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NASA PATHWAYS PROGRAMS

NASA Implementation Guide to the Pathways Programs

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

<u>**Page**</u>

APPENDICES

FIGURES

SECTION 1 – INTRODUCTION

This section provides an overview of the document content, as well as how the information is arranged.

1.1   Purpose

This desk guide provides National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA)-specific guidance to implement the Pathways Programs. It supplements guidance contained in the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) Pathways Transition and Implementation Guidance. The Pathways Programs consists of three components which are the Internship Program, the Recent Graduates Program (RGP), and the enhanced Presidential Management Fellows (PMF) Program.

This document is effective beginning with the effective date of the program as defined by OPM. OPM's final Pathways regulations became effective July 10, 2012. Agencies have until January 6, 2013 to complete all transition and conversion activities as described in the OPM Pathways Transition and Implementation Guidance.

For students participating in NASA programs at the time of the effective date of the Pathways Programs, please refer to the Transition Guide for NASA's Pathways Programs and related OPM guidance.

1.2   Background

On December 27, 2010, President Obama signed Executive Order (E.O.) 13562 establishing the Pathways Programs. On May 11, 2012, OPM issued the final rules on the Pathways Programs, (77 Federal Register (FR) 92) (dated May 11, 2012). Pathways Programs replace the Student Temporary Employment Program (STEP) (5 Code of Federal Regulations (C.F.R.) 213.3202 (a)), Student Career Experience Program (SCEP) (5 C.F.R. 213.3202 (b)), and enhances the PMF Program (5 C.F.R. 362).

Effective July 10, 2012, all agencies must use Pathways for any new student recruitment or hiring actions.

The Pathways Programs Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between OPM and NASA identifies the agreement between the organizations and the roles and responsibilities as they pertain to the implementation of the Pathways Programs.

1.3   Applicability

This guide is applicable to NASA Headquarters and NASA Centers, including Component Facilities, the NASA Shared Services Center (NSSC), and the Office of the Inspector General. Unless otherwise stated, the use of the word Center(s) in the text of this document includes NASA Headquarters, the NSSC, and the Office of the Inspector General, and any reference to Center Director(s) includes the Executive Director, Headquarters Operations and the Executive Director, NSSC. This guide is primarily for use by NASA Center Human Resources (HR) Offices, but may also be used by the other stakeholders identified in this guide.

1.4   About This Document

This document contains information on regulations and processes relating to the Pathways Programs. The following appendices are included in this document:
- Appendix A, Acronyms and Abbreviations
- Appendix B, Requirements Relating to the 5 C.F.R. 302 Regulations
- Appendix C, Overview of Benefits Eligibility by Program
- Appendix D, Reporting Requirements and Special Program Identification (SPID) Numbers
- Appendix E, Sample Participant Agreements

SECTION 2 – REFERENCES

This document contains references that, in some cases, are for specific subparagraphs; however, this section generally lists the primary document or code. In addition, when a Web link is available, it is provided here for your convenience. Since Web links may become invalid, the document names and numbers are provided as available. The following references were used in the preparation of this desk guide:

2.1 Federal Laws, Regulations, and Executive Order References

a. Government Organization and Employees, 5 United States Code (U.S.C.).

b. Exec. Order No. 13562, 3 C.F.R. 13562 (2010).

c. Administrative Personnel, 5 C.F.R.

2.2 OPM References

a. OPM Pathways Transition and Implementation Guidance.

b. OPM Category Rating Web page. Location: http://www.opm.gov/employ/category_rating/index.asp.

c. OPM Delegated Examining Operations Handbook: A Guide for Federal Agency Examining Offices, May 2007. Location: http://www.opm.gov/deu/.

d. OPM Effect of Extended Leave Without Pay (LWOP) (or Other Nonpay Status) on Federal Benefits and Programs Web site. Location: OPM **Leave Administration** Web page at: www.opm.gov/oca/leave, then click the **Fact Sheets on Federal Leave Programs** link, then the **Leave without Pay – Effect on Federal Benefits and Programs** link.

e. OPM The Guide to Personnel Data Standards.

f. OPM Guide to Processing Personnel Actions, Update 59, July 10, 2012.

g. OPM Handbook of Occupational Groups and Families.

h. OPM Hiring Reform Web site. Location: http://www.opm.gov/HiringReform/Pathways.

i. OPM Laws, Regulations & Other Guidance Web site. Location: http://www.opm.gov/hr_practitioners/lawsregulations/.

j. OPM Merit System Principles Web site. Location: http://www.opm.gov/ovrsight/mspidx.asp.

k. OPM Qualification Standards Web site. Location: http://www.opm.gov/qualifications/.

l. OPM Supervisory Qualification Guide. Location: http://www.opm.gov/qualifications/. Click the **Standards** tab, click the **Specialty Areas** link on the left side of the page, then click the **Supervisory Positions** link.

m. Standard Form (SF) 50, Notification of Personnel Action.

n. SF 52, Request for Personnel Action.

2.3   NASA References

a. Pathways Programs Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) Between the U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA).

b. NASA Transition Guide for NASA's Pathways Programs.

c. NASA Pathways Participant Agreement Templates.

d. NASA Pathways Programs Web site. Location: www.nasajobs.nasa.gov/studentopps/.

e. NASA Pathways Programs Web site on the NASA Human Resources Portal. Location: https://hr.nasa.gov. Click the **Human Resources** tab, click the **Employment** button in the left navigation pane, then click the **Pathways Programs** link. Please note that access to this site is restricted to internal NASA employees.

f. NASA Shared Services Center Service Delivery Guide, Personnel Action Processing, NSSC-HR-SDG-0036.

g. NASA Manager's Guide to Recruitment Best Practices, Version 1, Draft. 4, May 2009.

h. NASA Strategic Recruitment Guide. Currently under development, and not yet finalized.

i. NASA Classification Codes (NCCs). Location: Visit the NASA Supplemental Classification System (NSCS) Web page at: http://nscs.nasa.gov/nscs_lp.htm.
   - For the Aeronautics, Scientific, and Technical (AST) Codes, click the **AST Schematic** button in the left navigation pane.
   - For the Non-AST Codes, click the **Non-AST Schematic** button in the left navigation pane.

j. NASA Policy Directive (NPD) 3713.1, Reasonable Accommodations Procedures.

k. NASA Procedural Requirements (NPR) 3300.1, Appointment of Personnel To/From NASA.

l. NPR 3335.1, Internal Placement of NASA Employees.

m. NPR 3430.1, NASA Employee Performance Communication System (EPCS).

n. NPR 3530.1, NASA Pay and Compensation Policy.

o. NASA Desk Guide on the NASA Flexibility Act of 2004, Version 3, April 2009.

SECTION 3 – OVERVIEW AND GENERAL INFORMATION

The Pathways Programs includes the following three programs that provide Federal employment opportunities for current students, recent graduates, and advanced degree candidates:
- Internship Program
- Recent Graduates Program
- PMF Program

3.1 Policies and Guidance

3.1.1 OPM Policies and Guidance

Effective Dates

Effective July 10, 2012, all agencies must use Pathways for any new student recruitment or hiring actions.

OPM Instructions and Procedures

OPM has published the Pathways Implementation Guide for Agencies with specific instructions and procedures for all Federal agencies to follow once the program becomes effective. That document also contains numerous Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) that will assist you in implementing the new Pathways Programs.

3.1.2 NASA Policies and Guidance

This document provides NASA specific guidance for implementing the Pathways Programs at NASA, and contains information that is not already covered in the OPM guidance. Please refer to Section 2, References, for a listing of applicable NASA policies and guidance.

3.2 General Provisions

The OPM Pathways Transition and Implementation Guidance contains valuable information on several aspects that apply to all three programs. Please refer to OPM's guide regarding the following topics:
- Program Administration
- Qualifying Educational Institutions
- Pathways Program Participant Agreements
- Filling Positions:
  - Agency Workforce Planning
  - Announcing Pathways Programs Opportunities
  - Selection and Appointment
  - Veterans' Preference
  - Documenting the Appointment
  - Citizenship – While OPM's guidance allows non-U.S. citizens to participate in some circumstances, NASA requires U.S. citizenship to participate in the Pathways Programs.

- Separations
- Conversion to the Competitive Service
- Program Accountability and Oversight

3.3   Recruitment Strategies

The Office of Human Capital Management (OHCM) is currently working on a Strategic Recruitment Guide as a comprehensive guide to NASA's recruiting efforts. That guide will include information applicable to all NASA programs and efforts.

Please note that OPM requires that all Pathways Programs opportunities must be posted on the USAJOBS Web site to fulfill the public notice requirements. The postings may be in the form of a job ad or a vacancy announcement. Agencies are not required to provide an **Apply Online** button within the USAJOBS announcement, but must provide application instructions within the announcement.

SECTION 4 – NASA PATHWAYS INTERN EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM (IEP)

This section contains supplemental NASA-specific information on implementing the NASA Pathways IEP. Please refer to the OPM Pathways Transition and Implementation Guidance for additional guidance.

