



STATE OF ARKANSAS
**Department of Finance
and Administration**

EXHIBIT D.5
OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT
Administrator's Office
1509 West Seventh Street, Suite 201
Post Office Box 3278
Little Rock, Arkansas 72203-3278
Phone: (501) 682-1823
www.dfa.arkansas.gov

October 19, 2016

Senator Uvalde Lindsey, Co-Chairperson
Representative Lanny Fite, Co-Chairperson
Uniform Personnel Classification and
Compensation Plan Subcommittee
Arkansas Legislative Council
State Capitol Building, Room 315
Little Rock, Arkansas 72201

Dear Co-Chairs:

The Office of Personnel Management (OPM) submits a request from the Arkansas Department of Veterans Affairs (ADVA) for your review.

The ADVA is requesting two positions from the position pool established by Arkansas Code Annotated §21-5-225(a)(1). The classifications requested along with the positions being surrendered are listed below:

<u>POSITIONS SURRENDERED</u>	<u>TITLE</u>	<u>CLASS CODE</u>	<u>GRADE</u>
22094508	Administrative Specialist II	C073C	C109
22133698	Administrative Specialist III	C056C	C112

CLASSIFICATIONS REQUESTED

Veterans Service Officer	G253C	C118
Veterans Cemetery Manager	G237C	C117

JUSTIFICATION

ADVA is requesting an additional Veterans Service Officer (VSO) classification due to the strategic plan approved by the Governor in June, 2015. The agency has decided to establish eight regional district offices. This plan calls for the establishment of five of the eight new district offices by 2020, which constituted deploying VSO's throughout the state. The eight district locations include Bentonville, Mountain Home, Russellville, Jonesboro, Baring, Hazen, Hope, and Warren. Six has already been established, which puts them several years ahead of schedule. Although, no new positions were authorized for this transition, the districts are filled through attrition and a planned Reduction in Force (RIF) in June, 2017. There were four employees subject to a RIF, but all have been placed in other jobs with the exception of one employee. This request will secure a position for the remaining employee, which will eliminate the need for a RIF.

Senator Uvalde Lindsey, Co-Chairperson
Representative Lanny Fite, Co-Chairperson
October 19, 2016
Page 2

ADVA is also requesting a Veterans Cemetery Manager classification due to the pending finalization of the multi-million dollar improvement project for the State Veterans Cemetery located in North Little Rock. This expansion will increase the burial capacity to accommodate the growing need of burial space for veterans and their eligible dependents. Currently, the North Little Rock State Veterans Cemetery is the only cemetery in Central Arkansas with space available for burials. In order to eliminate the risk of non-compliance with the National Cemetery Association standards and the essential need to deliver continual excellent service, ADVA feels the increased burials will require an additional management position. The agency states that both positions will easily be absorbed in their current budget.

The Office of Personnel Management has reviewed this request and **recommends** the approval of two pool positions for the classifications of Veterans Service Officer, G253C, grade C118 and Veterans Cemetery Manager, G237C, grade C117. Your approval of this request is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,



Kay Barnhill
State Personnel Administrator



Chief Fiscal Officer of the State

OCT 06 2016

Date

KB/cls:1-2



STATE OF ARKANSAS

Department of Veterans Affairs

501 Woodlane Drive, Suite 230C
Little Rock, AR 72201
Phone: (501) 683-1787 / Fax: (501) 682-4833

Asa Hutchinson
Governor

Matt Snead
Director

September 28, 2016

Ms. Kay Barnhill
Administrator
Office of Personnel Management
1509 West 7th Street, Room 201
Little Rock, AR 72201

RE: Surrender Pool Position Request – Veteran Service Officer, G253C, Grade C118

Dear Ms. Barnhill,

On June 8, 2015, Governor Asa Hutchinson approved ADVA's first-ever strategic plan focused at improving services for Veterans. The plan was developed by a diverse group of Veterans and stakeholders from across Arkansas.

