



United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

P.O. Box 37127

Washington, D.C. 20013-7127

IN REPLY REFER TO

P4015(247)

Memorandum

MAR 22 1994

To: All Employees

From: Director

Subject: Dual Career Assistance Policy

Responses to my August 31, 1993 memorandum requesting comments on spouse employment and dual careers showed me there are needs that are not being consistently met. It is critical to the Service that we recognize that most couples depend on dual incomes. Effective dual careers support is essential for recruiting and retaining our quality employees. I am committed to improving dual career prospects in the National Park Service.

It is the policy of the National Park Service to provide assistance and support to dual career couples by assuring that units establish support structures and information networks to assist dual career employment. This policy applies to dual income couples where at least one spouse works for the National Park Service. The policy assures that employees and/or their spouses receive full and fair consideration for available vacancies in units of the National Park System. It also provides assistance and support in seeking non-NPS employment within commuting distance of NPS units.

The policy is described in Special Directive 94-2 , Dual Career Assistance Program. The program outlines the responsibilities of both management and dual career couples. Copies of the Special Directive are being sent out to all Superintendents and Regional Offices.

Your enthusiastic and continuing support of this policy is essential for effective management of the present and future workforce of the National Park Service.


Roger S. Kennedy



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March 22, 1994

Special Directive 24-2

Annual Review

To: Directorate, Field Directorate, Superintendents,
and WASO Division Chiefs

From: Director

Subject: Dual Career Assistance Program

This Special Directive transmits the National Park Service's revised policy on dual career assistance.

To recruit and retain a high quality, diverse workforce, it is the Service's policy to provide assistance to employees and/or their spouses. Many households rely on dual incomes. Recognizing this fact and providing appropriate assistance to employees and/or spouses will promote high morale and increase productivity. Although the ultimate responsibility for securing employment rests with the individual, managers and supervisors are to make every possible effort to assist spouses in securing employment.

This policy on dual careers applies to dual income couples where at least one spouse works for the National Park Service.

The policy uses the word "spouse" as defined by the Department of the Interior in the Personnel Management Letter on Family and Medical Leave to mean "husband or wife, as defined or recognized under State law for the purposes of marriage, including common law marriage in States where it is recognized. In addition, this issuance recognizes non-traditional relationships where an individual related by blood or affinity whose close association with the employee is the equivalent of a spousal relationship."

The following actions will be taken by supervisors and managers to assist dual career employees or their spouses.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Parks, Service Centers, and Regional/WASO Offices are expected to:

- Provide counseling to dual career couples about their career options;

- Explain the Dual Career Referral Program when making job offers to employees so they are aware of the assistance available;
- Grant as a minimum at least 180 calendar days Leave Without Pay (LWOP) to permanent employees who are leaving to accompany a spouse. Obtain a written resignation post-dated to the end of the LWOP. To encourage management support, the losing unit is allowed to create an "additional identical" (AI) position to fill immediately, regardless of resignation.
- Make personal contact with managers at other Service units about placement possibilities for spouses with status;
- Review vacancies to determine if they can be advertised simultaneously as possible dual career opportunities;
- Encourage supervisors to utilize alternative work schedules, job sharing and flexi-place as appropriate.
- Support existing or consider establishing day care facilities.
- Maintain a current list of other Federal agencies and major employers within the commuting area with addresses, phone numbers and contacts.
- Provide a copy of the Dual Career Exit Interview Checklist (Attachment 1) to employees transferring to other areas.
- Appoint a Worklife Coordinator, who may be assigned on either a full-time or a collateral duty basis. The Coordinator shall provide information on dual career opportunities, other employment options, day care, schools and additional area information to transferring employees and potential applicants. The Coordinator can also assist supervisors and managers in fulfilling their obligations under the program.

DUAL CAREER REFERRAL PROGRAM:

The National Park Service will assist spouses who have career or career conditional status with the Federal government by referring their applications for consideration to selecting officials before advertising or filling vacancies.

To be eligible, spouses must submit their application to the appropriate personnel offices in the commuting area. The spouse must identify the types of positions they wish to be considered for. If qualified, they will be considered for positions at the same or lower grades as held before on a permanent appointment. Consideration for vacancies under this program will begin with the receipt of the spouse's application and terminate with being offered and declining the identified position(s) and grade(s), or with accepting a permanent position.

The Dual Career Program may be managed by either the unit's Personnel Office or by the Worklife Coordinator. Each responsible unit will set up a process for maintaining the applications of spouses and for providing the appropriate applications to selecting officials before a vacancy is advertised or filled. Spouse applications are valid for up to one year, continued eligibility will require annual updates by the spouse.

Referral Procedures:

Before announcing or filling a vacancy (except if the NPS Priority Placement List is used), the unit(s) will refer the spouse's application for any position they are qualified for and have identified an interest in at a grade no higher than permanently held. The selecting official is not obligated to select the spouse applicant, only to consider his/her application. If the selecting official does not select the spouse the position may then be advertised or otherwise filled. If the position is advertised, the spouse may apply.

ALTERNATIVES FOR PLACEMENT

Before making decisions on reassignments each dual career couple should maintain a flexible attitude and consider all available placement options within and outside the National Park Service.

Supervisors of and dual career couples are expected to examine all options available for placement including, but not limited to, the following:

- a) Detail to another Park/Region;
- b) Lateral reassignment to another position for which qualified;
- c) Temporary (seasonal) assignments;
- d) Permanent intermittent status;
- e) Change to a lower grade;
- f) Job-sharing, flexi-schedule, and flexi-place assignments;
- g) Transfers to other federal agencies in the area;
- h) Networking with professional organizations (e.g. ANPR, ANPME, FOP, NAI, etc.)

- i) Resignation;
- j) Employment outside the federal government (e.g. with state/local governments, private industry, etc.)

This policy does not propose that any particular employee will be accommodated in every instance. The responsibility for career planning still rests with individuals whether dual career couples or not. It does, however, provide a process for assisting employees with planning and achieving career movement.

DUAL CAREERS EXIT INTERVIEW CHECKLIST

1. For all dual income couples: discuss employment options/career plans for the spouse/employee at the new location.
2. For spouse/employee with federal status: explain the Dual Career Referral Program.
3. For spouse/employee with federal status: discuss employment options available. Options may include:
 - a) detail to another Park/Region
 - b) non-competitive reassignment to lateral position
 - c) temporary (seasonal) assignments
 - d) permanent intermittent status
 - e) change to lower grade
 - f) job-sharing, flexi-schedule, and flexi-place options
 - g) transfers to other federal agencies
 - h) networking with professional organizations
 - i) resignation
 - j) employment outside the federal government (e.g. with State/local governments, private industry, cooperating associations, etc.)
4. For an employee trailing a spouse to a new location: inform them of the 180 calendar days of LWOP they can have while they look for a job in their new location.
5. For all dual income couples: provide contact with Worklife Coordinator at the new location.