



OOD
PM 26-07
Effective: September 4, 2026

To: All of EOIR
From: Sirce E. Owen, Acting Director
Date: September 4, 2026

IN-OFFICE ADJUDICATOR VOLUNTARY TRANSFER POLICY

PURPOSE:	To update EOIR's Adjudicator Voluntary Transfer Policy
OWNER:	Office of the Director
AUTHORITY:	8 C.F.R. § 1003.0(b)
CANCELLATION:	Adjudicator Voluntary Transfer Policy (January 14, 2026)

I. PURPOSE

This Policy Memorandum (PM) establishes a uniform policy for the processing of voluntary, in-person duty station transfer requests by EOIR adjudicators. For purposes of this PM, an adjudicator includes an Immigration Judge, Appellate Immigration Judge, or Administrative Law Judge, including all supervisory, management, or temporary positions in each category; and the Chief Administrative Hearing Officer, the Assistant Director for Policy, and the Director, including any individual serving in an acting capacity or performing the duties of those positions.¹ This PM applies only to adjudicators seeking reassignment from one in-person duty station to another in-person duty station and to adjudicators working at a remote duty station seeking reassignment to an in-person duty station. Requests by an adjudicator who works at a remote duty station and seeks to transfer to a different remote duty station will generally be granted without reference to a register subject to supervisory approval, compliance with applicable EOIR and Department of Justice telework policies, and any applicable laws. This PM does not address requests by an adjudicator seeking reassignment from an in-person duty station to a remote duty station. Such requests are not authorized at this time, but EOIR will continue to evaluate the feasibility of implementing such reassignments in the future. This PM supersedes and cancels the January 14, 2026, Adjudicator

¹ This PM does not address the initial duty station of any adjudicator, namely whether that duty station is in-person or remote, as that determination is made by agency policy. Additionally, for certain adjudicatory positions, in-person adjudicators may be located at any field location where EOIR operates a permanent immigration court, except for the following locations: (1) Saipan, (2) Honolulu, (3) San Juan, and (4) any immigration court located within a Department of Homeland Security (DHS) detention facility. *See generally* PM 25-24, *Adjudicator Personnel Matters*, 2 (Feb. 28, 2025). In recognition of EOIR's nationwide footprint and the accompanying need for nationwide executive leadership, in-person Senior Executive Service adjudicators may also be located at any field location where EOIR operates a permanent immigration court, subject to the four exceptions above. PM 25-24 is modified accordingly to reflect that operational reality.

Voluntary Transfer Policy.

II. REASSIGNMENT REGISTER

Each of the three adjudicatory components within EOIR will maintain its own Reassignment Register (“Register”), if appropriate, organized by office location to manage voluntary in-person duty station transfer requests by adjudicators. The Register will list the name, current duty station, and reassignment request date for each adjudicator seeking a transfer to the duty station.

a. Reassignment Requests

Adjudicators who wish to request a voluntary reassignment to a different EOIR in-person duty location must submit requests by email to *adjudicator.reassignment@usdoj.gov*. Each adjudicator may request transfer to no more than two duty locations at any given time.

Adjudicators who wish to remove themselves from the Register for a location or modify their requested transfer locations may submit their requests to the same email address. Any change to a requested location will be considered a new reassignment request for the newly designated duty station. A change that removes a location without adding a new location will not be considered a new reassignment request.

b. Reassignment Priority

The Register for each duty location will be ranked in order of reassignment request date. In cases where two or more requests to transfer to a duty location are made on the same day at the same time, requests will be ranked in order of adjudicator seniority.

c. Ineligibility for Reassignment

1. Subject to subsection c.2, adjudicators with less than 36 months of continuous service as an adjudicator with EOIR are ineligible to be placed on the Register.
2. Adjudicators with less than 36 months of continuous service as an adjudicator with EOIR are eligible to be placed on the Register if they currently work at a remote duty station and wish to be reassigned to an in-person duty station at a particular location.
3. Adjudicators who have requested and accepted a voluntary transfer may not request another voluntary transfer until they have served at their newly designated duty station for at least 36 months.
4. Adjudicators who become subject to discipline are not eligible for placement on the Register for a period of 36 months from the effective date of the discipline. In cases where a disciplined adjudicator is already listed on the Register, their name will be removed from the Register at the time that the discipline is imposed.

d. Decision Period

Upon notification of selection for a voluntary transfer, adjudicators will have 3 business days to

respond with their acceptance or declination.

