Candidate Inventory Frequently Asked Questions

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Introduction

The frequently asked questions below are intended to assist agencies and Human Resources (HR) users in gaining a better understanding of the Candidate Inventory functionality in the USA Staffing system (USAS). If you have additional questions that are not addressed in this document, please contact your USAS Account Manager.

General Questions

1. What is the Candidate Inventory Feature?

Candidate Inventory is an innovative feature that allows hiring managers direct access to search for available applicants without the need to complete a new recruitment process.

2. Why use Candidate Inventory?

Agencies can leverage prior recruitments to fill new vacancies without the need to begin the recruitment process again. This allows agencies to reduce their time to hire and make more selections from active Merit Promotion, Non-Competitive recruitment authorities and certain Direct Hire authorities.

3. When should agencies use Candidate Inventory?

Agency policy and HR operations teams should collaborate to identify specific series, grades and locations that are routinely recruited or identified hard-to-fill vacancies, and by using that information could provide the data to make the business case to use Candidate Inventory.

Agencies opting to use the Candidate Inventory feature assume the responsibility establishing the policies and/or procedures for the identification of the specific series, grades, and locations to include in the inventory for Hiring Managers. Agency policy teams would also be responsible for the development of any agency specific Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) for their Human Resource and Hiring Manger users. To assist agencies with this process, the USA Staffing Program Office has created a Pre-Implementation Guide and Business Process Rules Example located on our Resource Center.

4. What is the difference between Candidate Inventory and the USAJOBS/Agency Talent Portal Resume Mining Feature?

Candidate Inventory exists within a single Agency – created in USA Staffing as an Organization. Only HR and HM users within that Organization can add applicants to and source applicants from that Agency/Organization's Candidate Inventory. Conversely, USAJOBS' Talent Pools feature allows Departments and Agencies to share certificates with each other across those organizational boundaries. Also, Candidate Inventory is limited to some types of merit promotion, non-competitive, excepted service, and direct hire authorities while Talent Pools was designed to facilitate sharing Delegated Examining certificates and cross-government hiring actions as authorized by the Competitive Service Act.

Lastly, Human Resources and Hiring Managers can use USAJOBS Resume Mining to find job seekers who have made their resumes searchable in their USAJOBS profile.

Please see the Candidate Inventory vs Talent Pools document for a side-by-side comparison of these capabilities located on our Resource Center.

5. How is Candidate Inventory different than a shared certificate?

Shared Certificates are supported by the Competitive Service Act which allows an "appointing authority" to share a competitive certificate issued under delegated examining procedures with one or more "appointing authorities" to make an appointment to a position that is in the same occupational series, grade level (or equivalent), full performance level, and duty location during the 240-day period beginning on the date of issuance of the certificate of eligibles. Candidate Inventory is a different approach to meeting the same need but suitable agency merit promotion, non-competitive and direct hiring authorities.

6. Can a Candidate Inventory be shared across agencies?

Candidate Inventory may only be used within a single Organization in USA Staffing. For more information about your Agency's USAS Organizational structure, please reach out to your USAS Account Manager.

7. Can applicants from any certificate be included in the Candidate Inventory?

No. Applicants on certificates that require Veterans Preference considerations such as Category Rating or Rule of Three may not be included in Candidate Inventory. Candidate Inventory is only appropriate for certain types of Merit Promotion, Non-Competitive recruitment authorities and some Direct Hire. Any use of Candidate Inventory should align with your agency's policy and standard business process.

8. Will there be a guide for Hiring Managers made available on how to use this?

There will not be a specific guide but there will be specific Online Help content for the pages, and step by step directions for the different tasks. These pages will be contextually driven by using the '?' mark in the system and will be provided on the Release Notes.

Process/System Questions

9. How do I enable Candidate Inventory for a specific Vacancy?

The Candidate Inventory feature is enabled by the HR User when the vacancy is created within USAS. When the announcement is released to USAJOBS, applicants will indicate if they want to be considered for additional opportunities in addition to the one to which they are applying. Once the announcement closes, it is strongly encouraged that the HR User review applicants to determine that they meet qualification and eligibility requirements and then issue a certificate to management. Once the certificate is issued, the HR user will determine if the referred candidates should be shared by toggling on the sharing option for that entire certificate along with the appropriate start and end date for sharing. Once the candidates are shared, they are available as part of the inventory for Hiring Managers.

