

Q & A

Medical Support Assistant (MSA) GS-679 Conversion to Title 38 Hybrid

Q: Since the implementation date of the conversion was effective July 1st, if I am boarded at a higher grade i.e. GS-5 to GS-6, will I receive retroactive pay?

A: Yes. All board action decisions will be retroactive to July 1, 2012 or the date you started in your position.

Q: Will the board use documents or information from my Electronic Official Personnel Folder (eOPF)?

A: The board will only review the required documents and the documents submitted to them in addition to those documents. The board will not review miscellaneous documents in your EOPF.

Q: Is there a percentage of Medical Support Assistants who will be promoted?

A: No, there will be no set percentage. The number of MSA's promoted will be dictated strictly by the duties they are performing.

Q: What documents will be required for the board?

A: The board will determine this information. Since the board has yet to be established it is not yet known for sure what documents will be required. Typically, the board looks at the resume, transcripts, certificates/licenses, performance appraisals, and letters of reference.

Q: Is there anyone who can provide assistance with reviewing my resume?

A: Yes. Your Human Resources staff will be happy to assist with your resume.

Q: Am I able to submit Letters of Recommendation to the board?

A: At this point in time the assumption is yes. The board will determine what documentation is acceptable, but typically boards will accept up to 3 letters of reference.

Q: Are any other positions outside the GS-679 series being reviewed for promotion?

A: Yes and No. Only GS-679 (Medical Support Assistants) will be reviewed by the board. However, the Clinic Administrators are going to review other positions, such as, Program Support Assistants and File Clerks to determine if they should be moved to the GS-679 series.

Q: Will the lead MSAs currently GS-6 automatically be boarded to GS-7?

A: The newly-issued Qualification Standards for the GS-675 Medical Support Assistant state that a lead role equates to a GS-7. The board will make the final determination based on the functional statement you are assigned to along with the qualifications you

present. If you are currently a GS-6 MSA without the lead designation you will be boarded as such. The Clinic Administrators will also be reviewing the MSA positions to determine if some of the positions should be Lead MSA's.

Q: Can I submit supplemental documents as part of my resume i.e. KSAs?

A: The board will determine what documentation will be accepted. Most times the board will be willing to accept any additional documentation which helps to illustrate your qualifications. However, KSA's are not mandated at this point in time.

Q: If I have a license, should I submit it to the board? Will it be considered during the boarding process?

A: Yes. The board will review any license you have. If it is applicable to your duties as a MSA it could result in a Superior Advancement for Achievement (SAA).

Q: Will I receive a copy of the functional statement?

A: Yes. Once the functional statements are completed they will be disseminated to all MSA's.

Q: Will Time-in-Grade (TIG) impact a promotion from GS-5 to GS-6?

A: Hybrid employees are not subject to the TIG restrictions. However, you will still need to meet the specialized experience outlined in the qualification standards. Note that required experience at the next level includes one year of equivalent experience at the next lower grade level.

Q: Am I able to dispute the decision of the board?

A: The approving official's decision is final for the initial one-time boarding. There is a reconsideration process when the purpose of boarding is for promotion consideration. The grade you are placed at is going to be determined by the functional statement associated with your duties. If this grade results in a promotion, standard promotion criteria will be utilized to determine your step. If it is determined you are at the same grade, your step will more than likely remain the same.

Q: How can I become a board member?

A: There will be an application process for board membership. If you are interested you will be able to apply and be considered for board membership. More information should be coming on this process in the next couple weeks.

Q: When are the documents due to the board?

A: The board will make this determination. Typically, you will have at least 2 weeks' notice prior to a board taking place.

Q: Will I have to appear before the board?

A: No. The boarding process is not a process in person. It is strictly a paper process. You will be able to submit your documents for the board to review.

Q: In what order will the MSAs be boarded?

A: The board will establish the order of boarding. Remember, all board actions will be retroactive to July 1, 2012 or your start date. So you will not be negatively impacted if you are boarded at a later date.

Q: What was the purpose for converting from Title 5 to Title 38 Hybrid?

A: The purpose was increased hiring flexibility. The Title 38 Hybrid process is a more flexible hiring authority. With will give us different options when recruiting for hard to fill or hard to retain positions.

