

# Summary of Changes

## Handbook EL-304, *Maintenance Selection System*

Handbook EL-304, *Maintenance Selection System*, has been updated with *Postal Bulletin* articles through September 4, 2014, as follows:

The chapter, subchapter, part, appendix, or section . . .	titled . . .	was . . .	in <i>Postal Bulletin</i> issue number . . .	with an issue date of . . .
<b>Chapter 1, Overview</b>				
<a href="#">112</a>	Scope	revised to clarify scope.	22397	9-4-14
<a href="#">113</a>	Grievance and Complaint Settlements	revised to clarify complaint processes.	22397	9-4-14
<a href="#">115</a>	MSS Processes	revised to clarify that the processes described are for filling career maintenance positions.	22397	9-4-14
<a href="#">12</a>	List of Terms	revised to add new definitions and revise existing definitions.	22397	9-4-14
<a href="#">13</a>	Acronyms	revised to add the acronym PAR.	22397	9-4-14
<b>Chapter 2, Incraft Application Process</b>				
<a href="#">242</a>	Conducting Examinations	revised to delete a sentence that is no longer true concerning Examination 955.	22397	9-4-14
<a href="#">243</a>	Abandoned Examinations	revised to add item c and to add a note.	22397	9-4-14
<a href="#">262.3</a>	Rerate Requests	revised to change PAS MSS to PAS ADMIN to accurately reflect the organization with this role.	22397	9-4-14
<a href="#">282.4</a>	Update Examinations	revised to change PAS MSS to PAS ADMIN to accurately reflect the organization with this role.	22397	9-4-14
<b>Chapter 3, Inservice Application Process</b>				
<a href="#">34</a>	Step 3 - Inservice Records Review	revised to remove a note about future technology.	22397	9-4-14
<a href="#">352</a>	Conducting Examinations	revised to delete a sentence that is no longer true concerning Examination 955.	22397	9-4-14
<a href="#">353</a>	Abandoned Examinations	revised to add item c to instruct when and how the applicant is to be notified.	22397	9-4-14
<a href="#">371</a>	Posting	revised to add a new Exhibit number.	22397	9-4-14
<a href="#">372.4</a>	Rerate Requests	revised to change PAS MSS to PAS ADMIN to accurately reflect the organization with this role.	22397	9-4-14
<a href="#">373</a>	Union Requests for Information	revised to clarify information and add an email address.	22397	9-4-14

The chapter, subchapter, part, appendix, or section . . .	titled . . .	was . . .	in <i>Postal Bulletin</i> issue number . . .	with an issue date of . . .
<b>Chapter 4, Entrance Application Process</b>				
<a href="#">452</a>	Conducting Examinations	revised to change PAS MSS to PAS ADMIN to accurately reflect the organization with this role, and to update the second sentence regarding Exam 955.	22397	9-4-14
<a href="#">453</a>	Eligibility Notification	revised to change the word “send” to “provide” as relates to eligibility notifications to applicants because the Notices of Result are now electronic.	22397	9-4-14
<a href="#">462.1</a>	Eligibility	revised to delete the word “written.”	22397	9-4-14
<a href="#">474</a>	Additional Test Opportunities	revised to include the phrase “if they apply 120 days or more after taking the test” to incorporate the retest rules for postal entrance exams.	22397	9-4-14
<b>Chapter 6, Transfers and Position Changes</b>				
<a href="#">61</a>	Qualifying for a Transfer	updated to clarify transfer qualifications.	22397	9-4-14
<b>Chapter 7, Administration</b>				
<a href="#">723</a>	Requests for Information	updated with a link to Handbook 353.	22397	9-4-14
<b>Appendix A, Exhibits</b>				
<a href="#">Exhibit A-7</a>	Interview Panel Consensus Final Rating	updated and renamed.	22397	9-4-14
<a href="#">Exhibit A-8</a>	Sample Notice of Result (for Incraft or Inservice) for Exam 955	updated.	22397	9-4-14
<a href="#">Exhibit A-9</a>	Sample Notice of Result for the MSS Structured Interview	updated.	22397	9-4-14
<a href="#">Exhibit A-11</a>	Sample Notice of Result (Entrance) for Examination 955	updated.	22397	9-4-14
<a href="#">Exhibit A-12</a>	Sample Instruction Letter to Incraft Employee or Inservice Applicant	updated.	22397	9-4-14
<a href="#">Exhibit A-13</a>	Applicant Date Collection Sheet	updated.	22397	9-4-14
<b>Appendix C, Privacy Act and Freedom of Information Act Considerations and Disclosure of Records</b>				
<a href="#">C</a>	Privacy Act and Freedom of Information Act Considerations and Disclosure of Records	updated with an email address.	22397	9-4-14

## Maintenance Selection System

Handbook EL-304  
Issue 4

September 2014  
Transmittal Letter

- A. Explanation.** This issue of Handbook EL-304, *Maintenance Selection System*, is completely revised to provide current information on Postal Service policies and procedures for selecting maintenance craft employees. Issue 4 contains updates to items from Issue 3.
- B. Instructions.** Discard or recycle all previous issues of Handbook EL-304; they are obsolete.
- C. Distribution.** Print a copy from the intranet.
- D. Comments and Questions:**
- 1. Processing examinations.** Send an e-mail to PAS MSS or [NMSS@usps.gov](mailto:NMSS@usps.gov).
  - 2. Other issues.** Direct comments and questions through the appropriate Area office to Headquarters Human Resources.
- E. Effective Date.** This handbook is effective September 2014.



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# 1 Overview

## 11 General Principles

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### 111 Goals

The goals of the Maintenance Selection System (MSS) are to:

- a. Ensure the selection and promotion of qualified maintenance personnel; and
- b. Promote the uniform application of qualification requirements.

### 112 Scope

Career maintenance craft positions filled under the Maintenance Selection System covered by this handbook include:

Electronic Technician	PS-10
Electronic Technician	PS-11
Maintenance Mechanic, MPE	PS-9
Maintenance Mechanic	PS-6
Maintenance Mechanic	PS-7
Area Maintenance Specialist	PS-8
Area Maintenance Specialist	PS-9
Building Equipment Mechanic	PS-9
Blacksmith-Welder	PS-8
Building Maintenance Custodian	PS-5
Carpenter	PS-8
Letter Box Mechanic (Shop)	PS-8
Mason	PS-8
Machinist	PS-8
Maintenance Electrician	PS-8
Painter	PS-8
Plumber	PS-8

Other career maintenance craft positions, sometimes referred to as “non-MSS” positions, are filled outside of the Maintenance Selection System. Vacant non-MSS duty assignments are filled internally on either a senior-qualified basis or a best-qualified basis (see Handbook EL-312, *Employment and Placement*, section 728), or externally as described in the collective bargaining agreement and Handbook EL-312, *Employment and Placement*, Chapter 4 and sections 232.52 and 233. Non-MSS positions include the following positions:

- Maintenance Support Clerk, PS-07.
- Group Leader, Custodial, PS-05.
- Laborer Custodial, PS-04.

## 113 **Grievance and Complaint Settlements**

Grievance and pre-arbitration settlements, the resolution of formal and informal EEO complaints, and similar actions involving the MSS must be coordinated with Postal Assessment Support (PAS) and/or Headquarters Labor Relations during the investigative phase. Such coordination will ensure that settlement implementations are in accordance with the provisions of the MSS.

## 114 **Planning**

Once a decision has been made to begin the MSS process, the planning stage begins. Once begun, it is imperative that the process continue in a timely fashion as required by Article 38 of the United States Postal Service/ American Postal Workers Union (USPS/APWU) National Agreement. The order of the steps is critical and must be followed exactly.

## 115 **MSS Processes**

There are three different processes for filling career maintenance positions in the Postal Service: *incraft*, *inservice*, and *entrance*.

### 115.1 **Incraft**

Career maintenance craft employees are given first priority in filling vacancies in the maintenance craft. Article 38 of the USPS/APWU National Agreement defines a career maintenance craft employee — referred to in the MSS as an *incraft* employee.

### 115.2 **Inservice**

When it becomes apparent that *incraft* procedures will not meet present or future staffing needs, the Postal Service looks to career employees who are qualified to fill the maintenance positions.

### 115.3 **Entrance**

When it becomes apparent that neither *incraft* nor *inservice* procedures will meet present or future staffing needs, the Postal Service recruits outside applicants.

## 116 **Responsibilities**

For the MSS to be effective, coordination of the program's activities is essential. Human Resources (HR) MSS Coordinators and Maintenance MSS Coordinators are both responsible for the administration of the MSS.

### 116.1 **Selecting Coordinators**

Managers must select HR MSS Coordinators and Maintenance MSS Coordinators who are capable of ensuring that all activity within their areas of responsibility is completed in a proper and timely manner.