> **Note:** Any students who were participants in NASA student programs prior to the implementation/transition of the Pathways Programs will be handled as per their agreements that were in effect at the time of transition.

4.1   NASA Pathways IEP Roles and Responsibilities

Throughout this section, NASA stakeholder roles and responsibilities are identified. The Agency has identified role titles in this document. However, some Centers may have different role titles utilized for these functions. Please note that all of the responsibilities must be addressed, regardless of the role title used at the Centers. When more than one role is responsible for a particular activity, both roles are identified. In addition, initiator and support responsibilities are identified as available. This paragraph provides a high-level overview of each role's responsibilities. Note that the responsibilities are not listed in rigid chronological order. The following is a list of the roles and a high-level overview of responsibilities:

NASA Pathways IEP Implementation Roles and Responsibilities	
Role	**Overview of Responsibilities**
NASA OHCM	• Establish eligibility criteria for initial appointments into the Pathways Programs. Note that NASA eligibility and qualifications standards must comply with standards consistent with OPM criteria. • Provide finalized versions of all Pathways documents, along with a resource for obtaining the latest revisions. • Provide clarification on any policies not identified by OPM or other NASA guidance. • Provide data to meet OPM reporting requirements.
Intern	• Apply to vacancy. • Provide the Center Pathways Programs Manager with appropriate documentation (e.g., transcripts, degree changes, Grade Point Average (GPA), rotation plans, etc.) to validate eligibility for the program. • Accept or decline offer. • Sign a NASA Pathways Participant Agreement. • Complete the required In-Processing activities after receiving e-mails from Entrance on Duty System (EODS) (containing a User Name, Password, information on logging into the system, and information on starting the In-Processing process).

NASA Pathways IEP Implementation Roles and Responsibilities	
Role	**Overview of Responsibilities**
	• Consider benefits options, if applicable. • Provide documentation related to work/study schedule changes as soon as possible, and at a minimum 4–6 weeks in advance. Examples include: rotation schedule, major course of study changes, graduation date changes, etc. • Provide Center Pathways Programs Manager with any documentation or required paperwork upon completion of each rotation or at the end of the program.
Center HR Office Personnel (Includes Staffing and Workforce Planning Personnel) A Delegated Examining Unit (DEU)-certified individual must participate in these procedures for external hiring.	• Meet with Supervisor/Assigned Organization Representative to determine if a vacancy can be classified under the Pathways IEP. • Create Position Description (PD) using requirements from the Supervisor/Assigned Organization Representative. • Enter the position into Workforce Transformation Tracking System (WTTS) (Gains Module), and Publish the new appointment. At this point, the NSSC In-Processing Caseworkers are notified of the new Participant. • Coordinate with Pathways Programs Manager to complete the staffing processes necessary for an external hire, including receive from the Intern appropriate documentation (e.g., transcripts, GPA, etc.) to validate eligibility for the program. Note that coordination in the Center HR Office should be completed by a DEU-certified individual. • Create the action in the Federal Personnel and Payroll System (FPPS) with the appropriate Nature of Action Code (NOAC) for appointment, Legal Authority Code (LAC), and Pay setting in accordance with the NSSC Personnel Action Processing (PAP) Service Delivery Guide (SDG) and the OPM Guide to Processing Personnel Actions. • Legally Approve (LGAP) the action and forward to the NSSC PAP team in accordance with the NSSC submission deadlines. At this point, the NSSC PAP team is notified to begin their processing. • Partner with Center Pathways Programs Manager and organization to ensure that Full-Time Employee (FTE) is accounted for within Center phasing plans for Interns while in the program and once again during conversion. (Initiate responsibility) • Ensure the proper incoming Center skill mix to meet mission requirements. • Ensure levels are within hiring limits and budget requirements.
Supervisor/Assigned Organization Representative	• Meet with HR Office to determine if a vacancy can be classified under the Pathways IEP. • Provide Center HR Office with PD requirements.

NASA Pathways IEP Implementation Roles and Responsibilities	
Role	**Overview of Responsibilities**
	• Submit requests for Interns to the Center Pathways Programs Manager. • Partner with Center Pathways Programs Manager and Center Recruitment Program Manager to develop effective recruitment strategy to ensure sufficient pool of qualified applicants. • Partner with Center Pathways Programs Manager to review and consider qualified applicants for selection into available position. • Receive information from Center Pathways Programs Manager if Intern has accepted or declined. If declined, make another selection. • Assign a mentor to each Intern. • Provide meaningful developmental work assignments for Interns. • Monitor work performance of Intern, create a Performance Plan for each Intern, and provide timely, constructive feedback with regards to performance to Intern and Center Pathways Programs Manager. Ensure that these activities are fulfilled within the guidelines of NASA and Center Performance Plan policies. • Take appropriate action to address any issues that may impact successful performance in or completion of the IEP (e.g., failure to maintain required academic standing, misconduct, less than fully successful performance, etc.). • Recommend Interns for possible promotion and conversion or termination. This responsibility would occur after the Intern has been employed for the required period of time. Terminations for appropriate reasons may be effected at any time.

Center Pathways Programs Manager	• Lead the strategic roll-out of communication across their Center. This will include major impacts, such as applicant process and naming conventions.
	• Partner with Center HR Office and organization to ensure that FTE is accounted for within Center phasing plans for Interns while in the program and once again during conversion. (Support responsibility)
	• Work with the Center Recruitment Program Manager to recruit students to meet Center and Agency goals (e.g., Veterans, disability, and diversity).
	   o Inform recruiters of available positions, Center needs, and application process.
	   o Review materials used to recruit such as brochures and Web sites.
	   o Prepare for on-the-spot interviews.
	• Coordinate with the Center Recruitment Program Manager to ensure universities are aware of NASA Jobs ads and Pathways vacancies that have been posted.

NASA Pathways IEP Implementation Roles and Responsibilities	
Role	**Overview of Responsibilities**
	• Partner with Supervisor/Assigned Organization Representative to review and consider qualified applicants for selection into available position. • Partner with Supervisor/Assigned Organization Representative and Center Recruitment Program Manager to develop effective recruitment strategy to ensure sufficient pool of qualified applicants. • Work with the HR Office to determine appropriate grade level based on education. • Work with HR Office to ensure appropriate Intern PDs are in place. • Evaluate candidates to assess basic eligibility requirements. • Notify selected Participant and offer position. • Inform Supervisor/Assigned Organization Representative that selectee has accepted or declined offer. • Obtain Intern's signature on the Pathways Participant Agreement. • Receive from Intern appropriate documentation (e.g., transcripts, degree changes, GPA, rotation plans, etc.) to validate eligibility for the program. • Maintain student records in accordance with records retention schedules. • Refer qualified students who have not been selected for conversion to other Centers. • Provide reporting data on program activities to NASA OHCM. • Ensure adequate training and development of all Interns. • Ensure out processing is completed as per Center and OHCM requirements.
Center Recruitment Program Manager	• Work with the Center Pathways Programs Manager to recruit students to meet Center and Agency goals (e.g., Veterans, disability, and diversity). • Ensure universities are aware of NASA Jobs ads and Pathways vacancies that have been posted. • Partner with Center Pathways Programs Manager and Supervisor/Assigned Organization Representative to develop effective recruitment strategy to ensure sufficient pool of qualified applicants. • Coordinate logistical support for Agency and other recruiting events.
NSSC In-Processing Caseworker	• Receive notification of new Participant after Center publishes the new Participant in WTTS. • Contact new Participant to begin in-processing and begin benefits counseling.

NASA Pathways IEP Implementation Roles and Responsibilities	
Role	**Overview of Responsibilities**
NSSC PAP Team Personnel	• Code and process actions from the Centers.