The strategic plan calls for fundamental changes in the way ADVA delivers services through its three divisions. In particular, Strategic Goal 1, significantly changed the way ADVA delivers services through the Veteran Services Division. Historically, ADVA's Veteran Service Officers (VSO) have all been housed at Fort Roots in North Little Rock, with the exception of VSOs located at both VA hospitals in Little Rock and Fayetteville.

Strategic Goal 1 called for the creation of eight district offices across Arkansas focused on providing direct support to local County Veteran Service Officers (CVSO), and providing a more local and convenient location for Veterans who had to travel hours in the past to meet with an ADVA VSO. New positions were not authorized to create the new offices. The offices are created through a combination of attrition and surrendering existing agency positions for VSO positions.

The strategic plan called for the creation of five of the eight offices by 2020.

The agency opened the first office located in Fayetteville in November 2015. By April of 2016 the agency opened six of the eight new offices four years ahead of schedule. Currently, two offices remain to be opened; one in Hope and one in Russellville.

The effects of the plan have already had a positive impact on Veterans across the state. Last fall the agency assisted an average of 400 to 450 Veterans monthly through the Veteran Service Officer division. Leveraging the six new district offices, in August we assisted 1,100 Veterans where they live; not just in North Little Rock. Also, for the first time, direct assistance and formal training is provided to CVSOs in each district, we have increased the number of fully accredited VSOs under the ADVA umbrella from eight last fall to sixteen; that number continues to grow. These improvements were made without increasing the number of state employees.

In August one of the VSOs in Little Rock retired creating a vacancy that will be used to open the office in Hope. In September, an Administrative Specialist II, C109, accepted another job in state government. The purpose of this request

is to surrender the Administrative Specialist II position in exchange for a Veteran Service Officer C118 position. This position will be used to open the office in Russellville, and complete Strategic Goal 1, well ahead of schedule, in time for an announcement at the Veterans Day Ceremony at the new North Little Rock Veterans home's ribbon cutting.

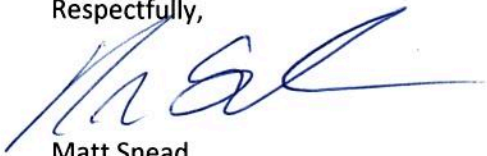
The midpoint for a C109 is \$29,427, and the midpoint for C118 is \$46,730, a difference of \$17,303. The agency has the funds to cover the additional cost of this position.

Veterans Service Officer Scope of Work, Knowledge, Skills and Abilities:

- Interviews veterans to ascertain eligibility for benefits and to collect information and documentation to support claims.
- Provides information and counseling to veterans concerning benefit eligibility requirements, required supporting documentation, sources of obtaining missing documentation and forms and assistance in completing applications.
- Informs veterans of appeals processes and requirements and acts as veterans advocate during appeals, appears before Disabled Veterans Appeals Board to argue on behalf of veterans and writes and presents briefs to communicate client contentions.
- Researches state and federal laws to obtain information to support claim actions and reviews medical terminology and medical textbooks to ascertain information related to various diagnoses, treatments, prognoses and specific claims actions.
- Obtains Power of Attorney from veteran in order to act on his/her behalf during claims process.
- Provides information and guidance to County Veterans' Services Officers (CVSO).
- Knowledge of state and federal laws, regulations and agency programs pertaining to veterans benefits.
- Knowledge of case management policies and procedures.
- Knowledge of veterans service officer program operations.
- Ability to research, interpret and apply veteran laws and regulations.
- Ability to interview, obtain and provide information and assistance relating to services and benefits.
- Ability to review, investigate, record data and suggest courses of action.
- Ability to prepare and present oral and written information and reports.
- Ability to provide advice, guidance and support to claimants and CVSO.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Respectfully,



