

For: FSA Federal and County Employees

**Supplemental Information on Voluntary Separation Incentive Payment (VSIP)
and Voluntary Early Retirement Authority (VERA)**

Approved by: Administrator



1 Supplemental Information

A Purpose

This notice provides further guidance on the VSIP selection priority information that was in Notice PM-2477.

B Background

FSA is offering VSIP and VERA to deal with a variety of workforce needs. In addition to budgetary concerns, the tobacco buyout legislation will end the tobacco program that had been a function of FSA and the bulk of the administrative activity FSA has been performing for NRCS on the Environmental Quality Incentives Program has been transferred back to NRCS. FSA has also experienced over the years a shift in program workload in geographic locations that changes the staffing needs. At the same time, FSA is addressing the challenge of increasing efficiency. To meet this challenge requires modernizing our infrastructure and, in some areas, a need for employees with different skill sets. The VSIP/VERA offers are designed to help FSA meet all of these needs.

C OPM Approval and Eligibility Clarification

As announced in Notice PM-2477, the approval of VSIP and VERA applications was pending receipt of OPM approval of the FSA request for the authority to do so. FSA has formally received the authority from OPM to offer VSIP and VERA. In the OPM authority notification, there is 1 change in eligibility. Previously, OPM regulations required employees to have been employed for a continuous period of at least 3 years with their Department (USDA). This requirement was more restrictive than the actual statutory requirement that only requires employees to have at least 3 years of continuous Federal employment.

Disposal Date	Distribution
January 1, 2006	All FSA Federal and County Employees; State Offices relay to County Offices

Notice PM-2480

1 Supplemental Information (Continued)

C OPM Approval and Eligibility Clarification (Continued)

OPM has clarified their regulations to agree with the statutory requirement and included that in the authority notification. Therefore, employees that meet all other requirements listed in Notice PM-2477 and have 3 continuous years of Federal employment whether or not with USDA are eligible to apply. This information was distributed in an all-employee e-mail on September 1, 2005, and the application deadline remains September 6, 2005.

D Specific Change

The following organizations were not listed in Notice PM-2477 as offering any VSIP/VERA opportunities. This was not an oversight. These organizations already achieved their targeted ceiling levels and, therefore, have no need to offer incentives to reduce further. There are no positions eligible for VSIP/VERA in the following:

- Deputy Administrator, Farm Loan Programs
- California
- Delaware
- Florida
- Hawaii
- Illinois
- Nevada
- Pennsylvania
- Puerto Rico
- Rhode Island
- Washington.

The selection priority charts for DAM - ITSD and HRD have been corrected because both contained an administrative error. The ITSD chart had an incorrect number of maximum approvals listed in priority 1, and the HRD chart left off 1 eligible position. There was also a discrepancy on the chart for Tennessee. This notice confirms that the listed target reduction on the first page of the Tennessee chart is correct at 27 CO positions.

Note: Exhibit 1 shows the corrected ITSD and HRD charts.

VSIP Selection Priority for Headquarters and Field Offices

Deputy Administrator for Management - ITSD			
Reduction Target – 45 (Includes a maximum of 25 to be backfilled)			
Priority	Organization	Maximum To Be Approved	Eligible Positions
1	Kansas City	23	All GS-2210 positions except ITSPEC (DATAMGMT) and all ITSD supervisors
	St. Louis	6	
2	WDC	1	All GS-343 positions
	Kansas City	2	
3	Kansas City	7 to reach target	All remaining GS-300 positions
4	Kansas City	6 to reach target	ITSPEC (DATAMGMT)

Note: Positions shown on the Incidental Transfer Agreement as being transferred to FAS are **excluded** from buyout eligibility.

Deputy Administrator for Management - HRD			
Reduction Target - 8			
Priority	Organization	Maximum To Be Approved	Eligible Positions
1	Office of the Chief - KCHRO	1	GS-201-13 HR Specialist
2	SPIMS	1	GM-201-14 Personnel Mgmt. Specialist GS-201-9/13 HR Specialist GS-301-13 Org Dev Specialist GS-950-12 Paralegal Specialist GS203-7 HR Assistant
3	Services Group	1	GS-201-11 HR Specialist GS-203-7/8 HR Assistant
4	TDB	3	GS-201-12/13 HR Specialist – 1 only
	EDS		GS-201-12/13 HR Specialist – 1 only
	TDB/EDS		GS-203 and GS-301 positions below GS-11 – 1 only
5	PMBAB	1	GS-201-11/13 HR Specialist GS-301-9 Personnel Payroll Specialist GS-203-7 HR Assistant
6	ES	5 to reach target	GS-201-7/13 HR Specialist – 1 only
	C&OS		GS-201-12/13 HR Specialist – 1 only
	DOB		GS-201-11/13 HR Specialist – 1 only
	FOB		GS-201-9/13 HR Specialist – 1 only
	ES/C&OS/DOB/FOB		Assistants and Clerks – 2
7	ELRB	if needed to reach target	GS-201-13 HR Specialist (Labor Relations) – 1 only
	ELRS		GS-201-7/13 HR Spec. (Employee/Labor Rel.) – 1 only
	ELRB		GS 201-11/13 HR Specialist not involved in litigation or workplace violence – 1 only
	ELRS		GS-203-6/8 HR Assistant – 1 only

Note: HRD supervisors, nurses, and secretaries are **not** eligible for VSIP/VERA.