### 116.2 HR MSS Coordinators

In each district, the HR MSS coordinators are responsible for:

- a. Notifying all new incraft employees in writing that they have 30 days from the receipt of the announcement letter to request inclusion on all Promotion Eligibility Registers (PERs) in the office.
- b. Providing Employee Maintenance Position Selection (EMPS) Sheets and instructions for completing them to incraft and inservice applicants.
- c. Providing an instruction letter to employees regarding how to use the Online Assessment System (OASYS) for Examination 955 (see [Exhibit A-12](#)).
- d. Including an Applicant Data Collection Sheet ([Exhibit A-13](#)) with the instruction letter.
- e. Maintaining MSS Structured Interview Guides under double lock and key, and maintaining a log of the checkout and return of each numbered booklet.
- f. Coordinating the establishment and scheduling of review panels.
- g. Maintaining all files concerning MSS applicants.

### 116.3 Maintenance MSS Coordinators

In each maintenance-capable installation, the Maintenance MSS Coordinators are responsible for:

- a. Providing MSS Structured Interview Guides to review panel members.
- b. Collecting and accounting for all MSS Structured Interview Guides and returning booklets to the HR MSS Coordinator.
- c. Reviewing requests submitted for incraft updates and determining whether an applicant is eligible to update.

## 12 List of Terms

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**Abandon.** Failure to attend a scheduled examination or employee asks not to be scheduled.

**Banded Scores.** Refer to Article 38 for banding information.

**Competency.** A collection of the Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities (KSAs) that are required for qualification for a job as identified in the qualification standards for the specific standard position.

**Component.** Process step required to complete the MSS process, for example, the examination and the Review Panel Evaluation (MSS Structured Interview).

**Eligibles.** Applicants who receive a numerical rating.

**Entrance Hiring List.** A list of eligibles based on an entrance vacancy announcement.

**Entrance Examination Rating.** The examination result received by entrance applicants who apply for a vacancy. An eligible rating only guarantees the entrance applicant further consideration if the score is reached competitively.

**Note:** An entrance examination score from Exam 955 is transferrable to either an incraft or an inservice application to satisfy the examination requirement. Scores from the old MSS process are not transferrable to an incraft or inservice application.

**Incraft.** A career maintenance craft employee in accordance with Article 38 of the USPS/APWU National Agreement.

**Incraft Preferred Assignment Register (PAR).** A register in numerical order for maintenance employees, listing the specific duty assignments in their current occupational group and level that they prefer over the one they currently hold. The listing of employees is by occupational group and level, using the seniority under Article 38.2.G.

**Incraft Promotion Eligibility Register (PER).** A register established for the purpose of filling vacancies in particular occupational groups and levels (for which there is an existing or newly authorized position at an installation) in accordance with Article 38 of the USPS/APWU National Agreement.

**Incraft Result.** The result received by incraft maintenance employees based on the examination and MSS Structured Interview components.

**Inservice Register.** A group of eligible career Postal Service employees who have applied as a result of an inservice announcement.

**Note:** An inservice examination score from Exam 955 may be applied to an incraft application.

**Inservice Result.** The composite result, using the examination and MSS Structured Interview, received by career Postal Service employees who applied as a result of an inservice announcement. This result is **only** used to determine whether an applicant is eligible to be placed on the inservice register for further consideration.

**Installation.** A main Post Office, airport mail center or facility, terminal, bulk mail center (also known as a network distribution center), processing and distribution center or facility, Maintenance Support and Repair Facility, or any similar organizational unit under the direction of one postal official together with all stations, branches, and other subordinate units.

**Job Family.** Maintenance positions having the same test qualification standard (see Job Families 0, 1, 2, 3, and 4 listed on the EMPS Sheet shown in [Exhibit A-2](#)).

**Job Group.** A group of maintenance positions that have the same test requirement. Job Groups are shown in [Exhibit A-8](#), Sample Notice of Result (Incraft/Inservice) for Examination 955.

**KSA.** Knowledge, skills, and abilities identified for each individual position that are required for qualification for a job.

**Maintenance Examination.** Examination 955 is used for maintenance jobs within the Maintenance Selection System.

**Maintenance Selection System (MSS).** The process for qualifying employees and applicants for maintenance positions in the Postal Service.

**Notice of Result.** A summary sheet generated for incraft applicants for each MSS job family. For entrance applicants, the summary sheet identifies all positions and ratings for each position.

**Maintenance Position.** A specific job in the maintenance craft.

**Postal Assessment Support (PAS ADMIN).** Postal Service organization that offers general examination guidance.

**Postal Assessment Support (PAS MSS).** Postal Service organization that offers maintenance selection system (MSS) guidance.

**Register Date.** A date specified by a particular application process, as follows:

- Entrance. The examination date.
- Inservice. The closing date of the announcement.
- Incraft — New to Craft. The date an employee entered the maintenance craft.
- Incraft — Newly Authorized Position. The closing date of the announcement.
- Incraft — Transfer to Another Facility. The date of an employee's transfer.
- Incraft — Update. An employee's original register date for the register he or she is updating.

**Rerate.** A request of verifying an applicant's maintenance examination results.

**Review Panel.** A panel composed of one EAS Human Resources and two EAS Maintenance officials (a Maintenance Manager or designee must be one of the members).

**Review Panel Evaluation.** An assessment made by a review panel during an MSS Structured Interview. The result of the Review Panel Evaluation is recorded on the Interview Panel Consensus Final Rating Sheet ([Exhibit A-7](#)).

**USPS/APWU National Agreement.** A collective bargaining agreement between the United States Postal Service and the American Postal Workers Union that covers maintenance craft employees.

**Veterans' Preference.** The Postal Reorganization Act of 1970 requires the Postal Service to continue to recognize veterans' preference in rating, ranking, and selecting of applicants. The Veterans' Preference Act of 1944 allows certain privileges for applicants who meet the requirements for veterans' preference entitlement. These privileges include the addition of either five or 10 points to competitive entrance examination scores, priority in selection decisions, and the opportunity to compete in exams not open to the general public. The law also restricts certain positions to those entitled to veterans' preference.

## 13 Acronyms

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APWU	American Postal Workers Union
ASM	<i>Administrative Support Manual</i>
EAS	Executive and Administrative Schedule
EEO	Equal Employment Opportunity
EIN	Employee Identification Number
EMPS	Employee Maintenance Position Selection
HR	Human Resources
KSA	Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities
MI	Management Instruction
MSS	Maintenance Selection System
MTSC	Maintenance Technical Support Center
NTSN	National Technical Support Network
OASYS	Online Assessment System
OPF	Official Personnel Folder
PAR	Preferred Assignment Register
PAS	Postal Assessment Support
PER	Promotion Eligibility Register
PS	Postal Service (used only for forms)
USPS	United States Postal Service



# 2 Incraft Application Process

## 21 Overview

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### 211 Incraft Employees

Career maintenance craft employees are given first priority in filling vacancies in the maintenance craft. Article 38 of the USPS/APWU National Agreement defines a career maintenance craft employee. Within the context of MSS, they are called *incraft* employees.

Incraft employees are given the opportunity to fill a vacant position based on their standing on a Promotion Eligibility Register (PER). That standing is determined by the results of their completion of the MSS process for the job family that includes the vacant position. Maintenance craft employees can apply to be included in a PER under the following four circumstances:

- a. *New to Craft*. When an employee enters the maintenance craft.
- b. *New Position*. When a facility announces a newly authorized maintenance position.
- c. *New to Facility*. When an employee transfers to another maintenance facility.
- d. *MSS Open Season*. When an official MSS Open Season is announced.

Once an incraft applicant has completed the MSS process and received an incraft result — whether eligible or ineligible — he or she may **not** apply as an incraft applicant for that job family again.

### 212 Updating

Applicants may apply to improve their ratings through a process called *updating*. Updating is available only to incraft applicants and it applies only to their incraft ratings. The updating process allows an incraft applicant to reparticipate in the MSS process, obtain a reevaluation, and generate a new rating. For detailed information, see Subchapter [28](#), Updating.

### 213 Incraft MSS Process

The incraft process for MSS (except for updates) consists of six distinct steps, as follows:

Step	Procedure
1.	Announcement
2.	Applications

Step	Procedure
3.	Record review
4.	Examination
5.	MSS Structured Interview
6.	Results

Steps 1 and 2, announcement and application, differ depending on which of the four circumstances apply (new-to-craft, new position, new-to-facility, or MSS Open Season). Steps 4 through 6 remain the same regardless of circumstances.

**The order of the steps is important!** Performing steps out of order will create additional work for the local office and, in some cases, it will create serious problems. The entire process must be completed within 150 days.

The following paragraphs explain the six-step incraft process in detail.

## 22 Steps 1 and 2 – Incraft Announcement and Application

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### 221 New to Craft

When an employee enters the maintenance craft, the HR MSS Coordinator must:

- a. Notify all new-to-craft maintenance employees, in writing, of their right to apply for the Promotion Eligibility Registers (PERs) in their office within 15 days of their entering the maintenance craft. (See [Exhibit A-1](#), Sample Letter – New Maintenance Craft Employees.)
- b. Provide an EMPS Sheet ([Exhibit A-2](#)) with the notice.
- c. Retain a copy of the notice.

New-to-craft employees have 30 calendar days from receipt of the EMPS Sheet to return it completed and signed, indicating the positions for which they are applying. If an employee does not return the completed and signed sheet within 30 days, the HR MSS Coordinator annotates the retained copy indicating that the employee was notified and declined to apply, and places it in the employee's maintenance file. No further action is required.

