

**BUREAU
FIREFIGHTER/LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER
POSITION DESCRIPTION
COVERAGE
GUIDE**



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I. INTRODUCTION

The information in this guide is intended to provide instruction related to the requirements for special retirement coverage of firefighter (FF) and law enforcement officer (LEO) position descriptions, and to promote consistency in the application of those requirements.

II. BUREAU FF/LEO STANDARD POSITION DESCRIPTIONS (SPDS)

A. Use of Bureau FF/LEO SPDs

Bureau FF/LEO SPDs should be used if the primary and grade controlling duties of the position are adequately covered in the SPD. SPDs are generally developed to be broad enough to cover the material aspects of a given type of position, yet specific enough to be meaningful and classifiable.

Standardizing position descriptions is an effective method of ensuring consistency among units in position design, requirements, use of technical language, and classification for similar positions. Using FF/LEO SPDs greatly reduces time spent in the position description development, classification review and special retirement coverage process.

The Bureau strongly advocates the use of SPDs. A Department mandate for Bureau SPD use is proposed. The proposal includes procedures for requests for waivers to the use of SPDs on an exception basis. When finalized this Department direction will be distributed to the field.

Note: When entering the SPD number in the Federal Personnel Payroll System (FPPS), always right justify the SPD number within the 7-digit position number field and zero fill before the SPD number. FPPS will automatically generate unique number keys in the position description number suffix field for each position. This feature allows the same SPD number to be used multiple times, establishing identical additional (IA) positions.

B. Development of Bureau FF/LEO SPDs

Numerous Bureau FF/LEO SPDs currently exist. Development of additional SPDs will continue as fire and law enforcement managers determine their need.

Once a Bureau FF/LEO SPD is developed, members of the Bureau SPD Workgroup complete the classification process

and assign a unique Bureau FF or LEO SPD number, beginning with one of the following prefixes: "F" (firefighter), "LE" (law enforcement). Note: The "M" prefix is used for non-covered fire management, technical or administrative support positions.

The firefighter or law enforcement SPD is then submitted through established channels to the Firefighter Law Enforcement Retirement Team (FLERT) with a request for special retirement coverage approval.

Once the approval process is completed, information regarding new and amended Bureau FF/LEO SPDs is distributed via Information Memorandum (IM), with directions on their applicability and use.

C. Availability of Bureau FF/LEO SPDs

Bureau FF/LEO SPDs and amendments are available to view, print or download from two sources:

1. National Human Resource Management Center (NHRMC)
Website SPD Library

http://ncweb.sc.blm.gov/nhrmc/Classification/blm_fire_spds_number.htm

2. Office of Fire and Aviation (OF&A) Website SPD Library.

(website link currently under construction)

Hard copies can be requested from the Bureau Special Retirement Coordinator (see Appendix C for contact information).

D. Amendments To Bureau FF/LEO SPDs

In general, amendments (DI-625 form) to FF/LEO SPDs are acceptable as long as the amendment does not add, delete, or change the conditions in the position description (PD) that support the classification or special retirement coverage determination.

For example, the DI-625 form can be used to amend the target grade of the SPD for career ladder promotion or recruitment purposes. In this case, the amendment should include documentation of the statement of difference(s) from the full

performance level. The amendment form can also be used to add additional statements, such as "this is a drug testing position", or to add specific position qualification requirements.

Use of the DI-625 form is normally limited to not more than two amendments to the basic position description (DM Chapter 511, Subchapter 4, Section 1(C)).

State fire or law enforcement managers, who wish to recommend an amendment to any established Bureau FF/LEO SPD, should sign the DI-625 in approval of the changes and coordinate the request through the appropriate Specialist in their servicing Human Resources Office. The Specialist will ensure position classification is not negatively affected.

Proposed Bureau SPD amendments require concurrence by appropriate national level management and review by the Bureau Special Retirement Coordinator. Not all SPD amendments will require approval for special retirement coverage purposes. However, the Coordinator will determine if the changes or additions noted in amendments are significant enough to require approval, and if so, will coordinate the approval process.

III. COVERED FF/LEO PDS FROM OTHER UNITS

A. Recommended Use

When appropriate circumstances exist, PDs previously classified and approved for special retirement coverage on other units in the Bureau can be used. Managers and supervisors should work closely with a classifier to ensure the established position description is appropriate for that particular unit's situation. Using these established PDs eliminates the requirement for and time spent in PD development and classification. Generally, no additional Department special retirement approval is required.

