USA Staffing

Shared Certificate Guide

A guide to using shared certificates in alignment with the Competitive Service Act

OPM HR SOLUTIONS
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Introduction

On March 18, 2016, the Competitive Service Act of 2015 was enacted as Public Law 114-137. The "Act" allows an "appointing authority" to share a competitive certificate issued under delegated examining procedures with one or more "appointing authorities" to make an appointment to a position that is in the same occupational series, grade level (or equivalent), full performance level, and duty location during the 240-day period beginning on the date of issuance of the certificate of eligibles. To view the Competitive Service Act, please visit https://www.congress.gov/114/crpt/hrpt367/CRPT-114hrpt367.pdf.

This guide is intended to provide Federal agencies with guidance on how to use shared certificates in the USA Staffing® Talent Acquisition System, in accordance with the Competitive Service Act. It draws on staffing processes and system terminology that should be familiar to Federal HR Specialists. A high-level process drawing is shown below. This drawing illustrates the staffing processes used in sharing certificates and delineates between the actions of the requesting agency and sharing agency.

Determining if a Certificate from an Existing Announcement is Eligible to be Shared

If an agency is interested in receiving a certificate(s) from one of your existing announcements, ensure the announcement meets the following criteria before doing so.
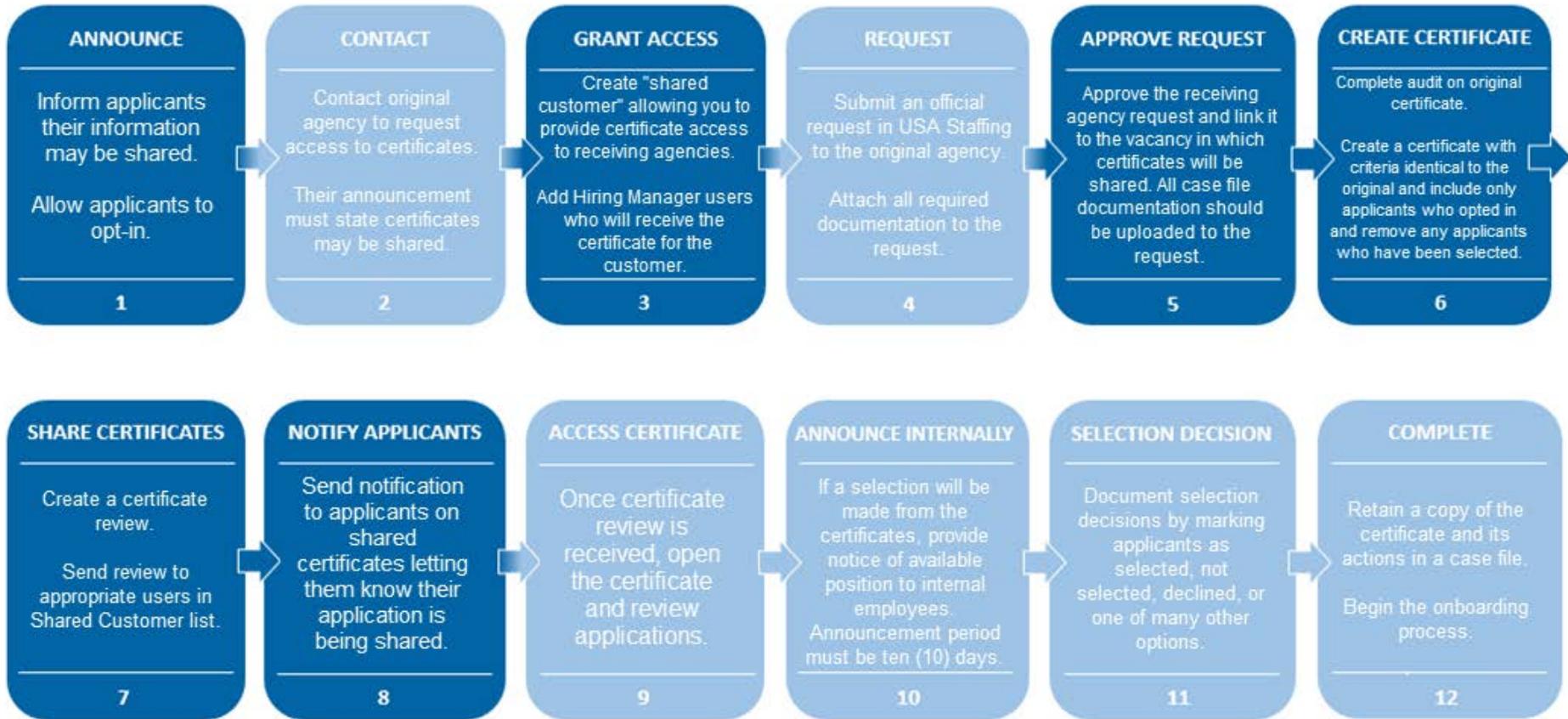
- The original announcement must have:
    - Been opened through a Delegated Examining Authority;
    - Been for a vacancy that is in the same occupational series, grade level (or equivalent), full performance level, and duty location of the one being filled by the receiving agency;
    - Provided notice that the resulting list of candidates may be used by one or more agencies;
    - Provided an opportunity for applicants to "opt-in" to have their application material shared; and,
- It cannot be beyond 240 calendar days from the original certificate issue date.

