

New Employee Handbook



Presented by Desert Mountain Civilian
Personnel Advisory Center – Fort
Bliss, Texas Branch

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DESERT MOUNTAIN CIVILIAN PERSONNEL ADVISORY CENTER
Servicing Fort. Bliss, TX and White Sands Missile Range, NM

Welcome to the Federal Service. You are now one of approximately 6,000 civilian employees working at Fort Bliss, TX and employed in one of over 250 different occupations. We hope that you find your work here both challenging and rewarding.

The Civilian Personnel Advisory Center stands ready to provide our customers with professional and timely guidance and assistance in all personnel matters. This booklet is designed to give you general information on various services we provide, and some points of contact to get you started.

We look forward to assisting you!

ARLENE SAMBRANO
Director, Desert Mountain
Civilian Personnel Advisory
Center

Army Civilian Corps Creed

I am an Army Civilian – a member of the Army Team

I am dedicated to the Army, its Soldiers and Civilians

I will always support the mission

I provide stability and continuity during war and peace

I support and defend the Constitution of the United States
and consider it an honor to serve the Nation and its Army

I live the Army values of Loyalty, Duty, Respect, Selfless
Service, Honor, Integrity, and Personal Courage

I am an Army Civilian

Fort Bliss, Texas

Located in El Paso, Texas, Fort Bliss is the “Home of America’s Tank Division”, 1st Armored Division – “Old Ironsides”, 11th Air Defense Artillery Brigade, and the 5th Army Brigade. It also hosts the Army’s Sergeants Major Academy. The post has 1.12 million acres of land that stretches from the western tip of Texas north into New Mexico which makes it the second largest U.S. Army Installation.

Fort Bliss has a long and storied history that dates back to 7 November 1848 when War Department General Order Number 58 directed the establishment of a post in the vicinity of El Paso del Norte. This action was taken to defend American interests along the border as well as to safeguard settlers taking the southern route to California. During the years which followed, Fort Bliss served the Nation as a strategic outpost and home to a variety of military organizations to include the 1st Cavalry Division and elements of the 8th Infantry Regiment, 25th Infantry Regiment, 4th Cavalry Regiment, and 8th Cavalry Regiment (to name a few). Well into the 1900’s, the Soldiers assigned to these regiments served with distinction patrolling the West Texas-New Mexico Region to protect settlers and the local community from Indians and bandits.

In 1940, the installation witnessed the arrival of its first Coastal Artillery Soldiers. This event placed Fort Bliss on an evolutionary path which eventually resulted in its designation as the United States Army Air Defense Artillery School and Center (1 July 1957). The post’s identity as the “Home of Air Defense” remained until 2005 when the Base Realignment and Closure Commission (later enacted as legislation) directed the re-stationing of the USAADASCH to Fort Sill, Oklahoma. Along with the movement of the Air Defense Artillery School, came a major shift in the primary focus of the installation – from training individual Soldiers as a Training and Doctrine Command school to providing combat ready units (supporting contingency operations) as part of the Forces Command footprint. Fort Bliss is home to America’s Tank Division, the 1st Armored Division.

The 2005 BRAC Commission clearly recognized the vast underutilized potential of Fort Bliss to achieve Army Campaign Plan objectives. In fact, after the 2005 BRAC Commission review (the most comprehensive analysis to date), the Commission ranked Fort Bliss as the installation of highest military value within the Department of the Army. This conclusion was based on the installation’s unique characteristics as well as its exceptional capabilities as a power projection platform, joint training center, and testing / research facility. Fort Bliss is currently ranked #1 in military value, and is one of two active Mobilization Force Generation Installations and home to the only CONUS Replacement Center.

Respect to the Flag

As a military installation, both locations conduct Reveille, the raising of the Flag, and Retreat, the lowering of the Flag, on a daily basis. You will hear the bugle call for Reveille at 6:30 AM and Retreat at 5:00 PM, as they are broadcasted thru the installation's public announcement system.

During these brief ceremonies, as a sign of respect for our American Flag, you should stop, face the flag, and stand at attention until Reveille or Retreat has finished playing. If you are in your car, you should stop on the side of the road during the duration of the bugle call. Civilians are encouraged, but not required, to exit their vehicles and place their hands over their hearts. Service members must exit their vehicles and salute the flag. You may proceed at the conclusion of the ceremony.

Failure to follow these directions may result in a receiving a traffic violation.

At a parade or review ceremony, as the flag passes by you should stand at attention and face the flag. Also any time the National Anthem or To the Colors is played you should stand, face the flag, and place your right hand over your heart. Gentlemen should remove their hats.

Code of Ethics

Public Service is a public trust. Each employee has a responsibility to the United States Government and its citizens to place loyalty to the Constitution, laws and ethical principles above private gain. No employee shall engage either directly or indirectly in any action which conflicts with official duties, represents any private interest, discloses confidential information, obtains privileges for self or others, or benefits financially. To ensure that every citizen can have complete confidence in the integrity of the Federal Government, each employee shall respect and adhere to the principles of ethical conduct set forth in Department of Defense Regulation 5500.7- R, Joint Ethics Regulation.

About Your Federal Employment

Many people believe that the Federal workplace is one that is filled with acronyms, codes and mystery when it comes to understanding your job status and benefits. We want to get you started on the right foot—provide a foundation from the beginning—this handbook is not intended to provide all the circumstances for all situations. We would like to think of it as the ground floor that you can build from.

The one document that you will receive once you are appointed is the SF50—Notification of Personnel Action. This is a very important document which gives you a lot of very important information such as the type of appointment you are on, what retirement system you are covered by, what your service computation date is, etc. You should establish a personal file to keep all of your SF50's, other forms regarding your benefits (life insurance, health insurance, thrift savings plan), as well as your Leave and Earnings Statements (LES). Your electronic Official Personnel File (eOPF) contains a history of your employment—all of your SF 50's, election forms, and other pertinent information. However, it is still important that you maintain your own file.

Type of Appointment

Basically there are only two categories of appointments, temporary or permanent. There are many types of appointments within each of the categories, such as excepted service, indefinite, term, career, and career- conditional that have been established to meet the needs of the agency.

Temporary Appointments

If your SF 50, in block 5B, states Temporary Appointment (NTE date), it means that you are serving on an appointment not to exceed (NTE) a certain date. Temporary appointments are normally NTE one year. You will be eligible for Health Benefits, however, you are NOT eligible for retirement coverage or life insurance. (Block 30 of SF 50 will have a 2 in it which means no retirement coverage.) You do pay a Social Security wage tax of 6.2%. If you become covered by retirement in the future, temporary service will be credited for leave, reduction-in-force, and required time for vesting in the government contribution to the Thrift Savings Plan (TSP).

Another type of temporary appointment is TERM appointment. It is still an appointment of limited time, but it is made for a specific period exceeding 1 year to 6 years and may be authorized to extend to up to 8 years. In contrast, term appointments are covered by the Federal Employee Retirement System (FERS) and you will be eligible for health and life insurance. (Block 30 on your SF 50 will show a —K) You will pay a 6.2% Social Security wage tax.

Permanent Appointments

This means there is no time limitation with your appointment. You are covered by retirement and are eligible for health and life insurance. There are many types of permanent appointments such as a career-conditional appointment, which means that you are on a permanent appointment but you have not met the service requirement for career tenure. Career tenure is reached after a 3-year period of substantially continuous, creditable service.