Online Help has step by step instructions for Enabling Candidate Inventory on Vacancy and Including a certificate on Candidate Inventory.

10. Can I enable the Candidate Inventory functionality after the announcement is open?

No. The Candidate Inventory feature cannot be enabled for a vacancy once the announcement is released to USAJOBS.

11. What if I discover a vacancy should have included Candidate Inventory but did not, can this be corrected?

If the error is discovered *before* the announcement is released to USAJOBS, the HR User can enable Candidate Inventory on the Vacancy Setting page.

If the error is discovered *after* the announcement is released to USAJOBS, the setting cannot be changed.

12. What if I discover a vacancy should not have included Candidate Inventory but did, can this be corrected?

If the error is discovered *before* the announcement is released to USAJOBS, the HR User can navigate to the Vacancy Settings page, Application Processing section to remove to the option for Candidate Inventory.

If the error is discovered *after* the announcement has been released to USAJOBS, the Candidate Inventory functionality cannot be removed from the vacancy. However, the HR user *should not* share the certificate on the Certificate Information page, therefore, the candidates will not go into the Candidate Inventory for Hiring Manager consideration.

13. Is there an additional cost associated with use of the Candidate Inventory Feature?

No. There is no additional cost for using the Candidate Inventory feature. All new features added to USA Staffing system are included in your annual USA Staffing license cost.

14. How/when will applicants be notified whether they were shared to the Candidate Inventory?

Applicants will not be automatically notified if they have been shared to the Candidate Inventory. Please follow your agency policy for notification of applicants.

15. Do I need to conduct a qualification review on applicants who applied to my vacancy that enabled Candidate Inventory?

Only Applicants rated as eligible, qualified and were included on a certificate will be available to be shared to the Candidate Inventory.

16. What resources are available to assist HR Users to enable their JOAs to use Candidate Inventory?

The USA Staffing Program Office has created several resources for Candidate Inventory which include these FAQs, an informational PowerPoint, Online Help content, a Pre-Implementation Guide and Business Process Rules Example. These resources can be found in our Resource Center.

Agencies are encouraged to develop agency specific guidance and resources based on their own policies and procedures. Please consult your agency policy representatives for specific guidance on how your agency is opting to use Candidate Inventory.

17. Is the Candidate Inventory available to all Hiring Managers and HR users?

For HR Users, the ability to enable Candidate Inventory will be available to all users who have the *Edit Application Processing* permission enabled. The ability to create a certificate to populate Candidate Inventory will be available to all users who have the *Issue Certificate* permission enabled.

For Hiring Manager Users, any Hiring Manager with access to USA Staffing will be able to access Candidate Inventory. However, the availability of candidates will depend on if the agency has enabled Candidate Inventory and has candidates that match the manager's search selections.

18. How does Candidate Inventory affect the way an agency handles veterans' preference?

Current veterans' preference policies remain in effect. Certificate types that require veterans' preference considerations, such as Category Rating, and Rule of Three may not be included in Candidate Inventory. Certificate types that include logic for veterans' preference will not have the sharing option on the Certificate Information page.

19. Can I use the Candidate Inventory for wage grade positions?

Yes, if your agency has determined that the series, grades, and locations meet one of the business cases. Please follow your agency policies.

20. If utilizing for Direct Hire and applicants are only originally minimally qualified upon certificate issue - could those applicants still be shared in the Candidate Inventory and the applicant quals would need to be verified upon selection as other DHA selections are done?

It is strongly advised to only include certificates where candidates have been positively reviewed for minimum qualifications and any other eligibilities before issuing. We'd be happy to consult with you about why this is important, please reach out to your USAS Account Manager to schedule a discussion.

21. Are we able to extend how long a certificate is included Candidates in Inventory?

Yes. HR users can extend how long a certificate is included in Candidate Inventory at any time on the Certificate Information page. Please follow your agency policies.

