



February 18, 2020

Senator David Wallace, Co-Chairperson
Representative Jim Wooten, 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 Department of Veterans Affairs (ADVA) for your review.

The Department of Veterans Affairs is requesting one (1) position from the OPM surrender pool established by Ark. Code Ann. §21-5-225(a)(1). The classification requested along with the positions being surrendered are listed below:

<u>POSITIONS SURRENDERED</u>	<u>TITLE</u>	<u>CLASS CODE</u>	<u>GRADE</u>	<u>SALARY RANGE</u>
22161835	Public Information Coordinator	P013C	GS07	\$40,340 - \$58,493

CLASSIFICATIONS REQUESTED

Public Information Manager	P004C	GS09	\$50,222 - \$72,821
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JUSTIFICATION

The Department of Veterans Affairs is requesting the position above in order to address two critical initiatives. The Arkansas State Veterans Cemeteries and Arkansas State Veterans Homes depend greatly on public awareness of veteran services. Exceptional care for residents and the benefits to veterans and their loved ones at the cemeteries depend on strong revenue and financial health. The Public Information Manager will provide the necessary skills to make the public aware of ADVA's veteran services at homes and cemeteries.

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The Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans Act of 2019 has a potential impact for as many as 220,000 Arkansas veterans and some surviving spouses of Arkansas Navy veterans that could be eligible for additional benefits effective January 1, 2020. ADVA's request for a Public Information Manager will provide the experience and qualifications necessary to execute a critical statewide media campaign to ensure Arkansas' aging veterans are aware of the new benefits available and access to the VA medical systems.

The potential cost of the additional position is \$66,813. In order to help offset the budgetary impact of this change, ADVA is surrendering a vacant, budgeted position with a budgetary value of \$45,380.

Requested Classification	Entry + Match	15% Above Entry + Match	30% Above Entry + Match
Public Information Manager	\$66,813	\$76,079	\$85,344

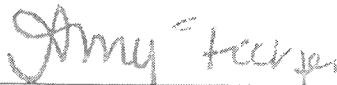
The Office of Personnel Management has reviewed this request and recommends the approval of the position from the OPM surrender pool.

Your approval of this request is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,



Kay Barnhill
State Personnel Administrator



Secretary, Transformation & Shared Services

02/04/2020

Date



Office of the Director
501 Woodlane Drive, Suite 230C, Little Rock, AR 72201
Phone: (501) 683-2446 | Fax: (501) 682-4833

ASA HUTCHINSON
Governor

NATHANIEL (NATE) TODD
Director

January 22, 2020

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

RE: Pool Position Request – Public Information Manager, P004C, GS09

Dear Ms. Barnhill:

It is essential to the Agency's mission that we employ a Public Information Manager, Grade GS09, Class Code P004C. In return, we would like to surrender the currently authorized (vacant) Public Information Coordinator position, Grade GS07, Class Code P013C.

ADVA derives more than 80% of its \$28.9 million budget from cash fund receipts for either burial at the Arkansas State Veterans Cemeteries or for long-term care at the Arkansas State Veterans Homes. Consistent and enduring business activities at the homes and cemeteries depend, above all else, on public awareness. Without public awareness of the exceptional care ADVA provides the residents of its homes or the benefits to the veterans and their loved ones at the cemeteries, revenues and the ultimate financial health of ADVA will wither. The ADVA PIC position has been vacant since September of 2017, and it has since become clear there is room for optimization. Hiring a PIM, GS09, will enable ADVA to address recruitment at the homes and cemeteries from its agency-wide mouthpiece, not simply at each entity. Harmonizing the ADVA message and addressing recruitment at the agency level is not only fiscally prudent but is rooted in the Governor's commitment in Transformation to more streamlined and more effective state government.

Lastly, the timing of this request warrants further emphasis. On June 25, 2019, President Trump signed into the law the Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans Act of 2019. This law ended the decades-long effort to extend a presumption of service-connected disability to the 14 medical conditions associated with Agent Orange exposure to veterans that served in the offshore territorial waters of Vietnam. This important statutory change means that potentially thousands of the 220,000 Arkansas veterans and certain surviving spouses of Arkansas Navy veterans who meet the criteria and passed away from a presumptive condition associated with Agent Orange, as of January 1, 2020, may be eligible for additional benefits from the Department of Veteran's Affairs. Only a seasoned PIM with experience and qualifications will be able to execute an ADVA media campaign to ensure that Arkansas' aging Vietnam veterans understand the new benefits available to them as of 2020 and to raise statewide awareness of Arkansas' access to the federal VA medical

systems at large. The grade of GS09 is not only more commensurate with this challenge, but also the caliber of the person required to address it effectively.

Thank you for your consideration in this important matter. My point of contact for this matter is my Chief of Staff, Mr. Austin Booth. You can contact Mr. Booth or me with any questions or concerns you may have.

Respectfully,



Secretary Nathaniel Todd
Arkansas Department of Veterans Affairs



DEPARTMENT OF TRANSFORMATION AND SHARED SERVICES
Office of Personnel Management
Request for Pool Position

Business Area	Agency/Institution	Date
0385	AR Dept of Veterans Affairs	01/22/2020

Position(s) to be Surrendered

Position/Item Number	Classification Title	Pay Grade	Class Code
22161835	Public Information Coordinator	GS07	P013C

Classification(s) Requested

N/A	Classification Title	Pay Grade	Class Code
	Public Information Manager	GS09	P004C

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
<i>[Signature]</i>	1/22/2020

Agency Director	Date
<i>[Signature]</i>	2/25/2020