All of the above must be met in order for sharing to occur; if not all met, any certificate from the announcement is not eligible to be shared under the provisions of the Act.

Roles in the Process

The agency who owns the original certificate(s) being shared will be considered the originating agency. The agency who is using the originating agency's certificate(s) will be considered the receiving agency. The receiving agency will also likely have an HR POC and a Hiring Manager involved in the process.

USA Staffing Shared Certificate Process Map

ANNOUNCE

Inform applicants their information may be shared.

Allow applicants to opt-in.

1

CONTACT

Contact original agency to request access to certificates.

Their announcement must state certificates may be shared.

2

GRANT ACCESS

Create "shared customer" allowing you to provide certificate access to receiving agencies.

Add Hiring Manager users who will receive the certificate for the customer.

3

REQUEST

Submit an official request in USA Staffing to the original agency.

Attach all required documentation to the request.

4

APPROVE REQUEST

Approve the receiving agency request and link it to the vacancy in which certificates will be shared. All case file documentation should be uploaded to the request.

5

CREATE CERTIFICATE

Complete audit on original certificate.

Create a certificate with criteria identical to the original and include only applicants who opted in and remove any applicants who have been selected.

6

SHARE CERTIFICATES

Create a certificate review.

Send review to appropriate users in Shared Customer list.

7

NOTIFY APPLICANTS

Send notification to applicants on shared certificates letting them know their application is being shared.

8

ACCESS CERTIFICATE

Once certificate review is received, open the certificate and review applications.

9

ANNOUNCE INTERNALLY

If a selection will be made from the certificates, provide notice of available position to internal employees. Announcement period must be ten (10) days.

10

SELECTION DECISION

Document selection decisions by marking applicants as selected, not selected, declined, or one of many other options.

11

COMPLETE

Retain a copy of the certificate and its actions in a case file.

Begin the onboarding process.

12

■ **Original Agency Activities**

■ **Receiving Agency Activities**

1.0 Guidance for the Originating Agency

Steps to take before announcing a position for which you intend to share certificates

ADMIN

Add the appropriate language into your announcement templates.

1. Go to the Admin Section of the system.

2. In the Templates section, select Manage Announcement Templates.

3. Select the template you will use when announcing a vacancy that may ultimately be shared with another agency. At this point you may also choose to create a new template, or copy an existing template.

4. We suggest adding the following language into the "How You Will Be Evaluated" section of the announcement:

   Applicants referred for selection consideration for this position may be shared with other Federal agencies at their request. You may choose to opt in of having your information shared with other agencies when applying for this position. If an agency requests a copy of a certificate you are on, you will be notified.

How You Will Be Evaluated

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Experience refers to paid and unpaid experience, including volunteer work done through National Service programs (e.g., Peace Corps, AmeriCorps) and other organizations (e.g., professional; philanthropic; religions; spiritual; community; student; social). Volunteer work helps build critical competencies, knowledge, and skills and can provide valuable training and experience that translates directly to paid employment. You will receive credit for all qualifying experience, including volunteer experience.

Applicants referred for selection consideration for this position may be shared with other agencies at their request. If an agency requests a copy of a certificate that you are on, you will be notified. You may choose to opt out of having your information shared with other agencies when applying for this position.

Add an item to your announcement item library that will allow applicants to opt in or out.