### 222 New Position

When a facility announces a newly authorized maintenance position, the HR MSS Coordinator must:

- a. Post a notice – for at least 30 calendar days – announcing that a PER is being created for a newly established position (or positions). (See [Exhibit A-3](#), Announcement – Newly Authorized Incraft Position.)
- b. Publicize the notice widely to all career maintenance craft employees at the installation.
- c. Provide EMPS Sheets and make them widely available to eligible employees.
- d. Retain a copy of the notice.

During the 30-day posting period, career maintenance craft employees may apply by completing and signing an EMPS Sheet. EMPS Sheets will not be accepted after the announcement closing date.

In addition:

- a. Applicants who have an eligible rating for the MSS Structured Interview for the applicable position will not receive a new MSS Structured Interview.
- b. Applicants who have completed the process for the job family containing the new position already have a rating for the new position and that rating must be used to place them on the new register. This includes applicants whose rating is “ineligible.”

The HR MSS Coordinator will retain the original EMPS Sheets for use when the final results are generated.

## 223 **New to Facility**

### 223.1 **Step 1 – Announcement**

When an incraft employee transfers to another maintenance facility, the HR MSS Coordinator must:

- a. Notify all new maintenance craft employees, in writing, of their right to apply for the PERs in their office within 15 calendar days of their entering the maintenance craft. (See [Exhibit A-4](#), Sample Letter — Transferred Maintenance Craft Employees Only.)
- b. Provide an EMPS Sheet along with the notice.
- c. Retain a copy of the notice.

### 223.2 **Step 2 – Application**

Newly transferred employees have 30 calendar days from receipt of the notification letter to return the completed and signed EMPS Sheet indicating the registers for which they are applying. If an employee does not return the completed and signed sheet within 30 calendar days, the HR MSS Coordinator annotates the retained copy indicating that the employee was notified and declined to apply, and places it in the employee’s maintenance file. No further action is required.

The following guidelines apply to applications from newly transferred employees:

- a. If an applicant has an eligible rating for a MSS Structured Interview for the position of interest, the applicant is not required to have a new interview.
- b. If an applicant has completed the MSS process for the job family that contains the new position, he or she has a rating for that position. That rating must be used to place the applicant on the new register — even if the rating is “ineligible.”

The HR MSS Coordinator will retain the original EMPS Sheets for use when the final results are generated.

### 224 **MSS Open Season**

MSS Open Season is governed by Article 38 of the USPS/APWU National Agreement. Prior to each MSS Open Season, Organizational Effectiveness will publish special instructions outlining the announcement and application process.

## 23 Step 3 — Incraft Record Review

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The HR MSS Coordinator will compile a list of applicants that notes, for each applicant: examinations completed, and MSS Structured Interviews on file. This list will be made available to the Maintenance MSS Coordinators, who should process applicants on the list as follows:

- a. If an applicant does not have an examination on file, schedule an examination that will take place before the MSS Structured Interview and notify the applicant.
- b. If an applicant does not have a Review Panel Evaluation or MSS Structured Interview on file, schedule a review panel and notify the applicant.

**Note:** Eventually, as the technology evolves, the list of applicants will be available as an on-line database.

## 24 Step 4 — Incraft Examination Process

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### 241 **Scheduling Examinations**

If Step 3, Incraft Record Review, indicates a need for an examination, schedule it to take place before the review panel process.

### 242 **Conducting Examinations**

Maintenance examinations are conducted in OASYS according to Headquarters' rules and procedures for conducting examinations.

If an applicant has a Review Panel Evaluation on file from a maintenance selection system process used prior to 2009, notify the applicant that he or she will not be scheduled for an MSS Structured Interview. (See [Exhibit A-5](#), Sample Letter — Applicant Not Entitled to New MSS Structured Interview).

### 243 **Abandoned Examinations**

If an applicant abandons the examination process (i.e., fails to attend a scheduled examination or asks not to be scheduled):

- a. Note the abandonment in the employee's maintenance file. (Before entering the notation, verify that the circumstances justify this action.)
- b. Nevertheless, process abandonments in a timely manner because other applicants with the same or earlier register dates cannot receive results until all abandoned examinations have been entered in the records.

- c. Notify the applicant that he or she is no longer considered an applicant for the position (see [Exhibit A-6](#), Sample Letter-Applicant).

A candidate attempting to test for an update will be allowed to reschedule 120 days after the original exam date.

## 25 Step 5 – Incraft Review Panel Evaluation

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### 251 **Constructing an MSS Review Panel**

Construct a MSS Review Panel consisting of three members, as follows:

- a. The senior maintenance manager (or designee), who serves as chairman.
- b. A maintenance supervisor from the functional area. If none are available, select an EAS maintenance representative who is knowledgeable about the duties and requirements of the position in the job family.
- c. A Human Resources representative.

When precise membership for a review panel is not available, management may designate Human Resources and maintenance representatives from the next higher level or nearby facility.

Members of an MSS Review Panel must not be the immediate supervisor of any applicant or a 204B or craft employee.

### 252 **Constructing an ET-11 Review Panel**

A representative from the Maintenance Technical Support Center (MTSC) (or another official designated in writing by the MTSC) must be one of the members of an ET-11 Review Panel.

**ET-11 Review Panels conducted without an MTSC representative will be void.** Since this is a costly and time-consuming mistake, be especially careful when constructing an ET-11 Review Panel. Refer to Management Instruction (MI) AS-530-1999-5, *NTSN Guidelines for PS-10 Electronics Positions* (or a superseding MI).

**Reminder:** All members of an ET-11 Review Panel must be EAS employees; they must not be the immediate supervisor of any applicant or 204B or craft employee.

### 253 **Conducting the Review Panel**

#### 253.1 **Preparing Interview Guides and Rating Sheets**

The HR MSS Coordinator provides the following to the Maintenance MSS Coordinator:

- a. MSS Structured Interview Guide.
- b. Interview Panel Consensus Final Rating Sheet ([Exhibit A-7](#)), with the applicant's name and Employee Identification Number (EIN) entered.

The Maintenance MSS Coordinator verifies that the candidate's name and EIN are inserted on the rating sheet and provides the materials to the review panel.

**Note:** The ultimate responsibility for the accuracy of the name and EIN rests with the HR MSS Coordinator. Under no circumstances should review panel members be given sheets without the names and EINs entered.

### 253.2 **Evaluating Candidates**

The review panel evaluates each candidate's qualifications using the MSS Structured Interview Guide and enters the appropriate rating on the Interview Panel Consensus Final Rating Sheet ([Exhibit A-7](#)). The review panel must evaluate all of the competencies on the rating sheet.

### 253.3 **Verifying Rating Sheets**

The review panel returns the completed sheets to the HR MSS Coordinator, who reviews the sheets to be certain that all items have been marked.

### 254 **Abandoned MSS Structured Interviews**

If an applicant abandons the review panel process (i.e., fails to report for a scheduled review panel or asks not to be scheduled):

- a. Notify the applicant that he or she is no longer considered an applicant for the position (see [Exhibit A-6](#), Sample Letter – Applicant Considered Non-Applicant).
- b. Process abandonments in a timely manner. Submit requests to abandon within 15 calendar days of the scheduled date for the MSS Structured Interview. Other applicants with the same or earlier register dates cannot receive their results until all requests to abandon have been processed.

## 26 Step 6 – Incraft Results

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### 261 **Posting**

The final step is recording and filing the results of the process. Once the Human Resources office has the results of the examination and MSS Structured Interview on file, it will notify the employee of the results. [Exhibit A-8](#) and [Exhibit A-9](#) show the basic contents and layout for Notice of Result letters.

The HR MSS Coordinator matches the results letter with the EMPS Sheet filled out by the applicant at the beginning of the process. The results document may not cover each position selected because the result for each job family is issued separately. The HR MSS Coordinator then:

- a. Places the applicant on each register selected on the sheet according to his or her rating for that register.
- b. Places a copy of the applicant's results in his or her OPF and maintenance file.

## 262 **Applicants' Inquiries**

Applicants might not receive their personal copies before the results are posted to the register. Since the office copy contains the same information, Human Resources may provide a copy to an applicant upon request.

Although MSS documents are considered confidential, employees may obtain copies of their own Interview Panel Consensus Final Rating Sheets ([Exhibit A-7](#)).

**Remember!** Eligible incraft ratings range from 70 to 100. If the applicant has a numerical rating, he or she is eligible.

### 262.1 **Actual Versus Banded Scores**

Actual incraft scores are converted to banded scores in accordance with Article 38 of the USPS/APWU National Agreement.

### 262.2 **Components**

Upon request, the Human Resources office will search for the components used to determine an employee's current position on the PER.

### 262.3 **Rerate Requests**

An applicant who requests verification of the results (commonly referred to as a *rerate*) must submit a signed request for a review and include a copy of his or her examination results. When an applicant submits a signed request, the HR MSS Coordinator will review it for completeness and forward it under a cover letter to PAS ADMIN. PAS ADMIN will respond directly to the applicant with a copy to the requesting office.