4.2   NASA Pathways IEP Overview Flowchart

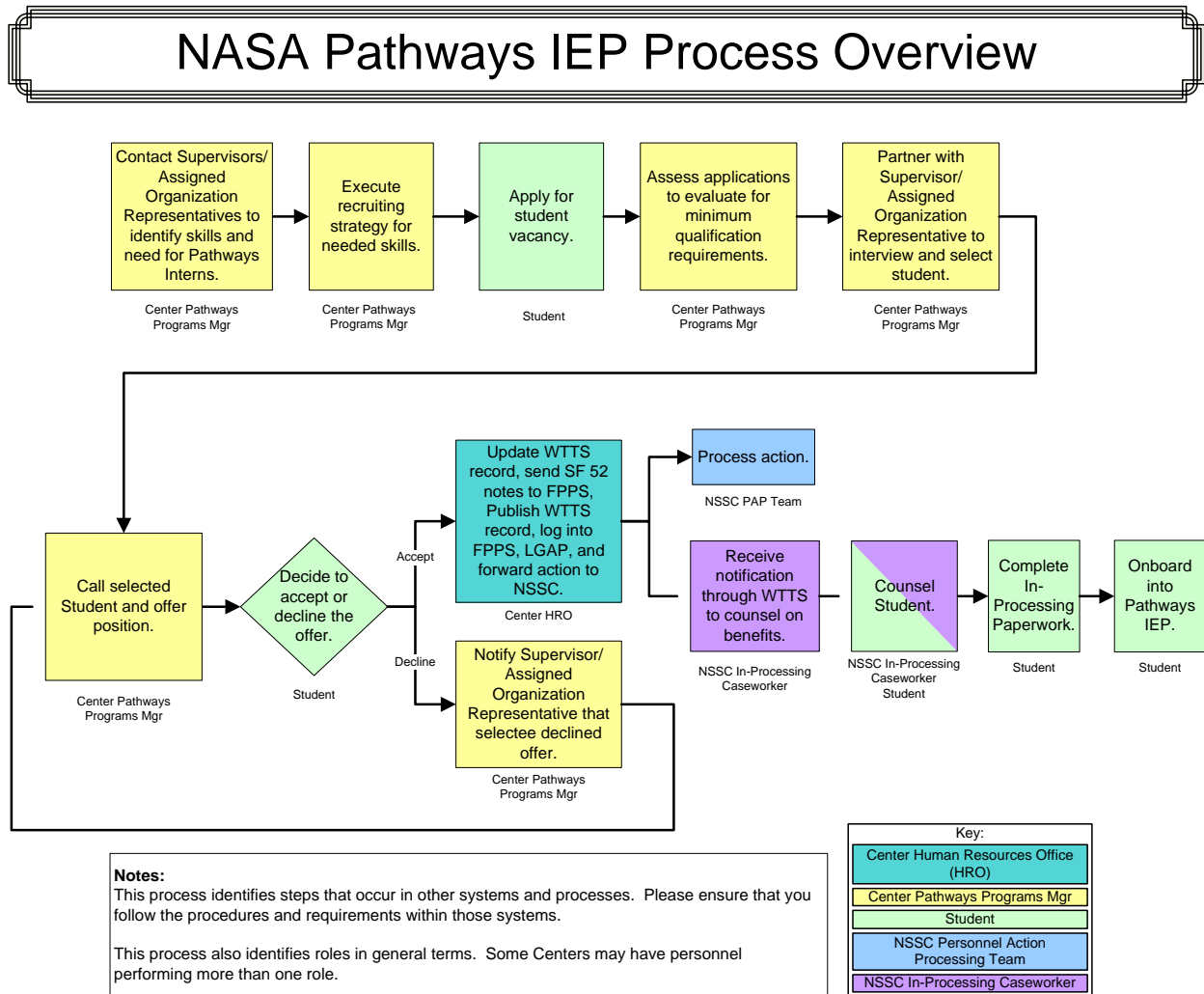The following is a high-level flowchart showing the IEP process:

Figure 4-01. NASA Pathways IEP Process Overview

4.3   NASA Pathways IEP Procedures

Use the following procedures to process IEP participants:
1. Center Pathways Programs Manager contacts Supervisors/Assigned Organization Representatives to identify the skills needed for Pathways IEP participants.
2. Center Pathways Programs Manager executes the recruiting strategy for the needed skills. Recruiting methods include university recruiting and NASA's automated staffing system.
3. Student applies for vacancy.
4. Center Pathways Programs Manager assesses the applications to evaluate for minimum qualification requirements for the vacancy.
5. Center Pathways Programs Manager partners with Supervisor/Assigned Organization Representative to interview and select the Student.
6. Center Pathways Programs Manager calls the selected Student and offers the position.
7. Student reviews offer.
    a. If Student accepts the offer, notify the Supervisor/Assigned Organization Representative and proceed to Step 8.
    b. If Student declines the offer, notify the Supervisor/Assigned Organization Representative, and go back to Step 6 to call the next selected Student.
8. Center HR Office updates the WTTS record, sends the SF 52 notes to FPPS, Publishes the WTTS record, logs into FPPS, LGAPs the action, and forwards to the NSSC.
9. NSSC In-Processing Caseworker receives notification of a new employee, and counsels Student.
10. Student completes In-Processing paperwork.
11. Student onboards into the NASA Pathways IEP.
12. NSSC PAP team processes the action.

4.4   NASA Pathways IEP Eligibility Requirements

Please refer to the OPM Pathways Transition and Implementation Guidance as well as 5 C.F.R. 362, Pathways Programs, for guidance on eligibility requirements. NASA Pathways candidates will meet the qualification requirements consistent with the OPM qualification standards applicable to the position being filled. Where appropriate, candidates will be required to meet NASA's AST qualification standards for the position(s) for which they are applying. In addition, the following NASA eligibility requirements apply to the NASA Pathways IEP:

- Currently has and maintains at least an overall 2.9 GPA or higher on a scale of 4.0. If a student falls below the 2.9 threshold during the academic year, an academic improvement period to raise a GPA may be extended by the employing Center.
- Attends a qualifying educational institution as defined in the OPM Implementation Guide for Agencies.
- Is a United States citizen.
- Must be able to complete 640 hours of work prior to completing their graduation requirements.

4.5   NASA Pathways IEP Selection and Appointment

Please refer to the following:
1. OPM Pathways Transition and Implementation Guidance for guidance on selection and appointment, including qualifications, appointments, classification, tenure groups for Reduction in Force (RIF), and trial period.
2. 5 C.F.R. 302, Employment in the Excepted Service, for information on eligibility standards, rating applications, and Veteran's preference.
3. Appendix B, Requirements Relating to the 5 C.F.R. 302 Regulations, for information on implementing the regulations with the Pathways Programs.

In addition, the following items identify NASA's policy for application of Veterans' Preference:
- Veterans' preference applies to selections made under the Pathways Programs authority.
- Centers must consider candidates by either of the following:
  - Using a numeric rating and ranking system to include Veterans' preference points.
  - Categorizing candidates according to preference (i.e., preference and non-preference) in which preference eligibles have absolute preference.
- Pathways Programs notices will clearly describe how Veterans' preference will be applied.

Student trainees may be appointed based on level of education. For purposes of this standard, the college or university will determine the "level of education" that the student trainee has attained.

Student Trainee Appointment Requirements	
Grade	**Level of Education**
To GS-1	High School Student.
To GS-2	High School Graduate/Equivalent.
To GS-3	Completion of one full semester or the equivalent of post-high school study.
To GS-4	Completion of 1 academic year of post-high school study. (The 1 academic year is the equivalent of 30 semester hours or 45 quarter hours.)
To GS-5	Completion of 2 academic years of post-high school study leading to a bachelor's or higher degree. (The 2 academic years is the equivalent of 60 semester hours or 90 quarter hours.)
To GS-6	Completion of 3 academic years of post-high school study leading to a bachelor's or higher degree. (The 3 academic years is the equivalent of 90 semester hours or 135 quarter hours.)
To GS-7	Completion of 4 academic years of study (or all the requirements) for a bachelor's degree and accepted into a master's program.
To GS-9	Completion of 1 academic year of master's level education or acceptance into a Doctoral program.
To GS-11	Completion of 1 year of Doctorate Level study or accepted into a Doctoral Program. (Research)
To GS-12 *	Completion of 1 year of Doctoral Program. (Research)
*This is for Research Positions	

4.6   NASA Pathways IEP Student Schedules

Please refer to the OPM Pathways Transition and Implementation Guidance for guidance on student schedules, including break in program. For additional information, refer to 5 C.F.R. 610, Hours of Duty; NPR 3600.1, Attendance and Leave; and Center policies governing hours of work.

4.7   NASA Pathways IEP Changes in Status

Please refer to the OPM Pathways Transition and Implementation Guidance for guidance on changes in status, including separations and conversion to the competitive service.

4.8   Duration of NASA Pathways IEP

A student's time in the program is limited to the number of years shown in the following table:

Degree	Timeframe * (Number of years from Entrance On Duty (EOD) date until exit from the program, not the number of years in an in-work status at NASA.)
High School **	3 years
Associate's Degree and Vocational/Technical School	3 years
Bachelor's Degree	6 years ***
Master's Degree	4 years
Doctorate Degree	5 years
Notes: * Time spent pursuing successive degrees may allow for the additional timeframe for the successive degrees. ** High School students must meet a minimum age requirement of 16 years. *** Includes time spent pursuing the AA degree.	

Students may request additional time to complete the program if there is evidence of a personal or academic circumstance warranting special consideration. Students who do not complete their degrees in the time allocated cannot continue to participate in the program.

Upon graduation, the degree of specialization in this field must satisfy the specific educational requirements in the qualification standard for the corresponding position if the student is converting to competitive service.

4.9   Pay and Promotion for NASA Pathways IEP Participants

4.9.1 Pay

Students are paid using the appropriate pay schedule for their position. Salary Tables are posted on the OPM Web site at: www.opm.gov. Click the **View Salaries & Wages** link, then click the current year link.