Probationary Period

You are required to serve a probationary period when appointed under a career or career-conditional appointment. The appointment SF 50 will have a statement in the remarks section which states Appointment is subject to completion of a two year (three-year for employees appointed under the Laboratory Demonstration Project) initial probationary period beginning (date). During this probationary period, an agency may terminate an employee because work performance or conduct fails to demonstrate fitness or qualifications for continued employment. The termination may not be appealed during probationary periods unless the appeal is based on discrimination or improper procedures.

Tour of Duty – Hours worked

You will have to discuss your actual schedule with your supervisor as it will be based on mission requirements. Your supervisor may allow you to work on an Alternate Work Schedule or Flexible Work Schedule. This flexibility is determined by your supervisor. Your supervisor has the authority to approve or disapprove requested work hours based on mission requirements.

Civilian Personnel Advisory Center (CPAC)

The CPAC is the primary point of contact for matters concerning all personnel issues. We advise managers on issues concerning staffing, labor/management employee relations, position management, and classification. When employees have questions, their first point of contact should always be their supervisor. If your supervisor cannot answer your question, he/she will use the chain of command for advice. Employees who wish to call or visit the CPAC personally, are encouraged to call to make an appointment in advance.

DoD Identification Common Assess Card (CAC)

As a newly hired Federal employee, you will need a CAC to assess the installation and your computer. Your supervisor may contact this official the second day of your employment to verify that your record was input and your personnel record was established. Prior to going to the CAC office, you will be required to establish an Army Knowledge Online (AKO) email account. Your supervisor or Administrative representative will assist you in completing this requirement. The CAC office is located in Bldg 505. Appointments may be made on line at <https://rapids-appointments.dmdc.osd.mil>. You may also call (915) 569-6036. You will need to bring two forms of Identification.

Civilian Personnel On-Line (CPOL)

You have 24/7 access to your employment information on the CPOL, go to the Employee tab, <https://acpol.army.mil>.

The screenshot displays the CPOL web application interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with tabs for HOME, EMPLOYEE, HR SPECIALIST, and REPORTS. Below this, the main content area is divided into several panels. A red circle highlights the 'SF50 Information' panel, which contains the following links:

- E-OFF APF - Electronic Official Personnel Folders/Appropriated Fund
- E-OFF NAF - Electronic Official Personnel Folders/Non-Appropriated Fund
- MyBiz+ - Online access to Personnel Actions, Position, Performance

Other panels visible include 'My Position Description (PD)', 'Employee Data (v8.36)', 'My Links', and 'Automation'. The 'My Links' panel has a form for adding links with fields for Label and Link URL, and an 'Add Link' button. The 'Automation' panel lists links for eOFF - Appropriated Fund Employees, eOFF - Non Appropriated Fund (NAF) Employees, and Army Benefits Center - Civilian (ABC-C).

myBiz+

Self Help website that permits you to access your personnel information. Here, you are able to review your Electronic Official Personnel File (eOPF), personnel action history, position description and performance evaluations.

Electronic Official Personnel File (eOPF)

The eOPF is a file containing records that cover an individual's employment history. The long-term records included in the file are chosen to protect the legal and financial rights of the Government and the employee. You have access to all the documents in your eOPF electronically through the myBiz+ website.

Position Description (PD)

The position description is the key document used in determining the appropriate classification and level of a position. The duties for the position you occupy, are periodically reviewed to make sure the duties you are performing are needed, correctly described, and graded properly. This review is required by higher headquarters and is made by your supervisor in conjunction with the Civilian Personnel Operations Center.

Rates of pay are based on the grade level assigned to a position. Grades and titles of positions are based upon the duties and responsibilities assigned by the supervisor of that position and are determined by U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) Classification Standards. The volume of work is not a grade determination factor. If you have questions about your grade, title, duties and responsibilities you should discuss them with your supervisor. It is very important that the work you do on a regular and recurring basis is identified in your job description. If it is not, bring the situation to your supervisor's attention.

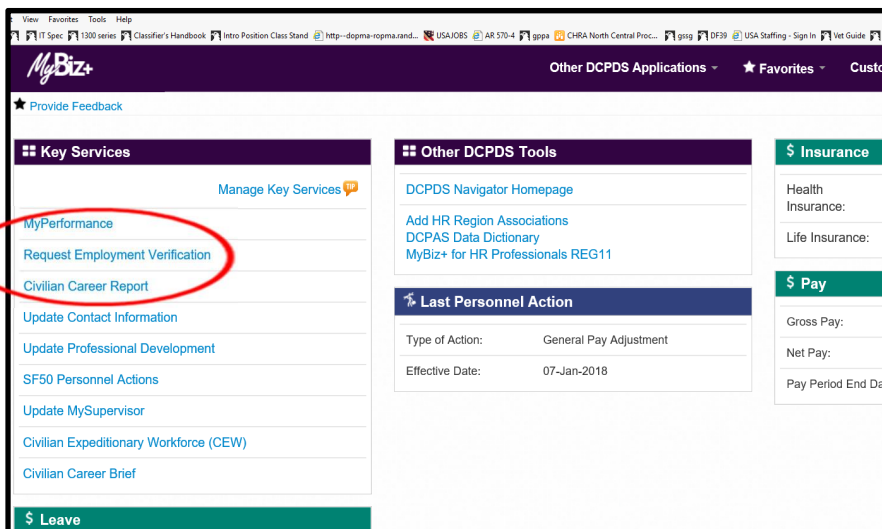
SF-50 information

The SF-50, Notification of Personnel Action, is used to document employment actions, such as promotions, reassignments, pay adjustments, etc. Your SF-50 History will only be current up to September 27, 2007. You will have to go into your eOPF in myBiz+ to view any actions processed after this date. Please note, that there may be times where two actions are processed with the same effective date, such as, With in Grade Increases and Promotions. The SF-50s will be in consecutive order with the most recent SF-50 listed first. Remember, we are one pay period behind, and there is some lag time from the time an action is processed and the time the SF-50 is posted. The Processing Center has 12 days from the effective date to process an action. So, please don't panic when you don't see the SF-50 the date your promotion is effective.

Employment Verification for current employees

Employment verification is completed through the **MyBiz+** website. You will find the Request Employment Verification under the Key Services.

This feature allows you to provide your employment and salary information within a matter of minutes. It is a fast, secure service used for mortgage applications, reference checks, loan applications, and apartment leases. This is a quick and accurate method to provide required proof of employment information. Please note written requests for verifications are no longer being processed as of December 4, 2000. See screen shot on next page.



Pay Information/Systems

There are several major Pay Systems: General Schedule (GS), Federal Wage System, and various demonstration projects.

General Schedule (GS): Sometimes called the Classification Act system, is one of the three statutory systems covered by 5 United States Code (U.S.C.) §5301. 5 U.S.C. §5301 establishes the policy of equal pay for substantially equal work and comparability of Federal pay rates with those in private enterprise. General Schedule employees are classified in accordance with the procedures prescribed by Chapter 51, and a range of pay rates or steps is established for each of these grades through the procedures prescribed by Chapter 53. Revisions of General Schedule pay rates are promulgated by Executive orders and are subsequently published in salary tables by Office of Personnel Management (OPM).

GS has 15 grades with 10 steps within each grade. Salary is based on a world-wide rate chart with locality differentials.

