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# ADS Chapter 435

## Commissions, Titles and Rank

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 ADS Chapter 435 – Commissions, Titles and Rank  
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(This Chapter supersedes USAID Handbook 25 Chapter 41 in its entirety.)

## Table of Contents

<a href="#"><u>435.1</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>OVERVIEW</u></a> .....	<a href="#"><u>3</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>435.2</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITIES</u></a> .....	<a href="#"><u>3</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>435.3</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>POLICY DIRECTIVES AND REQUIRED PROCEDURES</u></a> .....	<a href="#"><u>4</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>435.3.1</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Granting and Use of Diplomatic and Consular Titles</u></a> .....	<a href="#"><u>4</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>435.3.2</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Requesting Diplomatic and Consular Titles</u></a> .....	<a href="#"><u>4</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>435.3.3</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Diplomatic Listing</u></a> .....	<a href="#"><u>5</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>435.3.4</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Need for Diplomatic and Consular Titles</u></a> .....	<a href="#"><u>5</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>435.3.5</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Commissioned Titles</u></a> .....	<a href="#"><u>5</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>435.3.5.1</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Commissioning as a Career Foreign Service Officer</u></a> .....	<a href="#"><u>5</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>435.3.5.2</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Commissioning Upon Entry or Promotion Within the Senior Foreign Service</u></a> .....	<a href="#"><u>5</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>435.3.6</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Non-commissioned Titles</u></a> .....	<a href="#"><u>6</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>435.3.7</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Criteria for Ambassadorial, Ministerial, and Counselor Titles</u></a> .....	<a href="#"><u>6</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>435.3.8</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Criteria For Other Titles in Organizational or Function Positions</u></a> .....	<a href="#"><u>6</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>435.3.9</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Exceptions And Changes of Titles</u></a> .....	<a href="#"><u>6</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>435.3.10</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Use of Titles Upon Retirement</u></a> .....	<a href="#"><u>6</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>435.4</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>MANDATORY REFERENCES</u></a> .....	<a href="#"><u>6</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>435.5</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>ADDITIONAL HELP</u></a> .....	<a href="#"><u>6</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>435.6</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>DEFINITIONS</u></a> .....	<a href="#"><u>7</u></a>

*Text highlighted in yellow indicates that the adjacent material is new or substantively revised.*

## ADS 435 – Commissions, Titles and Rank

### 435.1 OVERVIEW

Effective Date: 09/09/2003

This chapter states the policies and responsibilities for granting diplomatic and consular titles, preparing a Diplomatic List and the Presidential commissioning of USAID personnel as Senior Foreign Service (SFS) Officers and Foreign Service (FS) Officers. This chapter applies to all USAID Foreign Service Officers.

### 435.2 PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITIES

Effective Date: 09/09/2003

- a. **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 government.
- c. The **Office of Human Capital and Talent Management (HCTM)** in USAID/Washington serves as the liaison on all matters related to titles and rank for USAID employees overseas. The **Office of Human Capital and Talent Management, Personnel Operations Division (HCTM/POD)** and the **Office of Human Capital and Talent Management, Executive Management Division (HCTM/EM)** are responsible for issuing the Notification of Personnel Action (SF-50) after a title has been approved and notifying the officer/mission concerned.
- d. **HCTM/EM** is also responsible for initiating commissioning as a member of the Senior Foreign Service.
- e. The **Office of Human Capital and Talent Management, Labor Relations Services Division, Personnel Management and Awards Branch (HCTM/LRS/PMA)** is responsible for initiating commissioning as a Career Foreign Service Officer.
- f. **Missions** are responsible for initiating requests for a diplomatic or consular title, rank, clear and concur in proposals for title and rank, before they are forwarded to the Department of State.
- g. The **employee** is responsible for executing form SF 61, Appointment Affidavits upon notification that a diplomatic or consular title has been approved, if the title granted is Counselor or Counsel. The Affidavit must be executed even if the employee previously signed one for another purpose.

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### **435.3 POLICY DIRECTIVES AND REQUIRED PROCEDURES**

Effective Date: 09/09/2003

The statements contained within the .3 section of this ADS chapter are the official Agency policies and corresponding essential procedures.

#### **435.3.1 Granting and Use of Diplomatic and Consular Titles**

Effective Date: 09/09/2003

The Agency shall adhere to the Granting and Use of Diplomatic and Consular Titles policies and practices as stated in 3 FAM 2430. (See [3 FAM 2430](#))

#### **435.3.2 Requesting Diplomatic and Consular Titles**

Effective Date: 09/09/2003

The appropriate steps for requesting diplomatic and consular titles follow:

- a.** Missions must initiate the action by sending a cable to the Office of Human Capital and Talent Management (HCTM) requesting a diplomatic title for a Foreign Service Officer who is at post or who has been approved for assignment and is pending arrival. HCTM shall prepare form DS-1474, Request for Approval of Diplomatic or Consular Title and forwards to the Department of State.
- b.** Requests for employees assigned to Non Executive Level positions (Non-SMG) shall be forwarded to the Office of Human Capital and Talent Management, Personnel Operations Division (HCTM/POD); and for employees assigned to Executive Level positions (SMG) to the Office of Human Capital and Talent Management, Executive Management Division (HCTM/EM). Missions must not forward requests or follow-ups to the Department of State.
- c.** USAID has one contact point to act as liaison for determining the status of diplomatic titles requests and for resolving issues that may arise. Missions must direct follow-up messages to HCTM/POD or HCTM/EM, as appropriate. HCTM/POD and HCTM/EM then forward these requests for discussion with the Department of State and a response to post.

