

Nurse Practitioner Consistency review and OPM Regrade of Nurse Practitioner FAQ Sheet

1. Why are Nurse Practitioner positions being regraded from GS13 to GS12?

(HCD Classification POC: Ray Lott/e-mail: Ray.A.Lott.Civ@Health.Mil and Terry Moten/e-mail: Terry.E.Moten.Civ@Health.Mil)

Answer: They will not be re-graded. DHA will suspend the re-grading of any GS-0610-13 professional series, non-supervisory positions. This decision to suspend the regrading is based on DHA's intent to explore the feasibility to apply more flexible pay, qualifications, and position classification standards under United States Code Title 38 personnel authorities. Congress authorized DoD to be able to implement Title 38.

2. How will this regrade affect the responsibilities and duties of Nurse Practitioners?

(HCD Classification POC: Ray Lott/e-mail: Ray.A.Lott.Civ@Health.Mil and Terry Moten/e-mail: Terry.E.Moten.Civ@Health.Mil)

Answer: The responsibilities and duties will not be impacted because DHA is suspending the re-grade of these positions.

3. Will Nurse Practitioners receive a decrease in pay because of this downgrade or will they be able to retain their current salary, even as GS12?

(HCD Classification POC: Ray Lott/e-mail: Ray.A.Lott.Civ@Health.Mil and Terry Moten/e-mail: Terry.E.Moten.Civ@Health.Mil)

Answer: Pending the potential conversion to Title 38, none of the Series 0610 Nurse Practitioners will receive a reduction in grade or decrease in salary. If the conversion to Title 38 is not completed, the need to regrade the positions will be reassessed at that time.

4. What steps are being taken to support Nurse Practitioners during this transition?

(HCD Classification POC: Ray Lott/e-mail: Ray.A.Lott.Civ@Health.Mil and Terry Moten/e-mail: Terry.E.Moten.Civ@Health.Mil)

Answer: There will not be a re-grade or transition of Nurses whose Positions Descriptions were part of the consistency review results.

5. How will this regrade impact the career advancement opportunities for Nurse Practitioners?

(HCD Classification POC: Ray Lott/e-mail: Ray.A.Lott.Civ@Health.Mil and Terry Moten/e-mail: Terry.E.Moten.Civ@Health.Mil)

Answer: All existing GS-12 & GS-13 will be sustained at their current grade. However, under current Title 5 authorities and in accordance with the consistency review, the agency must cease hiring at the GS-0610-13 non-Supervisory level. The agency recently provided this guidance to the Defense Health Networks (DHNs) and to our staffing partner, Civilian Human Resources Agency (CHRA).

6. Are there any plans to reverse or reconsider this regrade in the future?

(HCD Classification POC: Ray Lott/e-mail: Ray.A.Lott.Civ@Health.Mil and Terry Moten/e-mail: Terry.E.Moten.Civ@Health.Mil)

Answer: There are no plans to reverse or reconsider DHA's decision to suspend the regrade unless the conversion of the impacted positions to Title 38 does not occur.

7. Are there any plans to change the pay system to provide more competitive salaries (Title 38)?

(HCD Labor Management/Employee Relations POC: Janice Humbertson/e-mail: Janice.A.Humbertson.Civ@Health.Mil)

Answer: DHA values highly its Nurses and Nurse Practitioners. DHA leaders are very concerned the Military Medical Treatment Facilities are losing qualified staff to the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and the private sector in many markets due to the limitations on hiring and pay under the agency's current Title 5 personnel authorities. DHA is in the process of evaluating whether some or all healthcare occupations will be converted to Title 38. This effort would allow DHA to be more competitive with the VA and the private sector in hiring and retaining personnel in certain health care occupations. DHA is currently considering a phased approach to the potential

implementation of Title 38. The first phase is focused on registered nurses and licensed practical nurses. DHA is currently analyzing the risks, impacts to budget, and differences between the competitive and excepted services before implementing Title 38.

8. What resources or support will be available to Nurse Practitioners to help them navigate this change?

(HCD Classification POC: Ray Lott/e-mail: Ray.A.Lott.Civ@Health.Mil and Terry Moten/e-mail: Terry.E.Moten.Civ@Health.Mil)

Answer: There will not be a regrade of Nurses whose Positions Descriptions were part of the consistency review results unless the conversion of the impacted positions to Title 38 does not occur. The projected time for any such conversion is approximately two years. If the conversion does not occur, the regrade will be reassessed and personnel will be appropriately notified.

9. What resources or support will be available to Military Treatment Facilities (MTFs) to help them to competitively hire Nurse Practitioners?

(HCD Classification POC: Ray Lott/e-mail: Ray.A.Lott.Civ@Health.Mil and Terry Moten/e-mail: Terry.E.Moten.Civ@Health.Mil)

Answer: DHA will continue to exercise its Title 5 personnel authorities as it works towards potential future implementation of Title 38. Within its current Title 5 authorities, the DHA is pursuing several initiatives to support MTFs in competitively hiring Nurse Practitioners and Nurses. These include:

- **Standardizing and implementing Nurse position descriptions across the enterprise to ensure consistency of duties.**
- **Expanding developmental opportunities for our current Nurses and those we are recruiting through developing and implementing Nurse training programs and developmental promotion ladders.**
- **Applying Special Salary Rate tables in selected localities to better align DHA compensation with that of the VA and private sector employers.**

10. Do all MTFs have options for Special Salary Rates? If not, what is the criteria for these higher salaries?

(HCD Policy & Programs/Special Salary Rate POC: Aaron Robinson/e-mail: Aaron.L.Robinson4.Civ@Health.Mil)

Answer: The DHA has the option to apply Special Salary Rates (SSRs). The Office of Personnel Management (OPM) may establish special rates to address staffing problems caused by significantly higher non-Federal pay rates than those payable by the Federal Government within the area, location, or occupational group involved; the remoteness of the area or location involved; the undesirability of the working conditions or nature of the work involved; or any other circumstances OPM considers appropriate.

The MTFs may identify the staffing challenges experienced for a specific specialty/locality. DHA Headquarters in coordination with the DHNs will review these challenges alongside funding availability to determine if an SSR can be implemented.

11. *Per Mr. Goodman's memorandum 19APR24, effective immediately, no tentative offers may be extended for any Nurse, and Nurse Practitioner GS-0610-13 position until further notice.*

Does the decision of OPM to regrade the Nurse Practitioners (NPs) from GS-13 to GS-12 affect all other advanced practice and higher-level nursing positions that are at the GS-13 or higher? (Certified Nurse Anesthetist, Midwives, Managers, Supervisors or Executive Nurses, etc.)

(HCD Classification POC: Ray Lott/e-mail: Ray.A.Lott.Civ@Health.Mil and Terry Moten/e-mail: Terry.E.Moten.Civ@Health.Mil)

Answer: These positions are not affected because DHA is suspending the regrading of GS-0610-13 non-supervisory positions.

12. When does the regrade of the Nurse Practitioners begin? Who is notifying these Nurse Practitioners?

(HCD Classification POC: Ray Lott/e-mail: Ray.A.Lott.Civ@Health.Mil and Terry Moten/e-mail: Terry.E.Moten.Civ@Health.Mil)

Answer: DHA will suspend the re-grading of GS-0610-13 non-supervisory positions. There are no current GS-0610-13 Nurse Practitioners that will be affected during this suspension and there will be no notification.

13. Are other nursing positions being reviewed for possible regrade (GS-11 or lower)?

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Answer: No, only GS-0610-13 positions were affected by the appeal and the subsequent consistency review.