Student trainees who are classified in an occupational series ending in "99" may be covered by a special rate table if all of the following apply:

- Their position is officially classified to an NCC that directly links to a covered position. For example, a General Schedule (GS)-899 Student Trainee (Engineering), NCC 340-04 would not be covered by special rate since that NCC covers technical or support positions, while a GS-899 Student Trainee (Engineering), NCC 7XX group would be covered since this NCC covers AST positions. Engineers in NCC 2XX would also be covered since they are non-AST but still professional engineers.
- Their positions are classified at one of the covered grades.
- They fully meet the qualification requirements for the covered series and grade.
- They meet all other coverage requirements for the special rate table in question (e.g., official worksite location).

In other words, a student trainee who is fully qualified to be classified in a series, NCC, and grade that is covered by special rates is entitled to the appropriate special rate if the student trainee otherwise would be eligible but for the use of the "99" occupational series code. For example, an engineering Intern with a bachelor's degree in a qualifying academic field as determined by AST qualifications may be eligible for special salary rates pay for engineers as long as the position is classified to a covered NCC.

4.9.2 Promotion

Student trainees may be promoted to higher-graded trainee positions based on level of education plus student trainee work experience. For purposes of this standard, the college or university will determine the "level of education" that the student trainee has attained. The following table provides the level of education and work experience requirements for each of the listed Grade levels:

Student Trainee Promotion Requirements	
Grade	**Level of Education and Work Experience**
To GS-2	High School Graduate/Equivalent.
To GS-3	Completion of one full semester or the equivalent of post-high school study and completion of GS-2 Pathways Programs trainee work experience.
To GS-4	Completion of 1 academic year of post-high school study and GS-3 Pathways Programs trainee work experience. (The 1 academic year is the equivalent of 30 semester hours or 45 quarter hours.)
To GS-5	Completion of 2 academic years of post-high school study leading to a bachelor's or higher degree and GS-4 Pathways Programs trainee work experience. (The 2 academic years is the equivalent of 60 semester hours or 90 quarter hours.)
To GS-6	Completion of 3 academic years of post-high school study leading to a bachelor's or higher degree and GS-5 Pathways Programs trainee work experience. (The 3 academic years is the equivalent of 90 semester hours or 135 quarter hours.)
To GS-7	Completion of 4 academic years of study (or all the requirements) for a bachelor's degree and GS-6 Pathways Programs trainee work experience.
To GS-9	Completion of 1 academic year of graduate level education and GS-7 Pathways Programs trainee work experience.

Student Trainee Promotion Requirements	
Grade	**Level of Education and Work Experience**
To GS-11	Completion of 1 year of Doctorate Level study or acceptance into a Doctoral program (Research) and GS-9 Pathways Programs trainee work experience.
To GS-12 *	Completion of 1 year of Doctorate Program (Research) and GS-11 Pathways Programs trainee work experience.
* This is for Research positions.	

Note that it is acceptable to have one-grade qualification requirements for NASA Pathways IEP participant promotions in occupational families that would normally only include two-grade interval classifications. Related classification background/explanation:

> The Handbook of Occupational Groups and Families defines the classification series of Student Trainees in the Federal government as XX99 for all occupations. Therefore, the student trainees are not the same series as entry-level engineers or any other occupation (e.g., they would not be classified under the series for Aerospace Engineer, Program Analyst, HR Specialist, etc.).

> The Guide to Personnel Data Standards identifies the PATCO codes for occupational series (P for Professional, A for Administrative, T for Technical, C for Clerical, and O for Other). For General Student Trainee positions, the code is "O" – Other, so there is no requirement that they be 2-grade level interval positions as it is with Professional and Administrative positions.

4.10   Employee Benefits for NASA Pathways IEP Participants

Please refer to Appendix C, Overview of Benefits Eligibility by Program. Please also refer to the OPM Pathways Transition and Implementation Guidance for guidance on employee benefits, including health and life insurance. Any questions regarding employee benefits should be directed to the NSSC Customer Contact Center, requesting Benefits Processing assistance.

4.11   LWOP and Return to Duty (RTD) for NASA Pathways IEP Participants

Please note that LWOP or any other nonpay status may have an effect on Federal benefits. Please visit the OPM **Leave Administration** Web page at: www.opm.gov/oca/leave, then click the **Fact Sheets on Federal Leave Programs** link, then the **Leave without Pay – Effect on Federal Benefits and Programs** link.

Interns with or without a Not to Exceed (NTE) date (for their program) are placed in an LWOP status upon completion of each period of active work. The service computation dates will be adjusted if LWOP exceeds 6 months in a calendar year. Students must provide an estimated RTD date for their next work period prior to going on LWOP. Since both LWOP and RTD actions must be submitted to the NSSC prior to the effective date for processing, students must provide written confirmation of their LWOP/RTD date to the Supervisor and/or Center Pathways Programs Manager at least 6 weeks in advance to meet processing deadlines.

When an Intern goes out on LWOP, the Center initiates an SF 52, Request for Personnel Action, in FPPS in accordance with the submission deadline. Centers must ensure the Intern's contact information is updated and current so that the NSSC Benefits Processing team is able to contact the Intern in a timely manner. Please note that the Intern's <u>personal</u> phone and e-mail information should be included.

When ending a period of active work and beginning a period of LWOP, Interns must follow the Center's out-processing requirements. Normal LWOP periods should not extend past 18 months. Only one time during the internship may an Intern request an LWOP period that would last longer than 18 months.

Breaks in the program (i.e., neither working nor in school) will be considered by Center HR Offices on a case-by-case basis as requested by the students in writing. Approval will be considered by HR Offices for rare and unusual circumstances.

4.12   Performance Evaluation for NASA Pathways IEP Participants

Complete student performance evaluations in accordance with NASA's performance evaluation requirements. Refer to NPR 3430.1, NASA Employee Performance Communication System (EPCS), for additional information.

4.13   Travel for NASA Pathways IEP Participants

At the Center's discretion, travel expenses may be paid from the Center to school and for the return trip. The initial trip to the Center and the return trip at the end of the program are typically not paid. However, travel and relocation expenses may be paid for those students who are converted to permanent and term appointments.

Students may travel in a Temporary Duty (TDY) status and receive associated compensation due to job-related requirements.

4.14   Training and Tuition for NASA Pathways IEP Participants

Please refer to the OPM Pathways Transition and Implementation Guidance for guidance on training.

4.14.1 Training and Development

NASA's commitment to continuous and quality learning and employee development enables the workforce to achieve mission success. NASA offers a wide range of training and development opportunities that include mentorships, leadership courses and programs, formal education, on-the-job developmental experiences, and technical courses that support employee career development. Centers can reference 5 U.S.C. Chapter 41, Training; 5 C.F.R. 410, Training; and NPD 3410.2F, Employee and Organizational Development, Training authorities for more information regarding the guidelines for the training and development of employees.

4.14.2 Tuition Assistance

At the discretion of the Center, tuition assistance may be offered to an undergraduate or graduate student if he or she is in good academic standing and received a Meets Expectation or higher performance rating in the latest <u>work period</u>. The employing Center will set forth the maximum amount and criteria for payment of tuition assistance.

Before an Intern accepts tuition assistance from the employing Center, the Center may require the Intern to sign a continued service agreement to continue employment in NASA for a specified period of time, when and if converted to a permanent position. Service in a non-pay status is not counted toward completion of the obligation unless it is at the convenience of the Agency.

4.15 Other Assignments and Employment for NASA Pathways IEP Participants

4.15.1 Rotational Assignments

Rotational assignments can broaden the employee's perspectives on the mission, goals, and objectives of the Center and the Agency. Therefore, management officials and supervisors have the discretion to define the nature and content of the assignments and to tailor them to meet Agency-specific needs. The purpose and duration of the assignments should be mutually agreed upon by the supervisor and the student; however, managers have final authority to determine rotational assignments. Assignment objectives should be well defined in advance of the assignment. Documentation must provide a clear understanding of the expectations, goals, and timing of the assignment(s).

An Intern may initiate a request for a rotational assignment but must first receive concurrence from his/her supervisor before making contacts or agreements to start the rotation. A personnel action must be processed for any assignment over 30 days.

Note that a rotation is a defined period of work or school study, usually a semester, a summer, or a quarter in length.

4.15.2 Outside Employment

An employee who wishes to engage in outside employment or other outside activities must comply with appropriate regulations, policies, and procedures. Outside employment means any form of compensated or uncompensated non-Federal employment or business relationship involving the provision of personal services by the employee. It includes, but is not limited to, personal services as an officer, employee, agent, consultant, contractor, general partner, teacher, or speaker.