## 263 **Union Requests for Information**

The following rules apply to the release of information about individual employees to third parties:

- a. When permitted as a routine use of the system of records, information about individual employees may be released to certified collective bargaining agents, consistent with appropriate provisions of applicable collective bargaining agreements and other statutory obligations.
- b. If in doubt as to whether a disclosure is obligatory or permissible, obtain the advice of the chief field counsel. (See Handbook AS-353, *Guide to Privacy, the Freedom of Information Act, and Records Management*).
- c. When disclosure to a third party is authorized, always delete the social security number, date of birth, and home address from copies of all documents released.

## 27 **Establishing a Promotion Eligibility Register**

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The following guidelines apply to the establishment of a PER:

- a. *Eligible applicants* are ranked in descending order, first by banded score and then by seniority within the same banded score. Banded

scores are covered in Article 38 of the USPS/APWU National Agreement.

- b. *Ineligible applicants'* data is maintained in an alphabetical list separate from the PER.
- c. *Higher-level employees* have a right to apply for all PERs; however, they are not placed on a PER unless it is for the same level or a higher-level position.
- d. *Maintenance supervisors* can use [Exhibit A-8](#), Notice of Result (Inservice/Incraft) for Examination 955, and [Exhibit A-7](#), Interview Panel Consensus Final Rating Sheet, as effective tools for providing guidance and recommending training to employees.
- e. *Human Resources* staff is responsible for the administration and custody of the PERs.

## 28 Updating

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Incraft employees who have received a rating or set of ratings for an incraft job and are on the register (or on the separate list of ineligible applicants) have the right to update that rating or set of ratings. Management has only 37 calendar days from the date of the applicant's update request to complete the process and have results back in the office and notify the employee.

### 281 Eligibility to Update

To be eligible to update a job family, an applicant must meet all of the following criteria:

- a. The applicant must have received an incraft rating or set of ratings for the job families.
- b. He or she must be an applicant for at least one position in the job family he or she is asking to update (i.e., be on at least one register or list of ineligibles in the job family). Applicants who have abandoned the process are not eligible.
- c. The applicant must not have participated in the examination in the last 120 days from the date the examination result was generated.

### 282 Update Application Process

#### 282.1 Employee

The employee must submit a request, in writing, to the Maintenance MSS Coordinator.

#### 282.2 Maintenance MSS Coordinator

The Maintenance MSS Coordinator reviews the list of positions for which the employee applied. Based on the review, the coordinator determines:

- a. If the applicant has no other update in process for the job families in question.



- b. If the request is denied, either in whole or in part, the Maintenance MSS Coordinator must notify the applicant in writing of the specific reasons for the denial.

### 282.3 **HR MSS Coordinator**

If the Maintenance MSS Coordinator approves the update, the HR MSS Coordinator schedules an examination for the applicant. If an MSS Structured Interview is needed, the HR MSS Coordinator notifies maintenance and schedules a review panel.

**Note:** Although the Maintenance MSS Coordinator reviews the request to verify when the employee last took Examination 955, it remains the responsibility of the HR MSS Coordinator to schedule the examination and MSS Structured Interview.

### 282.4 **Update Examinations**

The update examination:

- a. Must be given according to the general rules for examination disseminated by PAS ADMIN.
- b. Must be given after the date on which the employee requested an update.

Next, the HR MSS Coordinator will compare the employee's latest examination results to previous results to determine if the employee's rating has improved. If so, the new rating is used to establish the employee's position on the PER. Any new rating with a lower score shall be ignored and the current score will remain.

### 282.5 **Update Review Panel**

The Update Review Panel:

- a. Must evaluate the applicant according to the MSS Structured Interview Guide.
- b. Must be held after the date on which the employee requested the update.

The HR MSS Coordinator provides the following to the Maintenance MSS Coordinator:

- a. MSS Structured Interview Guide.
- b. Interview Panel Consensus Final Rating Sheet ([Exhibit A-7](#)), with the applicant's name and EIN entered.

The Maintenance MSS Coordinator verifies that the candidate's name and EIN are inserted on the rating sheet and provides the materials to the review panel.

**Note:** The ultimate responsibility for the accuracy of the name and EIN rests with the HR MSS Coordinator. Under no circumstances will the Update Review Panel members be given sheets without the names and EINs entered.

The panel must evaluate the applicant on all of the competencies. Upon completion, the review panel returns the sheet to the HR MSS Coordinator who checks it for completion.

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# 3 Inservice Application Process

## 31 Overview

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When it becomes apparent that incraft procedures will not meet the present or future staffing needs of an installation, the installation may establish an inservice register for each position for which an entrance register is likely to be used. The HR MSS and Maintenance MSS Coordinators should periodically review their registers and, when appropriate, give current employees an opportunity to apply.

**Important Note:** New inservice announcements may not be posted until all prior inservice applicants have been processed.

The inservice process for MSS consists of six distinct steps. They are:

Step	Procedure
1.	Announcement
2.	Application
3.	Record Review
4.	Examination
5.	MSS Structured Interview
6.	Results

**The order of the steps is important!** Performing steps out of order will create additional work for the local office.

## 32 Step 1 – Inservice Announcement

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The HR MSS Coordinator prepares an MSS Inservice Announcement (Exhibit A-10) for all career Postal Service employees within the pre-determined area of consideration (installations, districts, etc.) announcing that inservice applications are being accepted. The announcement is sent to all offices within the area of consideration for posting.

The announcement must contain the following information:

- a. Job Families.
- b. Positions within Job Families.
- c. Opening and closing dates.
- d. Application instructions.

- e. A statement that the registers established by the posting will be used to fill vacancies in the installation
- f. A description of the position with the appropriate qualification standard attached to the announcement.

## 33 Step 2 — Inservice Application

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During the posting period, career Postal Service employees may apply by completing and signing an EMPS Sheet ([Exhibit A-2](#)), modified to show only those jobs in the announcement. The EMPS Sheet must be made available to all career employees during the posting period; it will not be accepted after the announcement closing date.

**Note:** An incraft applicant who has completed the incraft MSS process is not eligible to apply for or to be listed on inservice registers for the same positions he or she has completed (whether eligible or ineligible). Local offices must ensure that their staff members adhere to this rule.

## 34 Step 3 — Inservice Record Review

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Once the EMPS Sheets are submitted, the HR MSS Coordinator will compile a list of applicants that notes, for each applicant: examinations completed, and MSS Structured Interviews on file. This list will be made available to the Maintenance MSS Coordinators, who should process applicants on the list as follows:

- a. If an applicant does not have an examination on file, schedule an examination that will take place before the MSS Structured Interview and notify the applicant.
- b. If an applicant does not have a Review Panel Evaluation (MSS Structured Interview) on file, schedule a review panel and notify the applicant.

## 35 Step 4 — Inservice Examination Process

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### 351 **Scheduling Examinations**

If Step 3, Inservice Record Review, indicates the need for an examination, schedule it to take place before the review panel process.

### 352 **Conducting Examinations**

Maintenance examinations are conducted in OASYS according to Headquarters' rules and procedures for conducting examinations.

### 353 **Abandoned Examinations**

If an applicant abandons the examination process (i.e., fails to attend a scheduled examination or asks not to be scheduled):

- a. Note the abandonment in the employee's maintenance file. (Before entering the notation, verify that the circumstances justify this action.)
- b. Nevertheless, process abandonments in a timely manner because other applicants with the same or earlier register dates cannot receive results until all abandoned examinations have been entered in the records.
- c. Notify the applicant that he or she is no longer considered an applicant for the position (see [Exhibit A-6](#), Sample Letter-Applicant).

## 36 Step 5 — Inservice Review Panel Evaluation

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### 361 **Constructing a Review Panel**

Construct a MSS Review Panel consisting of three members:

- a. The senior maintenance manager (or designee), who serves as chairman.
- b. A maintenance supervisor from the functional area. If none are available, select a maintenance official who is knowledgeable about the duties and requirements of the position in the job family.
- c. A Human Resources representative.

When precise membership for a review panel is not available, management may designate Human Resources and maintenance representatives from the next higher level or nearby facility.

**Reminder:** All Inservice Review Panel members **must** be EAS employees; they **must not** be the immediate supervisor of any applicant or a 204B or craft employee.

### 362 **Conducting the Review Panel**

#### 362.1 **Preparing Interview Guides and Rating Sheets**

The HR MSS Coordinator provides the following to the Maintenance MSS Coordinator:

- a. MSS Structured Interview Guide.
- b. Interview Panel Consensus Final Rating Sheet ([Exhibit A-7](#)) with the applicant's name and EIN entered.

The Maintenance MSS Coordinator verifies that the candidate's name and EIN are inserted on the rating sheet and provides the materials to the review panel.

**Note:** The ultimate responsibility for the accuracy of the name and EIN rests with the HR MSS Coordinator. Under no circumstances should review panel members be given sheets without the names and EINs entered.

**362.2 Evaluating Candidates**

The review panel evaluates each candidate's qualifications using the MSS Structured Interview Guide and enters the appropriate rating on the Interview Panel Consensus Final Rating Sheet ([Exhibit A-7](#)). The review panel **must** evaluate all the competencies on the rating sheet.

