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# Frequently Asked Questions

## Eligibility

**Q:** I am not a Panamanian citizen; do I need a Panamanian work permit in the U.S. Embassy?

**A:** Yes. One of the eligibility requirements to be considered for an advertised position is to have the legal right to work in Panama. Therefore, you must have a residency permit **and** a work permit. Please note that the U.S. Embassy is not able to sponsor candidates for a Panamanian residency or work permit.

**Q:** Do I need a United States visa to work in the U.S. Embassy?

**A:** No. It is not required.

**Q:** Can I apply for any advertised job that I qualify for?

**A:** Only applicants who meet the “OPEN TO” criteria will receive consideration.

- **All candidates**

The vacancy announcement is open to any interested applicants who is legally work in country.

- **USEFMs only: U.S. Citizen Eligible Family Members – All Agencies**

The vacancy announcement is open only to the following criteria:

- Appointment Eligible Family Member (AEFM): An AEFM for employment purposes is an individual who meets all of the following criteria: •U.S. Citizen; and
- Spouse or same-sex domestic partner (as defined in 3 FAM 1610) of the sponsoring employee; or
- Child of the sponsoring employee who is unmarried and at least 18 years old; and
- Listed on the travel orders or approved Form OF-126 of a sponsoring employee, i.e., a direct-hire Foreign Service, Civil Service, or uniformed service member who is permanently assigned to or stationed abroad or, as appropriate, at an office of the American Institute in Taiwan (AIT); and
- Is under chief of mission authority; and
- Is residing at the sponsoring employee's post of assignment abroad or, as appropriate, at an office of the American Institute in Taiwan; and
- Does NOT currently receive a U.S. Government retirement annuity or pension from a career in the U.S. Foreign Service or Civil Service.
- U.S. Citizen Eligible Family Member (USEFM): A USEFM for employment purposes is an individual who meets all of the following criteria: •U.S. Citizen; and
- Spouse or same-sex domestic partner (as defined in 3 FAM 1610) of the sponsoring employee; or
- Child of the sponsoring employee who is unmarried and at least 18 years old; and
- Listed on the travel orders or approved Form OF-126 of a sponsoring employee, i.e., a direct-hire Foreign Service, Civil Service, or uniformed service member who is permanently assigned to or stationed abroad or, as appropriate, at an office of the American Institute in Taiwan; and resides at the sponsoring employee's post of assignment abroad, or as appropriate, at an office of the American Institute in Taiwan; and is under chief of mission authority; or •resides at an Involuntary Separate Maintenance Allowance (ISMA) location authorized under 3 FAM 3232.2; or
- Currently receives a U.S. Government retirement annuity or pension from a career in the U.S. Foreign Service or Civil Service.

**IMPORTANT:** AEFM, US EFM, EFMs, and MOH are required to submit travel order showing that your sponsor has been assigned to the U.S. Mission in Panama.

- **Internal Candidates only: Current Employees of the Mission, USEFMs, EFMs and MOH – All Agencies**

The vacancy announcement is open only to:

- Current Employees of the Mission: Any local employee of the U.S. Mission Panama currently hired under a personnel service agreement (PSA) or a direct hire appointment.
- Appointment Eligible Family Member (AEFM) as defined above.
- U.S. Citizen Eligible Family Members (USEFMs) as defined above.

- Eligible Family Members (EFMs): An EFM for employment purposes is an individual who meets all of the following criteria: •U.S. Citizen or not a U.S. Citizen; and
- Spouse or same-sex domestic partner (as defined in 3 FAM 1610); or
- Child, who is unmarried and under 21 years of age or, regardless of age, is incapable of self-support; or
- Parent (including stepparents and legally adoptive parents) of employee, spouse, or same-sex domestic partner, when such parent is at least 51 percent dependent on the employee for support; or
- Sister or brother (including stepsisters and stepbrothers, or adoptive sisters or brothers) of the employee, spouse, or same-sex domestic partner when such sibling is at least 51 percent dependent on the employee for support, unmarried, and under 21 years of age, or regardless of age, incapable of self-support; and
- Listed on the travel orders or approved Form OF-126 of a sponsoring employee, i.e., a direct-hire Foreign Service, Civil Service, or uniformed service member who is permanently assigned to or stationed abroad or, as appropriate, at an office of the American Institute in Taiwan; and
- Is under chief of mission authority.
- Member of Household (MOH): An individual who accompanies or joins a sponsoring employee, i.e., sponsor is a direct hire employee under Chief of Mission authority, either Foreign Service, Civil Service, or uniformed service member who is permanently assigned to or stationed abroad at a U.S. mission, or at an office of the American Institute in Taiwan. A MOH is an individual who meets the following criteria: •Not an EFM and therefore not on the travel orders or approved through form OF-126 Foreign Service Residence and Dependency Report of the sponsoring employee; and
- Officially declared by the sponsoring U.S. Government employee to the Chief of Mission (COM) as part of his or her household and approved by the COM; and
- Is a parent, grandparent, grandchild, unmarried partner, adult child, foreign born child in the process of being adopted, father, mother, brother, sister, father-in-law, mother-in-law, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, brother-in-law, sister-in-law, stepfather, stepmother, stepson, stepdaughter, stepbrother, stepsister, half-brother, or half-sister who falls outside the Department's current definition of Eligible Family Member 14 FAM 511.3. A MOH may or may not be a U.S. Citizen.

