



# United States Department of the Interior

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY  
Washington, DC 20240

May 9, 2025

## Memorandum

To: Scott Davis  
Exercising the Authority of Assistant Secretary – Indian Affairs

From: Stephanie M. Holmes  
Acting Chief Human Capital Officer

Subject: Indian Affairs Programs and Organizations Limited Deferred Resignation/Retirement Program (DRP) and DRP with Voluntary Early Retirement Authority (VERA) Open Period – May 9, 2025, to May 16, 2025

**STEPHANIE HOLMES**  
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Date: 2025.05.09  
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The purpose of this memorandum is to notify you that the Department of the Interior (DOI or Department), is opening a limited Deferred Resignation/Retirement Program (DRP) and a Voluntary Early Retirement Authority (VERA) in conjunction with the DRP to employees within the organizational component of U.S. Department of the Interior, Office of the Secretary, Indian Affairs Programs and Organizations, including Office of Assistant Secretary – Indian Affairs (AS-IA), Deputy Assistant Secretary Management (DASM), Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), and Bureau of Trust Funds Administration (BTFA). Employees interested in participating must express their interest during the open period which begins on May 9, 2025, and ends at 11:59 pm ET on May 16, 2025. To maximize workforce efficiency, the Department is planning for reductions-in-force, with exemptions for positions that are critical to public safety or that are directly linked to the highest priority programs contributing to the achievement of the Department's mission. Our goal with this workforce optimization is to offer an opportunity for dedicated employees who have served the American people.

## Limitations

The Department intends to allow full-time, Indian Affairs Program and Organization employees, including employees in their probationary or trial periods, the opportunity to participate in this window of DRP or DRP with VERA if they meet the eligibility requirements. DRP and VERA are not entitlements and the Department may exercise discretion to limit these incentives such that employee acceptance will not impede mission delivery, including but not limited to: permitting a specified number of applications for DRP or DRP with VERA; extending or limiting DRP and/or DRP with VERA offers to employees in specific organizational units, occupational series or grades, geographic areas, and/or in possession of certain knowledge or skills related to a position.

Due to the nature of the job functions and responsibilities, the following occupational series, positions, and/or critical skillsets are exempt from participating in the DRP and DRP with VERA:

#### AS-IA, BIA, and BTFA Organizations and Programs

- Personnel Security (occupational series: 0080)
- Engineers and Architects in Water Resources, Transportation, and Facilities (occupational series: 0801, 0802, 0808, 0809, 0810, 0830, 0850, 0856, 0880, 0890)
- Self-Determination Positions with an Awarding Official Warrant (occupational series: 1101)
- Cyber Security (occupational series: 0391, 0854, 0855, 1550, 2210 with Cyber Security responsibility)

#### BIA

- Public Safety Positions – Law Enforcement, Security, and Firefighters (occupational series: 0006, 0007, 0080, 0081, 0083, 0086, 0089, 0132, 0301, 0391, 0401, 0456, 0462, 1670, 1801, 1802, 1811, 2151)
- Social Workers (occupational series: 0185, 0186, 0187)
- Positions supporting rate payer-funded activities (irrigation, power utilities), with written approval from the Senior Advisor to the Secretary, exercising the delegated authority of AS-PMB
- Safety of Dams Engineers (occupational series: 0801, 0802, 0808, 0809, 0810, 0830, 0850, 0856, 0880, 0890)
- Probate Strike Team Positions (occupational series: 0343, 0901, 0923, 0962)
- Permitting Positions (skills, knowledge, or other factors related to permitting activities for energy development) with written approval from the Senior Advisor to the Secretary, exercising the delegated authority of AS-PMB

#### BTFA

- Financial Analysts (occupational series: 1160)

### **Deferred Resignation/Retirement Program (DRP)**

The DRP allows eligible Indian Affairs Program and Organization employees who wish to voluntarily resign/retire to retain all pay and benefits regardless of their daily workload, to be exempted from all applicable in-person work requirements, and to be exempted from reduction-in-force actions, if any, that the Department initiates and effects prior to December 31, 2025, consistent with the terms of their executed DRP agreement. Employees who resign within the DRP must have an effective resignation date no later than September 30, 2025, but participants may voluntarily elect to resign on a date prior to September 30, 2025. Employees who are eligible to retire from federal service at any time during calendar year 2025, including employees who become eligible for early retirement through DOI's VERA, must retire no later than December 31, 2025, but participants may voluntarily elect to retire on a date prior to December 31, 2025.

To participate in the DRP and DRP with VERA, employees must express their interest during the open period, which begins May 9, 2025, and ends on May 16, 2025, at 11:59 pm ET. Employees must express their interest through the online form: <https://forms.office.com/g/F3jss9AbPf>.

## **Voluntary Early Retirement Authority (VERA)**

Eligible employees may only participate in VERA **in conjunction with DRP** for this window. VERA incentives are made in accordance with 5 U.S.C. section 8336(d)(2)(D) for CSRS, 5 U.S.C. section 8414(b)(1)(B) for FERS, 5 C.F.R. section 831.114 for CSRS, and 5 C.F.R. section 842.213 for FERS. For employees to be eligible for VERA, employees must be:

- At least age 50 with at least 20 years creditable Federal service, OR
- Any age with at least 25 years creditable Federal service.

Additional eligibility requirements outline an employee must:

- Have been continuously employed by the Department in a position covered by the authorization for a minimum of 31 days prior to February 27, 2025;
- Occupy a position covered by the approved plan;
- Serve in a position covered by the Department's VERA plan; and
- Retire no later than December 31, 2025.

Employees in the following categories are not eligible for VERA:

- Employees serving under time-limited appointments; and
- Employees who have received a final removal decision based on misconduct or unacceptable performance.

Additional details, eligibility, and application requirements for participation in VERA will be provided by Servicing Human Resources Offices.

## **Implementation**

Indian Affairs Programs and Organizations must verify each employee's eligibility, provide the DRP agreement to effectuate each employee's participation in the DRP, and grant each employee paid administrative leave no later than Friday, May 23, 2025, until their effective resignation/retirement date.

Additional planning at the Programs and Organization-level is necessary as leadership informs eligible employees of the DRP and/or DRP with VERA opportunities and deadlines for applications and separations. For example, should there be a limit on the number of applications for DRP and/or DRP with VERA, legitimate, non-discriminatory formal procedures for such limitations prior to accepting applications must be established.

For questions regarding the DRP, employees may contact their [Servicing Human Resources Office](#) (SHRO) and SHROs may contact the Office of Human Capital for additional guidance.