**362.3 Verifying Rating Sheets**

The review panel returns the completed rating sheets to the HR MSS Coordinator, who reviews the sheets to be certain that all items have been marked.

**362.4 Abandoned MSS Structured Interviews**

If an applicant abandons the review panel process (i.e., fails to report for a scheduled review panel or asks not to be scheduled), note this in the employee's maintenance file. Before entering a notation, verify that the circumstances justify this action.

## 37 Step 6 — Inservice Results

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**371 Posting**

The final step is recording and filing the results of the process. Once the Human Resources office has the results of the examination and MSS Structured Interview on file, it will notify the employee of the results. [Exhibit A-8](#) and [Exhibit A-9](#) show the basic contents for a Notice of Result letter.

The HR MSS Coordinator matches the results letter with the EMPS Sheet filled out by the applicant at the beginning of the process. The results document may not cover each position selected because the result for each job family is issued separately. The HR MSS Coordinator then:

- a. Places the qualified applicant on each register selected on the sheet according to his or her rating for that register.
- b. Places a copy of the applicant's results in his or her OPF and maintenance file.

**Notes:**

- a. Maintenance craft employees can request to transfer their examination and structured interview eligibility to the appropriate PER.
- b. Inservice results are good indefinitely unless the examination requirements are changed.

**372 Applicants' Inquiries**

The applicant may not receive his or her personal copy before the results are posted to the register. Since the office copy contains the same information, Human Resources may provide a copy to the applicant upon request.

While MSS documents are considered confidential, an employee may obtain copies of his or her Interview Panel Consensus Final Rating Sheet ([Exhibit A-7](#)).

**Remember!** Eligible inservice ratings range from 70 to 100. If the applicant has a numerical rating, he or she is eligible.

372.1 **Banded Scores**

Inservice scores are not banded.

372.2 **Dates of Examinations and MSS Structured Interviews**

If an applicant questions the dates of the examination or MSS Structured Interview used in calculating the rating, the HR MSS Coordinator will review the rules and the dates with the applicant.

372.3 **Verifying Components**

After the HR MSS Coordinator reviews the rules, if the applicant is still not satisfied that the correct examination or the MSS Structured Interview was used, the applicant may request a formal review:

372.4 **Rerate Requests**

An applicant who requests verification of the results (commonly referred to as a *rerate*) must submit a signed request for a review and include a copy of his or her examination results. When an applicant submits a signed request, the HR MSS Coordinator will review it for completeness and forward it under a cover letter to PAS ADMIN. PAS ADMIN will respond directly to the applicant with a copy to the requesting office.

373 **Union Requests for Information**

The following rules apply to the release of information about individual employees to third parties:

- a. When permitted as a routine use of the system of records, information about individual employees may be released to certified collective bargaining agents, consistent with appropriate provisions of applicable collective bargaining agreements and other statutory obligations.
- b. If in doubt as to whether a disclosure which may or may not include personally identifiable information is obligatory or permissible, obtain the advice of the chief field counsel. (See Handbook AS-353, *Guide to Privacy, the Freedom of Information Act, and Records Management* at <http://about.usps.com/handbooks/as353.pdf>).
- c. When disclosure to a third party is authorized, always delete the social security number, date of birth, and home address from copies of all documents released.

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# 4 Entrance Application Process

## 41 Overview

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When it becomes apparent that neither incraft nor inservice procedures will meet present or future staffing needs, the Postal Service recruits outside applicants. The process for recruiting entrants to the MSS process consists of the following steps:

Step	Procedure
1.	Recruitment
2.	Announcement/Application
3.	Record Review
4.	Examination
5.	Review Panel Evaluation
6.	Results

**Important Note:** The PER for Job Family 0, Electronics Technician, Level 11, cannot be opened under entrance procedures.

## 42 Step 1 – Entrance Recruitment

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To attract the best possible applicants from outside the Postal Service, you should:

- a. Evaluate staffing and determine your hiring needs.
- b. Discuss your needs with a representative from Headquarters Talent Acquisition and Retention (TAR). TAR will review the current labor market in your area and assist with development of a recruitment strategy to meet your installation hiring goals.
- c. The recruitment plan should include outreach through a variety of sources, such as electronic job boards, professional associations, and the military. TAR holds nationwide contracts with job boards (e.g., Monster.com) and will work closely with you to find the best candidates.
- d. Be aware of the costs associated with your recruitment plan, including the cost to hire, time to hire, and charges to use recruitment resources.

For additional information and assistance with recruiting, contact a Corporate Recruiter at 202-268-5627 or [Talent@usps.gov](mailto:Talent@usps.gov).

## 43 Step 2 — Entrance Announcement/Application

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Job Family 0, Electronics Technician, Level 11, cannot be opened under entrance procedures.

## 44 Step 3 — Entrance Record Review

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While most applicants for entrance maintenance positions have not taken the multiple choice examination, you may find some applicants who have.

## 45 Step 4 — Entrance Examination

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### 451 **Scheduling Examinations**

Schedule examinations to take place before the review committee panel process.

### 452 **Conducting Examinations**

Maintenance examinations must be conducted according to the general rules and procedures disseminated by PAS ADMIN for conducting examinations. Applicants must complete Exam 955 within 14 days.

### 453 **Eligibility Notification**

OASYS will provide eligibility notifications to the applicants. [Exhibit A-11](#), Sample Notice of Result (Entrance) for Examination 955, shows the basic contents of an entrance notice of result. This eligibility notification guarantees only further consideration to entrance applicants whose eligibility ratings are reached competitively.

## 46 Step 5 — Entrance Review Panel Evaluation

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### 461 **Constructing an Entrance Review Panel**

Construct a MSS Review Panel consisting of a Human Resources staff member and two maintenance supervisors (or managers) who are familiar with the positions.

### 462 **Conducting the Entrance Review Panel**

#### 462.1 **Eligibility**

Entrance applicants who have passed the examination are eligible for a Review Panel Evaluation that uses the MSS Structured Interview procedures.

**462.2 Preparing Interview Guides and Rating Sheets**

The HR MSS Coordinator provides the following to the Maintenance MSS Coordinator:

- a. MSS Structured Interview Guide.
- b. Interview Panel Consensus Final Rating Sheet ([Exhibit A-7](#)) with the applicant's name and EIN entered.

The Maintenance MSS Coordinator verifies that the candidate's name and EIN are inserted on the rating sheet and provides the materials to the review panel.

**Note:** The ultimate responsibility for the accuracy of the name and EIN rests with the HR MSS Coordinator. Under no circumstances should review panel members be given sheets without the names and EINs entered.

**462.3 Scheduling the Interview**

The HR MSS Coordinator schedules the MSS Structured Interview.

**462.4 Evaluating Candidates**

The review panel evaluates each candidate's qualifications using the MSS Structured Interview Guide and enters the appropriate rating on the Interview Panel Consensus Final Rating Sheet ([Exhibit A-7](#)). The review panel must evaluate all the items on the sheet.

**Note:** All Entrance Review Panel members must be EAS employees; they must not be 204B or craft employees.

## 47 Step 6 — Entrance Results

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**471 Eligible Applicants**

Human Resources personnel process the fully qualified applicants for appointment in accordance with the established selection procedures outlined in Handbook EL-312, *Employment and Placement*.

**472 Ineligible Applicants**

Human Resources hiring officials notify, in writing, all applicants who did not meet the requirements.

**473 Qualification Results**

Human Resources updates the results letter as follows: The applicant:

- a. Failed to report for interview (date).
- b. Qualified on review panel (date).
- c. Failed review panel (list competencies).
- d. Notified by letter (date).

**474 Additional Test Opportunities**

Entrance applicants may not retake the same entrance maintenance examination within 120 calendar days of the date of the last examination. Applicants who reapply for a job family for which they have already taken the test may retake the test or use the test score they already have, if they apply 120 days or more after taking the test.

# 5 Registers

## 51 Eligibility for a Register

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### 511 **Incraft Register**

Only career employees currently in a maintenance craft position may have their names placed on an incraft maintenance Promotion Eligibility Register (PER.)

**Note:** Applicants for lower-level positions cannot be placed on a PER. They may only apply under the following circumstances: (1) during MSS Open Season; (2) upon transfer to another installation; or (3) when a new position is authorized within their installation. Under this separate procedure that does not use the PER, applicants will receive a score that can be used to qualify for a change to a lower-level position.

### 512 **Inservice Register**

Career Postal Service employees (bargaining and nonbargaining) may apply for inservice examination announcements. Inservice examinations must be opened at the installation with the vacancies. If necessary, the area of consideration may be expanded to a wider geographic area to include other installations.

## 52 Restoration to a Register

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### 521 **Incraft Register**

Once an employee is selected from an incraft PER, his or her name is removed from that register. If a maintenance employee leaves his or her current position and wishes to have his or her eligibility restored to the register, the employee may do so if:

- a. He or she is currently a maintenance craft employee.
- b. The examination and/or qualification requirements are unchanged (i.e., the employee's original rating is still valid).
- c. The register the employee is restored to is at the same or a higher level than the employee's current position.