Requests for Diplomatic Titles must include all of the information specified below:

- a.** Diplomatic Title requested;
- b.** Name of Officer;
- c.** Effective date of assignment at post or estimated date of arrival;
- d.** Functional position title and position number to which assigned;

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- e. Legal residence of employee and date of birth;
- f. Name, grade, and Diplomatic Title, if any, held by the previous incumbent;
- g. Justification for the title; and
- h. Statement from the Ambassador concurring in each request.

**435.3.3 Diplomatic Listing**

Effective Date: 09/09/2003

The Agency shall adhere to the Diplomatic Listing policies and practices as stated in 3 FAM 2430. (See [3 FAM 2430](#))

**435.3.4 Need for Diplomatic and Consular Titles**

Effective Date: 09/09/2003

The Agency shall adhere to the Need for Diplomatic and Consular Titles policies and practices as stated in 3 FAM 2430. (See [3 FAM 2430](#))

**435.3.5 Commissioned Titles**

Effective Date: 09/09/2003

The Agency shall adhere to the Commissioned Titles policies and practices as stated in 3 FAM 2430. (See [3 FAM 2430](#))

**435.3.5.1 Commissioning as a Career Foreign Service Officer**

Effective Date: 09/09/2003

Employees who were employed on or before May 23, 1983 shall be commissioned on a voluntary basis. Employees who were employed after May 23, 1983 shall be commissioned as career Foreign Service Officers immediately after tenuring if the employee's rank is Class 3 or higher. For those whose rank was below Class 3 at the time of career appointment, their commissioning as a career Foreign Service Officer shall be initiated immediately upon promotion to Class 3.

**435.3.5.2 Commissioning Upon Entry or Promotion Within the Senior Foreign Service**

Effective Date: 09/09/2003

Upon promotion into or within the Senior Foreign Service and entry to the Senior Foreign Service Career Candidates, employees must receive a Presidential Commission.

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**435.3.6 Non-commissioned Titles**

Effective Date: 09/09/2003

The Agency shall adhere to the Non-Commissioned Titles policies and practices as stated in 3 FAM 2430. (See [3 FAM 2430](#))

**435.3.7 Criteria for Ambassadorial, Ministerial, and Counselor Titles**

Effective Date: 09/09/2003

The Agency shall adhere to the Criteria for Ambassadorial, Ministerial, and Counselor Titles policies and practices as stated in 3 FAM 2430. (See [3 FAM 2430](#))

**435.3.8 Criteria For Other Titles in Organizational or Function Positions**

Effective Date: 09/09/2003

The Agency shall adhere to the Criteria for Other Titles in Organizational or Function Positions policies and practices as stated in 3 FAM 2430. (See [3 FAM 2430](#))

**435.3.9 Exceptions And Changes of Titles**

Effective Date: 09/09/2003

The Agency shall adhere to the Exceptions and changes of Titles policies and practices as stated in 3 FAM 2430. (See [3 FAM 2430](#))

**435.3.10 Use of Titles Upon Retirement**

Effective Date: 09/09/2003

The Agency shall adhere to the Use of Titles Upon Retirement policies and practices as stated in 3 FAM 2430. (See [3 FAM 2430](#))

**435.4 MANDATORY REFERENCES**

**435.4.1 External Mandatory References**

Effective Date: 09/09/2003

- a. [3 FAM 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: 09/09/2003

There are no Internal Mandatory References for this chapter.

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**435.5 ADDITIONAL HELP**

Effective Date: 09/09/2003

- a. [Requests for Diplomatic Titles](#)
- b. [Sample Memorandum – Commissioning of Foreign Service Officers](#)
- c. [Sample Memorandum - Request for Presidential Commissioning as a Foreign Service Officer](#)
- d. [Sample Request for Diplomatic Titles](#)

**435.6 DEFINITIONS**

Effective Date: 09/09/2003

The terms and definitions listed below have been incorporated into the ADS Glossary. See the [ADS Glossary](#) for all ADS terms and definitions.

Definitions for terms in this chapter are located in 3 FAM 2430.

**Appointment Commission**

Definition in 3 FAM 2430. (Chapter 435)

**Assignment Commission**

Definitions for terms in this chapter are located in 3 FAM 2430. (Chapter 435)

**Commissioned Diplomatic Title**

See 3 FAM 2430. (Chapter 435)

**Foreign Service Officer**

Definition in 3 FAM 2430. (Chapter 435)

**Foreign Service Post**

Definition in 3 FAM 2430. (Chapter 435)

**Member of the Foreign Service**

Definitions for terms in this chapter are located in 3 FAM 2430 (Chapter 435)

**Permanent Rank**

See 3 FAM 2430. (Chapter 435)

**Personal Rank**

See 3 FAM 2430. (Chapter 435)

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**Tenure**

A process that changes a Career Candidate from limited or conditional to career status.  
([Chapter 414](#), 435)

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