The General Schedule pay system covers the largest group of civilian white-collar Federal employees and is identified by the pay plan codes.

The most common codes are:

- GS - Employees covered by the General Schedule classification and pay system established under the Classification Act of 1949, as amended. (5 U.S.C. chapter 53, subchapter III, and 5 CFR part 531)
- GP - Physicians and dentists covered by the General Schedule classification system and GS base pay ranges who receive title 38 market pay instead of locality pay (formerly GS).
- GG – Defense Civilian Intelligence Personnel System (DCIPS) Employees in security - excepted service employees, which means their jobs were not subject to open competition.

Federal Wage Schedules: (falls under the Prevailing Rate Systems category) These are the systems, by which the pay of employees in recognized trades or crafts, or other

skilled mechanical crafts or in unskilled, semiskilled, or skilled manual labor occupations is fixed and adjusted from time to time as nearly as is consistent with the public interest in accordance with prevailing rates, usually on a locality basis. These schedules are provided for in Subchapter IV, Chapter 53, Title 5, U.S.C., and are implemented by Part 532, Title 5, CFR and Office of Personnel Management Operating Manual 532-1.

The Federal Wage System covers the largest groups of civilian blue-collar Federal employees and is identified in in three (3) categories:

- Wage Grade (WG) (nonsupervisory)
- Wage Leader (WL)
- Wage Supervisory (WS)

Salary and Locality rates are developed by Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD).

Demonstration Programs:

OPM has approved the conduct of demonstration projects that are designed to test unique personnel systems and programs. Participating organizations are re-engineering their work processes and have delegated authorities and responsibilities beyond the norm which allow them to waive DOD and Army regulations and policies that would otherwise hinder improved efficiencies and process re-engineering efforts. One of the major initiatives under the demonstration projects is the concept of pay for performance which allows organizations to compensate employees based on their contributions to the organization rather than through established within grade increases. Also the demos use a broad banding grade structure rather than the traditional General Schedule (GS) structure which allows flexibility in moving an employee within the pay band. Other benefits of the projects include streamlined hiring processes, simplified job classification, revised reduction-in-force procedures, expanded training opportunities and sabbaticals.

myPay

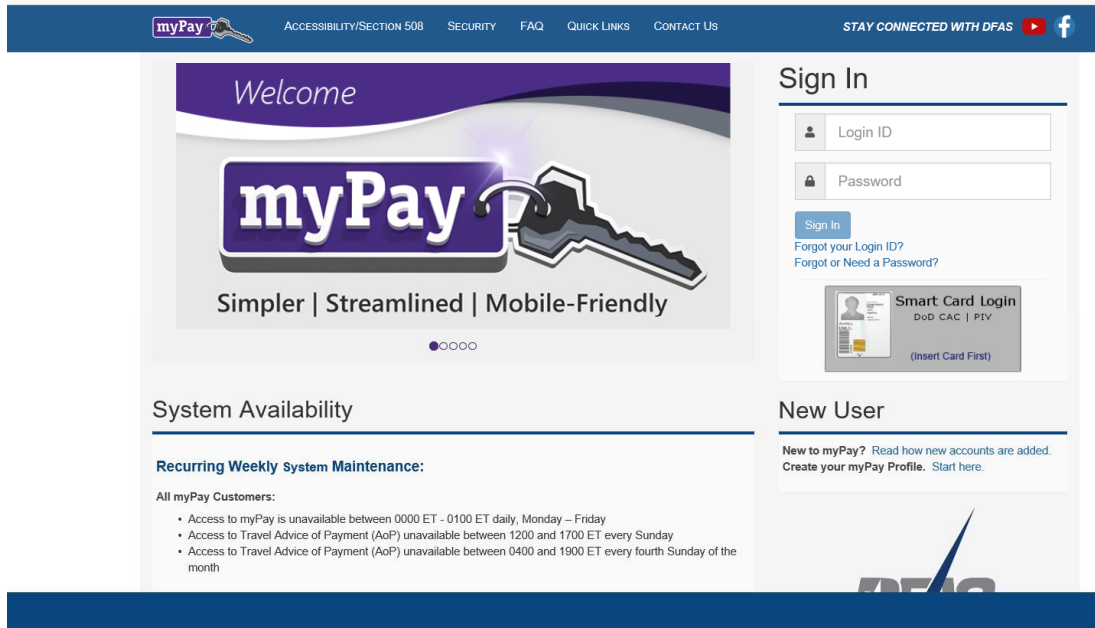
myPay is a web-based system that delivers pay information and allows you to process timely pay-related transactions such as a change of address, allotment changes, and tax changes.

It is a safe and secure site that reduces the risks of identity theft. The system allows members to access electronic W2, LES, and other financial information. The system allows you to view the previous 25 pay periods as well. To view your LES visit the myPay website - <https://mypay.dfas.mil/#/>

As a new Army civilian employee, you would use your Common Access Card (CAC) with a Personal Identity Verification (PIV) and a SmartCard Reader to access myPay after you receive your first pay check by clicking 'SmartCard Login' on the myPay home page. You can click on "How do I get a new password" in the menu on the right side of the home page if you need to reset your password. It is a good idea to establish a user name and password in the event your CAC does not work, you can still access the system.

Leave and Earning Statement (LES)

Your LES is your pay voucher. You will receive an email message stating that your LES is available for you to view the Friday before the payday. The electronic delivery system is automatic. If you wish to receive a hard copy through the regular mail; you must select that option on this web site.



Your LES contains information regarding your earnings for the period such as hourly wage, hours worked, gross pay, deductions, and net pay. It also contains information regarding your Annual and Sick leave such as how much leave you have used for the pay period and the year, and your leave balance.

Civilian employees are paid by the Defense Finance Accounting System (DFAS) located in Denver, Colorado.

Premium Pay consists of overtime pay, night and shift differential pay, and Sunday premium pay will be paid when due if eligible by type of appointment and if your time is properly reported to the payroll office on your time card. For additional information: <https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/pay-leave/work-schedules/factsheets/alternative-flexible-work-schedules/>

You should review your LES each pay period to ensure that your information and deductions are correct. Any errors should be reported to you supervisor or the administrative point of contact in your organization. You can review your Leave and Earnings Statement (LES) online at <https://mypay.dfas.mil/#/> .

Pay Periods

You are required to have your pay deposited directly into your bank account. The pay periods are 2 full weeks, beginning on Sunday and ending on Saturday (14 days) with 26 pay periods in a year. Army civilian employees are paid approximately 10 days after the end of the pay period.

Within Grade Increases (WIGI)

Full time and part time employees who occupy permanent positions classified and paid under the General Schedule (GS) and who are paid less than the maximum rate of their grade are eligible for within grade increases (WIGIs) based on the waiting periods below. For GS employees, an appointment for more than one year is considered permanent for WGI purposes. GS employees serving on appointments with a definite time limit of one year or less are not eligible for WIGIs.

Full time and part time employees classified and paid under the Wage Schedule (WS, WL, and WG) who are paid less than the maximum rate of their grade are eligible for WIGIs based on the waiting periods below, regardless of the length of their appointment.

To receive a WIGI, an employee must have completed the required waiting period and be performing at an acceptable level of competence.

