

## **General Information for Air Reserve Technician (ART) Positions**

### **WHAT IS AN ART POSITION?**

As an Air Reserve Technician (ART), you're a civilian—forty hours a week and you are a reservist in the Air Force Reserve Command (AFRC). As an ART, you work in the best of both worlds. It's a rewarding dual career that can help you progress in your chosen profession, while you advance in military rank. ARTs are full-time civilian employees who are required to serve as members of the Air Force Reserve one weekend a month and at least fourteen days a year of annual training. During the normal five-day workweek, ARTs perform as civilians—maintaining and operating the Reserve facility in direct support of their unit. They work a regular five-day, forty-hour week with overtime and compensatory time off for time over forty hours. They are assigned an equivalent position in the Air Force Reserve, with a comparable military rank and corresponding duties.

### **QUALIFICATIONS**

Applicants to the ART program must meet specific qualifications for Air Force Civilian employment, as well as for active Air Force Reserve duty. You are considered eligible if you meet the following requirements:

1. You are a United States citizen and eligible and willing to join the active Air Force Reserve.
2. You are at least 17 years of age.\*
3. You satisfy appropriate Office of Personnel Management (OPM) qualifications.
4. You meet Air Force Reserve physical requirements.
5. You are not a retired member of the uniformed services ineligible for membership in the active Air Force Reserve.
6. You qualify for the Air Force Reserve position under consideration. All qualified applicants are considered for employment without regard to race, religion, color, sex, national origin, political affiliation, or any other non-merit factor.

### **DISQUALIFICATIONS**

A candidate may be disqualified on the basis of military status and for certain uniform physical disabilities. Retention is dependent upon maintaining active reserve status in the ART position. Loss of reserve status for reasons within your control will provide a basis for your separation and loss of your civil service employment. Contact your local Air Force Reserve recruiter for details at 800-257-1212.

### **PALACE CHASE**

The **PALACE CHASE** program is an early release program which allows active Air Force officers and enlisted members to request transfer from active military service in the [United States Air Force](#) (USAF) to the [United States Air Force Reserve](#) (USAFR). If approved for separation under the Palace Chase program the member's remaining active duty service commitment (ADSC) or term of enlistment is waived in exchange for accepting an extended Selected Reserve (Traditional Reserve/TR) assignment in the Air Force Reserve.

Personnel separating from active military service under the Palace Chase program are required to report to the gaining unit and participate satisfactorily in all Reserve training activities for the duration of the Palace Chase contract. Failure to fulfill the contract could result in administrative action and recall to active duty in the Regular Air Force.

## **PALACE FRONT**

The **PALACE FRONT** program is a transfer program which allows active Air Force officers and enlisted members to transfer from the [United States Air Force](#) (USAF) to the [United States Air Force Reserve](#) (USAFR) into a Selected Reserve (Traditional/TR) billet the day after separation from the Air Force non-PALACE CHASE, normally upon completing active duty service commitment (ADSC) or on reaching their Date Of Separation (DOS).

Personnel transitioning to a Selected Reserve (Traditional/TR) billet under the PALACE CHASE/PALACE FRONT programs also remain eligible and may apply be considered and selected for acceptance into the full-time [Air Reserve Technician \(ART\)](#) program. **Air Reserve Technician (ART)**—Full-time civilian employees who are also members of the Air Force Reserve unit in which they are employed. In addition to their civilian assignments, they are assigned to equivalent positions in the Reserve organization with a Reserve military rank or grade. ARTs must maintain active membership in their Reserve unit of assignment and satisfactory participation in order to keep their ART position.

## **IF APPLYING FOR THE FOLLOWING SERIES: GS-2181, GS-2183, or GS-2185**

You must submit ATAFR Form 209, (dated Jan 95), Supplemental Statement of Aeronautical Qualifications with your application. This form is mandatory for all aircrew positions. Applications filed for aircrew positions without current ATAFR 209 will not be processed until a current ATAFR-209 is received.

## **RETIRED MILITARY**

Retired military are usually ineligible for membership in the Air Force Reserve. Retired military personnel who have active Air Force Reserve assignments may apply provided they show assignment (position and unit) on their application. In order to be considered for an ART position, you must possess a retirement waiver at the time application is submitted to USA Jobs. For questions concerning eligibility, please contact the Air Force Qualification Center at 1-800-257-1212.

## **CIVIL SERVICE BENEFITS**

As an ART, you'll receive a good salary, training and education, the opportunity to travel, and excellent benefits. You'll sharpen your skills as you work with state-of-the art equipment. Perhaps most importantly, you'll have the sense of accomplishment that comes from knowing that what you do makes a difference. Moreover, you'll be on the receiving end of great Air Force civilian employee benefits. You'll receive additional considerations through the Air Force Reserve.

**Good Pay:** We offer a highly competitive salary structure for blue-collar and white-collar skills, plus additional compensation for overtime, night differential and Sunday work.