Please see Online Help for step by step instructions: Including a certificate on Candidate Inventory

22. Does the "I'm interested in hiring this candidate email" go to the HR Specialist who issued the certificate?

For the initial release, we plan to have the email recipient default to the Internal Contact for the Job Announcement the applicant applied to. Managers will also be able to include/replace the receipt field with other HR users with permission to the Office of the Vacancy the candidate's application is associated with using the recipient drop down menu.

Applicant Questions

23. How do applicants indicate interest for being a part of Candidate Inventory?

If a vacancy is enabled for the Candidate Inventory, a preference question is automatically added to the Announcement Questionnaire page under "Preferences." During the online application process the applicant is presented this question to express interest to be considered for similar positions. If the applicant is interested, they would indicate yes on the preference question.

24. Can applicants update their selection to be a part of the Candidate Inventory?

If the Vacancy Settings allow applicants to update their application, applicants may change their response to the Preference question up until the announcement closes.

25. Do applicants who were selected from a certificate get removed from the Candidate Inventory?

No. Candidates will remain in the inventory until all the Candidate Inventory enabled certificates they are referred on have expired or have reached the sharing end date, which ever happens first.

26. Are candidate eligibilities identified to the Hiring Manager as they can be for Merit Promotion certificates?

No, eligibilities are not visible in Candidate Inventory to hiring managers.

27. How are multi-grade level recruitments affected by Candidate Inventory? Will candidates appear in the inventory for all grade levels or just the full performance?

Candidates will appear in Candidate Inventory for all grades they were certified for if the certificate was enabled to populate Candidate Inventory.

28. Will the time limit for including candidates in Candidate Inventory be a default setting or will it have to be set every time? (I.e. Agency policy states candidates can be included for 60 days – will this have to be input every time or can it be defaulted?)

A default setting may be set in the Admin area for each certificate type. In addition, an HR user may extend or shorten this timeframe on each individual certificate. Please follow your agency policies.

Please see Online Help for step by step instructions: Setting application sharing default settings.

29. What does the candidate see from the Candidate Inventory?

Candidate Inventory is only visible to Hiring Manager users, not candidates (applicants) themselves.

Hiring Manager Questions

30. Can the hiring manager search key words from the resumes on their inventory search options?

No, hiring managers can only search by pay plan, series, grade and location at this time.

31. If the feature is turned on will all hiring manager users in the Organization have access to see the inventory?

Yes, all hiring managers in the Organization will have access to any candidates included in the inventory by HR.

32. Can managers see an inventory for more than one grade? (let's say they're hiring at GS-07 and GS-09) Or would they have to do separate inventory "searches" for each grade?

Managers will be limited to searching against a single pay plan, series, grade and location combination. However, they may do multiple searches in the inventory to search multiple grades.

33. What if you are looking for candidates who have applied for a remote position? What do you put in the location search field?

Hiring Managers would search for the 'Anywhere in the – U.S. (remote job)' location, which is automatically added to announcements when the 'remote job' option is selected.

34. How does a Hiring Manager access the Inventory?

The Hiring Manager will access the Candidate Inventory through the navigation bar on the Hiring Manager Dashboard. Please see Online Help for step by step instructions: Accessing candidate inventory.

35. Will the Hiring Manager be able to see when a candidate will “expire”?

Yes, the Candidate record indicates how long the candidate will remain available in the inventory.

36. Is there a way for the Hiring Manager to see the specialized experience, duties, or competencies associated with the position the applicant applied?

Yes, Hiring Managers will be able to view the job announcement(s) to which the candidate applied.

Reporting

37. Can you pull reports based on applicants opting in to having their application shared in Candidate Inventory?

Yes, USAS Cognos offers a report which shows which vacancies have Candidate Inventory enabled, number of applicants who opted-in to having their application shared on Candidate Inventory and certificate level information when Candidate Inventory has been enabled.

This report can be accessed by HR Users in Cognos (Team Content > USA Staffing Packages and Folders > Hiring Data Warehouse > Production Metrics > Candidate Inventory Report)