**522 Inservice Register**

Once an employee is selected from an inservice register, his or her name is removed from that register. If the employee leaves a position and wishes to have his or her eligibility restored, the employee may do so if:

- a. The examination and/or qualification requirements are unchanged (i.e., the employee's original rating is still valid).
- b. He or she is a career employee when the request is made.

**523 Pre-Revamped MSS Ratings**

MSS scores attained through Examinations 931, 932, or 933 and scores generated before January 1989 are valid. Employees with these scores will remain on PERs.

However, an employee with an ineligible rating not obtained under revamped MSS must participate in the revamped MSS to update the rating. When updating, follow the normal update procedures in Subchapter [28](#), Updating.

## 53 Filling Vacant Maintenance Craft Positions

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Detailed guidance on the order in which vacant maintenance craft positions are to be filled is provided in the following publications:

- a. "Order for Filling Vacant Maintenance Positions" (Article 38), *Joint Contract Interpretation Manual*, USPS/APWU, available online at <http://blue.usps.gov/humanresources/professionalportal/laborrelations/lr/pdf/2012%20JCIM.pdf>.
- b. Article 38 of the USPS/APWU National Agreement, available online at <http://blue.usps.gov/cpim/ftp/hand/el912.pdf>.

# 6 Transfers and Position Changes

## 61 Qualifying for a Transfer

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An incraft employee may be afforded a special opportunity to qualify for transfer to a different installation in a position covered by the MSS. The transfer position may be either a promotion or change to a lower level. The employee must meet the following criteria.

- a. The employee has a letter from the office to which he or she has requested a transfer confirming his or her selection for the position pending a qualifying rating on the appropriate examination.
- b. The employee has never completed the MSS process for the job family containing the position in question.

Once the criteria are met, the employee must complete an EMPS Sheet. The HR MSS Coordinator will then:

- a. Tentatively schedule the examination and review panel.
- b. Review the applicant's record to verify that the examination and MSS Structured Interview are needed.
- c. Cancel the examination and/or MSS Structured Interview, if one is already on file.
- d. Notify the supervisor of the need to provide an evaluation if the record review shows one is needed.
- e. Submit the components as they are completed.

If an applicant receives ratings for a job family as a result of this process and does not transfer to a new office, the ratings may be used (a) for transfer to a different office, (b) to place the applicant on registers or ineligible applicant lists only during the next MSS Open Season, or (c) if a new position is authorized in the office.

**Note:** Employees with a prior rating of ineligible for the position in question are not permitted this special opportunity.

## 62 Qualifying for a Change to a Lower-Level Position

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A qualified incraft employee may request a change to a lower-level incraft position in the installation. The request should be considered as specified in Chapter 5, Registers. The following guidelines apply:

- a. The MSS Open Season, new-to-craft, and new-position entrance processes described in Chapter 2, Incraft Application Process, provide the only opportunities for an incraft applicant to qualify for a lower-level incraft position within an installation.
- b. An incraft employee who has not qualified for a position under MSS will not be afforded any special opportunity to qualify.



# 7 Administration

## 71 Miscellaneous Actions

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### 711 Posting the Names of MSS Coordinators

Post the names, locations, and telephone numbers of both the HR and Maintenance MSS Coordinators in the same location where registers are posted. If your installation does not have HR or Maintenance MSS Coordinators, post the names, locations, and telephone numbers of the installation coordinators.

### 712 Suspending Action

If an applicant cannot complete the MSS requirements for a long time due to extenuating circumstances such as personal illness, injury, military activation, or leave of absence for extended periods, then the HR MSS Coordinator will suspend action for that applicant.

### 713 Resuming Action

The *resume* action is used to reactivate an applicant whose MSS effort was suspended when the applicant who was suspended is ready to complete the process.

## 72 Maintenance File

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### 721 HR MSS Coordinator

The HR MSS Coordinator must maintain a maintenance file for each incraft and inservice maintenance applicant. Following is a list of items that must be maintained in this file:

- a. Employee notification letter (incraft).
- b. Employee Maintenance Position Selection Sheet.
- c. Interview Panel Consensus Final Rating Sheet.
- d. MSS results and rating summaries.
- e. All correspondence to and from the applicant.
- f. Control sheet for tracking MSS activity.
- g. Other materials deemed applicable.

**722 Maintenance MSS Coordinator**

The Maintenance MSS Coordinator must maintain a maintenance file for each incraft maintenance applicant. Copies of these items must be maintained in the file:

- a. Employee notification letter (incraft).
- b. Employee Maintenance Position Selection Sheet.
- c. MSS results.
- d. Requests for updates.
- e. Notification of update approval or denial.
- f. All correspondence to and from the applicant.
- g. Control sheet for tracking MSS activity.
- h. Other materials deemed applicable.

**723 Requests for Information**

Although MSS documents are considered confidential, an employee may obtain copies of the Interview Panel Consensus Final Rating Sheet ([Exhibit A-7](#)) recorded for his MSS Structured Interview.

The following rules apply to the release of information about individual employees to third parties:

- a. When permitted as a routine use of the system of records, information about individual employees may be released to certified collective bargaining agents, consistent with appropriate provisions of applicable collective bargaining agreements and other statutory obligations.
- b. If in doubt as to whether a disclosure is obligatory or permissible, obtain the advice of the chief field counsel. (See Handbook AS-353, *Guide to Privacy, the Freedom of Information Act, and Records Management* at <http://about.usps.com/handbooks/as353.pdf>).
- c. When disclosure to a third party is authorized, always delete the social security number, date of birth, and home address from copies of all documents released.

## 73 Managing Materials

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**731 Ordering and Stocking Materials**

The Review Panel Chairperson or HR MSS Coordinator will access OASYS to download copies of the MSS Structured Interview Guide.

**732 Security of Restricted Materials**

All restricted materials must be safeguarded accordingly. The Review Panel Chairperson or HR MSS Coordinator must:

Secure proper storage equipment and enforce security measures.

- a. Secure restricted materials in a separate room and/or in cabinets using double locks.
- b. Never allow unauthorized persons to handle or see restricted material.
- c. Account for all copies of restricted material.

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## Appendix A

# Exhibits

This appendix provides the following exhibits:

- A-1 Sample Letter — New Maintenance Craft Employees
- A-2 Employee Maintenance Position Selection Sheet
- A-3 Announcement — Newly Authorized Incraft Position
- A-4 Sample Letter — Transferred Maintenance Craft Employees Only
- A-5 Sample Letter — Applicant Not Entitled to New MSS Structured Interview
- A-6 Sample Letter — Applicant Considered Non-Applicant
- A-7 Interview Panel Consensus Final Rating
- A-8 Sample Notice of Result (Incraft/Inservice) for Examination 955
- A-9 Sample Notice of Result for the MSS Structured Interview
- A-10 MSS Inservice Announcement
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- A-12 Sample Instruction Letter to Incraft Employee or Inservice Applicant
- A-13 Applicant Data Collection Sheet

Exhibit A-1

**Sample Letter – New Maintenance Craft Employees**

**Sample Letter – New Maintenance Craft Employees**



[DATE:]

TO: [NAME]  
[ADDRESS]

In accordance with Article 38 of the National Agreement between the American Postal Workers Union, AFL-CIO, and the U.S. Postal Service, you have 30 calendar days from the receipt of this notice to complete and return the attached Employee Maintenance Position Selection Sheet for Promotion Eligibility Register(s) that is/are authorized in your facility. Please check all jobs in which you are interested.

If you do not return the attached sheet to (add local individual/title) within 30 calendar days, you will forfeit your right to apply for any of these positions until the next Maintenance Open Season (every 3 years).

RETURN TO:

Exhibit A-2

**Employee Maintenance Position Selection Sheet**

<b>Employee Maintenance Position Selection Sheet</b>													
Employee's Name: _____ <i>(Please Print)</i>													
Employee ID: _____													
Return by: _____													
The following MSS positions should be authorized in your facility. You must return this sheet, with a check mark beside each position in which you are interested, by the deadline listed above.													
<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <th style="text-align: left; padding: 5px;"><b>Position Title / Level</b> <i>Check the appropriate box:</i></th> <th style="width: 50px;"></th> </tr> <tr style="background-color: #f2f2f2;"> <td style="padding: 5px;"><b>0</b></td> <td style="padding: 5px;"> <input type="checkbox"/> Electronic Technician / PS-10  <input type="checkbox"/> Electronic Technician / PS-11                 </td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;"><b>1</b></td> <td style="padding: 5px;"><input type="checkbox"/> Maintenance Mechanic, MPE / PS-9</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;"><b>2</b></td> <td style="padding: 5px;"> <input type="checkbox"/> Maintenance Mechanic / PS-6  <input type="checkbox"/> Maintenance Mechanic / PS-7                 </td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;"><b>3</b></td> <td style="padding: 5px;"> <input type="checkbox"/> Area Maintenance Specialist / PS-8  <input type="checkbox"/> Area Maintenance Technician / PS-9  <input type="checkbox"/> Building Equipment Mechanic / PS-9                 </td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;"><b>4</b></td> <td style="padding: 5px;"> <input type="checkbox"/> Blacksmith-Welder / PS-8  <input type="checkbox"/> Building Maintenance Custodian / PS-5  <input type="checkbox"/> Carpenter / PS-8  <input type="checkbox"/> Letter Box Mechanic (Shop) / PS-8  <input type="checkbox"/> Mason / PS-8  <input type="checkbox"/> Machinist / PS-8  <input type="checkbox"/> Maintenance Electrician / PS-8  <input type="checkbox"/> Painter / PS-8  <input type="checkbox"/> Plumber / PS-8                 </td> </tr> </table>	<b>Position Title / Level</b> <i>Check the appropriate box:</i>		<b>0</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Electronic Technician / PS-10 <input type="checkbox"/> Electronic Technician / PS-11	<b>1</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Maintenance Mechanic, MPE / PS-9	<b>2</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Maintenance Mechanic / PS-6 <input type="checkbox"/> Maintenance Mechanic / PS-7	<b>3</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Area Maintenance Specialist / PS-8 <input type="checkbox"/> Area Maintenance Technician / PS-9 <input type="checkbox"/> Building Equipment Mechanic / PS-9	<b>4</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Blacksmith-Welder / PS-8 <input type="checkbox"/> Building Maintenance Custodian / PS-5 <input type="checkbox"/> Carpenter / PS-8 <input type="checkbox"/> Letter Box Mechanic (Shop) / PS-8 <input type="checkbox"/> Mason / PS-8 <input type="checkbox"/> Machinist / PS-8 <input type="checkbox"/> Maintenance Electrician / PS-8 <input type="checkbox"/> Painter / PS-8 <input type="checkbox"/> Plumber / PS-8	
<b>Position Title / Level</b> <i>Check the appropriate box:</i>													
<b>0</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Electronic Technician / PS-10 <input type="checkbox"/> Electronic Technician / PS-11												
<b>1</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Maintenance Mechanic, MPE / PS-9												
<b>2</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Maintenance Mechanic / PS-6 <input type="checkbox"/> Maintenance Mechanic / PS-7												
<b>3</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Area Maintenance Specialist / PS-8 <input type="checkbox"/> Area Maintenance Technician / PS-9 <input type="checkbox"/> Building Equipment Mechanic / PS-9												
<b>4</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Blacksmith-Welder / PS-8 <input type="checkbox"/> Building Maintenance Custodian / PS-5 <input type="checkbox"/> Carpenter / PS-8 <input type="checkbox"/> Letter Box Mechanic (Shop) / PS-8 <input type="checkbox"/> Mason / PS-8 <input type="checkbox"/> Machinist / PS-8 <input type="checkbox"/> Maintenance Electrician / PS-8 <input type="checkbox"/> Painter / PS-8 <input type="checkbox"/> Plumber / PS-8												
Employee's Signature Required _____													
Date Signed _____													

Exhibit A-3

**Announcement – Newly Authorized Incraft Position**

<b>Announcement – Newly Authorized Incraft Position</b>
TO: ALL MAINTENANCE CRAFT EMPLOYEES
RE: MAINTENANCE SELECTION SYSTEM (MSS) PROMOTION ELIGIBILITY REGISTER (PER)
Authorization has been given for Maintenance Craft employees to apply for the newly established position of _____ in the _____ Post Office.
All interested Maintenance Craft employees are invited to apply for consideration for this position.
Opening Date: _____ Closing Date: _____
Contact the following person(s) for the Employee Maintenance Position Selection Sheet:
This sheet must be completed and returned by the following date: _____.
PROCESS FOR CONSIDERATION AS AN APPLICANT:
1. Complete the Employee Maintenance Position Selection Sheet by the closing date on this announcement.
2. Successfully complete the examination which will be scheduled for you after you have finished step 1 above.
3. Satisfactorily complete an interview which will be given to you by a three-member panel.



Exhibit A-4

**Sample Letter – Transferred Maintenance Craft Employees Only**

**Sample Letter – Transferred Maintenance Craft  
Employees Only**



[DATE:]

TO: [NAME]  
[ADDRESS]

In accordance with Article 38 of the National Agreement between the American Postal Workers Union, AFL-CIO, and the U.S. Postal Service, you have the opportunity to apply for any authorized positions within a job family, for which you have not previously applied.

**Note:** If you previously applied and abandoned for a particular job family, you are eligible to reapply for any positions in that job family.

Please complete and return the attached Employee Maintenance Position Selection Sheet within 30 calendar days for Promotion Eligibility Register(s) (PER) which is/are authorized in this facility. Please check all jobs in which you are interested. If you currently have a notice of rating for any of the positions, submit a copy to the Human Resources MSS Coordinator with this sheet.

If you do not return the attached sheet, you will forfeit your right to apply for any of these positions until the next Maintenance Open Season (every three years).

RETURN TO:

Exhibit A-5

**Sample Letter – Applicant Not Entitled to New MSS Structured Interview****Sample Letter – Applicant Not Entitled to  
New MSS Structured Interview**

[DATE:]

TO: [NAME]  
[ADDRESS]

Our records indicate that you have a valid review panel evaluation sheet(s) on file.  
Therefore, you will not be scheduled for a new MSS Structured Interview.  
If you have any questions, please contact [name of local person] at [telephone number].

[NAME]  
[TITLE]  
[OFFICE]

Exhibit A-6

**Sample Letter – Applicant Considered Non-Applicant**

**Sample Letter – Applicant Considered Non-Applicant**



[DATE:]

TO: [NAME]  
[ADDRESS]

Our records indicate that you failed to return [Employee Maintenance Position Selection Sheet] which was due [date].

Therefore, you are considered a non-applicant and will not be eligible to apply until the next Maintenance Open Season.

If you have any questions, please contact [name of local person] at [telephone number].

[NAME]  
[TITLE]  
[OFFICE]

Exhibit A-7  
**Sample Interview Panel Consensus Final Rating**

<b>Interview Panel Consensus Final Rating</b>						
Job Title: _____						
Candidate Name: _____						
Interview Date: _____						
Interviewer Name: _____		Signature: _____				
Interviewer Name: _____		Signature: _____				
Interviewer Name: _____		Signature: _____				
<b>Competency Summary</b>	Information Usage	1	2	3	4	5
	Safe Work Habits	1	2	3	4	5
	Analytical Problem Solving	1	2	3	4	5
	Organizational Citizenship	1	2	3	4	5
	Skilled Trades	1	2	3	4	5
	Electronics Knowledge	1	2	3	4	5
<b>Rating Scale Key</b>	1 — Ineffective	2 — Below Average	3 — Average	4 — Above Average	5 — Extremely Effective	
<b>Comments and Other Important Information</b>	_____					
	_____					
	_____					
<b>Also Provide Written Justification Here for Scores of 1 or 5</b>	_____					
	_____					

Exhibit A-8

**Sample Notice of Result (Incraft/Inservice) for Examination 955**

DATE OF ISSUE: 05/01/2013

**Notice of Result (Page 1 of 1)**

Joe Sample  
 123 Cherry Lane  
 Anytown, USA 00000

This is a record of your participation in Exam 955 Maintenance Assessment System – In Service

**Candidate ID:** EIN01234567      **Job Posting Number:** SP Sample Posting  
**Examination Date:** 05/01/2013      **Job Posting Title:** Update – ET10 – Anytown PDC  
**Application/Register Date:** 04/15/2013      **Type of Application:** Special Posting

Job Group	Rating	Retest Date
Electronics Technician	72	08/29/2013
Maintenance Mechanic – MPE	86	08/29/2013
Maintenance Mechanic	85	08/29/2013
Building/All Other	85	08/29/2013

Content Area	Feedback
AC/DC Theory, Power Distribution, & Electrical Maintenance	High
Motors, Control Circuits, Schematics, & Print Reading	Average
Digital Electronics, Power Supplies, Computers, and Test Instruments	Low
Hydraulics & Pneumatics	Low
Pumps, Piping and Combustion	High
Power Transmission, Lubrication, Mechanical Maintenance, & Shop Machines, Tools and Equipment	Average
Welding & Rigging	Low
Spatial Relations – Matching Figures	High
Spatial Relations – Visualization	Low

If any rating shows as “Ineligible,” no additional consideration is provided. You will be placed on the list for further consideration for a position only if you received a numerical score for the applicable job family. You will be contacted with the information necessary to complete the assessment process.

You cannot retake this exam before the retest date shown above.

Please address any inquiries about these results to your local MSS Coordinator.

Exhibit A-9

**Sample Notice of Result for the MSS Structured Interview**

DATE ISSUED: 09/09/2012

**Notice of Result (Page 1 of 1)**

Joe Sample  
 123 Cherry Lane  
 Anytown, USA 00000

This is a record of your participation in 970 Electronic Technician Interview – In Service

**Candidate ID:** EIN01234567  
**Interview Date:** 09/07/2012  
**Job Posting Number:** SP Sample Posting  
**Job Posting Title:** Update – ET10 – Anytown PDC  
**Type of Application:** Special Posting

Job Title	Basic Rating	Retest Date
INTERVIEW RESULT	ELIGIBLE	1/5/2012

A rating of “Ineligible” means that you did not qualify on the interview and you will not receive further consideration for that job. If you received a rating of “Eligible,” that means you remain eligible for further consideration for that job.

