



Global Bidding and Assignment Systems (GBAS) HHS Pilot Staffing Accelerator

Frequently Asked Questions for Supervisors of Potential Applicants

INTRODUCTION

GBAS is a pilot program developed with support from the HHS Idea Lab, Ignite Program, and is being supported as a pilot out of the HHS Office of Global Affairs (OGA) and Assistant Secretary for Administration, Office of Human Resources (ASA/OHR). Once this 9 month pilot is completed, the team will review implementation success, challenges, and make recommendation for possible expansion to the various Operating Divisions (OPDIVs) of HHS in the future. The structure of this pilot is also supported in the FY2016/2017 Global Health Workforce Initiative, currently being evaluated for funding this fiscal year by the Assistant Secretary for Financial Resources (ASFR).

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

GBAS is a specialized system for global recruitment, bidding, and assignment that will build a pool of qualified staff ready to serve in long-term positions (initially 2 years) in global health. HHS envisions a model global health staffing process which allows in-depth assessment and selection of top candidates, timely screening and training (medical clearance, security clearance, required trainings) and readiness to deploy when vacancies occur on a regular, annual cycle. All HHS permanent employees who meet eligibility and qualification requirements are invited to participate in this pilot.

There are two rounds to the pilot. If an applicant has already served 48 months overseas or has served at least 36 months towards a 48 month tour as of September 2015, they may participate in Round 1. Because of their previous or current service, the timeline for this group is compressed since many requirements for deployment may have already been completed.

If your employee has served less than 48 months of continuous overseas service or have no overseas experience, they may be invited to participate in Round 2. The timeline for this process is longer given most participants will not have completed the training and clearance requirements for overseas deployment.

All those selected into the Global Health Cadre will deploy in the summer of 2016. If an employee does not match in the bidding system, either they cannot find an appropriate



program slot, or their own person situation changes, they would be available for future deployment, having completed all of the extensive requirements to deploy abroad.



APPLICATION

1. Does the employee need my approval to participate in GBAS?

Employees must have supervisory approval to apply to GBAS. If an employee will break a current international tour to deploy through GBAS by summer 2016, then he or she would need Division Director approval to apply. The GBAS still be seeking this approval for any applicants who is on an international tour. They are applying for a competitive program which, if accepted, means they will remain in their current position until they complete orientations, training, medical and security clearances, and participate in an assignment bidding and matching process. While there is guarantee that the application will be successful, if your employee is matched into a position, you, the employee's Executive Officer, or an agency appropriate POC, will be presented with a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for a two-year international assignment or domestic rotational position. If an employee successfully matches to a position, the employee and employer will have between 5 and 7 months advance notice prior to deployment, depending on the speed at which clearances and training can be completed.

2. What are the benefits to our office if our employee participates in the GBAS Program?

This is a career development experience for your employee, with a two-year, renewable, service agreement component. During their time in the program, he or she will develop both technical and leadership skills that will benefit your office or Agency upon their return. When the employee returns, he or she can help provide critical links between the domestic capacities and the global mandates of HHS. This interchange between the domestic and global is more critical now than ever for HHS, as nations become wealthier and request additional assistance from the U.S. on health related issues.

Employee development also includes the following competencies that would be transferrable back to your office in various ways:

- a. **Cultural Competence:** Acknowledges and incorporates, at all levels, the importance of culture, the assessment of cross-cultural relations, the need to be aware of the dynamics resulting from cultural differences, the expansion of cultural knowledge, and the adaptation of services to meet culturally unique needs.
- b. **Building Global Partnerships:** Develops and strengthens internal and external partnerships that can provide information, assistance and support to the organization. Identifies and uses synergies across the organization and with external partners, to improve public health.



- c. **Global Representation and Promotion:** Positions HHS as a leader in health issues. Gains support for HHS's mission. Coordinates, plans, and communicates in a way that attracts support from intended audiences.
- d. **Global Program and Policy Development:** Applies quantitative and qualitative methods to identify, compare, and select policy interventions that will achieve objectives and maximize outcomes most efficiently. Draws conclusions from qualitative and quantitative data and literature to identify opportunities and create plans for addressing public health problems.
- e. **Complex Problem Solving and Decision Making:** Works with others to conduct analyses that identify problems and the solutions; with the ability to make clear, consistent, transparent decisions in an often ambiguous global, multicultural context.

The structure of this program also provides your office 5 – 7 months advance notice before your employee leaves their current position. You may also hire a temporary or term employee to replace your employee while they are on an international assignment, filling in behind the vacated FTE. This process allows time for appropriate transition and succession planning.