**IMPORTANT:** AEFM, US EFM, EFMs, and MOH are required to submit travel orders showing that your sponsor has been assigned to the U.S. Mission in Panama.

## Hiring Preference

**Q:** Do I have hiring preference if I am a U.S. Veteran?

**A:** No, only qualified AEFM/USEFM who is a U.S. Veteran can obtain hiring preference. Hiring preference order will be as below:

(1) AEFM / USEFM who is a preference-eligible U.S. Veteran

(2) AEFM / USEFM

(3) FS on LWOP

## Apply for Jobs

Q: How do I apply?

A: Go to the [U.S. Embassy Panama](#) website. Click on the Electronic Recruitment Application (ERA) [Seeker site](#). Identify the job you are interested in and click on it to access the related Vacancy Announcement. All applicants must electronically submit information through the [Electronic Recruitment Application \(ERA\)](#) site. If it is your first time entering ERA you will need to create an account. Make sure you review all qualifications required. You will then be able to apply by selecting “**Apply to this Vacancy**”, featured at the top of each Vacancy Announcement. This will prompt you to the [ERA Login Page](#).

Q: Can I apply for all advertised positions?

A: You can apply to as many as positions, which you are qualified. You can also apply for any positions even though you are not selected for other positions previously. However, there are some restrictions, which you must be aware of as following:

- **Type of candidates:** Please ensure that you are eligible to apply for the position which you apply for.
- **Qualification Requirements:** You must meet all requirements of the position to be considered for the position.
- **Required documents:** Different position may require different supporting documents. Please review your application packet before submitting your application. You need to clarify your qualifications clearly in education, work experience, skills and job knowledge related to the requirements of each position. For example, if the position requires Spanish and English skills, you have to clarify both language skills in your online application.

## Manage ERA Account

Q: What happens if I forget my ERA password?

A: On the ERA website, you can click on “Forgot password?” and proceed through the password recovery process, or you can simply create another ERA account.

Q: What can I do if I forgot my secret answer, or failed to log in the system three times?

A: After multiple failed login attempts (default set to three tries), a user can no longer login. To log in, you need to create a new account with another personal email address. Do not wait until you fail to log in on the third try. You need to click “Forgotten Password” to move on to the secret questions after you failed to login twice.

**Q: Can I make changes on my online application or add/remove supporting documents?**

**A:** Yes, and you should do it by the closing date. After the closing date, you cannot make any changes.

**Q: Will the Embassy give me any feedback on the status of my application process?**

**A:** No. The Human Resources Office will only contact applicants who meet the eligibility criteria and advertised qualifications. If you are not contacted within six weeks after the vacancy announcement's closing date, please assume that you are not being considered.

**Q: Will the Embassy inform me if I was not selected?**

**A:** Only applicants who were unsuccessful in the interview will receive a reply in writing.

**Q: Do I need to upload a CV/ Résumé?**

**A:** No. The ERA system is an inbuilt DS-174 which also serves as a résumé. Recruitment will be based on the contents on the DS-174. If you upload one, recruiters will not consider it.

**Q: How can I withdraw my application if I do not want to be considered for the position I applied?**

**A:** Prior to the closing date, you can withdraw your application by clicking 'Dashboard' to view all positions that you have applied for and select "Withdraw Application" for the position you do not want to continue. However, if it is after the closing date, you cannot access your online application, please inform us by sending an email to [panamaembjobs@state.gov](mailto:panamaembjobs@state.gov) and provide your name and the vacancy announcement number of the position.

**Q: How to reapply for the position that I have just withdrawn my application?**

**A:** You can reapply for the position before the closing date of the vacancy announcement. On the 'Dashboard' page, click 'Edit Application' for the position which you want to reapply. Then, click 'Edit' at the 'Series, Grade, Location' section, and click 'Reapply' button under 'Grade', and click 'Save.'