

TITLE 5, UNITED STATES CODE, SECTION 2301
Merit System Principles

§ 2301. Merit system principles

- (a) This section shall apply to--
 - (1) an Executive agency; and
 - (2) the Government Printing Office.
- (b) Federal personnel management should be implemented consistent with the following merit system principles:
 - (1) Recruitment should be from qualified individuals from appropriate sources in an endeavor to achieve a work force from all segments of society, and selection and advancement should be determined solely on the basis of relative ability, knowledge and skills, after fair and open competition that assures that all receive equal opportunity.
 - (2) All employees and applicants for employment should receive fair and equitable treatment in all aspects of personnel management without regard to political affiliation, race, color, religion, national origin, sex, marital status, age, or handicapping condition, and with proper regard for their privacy and constitutional rights.
 - (3) Equal pay should be provided for work of equal value, with appropriate consideration of both national and local rates paid by employers in the private sector, and appropriate incentives and recognition should be provided for excellence in performance.
 - (4) All employees should maintain high standards of integrity, conduct, and concern for the public interest.
 - (5) The Federal work force should be used efficiently and effectively.
 - (6) Employees should be retained on the basis of adequacy of their performance, inadequate performance should be corrected, and employees should be separated who cannot or will not improve their performance to meet required standards.
 - (7) Employees should be provided effective education and training in cases in which such education and training would result in better organizational and individual performance.
 - (8) Employees should be--
 - (A) protected against arbitrary action, personal favoritism, or coercion for partisan political purposes, and
 - (B) prohibited from using their official authority or influence for the purpose of interfering with or affecting the result of an election or a nomination for election.
 - (9) Employees should be protected against reprisal for the lawful disclosure of information which the employees reasonably believe evidences--
 - (A) a violation of any law, rule, or regulation, or
 - (B) mismanagement, a gross waste of funds, an abuse of authority, or a substantial and specific danger to public health or safety.
- (c) In administering the provisions of this chapter--
 - (1) with respect to any agency (as defined in section 2302(a)(2)(C) of this title), the President shall, pursuant to the authority otherwise available under this title, take any action including the issuance of rules, regulations, or directives; and
 - (2) with respect to any entity in the executive branch which is not such an agency or part of such an agency, the head of such entity shall, pursuant to authority otherwise available, take any action, including the issuance of rules, regulations, or directives; which is consistent with the provisions of this title and which the President or the head, as the case may be, determines is necessary to ensure that personnel management is based on and embodies the merit system principles.