Matt Snead
Director

Cc: Karen Watkins, CFO
Sara Terry, Human Resources Analyst



STATE OF ARKANSAS

Department of Veterans Affairs

501 Woodlane Drive, Suite 230C
Little Rock, AR 72201
Phone: (501) 683-1787 / Fax: (501) 682-4833

Asa Hutchinson
Governor

Matt Snead
Director

October 3, 2016

Ms. Kay Barnhill Terry
Administrator
Office of Personnel Management
1509 West 7th Street, Room 201
Little Rock, AR 72201

RE: Surrender Pool Position Request – Veterans Cemetery Manager, G237C, Grade C117

Dear Ms. Terry,

ADVA operates two State Veterans Cemeteries established under the United States Department of Veterans Affairs (USDVA) Veterans Cemetery Grants Program; one at North Little Rock and the other at Birdeye, Arkansas.

Because the USDVA Little Rock National Cemetery is full, *the State Veterans Cemetery at North Little Rock (SVC-NLR) is the only Veterans Cemetery in Central Arkansas with available burial space for Veterans and their eligible dependents.* All Veterans who served honorably in any branch of the United States armed forces are entitled to free burial at SVC-NLR.

Approximately 450 Veterans are buried at SVC-NLR each year and 150 eligible dependents of Veterans. *Often, Veteran families must delay burial of their loved one for several days due to SVC-NLR staffing resource constraints.*

A \$4.4M cemetery expansion project due to complete within the next several months will increase the SVC-NLR burial capacity and will double the area that must be maintained (grounds keeping). Although the burial capacity will increase, the ability to accommodate a higher burial rate will continue to be limited due to resource constraints.

We are evaluating courses of action to respond to: 1) doubling of grounds keeping workload, 2) continuing need for project work, and 3) burial demand - while containing agency staffing levels.

Any course of action chosen will require additional management oversight due to stringent NCA standards that must be upheld, significant projected increase in workload; and existing strain on SVC-NLR management personnel under the existing workload.

We are currently evaluating both the risks and potential benefits of contracting out the grounds keeping function at SVC-NLR and utilizing existing staff primarily for the burial function, which may allow us to better meet burial demand while reducing the need for additional state employee staffing.

We would like to surrender the currently authorized (vacant) Administrative Specialist III position # 22133698, Grade C112, Class Code C056C for a Veterans Cemetery Manager position, Grade C117, Class Code G237C. The addition of this management position will mitigate the risk of non-compliance with NCA standards and the risk of poor quality service delivery as the Cemetery doubles in size.

The level of oversight, management and knowledge required to properly operate and maintain a State Veterans Cemetery and provide compassionate, high-quality services to the State Veteran population is significant. ADVA performs this essential service with a small budget and staff. FY15 expenditures totaled \$426,494.04. For the same period, the agency received \$331,421 in

federal burial reimbursements and collected \$38,400 in dependent burial fees. *The amount of FY15 State general revenue required in support of burial services at SVC-NLR for Veterans and their eligible dependents was \$56,673.04*

Current staff/rates of pay at ASVH-NLR (33% position vacancy rate - 9 authorized, 6 filled):

- (1) Veterans Service Program Manager G252C, Grade C120 – serves as ADVA Cemeteries Division Director and SVC-NLR Cemetery Manager, \$38,496.02
- (2) Administrative Analyst C037C, Grade C115, \$30,435.81
- (3) Maintenance Supervisor S033C, Grade C115, \$29,838.85
- (4) Maintenance Technician S046C, Grade C113 (2) positions , Average Annual Pay \$29,043.56
- (5) Heavy Equipment Operator S060C, Grade C109 , \$22,711.10
- (6) Maintenance Technician S046C, Grade C113 (1) position VACANT
- (7) Administrative Specialist III C056C, Grade C112 (1) positions VACANT
- (8) Heavy Equipment Operator S060C, Grade C109 (1) position VACANT

Average annual pay across all SVC-NLR filled positions is \$29,928.15 (\$14.39 per hour).