The waiting period for GS employees is as follows:

General Schedule Waiting Periods for Steps	
Grades 2, 3 and 4	52 calendar weeks (1 year)
Grades 5, 6 and 7	104 calendar weeks (2 years)
Grades 8, 9 and 10	156 calendar weeks (3 years)

The waiting period for WG employees is as follows:

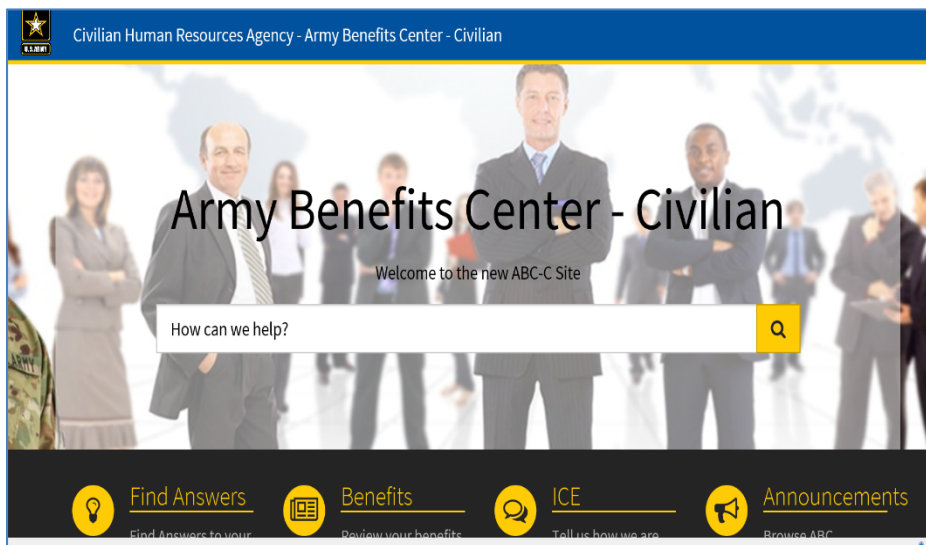
Wage Schedule Waiting Periods for Steps	
Grades 2	26 calendar weeks (6 months)
Grades 3	78 calendar weeks (18 months)
Grades 4 and 5	104 calendar weeks (2 years)

Employee Benefits

Army Benefits Center- Civilians (ABC-C)

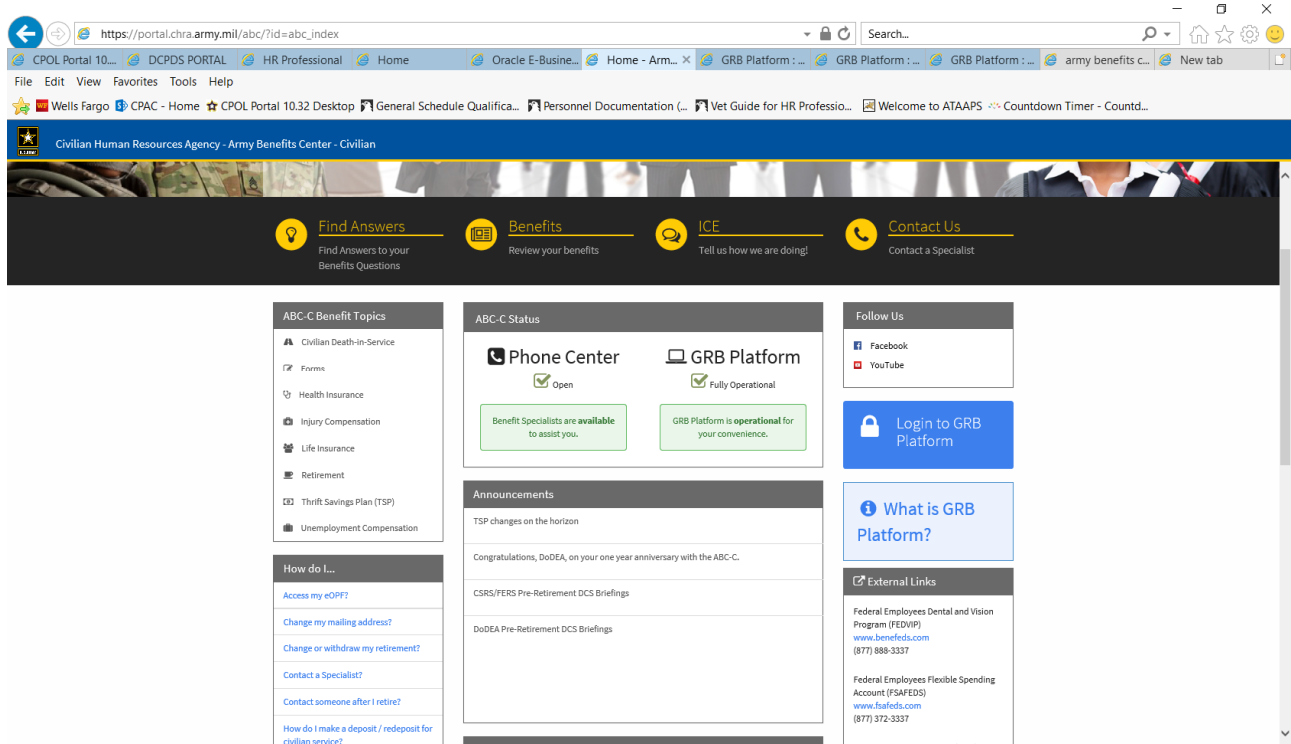
The Army Benefits Center-Civilian (ABC-C), located at Fort Riley, Kansas, provides automated benefits support to the Department of Army (DA) appropriated fund employees through the Government & Retirement Benefits (GRB) Platform and trained benefit counselors. You can link to the Army Benefits Center-Civilian using the following link <https://portal.chra.army.mil/abc/>

ABC-C is an automated system that provides unlimited access to your benefits and entitlements. You can receive personal counseling, process transactions, and obtain general information on retirement, life insurance, health benefits, survivor information, and the Thrift Savings Plan (TSP).



The ABC-C automated system is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The ABC-C home page can be accessed immediately to obtain **general** information regarding your benefit and entitlement options. Approximately 5 days after starting work, you will be able to access either system to make your initial benefit elections. All benefits elections must be made using the automated systems (except where otherwise stated).

To access the Government & Retirement Benefits (GRB) Platform, scroll down the ABC home page. The Login to GRB Platform button is located on the right hand side. Here you will be able to make a benefit elections or get a retirement estimate.



Because you are in control of your benefits and entitlements you are strongly encouraged to:

- ✓ Obtain and keep a copy of each transaction that you make for your records. This can be done by printing the transaction screen on GRB.
- ✓ Verify your transactions within 48 hours of making them by revisiting the website or calling the toll-free telephone number.
- ✓ Make a note of the effective date of your transaction. GRB will inform you of the effective date.

Contact Information for the Army Benefits Center	
Mailing Address:	Army Benefits Center-Civilian 301 Marshall Avenue Ft. Riley, Kansas 66442-5004
Accessing ABC-C website	 https://portal.chra.army.mil/abc/
Counselors are available from 6:00 AM to 6:00 PM Central Time, Monday - Friday to assist you with any issues regarding your benefits and entitlements. Employees can access this system by calling 1-877-276-9287 hearing-impaired (TDD) customers call 1-877-276-9833 FAX number is (785) 239 - 6228 or DSN 856 - 6228.	

Always review your Leave and Earnings Statement (LES), especially if you have made any changes. You want to verify the action has taken effect and the withholding(s) is/are correct. If this information is incorrect, contact ABC-C.

Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB) - <https://portal.chra.army.mil/abc>
Our Personnel Office for benefits is the Army Benefits Center-Civilian (ABC-C), 1-877-276-9287,

Eligible employees must enroll within 60 days of their entrance on duty date in order to have health coverage.

If you fail to elect FEHB within the 60 days you are considered to have declined coverage. You will have to wait until the next open season to make your election. Open season (usually November – December timeframe) provides you with an annual opportunity to enroll in FEHB or to change your coverage.

It will be annotated on your Leave and Earnings Statement (LES) and advertised through your local CPAC. Open season enrollments are effective the first pay period of the new year.

Review the Federal Employees Health Benefits Plan Brochure (RI 70-1) information on FEHB carriers. This brochure can be found on the Office of Personnel Management's (OPM) website at <http://www.opm.gov>. After making an election, your coverage will begin the first day of the following pay period. If you transfer without a break in service, you do not have an opportunity to elect a new plan unless you were enrolled in an HMO, which is not available at the new location.

It is important that you notify your FEHB carrier to report any change of mailing address to ensure that you continue to receive your FEHB card and plan information.

Federal Employees Dental and Vision Insurance Program (FEDVIP)
<https://www.opm.gov/healthcare-insurance/dental-vision/>

The U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) has made arrangements with various companies to provide supplemental dental and vision insurance with competitive premiums to eligible individuals. This site contains important information that eligible individuals and their families need to know about FEDVIP. This site also offers a plan comparison tool that allows you to see the different types of plans available to you in your zip code and then make comparisons between the plans' benefits.

To sign up for dental and vision care programs, go to <https://www.benefeds.com/> or contact a Benefed representative at 1-877-888-FEDS (1-877-888-3337), TTY 1-877-889-5680.

Unlike FEHB, FEDVIP is handled by a third party administrator and your servicing Human Resource Office will not be aware of your enrollment. Please notify the program administrator of any changes such as address, contact information, transfer of employment, or any non-pay status to ensure continuation in the program.

Based on the Supreme Court's decision in Obergefell v. Hodges, published June 26, 2015, all states are now required to allow same-sex couples to marry.

For plan year 2016 and beyond, couples must be married in order to cover (or continue to cover) stepchildren under their FEHB and FEDVIP enrollment. Employees should follow the guidance in BAL 13-211 on how to proceed when states begin to allow same-sex marriage mid-year. Link <https://www.opm.gov/retirement-services/publications-forms/benefits-administration-letters/2013/13-211.pdf>

Federal Employees' Group Life Insurance Program

The Federal Employees' Group Life Insurance (FEGLI) Program is the largest group life insurance program in the world, covering over 4 million Federal employees and retirees, as well as many of their family members. FEGLI does not build up any cash value or paid-up value as it is a term life insurance. It consists of Basic term life insurance coverage and three options. In most cases, if you are a new Federal employee, you are automatically covered by Basic Life Insurance and your payroll office deducts premiums from your paycheck unless you waive the coverage by completing SF Form 2817 through the ABC-C website. You have 60 days from the time of your appointment to decide to waive or elect optional insurance.

To change your life insurance coverage you must:

- Wait for an Open Enrollment which is relatively rare or
- Experience a Life Changing Event such as marriage, birth or adoption of a child, divorce, or death of a spouse.

If you waive Basic Life Insurance you will not be eligible to enroll later unless you meet the following requirements:

- One year has elapsed since the effective date of you last waiver, and
- You furnish, at your own expense, satisfactory medical evidence of insurability.

To acquire any insurance coverage, you must actually be on duty at your workplace and not on annual or sick leave, excused absence, or otherwise absent from duty. You may cancel Basic Life insurance at any time, but if you do so, you will lose all optional insurance at the same time. The cost of Basic insurance is shared between the Government and you. You pay 2/3 of the total cost and the Government pays 1/3. The cost is based on your age and increases in 5 year increments (40, 45, 50 etc.).

The least amount of insurance any eligible employee has is \$10,000 regardless of the salary. Insurance is based on the annual salary rounded to the next thousand dollars plus two thousand dollars. Example: salary is \$49,206 per year, the insurance coverage would be rounded to \$50,000 + \$2,000 which totals \$52,000.

In addition to the Basic, there are three forms of optional insurance that you can elect. You must have Basic insurance in order to elect any of the options. Unlike Basic, enrollment in Optional insurance is not automatic - you must take action to elect the options. You pay for the full cost of the optional insurance and the amount depends on your age and salary.

The three optional insurances are:

- **Option A:** coverage is \$10,000.

- **Option B:** coverage comes in 1, 2, 3, 4, or 5 multiples of your annual pay (after your pay has been rounded to the next higher thousand). It does not include the extra \$2,000 added for your BIA.
- **Option C:** provides coverage for your spouse and eligible dependent children. When you elect Option C, all of your eligible family members are automatically covered. You may elect either 1, 2, 3, 4 or 5 multiples of coverage. Each multiple is equal to \$5,000 for your spouse and \$2,500 for each eligible dependent child. For example, if you elect 3 multiples and your spouse dies, you would receive \$15,000 (3 times \$5,000). If one of your eligible dependent children dies, you would receive \$7,500 (3 times \$2,500).

The number of multiples you elect applies to all of your eligible family members. You cannot elect a number of multiples for your spouse that is different from the number of multiples for your eligible dependent children.

A child's eligibility for Option C benefits ends once he/she reaches age 22, unless he/she is [Incapable of Self-Support](#) because of a mental or physical disability that existed before the child reached age 22.

You are responsible for 100% of the cost for any additional life insurance beyond the Basic coverage.

Both Basic Life and Standard Optional coverage provides double indemnity for accidental death and dismemberment benefits. Additional Optional and Family Optional coverage does not. ABC-C website has a FEGLI calculator to assist you with determining your cost.

To enroll for FEGLI, visit ABC-C website no later than 31 days after the date of your appointment.

Federal Flexible Spending Account (FSA) Program - www.fsafeds.com

Federal Flexible Spending Account (FSA) allows you to set aside pre-tax money from your paychecks to pay for a variety of eligible expenses. By using an FSA, you can reduce your taxes while paying for services you would have to pay for anyway, producing a discount that can be over 40%.

There are two types of FSAs offered by FSAFEDS:

Health Care FSA covers eligible health care expenses not reimbursed by your FEHB Plan, or any other medical dental, or vision care plan you or your dependents may have.

Dependent Care FSA is available for eligible dependent care expenses incurred so you, or your spouse, if married, can work, or attend school full-time.

As a new employee, you have 60 days or by October 1st, whichever occurs first, to enroll in FSA. Afterwards, you will have to wait until the next open season which is usually in conjunction with the FEHB open season (November and December timeframe).

See <http://www.opm.gov/insure/pretax/fsa/hr.asp> for more information regarding Flexible Spending Accounts. If you have further questions about FSAs, please utilize the toll free number 1-877-372-3337.

Like FEDVIP, FSA is handled by a third party administrator. Please notify the program administrator of any changes to ensure continuation in the program.

Long Term Care Insurance - www.LTCFEDS.com

Long term care is ongoing care for people who need lengthy or lifelong assistance with daily living due to an illness, injury, or severe cognitive impairment (such as Alzheimer's disease). FEHB plans do not cover the cost of long term care. The need for long term care can strike anyone at any age and the cost of care can be substantial.

