

Merit System Principles

The merit system principles are the public's expectations of a system that is efficient, effective, fair, open to all, free from political interference, and staffed by honest, competent, and dedicated employees. As the federal government experiences continued change in the management of human resources (centralization, deregulation, delegation, etc.), it becomes increasingly important that line supervisors and managers incorporate the merit system principles into every decision process they use.

The merit system principles are:

1. Recruit qualified individuals from all segments of society and select and advance employees on the basis of merit after fair and open competition.
2. Treat employees and applicants fairly and equitably, without regard to political affiliation, race, color, religion, national origin, sex, marital status, age, or handicapping condition.
3. Provide equal pay for equal work and reward excellent performance.
4. Maintain high standards of integrity, conduct, and concern for the public interest.
5. Manage employees efficiently and effectively.
6. Retain and separate employees on the basis of their performance.
7. Educate and train employees when it will result in better organizational or individual performance.
8. Protect employees from improper political influence.
9. Protect employees against reprisal for the lawful disclosure of information in "whistleblower" situations (i.e., protecting people who report things like illegal and/or wasteful activities).

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

Information sources:

U.S. Office of Special Counsel (OSC). Inquiries about the Hatch Act and the activities of the OSC made be made to:

U.S. Office of Special Counsel
1730 M Street, NW., Suite 300
Washington, D.C 20036-4505
(202)653-7188
1-800-872-9855 (TDD equipped)

U.S. Office of Government Ethics (OGE). Inquires about ethical conduct may be made to:

Office of Government Ethics
1201 New York Avenue, NW., Suite 500
Washington, DC 20005-3917
(202) 523-5757

Merit Systems Protection Board. Inquiries about the activities of the MSPB may be made to:

Merit Systems Protection Board
1120 Vermont Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20419
(202)653-7124