



# United States Department of the Interior

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY  
Washington, DC 20240

March 17, 2025

## Memorandum

To: Assistant Secretaries  
Heads of Bureaus and Offices

From: Stephanie M. Holmes  
Acting Chief Human Capital Officer

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Date: 2025.03.17  
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Subject: Voluntary Early Retirement Authority (VERA) and Voluntary Separation Incentive Payment (VSIP) Approval – March 17, 2025 – March 26, 2025 Window

The purpose of this memorandum is to advise that the U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) has approved the Department of the Interior's (DOI) plan to offer early retirements under the Voluntary Early Retirement Authority (VERA) (Auth. No. 2025-103) and separation incentives under the Voluntary Separation Incentive Payment (VSIP) Authority (Auth. No. 2025-014) to assist the agency in achieving the President's goal of reforming the Federal workforce to maximize efficiency and productivity as outlined in the Presidential Executive Order 14210, "*Implementing the President's Department of Government Efficiency Workforce Optimization Initiative*".

The Department is opening the VERA/VSIP from March 17, 2025, to March 26, 2025.

Due to the nature of the job functions and responsibilities, the following occupational series, positions, and/or critical skillset are exempt Department-wide from VERA/VSIP for this window:

- Wildland Fire Management Positions (0456 Wildland Fire Management, 0462 Forestry Technician, and Fire Management Officers)
- Emergency Response Management Positions (0089 Emergency Management, 0640 Emergency Medical Technician)
- Law Enforcement and Security Positions (0007 Corrections Officers, 0025 Park Ranger (Protection/Law Enforcement), 0083 Police Officer, 0085 Security Guard, 1801 Investigation, 1811 Criminal Investigation)
- Dispatching Positions (0346 Logistics Management, 0462 Forestry Technician, and 2151 Dispatching)
- Aviation Positions (1815 Air Safety Investigating, 1825 Aviation Safety, 2101 Aviation Management, and 2181 Aircraft Operation)

- Permitting Positions (skills, knowledge, or other factors related to permitting including, for example, surveyors, hydrologists, geologists, realty specialists and ESA) with written approval from the Senior Advisor to the Secretary, exercising the delegated authority of AS-PMB
- Human Resources (0201 Management Positions, 0203 Assistance Positions)
- Cyber Security (2210 Information Technology Management, 0391 Telecommunications, 0854 Computer Engineering, 0855 Electronics Engineering, and 1550 Computer Science with Cyber Security responsibility)
- Indian Affairs programs and organizations are exempt from this VERA/VSIP window pending the conduct of tribal consultations

VERA/VSIP are not entitlements and as such the Department may exercise discretion to limit the incentives such that employee acceptances will not impede mission delivery, including, but not limited to: permitting a specified number of applications for VERA/VSIP; extending or limiting VERA/VSIP offers to employees in specific organizational units, occupational series or grades, geographic areas, and/or in possession of certain knowledge or skills related to a position.

As Bureaus and Offices must inform eligible employees of the VERA/VSIP opportunities and deadlines for applications and separations, additional planning at the Bureau-level is necessary. For example, should a Bureau or Office limit the number of applications for VERA or VSIP, legitimate, non-discriminatory formal procedures for such limitations prior to accepting applications must be established.

VERA incentives are made in accordance with 5 U.S.C. section 8336(d)(2)(D) for CSRS and 5 U.S.C. section 8414(b)(1)(B) for FERS, and 5 C.F.R. section 831.114 for CSRS and 5 C.F.R. section 842.213 for FERS. For employees to be eligible for VERA, employees must be:

- At least age 50 with at least 20 years creditable Federal service, OR
- Any age with at least 25 years creditable Federal service.

Additional eligibility requirements outline an employee must:

- Have been continuously employed by the Department in a position covered by the authorization for a minimum of 31 days prior to February 27, 2025;
- Occupy a position covered by the approved plan;
- Serve in a position covered by the Department's VERA plan; and
- Retire by May 31, 2025.

Employees in the following categories are not eligible for a VERA:

- Employees serving under time-limited appointments; and
- Employees who have received a final removal decision based on misconduct or unacceptable performance.

VSIP payments are made in accordance with 5 U.S.C. sections 3521 through 3525 and 5 C.F.R. section 576. For employees to be **eligible** for VSIP, they must:

- Be serving in an appointment without time limit;
- Be currently employed by the Executive Branch of the Federal Government for a continuous period of at least (3) years;
- Be serving in a position covered by an agency VSIP plan (i.e., in the specific geographic area, organization, series and grade);
- Apply for and receive approval for a VSIP from the Department; and
- Not be included in any of the ineligibility categories listed below.

Employees in the following categories are **not eligible** for a VSIP:

- Are re-employed annuitants;
- Have a disability such that the individual is or would be eligible for disability retirement;
- Have received a decision notice of involuntary separation for misconduct or poor performance;
- Previously received any VSIP from the Federal Government;
- During the 36-month period preceding the date of separation, performed service for which a student loan repayment benefit was paid, or is to be paid;
- During the 24-month period preceding the date of separation, performed service for which a recruitment or relocation incentive was paid, or is to be paid; and
- During the 12-month period preceding the date of separation, performed service for which a retention incentive was paid, or is to be paid.

General information on these authorities can be found on OPM's website at

VERA: [Voluntary Early Retirement Authority](#)

VSIP: [Voluntary Separation Incentive Payments](#)

DOI VERA and VSIP reporting instructions are enclosed below. General questions regarding this guidance can be directed to the Office of Human Capital, via e-mail at [doi\\_office\\_of\\_human\\_resources@ios.doi.gov](mailto:doi_office_of_human_resources@ios.doi.gov)

To ensure that there are no delays in VERA/VSIP offers, Bureaus and Offices with bargaining unit employees should review existing collective bargaining agreement(s) and consider whether there are any bargaining obligations and should follow any applicable procedures contained in the agreement unless contrary to law.

cc: Human Capital Officers  
Human Resources Directors

Attachments:

VERA Reporting Instructions

VSIP Reporting Instructions