
Sick Leave	Automatically earn 4 hours per pay period		
Service credit for directly related experience to increase annual leave	Must be requested prior to EOD and preferably before final offer is made. Experience must be relative to the position.	Send written request to the Office of Strategic Planning and Policy, HC-11, attention Tiffany Wheeler	http://humancapital.doe.gov/resources_hc11.htm
Bargaining Unit	Bargaining Unit status is contingent upon the position selected and where	No enrollment is necessary. Enrollment is automatic at the	See local HR office for more information. Offices with active bargaining units are: HQ’S, BPA,



	the position is located.	time of hire	IDAHO, SC/OAK, NETL, EM RL, SWAPA AND WAPA.
FLSA	Positions covered by FLSA must meet all criteria included in the 5 CFR 551.101 and are contingent on the classification of each position. All positions are considered covered unless the position meets one of the related exemptions.	No enrollment is required. Employee is assigned to specific position in which the HR Specialist will determine FLSA status.	http://www.opm.gov/flsa/
RIF	RIF procedures apply to any employee who is a part of the executive branch of the federal government.	No enrollment necessary. In the event of a reduction-in-force, employees under this program will be notified accordingly.	http://www.opm.gov/reduction_in_force/ ; https://www.directives.doe.gov/directives/current-directives/320.1-BOrder-cl/view
Tenure Group	Appointments made under this authority will be assigned a tenure code of "3". Such appointments are not subject to conversion into the competitive service.	No enrollment is required. Tenure codes will be applied at the time of accession.	
Student Loan Repayment Program	SLRP must be approved (at minimum) prior to the EOD date. All service agreements must be signed on or before the effective date of initial appointment.	Selecting official or Hiring Manager must coordinate any SLR authorizations with their servicing HR Specialist in writing. Suggest following example provided in DOE Handbook.	http://www.opm.gov/oca/pay/StudentLoan/ http://humancapital.doe.gov/resources/Handbook-on-Recruitment-Retention-Incentives-3-10.pdf
Advance-In-Hire	Must be approved prior to the establishment of a final offer. Approval is contingent on both previous experience and educational status as it relates to the position being filled.	Selecting official or Hiring Manager must coordinate any AIH request with their servicing HR Specialist in writing.	http://www.opm.gov/Strategic_Management_of_Human_Capital/fhfr/default.asp
Recruitment incentive	Recruitment Incentives must be finalized and approved prior to EOD date.	Selecting official or Hiring Manager must coordinate any "incentive" request with their servicing HR Specialist in writing. Suggest following example provided in handbook.	http://www.opm.gov/Strategic_Management_of_Human_Capital/fhfr/default.asp http://www.opm.gov/3rs/fact/RECBONFS.asp http://humancapital.doe.gov/resources/Handbook-on-Recruitment-Retention-Incentives-3-10.pdf
Relocation Incentive	Relocation Incentives must be finalized and approved prior to EOD date.	Selecting official or Hiring Manager must coordinate any "incentive" request with their servicing HR Specialist in writing. Suggest following example guidance in handbook.	http://www.opm.gov/Strategic_Management_of_Human_Capital/fhfr/default.asp http://www.opm.gov/3rs/fact/RELBONFS.asp http://humancapital.doe.gov/resources/Handbook-on-Recruitment-Retention-Incentives-3-10.pdf