Accordingly, before engaging in certain outside employment activities outlined in 5 C.F.R. 6901.103, Outside Employment, including employment with a NASA contractor, subcontractor, grantee, or other entity which has an agreement with NASA, the student employee must request and obtain administrative approval. This requirement is to ensure compliance with statutes and regulations affecting outside employment and financial conflicts of interest. Because these requirements may affect a student's ability to accept some employment opportunities with their own educational institution, Interns considering other employment opportunities during their NASA appointment

(including during both duty periods and LWOP) should consult with a local NASA ethics official within their Center's Chief Counsel's Office as soon as possible.

4.16 Program Completion Activities for NASA Pathways IEP Participants

Please refer to the OPM Pathways Transition and Implementation Guidance for guidance on:
    a. Program completion activities
    b. Conversion after program completion
    c. Crediting other experience
    d. Resignation
    e. Termination
    f. Trial Period

In addition, the subparagraphs identify clarifications or NASA-specific requirements for resignation, termination, trial probationary period, and conversion.

4.16.1 Resignation

Student employees electing to resign must submit a letter of resignation. The letter should include effective date, reason for resignation, and a permanent mailing address.

4.16.2 Termination

If the Center elects not to convert to competitive service an Intern who has completed his/her education requirements and is within the 120-day conversion period for optional conversion, the Intern's appointment expires at the end of the 120-day period. A termination due to the expiration of an Intern's appointment is not effected under 5 U.S.C. Chapter 35, 43, or 75, and the Intern does not have appeal rights. Follow the Termination-Expiration of Appointment procedures found in the OPM Guide to Processing Personnel Actions.

If an Intern is terminated at any other time, the Center must determine if the action must be processed in accordance with any of the following and the Intern be given appeal rights:
- 5 U.S.C. Chapter 35, Retention Preference, Voluntary Separation Incentive Payments, Restoration, and Reemployment
- 5 U.S.C. Chapter 43, Performance Appraisal
- 5 U.S.C. Chapter 75, Adverse Actions

In most cases, this determination is based on whether the Intern meets the definition of "employee" as set forth in 5 U.S.C. 7511; in general, when an Intern has been employed more than 2 years, or more than 1 year if he/she is a preference eligible.

The Center may also allow an Intern to resign in lieu of termination. Please refer to paragraph 4.16.1, Resignation.

Interns may also be terminated for reasons including, but not limited to:
- Inability of the Agency, for administrative reasons, to retain the Intern in the job (e.g., budget constraints, reorganization, lack of available work, etc.).

- Failure to follow or violations of the terms and conditions as identified in the Pathways Programs Participant Agreement.
- Change in the academic status (including major) which will not qualify the Intern for the target position.
- Lack of available work.
- Budget reasons.
- Misconduct.
- Performance issues.
- Suitability.
- Failure to receive a favorable recommendation for conversion at the end of the academic program.
- Resignation.
- Suspension, expulsion, or withdrawal from the educational institution.
- Inability of the Agency, for administrative reasons, to retain the Intern in the job (e.g., budget constraints, reorganization, etc.).

4.16.3 Trial and Probationary Period

The entire tenure of an Intern's trainee work experience is served on a trial basis. This must be stated in the **Remarks** section of the SF 50, Notification of Personnel Action.

Interns who are converted to career or career-conditional appointments are subject to the probationary period in accordance with 5 C.F.R., 315.801, Probationary Period; When Required. Additionally, time spent on the Intern appointment is credited towards probation provided it meets the requirements of 5 C.F.R. 315.802, Length of Probationary Period; Crediting Service. One month of work experience can be credited toward one month completion of the probationary period.

> **Example:** A student in the Intern Program for 6 months will be required to serve another 6 months to complete the probationary period unless the student has 6 months of prior Federal service that meets the requirement of 5 C.F.R. 315.802, Length of Probationary Period; Crediting Service.

Time spent in a non-Federal internship or as an active duty military member is not creditable towards the probationary period. 5 C.F.R. 315.802, Length of Probationary Period; Crediting Service, only allows credit for prior Federal service in the same agency and in the same line of work.

4.16.4 Conversion

In addition to the OPM guidance, please refer to NPR 3300.1, Appointment of Personnel To/From NASA, for guidance on conversion requirements. Please also refer to the NASA AST qualification requirements in NPR 3300.1, Chapter 2, AST Rating Procedures.

To be eligible for conversion, when students begin their NASA Pathways IEP participation, they must have sufficient time left in their academic schedule to complete the required number of work hours so that they may be eligible for conversion. Additionally, students must have at least a fully successful or equivalent performance rating from their final evaluation.

SECTION 5 – NASA PATHWAYS RGP

This section contains supplemental NASA-specific information on implementing the NASA Pathways Recent Graduates Program. Please refer to the OPM Pathways Transition and Implementation Guidance for additional guidance.

5.1 NASA Pathways RGP Roles and Responsibilities

Throughout this section, NASA stakeholder roles and responsibilities are identified. The Agency has identified role titles in this document. However, some Centers may have different role titles utilized for these functions. Please note that all of the responsibilities must be addressed, regardless of the role title used at the Centers. When more than one role is responsible for a particular activity, both roles are identified. In addition, initiator and support responsibilities are identified as available. This paragraph provides a high-level overview of each role's responsibilities. Note that the responsibilities are not listed in rigid chronological order. The following is a list of the roles and a high-level overview of responsibilities:

NASA Pathways RGP Implementation Roles and Responsibilities	
Role	**Overview of Responsibilities**
NASA OHCM	• Establish eligibility criteria for initial appointments into the Pathways Programs. Note that NASA eligibility and qualifications standards must comply with standards established by OPM. • Provide finalized versions of all Pathways documents, along with a resource for obtaining the latest revisions. • Provide clarification on any policies not identified by OPM or other NASA guidance. • Provide data to meet OPM reporting requirements.
Recent Graduate	• Apply to vacancy. • Provide the Center HR Office with appropriate documentation (e.g., transcripts, GPA, etc.) to validate eligibility for the program. • Accept or decline offer. • Sign a NASA Pathways Participant Agreement. • Complete the required In-Processing activities after receiving e-mails from EODS (containing a User Name, Password, information on logging into the system, and information on starting the In-Processing process). • Consider benefits options. • Work with Center Pathways Programs Manager to verify completion of program activities.

NASA Pathways RGP Implementation Roles and Responsibilities	
Role	**Overview of Responsibilities**
Center HR Office Personnel (Includes Staffing and Workforce Planning Personnel) A DEU-certified individual must participate in these procedures for external hiring.	• Meet with Supervisor/Assigned Organization Representative and the Center Pathways Program Manager to determine if a vacancy can be classified under the NASA Pathways RGP. (Initiate responsibility) • Create PD using requirements from the Supervisor/Assigned Organization Representative. • Create the Request for Eligibles (RFE) in the HR Portal. • Complete the staffing processes necessary for an external hire, including receive from the Recent Graduate appropriate documentation (e.g., transcripts, GPA, etc.) to validate eligibility for the program. Note that this must be completed by a DEU-certified individual. • Enter the position into WTTS (Gains Module), and Publish the new appointment. At this point, the NSSC In-Processing Caseworkers are notified of the new Participant. • Create the action in FPPS with the appropriate NOAC for appointment, LAC, and Pay setting in accordance with the NSSC PAP SDG. • LGAP the action and forward to the NSSC PAP team in accordance with the NSSC submission deadlines. At this point, the NSSC PAP team is notified to begin their processing. • Partner with Center Pathways Programs Manager and organization to ensure that FTE is accounted for within Center phasing plans. (Support responsibility) • Ensure the proper incoming Center skill mix to meet mission requirements. • Ensure levels are within hiring limits and budget requirements. • Work with Center Pathways Programs Manager, Supervisor/Assigned Organization Representative, and Center Training and Development personnel to ensure all training and development requirements are met. (Support responsibility)

NASA Pathways RGP Implementation Roles and Responsibilities	
Role	**Overview of Responsibilities**
Supervisor/Assigned Organization Representative	• Meet with HR Office to determine if a vacancy can be classified under the NASA Pathways RGP. • Provide Center HR Office with PD requirements. • Partner with Center Pathways Programs Manager and Center Recruitment Program Manager to develop effective recruitment strategy to ensure sufficient pool of qualified applicants. • Partner with Center Pathways Programs Manager to review and consider qualified applicants for selection into available position. • Assign a mentor to each Recent Graduate. • Work with Center HR Office, Center Pathways Programs Manager, and Center Training and Development personnel to ensure all training and development requirements are met. (Support responsibility) • Monitor work performance of Recent Graduate, create a Performance Plan for each Recent Graduate, and provide timely, constructive feedback with regards to performance to Recent Graduate and Center Pathways Programs Manager. Ensure that these activities are fulfilled within the guidelines of NASA and Center Performance Plan policies. • Take appropriate action to address any issues that may impact successful performance in or completion of the RGP (e.g., misconduct, less than fully successful performance, etc.). • Recommend Recent Graduates for possible promotion, conversion to permanent positions, or termination. This responsibility would occur after the Recent Graduate has been employed for the required period of time. Terminations for appropriate reasons may be effected at any time. • Request 120-day extensions to Recent Graduate appointments when necessary.