1. Go to the Admin Section of the system.
2. In the Libraries section, select Manage Announcement Items.
3. Click Create New Item.
4. Enter "Shared Certificates – Opt In" as the Item Header.
5. In the Required drop down, select Yes.
6. Select your office from the Owning Office dropdown options.
7. Insert any Tags as applicable.
8. In the Item Stem, insert the following language:

   Certificates of Eligible Applicants for this position may be shared with other Federal agencies at their request. If your information is shared with another agency, you will be notified. Do you authorize the sharing of your information with other Federal agencies? If you respond "No" to this question, your information will not be shared and you will not be considered for employment by the requesting agency.

9. Select Yes/No from the Response Type dropdown options.

Create a shared customer that will allow you to provide receiving agencies access to reviews.

1. Go to the Admin Section of the system.
2. In the Maintenance section, select Manage Customers.
3. Click Create Customer.
4. In the Customer Information section,
   a. Enter your agency name followed by "Shared Customer" as the Internal and External Customer Name.
   b. In the CDPF Organization, select your organization.
   c. In the CDPF Agency, select your agency.
   d. Enter your agency information in the Address, City, Country, State, Zip Code, and Phone Number fields.
5. In the Account Settings section select your Organization and Office from the dropdown items.
6. Leave the information in the Onboarding Defaults subtab blank.

Create a notification template to inform applicants their information is being shared.

1. Go to the Admin Section of the system.
2. In the Templates section, select Manage Notification Templates.
3. Click Create Template.
4. Name the template "Shared Certificate Notification."
5. In the Template Description enter "Applicant Notification – Application shared with outside agency."
6. Select Staffing from the Notification Purpose Dropdown options.
7. Select Custom from the Notification Dropdown options.
8. Select your office as the Owning Office.
9. Insert any Tags as applicable.
10. In the subject line, enter "Application Shared for" and use the data insert to enter the Announcement Number.
11. In the Body Text, enter the following:

   This notification is to inform you that your application for [Announcement Number Data Insert] has been shared with another Federal agency. As stated in the announcement, "Applicants referred for selection consideration for this position may be shared with other agencies at their request."
   When applying, you selected "Yes" as your response to the following question, "Do you authorize the sharing of your information with other Federal agencies?" If the agency chooses to interview you, they will contact you directly.

Template Information

Template Name *
Shared Certificate Notification

Template Description *
Applicant Notification - Application shared with outside agency

Notification Purpose *	Notification Type *	Owning Office *
Staffing	Custom	Program Office

Tags
Program Office

Subject Line *
Application Shared for Announcement Number

Body Text *

Hello,

This notification is to inform you that your application for has been shared with an external agency. As stated in the announcement, "Applicants referred for selection consideration for this position may be shared with other agencies at their request. If an agency requests a copy of a certificate that you are on, you will be notified. You may choose to opt out of having your information shared with other agencies when applying for this position." When applying, you selected "Yes" as your response to the following question "Certificates of Eligible Applicants for this position may be shared with other agencies at their request. If your information is shared with another agency, you will be notified. Do you authorize the sharing of your information with other agencies? If you respond "No" to this question, your information will not be shared and you will not be considered for employment by the requesting agency". If the agency chooses to interview you, they will contact you directly.

Available Data Inserts
+ Applicant
+ Hiring Office and Customer
+ Vacancy/Announcement

ANNOUNCEMENT

Shared Certificates – Opt In Announcement Item

1. On the Announcement tab, Announcement Questionnaire subtab, hover your mouse over the Preferences Section.
2. From the Add To Preferences drop down that appears on the far right side of the section, select Item From Library.
3. Select Shared Certificates – Opt In from the list.
4. Click Add Selected.

Shared Certificates Announcement Template

1. When clicking into the Announcement Text subtab of the Announcement tab, the Choose Template Popup Box appears.
2. Select the applicable template containing the shared certificates language in the Who May Apply Section.

Sharing Certificates

GRANT ACCESS
Provide Access to the Receiving Agency

1. Go to the Admin Section of the System.
2. In the Users & Permissions section, select Manage Users.
3. Click Create User.
4. Enter the required information in the User Information Section.
5. Select Hiring Manager User from the User Type dropdown options.
6. Select your Agency's Shared Customer from the Customer/Office dropdown options.
7. Select Standard Hiring Manager User from the Permission Profile dropdown options, or custom permission profile as applicable.

