

OFFICE OF HUMAN RESOURCES - FACT SHEET



Competitive Placement of IHS Scholarship Recipients

Placement of IHS Health Professions Scholarship Recipients Entering Obligated Service without Application to a Job Opportunity Announcement

- The IHS Scholarship Program (IHSSP) operates under the authority of Sections 751–757 of the Public Health Service Act and Sections 103 and 104 of the Indian Health Care Improvement Act (IHCIA; P.L. 94-437), as amended by the Indian Health Care Amendments of 1988, 1992, 1996 and 2010 (P.L. 100-713, P.L. 102-573, P.L. 704-313 and P.L. 111-148). The IHS Health Professions Scholarship is authorized by Section 104 of the IHCIA, codified at 25 U.S.C. 1613a.
- IHS Health Professions Scholarship (Scholarship) recipients entering obligated service for the first time, **do not** need to go through the regular Human Resources (HR) process to be placed into a position to meet their service obligation. Once they are eligible and qualified, the regular process may be bypassed without regard to any competitive personnel system, agency personnel limitation, or Indian Preference policy. However, if a Scholarship recipient chooses to apply to a job opportunity announcement (JOA) for a clinical position, then they will select the scholarship eligibility in USAJobs and will receive first priority consideration for selection.
- As a scholar completing their education, they are encouraged to work with their IHSSP Analyst and servicing HR specialist (or point of contact) to be placed into a suitable position. Scholarship recipients applying for their initial appointment at a federal site have the **highest priority** for placement for any IHS clinical position to fulfill their service obligation.
- Servicing HR specialist **should not** require that a job opportunity announcement (JOA) is advertised as long as there is a vacant position in which the Scholarship recipient qualifies. This overrides the area facility's policies. Indian Preference does not need clearance; please see [Indian Health Manual Chapter 7 Human Resources and Management Part 3-Indian Preference 7-3.4C \(23\)](#).
- Servicing HR specialist works with the hiring official to validate that a vacant position is available [(approved and funded in the Enterprise Human Capital Management (EHCM system)] and ensures that the position description has clinical (not administrative) duties equal to or greater than 80% and is updated and ready to fill.
- The Scholarship recipient must submit a copy of their diploma and official transcripts documenting the degree awarded, as well as a copy of their license or board certification, if applicable for the position, to their HR specialist and IHSSP Analyst.
- The Scholarship recipient submits their [Preferred Placement \(IHS-856-12\) Form](#) to their IHSSP Analyst.

- Servicing HR specialist determines qualifications and the IHSSP Analyst validates the Scholarship recipient's eligibility status when contacted by HR.
- Servicing HR specialist **should** begin the onboarding process of the Scholarship recipient *immediately* after they are informed that the Scholarship recipient is licensed and ready to start employment. The HR specialist ensures correct job code and position number in EHCM and works with the hiring manager to discuss any compensation flexibilities.
- The onboarding process will be the same as a regular hire process, except there will be no JOA or Indian Preference clearance and to use the EHCM job opening ID (JOID) in lieu of HRx system ticket/REC#.
- When processing in EHCM, the nature of action code (NOAC) 101 Career-Conditional Appointment in most circumstances but will depend on the Scholarship recipient's work history. The legal authority is AYM Reg. 337.201 Directive and BAB GW001 (MED) with dtd 06/20/2003 in description (1) part 2 of the position record. For the remark codes, follow the guide to processing personnel action, as each IHS scholar's situation differs. NOTE: there could be an instance where an appointment could be under excepted service if the IHS Scholarship Recipient is an enrolled member of a Federally Recognized Native American Tribe or Alaska Native and can provide the required document of BIA form 4432 Verification of Indian Preference for Employment in the BIA and IHS.
- The IHSSP Analyst will work to ensure the Scholarship recipient has an identified position within 90 days of graduation or the completion of post-graduate training. If they are having difficulty identifying a position they will be referred to the Recruitment and Outreach Branch within the Division of Recruitment and Retention.

Manual Onboarding Process of IHS Scholarship Recipients Appointed Outside of Competitive Procedures

- Upon completion of eligibility and qualification determination and a vacant position has been identified as approved the HR Specialist may begin the onboarding process.
- The HR Specialist will create a manual new hire record in USAStaffing/Onboarding. The request number will be entered into the new hire record along with the EHCM Job Opening ID (JOID). This applies when the vacancy was not filled through the competitive process via a job opportunity announcement. The HR Specialist should utilize the USAS Job Aid #13, as well as the IHS Onboarding User Guide: Human Resources and Onboarding Users, for guidance to ensure the new hire record is created appropriately.
- When the new hire record is created, the HR Specialist will initiate a tentative job offer email in USAStaffing/Onboarding to send to the IHS Scholarship Recipient. This allows the IHS Scholarship Recipient to start completing the relevant questionnaires associated with appointment and benefits documents. During this process, the HR Specialist will outline the necessary tasks for the new hire procedure. This includes submitting the request for Personnel Security for security clearance by assigning the appropriate task to the Personnel Security staff member responsible for the case, who can access the new hire record to

download the resume/application, OF-306, and Indian Child Care Form (when applicable) to begin initial contact with the IHS Scholarship Recipient for fingerprint and background investigation procedures.

- The HR Specialist should regularly review the new hire record for the completion of appointment and benefits forms to ensure they are filled out correctly. Once the security clearance has been granted, the servicing HR Specialist will issue the official job offer letter via USAStaffing/Onboarding, noting the entrance on duty date. It is essential that the letter includes accurate position and pay information (i.e., position title, series, grade, step, salary, pay basis, recruitment incentives offered, ATM, SCAL, or relocation expenses). The HR Specialist should maintain constant communication with both the new hire and the hiring manager to ensure that any incentive forms are completed and approved before the effective date of the appointment and the reporting date.

Processing of the Hire Action

- The Servicing HR Specialist will be responsible for updating USAS/Onboarding by completing the 'Verify the New Hire Arrived for their First Day of Duty' task. This will allow the New Hire to sign the SF-61 Appointment Affidavit form, which MUST be signed by both the appointee and HR on the first day of duty. The HR Specialist should confirm that all other appointment forms are complete and accept the forms in USAS/Onboarding.
- Before processing the personnel action request (PAR) action, the appointment in EHCM: The HR Specialist should verify in EHCM that the position has an inserted row with the same effective date as the HIRE action and data fields are accurate and correct to the hire action to be processed. If the job code is assigned ONLY to this position, then the job code should also have a row added with the same effective date as the position and appointment, in addition to data fields that need to be updated to align with the position and hire action.
- Before processing in EHCM the PAR appointment action, the HR Specialist MUST confirm they have determined the correct Nature of Action Code, Legal Authority, and required remarks. This determination is made by referencing the OPM Guide to Processing Personnel Actions and the appropriate chapter that aligns with the appointing authority under which the appointee was selected (i.e., if the appointee is hired under Direct Hire, for example, 101 Career Conditional, the legal authority would be AYM (Memo from Director, OPM, dated 06/20/2003) and BAB GW001 (MED)). NOTE: There may be instances where an appointment could be under excepted service if the IHS Scholarship Recipient is an enrolled member of a Federally Recognized Native American Tribe or Alaska Native and can provide the required document of BIA Form 4432 Verification of Indian Preference for Employment in the BIA and IHS.