The Federal Long Term Care Insurance Program (FLTCIP) can help protect you from the potentially high cost of long term care. This coverage gives you options regarding the type of care you receive and where you receive it. With FLTCIP coverage, you will not have to worry about relying on your loved ones to provide or pay for your care.

As with the FEDVIP and FSA, FLTCIP is a third party administrator and your servicing Human Resource Office will not be aware of your enrollment. Please notify the program administrator of any changes to ensure continuation in the program.

Retirement Plans

Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS)

FERS provides benefits from three different sources: Basic Benefits Plan, Social Security, and Thrift Savings Plan (TSP). Your contribution to the Basic Benefit Plan is the difference between 7% of your annual pay and Social Security's Old-Age Survivors and Disability Insurance (OASDI) tax rate.

Eligibility for retirement is determined by your age and number of years of creditable service. Your benefit is based on the average of your highest basic pay over any 3 consecutive years of creditable service, known as "high-3 average pay". The formula used to calculate your benefit is 1% of your high-3 average pay multiplied by the number of creditable service years.

Returning employees previously covered by CSRS may apply for a refund of excess retirement deductions for the time covered by CSRS. If retirement deductions were refunded, you may buy back this time for FERS credit. If you withdraw your FERS retirement deductions, you will never receive retirement credit for that time.

There are currently 3 types of FERS Retirement plans. Your plan will depend on the date you were hired.

- The most recent version is FERS-Further Revised Annuity Employees (FERS-FRAE). New employees first hired in covered position on/after 01-01-2014, contribute 4.4% of salary to FERS.

- The FERS-Revised Annuity Employees (FERS-RAE) Employees first hired in covered position on 01-01-2013 and prior to 01-01-2014, contribute 3.1% of salary to FERS
- FERS – Cover employees first hired in covered position on 01-01-1987 and prior to 01-01-2013 will continue. These employees will continue to contribute 0.8% of salary to FERS.

Social security only

Temporary appointments of less than one year pay into the Social Security system only. The cost is approximately 7% of gross pay.

MEDICARE – ALL appointments pay into Medicare.

Special Retirement Coverage – Federal Firefighter (FF) and Law Enforcement Officer (LEO)

Firefighters and Law Enforcement Officers are covered by a special retirement system. This retirement is based on the type of position and age.

For older Retirement Plans, please visit the ABC-C website.

Thrift Savings Plan (TSP)

New employees will become immediately eligible for TSP agency automatic and matching contributions. This includes those who are converted to FERS, or make an election of FERS coverage.



Additionally, those employees pending eligibility for agency contributions will begin to receive such immediately. Please see the TSP website for additional information.

You can choose between two tax treatments for your TSP contributions:

- Traditional (pre-tax)-You defer paying taxes on your contributions and their earnings until you withdraw them. If you are a uniformed services member making tax-exempt contributions, your contributions will be tax-free at withdrawal but your earnings will be subject to tax.

- Roth (after-tax)-You pay taxes on your contributions as you make them (unless you are making tax-exempt contributions), and your earnings are tax-free at withdrawal as long as you meet certain IRS requirements.

TSP offers several investment funds, <http://www.tsp.gov/rates/fundsheets.html>, that differs in rates of return and different amounts of risk. You may invest any percentage of future contributions to your account in any of the funds. You may also transfer any portion of your existing account balance to any of the funds.

Investment Options:

G Fund: The Government Securities Investment Fund which is invested in short-term U. S. Treasury securities. It is very secure.

C Fund: The Common Stock Index Investment Fund which consists of common stocks represented in the S&P stock index. There is some risk involved.

F Fund: The Fixed Income Index Investment Fund which is a bond index fund that tracks the Lehman Brother Aggregate (LBA) bond index. There are risks involved.

S Fund: The Small Capitalization Index Investment Fund is a stock index fund that tracks medium and small companies included in the Wilshire 4500 stock index. There are risks involved.

I Fund: The International Stock Index Investment Fund tracks the 21 countries included in the Morgan Stanley Capital International EAFE stock index. There are risks involved.

L Fund: The L Funds or “Lifecycle” funds use professionally determined investment mixes that are tailored to meet investment objectives based on various time horizons. The objective is to strike an optimal balance between the expected risk and return associated with each fund. The strategy is to invest in an appropriate mix of the G, F, C, S, and I Funds for a particular target retirement date. The investment mix of each L Fund becomes more conservative as its target date approaches.

New and rehired FERS automatically contribute 5% to TSP.

New employees are automatically enrolled in the Life Cycle Funds. See the table below

Default Fund	For those born	Expected TSP Payout
L Income	1953 or earlier	Before 2017
L 2020	1954 -1962	2017 -2024
L 2030	1963 -1972	2025 -2034
L 2040	1973 -1982	2035 -2044
L 2050	1983 or later	2045 or later

You become vested (entitled to keep the agency’s automatic 1% contributions and their earnings when you leave Federal service) after completing 3 years of civilian service. You are immediately vested in your own contributions and in any of the earnings they accrue. If

you are receiving matching contributions, you are also immediately vested in those contributions and any earnings they accrue.

You will make the select on the amount, either a percentage or dollar amount, you wish to contribute at the ABC-C web site. You select the fund type on the TSP web site. If you do not select a fund type, your contribution will automatically be placed in the G-fund. Visit the TSP website at <http://www.tsp.gov/> for details.

TSP enrollment and changes in amount of contributions must be done electronically through ABC/EBIS. Transfers between different funds must be done through the TSP website. If you change your amount and do not elect a fund in TSP, your new contribute would default to the G fund.

TSP Catch-up

Are additional tax-deferred contributions available to TSP participants age 50 and older who meet the eligibility requirements. If you are an eligible Army civilian employee, you may enroll. More than one catch-up contribution election may be made in any given year so long as the annual limit does not exceed the amount IRS has determined (for 2022 the catch-up amount is (6,500). Elections are effective beginning the first day of the pay period following the pay period during which the enrollment is made. Catch-Up contributions will automatically stop the end of the last pay period of the pay year (December 18, 2022 for most) or when the maximum dollar limit for the year is reached. You must make a new election for catch-up contributions each year as the IRS limitations changes yearly. There are no matching contributions for catch-up contributions.

Post – 56 - Military Deposit

If you have served on active military duty, including active duty for training, or periods of active duty that may have occurred during your civilian employment, you may be eligible to buy back that time to put towards your Federal retirement. See the ABC-C website for additional information: at <https://portal.chra.army.mil/abc>.

a. You must complete the RI 20-97, Estimated Earnings During Military Service, and mail it to the appropriate military finance center with a copy of all DD Forms 214. The addresses and contact information can be found on the ABC-C website.

b. Upon receipt of the estimated military earnings, SF 3108, Application to Make Service Credit Payment (FERS), as applicable. These forms can be obtained from the OPM website at <http://www.opm.gov/forms/index.htm>.

Mail the application with the RI 20-97 and DD form 214 to the following address:

Army Benefits Center-Civilian (ABC-C)
303 Marshall Avenue
Fort. Riley, KS 66442-5004

c. ABC-C will receive the application, review for accuracy, calculate an estimate of the amount of military deposit, and send to DFAS. You will receive a copy of the application and estimate from ABC-C.

d. When you receive the response from the DFAS office, you must make arrangements with DFAS to pay the deposit. If the letter is not received from DFAS, you may still begin paying the deposit when the amount of the military deposit shows in Block 20 of your Leave and Earnings Statement (LES).

