



United States Department of the Interior

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
Washington, DC 20240

December 18, 2023

Veronica E. Hinton
Associate Director
Workforce Policy & Innovation
U.S. Office of Personnel Management
1900 E Street, NW
Washington, DC 20415-9700

Dear Mrs. Hinton:

The U.S. Department of the Interior (DOI) is a Cabinet-level agency that manages America's vast natural and cultural resources. In Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, DOI employed approximately 77,000 personnel at 2,400 locations with offices across the United States, Puerto Rico, U.S. Territories, and Freely Associated States.

There are currently 75 military spouses onboard at Interior, an increase of 26 military spouses onboarded from FY 2022. In FY 2023, the Department hired 33 permanent military spouses, an increase of 14 additional military spouse hires from FY 2022. Interior's utilization of the Military Spouse Hiring Authority during FY 2023 is as follows:

1. The number of positions made available for application under the military spouse hiring authority during FY 2023: 3,762 job opportunity announcements (via USA Staffing data).
2. The number of applications submitted under the military spouse hiring authority during FY 2023: 8,431 (via USA Staffing data).
3. The number of military spouses appointed under the military spouse hiring authority during FY 2023: 47 applicants were selected under the military spouse hiring authority however only 33 permanent hires onboarded, and nine non-permanent hires onboarded, which is an increase of 23 military spouses to the Department in FY 2023.
4. Identify each of the positions filled under the authority by title, series, and grade level:
 - Archaeologist – GS-0193-09
 - Human Resources Specialist – GS-0201-13
 - Human Resources Assistant (3) – GS-0203-07
 - Administrative Specialist (2) – GS-0301-07
 - Administrative Support Assistant – GS-0303-05
 - Administrative Support Assistant – GS-0303-07
 - Administrative Operations Specialist (2) – GS-0303-07

- Secretary (OA) – GS-0318-09
 - Management Analyst – GS-0343-07
 - Program Manager – GS-0343-09
 - Fish and Wildlife Biologist – GS-0401-11
 - Accountant – GS-0410-12
 - Budget Analyst – GS-0560-07
 - Budget Analyst (2) – GS-0560-09
 - Budget Analyst – GS-0560-11
 - Landscape Architect – GS-0807-11
 - Public Affairs – GS-1035-09
 - Minerals Revenue Specialist – GS-1101-07
 - General Business and Industry – GS-1101-09
 - Minerals Revenue Specialist – GS-1101-12
 - Contracting Specialist – GS-1102-12
 - Procurement Analyst – GS-1102-14
 - Procurement Technician – GS-1106-05
 - Grants Management Specialist – GS-1109-07
 - Grants Management Specialist – GS-1109-09
 - Land Management Law Enforcement Officer – GS-1801-09
5. Summarize and provide details on actions taken by the agency during FY 2023 to advertise and promote the hiring of military spouses:

The Department enthusiastically participated in the inaugural USDA Military Spouse Association (MSA) Federal Interagency Military Spouse Career Expo, with several DOI HR professionals providing presentations, sharing vacancies, engaging audiences on Federal recruitment tips and tricks, and sharing personal military spouse testimonies.

DOI continued to maintain an alliance with the Military Spouse Employment Partnership (MSEP) program. This collaboration affords DOI the opportunity to utilize the MSEP platform, converse with potential applicants and re-direct them to job opportunity announcements on USAJOBS. DOI HR professionals leverage the full capacity of MSEP events, initiatives, career fairs, and activities that involve both outreach and recruitment strategies to broadly share information regarding vacancies at the agency. DOI utilizes MSEP's Federal Concierge Service, Military Spouse Testimonial, "Hot Jobs" for Military Spouse, and MSEP's "Engagement feature" to further reach military spouse candidates. Also in FY 2023, DOI worked diligently to ensure the establishment of Subordinate Federal Partners within the MSEP partnership and are pleased that several bureaus have become subordinate partners exemplifying their dedication to hire military spouses.

DOI held monthly Inter-bureau Expert Team (I-BET) meetings with Veteran Employment Coordinators that work exclusively with Veterans and Military Spouses for recruitment and placement matters. This team shared best practices to support the military spouse community, tying in key action items from *Joining Forces*, a White House initiative to support military families.

Also in FY 2023, DOI hosted several webinars and trainings geared toward HR supervisors and managers involved in recruitment and placement of military spouses including hosting guest speakers from U.S. Office of Personnel Management in Support of Executive Order 14100—Advancing Economic Security for Military and Veteran Spouses, Military Caregivers, and Survivors.”

The Department, on a continuous basis, shares recruitment and outreach resources between regions and works in partnership Servicing Human Resources Offices, hiring professionals, Equal Employment Opportunity Offices, and the Civil Rights Division to reach as many potential future military spouses as possible via networking, word of mouth, and communications. Use of email distribution lists (e.g., Listservs) to contact professional organizations, alumni groups, and minority/advocacy groups with military spouse populations also affords the Department opportunities to engage with military spouses.

Bureau highlights include (but are not limited to):

- Opening Merit Promotion job opportunity announcements to Military Spouse candidates allowing them the opportunity to compete non-competitively.
- Diversity Recruitment Teams expanding outreach efforts by identifying 3,000 points of contacts at military transition centers, and Federal and State Veteran employment offices, representing Veteran constituencies at both regional and local levels.
- Utilization of digital weekly newsletters with job opportunity announcement hyperlinks for organizations to disseminate to their constituents, including those that support military families.
- Participation in several outreach events at Veteran career fairs sponsored by the Department of Defense, Veterans Administration, and state/local Veteran service offices at venues across the country, including rural areas.
- Representation at recruitment fairs at local academic institutions including Historically Black Colleges and Universities.
- Ongoing internal training to human capital professionals regarding provisions of E.O. 13832 along with specific training seminars, such as “Talent Surge Webinar Series: Military Spouse Hiring Authority.”
- Addition of automated eligibility question to identify those who apply under the military spouse hiring authority.
- Talent Recruiters establishing a campaign in the USA Jobs Talent Portal that allows further outreach to military spouses and has resulted with the Department of Labor in each state working with bureau/program office when vacancies arise.
- As a best practice, when visiting military installations, including visits to local Family Support Offices and Employment Readiness Offices to establish relationships, offer support and appreciation either in-person or virtually. These connections have created an opportunity to directly communicate information and extend invitations to webinars and Military Spouse Career Fairs.
- Utilization of LinkedIn, Handshake, and the Military Spouse Employment Partnership (MSEP) portal to advertise vacancies and to attract military spouses, adding MSEP badge to announcement flyers and banners, showcasing commitment to hiring military spouses.

- Forming Operations Hiring Solutions Task Force: A strategic cross-cutting proactive and streamlined talent acquisition team that is branded and managed like private industry and augmented with smart technologies to better access and engage top tier talent and provide well-rounded solutions tackling all aspects of applicant experience including military spouse recruitment and retention.
6. Point of Contact for Military Spouse Hiring initiative. The Departmental subject matter expert is Angela Mettling, Angela_Mettling@ios.doi.gov.

Please contact Angela Mettling, Senior HR Staffing Policy Analyst and Agency Special Employment Programs Manager, at Angela_Mettling@ios.doi.gov with any questions.