3. Can an employee currently abroad break their tour assignment early to participate in GBAS?

No. However, if the current Division Director/Supervisor approves, the employee's application will be accepted. There must be written confirmation from both the supervisor, as well as the Division director in the application package that this exception was granted if an employee will break a current international tour to apply to GBAS.

4. When will my employee know they have been accepted into the program?

Round 1 will be notified of their selection no later than November 16. Round 2 will be notified no later than December 18. Screening and training will begin after their selection into the Global Health Cadre. Once accepted, training and clearance process will be initiated and will require up to 15 cumulative days of time away from the office from acceptance to deployment in the summer of 2016..

AFTER SELECTION INTO THE GLOBAL HEALTH CADRE

5. Is there a formal agreement between our office (the Agency/Program of origin), our employee (Cadre Member), OGA GBAS, and the tour assignment Agency/Program ?

If your employee is accepted into GBAS, a Statement of Understanding (SOU) is signed between OGA GBAS and your employee outlining the process.



A formal MOU will be signed when the Cadre Member accepts a two year assignment. When the GBAS bidding and assignment process is completed, the GBAS team, working with your HR office and the receiving Agency or Program, will process the MOU between the respective operating units and your employee.

6. Will there be any costs to my office if an employee participates in the program?

No. All costs associated with preparation for your employee's GBAS assignment are covered through the receiving Agency/Program. Your office is only responsible for covering the cost of the employee's salary, which includes the time spent during activities such as orientation, clearance preparation, and training until they are deployed to the tour assignment Agency/Program (as noted above, this could be up to 15 cumulative days).

However, there may also be time spent prior to deployment with the specific gaining Agency/Program, to provide orientation to the new international Program and assignment. This time could include temporary duty travel (TDY) as well as Agency/Program specific training. This pre-deployment time will be confirmed in the MOU between the program of origin and the receiving program.

7. How much time will the employee be away from the office and when is this expected to occur?

Your employee could be away from the office for up to 15 cumulative days for pre-deployment orientation and training. This will be very dependent on the current status of clearances and training requirements of each particular employee. For example, if an employee has already deployed on a Ebola response team, he or she may have met several of the training requirements already. This time is spread over the orientation/training period which is November 9-December 18, 2015 for Round 1 and January 11 to April 1, 2016 for Round 2.

8. Can our office hire behind the employee if they are accepted into GBAS?

Yes, your program may fill the employee's position through a permanent, term, or temporary position to cover their absence. Since the gaining program will be supporting the salary of your employee after they deploy on their international assignment, you will have the funding after deployment available to fund a permanent, temporary, or term position to fill the vacated FTE, depending on your executive officer and program's own staffing plan. This may also be done before the employee accepts a position to permit adequate succession planning and overlap with the new permanent, term, or temporary employee. While your employee will remain in their current position until they are matched and receive deployment orders, they will need to be available to participate in any required activities for the international position until deployment. Once the employee is deployed, you can fill the position permanently with the understanding at the end of the deployment, the employee will have return rights to a position in your Program or Agency, depending on the terms of the MOU, specific for this employee's deployment.



9. How does our office hire a term or temporary individual to cover our employee's absence?

Contact your respective Human Resources POC for guidance on how to process this personnel action, or contact the GBAS team at StaffingAccelerator@hhs.gov and the HR staff can refer you to an appropriate HR contact to meet the needs of your specific situation.

10. What happens if the employee is accepted to the GBAS program, but then drops out?

Your employee can withdraw from the program at any time, before or after deployment. However, The SOU states that if an employee drops out for other than medical, security, or for reasons of convenience for the government, they could be held liable for the direct costs of any training, security or medical clearances, travel, or moving expenses already paid for you by the Government, as determined by the paying Program. Your office will not be responsible for any of these costs. The employee will return to your Agency/Program for placement in the position of record or comparable position.

11. When will my employee receive an offer of assignment?

Round 1 Cadre Members will be offered assignments no later than February 26. Round 2 Cadre Members will be offered assignments no later than May 30.

DURING THE ASSIGNMENT

12. Will any support from our office be required during the employee's assignment?

No ongoing support from your office will be required.

RETURN

13. How will the return process work after the employee has completed their 2-year assignment?

The MOU stipulates that after the initial 2 years assignment, the employee will return to the Agency/Program of origin or extend the MOU with the concurrence of all parties for an additional 2 year assignment (according the provisions and limits established in Instruction HHS 301-International Assignments). The tour assignment Agency/Office will initiate a discussion regarding the employee's return 9 months in advance of their assignment's end. This is also coordinated with the respective HR Office POCs.