

IPA

An underused option available to researchers at the VA is the Intergovernmental Personnel Act (IPA) Mobility Program, which allows the VA enters into an agreement with a state and local governments, colleges and universities, Indian tribal governments, federally funded research and development centers, or other eligible organization to conduct VA research.

IPA assignments are mandated by law to not exceed four continuous years on a single assignment. Successive assignments without a break of at least 60 calendar days will be regarded as continuous service under the mobility authority and require a 12-month return to duty with his or her regular employer before another IPA assignment can be utilized. Members of other federal agencies have a lifetime cap of 6 years of IPA assignments. IPA appointments are usually set for two year increments with a two year extension option. An IPA appointee must have been employed at the eligible organization for at least 90 days in a permanent position before going onto an IPA assignment.

If a PI would like to leverage an IPA appointment, the PI needs to contact the Research Administration Office or the [MVMREF representative](#) depending on the source of funding.

After contracting the appropriate office, the PI will receive a questionnaire about the person they are preparing the IPA for. The PI needs to return the completed questionnaire, a signed IPA coversheet, a copy of the individual's resume, and a point of contact at the University or other eligible organization the individual is coming from.

Once all of the appropriate information is turned in, the Research Office staff will route the packet through the hospital administration including Finance, HR, and the Director's Office before sending it to the University to be signed by the Department Chair, or other designated official. Once the documents are returned from the University, a PO number is generated and the University can start billing the VA after receiving the PO number. While individuals can be on an IPA assignment for up to 4 years, it is Research Service's policy to write IPAs in two year increments.

References:

1. [Intergovernmental Personnel Act \(IPA\) Mobility Program](#)