Center Pathways Programs Manager	• Lead the strategic roll-out of communication across their Center. This will include major impacts, such as applicant process and naming conventions.
	• Partner with Center HR Office and organization to ensure that FTE is accounted for within Center phasing plans. (Initiate responsibility)
	• Work with the Center Recruitment Program Manager to recruit Recent Graduates to meet Center and Agency goals (e.g., Veterans, disability, and diversity).
	   o Inform recruiters of available positions, Center needs, and application process.
	   o Review materials used to recruit such as brochures and Web sites.
	• Coordinate with the Center Recruitment Program Manager to

NASA Pathways RGP Implementation Roles and Responsibilities	
Role	**Overview of Responsibilities**
	ensure universities are aware of NASA Jobs ads and Pathways vacancies that have been posted. • Partner with Supervisor/Assigned Organization Representative and Center Recruitment Program Manager to develop effective recruitment strategy to ensure sufficient pool of qualified applicants. • Obtain Recent Graduate's signature on the Pathways Participant Agreement. • Refer qualified Recent Graduates who have not been selected for conversion to other Centers for consideration, if possible. • Provide reporting data on program activities to NASA OHCM. • Work with Center HR Office, Supervisor/Assigned Organization Representative, and Center Training and Development personnel to ensure all training and development requirements are met. (Initiate responsibility) • Consider/approve requests for 120-day extensions to Recent Graduate appointments.
Center Recruitment Program Manager	• Work with the Center Pathways Programs Manager to recruit Recent Graduates to meet Center and Agency goals (e.g., Veterans, disability, and diversity). • Ensure universities are aware of NASA Jobs ads and Pathways vacancies that have been posted. • Partner with Center Pathways Programs Manager and Supervisor/Assigned Organization Representative to develop effective recruitment strategy to ensure sufficient pool of qualified applicants. • Coordinate logistical support for Agency and other recruiting events.
Center Training and Development Personnel	• Work with Center Pathways Programs Manager, Center HR Office, and Supervisor/Assigned Organization Representative to ensure all training and development requirements are met. (Support responsibility)
NSSC In-Processing Caseworker	• Receive notification of new Participant after Center publishes the new Participant in WTTS. • Contact new Participant to begin in-processing and begin benefits counseling.
NSSC PAP Team Personnel	• Code and process actions from the Centers.

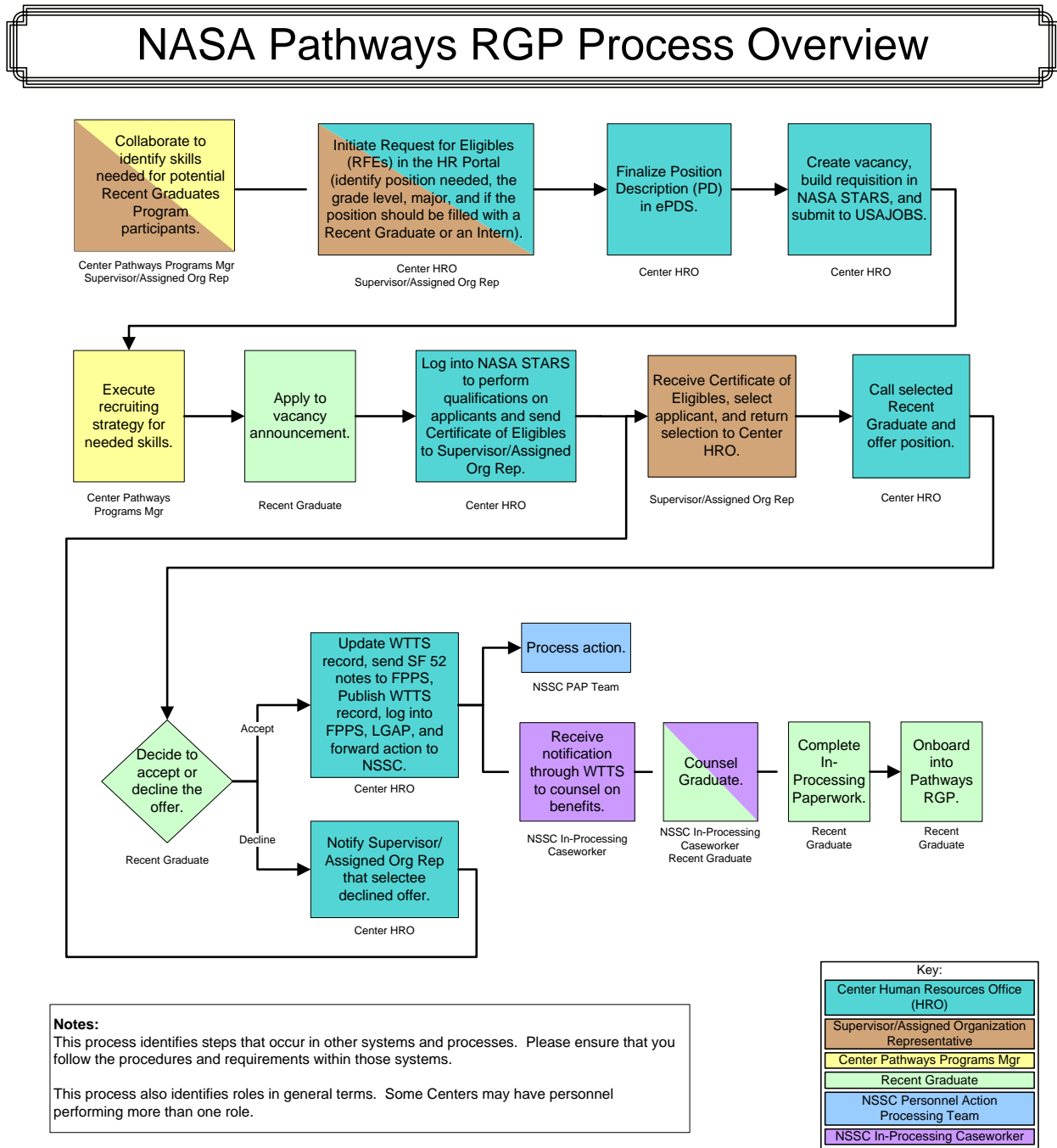### 5.2 NASA Pathways RGP Overview Flowchart

Figure 5-01   **NASA Pathways RGP Process Overview**

5.3   NASA Pathways RGP Procedures

Use the following procedures to process NASA Pathways RGP participants:
1. Supervisor/Assigned Organization Representative and Center Pathways Programs Manager collaborate to identify skills needed for potential RGP participants.
2. Center HR Office and Supervisor/Assigned Organization Representative initiate the RFEs in the HR Portal, identifying the position needed, the grade level, major, and if the position should be filled with a Recent Graduate, including determination whether position should exceed 1 year based on applicable criteria.
3. Center HR Office finalizes the PD in the Electronic Position Description System (ePDS).
4. Center HR Office creates the vacancy, builds the requisition in NASA Staffing and Recruiting System (STARS), and submits to USAJOBS.
5. Center Pathways Programs Manager executes recruiting strategy for needed skills.
6. Recent Graduate applies to the vacancy announcement.
7. Center HR Office logs into NASA STARS to perform qualifications on applicants and sends Certificate of Eligibles to Supervisor/Assigned Organization Representative.
8. Supervisor/Assigned Organization Representative receives the Certificate of Eligibles, selects the applicant, and returns the selection to the Center HR Office.
9. Center HR Office calls selected Recent Graduate and offers the position.
10. Recent Graduate reviews offer.
    a. If Recent Graduate accepts the offer, proceed to Step 11.
    b. If Recent Graduate declines the offer, notify the Supervisor/Assigned Organization Representative, and go back to Step 7 to call the next selected Student.
11. Center HR Office updates the WTTS record, sends the SF 52 notes to FPPS, Publishes the WTTS record, logs into FPPS, LGAPs the action, and forwards to the NSSC.
12. NSSC In-Processing Caseworker receives notification of a new employee, and counsels Recent Graduate.
13. Recent Graduate completes In-Processing paperwork.
14. Recent Graduate onboards into the NASA Pathways RGP.
15. NSSC PAP team processes the action.

5.4   NASA Pathways RGP Eligibility Requirements

For information on eligibility requirements, please refer to the OPM Pathways Transition and Implementation Guidance.

5.5   NASA Pathways RGP Selection and Appointment

Please refer to the following:
1. OPM Pathways Transition and Implementation Guidance for guidance on selection and appointment, including qualifications, appointments, classification, tenure groups for RIF, trial period, and movement between and within agencies/components.
2. 5 C.F.R. 302, Employment in the Excepted Service, for information on eligibility standards, rating applications, and Veterans' preference.
3. Appendix B, Requirements Relating to the 5 C.F.R. 302 Regulations, for information on implementing the regulations with the Pathways Programs.

