Critical Shortage Key Considerations

Before Hiring a Retiree in a Critical Shortage Position

- Critical shortage positions are determined in two ways:
  - The Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) may establish critical shortage areas by subject matter. View DOE’s critical shortage areas for the current school year.
  - The school division received three or fewer qualified applicants when recruiting for a position.
- A retiree hired into a critical shortage position:
  - Must hold a current Virginia Board of Education license to teach in the subject area.
  - Must be receiving a monthly retirement benefit from VRS.
  - Must have a bona fide break in service of at least 12 consecutive months following the effective date of retirement.
    - The employee may not work in any capacity for a VRS-participating employer, including full-time, part-time or temporary positions, during that period. This includes coaching and substitute teaching.
    - The employee also may not work for a contractor for any VRS-participating employer during that 12-month period.
- Retirees are not eligible to fill a critical shortage position if they retired:
  - With a reduced benefit under a school system’s early retirement incentive program (ERIP); or
  - With any incentive program that enables the retiree to retire with a reduced or unreduced benefit.
  - With a VRS disability benefit.
- Members who have taken a refund of their member contributions or deferred retirement are not eligible.
- No pre-arranged employment commitment, either verbal or written, with the school division may take place before the employee’s retirement date.

After Hiring a Retiree in a Critical Shortage Position

- Retirees filling critical shortage positions must complete a Certification of Eligibility for Critical Shortage Teachers and Administrators (VRS-160).
- The school division also must sign the VRS-160 and mail or fax the form to VRS. Qualified retirees will continue to receive retirement benefits but will not earn additional service credit.
- Teachers working in critical shortage positions may only move to a different position if the other position is also deemed a critical shortage area by VDOE or three or fewer qualified applicants applied for the position.
- Retirees must follow the return-to-work rules if they move from a critical shortage position to one that is not. For more information about the rules for working after retirement, see Chapter 10, Post-Retirement Benefits, of the VRS Employer Manual.
- Employers must enroll each critical shortage teacher in myVRS Navigator.
- To ensure that the retiree’s monthly retirement benefit continues while serving in the critical shortage position, employers must designate the retiree with the VRS job title “Critical Shortage Teacher” in myVRS Navigator. Do not use the “teacher” job name, which will cause the retiree’s monthly retirement benefit to end.

Questions?
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