



United States Department of the Interior

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
Washington, DC 20240



Memorandum

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To: Solicitor
Inspector General
Assistant Secretaries
Heads of Bureaus and Offices

From: *Sharlyn A. Grigsby*
Sharlyn A. Grigsby
Director, Office of Human Resources

Subject: Qualification Requirements for Firefighter Positions Covered by Secondary
(Administrative) Retirement Coverage

This memorandum is issued to all bureaus and equivalent offices with an updated definition of wildland firefighting requirements for positions covered under Secondary (Administrative) firefighter retirement. This memorandum updates and supersedes the Department's October 18, 2006, memorandum "Qualification Requirements for Firefighter Positions Covered by Secondary (Administrative) Retirement Coverage". As Secondary (Administrative) positions are covered under firefighter retirement, the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) requires previous firefighting experience in order to qualify for certain firefighter positions. Thus, all candidates selected for these positions, in addition to meeting minimum qualification requirements as defined by OPM, must also meet or exceed a selective factor which requires a minimum of 90-days of wildland firefighting experience. The selective factor cannot be waived.

The Department of the Interior defines wildland firefighting experience as: as any non-structure fire that occurs in the wildland. Wildland firefighting experience is gained through work on the fire line in containment, control, suppression or use of wildland fire. This experience can be met by serving in a temporary, seasonal, or equivalent private sector fire position for no less than 90-days. Periods of wildland firefighting experience gained through militia and rural fire departments can also be credited as long as the total amount of this experience equates to at least 90-days.

Wildland fires are categorized into two distinct types:

Wildfires. Unplanned ignitions or prescribed fires that are declared wildfires

Prescribed Fires. Planned ignitions. This description includes only fireline experience on a Prescribed Fire; it does not include experience in the planning stages. Prescribed fire experience must be supplemented by fire suppression experience in order to be creditable as previous wildland firefighting experience.

The above definitions for wildland firefighting experience are to be used when qualifying applicants for Secondary (Administrative) covered positions. Please include these definitions in all vacancy announcements when advertising covered positions. Wildland firefighting experience is required in position descriptions covered as Secondary (Administrative).

The requirement of wildland firefighting experience should not be confused with an employee's firefighter coverage. An employee may go into a Secondary (Administrative) position and not be covered for firefighter retirement; however, they can not go into the position without meeting the 90-day requirement. The wildland firefighting experience can be gained at any grade level and series. The wildland firefighting experience does not substitute for the one year of specialized experience at the next lower grade level for individuals applying for promotion opportunities.

If you have any questions please contact Craig Welch at 202-513-0755 or by email at craig_welch@ios.doi.gov.

cc:

Deputy Secretary

Chief of Staff

Bureau/Equivalent Office Human Resources Officers