



COMPETITIVE AREAS FOR REDUCTION IN FORCE

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Personnel Staff

1. **PURPOSE.** This order publishes U.S. Department of Justice competitive areas for reduction in force.
2. **SCOPE.** This order applies to all components of the Department including all field offices. For the purpose of this order, the term "bureau" refers to the Federal Bureau of Investigation; the Bureau of Prisons/Federal Prison System; the Drug Enforcement Administration; the Executive Office for U.S. Attorneys, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives; and the U.S. Marshals Service.
3. **CANCELLATION.** Order DOJ 1351.1B is cancelled.
4. **BACKGROUND.** Agencies are required by the U.S. Office of Personnel Management to establish competitive areas in which employees compete during a reduction in force. These areas may be established geographically or organizationally or both. Each competitive area outlines the boundaries of competition.
5. **COMPETITIVE AREAS.** Competitive areas for reduction-in- force purposes in the Department are based on both geographic and organizational considerations. Since headquarters organizations and field organizations are independent of each other in terms of operation and work function, they are designated as separate competitive areas even when located physically within the same local commuting area.
 - a. **Headquarters Areas.** Elements of headquarters organizations which are located outside of the local commuting area where the headquarters organizations are located will not be included in the headquarters competitive area for reduction-in-force purposes. Such elements will be treated as separate competitive areas.
 - (1) The entire headquarters organization of each office, board, division, and bureau are separate competitive areas.
 - (2) The Office of the Assistant Attorney General, Office of Justice Programs (together with its subordinate administrative support offices and the Office for Victims of Crime); the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention; the

National Institute of Justice; the Bureau of Justice Assistance; and the Bureau of Justice Statistics are separate competitive areas.

(3) The headquarters organization of the U.S. Parole Commission is a separate competitive area.

(4) The headquarters organization of the Community Relations Service is a separate competitive area.

(5) The Foreign Claims Settlement Commission is a separate competitive area.

- b. **Field Areas.** In the field, a competitive area ordinarily is not smaller than a field organization; that is, a field office which is independent of other offices in operation and work function and in which employees are assigned under a single administrative authority. In the interest of economy, there may be instances in which two or more field organizations are collocated in a common physical facility. This physical grouping does not alter the organizational independence of the field organizations. Even if located side by side, each is still a separate entity and, accordingly, is designated a separate competitive area. When, however, a field organization includes units in more than one local commuting area, a separate competitive area is established for each of the commuting areas. Conversely, units of a field organization physically located at different worksites within the same commuting area are combined together and thus constitute a single competitive area for reduction-in-force purposes.
 - c. **Modification of Areas.** Modification of the competitive areas, as stated above, requires the prior approval of the Director, Personnel Staff, Justice Management Division. Any approved modifications will be publicized to all affected employees within the modified areas by the originator of the request for such modification(s).
6. **DEFINITION OF LOCAL COMMUTING AREA.** Local commuting area means the geographic area which usually constitutes one area for employment purposes. It includes any population center (or two or more neighboring ones) and the surrounding localities in which people live and reasonably can be expected to travel back and forth daily in their usual employment. As a general rule, the local commuting area for mid- to high-population density areas is an area within a 35 mile radius of the worksite. However, in low population density areas, the local commuting area may be expanded to meet reasonable commuting requirements depending upon local area needs and practices. Appointing officers are responsible for making judgmental determinations of this nature prior to the initiation of reduction-in-force action. Such determinations need not be published, but must be documented and filed for review by interested parties.

/s/HARRY H. FLICKINGER
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