

TO: FDA-Wide

SUBJECT: FDA's Hiring Initiative

The Commissioner and I are pleased to announce that on April 21, 2008, the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) approved the use of Direct Hire Authority (DHA) to aid in the hiring of more than 1300 mission critical positions as part of FDA's multi-year hiring initiative.

Direct-hire authority is an appointing authority OPM can give to federal agencies for filling vacancies when a critical hiring need or severe shortage of candidates exist. It expedites hiring of qualified candidates by eliminating certain rating and ranking preferences. Qualified candidates could be on the job in as little as three weeks.

In September 2007, FDA's public health mission was expanded as a result of the passage of the Food and Drug Administration Amendments Act of 2007 or FDAAA. The FDAAA will provide important resources and strengthen FDA's ability and commitment to protect and promote Americans' health. FDA needs hundreds of individuals with science and medical backgrounds to help meet the agency's responsibilities to assure the safety and efficacy of human and veterinary drugs, biological products, medical devices, food, cosmetics and products that emit radiation.

In FY 2008, FDA will hire more than 600 new staff and backfill more than 700 positions to implement FDAAA, the Food Protection Plan and the Import Safety Action Plan. The occupations include Consumer Safety Officer, Pharmacologist, Epidemiologist, Mathematical Statistician, Biologist, Chemist, Microbiologist, and General Health/Regulatory Health Scientist. This newly granted authority will enhance the direct hire authorities that we currently utilize for Medical Officers and Pharmacists.

The FDA hiring initiative is currently underway and we have already reached 35 percent of our goal. **You can make a difference** in meeting the needs of this critical agency initiative by referring highly qualified candidates to fill these positions. You can also assist by helping the agency recruit at various recruitment fairs, during professional conferences, and at your alma mater. As an incentive, FDA will offer a recruitment referral award, as much as \$500 for some positions, to any employee who refers external candidates who are ultimately hired for employment. For more information about recruitment referral awards, please visit:  
<http://intranet.fda.gov/omp/rewards/recrurefawrdtxt.htm>

As the Commissioner has stated many times: our workforce is by far FDA's most valuable resource for accomplishing our mission. While FDA currently has a vast pool of talented staff who are dedicated to mission of this agency, the increase in

new staff provides an opportunity to enhance our human capital and further our ability to meet our new legislative mandates.

For further information: The Food and Drug Administration Amendments Act of 2007 <<http://www.fda.gov/oc/initiatives/advance/fdaaa.html>> ; The Food Protection Plan <<http://www.fda.gov/oc/initiatives/advance/food.html>> ; and The Import Safety Action Plan <<http://www.Importsafety.gov>>

John R. Dyer

**Deputy Commissioner for Operations and Chief Operating Officer**