

Intergovernmental Personnel Act (IPA)

Instructions for Preparing VA IPA Agreement Requests

To prepare an IPA agreement request, Investigators must submit the following completed attachments at least **90 days (3 months)** prior to your needed start date:

1. IPA Cover Memo
2. Office of Inspector General (OIG) Exclusion Search Results (<https://exclusions.oig.hhs.gov/>)
3. CV/Resume of Applicant
4. Cost Summary Worksheet (document template available via email request)
5. IPA Assignment Agreement OF69 Form (signed by affiliate agency)
(https://www.opm.gov/forms/pdf_fill/of69.pdf)

The required templates and forms are linked in the list above. Please complete each attachment to the best of your ability. Once completed, email the documents to Ms. Nui Brown for review and schedule a brief phone call to discuss the next steps. For any questions or IPA document requests, contact: Nui.Brown@va.gov.

IPAs are not contracts/firm agreements until approved by the VA's Facility Director and Human Resources Department. They executable only *after* approval. You should receive a copy once approval is confirmed.

About the IPA Program

► **What is an IPA?** IPA stands for Intergovernmental Personnel Act and the provisions of this act are set forth in 5 CFR part 334. The act allows for "mobility assignment" of a person with specific skills that is working for one eligible affiliate agency (e.g., an institution of higher learning) to be "assigned" to work on a program or project at another agency that has a need for these skills. This was created to benefit both the "sending" and "receiving" agencies, while preserving the rights and benefits for the employee on assignment. At least one of the agencies in the agreement must be a federal agency (i.e., the VA). An IPA is NOT a funding mechanism for hiring personnel. It is a mechanism for reimbursing one agency for work performed at another. If sufficient funds for a position do not exist at the sending agency to cover the assignee, then an IPA should not be used to pay the assignees salary.

► **How long can someone be on mobility assignment?** IPA assignments can be made for up to two years (on an intermittent, part-time, or full-time basis), and can be extended for two additional years. After four continuous years on an IPA, the assignee must be returned to the originating agency for at least 12 months before going back on assignment for two additional years. Investigators should be prepared to react to any assignment limits by either initiating VA hires, or by securing funding at the agency in advance.

► **Who can be placed on IPA assignment?** The IPA provides for a broad spectrum of scientific or technical skills that can be placed on mobility assignment. The assignee candidate must have worked for the "sending" agency for at least 90 days in a position that is considered permanent, not temporary. This designation may vary and should be confirmed with that agency's Human Resources department before requesting a mobility assignment. IPA assignments should not be used to overcome standard hiring practices, therefore administrative and student positions are not eligible for mobility assignment. At the VA, the ability to assign personnel that would normally be hired under Title 38 authorities would be governed by the allowable hiring under the type of funding received. For most research studies and other programs, physicians would therefore be excluded from IPA assignment.

For more information on IPAs, visit: <http://www.opm.gov/programs/ipa/Mobility.asp>.