In addition, the following items identify NASA's policy for application of Veterans' Preference:
- Veterans' preference applies to selections made under the Pathways Programs authority.
- Centers must consider candidates by either of the following:
    - Using a numeric rating and ranking system to include Veterans' preference points.
    - Categorizing candidates according to preference (i.e., preference and non-preference) in which preference eligibles have absolute preference.
- Pathways Programs notices will clearly describe how Veterans' preference will be applied.

5.6   NASA Pathways RGP Changes in Status

Please refer to the OPM Pathways Transition and Implementation Guidance for guidance on changes in status, including separations and conversion to the competitive service.

5.7   Promotions for NASA Pathways RGP Participants

In accordance with OPM guidance, Recent Graduates are not eligible for accelerated promotions. To be promoted, Recent Graduates must meet all OPM qualification requirements, including time in grade. Per the discussion section in the OPM regulations: accelerated promotions are not consistent with the Recent Graduate Program.

5.8   Employee Benefits for NASA Pathways RGP Participants

Please refer to Appendix C, Overview of Benefits Eligibility by Program. Please also refer to the OPM Pathways Transition and Implementation Guidance for guidance on employee benefits, including health and life insurance.

5.9   Performance Evaluation for NASA Pathways RGP Participants

Supervisors will complete performance evaluations of the RGP participant in accordance with NASA's performance evaluation requirements. Please refer to NPR 3430.1, NASA Employee Performance Communication System (EPCS).

> **Note:** This performance evaluation is in addition to the evaluation the supervisor completes after each rotation.

5.10   Training and Tuition for NASA Pathways RGP Participants

Please refer to the OPM Pathways Transition and Implementation Guidance for guidance on training.

NASA's commitment to continuous and quality learning and employee development enables the workforce to achieve mission success. NASA offers a wide range of training and development opportunities which include mentorships, competitive degree programs, leadership courses and programs, formal education, on-the-job developmental experiences, and technical courses that

support employee career development. Centers can reference 5 U.S.C. Chapter 41, Training; 5 C.F.R. 410, Training, and NPD 3410.2F, Employee and Organizational Development, Training authorities for more information regarding the guidelines for the training and development of employees.

Additionally, per OPM requirements, the following are required for RGP participants:
- Within 45 days of appointment, the participant must have an Individual Development Plan (IDP) that is approved by his/her supervisor.
- Within 90 days of appointment, the participant must be assigned a mentor who is an employee outside the participant's chain of command.
- Within the initial appointment, the participant must receive 40 hours annually of formal training related to his/her IDP as identified in the OPM regulations.

5.11 Program Completion Activities for NASA Pathways RGP Participants

Please refer to the OPM Pathways Transition and Implementation Guidance for guidance on program completion activities, including conversion after program completion, crediting other experience, resignation, and termination.

5.11.1 Resignation

Employees electing to resign must submit a letter of resignation. The letter should include effective date, reason for resignation, and a permanent mailing address.

5.11.2 Termination

Service in the NASA Pathways RGP confers no rights to further Federal employment in either the competitive or excepted service upon expiration of the appointment. Recent Graduates may be noncompetitively converted to a competitive service appointment upon successful completion of the established Program period which is any of the following:
1. At the end of 1 year.
2. At the end of 2 years for those positions determined to warrant more rigorous training and development.
3. At the end of an approved extension of 120 days.

If a Recent Graduate is not converted, his or her appointment expires at the end of the established Program period, and the employee must be terminated on that date. There is one exception: if the employee held a career or career-conditional appointment in the Agency immediately before entering the Program, and fails to complete the Program for reasons not related to misconduct, poor performance, or suitability, the Center may elect to place him or her in a permanent competitive service position.

Terminations of Recent Graduates during the Program period may be taken for appropriate reasons. The procedural requirements for taking such actions and the employee's rights to appeal must be considered, as discussed in paragraph 4.16.2, Termination. Supervisors should notify their servicing HR Office as soon as termination is anticipated.

SECTION 6 – NASA PATHWAYS PMF PROGRAM

Please refer to the OPM Pathways Transition and Implementation Guidance for guidance. Please also refer to NPR 3300.1, Appointment of Personnel To/From NASA.

Use the following procedures to process NASA Pathways PMF participants:
1. Center works with Agency PMF Program Coordinator to select a PMF participant from OPM's list of available candidates.
2. After a candidate is selected and accepts the position, he/she signs the Participant Agreement and is assigned a mentor.
3. Center initiates the SF 52, Request for Personnel Action. Refer to the updated OPM Guide to Processing Personnel Actions.
4. Center HR Office updates the WTTS record, sends the SF 52 notes to FPPS, Publishes the WTTS record, logs into FPPS, LGAPs the action, and forwards to the NSSC.
5. NSSC In-Processing Caseworker receives notification of a new employee, and counsels Student.
6. NSSC PAP team processes the action.

APPENDIX A – ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

Acronyms that are used in this desk guide are identified upon first use in this document. Thereafter, the acronym is used. In cases where the first or only instance of the use of an acronym is in a table or graphic, it may not be spelled out on first reference. Since many acronyms and abbreviations have multiple meanings, the following list includes those used in this guide and the applicable meaning:

ACRONYM/ ABBREVIATION	MEANING
AST	Aeronautics, Scientific, and Technical
C.F.R.	Code of Federal Regulations
DEU	Delegated Examining Unit
DOI	Department of the Interior
E.O.	Executive Order
EOD	Entrance on Duty
EODS	Entrance on Duty System
EPCS	Employee Performance Communication System
ePDS	Electronic Position Description System
FAQ	Frequently Asked Question
FEDVIP	Federal Employees Dental and Vision Insurance Program
FEGLI	Federal Employees' Group Life Insurance
FEHB	Federal Employees Health Benefits
FERS	Federal Employees Retirement System
FICA	Federal Insurance Contributions Act
FLTCIP	Federal Long Term Care Insurance Program
FPPS	Federal Personnel and Payroll System
FR	Federal Register
FSA	Flexible Spending Account
FTE	Full-Time Employee
GPA	Grade Point Average
GS	General Schedule
HR	Human Resources
IDP	Individual Development Plan
IEP	Intern Employment Program
LAC	Legal Authority Code
LGAP	Legally Approve
LWOP	Leave Without Pay
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NASA	National Aeronautics and Space Administration
NCC	NASA Classification Code
NEACC	NASA Enterprise Applications Competency Center
NEBA	NASA Employees Benefit Association
NOAC	Nature of Action Code
NPD	NASA Policy Directive

ACRONYM/ ABBREVIATION	MEANING
NPR	NASA Procedural Requirements
NSCS	NASA Supplemental Classification System
NSSC	NASA Shared Services Center
NTE	Not to Exceed
OHCM	Office of Human Capital Management
OPM	Office of Personnel Management
PAP	Personnel Action Processing
PD	Position Description
PMF	Presidential Management Fellows
RFE	Request for Eligible's
RGP	Recent Graduates Program
RIF	Reduction in Force
RTD	Return to Duty
SCEP	Student Career Experience Program
SDG	Service Delivery Guide
SF	Standard Form
SPID	Special Program Identification
STARS	Staffing and Recruiting System
STEP	Student Temporary Employment Program
TDY	Temporary Duty
TSP	Thrift Savings Plan
U.S.C.	United States Code
WTTS	Workforce Transformation Tracking System

APPENDIX B – REQUIREMENTS RELATING TO THE 5 C.F.R. 302 REGULATIONS

The regulations detailed in 5 C.F.R. 302, Employment in the Excepted Service, provide information on eligibility standards, rating and arranging applications, selection, appointment, etc.

The following guidance is from the OPM Pathways Transition and Implementation Guidance:

> Veterans' preference applies to selection for positions in the
> Pathways Programs. Selections must be made in accordance with the
> requirements of 5 CFR part 302, veterans' preference laws, and OPM
> guidance issued as a Memorandum for Chief Human Capital
> Officers, dated February 9, 2009, on *Procedures for Passover of
> Compensably-Disabled Preference Eligibles in the Excepted Service.* This
> includes, but is not limited to, ranked and unranked referral lists.

APPENDIX C – OVERVIEW OF BENEFITS ELIGIBILITY BY PROGRAM

Please refer to the OPM Pathways Transition and Implementation Guidance for guidance on employee benefits. Each program participant is eligible for benefits based on the type of Pathways Program in which he/she is enrolled. While there are certain restrictions, the following chart provides a general overview of eligibility for the different Pathways Programs:

Overview of Benefits Eligibility for NASA Pathways Programs Participants by Program Based on Initial Appointment						
	Intern NTE (Less Than 90 Days)	Intern NTE (Less Than 1 Year)	Intern NTE (More Than 1 Year)	Intern Without NTE Date	Recent Graduate	Presidential Management Fellow
Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB)	No	No	Yes *	Yes	Yes	Yes
Federal Employees' Group Life Insurance (FEGLI)	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
NASA Employees Benefit Association (NEBA)	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Federal Employees Dental and Vision Insurance Program (FEDVIP)	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Flexible Spending Account (FSA)	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Federal Long Term Care Insurance Program (FLTCIP)	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Thrift Savings Plan (TSP)	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Annual Leave	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Sick Leave	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Holidays	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Retirement Coverage:						
Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS)	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Federal Insurance Contributions Act (FICA)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
* Eligible for FEHB, but must pay full cost of employee and employer share.						
Questions regarding NASA Benefits should be directed to the NSSC at 1-877-677-2123.						

