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**CHAPTER 715. VOLUNTARY SEPARATIONS AND REDUCTIONS IN  
RANK OR PAY**

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**CHAPTER 715. VOLUNTARY SEPARATIONS AND REDUCTIONS  
IN RANK OR PAY**

**1. SCOPE**

This chapter contains the policies and procedures which apply to voluntary separations and reductions in rank or pay for employees in the competitive and excepted civil service. It does not apply to physicians, physician assistants, dentists, expanded-function dental auxiliaries, optometrists, podiatrists, nurse anesthetists, and nurses appointed under 38 U.S.C., ch. 73, ch 74 or Canteen Service employees appointed under 38 U.S.C., ch. 75.

**2. ADVANCE NOTICE**

Human Resources Management Officers and supervisors share the responsibility for informing employees (preferably at the time of appointment) that they are expected to give at least 2 weeks advance notice to their supervisors when they have decided to leave their jobs. This applies whether the employees are resigning or accepting other positions in the Federal Civil Service or a non-Federal Government activity.

**3. RESIGNATIONS**

a. General. When employees wish to resign, they are expected to do so in writing, preferably on an SF-52, Request for Personnel Action, at least 2 weeks in advance. The written statement should include the effective date and the reason for leaving. When a written resignation is not made, the supervisor and witnesses, if any, will document the known reasons and the effective date of the oral resignation.

b. Accepting Resignations. A resignation is a voluntary action initiated by the employee and must be accepted regardless of the reasons for it. It must not be demanded as an alternative to another type of proposed separation or adverse action. In such a case, the employee will be given a reasonable time to consider the alternative, and should he elect to resign will be told the appropriate remarks required by the Office of Personnel Management's Guide to Processing Personnel Actions, 296-33 will be entered on his resignation SF-50-B, Notification of Personnel Action.

c. Canceling Resignations. As a general rule, once submitted, a resignation is binding on the employee. The employee, however, may request withdrawal of his/her resignation at any time before it becomes effective. In this event, supervisors at appropriate levels, as determined by the station head and with the knowledge of the Human Resources Management Officer, may approve the request. Disapproval of such a request requires exercise of discretion based on some reasonable justification, e.g., administrative disruption or commitment to fill the expected vacancy. The station head will determine whether a requested withdrawal is to be disapproved. If the request is disapproved, the employee will be informed of the reasons.

#### **4. MOVEMENTS BETWEEN AGENCIES**

a. General. Except where the movement of an employee from one Federal agency to another results from a transfer of function, management cannot require an employee to accept employment in another agency or take an adverse action if he/she refuses. Transfers between agencies (other than those in a transfer of function) must be requested by the employee or made with his consent. The interagency movement of an employee may be to a position at the same, a higher, or a lower grade. It will be accomplished without a break in service by a transfer or a separation (or termination) from one agency and appointment by the other.

b. Establishing Effective Date. The VA will not refuse to release an employee for transfer or appointment in another agency. The VA Human Resources Management Office and appropriate officials of the other agency will arrange a mutually agreeable date so the action can be taken without a break in service.

(1) In negotiations concerning a VA employee's leaving, the Human Resources Management Office will normally request at least a 2-week notice. Retention of the employee beyond 2 weeks may be requested where continuity of service is essential and if such a request will not jeopardize the employee's acceptance in the new job.

(2) In any planned movement between agencies of an employee who is not eligible for transfer, care must be exercised so that the separation and appointment actions are taken without a break in service, thus avoiding any loss to the employee and other administrative complications which could result. The separation Notification of Personnel Action will not be issued until the Human Resources Management office confirms that the gaining agency has completed the appointment action.

c. Reemployment Rights. For special provisions concerning employees who are leaving with reemployment rights, see MP-5, Part I, Chapter 352.

#### **5. MOVEMENTS BETWEEN VA STATIONS**

Movements of employees between VA stations are changes in appointing offices. They are processed in accordance with instructions in MP-5, Part I, Chapter 335, OPM's Guide to Processing Personnel Actions 296-33.

#### **6. EXIT INTERVIEWS**

To the extent possible, personnel offices will conduct counseling and exit interviews with separating employees, including those employees moving to another VA station. The purpose of these interviews is twofold. First, they give information to the employee concerning his rights and immediate or future eligibility for Federal employment benefits such as retirement, lump-sum leave payment, re-employment rights, unemployment compensation, health insurance, and life insurance. Second, they serve as a source of information to evaluate human resources management and help to identify job dissatisfactions and areas in need of correction. The use of

VA Form 5-4096, Record of Exit Interview, will facilitate recording the results of the interviews and the compilation and analysis of the information obtained.

## **7. PROCESSING SEPARATIONS**

When employees who are veteran claimants separate, personnel offices listed in MP-1, Part II, Chapter 5, Appendix C, must complete and forward VA Form 70-4535, Notice of Employment, Transfer, or Separation of Veteran, as provided in that manual. In addition to the Civil Service requirements for processing separations (OPM's Guide to Processing Personnel Actions, 296-33), other actions required by local administrative regulations, such as notifying the telephone and locator service, may also be necessary.

## **8. ACTIONS REQUESTED BY EMPLOYEES**

If a change to a position at a lower grade, rank, or compensation is based on the employee's request, the employee will submit a written statement for the change to the Human Resources Management Office. The statement must show that the employee is requesting the action of his own free will and for his/her benefit, briefly state the reasons for the request, and specify the title, grade, salary and location of the position to which assignment is requested and the earliest acceptable effective date. The request may also include other conditions such as whether the action is desired in lieu of another placement action proposed by management, that scheduled vacation plans be favorably considered by the new supervisor, or any other conditions considered to be important by the employee. The statement will be filed in the employee's Official Personnel Folder if approved by management and the personnel action is taken.