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Regulations governing eligibility for preference in employment in the Bureau of Indian Affairs were published January 17 in the Federal Register, Interior Assistant Secretary Forrest Gerard announced today.

The regulations define the term "Indian" for purposes of initial hire, promotion, transfers and all other appointments to vacancies in the Bureau.

Those persons entitled to Indian preference, according to the regulations are:

* Members of any recognized Indian tribe now under Federal jurisdiction;

* Descendants of such members who were, on June 1, 1934, residing within the present boundaries of any Indian reservation;

* All others of one-half or more Indian blood of tribes indigenous to the United States;

* Eskimos and other aboriginal people of Alaska; and

* For the next three years from the effective date of these regulations, a person of at least one-quarter degree Indian ancestry of a currently federally recognized tribe whose rolls have been closed by an Act of Congress.

The proposed regulations have a grandfather clause which protects all persons employed by the Bureau of the effective date of these regulations who received preference in any previous appointment. They will continue to be preferences eligible so long as they are continuously employed by the Bureau.

These regulations implement a long-standing Federal policy which was clarified and strengthened by a 1974 Supreme Court decision.

These regulations are effective 30 days after publication.