Please note that LWOP or any other nonpay status may have an effect on Federal benefits. Please visit the OPM Leave Administration Web page at: www.opm.gov/oca/leave, then click the **Fact Sheets on Federal Leave Programs** link, then the **Leave without Pay – Effect on Federal Benefits and Programs** link.

APPENDIX D – REPORTING REQUIREMENTS AND SPECIAL PROGRAM IDENTIFICATION (SPID) NUMBERS

OPM requires specific reporting criteria for agencies to follow when reporting on Pathways Programs. Please refer to the OPM Pathways Transition and Implementation Guidance.

SPID numbers are used when generating reports in FPPS Datamart. The NASA Enterprise Applications Competency Center (NEACC) will provide a new derivation table to the NSSC, including the correct SPID codes to be used with the Pathways Programs.

The Department of the Interior (DOI) provided three new SPID codes to be used for the Pathways Programs. They are the following:

- 74 - Internship Program
- 75 - Recent Graduates Program
- 76 - Presidential Management Fellows

APPENDIX E – SAMPLE PARTICIPANT AGREEMENTS

This appendix contains sample Participant Agreements.

Important: The samples included in this appendix are for reference only. Please access the official templates on the HR Portal.

Training Requirements (If applicable)

Mentoring (If your agency has a mentor requirement for Interns, enter those requirements)

Evaluation Procedures. (Summarize elements on which the Intern's performance appraisal will be based)

Minimum Eligibility Requirements for Noncompetitive Conversion (if any). (Include any agency specific requirements)

To be eligible for conversion to the competitive service, an Intern must:
- Be a U.S. citizen.
- Successfully complete academic course of study.
- Complete a minimum of 640 hours of work experience under the Internship Program.
- Meet the OPM Qualification Standard for the position the Intern may be converted to.
- Maintain acceptable performance under the agency's approved performance management system.
- Receive favorable recommendation for conversion from supervisor.

It is important to remember that eligibility for conversion does not guarantee that the agency will decide to opt for conversion.

SIGNATURES:

Intern:

Print Name	Signature	Date

Hiring Official/Supervisor:

Print Name	Signature	Date

Human Resources Approving Official:

Print Name	Signature	Date

INSERT YOUR AGENCY'S LOGO

YOUR AGENCY'S NAME – insert

Appendix C
Recent Graduates Program Participant Agreement

Appointee's Full Name:

Appointing Agency/Sub-Agency:

Appointment Date (s):	**Work Schedule:**
Entrance on Duty (EOD) Date : _____ (MM/DD/YYYY) Program Not to Exceed (NTE) Date: _____ (MM/DD/YYYY)	Monday _____ Tuesday _____ Wednesday _____ Thursday _____ Friday _____
Position Title, Series and Grade	**Pay**

Recent Graduate's Responsibilities:	**Hiring Official's/Supervisor's Responsibilities:**

• Adhere to the Recent Graduate Program requirements
 • Adhere to an established work schedule
 • Perform, successfully, the assigned duties listed in your position description
 • Participate in agency training classes or programs
 • Create an Individual Development Plan (IDP) with assistance from your manager
     o IDP must include at least 40 hours of formal interactive training
     o IDP must be completed within 45 days of your date of hire
     o IDPs must be created with your supervisor
 • Select a mentor within 90 days of your date of hire. Your manager will assist you
 • Attend regularly scheduled meetings with mentor
	• Complete Participant Agreement with each Recent Graduate
	 • Provide information on the Recent Graduate Program requirements
	 • Establish a mutually agreeable work schedule
	 • Identify performance goals and evaluation criteria
	 • Help Recent Graduate create an IDP which must be completed 45 days from date of hire
	 • Assist Recent Graduate with the selection of a mentor within 90 days of date of hire
	     o Mentor must be at an appropriate level outside of the Recent Graduate's chain of command
	 • Provide information on any special training requirements
	     o Ensure Recent Graduate participates in at least 40 hours of formal interactive training per year
	 • Supervise daily work activities
	 • Identify performance goals and evaluation criteria
	
	 • If the position offers noncompetitive conversion to the competitive service, identify the eligibility requirements for conversion and ensure the Recent Graduate is converted at the end of the Program.

Work Assignments (Enter brief description of duties or attach a position description)

Recent Graduates Program Requirements (Enter requirements for continuation and successful completion of Program)

Recent Graduates Training Requirements (Identify any special training requirements)

40 hours of formal interactive training each year.

Mentoring (Enter instructions on process to select Mentor)

Evaluation Procedures (Summarize elements on which the Recent Graduate's performance appraisal will be based)

Minimum Eligibility Requirements for Noncompetitive Conversion. (If this position offers noncompetitive conversion, enter any agency specific requirements)

To be eligible for conversion to the competitive service, the Recent Graduate must:
- Be a U.S. citizen.
- Successfully complete all Recent Graduate Program requirements.
- Meet the OPM Qualification Standard for the position to which the Recent Graduate may be converted to.
- Maintain acceptable performance under the agency's approved performance management system.

It is important to remember that eligibility for conversion does not guarantee that the agency will decide to opt for conversion.

SIGNATURES:

Recent Graduate:

Print Name	Signature	Date

Hiring Official/Supervisor:

Print Name	Signature	Date

Human Resources Approving Official:

Print Name	Signature	Date

INSERT YOUR AGENCY'S LOGO

PATHWAYS
FOR STUDENTS & RECENT GRADUATES
TO FEDERAL CAREERS

YOUR AGENCY'S NAME – insert

Appendix D
Presidential Management Fellows Program
Participant Agreement

Appointee's Full Name:	
Appointing Agency/Sub-Agency:	

Appointment Date (s):	Work Schedule:
Entrance on Duty (EOD) Date : _____ (MM/DD/YYYY) Program Not to Exceed (NTE) Date: _____ (MM/DD/YYYY)	Monday _____ Tuesday _____ Wednesday _____ Thursday _____ Friday _____
Position Title, Series and Grade	**Pay**
Fellow's Responsibilities:	**Hiring Official's/Supervisor's Responsibilities:**

• Adhere to the Presidential Management Fellows Program requirements
• Adhere to an established work schedule
• Perform, successfully, the assigned duties listed in your position description.
• Observe all workplace rules
• Create an Individual Development Plan (IDP) with assistance from your manager.
   o IDP must include at least 80 hours of formal interactive training
   o IDP must be completed within 45 days of your date of hire
   o IDP must be completed each year
• Select a Mentor within 90 days of your date of hire. Your manager will assist you.
• Participate in agency training classes or programs
• Attend regularly scheduled meetings with your mentor
	• Complete Participant Agreement with each Fellow
	• Provide information on the Presidential Management Fellows Program requirements
	• Establish a mutually agreeable work schedule
	• Identify performance goals and evaluation criteria
	• The Fellow creates an IDP which must be completed 45 days from date of hire
	• Assist Fellow with the selection of a mentor within 90 days of date of hire
	   o Mentor must be at the managerial level outside of the Fellow's chain of command
	• Provide information on special training requirements
	• Ensure Fellow participates in at least 80 hours of formal interactive training per year
	• Supervise daily work activities
	• Identify performance goals and evaluation criteria
	
	• If the position offers noncompetitive conversion to the competitive service, identify the eligibility requirements for conversion and ensure the Fellow is converted at the end of Program.

Work Assignments (Enter brief description of duties or attach a position description)

PMF Program Requirements (Enter requirements for continuation and successful completion of Program)

PMF Training Requirements (Identify any special training requirements)

80 hours of formal interactive training each year.

Mentoring (Enter instructions on process to select Mentor)

Evaluation Procedures (Summarize elements on which the Fellow's performance appraisal will be based)

Minimum eligibility requirements for noncompetitive conversion. Does this position offer non-competitive conversion? (Include any agency specific requirements)

To be eligible for conversion to the competitive service, the Fellow must:
- Be a U.S. citizen.
- Successfully complete all PMF Program requirements.
- Meet the OPM Qualification Standard for the position to which the Fellow may be converted.
- Maintain acceptable performance under the agency's approved performance management system.
- Obtain ERB certification prior to conversion.

It is important to remember that eligibility for conversion does not guarantee that the agency will decide to opt for conversion.

SIGNATURES:

Fellow:

Print Name	Signature	Date

Hiring Official/Supervisor:

Print Name	Signature	Date

Human Resources Approving Official:

Print Name	Signature	Date

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