Adjudicators who are offered a voluntary transfer will have their name removed from the Register for all locations, regardless of whether they choose to accept or decline the voluntary transfer offer. If an adjudicator declines the offer, he or she may not request voluntary transfer to the offered location for a period of 12 months from the date of the voluntary transfer offer. However, adjudicators who decline a voluntary transfer offer may otherwise submit a new reassignment request to any other location by sending an email to *adjudicator.reassignment@usdoj.gov*.

e. Relocation Period and Expenses

Because voluntary transfers occur at the request of the adjudicator and are primarily for the benefit of the adjudicator, all personal relocation expenses are the responsibility of the adjudicator. Administrative leave for travel to the new duty station is not authorized.

Adjudicators are advised that a transfer to a new duty station with a lower locality pay compared to their previous duty station may result in an overall salary decrease.

Transfers must be effectuated in a timely manner, and adjudicators who accept voluntary transfer offers are expected to enter on duty to the new duty location within 45 calendar days of their acceptance of the voluntary transfer offer. In cases where the adjudicator does not enter on duty to the new duty location within the 45-day relocation period, the transfer offer may be deemed declined and withdrawn subject to the provisions of subsection (d) above.

f. Court Facilities and Furniture

Transferring adjudicators will be assigned appropriate office facilities and furnishings by local management at the receiving duty station based on availability. Such facilities and furnishings will comply with agency requirements for adjudicator offices and equipment.

Office furnishings and fixtures provided to adjudicators by the sending duty station shall generally remain at the sending duty station and may not be taken to the receiving duty station except with the express written concurrence of both the sending and receiving managers. Office furniture provided under a reasonable accommodation may be transferred without the need for further written approval.

Transferring adjudicators will be expected to bring their government-issued laptop and cellphone, where applicable, with them to their new duty location.

III. HARDSHIP REASSIGNMENT REGISTER

EOIR will similarly maintain a Hardship Reassignment Register (“Hardship Register”) organized by office location to manage preferential voluntary transfer requests to different office locations based on hardship.

Adjudicators who wish to request a voluntary transfer based on hardship must submit requests by email to *adjudicator.reassignment@usdoj.gov*. Such requests should include a brief description

of the circumstances justifying the request.² Adjudicators requesting hardship transfers will not be listed on the regular Reassignment Register.

For purposes of the Hardship Register, a hardship is an unforeseeable or significantly worsened personal or family crisis resulting from a documented event seriously affecting the health, welfare, or safety of the adjudicator or his or her immediate family which occurred *after* the appointment date of the adjudicator. Voluntary family separation due to the EOIR duty station assignment upon onboarding, alone, is not considered a basis for a hardship transfer. For purposes of this policy, “immediate family” includes a spouse, son or daughter, stepson or stepdaughter, and parents and stepparents of the adjudicator or his or her spouse.

Hardship reassignment requests will be reviewed by at least two EOIR management officials within the adjudicator’s component and both management officials must agree that the hardship qualifies for inclusion in the register. The appropriate management officials will be determined by the adjudicator’s component head. If a component lacks a sufficient number of management officials, then the component head will determine if the hardship qualifies for inclusion in the register. All hardship reassignment requests are subject to final approval by the adjudicator’s component head and the EOIR Director. If final approval is granted, the adjudicator will be placed on the Hardship Register. Hardship reassignment requests will generally be given precedence over general voluntary reassignment requests.

IV. AGENCY DISCRETION

The decision to offer voluntary reassignment to any adjudicator is ultimately committed to management discretion. The Reassignment Register and Hardship Register are maintained as an administrative convenience and courtesy. All agency personnel actions remain governed by the relevant statutes and regulations, and nothing in this policy guarantees that an adjudicator will be offered voluntary transfer, or that any voluntary transfer offers made must adhere to the general Register priority order specified herein. All voluntary reassignments are subject to the approval of the EOIR Director.

This PM is not intended to, does not, and may not be relied upon to create, any right or benefit, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law or in equity by any party against the United States, its departments, agencies, or entities, its officers, employees, or agents, or any other person. Nothing herein should be construed as mandating a particular outcome in any specific case. Nothing in this PM limits an adjudicator’s independent judgment and discretion in adjudicating cases or an adjudicator’s authority under applicable law.

Please contact your supervisor if you have any questions.

² EOIR is authorized by 8 C.F.R. § 1003.0(b)(1)(i) to collect this information. This information is necessary for the agency to adjudicate your hardship reassignment request. The provision of any information in support of a hardship reassignment request, including possible medical or other sensitive information regarding an adjudicator or family member, is entirely voluntary. However, the agency may deny your hardship reassignment request if you do not provide the requested information. EOIR will use the information for authorized routine uses as stated in system of records notice OPM/GOVT-1, General Personnel Records, 77 FR 73694 (Dec. 11, 2012), modified by 87 FR 5874 (Feb. 2, 2022) and 88 FR 56058 (Aug. 17, 2023) (<https://www.opm.gov/information-management/privacy-policy/#url=SORNs>).