There are three payment options: Lump Sum Payment, Partial Payments, and Payroll Deductions. For Lump Sum Payment and Partial Payments, you would make your check payable to DFAS Cleveland. The check must have "Catch-62 Military Deposit" and your Social Security Number written on it. Partial payments must be a minimum of \$25.00.

Mail to the following address:

**DFAS Cleveland
PO Box 998019
Cleveland, OH 44199-8019**

Partial payments can be made along with payroll deductions.

Payroll Deductions must be a minimum of \$25.00 per pay period. There must be a request in writing (no particular form) submitted to your payroll office which includes the following: (1) Social Security Number; (2) name; (3) amount of deduction per pay period; (4) date to start the deduction; (5) signature. Fax the request to 1-866-401-5849.

e. Once your military deposit has been paid in full, you will need to request the electronic OPM 1514 as proof of payment. Contact your local payroll Customer Service Representative (CSR) and have a Remedy sent to DFAS requesting the electronic OPM 1514. When the electronic OPM 1514 is received, provide a copy to your local Civilian Advisory Center (CPAC), or your Human Resources representative, to be placed in your Official Personnel Folder.

Death Benefits

The benefits available to survivors of employees who become deceased while employed will depend on varying factors. Survivors may be entitled to continuation of any Federal health plan the employee may have had. If the employee elected to have Federal Employees Group Life Insurance (FEGLI), coverage will be payable in the amount of the gross annual salary at the time of death plus \$2000 and any additional coverage the employee may have elected. Benefits as a result of the Federal Employees Retirement System will depend on the rate of pay and the total service at the time of death.

Other benefits that would be payable are any unused annual leave and TSP funds as you would become automatically vested in the event of death.

For More Information: Contact the Army Benefits Center – Civilian (ABC-C) at 1-877-276-9287 or <https://portal.chra.army.mil/abc>

Designation of Beneficiary

Completing the designation forms is optional but encouraged. If beneficiaries are not named, the death benefits will be paid in the listed following order:

1. Court order property settlement (if applicable).
2. The surviving spouse.
3. If none, to the child/children in equal shares with the share of any deceased child being distributed among the descendants of that child.
4. If none, to the parents in equal shares or the entire amount to the surviving parent.
5. If none of the above, to the executor or administrator of the employee's estate.
6. If none, to the next of kin under the laws of the employee's domicile at the time of the employee's death.

Employees who wish to designate beneficiaries should complete the appropriate forms. There are five designations of beneficiary forms applicable to an employee's benefits and entitlements:

- ✓ SF-1152 Unpaid Compensation (Annual leave and any unpaid wages)
- ✓ SF-2823 FEGLI (Federal Employees Group Life Insurance)
- ✓ TSP-3 Thrift Savings Plan
- ✓ SF-3102 FERS Retirement Contributions
- ✓ SF-2808 CSRS Retirement Contributions

All forms must be completed per their instructions by writing legibly with no crossing out or writing over. If there is an error, complete a new form.

Beneficiaries cannot be witnesses. Copies of these forms can be found on the CPOL Employment Information In-Processing at <http://cpol.army.mil/library/employment/forms.html> or OPM Form website at <http://www.opm.gov/forms/>.

If you have any questions regarding the completion of beneficiary forms, you may contact ABC-C at 1-877-ARMY-CTR (276-9287). Hearing impaired employees can contact a Benefits Counselor at 1-877-ARMY-TDD (276-9833).

Leave Information

Employees must consult their own organization or Command Policy for guidance on existing policies and procedures for leave administration.

Annual Leave: Annual leave is earned and credited on a biweekly basis at the rate of 4, 6, or 8 hours per pay period depending on the total amount of creditable Federal service you have, including creditable military service.

Annual leave accrual is determined by your Service Computation Date (SCD) which is, normally, the date you enter Federal service. However, you may be able to claim additional time towards your SCD if you have prior government or active military service. You will see your SCD in block 31 on your SF50.

Annual Leave	Total per	
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years of service	pay period	calendar year
less than 3	4 hours	104 hours/13 workdays
3 but less than 15	6 hours	160 hours/20 workdays
15 & over	8 hours	208 hours/26 workdays

To ensure you receive proper credit for your prior military service, you will need to complete an SF 144, Statement of Prior Federal Service, and provide copies of your SF-50s (for government service) or a copy of your DD 214, Report of Separation, Member's copy 4 (for military service), to your CPAC. Your CPAC will forward this information to the servicing Processing Cell and request that your SCD be recalculated to include your prior service.

If you are Retired Active Duty, you may be able to get credit on campaign time. You will need to complete an SF-813, Verification of a Military Retiree's Service in Non-wartime Campaigns or Expeditions, and mail to the appropriate agency in accordance with the form's instructions.

Your military agency will mail the SF-813 along with your DD-214, member's copy 4, directly to the CPAC to be forwarded to the appropriate Processing Cell. Please note that requesting a change in your SCD takes time as the Processing Cell must order your Official Personnel File or receive documentation from the previous agencies.

Leave Usage: For all leave, the minimum charge is 15 minutes and additional leave is charged in multiples of 15 minutes. Annual leave should be requested and approved prior to the absence. In cases where you do not have sufficient annual leave available to cover the leave taken, the excess absence is charged first to compensatory time, if any, and then to leave without pay.

Use or Lose Leave: The maximum amount of annual leave an employee may carry over forward to the following year is 240 hours unless the employee was stationed overseas, then the leave ceiling may be up to 360 hours. Any leave that is over the ceiling will fall into the Use or Lose Category. DFAS calculates the amount of Use or Lose Leave by taking the end of year balance adding the leave that you would earn for the year and subtracting the total from the employee's leave ceiling. The difference is the Use or Lose Leave.

Example: Jane has 208 hours of annual leave at the end of the leave year. She earns 6 hours of annual leave a pay period giving her additional amount of 160 hours.

Balance at End of Year for 2017	Leave that will be earned in 2018	Total Leave for the year 2018	Jane's Leave Ceiling	Jane's Use or Lose Leave Balance
208	160	368	240	128

The Use or Lose Leave will be reduced as Annual Leave is used throughout the year.

Leave Restoration and Forfeiture: You may request restoration of annual leave that was forfeited if you agency determines that an exigency circumstances exists. Examples of exigency circumstances would be if mission requirements prevents you from taking leave,

if you are deployed, if you become ill when you had approved annual leave or if the agency makes an administrative error that causes the loss of annual leave otherwise accruable.

Leave restoration in these instances is only possible if the leave was scheduled in advance. The leave must be scheduled and approved in writing on an OPM Form 71, Request for Leave Form, before the start of the third pay period before the end of the leave year.

Employees must use their restored leave within two years after the end of the calendar year in which the leave is restored unless there is an extended exigency under OPM rules as defined in 5 C.F.R., Section 630.309.

Sick Leave: Sick leave is earned at the rate of 4 hours per pay period or 13 workdays per year, regardless of the number of years of creditable service.