8. Navigate to your vacancy in the Staffing section of the system.
9. Click the Position Information Subtab of the Vacancy Tab.
10. Add the Shared Customer by clicking the Customers Box and selecting the Shared Customer from the dropdown options.
11. Save.

APPROVE REQUEST
Approving the Request submitted by the receiving agency

1. Inform the receiving agency they now have access to submit a request to you in the system.
2. Once the agency has submitted the request, locate it on the Request Dashboard.
3. Open the request.
4. Review the information, as applicable.
5. On the Staffing Approach tab, link the request to the Vacancy from which you will share the certificate(s).
6. When ready, approve the request.

CREATE CERTIFICATE
Creating the Shared Certificate

Note: You may not share a certificate until your agency has completed the audit for the original certificate(s) being shared.

1. Navigate to the Applicant Overview Tab.
2. Click Create List.
3. Select the Category Rating Certificate Type.
4. Select the same Ordering Criteria and Filters used to issue the previous certificate.
5. Select the AC option from the Status (RSC) filter to eliminate applicants who have been Hired and only include those who were previously referred.
6. Click the plus sign next to Advanced Criteria.
7. Name the filter "Opt out."
8. Select the Shared Certificates – Opt In question from the Item dropdown options.
9. Select Response Item "Yes."
10. Click Apply.
11. Issue the certificate

NOTIFY APPLICANTS

1. Navigate to the Certificates tab.
2. Open the certificate(s).
3. Click the select all checkbox to the left of the applicant list.
4. If there are multiple pages, be sure to click the link to select all applicant records.
5. From the apply action dropdown, select "Send Notifications."
6. Select the "Shared Certificate Notification" template name from the list.
7. Click Send Notification.
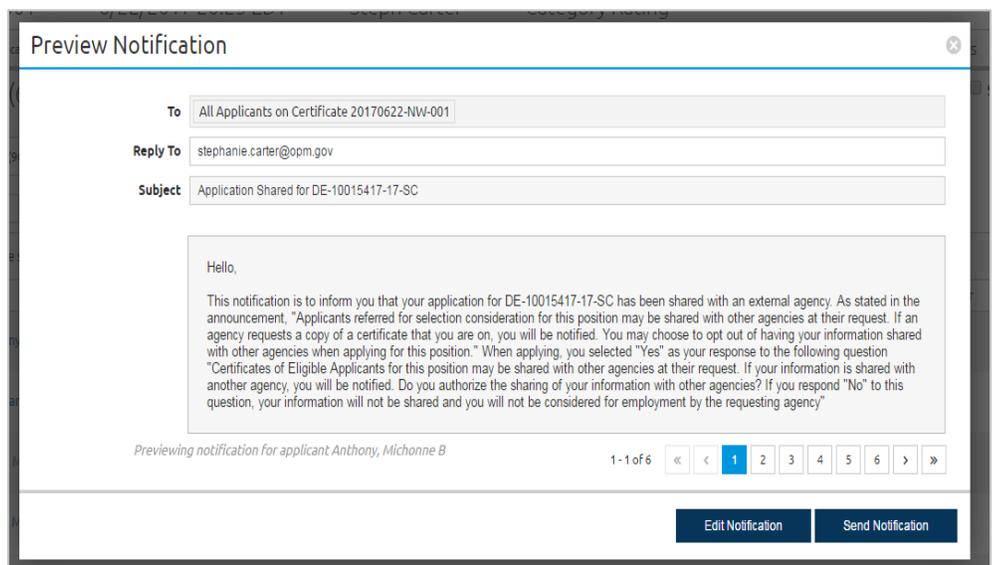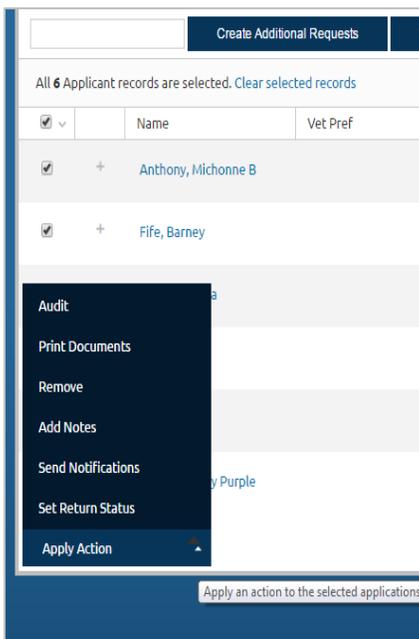
SHARE CERTIFICATES

