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# 5 U.S. Code § 3131 - The Senior Executive Service

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It is the purpose of this subchapter to establish a Senior Executive Service to ensure that the executive management of the Government of the United States is responsive to the needs, policies, and goals of the Nation and otherwise is of the highest quality. The Senior Executive Service shall be administered so as to—

**(1)** provide for a compensation system, including salaries, benefits, and incentives, and for other conditions of employment, designed to attract and retain highly competent senior executives;

- (2)** ensure that compensation, retention, and tenure are contingent on executive success which is measured on the basis of individual and organizational performance (including such factors as improvements in efficiency, productivity, quality of work or service, cost efficiency, and timeliness of performance and success in meeting equal employment opportunity goals);
- (3)** assure that senior executives are accountable and responsible for the effectiveness and productivity of employees under them;
- (4)** recognize exceptional accomplishment;
- (5)** enable the head of an agency to reassign senior executives to best accomplish the agency's mission;
- (6)** provide for severance pay, early retirement, and placement assistance for senior executives who are removed from the Senior Executive Service for nondisciplinary reasons;
- (7)** protect senior executives from arbitrary or capricious actions;
- (8)** provide for program continuity and policy advocacy in the management of public programs;
- (9)** maintain a merit personnel system free of prohibited personnel practices;
- (10)** ensure accountability for honest, economical, and efficient Government;
- (11)** ensure compliance with all applicable civil service laws, rules, and regulations, including those related to equal employment opportunity, political activity, and conflicts of interest;
- (12)** provide for the initial and continuing systematic development of highly competent senior executives;
- (13)** provide for an executive system which is guided by the public interest and free from improper political interference; and
- (14)** appoint career executives to fill Senior Executive Service positions to the extent practicable, consistent with the effective and efficient implementation of agency policies and responsibilities.

(Added Pub. L. 95-454, title IV, § 402(a), Oct. 13, 1978, 92 Stat. 1154.)