B. Procedures to Follow

If a PD previously approved for coverage on another unit within the Bureau is used, the following procedures should be followed:

1. Develop an amendment documenting the new organizational location. There should not be any changes made to the major duties, knowledge or experience requirements that would adversely affect the approved special retirement coverage.
2. Use the original 7-digit PD number configuration. The approval for special retirement coverage is linked to that original 7-digit PD number. FPPS automatically generates unique numbers in the position description number suffix field for each position. This feature allows the same position number to be used multiple times, establishing identical additional (IA) positions.
3. A copy of the amendment and original position description OF-8, documenting special retirement coverage, must be included with the unit's official copy of their PD. Supplemental copies should be provided to the employee and supervisor of the position.

IV. DEVELOPMENT OF NEW NON-STANDARD FF/LEO PDS

A new PD can be developed if no applicable Bureau FF/LEO SPD or other appropriate unit PD exists.

Managers, supervisors and classifiers work together to ensure proper development and classification of FF and LEO PDs. Specific major duties, required knowledge, skills and experience must be accurately documented.

During the development process, the manager or supervisor must decide whether or not the position will be recommended for special retirement coverage.

If the decision is to recommend the PD for special retirement coverage, the PD must contain certain conditions and language that fully meets the requirements for a given special retirement coverage.

A. Conditions for FF/LEO PD Coverage

Understanding the general conditions for PD coverage is necessary in order to determine the proper coverage to recommend.

1. Primary/Rigorous Coverage

Coverage requirements:

- Primary purpose (51% +) of the position is to perform work directly connected with the control and extinguishment of fires or investigation, apprehension, or detention of individuals suspected or convicted of offenses against the criminal laws of the US.
- Position must have rigorous duties so demanding that employment opportunities should be limited (through agency establishment of maximum entry age and physical requirements and/or medical standards) to young and physically vigorous

individuals. Generally Factor 8 of the position description will define physical requirements and medical standards.

2. Secondary/Supervisory Coverage

Coverage requirements:

- Position is clearly in the firefighting or law enforcement field;
- Position is in an organization having a firefighting or law enforcement mission;
- Position is in a normal career path for a FF or LEO;
- Position's primary duty (51%+) is first-level supervisor of primary firefighters or law enforcement officers engaged in rigorous duties.
- Prior experience in a rigorous FF or LEO position, respectively, is a mandatory prerequisite.

3. Secondary/Administrative Coverage

Coverage requirements:

- Position is clearly in a firefighting or law enforcement field;
- Position is in an organization having a firefighting or law enforcement mission;
- Position is in a normal career path for a FF or LEO;
- Position's duties are administrative, managerial, technical, semiprofessional, or professional in support of a fire or law enforcement program.

- Prior experience in a rigorous FF or LEO position, respectively, is a mandatory prerequisite.

B. FF/LEO Position Description Basic Requirements

1. Introduction Section - Describe:

- The fire or law enforcement organization in which the position is located.
- The fire or law enforcement organization's major function or mission.
- The overall purpose of the position within that fire or law enforcement organization.
- If a primary rigorous position – note the physical and medical requirements of the position. For example, "This is an arduous rigorous position and subject to medical screening and physical fitness testing."
- If a secondary position – describe the requirement of prerequisite experience in a primary rigorous position.

2. Major Duties Section - Describe:

- The paramount or significant fire or law enforcement duties associated with the position. These are the duties constituting the basic reason for the existence of the position and those that occur on a regular and recurring basis. For primary coverage, the time spent performing firefighting duties must be 51% or greater.
- The percentage of time spent in each major duty. Percentages must add up to 100%.

3. Knowledge Required Section - Describe:

- The kind and level of specific fire or law enforcement knowledge required of the position. Include any

- special knowledge required as a selective factor in recruitment.
- The fire or law enforcement related skills and abilities required of the position. Include any special skill required as a selective factor in recruitment.

4. Physical Demands Section –

If a primary rigorous position, describe:

- The demanding and strenuous activities associated with the position.
- The emergency and/or adverse environmental conditions under which work is performed.
- Extended period of time exposed to adverse environmental conditions.
- Requirements for medical examinations and/or physical fitness, such as passing a work capacity test for arduous positions.

C. FF/LEO Position Description Language

Once the appropriate coverage conditions and basic position requirements have been determined, the appropriate language supporting that coverage must be documented in the PD.

A Department workgroup developed examples of standardized firefighter primary and secondary coverage PD language for positions that will be submitted for special retirement coverage. A Memorandum was distributed on July 17, 2001. A copy of the full context of that Memorandum is located in (Appendix A)

It is important to remember when developing a FF or LEO PD that special retirement coverage requires the PD not only contain certain language, but the PD in whole must provide supporting evidence that fully meets the requirements for a

particular type of special retirement coverage.