Creating the Shared Certificate Review

1. Navigate to the certificates tab.
2. Select the certificate(s) from the list.
3. Click the Certificate Information subtab.
4. In the Instructions box, insert the original certificate number and date of issuance and information indicating the certificate is shared and the names of the selected applicants and those who chose to opt out have been removed. Suggested language to use:

    Original Certificate Number: [Insert as appropriate]

    Original Certificate Issuance Date: [Insert as appropriate]

    This certificate is shared. Selected applicants and applicants who opted out of having their applications shared have been removed from the list.

Certificate Number	Issued	Issued By	Certificate Type
20170622-NW-001	6/22/2017 20:23 EDT	Steph Carter	Category Rating

Applicant List | **Certificate Information** | ⚙ 🖨 💬 Notes ⓪ | 🗐 History

Certificate Details

Rank By	Rating (exclude Veteran Points)
Priority Order	Category Rating Rules
Refer Method	Top Category (Best Qualified)
Order	Name
Tie Breaker	None
Applicant List Name	Stored List

Display Preferences

☑ Final Rating
☑ Category Rating
☑ Rating Details
☑ Veteran's Preference
☑ Eligibilities
☑ Assessment Questionnaire

Instructions

[Toolbar: ✂ ⧉ 🗐 🗐 🗐 ↩ ↪ | B I U Iₓ | ☰ ☷ | 🔗 🔗 Ω | 247 *of* 5000]

Original Certificate Number - 20170621-NW-001
Original Certificate Date of Issuance - June 21, 2017

This certificate is shared. Selected applicants and applicants who opted out of having their applications shared have been removed from the list.

5. Click the Gear icon.
6. Select Create Review.

7. Enter a Review Name.
8. Enter a due date that is no more than 240 days from the initial issuance date of the originally issued certificate.
9. The Auto Recall Date should mirror the review due date.
10. In the review instructions, enter:

    This review contains shared certificates. The certificates will expire 240 days from the original date of issuance. The original certificate numbers are (insert original certificate number(s)). Please annotate your selection decisions and return the certificates within the system when complete.
11. Click Add Request.
12. Add the Receiving Agency's request number and save.

13. Navigate to the Review Assignments subtab.
14. Click add reviewer.
15. Search for and select the receiving Agency's Hiring Manager user account from the list.
16. Save and close.
17. Click Send Review.

Auditing the shared certificate

1. Navigate to the certificate tab.
2. Open the certificate.
3. Select applicant with the Audit Code Selected.
4. Select Set Return Status from the Apply Action dropdown.
5. Select "Hired" and choose the Receiving Agency's request number from the Request Number dropdown.
6. Save and Close.
7. Use the caret next to the Select All dropdown box to Select Applicants without Return Status Codes.
8. In the Set Return Status pop-up, select Available.
9. Save and Close.

2.0 Guidance for the Receiving Agency
Requesting certificates from the originating agency

The receiving agency should determine who will play a part in the process from both the HR and Hiring Manager(s) perspective before participating in the shared certificate process.

CONTACT
Indicate interest and receive access to the originating agency

1. Contact the originating agency via email or phone and indicate interest in receiving shared certificates from them.
2. If you do not currently have a Hiring Manager User account with the originating agency they will need to create one for you at this time.
3. After the access is granted, log into the system. If you have an account in multiple tenants or with multiple user types, be sure you are logging in to the originating agency's tenant as a **Hiring Manager User**.

REQUEST
Create and submit a request to the originating agency

When logged in to the originating agency's tenant as a Hiring Manager User

1. Click the Request Hiring Action button.
2. Select "Additional Selection" from the Type of Hiring Request Dropdown.
3. In the Hiring Action Number box, enter your agency request number followed by "–shared."
   Note: *You must add "–shared" to avoid issues with duplicate request numbers in the future.*
4. Select the appropriate "Shared Customer" in the Requesting Customer dropdown.
5. Select "No" for "Do you want to use the Position Description from the original Request?"
6. Click "Add Manually" to enter your position description information.
7. Enter your position description information in the Add Position Description pop up and click "Add."
8. Enter the location information and save.
9. Click Submit to HR and notify the originating agency that the request has been submitted.

