



United States Department of the Interior

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
Washington, D.C. 20240

NOV 18 2002

PERSONNEL BULLETIN: 03-3

SUBJECT: Maximum Entry Age for Law Enforcement Officers and Firefighters and Waivers of Maximum Entry Age

Policy

Congress established a policy of employing a “young and physically vigorous” workforce in all law enforcement and firefighting positions that involve sufficiently rigorous duties. Initial hires into primary law enforcement and firefighting positions must satisfy the age and physical requirements, and are expected to maintain a high level of performance throughout their careers.

Maximum Entry Age (MEA)

The date immediately preceding an individual’s 37th birthday is the maximum entry date at which an applicant can be initially hired into a primary law enforcement or firefighter position.

Individuals age 37 and over may reenter a primary law enforcement or firefighter position if they are able to complete a total of 20 years of covered and creditable law enforcement or firefighter service by the mandatory retirement age of 57. Prior service in covered positions may be subtracted from the applicant’s age to determine if he or she meets the MEA. Such prior service must also be creditable for retirement. Since Federal Employees’ Retirement System (FERS) temporary service performed after December 31, 1988 is not creditable for retirement, it may not be credited for MEA purposes.

Prior covered service must be submitted prior to employment. Acceptable proof consists of SF-50s showing begin and end dates of covered/creditable appointments and copies of approval letters based on individual claims.

Waivers

These special retirement provisions were enacted because of the rigorous physical requirements of certain positions. Special retirement provides law enforcement officers and firefighters with an enhanced annuity at a younger age than under the regular retirement provisions.

Waivers of the MEA are allowed only in the rare instance that an individual has unique experience and skills that are critical to the accomplishment of the missions. More than rare use of the waiver authority contradicts the need to maintain a young and vigorous workforce and erodes the theory behind the special retirement program. For this reason, the Director of Personnel Policy must concur with future waivers prior to their approval. Once approved by the

bureau head, forward a copy of the waiver to 1849 C Street, NW, MS-5221-MIB, Washington, DC 20240, or fax to 202-219-1513. The Office of Personnel Policy will also obtain the concurrence of the Office of Law Enforcement and Security on law enforcement waivers and the concurrence of the Office of Wildland Fire Coordination on firefighter waivers.

Questions from bureau headquarters contacts may be directed to the special retirement point of contact, Casey Schaffer, 202-208-6107.

Resources

5 USC 3307(c) - (e)

5 USC Chapter 83

5 USC Chapter 84

5 CFR 831

5 CFR 841

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David M. Anderson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

David M. Anderson

Deputy Director, Office of Personnel Policy