CAUTION. It is not appropriate to put statements in the body of the PD or OF-8 similar to "this position qualifies as a primary position/secondary position under the special retirement program". The authority to make special retirement approval determinations lies with the Secretary of Interior's Designee. Position description coverage approval will be annotated with the appropriate special retirement coverage when approval is received from the appropriate Department authority.

D. Amendments To Covered Non-Standard PDs

Amendments (DI-625 form) to non-standard covered PDs are acceptable as long as the amendment does not add, delete, or change the conditions in the PD that support the classification or special retirement coverage determination.

For example, the DI-625 form can be used to amend the target grade of the PD for career ladder promotion or recruitment purposes. In this case, the amendment should include documentation of the statement of difference(s) from the full performance level. The amendment form can also be used to: add additional statements, such as "this is a drug testing position"; document specific position qualification or certification requirements; change the supervisor of the position.

Use of the DI-625 form is normally limited to not more than two amendments to the basic position description (DM Chapter 511, Subchapter 4, and Section 1C).

State fire or law enforcement managers who wish to recommend an amendment to any non-standard covered PD should coordinate the request through the appropriate Specialist in their servicing Human Resources Office. The Specialist will ensure position classification would not be negatively affected.

Proposed amendments to non-standard covered positions require review by the Bureau Special Retirement Coordinator. Not all amendments will require Departmental approval for

special retirement coverage purposes. However, the Coordinator will determine if the changes or additions noted in amendments are significant enough to require approval, and if so, will coordinate the approval process.

V. SUBMISSION OF FF/LEO PDS FOR COVERAGE

A. Recommended Coverage Request Package Contents

1. DOI Checklist.

A completed, signed and dated DOI Recommendation for Special Retirement Coverage Checklist Form must be completed and submitted.

2. Official Position Description.

A copy of the official classified position description, including a completed, signed and dated OF-8, must be submitted. The OF-8 must include a unique PD number. Refrain from assigning PD numbers beginning with "F", "LE" or "M". These prefixes are set aside for SPD use.

The position description must include documentation of the percentages of time spent in each of the major duties (percentages must equal 100%).

3. Organization Function Statement.

A copy of the function statement for the fire or law enforcement organization in which the position resides must be submitted. This statement should be a description of the mission of the organization as it relates to the unit's fire or law enforcement program. This information can be recorded in the PD Introduction Section or submitted as a separate document.

4. Organization Chart.

An organization chart or listing must be submitted. The organization chart or listing must include an entry documenting the position (include PD number) being submitted for coverage and must show how this position fits within the current fire or law enforcement organization.

5. Criminal Law Provisions.

If an LEO position – a listing of the provisions of the Federal criminal law incumbent is responsible for enforcing must be submitted.

B. Submission of the Request Package

State Special Retirement Coordinators and members of the Bureau SPD Workgroup should submit completed packages through the Bureau Special Retirement Coordinator located at the National Interagency Fire Center (NIFC) 3833 So. Development, Boise, ID 83705. The Bureau Special Retirement Coordinator will review the package for appropriateness, accuracy and completeness.

If the package meets all requirements, it will be submitted, with recommendation for coverage approval by the Bureau Program Designee (designated Office of Fire and Aviation management official) to FLERT, located at 300 E. Mallard Dr, Suite 170, Boise, ID 83706.

If the package does not meet all of the requirements, the Bureau Special Retirement Coordinator will work with appropriate state Special Retirement Coordinator or a Bureau SPD Workgroup contact to obtain the necessary documentation.

NOTE: PDs should be submitted for special retirement coverage prior to recruiting.

VI. DISTRIBUTION OF FF/LEO RETIREMENT COVERAGE APPROVAL DOCUMENTATION

Once the special retirement coverage approval certification is received from the Department, a FLERT Specialist annotates the coverage approval type and date on the position description OF-8.

A copy of all approval documentation is then forwarded to the Bureau Special Retirement Coordinator. The Coordinator maintains the Bureau copy and distributes additional copies to the appropriate locations.

When State Personnel Offices receive their copy of the approval documentation, they should make copies and distribute as follows: OPF copy, PD book copy, supervisor copy, and employee copy. The OPF copy should be filed on the right side as evidence of special retirement coverage.

VII. APPENDICIES

A. DOI Standard Position Description Language Memorandum
Note: The Bureau Special Retirement Coordinator can be contacted for questions regarding standardized firefighter position description language

B. DOI Checklist

C. Key Contacts