Attaching documentation to a request

Documentation may be attached to the request at any point in the process. You may choose to upload the paper copy of the request, correspondence between agencies, and correspondence between hiring managers and applicants.

1. Open the request.
2. Click the Documents button.
3. Click Choose File.
4. Select a File.
5. Click Upload.
6. Once the file has been processed, it will be viewable by anyone who has access to the request, including the original agency.

After shared certificate(s) has been received

REVIEW AND NOTIFY

Access the review in which the shared certificate(s) were sent to you

1. Locate the review in the Reviews section.
2. Click the review name to open the review.
3. Click the certificate(s) you want to review.

Notifying applicants they have been shared with another agency

There are two options for notifying applicants about being "shared" on a certificate with another agency.

1. Request the originating agency notify applicants on your behalf
   1a. Contact the originating agency and request they send a notification to applicants who opted in to being shared on a certificate with another agency.
   1b. If you have specific language to be used in the notification, provide it to the originating agency so they can include it in the template they use for this purpose.
   1c. The originating agency selects all referred applicants and sends notifications directly from the shared certificate(s).
   1d. A copy of the notification is kept in each applicant's individual record.
2. Manually notify all applicants via email
   2a. Pull email addresses from each applicant's submitted documentation (Resume).
   2b. Enter all email addresses into an email notifying applicants their application was shared.
   2c. Send email(s).
   2d. Save a PDF copy of the email(s) and upload to the Request Case File Documents.

CERTIFICATE(S)

Review referred applicants

Within the certificate(s), review applicant documentation, add applicant notes and toggles, view applicant assessment questionnaire responses, eligibility claims and adjudications.

If a selection will be made, the step outlined below must happen first, if not previously completed.

ANNOUNCE THE VACANCY INTERNALLY, as applicable

Before selecting an applicant(s) from the certificate(s), your agency must announce the vacancy internally for 10 days

An agency seeking to use another agency's certificate(s) to make a selection must have first provided notice of the available vacancy to its own employees, give them up to 10 days to apply, and review their qualifications before a selection can be made from the certificate from an outside agency.

Note: The announcement open period may not exceed 10 days. The law does not permit an internal application period beyond 10 days to satisfy this requirement. Store all documents and selection decisions related to the shared certificate in the vacancy case file for audit purposes.

CERTIFICATE(S)
Documenting Selection Decisions
Document Selection Decision for applicants as normal. If you will be making multiple selections, continue with the steps outlined here.

A request number may only be used once per selected applicant. If you would like to select multiple applicants, you will need to create additional requests.

1. Enter the number of additional requests needed in the box to the left of the "Create Additional Requests" button.
2. Click "Create Additional Requests."
3. Change the value in the Request Number field to your agency request number followed by "–shared2", "–shared3", etc.
4. Select the appropriate "Shared Customer" in the Customer dropdown.
5. Select the "Make Selection From Existing Certificates" from the Workflow Dropdown.
6. Click Submit to HR.
7. At this point, you will need to contact the sharing agency's HR office so they can approve the request(s). Once the requests are approved, you can assign the additional request number(s) to the additional selected applicant(s).

Return the Review
1. Return to the Review Overview tab.
2. *This step is optional* – Select an approval status from the dropdown.
3. Click the Return to HR button.
NOTE: Once the review is returned by a user, no other users with access to the review can make any changes to the certificate.

Notify Applicants of Non-Selection
Like the options used to Notify Applicants of being shared, you can request the originating agency notify the non-selected applicants of the results of the referral or you can do so manually via email.

CASE FILE
Documenting the shared certificate(s)
It is important that you retain copies of all required documentation associated with the case, including copies of the certificate of eligibles and actions taken, job analysis, job opportunity announcement, and assessment materials developed by the originating agency. After the review has been returned to the originating agency and the case has been closed, you may not be able to access the electronic case file in USA Staffing again.

ONBOARDING A SELECTEE
Manually onboard the new hire(s)

Create an Onboard New Hire request in your own tenant to manually onboard the selected individual(s). Once the request is approved, click the "View New Hire" button and complete the process according to your agency standards.

For additional information or with any questions, please contact your USA Staffing Account Manager.