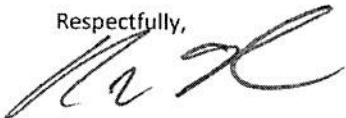
Cemetery Manager Scope of Work, Knowledge, Skills and Abilities:

- Be fluent in eligibility determination requirements for Veteran burials; review Veteran service documents; assist families in obtaining required documents, counsel family members regarding benefits, provide pre-eligibility services to Veterans;
- Be knowledgeable regarding a complex set of federal and state cemetery laws, regulations and standards;
- Be knowledgeable regarding maintenance and operations, turf management; and regulations related to chemicals and fertilizers;
- Manage and perform outreach functions for Veterans holidays;
- Manage complex capital projects, review plans and drawings, inspect work performed by contractors, interface with contractors, subcontractors, architects, engineers and DFA-DBA;
- Serve as liaison with funeral directors, family members, coroner's office;
- Work with electronic burial registry, assemble burial schedules, direct funeral corteges;
- Manage equipment replacement program and budget;
- Train staff and volunteers on processes and procedures regarding cemetery operations, including: maintenance of irrigated turf; tree, shrub and flowerbed maintenance procedures; equipment maintenance; burial procedures/standards.
- Oversee (accuracy of) burial records;
- Research grant opportunities;
- Manage SVC-NLR prison inmate work release program with the Department of Corrections.

In order to deliver responsive, compassionate, high-quality burial services to Veterans and their families, it is essential that we augment the ADVA Cemeteries Division management staff.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Respectfully,



Matt Snead
Director

Cc: Karen Watkins, CFO
Sara Terry, Human Resources Analyst



DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE & ADMINISTRATION
Office of Personnel Management
Request for Pool Position

Business Area	Agency/Institution	Date
0385	AR Dept of Veterans Affairs	09/28/2016

Position(s) to be Surrendered

Position/Item Number	Classification Title	Pay Grade	Class Code
22094508	Administrative Specialist II	C109	C073C

Classification(s) Requested

N/A	Classification Title	Pay Grade	Class Code
	Veterans Service Officer	C118	G253C

I Hereby Certify / Understand That:

- A. The position requested is critical to the operation of this Agency/Institution and a detailed justification for this request is attached. (Justification should be detailed and not less than one typed page in length.)
- B. Sufficient funds are available to fund this position at the requested grade.
- C. This is a full time position that will not be used for any other purpose than that which is outlined in the attached narrative.
- D. The position to be surrendered is the highest grade position available and the loss of this position will not adversely affect the operation of this Agency/Institution.
- E. No current employee will be displaced by this action.

Agency Personnel Rep	Date
	9-28-16

Agency Director	Date



DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE & ADMINISTRATION
Office of Personnel Management
Request for Pool Position

Business Area	Agency/Institution	Date
0385	AR Dept of Veterans Affairs	10/03/2016

Position(s) to be Surrendered

Position/Item Number	Classification Title	Pay Grade	Class Code
22133698	Administrative Specialist III	C112	C056C