**Annual and Sick Leave:** For vacations and personal or emergency reasons, employees earn annual leave based upon the number of years they have been in federal civil service plus any creditable military service. Leave accrues at the rate of four hours every two weeks for the first three years of service (13 days per year), six hours for the next twelve years (20 days per year), and eight hours after 15 years of service (26 days per year). Sick leave accrues at the rate of four hours every two weeks (13 days per year) regardless of the length of service. Sick leave can be used for illness, medical appointments, and adoption-related activities. A limited amount of sick leave can also be used for care of a family member for illness or medical appointments, and to make funeral arrangements and attend the funeral of a family member.

**Federal Holidays:** There may be times when other days are declared to be holidays by Federal statute or Executive order. Employees who are excused from duty because a holiday falls within their regular tour of duty are entitled to their basic rate of pay for that day. Employees who are required to work on a holiday are entitled to holiday pay. Generally, an employee who performs holiday work is entitled to pay at his or her rate of basic pay, plus an additional eight hours.

**Retirement:** The dual status of an ART also provides two ways to earn a retirement: from Civil Service, and from the Air Force Reserve. Provided the member remains in good health, and maintains satisfactory participation in the Air Force Reserve, one can be assured of two annuities (Civil Service and Air Force Reserve retirement eligibility is at age 60). Depending on the amount of contribution made throughout one's productive years, this may add up to a very comfortable lifestyle after retirement. The Federal Employees' Retirement System (FERS) is a three-tiered program which provides for Social Security benefits, a Basic Benefit Plan, and a Thrift Savings Plan (TSP). In addition to employee contributions to TSP, the agency will contribute up to an additional 5% of pay to the civilian TSP account. An employee is eligible to voluntarily retire with an unreduced annuity at age 62 with at least five years of service, at age 60 with 20 years of service, or at the Minimum Retirement Age (MRA) (55-57) with 30 years of service. In addition, ARTs who are separated after involuntarily losing military status may be eligible to retire under special retirement provisions prior to reaching these ages and service milestones.

**Medical and Hospital Benefits:** Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB) options include fee-for-service plans and prepaid plans, some with consumer-driven options, and high-deductible health plans. These plans offer a variety of benefits. The cost of the health benefits program is shared by the employee and the Government. Unless waived, the employee's FEHB premiums are withheld from pay pre-tax. Employees elect FEHB upon employment or during annual open seasons.

**Flexible Spending Accounts:** Employees are eligible to contribute pre-tax earnings to flexible spending accounts (FSA) which will reimburse them for out-of-pocket medical and dependent-care expenses. Employees elect to participate in FSAs upon employment and during annual open seasons.

**Long Term Care Insurance:** Employees are eligible to apply for and purchase long-term care insurance for themselves and their eligible dependents to cover costs associated with nursing home or assisted living care, in-home care, hospice care, etc.

**Life Insurance:** Federal Employees Group Life Insurance (FGLI) consists of four types or plans of coverage: Basic Life, Option A – Standard, Option B– Additional, and Option C – Family. An employee must be enrolled in the Basic Life coverage, in order to elect any of the options. The cost of premiums is shared by the employee and the Government. Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance (SGLI) and Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP): The Air Force Reserve is sensitive to the needs of its members regarding financial security for surviving family members. As such, you will be afforded the opportunity to apply for SGLI. With nominal monthly premiums (deducted from your monthly weekend training pay), you can insure yourself for a maximum of \$400,000, or you can elect a lesser amount (premiums will be proportionate to the amount selected). Once a member has attained 20 years of satisfactory service in the Air Force Reserve, this will entitle you to enroll in a SBP, which will also provide you variable options with regard to premiums. Both SGLI and SBP provide our members with the peace of mind that their loved ones will be well provided for.

**Injury Compensation:** The Federal Employees' Compensation Act (FECA) provides monetary compensation, medical care and assistance, vocational rehabilitation, and reemployment rights to Federal employees who sustain disabling injuries as a result of their employment with the Federal Government.

**Training and Education:** ARTs receive on-the-job training. They also receive additional job-related training at other federal agencies and at facilities outside the federal government.

**Promotion Opportunities:** Whenever possible, ART units fill vacancies by promoting their own employees. Promotion programs are designed to make sure that promotions go to the employees who are among the best qualified to fill higher positions.

**Awards and Recognition:** Decorations and honors, as well as cash awards, are given for suggestions and inventions that result in saving money or improved service. Outstanding job performance or other acts which are especially deserving are also rewarded.

**Physical Fitness Program:** The Federal government promotes and supports physical fitness for all its employees. The Air Force has officially endorsed excused absence for physical fitness activities for civilian employees and provided general guidance on this program. Within AFRC, all full-time civilian employees are authorized time for physical fitness activities while in an official duty status. Use of this time is voluntary on the part of the employee. The following conditions apply to the use of such time:

- a. The physical fitness activities will be limited to running, walking, jogging, bicycle riding, weight training, and structured exercises (i.e., push-ups, sit-ups, aerobics, etc.).
- b. A maximum of three hours per week may be used for physical fitness activities.
- c. The three hours per week consists of total time away from the job and includes time for changing clothes, showering, traveling to the exercise location, etc. Physical fitness periods cannot be combined with authorized breaks, but may be done in conjunction with the lunch period.

