



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

ADS Chapter 435

Commissions, Titles, and Rank

Partial Revision Date: 08/24/2022
Responsible Office: HCTM/FSC
File Name: 435_082422

Table of Contents

435.1	OVERVIEW	2
435.2	PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITIES	2
435.3	POLICY DIRECTIVES AND REQUIRED PROCEDURES	2
435.3.1	Granting and Use of Diplomatic and Consular Titles	3
435.3.2	Requesting Diplomatic and Consular Titles	3
435.3.3	Diplomatic Listing.....	3
435.3.4	Commissioning and Commissioned Titles.....	3
435.3.4.1	Commissioning as a Career Foreign Service Officer	3
435.3.5	Non-commissioned Titles	4
435.3.6	Criteria for Ambassadorial, Ministerial, and Counselor Titles.....	5
435.3.7	Criteria For Other Titles in Organizational or Function Positions	5
435.3.8	Exceptions and Changes of Titles.....	5
435.3.9	Use of Titles Upon Retirement.....	5
435.4	MANDATORY REFERENCES	5
435.4.1	External Mandatory References	5
435.4.2	Internal Mandatory References	5
435.5	ADDITIONAL HELP	5
435.6	DEFINITIONS	6

ADS 435 – Commissions, Titles, and Rank

435.1 OVERVIEW

Effective Date: 09/09/2003

This chapter provides the policies and procedures for granting diplomatic and consular titles and for preparing Diplomatic Lists and the Presidential commissioning of USAID personnel as Senior Foreign Service (SFS) and Foreign Service (FS) Officers. This chapter applies to all USAID Foreign Service Officers (FSOs).

435.2 PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITIES

Effective Date: 08/24/2022

- a. The **U.S. Department of State** is responsible for granting diplomatic and consular titles.
- b. The **Chief of Mission (Ambassador)** is responsible for composing the diplomatic list for submission to the host country's government.
- c. The **USAID Mission** initiates requests for a diplomatic or consular title or rank, and clears and concurs on proposals for title and rank before they are submitted to the responsible Bureau's Administrative Management Services (AMS) office for processing.
- d. The **Administrative Management Services (AMS)** staff in regional and other Bureaus that have staff based overseas completes the [Diplomatic or Consular Title Request Form \(DS 1474\)](#), forwards the requests to the U.S. Department of State, resolves any issues that may arise, and notifies overseas Missions and the Office of Human Capital and Talent Management, Foreign Service Center (HCTM/FSC) when titles are granted.
- e. The **Office of Human Capital and Talent Management, Foreign Services Center (HCTM/FSC)** issues the Notification of Personnel Action (SF 50) after a diplomatic or consular title has been approved, notifies the officer concerned, and initiates the commissioning for career FSOs at grade level FS 03 or higher.
- f. The **Office of Human Capital and Talent Management, Center for Performance Excellence (HCTM/CPE)** initiates commissioning for members of the SFS.

435.3 POLICY DIRECTIVES AND REQUIRED PROCEDURES

Effective Date: 08/24/2022

The official Agency policies and corresponding essential procedures for securing commissions, titles, and ranks are outlined below.

435.3.1 Granting and Use of Diplomatic and Consular Titles

Effective Date: 09/09/2003

The Agency must adhere to the Granting and Use of Diplomatic and Consular Titles policies and practices as stated in [3 FAH-1 H-2430](#).

435.3.2 Requesting Diplomatic and Consular Titles

Effective Date: 08/24/2022

Mission Executive Officers (EXOs) should refer to the [USAID Standard Operating Procedure For Requesting Diplomatic Title](#) for the information that must be included in their request to the Bureau AMS for an employee's Diplomatic Title.

Once the diplomatic or consular title has been approved by the Department of State, the Bureau AMS must notify both the FSO and HCTM/FSC. The Bureau AMS should notify HCTM by submitting a ticket via [LaunchPad](#) or emailing the HR Help Desk (HR-HELPDESK@usaid.gov) with the subject: Notification of Diplomatic Title for (Officer's name).

435.3.3 Diplomatic Listing

Effective Date: 09/09/2003

The Agency must adhere to the Diplomatic Listing policies and practices as stated in [3 FAH-1 H-2430](#).

435.3.4 Commissioning and Commissioned Titles

Effective Date: 08/24/2022

The Agency must adhere to the 'Commissioned Titles' policies and practices as stated in [3 FAH-1 H-2430](#). The granting of commissions occurs at two stages in an FS career:

- As a career FSO (see section [435.3.4.1](#)); and
- Upon promotion into the SFS (see section [435.3.4.2](#)).

435.3.4.1 Commissioning as a Career Foreign Service Officer

Effective Date: 08/24/2022

Commissioning is an act of appointment by the President of the United States and confirmation by the Senate of a candidate who has been recommended for tenure as a FSO by the USAID Tenure Board. HCTM/FSC will initiate commissioning of career FSOs after receiving tenure and once the officer's rank is Class 3 or higher. For those whose rank was below Class 3 at the time of tenure, their commissioning as a career FSO will be initiated upon promotion to Class 3.

HCTM/FSC compiles a list of FSOs eligible for commissioning and contacts each officer to obtain necessary information. Each officer must be vetted by the Office of Security

(SEC), Office of Civil Rights (OCR), Office of Inspector General (OIG), and Office of General Counsel (GC). Names can be withheld if derogatory information is received at any point in the process. In consultation with GC/Ethics and Administration (GC/EA), the HCTM/Senior Deputy Assistant Administrator (HCTM/SDAA) makes the final decision regarding whether an officer will be withheld from further processing due to a vetting issue.

