

**STATE OF ARIZONA**  
**Hiring Freeze**  
**QUESTIONS/ANSWERS**

**General**

**1) When does the hiring freeze begin?**

It is effective February 1, 2015.

**2) How long will the hiring freeze last?**

Until further notice.

**3) Will there be a layoff or RIF?**

The hiring freeze is intended to reduce the size and cost of government through attrition rather than layoffs or reductions-in-force. Disciplined justification of any new hires will help agency directors achieve a smaller government.

**4) Are all state agencies required to participate in this hiring freeze?**

The hiring freeze applies to all executive agencies, boards and commissions. The hiring freeze does not apply to agencies headed by an elected official. However, state agencies to which the hiring freeze does not apply are encouraged to voluntarily comply with this hiring freeze.

**5) Are there positions excluded from the hiring freeze?**

Positions that are vital to, and directly involved in, providing for the health or safety of the public or our employees or directly involved in the collection or investment of state revenues are excluded from the hiring freeze.

**6) Who determines which positions are excluded from the hiring freeze?**

The ADOA Human Resources Division (HRD) produced a list of classifications that appear to fit the criteria for being excluded from the hiring freeze. The list is based on information received during the 2008 hiring freeze. HRD will work with each agency to ensure the accuracy of the list. If there are any classifications that need to be added or deleted from the list or specific positions that should be excluded, the agency should submit the "Hiring Freeze Exclusion Request" form to the ADOA HR mailbox [HumanResources@azdoa.gov](mailto:HumanResources@azdoa.gov) for review.

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- 7) What if an agency has a position that needs to be filled but it is not approved as a position excluded from the hiring freeze?**

A position that is critical to fulfill the mission of the agency, hereafter referred to as “mission critical,” but is not excluded from the hiring freeze, must be approved by the agency Director or Deputy Director on a case-by-case basis. The agency shall document and maintain the reason for filling the position on the “Justification to Fill” form provided by HRD.

- 8) How will compliance with the hiring freeze be monitored?**

ADOA will identify the agency’s headcount at the beginning of the hiring freeze and will monitor agencies’ hiring activity on a bi-weekly basis using HRIS. Monthly reports will be provided to the Governor’s Office. Agencies shall maintain all approved “Justification to Fill” forms in the event a subsequent audit is requested.

- 9) Is there an expectation of how many positions remain vacant?**

The purpose of the hiring freeze is to help limit the growth of government and take control of the expenses on the state’s balance sheet so we can protect priorities. Therefore, the expectation is to restrict hiring to only positions that are vital to and directly involved in providing for the health or safety of the public or our employees or directly involved in the collection or investment of state revenues. It may be reasonable for a large agency to maintain at least 40% of its positions vacant, whereas a small agency, depending on its attrition rate and whether the positions are deemed mission critical, may find it more difficult to maintain 40% of its positions vacant.

- 10) Will there be a central location where agency staff can find information related to the hiring freeze?**

For more information regarding the hiring freeze, please visit the hiring freeze web page located at [www.hr.az.gov](http://www.hr.az.gov); then click on the red button labeled “2015 Hiring Freeze.” Agencies may also contact the ADOA Human Resources Division by phone: 602-542-5482, or email: [HumanResources@azdoa.gov](mailto:HumanResources@azdoa.gov).

#### **Hiring and Recruitment**

- 11) What positions can be filled?**

Only positions that are excluded from the hiring freeze or determined to be “mission critical” may be filled.

- 12) What is the process for filling positions deemed “mission critical?”**

It is recommended that each agency develop an internal review process for consideration of

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filling positions that may be “mission critical.” The agency shall document and maintain the reason for filling the position on the “Justification to Fill” form. The form must be approved by the respective agency Director or Deputy Director. Recruiting for these positions may occur only after approval has been obtained. A copy of the “Justification to Fill” form must be uploaded into the Talent Acquisition system. When the requisition is created, human resources staff will be able to designate the position as “mission critical” by marking the appropriate field in Talent Acquisition. This documentation shall be maintained in the event a subsequent audit is requested.

**13) What about positions that are not general funded? Or partially general funded?**

Positions that are funded by other funding sources such as federal funds, non-appropriated funds, etc. will not be excluded from the hiring freeze unless the position is determined to be vital to, and directly involved in providing for the health or safety of the public or our employees or directly involved in the collection or investment of state revenues or is approved as “mission critical” by the agency Director or Deputy Director.

**14) Are temporary appointments and political appointments subject to the hiring freeze?**

At this time, all positions are included in the hiring freeze.

**15) If an agency receives an ADA reasonable accommodation request from an employee to move into a vacant position that otherwise would have remained vacant pursuant to the hiring freeze, are they required to accommodate the request?**

Requests for accommodation must be handled on a case-by-case basis. Please consult with your human resources office for guidance.

**16) What should an agency do with those positions for which it is currently recruiting and the position is approved as “directly involved in providing for the health or safety of the public or our employees or the collection or investment of state revenues?”**

Recruitment (including job announcements, interviewing, reference checks) can continue for those positions included on the approved list of positions excluded from the hiring freeze.

**17) What should an agency do with those positions for which it is currently recruiting and the position is not approved as “directly involved in providing for the health or safety of the public or our employees or the collection or investment of state revenues?”**

Recruitment for those positions should stop. Recruitment can commence only if a “Justification to Fill” form is approved by the agency Director or Deputy Director.

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**18) What if an agency has already interviewed or is in the process of interviewing for a position that is subject to the hiring freeze?**

Interviewing should stop immediately and no offers for employment should be made until the agency determines it is “mission critical” and a “Justification to Fill” form is approved by the agency Director or Deputy Director.

**19) What happens if an offer for employment has already been made for a position?**

If an offer has been made prior to the hiring freeze, the individual may begin employment.

**20) Do agencies need a Justification to Fill form for administrative transfers into the same classification and/or to re-distribute employees within an agency based on need?**

Yes. All position movement must be documented, especially in the event of an audit. However, a JTF is not required when an agency transfers an employee and the position to another unit within the agency.

**21) If a position is approved for hire and it is a Deputy Director, Assistant Director or equivalent, do agencies still have to request approval for the appointment through ADOA?**

Yes. The ADOA will obtain approval from the Governor’s Office. As previously required, approval shall be obtained before an offer of employment is extended.

**22) Can an agency use consultants and other contracted resources to perform job functions for positions that are subject to the hiring freeze?**

If an agency determines the job functions are “mission critical”, it is the agency Director’s responsibility for determining whether it is appropriate to utilize consultants and other contracted resources or to fill the position with a permanent appointment. As mentioned previously, the purpose of the hiring freeze is to help control costs and hiring decisions should conform to the spirit of the hiring freeze.

**23) Are “Direct Hires” required to be logged into the Talent Acquisition system?**

Yes, all hires must be logged into the Talent Acquisition system for audit purposes. Requisitions should be marked accordingly in the system by indicating “yes” in the direct hire field.



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**Classification and Other Personnel Actions**

**24) Does this hiring freeze impact transfers, promotions, voluntary demotions and special assignments?**

Yes. Transfers, promotions, voluntary demotions, and special assignments may continue for positions that are excluded from the hiring freeze or for positions approved as “mission critical.”

**25) Will special assignments be extended?**

A special assignment shall not exceed six months, unless an extension is approved by the ADOA Director.

**26) Does the hiring freeze impact other personnel actions such as reallocations, in-grade adjustments, etc. ?**

At this time, the hiring freeze does not impact these types of actions; however, agencies should take the State’s budget situation into consideration when initiating any personnel action.