### **AIR FORCE RESERVE BENEFITS OF EMPLOYMENT**

**Military Leave:** Members of a Reserve or National Guard component are entitled to 120 hours of military leave per year in order to perform military duty. Employees must be on a full-time or part-time work schedule and serving in an appointment that is not limited to one year or less.

Upon request, employees are granted military leave to perform active duty, inactive-duty training, or active duty for training. The 120 hours is credited to an eligible employee's account (pro-rated for part-time employees) on 1 October of each fiscal year or upon appointment. Unused military leave remaining from the prior fiscal year, not to exceed 120 hours, is also credited.

Military leave is charged on an hourly basis. No charge is made for non-workdays at the beginning and end of a period of absence on military duty. All intervening non-workdays, including holidays, falling within the period covered by the orders are not charged to military leave.

**USERRA:** The Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act of 1994 (USERRA), provides reemployment protection and other benefits for employees who perform military service. Under USERRA, if a military member leaves their civilian job for service in the uniformed services, they are entitled to return to the job, with accrued seniority, provided they meet the law's eligibility criteria. USERRA applies to voluntary as well as involuntary service, in peacetime as well as wartime, and to virtually all civilian employers, including the Federal government, State and local governments, and private employers, regardless of size. Civil Service employees who perform military duty are placed in a special leave without pay uniformed service category (LWOP-US) if they choose not to use paid leave. Use of LWOP-US ensures:

- All pay changes occurring during LWOP-US, are credited without penalty upon return to duty (RTD).
- Continuation of health benefits for up to 24 months if the employee chooses.
- Automatic continuation of life insurance continues for up to 12 months.
- Voluntary contributions to a military Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) account and the opportunity to make up missed contributions to the civilian account upon return to civilian duty.
- Full credit towards retirement eligibility, annuity computation, and high-3 average salary if a military deposit is completed.

**Marketable Training in Private Industry:** As an Air Force Reservist, you are afforded the opportunity to obtain a wide variety of training skills needed to perform your military job. However, did you know a lot of this training is highly marketable in private industry? It's true! Imagine a career in information technology, security, communication, or even a specialized medical field. The Air Force Reserve is a great way to achieve your "civilian" career goals and serve your country at the same time.

**Commissary and Base Exchange Privileges:** Your dual-status as a "Citizen Airman" provides you economical advantages by affording you unlimited shopping visits to the Commissary and the Base Exchange. The Commissary provides you a thrifty way to meet your family's food and produce needs at less cost when compared to your local grocery store. At the Base Exchange (BX), you will find "top-of-the-line" named products including clothing, jewelry, audio and video equipment, lawn and garden needs, and a host of family needs. The BX also includes laundry and dry cleaning service, hair and beauty care, and optical shops, as well as other retail services.

**Free Immunizations:** With the rising cost of medical care, many people choose not to keep their immunizations current. As an ART and a member of the Air Force Reserve, this is not an issue, and all immunizations required to keep you healthy and as a ready member of the Air Force Reserve are provided to you at the proper intervals with no charge to the member.

**Montgomery GI Bill-Selected Reserve (MGIBSR) Chapter 1606:** The MGIB-SR Program became effective 1 July 1985. It is not only designed to aid in recruiting but also recognizes the vital role of the Reserve Components in our defense and extends educational benefits to these "Citizen-Service members." Additional, MGIB-SR benefits became to include post graduate study, and courses leading to a second baccalaureate degree, vocational and technical training, on-the-job training and apprenticeship training, flight training (must have private license), correspondence study and independent study.

**Tuition Assistance (TA) Program:** The AFRC TA Program is available to all participating members (for pay and points), and in good standing, of the Air Force Reserve. TA is intended as an educational incentive program for participating selected reserve members. TA is paid on a reimbursable basis, after student pays all school costs and successfully completes the course(s) for which TA was requested and approved. TA is available to Reserve and IMA members for both distance learning and on-campus courses. However, the college or school offering the course(s) must be a National or Regional Accredited Institution and recognized by the U.S. Department of Education (USDE). If the educational institution does not appear in the directory, have the member ask for proof of accreditation in writing or contact the accrediting body in their region to verify if accreditation exists. The educational institution does not qualify if they have applied for accreditation, lose their accreditation, or have not yet received authorization of accreditation. Accrediting bodies can be found at <http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ope/index.html>.

**Space Available (or Space "A") Travel:** If you have a desire to travel to distant lands, why not check into military travel? As a member of the Air Force Reserve, you have the benefit of traveling on military aircraft provided there is space available to you. With training and missions taking place all over the globe, there are countless opportunities to "jump on board" and take advantage of some free travel. One word of caution though, the operative phrase here is "space available." There must be available space to afford you the opportunity to travel via military aircraft, and that is for both the initial travel and the return travel. Have a contingency if you are able to hop aboard at no cost, but cannot find the available space for the return trip. Overseas TDY opportunities: ARTs are part of a ready force; one that is prepared to respond to training needs and the needs of foreign nations. Hence, temporary duty (TDY) is a staple of the Air Force Reservist. In today's environment, there are plenty of opportunities for our members to volunteer for overseas duty. So if a motivating factor for you is to see the world, then the Air Force Reserve is for you.