

FY 18 EPA Region 9 VERA-VSIP Opportunity



Region 9

Overview

- EPA has been authorized to offer eligible employees:
 - Voluntary Separation Incentive Payments (VSIP), otherwise known as a 'Buy-Out'.
 - Voluntary Early Retirement Authority (VERA), otherwise known as an 'Early-Out'.
- If interested, eligible employees must:
 - Apply by **August 6, 2018**;
 - Separate from service by September 1, 2018.
- To optimize retirement annuity, we advise:
 - FERS employees separate by August 31.
 - CSRS employees separate by September 1.

Voluntary Separation Incentive Payment (VSIP)

- **VSIP (Buy-out)**
 - Allows EPA to offer eligible employees lump-sum separation payments (up to \$25,000).
- **Key eligibility requirements for a Buy-Out**
 - Serving in an appointment without time limitation;
 - Currently employed by the federal government for at least 3 continuous years;
 - Serving in a position covered by R9's approved VV plan;
 - Apply for and receive approval for a VSIP from EPA; and
 - Separate by September 1, 2018
- **Region 9 Notice - Attachment B**
 - In the R9 Notice, Attachment B - Column 3 lists the reasons an employee may not be eligible for a VSIP.

Voluntary Early Retirement Authority (VERA)

- **VERA (Early-Out)**
 - Expands the normal retirement eligibility to allow voluntarily early retirement, with an immediate annuity.
- **Key eligibility requirements for Early-Out retirement**
 - Permanent employees in eligible positions (i.e., organization, position title, job series, grade, and duty station); and
 - ✓ Age 50 with 20+ years of service; or
 - ✓ Any age with 25+ years of service.

VERA/VSIP Workforce Plan

- **Region 9 only**
- **Creates opportunities to reduce and restructure positions.**
- **Facilitate R9's efforts to improve staff-to-supervisory ratios within:**
 - **Environmental Management Division**
- **Positions are located in San Francisco, Los Angeles, and Honolulu**

Number of Offers per Workforce Category

- **Total # of offers – 18**
- **Workforce Categories - 3**
- **Attachment A – List of eligible positions by organization, position title, job series, grade levels and duty station within each category. Also identifies the maximum number of offers per position.**

	Workforce Categories	Max Offers
1	Supervisory Positions	1
2	GS-14/15 Non-Supervisory Positions	2
3	Various Positions	15
	Total VERA/VSIP Offers	18

Early-Out / Buy-Out Application Process

Timeline

- Application Period (**July 31 – August 6**)
- **Must use the online application link** provided in the **July 30** email sent to employees occupying eligible positions.
- **Must apply online BEFORE 9 pm Pacific Time August 6.**
 - Enter all required information (including “Region 9 and Division”)
 - Enter official permanent position title (go to eOPF)
 - Choose one of the following separation options:
 - Optional Retirement: Employees already eligible for retirement.
 - Early Retirement: Employees who meet the minimum age and creditable federal service requirements.
 - Resignation: Not retirement eligible, but have at least three years of creditable civilian service.
 - Optional or Early Retirement with NO VSIP: Applies to people who already have received a VSIP in the past.

Timeline (cont.)

- After application period closes, CIN-HRSSC will confirm an applicant's eligibility and make approvals based upon Service Computation Date (SCD).
- In categories with more applicants than offers, applicants not approved will be placed upon a wait list based on
 - SCD (service computation date) for leave, then by
 - EOD (entry on duty date) based upon total EPA years of service.
 - If the SCD and EOD dates are the same for eligible employees, the offer will be granted to the employee who submitted his/her application first.
- CIN-HRSSC to notify applicants of approval by **August 13**.

Timeline (cont.)

- Notice of approval will provide a timeframe in which you are to accept or decline the offer.
- Should offers be declined, the CIN-HRSSC will send an offer to the next eligible person on the wait list.
- **Last day for separations – September 1.**

Retirement Application Process

Once you submit the online VERA/VSIP application,
what's next?

Retirement Application Process

- **Contact CIN-HRSSC Benefits Team**
 - **Email: CIN_HRSSC_BENEFITS_Central@epa.gov**
 - **Email Subject: **VERA/VSIP RELATED REQUEST****

- **CIN-HRSSC will provide advice and assistance in the preparation of your retirement application and other required forms:**
 - **SF-2801 Form – CSRS/CSRS Offset Employees**
 - **SF-3107 Form – FERS/FERS Transfer Employees**
 - **Designation of Beneficiary Forms (optional)**
 - **Spouse’s Consent to Survivor Election (notarized)**

Provide important documents: marriage certificates, divorce decrees and court orders, if applicable.

- **Jack Powelson is available for general questions.**

Separation Process Reminders

- **Notify your Supervisor and Administrative Officer of your separation date.**
- **Administrative Officer will:**
 - **Prepare a SF-52 Request for Personnel Action; and**
 - **Initiate an Separation Clearance Form**
- **Before you Leave the Office:**
 - **Complete Records Management Checklist**
 - **Return Government Property (Laptop, Other Equipment, Travel Card, Purchase Card, etc);**
 - **Complete your timecard;**
 - **Complete Separation Clearance Form**
 - **Turn in completed Separation Checklist and your badge to the Facilities Security Staff (Diana Uribe, Karen Rivera or MC Toliver).**
- **Consult R9's Ethics Officer (if you plan to volunteer or work)**
 - **Steven Jawgiel, Ext. 2-3876**

Important Reminders!

- Official VERA/VSIP Notice includes application link.
- Apply by Application Deadline: **August 6, 2018**
- CIN-HRSSC will issue eligible/not eligible notices by **August 13, 2018**
- CIN-HRSSC will provide assistance using the FHR Navigator (retirement benefits estimating tool).
- CIN-HRSSC will provide retirement benefits counseling and assistance with completion of the Retirement Application.
- Applications must be submitted **BEFORE 9:00 pm Pacific Time on August 6, 2018**
- **LAST SEPARATION DATE: September 1, 2018**

Resources and Contact Information

- **Cincinnati Shared Service Center**
 - Email: CIN_HRSSC_Benefits_Central@epa.gov
 - Email Subject: VERA/VSIP Related Request
 - POC: CIN-HRSSC Benefits Main Line 513-569-7699

- **Region 9 Human Resources Office**
 - Vicki Lane lane.vicki@epa.gov Ext: 2-3827
 - Andrea Lee lee.andrea@epa.gov Ext: 2-3826
 - Jack Powelson powelson.jack@epa.gov Ext: 2-3824

- **OARM Website**
 - <http://intranet.epa.gov/policy/buyouts/index.htm>



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- **National Association – Formed in 2008.**
- **Open to former EPA employees.**
- **To Join: www.EPAalumni.org**

Employee Assistance Program (EAP)



- 24/7 Employee Assistance and Work/Life:
1-888-635-3202 (TTY: 800-316-9993)
- www.espyr.com
- Website & Mobile App Password: USEPA