Q: Will I receive notification prior to being boarded?

A: Yes. You will be contacted with specific instructions on how to submit your boarding package.

Q: If I am a board member, who will board me? Do I need to be boarded prior to being a board member?

A: The board will be made up of multiple alternates. If you are a board member you will be boarded by the alternate members of the board. You will not need to be boarded prior to this initial one-time boarding.

Q: Should I focus on the KSAs when writing my resume?

A: The KSA's listed in the qualification standard are not a bad place to look when developing your resume. These are essentially the competencies the board will be looking for. While KSA's specifically may not be required by the board, it will not be a bad idea to review them prior to writing your resume.

Q: When are resumes due to the board?

A: Once the board is established you will receive information on when your resumes will be due. You should receive at least 2 weeks' notice prior to your resume being due.

Q: How do the required documents need to be submitted to the board?

A: The board will determine how they will collect the boarding packets. This is typically either via e-mail or a SharePoint site. The board will send specific instructions on how to submit all relevant paperwork.

Q: After I am boarded, what is my salary date? How does this affect future within-grade increases?

A: If you receive a promotion, your salary date will be changed to the effective date of the action (7/1/12 or your start date). Your normal Within Grade Increase (WIGI) cycle will continue from that date. Your current salary date will be reviewed prior to any action

being effective to ensure the action is most beneficial to you. If you do not receive a promotion your salary date will be unchanged.

Q: Is there a percentage I need to function as an MSA to be on a 679 functional statement?

A: No. If you perform any of the duties described as MSA duties in the qualification standard you will need to be in the GS-679 series. However, in order to be eligible for a higher grade within the GS-679 series you will need to perform the higher level assignments at least 25 percent of the time.

Q: Can I include experience with special projects in my resume to be considered by the board?

A: Yes. Any experience you have which is related to the duties of a MSA will be considered by the board.

Q: Where will the board meet? Will there be one central location?

A: Once established the board will determine a meeting place. Consideration will be given to any board member who is not located in the same physical location as the board. More than likely, video conference and the use of a SharePoint site will be the best option to include board members off site.

Q: Once my board membership expires, can I reapply for membership?

A: Yes.

Q: Who determines which functional statement I will be placed on?

A: The duties you are currently performing will determine which functional statement you are placed on. Your supervisor will review all employees to ensure they are placed on the appropriate functional statement.

Q: Can I submit unofficial transcripts with my board package?

A: The board will ultimately determine what documents are acceptable. However, unofficial transcripts are usually acceptable.

Q: Who determines my step?

A: The board will take into consideration your relevant experience, education, and other information. Most likely any promotion will be determined utilizing the normal promotion criteria. Also, if you are not given a promotion you will more than likely remain at your current step.

Q: What can I use for a reference document to prepare my resume?

A: You can use the assignments in the qualification standards, your current PD, your functional statement (once you have it), and any resume you may have prepared in the past.

Q: What is the maximum grade and step I could be boarded at?

A: It depends on your duties. Below are the highest grades and steps for each position.

- Full Performance MSA: GS-5/Step 10
- Advanced MSA: GS-6/Step 10
- Lead MSA: GS-7/Step 10

Q: Is the board the final determination of my step?

A: No. The final determination will be made by the Medical Center Director. The board makes a recommendation which is reviewed by a technical advisor (HR personnel) and then approved by the Medical Center Director.

Q: What happens if I choose not to submit a resume or other documents?

A: The board can only make their determination off of the documents they received. If you do not submit documents, they will not have sufficient information to make their determination.

Q: Should I submit performance appraisals?

A: Yes. You should access your EOPF and ensure a copy of your most recent Performance Appraisal is uploaded. If you need help accessing your EOPF, please contact your Processing and Records Clerk at 821-2100.

Q: How does this effect Program Support Assistants?

A: Program Support Assistants are in the GS-303 series. This series is not being converted to a Hybrid series.

Q: Who makes the final determination of my grade?

A: Your grade will be determined by the duties you are performing and the functional statement you are placed on. Your supervisor will ensure you are placed on the appropriate Functional Statement in accordance with your assigned duties.