Classification(s) Requested

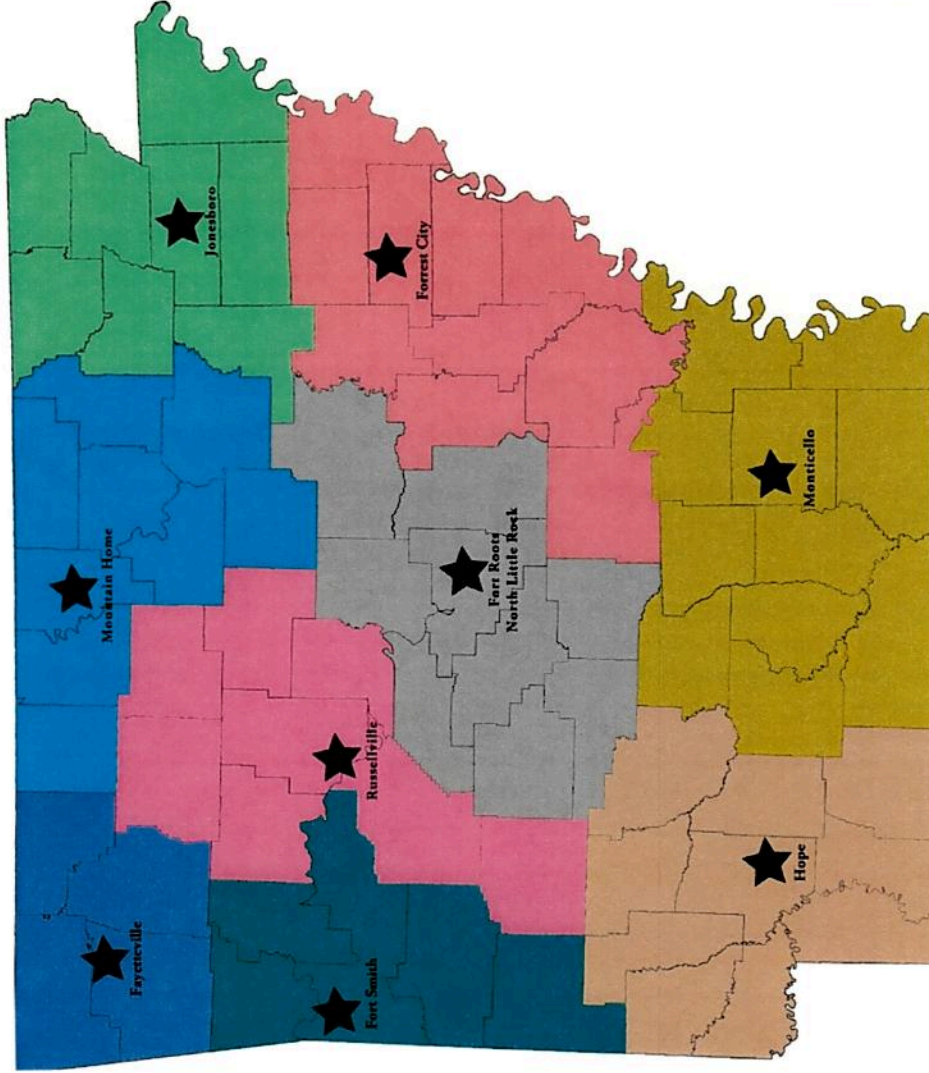
N/A	Classification Title	Pay Grade	Class Code
	Veterans Cemetery Manager	C117	G237C

I Hereby Certify / Understand That:

- A. The position requested is critical to the operation of this Agency/Institution and a detailed justification for this request is attached. (Justification should be detailed and not less than one typed page in length.)
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- C. This is a full time position that will not be used for any other purpose than that which is outlined in the attached narrative.
- D. The position to be surrendered is the highest grade position available and the loss of this position will not adversely affect the operation of this Agency/Institution.
- E. No current employee will be displaced by this action.

Agency Personnel Rep	Date
<i>[Signature]</i>	10-3-16

Agency Director	Date
<i>[Signature]</i>	03 Oct 16



District 1:
Fort Roots
82,911 Veterans
9 Counties

District 3:
Mountain Home
23,685 Veterans
9 Counties

District 5:
Jonesboro
20,940 Veterans
8 Counties

District 7:
Forrest City
18,670 Veterans
10 Counties

District 9:
Monticello
15,005 Veterans
11 Counties

District 2:
Fayetteville
36,673 Veterans
4 Counties

District 4:
Russellville
14,886 Veterans
8 Counties

District 6:
Fort Smith
22,832 Veterans
6 Counties

District 8:
Hope
13,643 Veterans
10 Counties

VSO DISTRICTS