



Reduction in Force (RIF) Quick Reference Guide

Key Legal, Regulatory, and Guidance References

When Federal agencies must abolish positions, they must ensure the processes are legally compliant, transparent, and equitable in accordance with the U.S. Code (U.S.C.) and Code of Federal Regulations (CFR).

- [5 U.S.C. Chapter 35](#) – Governs retention rights and RIF separation procedures required by law.
- [5 CFR Part 351](#) – Outlines RIF procedures, establishes competitive areas, levels, retention factors, and reassignment rights.
- [Workforce Reshaping Operations Handbook | OPM](#) and its [Appendices](#) – Specific operational procedures designed to ensure that reshaping efforts comply with merit system laws and regulations.
- [5 CFR part 330 Subparts B, F, and G](#) – Career transition assistance and reemployment priority – Provides priority rehiring opportunities and assistance.
- [The Employee’s Guide to Career Transition](#) – Assists displaced employees with finding career opportunities.
- [Merit Systems Protections Board \(MSPB\)](#) – Reviews employee appeals.
- [Severance Pay](#) – Fact sheet includes eligibility criteria and computation.
- [Vet Guide](#) – Documents how certain veterans have preference during a RIF.
- [Voluntary Early Retirement Authority \(VERA\)](#) – Allows eligible employees to retire early.
- [Voluntary Separation Incentive Payments \(VSIP\)](#) – Offers buyouts to reduce involuntary separations.
- [Top 10 Frequently Asked Questions](#) on VERA and VSIP

Request Templates

- [OPM VERA Request Template](#)
- [OPM VSIP Request Template](#)
- [Template for Requesting an Exception to 90-day Requirement on Changing Competitive Area Definitions](#)
- [Template for Requesting an Exception to the 60-Day RIF Notification Period](#)