Please address any inquiries about these results to your local MSS coordinator.

Exhibit A-10

**MSS Inservice Announcement**

<b>MSS Inservice Announcement</b>
TO: ALL INSERVICE EMPLOYEES
RE: MAINTENANCE SELECTION SYSTEM (MSS)
Authorization has been given to establish an Inservice Register for the following positions:
This Inservice Register will be used to fill any vacancies not filled by incraft procedures. All interested inservice career employees within the area of consideration are invited to apply for this position.
Opening Date: _____ Closing Date: _____
Contact the following person(s) for the Employee Maintenance Position Selection Sheet:
This sheet must be completed and returned by the following date: _____.
<b>PROCESS FOR CONSIDERATION AS AN APPLICANT:</b>
1. Complete the Employee Maintenance Position Selection Sheet by the closing date on this announcement.
2. Successfully complete the examination which will be scheduled for you after you have finished step 1 above.
3. Satisfactorily complete an interview which will be given to you by a three-member panel.

Exhibit A-11

**Sample Notice of Result (Entrance) for Examination 955**

DATE ISSUED: 01/28/2009

**Notice of Result**  
(Sample for Examination 955, Entrance)

ANDREW SAMPLE  
1234 CHERRY ST  
TAMPA, FL 33601-3347

This is a record of your participation in [Examination 955, *Maintenance Assessment System*]

**Candidate ID:** 1234567890  
**Examination Date:** 01/28/2009  
**Job Posting Number:** 23426  
**Job Posting Title:** ELECTRONICS TECHNICIAN - TAMPA FL, 23426  
**Type of Application:** Entrance

Job Title	Basic Rating	Expiration Date	Retest Date
ELECTRONICS TECHNICIAN (0856-0020)	81.10	1/27/2015	5/28/2009
ELECTRONICS TECHNICIAN (0856-0021)	81.10	1/27/2015	5/28/2009
MAINTENANCE MECHANIC (4749-0004)	84.34	1/27/2015	5/28/2009
MAINTENANCE MECHANIC (4749-03xx)	84.34	1/27/2015	5/28/2009
MAINT. MECHANIC MAIL PROCESSING EQUIPMENT (5350-0001)	81.56	1/27/2015	5/28/2009
AREA MAINTENANCE SPECIALIST (4801-21xx)	82.42	1/27/2015	5/28/2009
AREA MAINTENANCE TECHNICIAN (4801-20xx)	82.42	1/27/2015	5/28/2009
BLACKSMITH-WELDER (3704-02xx)	82.42	1/27/2015	5/28/2009
BUILDING EQUIPMENT MECHANIC (5306-0002)	82.42	1/27/2015	5/28/2009
BUILDING MAINTENANCE CUSTODIAN (4749-10xx)	82.42	1/27/2015	5/28/2009
CARPENTER (4607-02xx)	82.42	1/27/2015	5/28/2009
LETTER BOX MECHANIC (3843-02xx)	82.42	1/27/2015	5/28/2009
MACHINIST (3414-02xx)	82.42	1/27/2015	5/28/2009
MAINTENANCE ELECTRICIAN (2805-03xx)	82.42	1/27/2015	5/28/2009
MASON (3603-02XX)	82.42	1/27/2015	5/28/2009
PAINTER (4102-02XX)	82.42	1/27/2015	5/28/2009
PLUMBER (4206-02XX)	82.42	1/27/2015	5/28/2009

If any rating shows as "Ineligible," no additional consideration is provided.



Exhibit A-12

**Sample Instruction Letter to Incraft Employee or Inservice Applicant**

Dear MSS Applicant:

You were confirmed as being eligible to take Examination 955 and/or the MSS Structured Interview. To set you up in the Online Assessment System (OASYS) for Examination 955 and the MSS Structured Interview, please complete the enclosed Applicant Data Collection Sheet and return it to your supervisor. The following information must be completed on the data collection sheet:

- Full name (as shown on pay stub).
- Valid email address (please make sure this is accurate; instructions for taking the exam will be emailed to this address).
- District name and finance number.
- Home address and ZIP code (used to determine the testing location).
- Telephone number.
- Eight-digit Employee Identification Number (EIN; on pay stub).

Your information will be entered into OASYS. After your information is added, you will receive an email notification from OASYS asking you to log onto a computer and create your account. If you do not provide an email address on your Application Data Collection Sheet, an examination proxy will help you create your account at a determined time and location. If you have already taken an exam in OASYS, you will use the same account to take this exam.

To begin the exam process, follow the instructions in the email notification and in OASYS. You will be asked to schedule an appointment at a test center to take the exam. You must complete the exam within the timeframe indicated on the email notification.

An email message will notify you when your scores are available for viewing in OASYS.

Exhibit A-13

**Applicant Data Collection Sheet**

Please print the information requested. The data will be used to set you up in the Online Assessment System (OASYS).

District:

Facility:

Employee ID Number:\*

First Name:

Middle Name:

Last Name:

Phone (XXX-XXX-XXXX):

Email Address:\*\*

Mailing Address:

City:

State:

ZIP Code (XXXXX-XXXX):

Privacy Act Statement: Your information will be used to set you up in the Online Assessment System (OASYS) for Examination 955 and the Maintenance Selection System (MSS) Structured Interview. Collection is authorized by 39 USC 401, 410, 1001, 1005, and 1206. Providing the information is voluntary, but if not provided, your application cannot be processed. We may only disclose your information as follows: in relevant legal proceedings; to law enforcement when the U.S. Postal Service (USPS) or requesting agency becomes aware of a violation of law; to a congressional office at your request; to entities or individuals under contract with USPS (service providers); to entities authorized to perform audits; to labor organizations as required by law; to federal, state, local or foreign government agencies regarding personnel matters; to the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission; and to the Merit Systems Protection Board or Office of Special Counsel. For more information regarding our privacy policies, visit [www.usps.com/privacypolicy](http://www.usps.com/privacypolicy).

\* You can find your USPS Employee Identification Number on your pay stub.

\*\* Make sure to include your entire email address (for example, joe@yahoo.com). All instructions to take the assessment will be sent to this email address. You may use a personal email or Postal email address. If you do not have an email address, you may use the email address of someone who agrees to receive the messages and give them to you. This person must agree to give you these messages in a timely fashion. All applicants must complete the entire assessment process within the time indicated on the email invitation; no exceptions will be made. **Applicants who do not complete the entire assessment process within the allotted time will not receive further consideration for the position.** If you need help identifying someone to receive your messages, you may contact your local HR office for assistance.

## Retention of Records

### Vacancy File

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The Human Resources (HR) office is responsible for establishing and maintaining a vacancy file, as follows:

- a. *Establishment.* HR personnel establish a vacancy file using a Notice of Intent Number.
- b. *Components.* The vacancy file consists of the following:
  - (1) Current posted PERs.
  - (2) Withdrawal requests.
  - (3) Names of the individuals selected.
  - (4) Effective dates of promotion.
- c. *Retention.* HR personnel will maintain the vacancy file at the installation for 2 years from the date of selection. After 2 years, the vacancy file is destroyed **unless** an audit, investigation, or appeal is pending. If an audit, investigation, or appeal is pending, HR will retain the file until the need for it is satisfied and the matter is resolved.

### Promotion Eligibility Registers

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Article 38 of the USPS/APWU National Agreement determines the duration of PERs. Therefore, HR must retain all records pertaining to the establishment of PER eligibility for the duration of the USPS/APWU Contract. All PERs since November 1985 have been rolled over to each new USPS/APWU Contract and are still valid. All materials documenting these PERs, from 1989 forward, must be retained. After an employee retires or is deceased, files may be disposed of according to handbook AS-353.

### Preferred Assignment Registers

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Human Resources officials must:

- a. Transfer all records pertaining to a specific preferred assignment action to a closed file when the vacancy is filled.
- b. Close out this file monthly, and dispose of it 6 months from the cutoff date.
- c. If records are part of a grievance file, dispose of them with the case file.

## Personal Notes

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Review panel members and individuals may make personal notes to assist them in evaluating applicants. These notes are considered their own property and are not Postal Service records. However, these notes must not be circulated among other review panel members or other supervisors, and they must not be included in the vacancy file.

## Appendix C

# Privacy Act and Freedom of Information Act Considerations and Disclosure of Records

## Requests for Individual Records

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Postal Service employees who want access to their final ratings, and review panel evaluation must submit a written request as described in Handbook AS-353, *Guide to Privacy, the Freedom of Information Act, and Records Management*, to the local office and/or the District HR MSS Coordinator. More information is available at <http://about.usps.com/handbooks/as353.pdf>.

## Records Not to Be Released

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- a. Deny any applicant's request for the following types of information:
  - (1) MSS Structured Interview Guides.
  - (2) Ratings of other employees.
  - (3) Examination materials.
- b. Follow the procedures in Handbook AS-353 when you deny a request for disclosure of any record.

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