HCTM/FSC forwards the list of commission-eligible FSOs to the Department of State to be included in their next list of nominations to the Office of the President, which then forwards the list to the Senate for confirmation. This process can take 6-12 months or longer to complete.

Once HCTM/FSC receives notification that the officers' commissioning has been approved by the President of the United States and confirmed by the Senate, HCTM/FSC will process a Notification of Personnel Action (SF 50) changing the officer's pay plan code from Foreign Personnel (FP) (career, non-commissioned) to Foreign Officer (FO) (career, commissioned). In addition, the officer will receive a Foreign Service Appointment Commission Certificate signed by the President of the United States. HCTM/FSC will contact the Officer when the certificates are received and available for pickup.

Commissioned officers may receive commissioned diplomatic titles based on individual class and mission assignment when assigned overseas, enabling them to assume roles reserved only for commissioned officers.

435.3.4.2 Commissioning Upon Promotion Into or Within the Senior Foreign Service

Effective Date: 08/24/2022

Upon promotion into or within the SFS, a SFS officer is eligible to receive a new Presidential Commission. HCTM/CPE compiles a list of the officers and vets the candidates with SEC, OCR, OIG, and GC. HCTM/CPE works with the Department of State to secure these new commissions for officers following the SFS promotion decisions of the Promotion and Performance Management Boards (see [ADS 463, Foreign Service and Senior Foreign Service Promotion Eligibility Requirements and Procedures](#)). This involves forwarding the lists of those officers recommended for promotion to the Department of State, who compiles the names of officers for submission to the Office of the President, which then forwards them to the Senate for confirmation. Once Senatorial confirmation and Presidential approval is received, HCTM provides the commission certificates to the SFS Officers.

435.3.5 Non-commissioned Titles

Effective Date: 0/09/2003

The Agency must adhere to the non-commissioned titles policies and practices as stated in [3 FAH-1 H-2430](#).

435.3.6 Criteria for Ambassadorial, Ministerial, and Counselor Titles

Effective Date: 09/09/2003

The Agency must adhere to the criteria for Ambassadorial, Ministerial, and Counselor titles policies and practices as stated in [3 FAH-1 H-2430](#).

435.3.7 Criteria For Other Titles in Organizational or Function Positions

Effective Date: 09/09/2003

The Agency must adhere to the criteria for other titles in organizational or function positions policies and practices as stated in [3 FAH-1 H-2430](#).

435.3.8 Exceptions and Changes of Titles

Effective Date: 08/24/2022

The Agency must adhere to the exceptions and changes of titles' policies and practices as stated in [3 FAH-1 H-2430](#).

435.3.9 Use of Titles Upon Retirement

Effective Date: 08/24/2022

The Agency must adhere to the use of titles upon retirement policies and practices as stated in [3 FAH-1 H-2430](#).

435.4 MANDATORY REFERENCES

435.4.1 External Mandatory References

Effective Date: 09/09/2003

- a. [3 FAH-1 H-2430, Commissions, Title and Rank](#)
- b. [5 USC 2902, Commission; where recorded](#)
- c. [Foreign Service Act of 1980, Section 312](#)

435.4.2 Internal Mandatory References

Effective Date: 08/24/2022

- a. [ADS 463, Foreign Service and Senior Foreign Service Promotion Eligibility Requirements and Procedures](#)

435.5 ADDITIONAL HELP

Effective Date: 08/24/2022

- a. [Requests for Diplomatic Titles](#)
- b. [USAID Standard Operating Procedure For Requesting Diplomatic Title](#)

435.6

DEFINITIONS

Effective Date: 08/24/2022

See the [ADS Glossary](#) for all ADS terms and definitions.

Appointment Commission

Act of appointment by the President and a confirmation by the Senate of a candidate who has been recommended for tenure as a Foreign Service Officer by the Tenure Board. Definition in [3 FAM 2241](#). (Chapter 435)

Commissioned Diplomatic Title

Diplomatic and/or consular titles granted to commissioned Foreign Service Officers in the interest of the U.S. Government to enable individuals assigned to Foreign Service posts or to special details, regardless of the department or agencies they represent, to perform their duties effectively and to ensure the efficient performance of the functions of the diplomatic missions or consular offices of the United States of America. Definition in [3 FAM 2432](#). (Chapter 435)

Foreign Service Officer (FSO)

An employee who is appointed under section 302(a)(1) of the Foreign Service Act of 1980, as amended. Foreign Service Generalist positions are designated with the FO pay plan. (Note: that FSO career candidates (i.e., pre-tenure generalists) are appointed under section 303 of the Foreign Service Act of 1980, as amended, and designated with the FP pay plan.) Definition in [3 FAM 2432](#). (Chapter 435)

Foreign Service Post

The duty station to which an employee is assigned, overseas or in the United States. Definition in [14 FAM 511.3](#). (Chapter 435)

Senior Foreign Service (SFS) Officer

An employee who is appointed under section 302(a)(1) of the Foreign Service Act of 1980, as amended. SFS positions are designated with the FE pay plan. Definition in [3 FAM 2650](#). (Chapter 435)

Tenure

Granting of career status to an officer who has completed a probationary period as a career candidate, satisfied eligibility requirements, and been recommended by a Tenure Board. Definition in [3 FAM 2241](#). (Chapter 435)

435_082422