

years from the date on which the individual completed the requirements of an academic course of study.

**§ 362.303 Filling positions.**

(a) *Announcement.* (1) When an agency accepts applications from individuals outside its own workforce, it must provide OPM information concerning opportunities to participate in the agency's Recent Graduates Program. For the purposes of this paragraph, "agency" means an Executive agency as defined in 5 U.S.C. 105 and the Government Printing Office. An Executive department may treat each of its bureaus or components (first major subdivision that is separately organized and clearly distinguished from other bureaus or components in work function and operation) as a separate agency or as part of one agency, but must do so consistent with its Delegated Examining Agreement. The information must include:

- (i) Position title, series and grade;
- (ii) Geographic location of the position;
- (iii) How to apply. A public source (e.g., a link to the agency's Web site with information on how to apply for interested individuals to seek further information about how to apply); and
- (iv) Any other information OPM considers appropriate.

(2) OPM will publish information on Recent Graduate opportunities in such form as the Director may determine.

(b) *Appointments.* (1) An agency may make appointments to the Recent Graduates Program, pursuant to a Pathways MOU executed with the OPM, under Schedule D of the excepted service in accordance with part 302 of this chapter.

(2) An agency must appoint a Recent Graduate using the excepted service appointing authority provided by § 213.3402(b) of this chapter.

(3)(i) An agency may make an initial appointment of a Recent Graduate to any position filled under this authority for which the Recent Graduate qualifies, up to the GS-09 level (or equivalent under another pay and classification system, such as the Federal Wage System), except as provided in paragraphs (b)(3)(ii) through (iv) of this section.

(ii) Initial appointments to positions for science, technology, engineering, or mathematics (STEM) occupations may be made at the GS-11 level, if the candidate possesses a Ph.D. or equivalent degree directly related to the STEM position the agency is seeking to fill.

(iii) Initial appointments to scientific and professional research positions at the GS-11 level for which the classification and qualification criteria for research positions apply, if the candidate possesses a master's degree or equivalent graduate degree directly related to the position the agency is seeking to fill.

(iv) Initial appointments to scientific and professional research positions at the GS-12 level for which the classification and qualification criteria for research positions apply, if the candidate possesses a Ph.D. or equivalent degree directly related to the position the agency is seeking to fill.

(v) Positions must have progressively more responsible duties that provide career advancement opportunities (*i.e.*, positions must provide for career ladder advancement).

(c) *Extensions.* An agency may extend the Program period for up to an additional 120 days to cover rare or unusual circumstances or situations. The agency's Pathways MOU must identify criteria for approving extensions.

(d) *Qualifications.* An agency must evaluate candidates using OPM Qualification Standards for the occupation and grade level of the position being filled.

(e) *Promotions.* An agency may promote any Recent Graduate who meets the qualification requirements for the position. This provision does not confer entitlement to promotion.

(f) *Trial period.* The duration of the Recent Graduates appointment in the excepted service is a trial period.

**§ 362.304 Movement between agencies.**

(a) A Recent Graduate may apply for and accept a new Recent Graduates appointment with another agency covered by this part, as long as the agency meets all the requirements for participating in the Recent Graduates Program.