Disabled Veteran Leave (DVL) <https://www.chcoc.gov/content/disabled-veteran-leave>
On November 5, 2015, the President signed the Wounded Warriors Federal Leave Act of 2015 (Pub. L. 114-75) (Act). The Act adds section 6329 to title 5, United States Code. This Act provides for a separate and new leave category, to be known as "disabled veteran leave". This leave benefit is for any new Federal employee hired on or after 5 Nov 2016 who is a veteran with a service-connected disability rated at 30 percent or more. The disabled veteran leave is for medical treatment associated with the service connected disabilities. The purpose of this new leave benefit is to help disabled veterans attend medical appointments for their service connected disability as they transition to their civilian job without having to take unpaid leave.

Key Points

- DVL is a separate leave category and provides for 104 hours of leave. This new leave category is a one-time benefit and is limited to a 12 month period. Once an employee has exhausted the leave benefit and/or the 12 months have passed, he or she will not have any further entitlements to the benefit.
- If not used during the 12 months benefit period may not be carried over to subsequent years and will be forfeited.
- DVL is only available to veterans with a service-connected disability rated at 30 percent or more hired on or after 5 Nov 2016. Veterans with a service-connected disability rated at 30 percent or more hired before 5 Nov 2016 are not entitled to this benefit.
- Employees hired on or after 5 Nov 2016 that later are determined to have a service-connected disability rated at 30 percent or more will be eligible for DVL. In such cases, the start date of the 12 month eligibility period will be the date the VA claim is filed.

Voluntary Leave Transfer Program (VLTP): Allows you to receive transferred annual leave directly from other employees because of a medical emergency. You must have exhausted all your leave, both annual and sick, in order to be eligible for the program. This allows you to continue to receive pay while recuperating from an emergency (whether it is your emergency or a family member's). The medical emergency may be for the employee

or their family member which is likely to require their absence from duty for a prolonged period of time resulting in a substantial loss of income because of the unavailability of paid leave. A prolonged period is defined as at least 30% of the average hours worked in a pay period, or 24 hours for an 80 hour pay period. This may be consecutive or intermittent. There are two conditions you must meet before you would be eligible to participate in this program.

They are as follows:

- a. It must be a medical emergency. A medical emergency means a medical condition of an employee or a family member that is likely to require an employee's absence from duty for a prolonged period of time.
- b. You must have exhausted all your annual and sick leave leaving you in danger of being in a non-pay status.

To become a leave donor recipient, contact the CPAC VLTP coordinator, Yolanda Chacon, 575-678-3240, Yolanda.v.chacon.civ@mail.mil. Your application must be endorsed by Medical documentation is required to participate in this program.

A list of eligible recipients is sent out monthly thru email to all employees. Forms for donating and receiving annual leave donations are under the emergency leave transfer program can be accessed on OPM's internet web site at <http://www.opm.gov/forms/html/emerg.htm>.

Please note, the employee is no longer eligible for the program once the medical emergency is over and they have returned to work.

Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 (FMLA): Entitles you up to a total of 12 workweeks of unpaid leave during any 12-month period for the following purposes:

- the birth of a son or daughter of the employee and the care of such son or daughter;
- the placement of a son or daughter with the employee for adoption or foster care;
- the care of spouse, son, daughter, or parent of the employee who has a serious health condition; or
- a serious health condition of the employee that makes the employee unable to perform the essential functions of his or her positions.

Under certain conditions, you may use the 12 weeks of FMLA leave intermittently. You may elect to substitute annual leave and/or sick leave, consistent with current laws and OPM's regulations for using annual and sick leave, for any unpaid leave under the FMLA.

You must provide notice of your intent to take family and medical leave not less than 30 days before leave is to begin or as soon as is practicable in the event of an emergency. **Your agency will request medical documentation for FMLA leave taken. Medical documentation should state the FMLA qualifying condition, the expected duration of the condition or frequency of intermittent events. This must be noted correctly on your request of leave on OPM Form 71.**

FMLA has also been extended for Military Caregiver which is leave to care for your spouse, parent, child, or next of kin, who is a Covered Service member, with a serious injury or illness incurred in the line of duty on federal active duty. This leave is protected under FMLA only. Eligible employees are entitled to up to 26 workweeks of leave during a “single 12-month period”.

Federal Employees Family Friendly Leave Act: Authorizes covered full-time employees to use a total of up to 40 hours (5 workdays) of sick leave per year to (1) give care or otherwise attend to a family member having an illness, injury, or other condition which, if an employee had such a condition, would justify the use of sick leave by the employee; or (2) make arrangements for or attend the funeral of a family member. In addition, a covered full-time employee who maintains a balance of at least 80 hours of sick leave may use an additional 64 hours (8 workdays) of sick leave per year for these purposes, bringing the total amount of sick leave available for family care or bereavement purposes to a maximum of 104 hours (13 workdays) per year.

Defense of Marriage Act: On June 26, 2013, the Supreme Court ruled that Section 3 of the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) is unconstitutional. As a result of the Supreme Court’s June 26, 2013 ruling that Section 3 of DOMA is unconstitutional, legally married same-sex spouses will be eligible family members under a Self Plus One or Self and Family enrollment. Coverage is available to any legally married same-sex spouse of any Federal employee or annuitant, regardless of the employee’s or annuitant’s state of residency.

In addition, the children of same-sex marriages will be treated in the same manner as those of opposite-sex marriages and will be eligible family members according to the same eligibility guidelines. This includes coverage for children of same-sex spouses as stepchildren. <https://www.opm.gov/healthcare-insurance/healthcare/reference-materials/reference/family-members#genefc>

Holidays

Full-time employees, whose appointments are more than 90 days, or have been employed on one or more continuous appointments where the total exceeds 90 days, are entitled to receive pay for official U.S. holidays. If such employees are ordered to perform work on the holiday, they are entitled to be paid holiday pay (double time) for the time worked.

The official holidays are as follows:

New Year's Day	January 1
Martin Luther King's Birthday	Third Monday in January
Washington's Birthday	Third Monday in February
Memorial Day	Last Monday in May
Independence Day	July 4
Labor Day	First Monday in September
Columbus Day	Second Monday in October
Veterans Day	November 11
Thanksgiving	Fourth Thursday in November
Christmas Day	December 25

PERFORMANCE EVALUATIONS

Non-Demonstration Program Employees:

The DoD Performance Management and Appraisal Program (DPMAP) uses a three-level rating pattern, Summary Level Pattern B, as identified in Section 430.208(d)(1) of Title 5, CFR, and the performance rating levels (also known as “summary levels”) listed below must be used.

Performance Rating Levels	
Level 5	Outstanding
Level 3	Fully Successful
Level 1	Unacceptable

The appraisal cycle for GS employees covered by the DPMAP is April 1 through March 31 of each calendar year. Components operating academic institutions may elect to apply an appraisal cycle based on their academic year to some or all of the employees of these academic institutions.

A rating of record is final when it is signed by the employee’s supervisor, in his or her capacity as rating official and, where required by Component policy, by a higher level reviewer (HLR). A rating of record finalized before June 1 will be effective June 1.

The minimum period of performance is 90 calendar days. Employees who perform under an approved performance plan for a minimum of 90 calendar days will be rated based on the period of demonstrated performance.

To foster a culture of high performance, supervisors and employees should engage in two-way performance feedback throughout the appraisal cycle. Supervisors are required to hold a minimum of three formal documented performance discussions during the appraisal cycle. These required discussions will include the initial performance plan meeting to discuss performance expectations, one progress review, and the final performance appraisal discussion to communicate the rating of record. Additional progress reviews are highly encouraged throughout the appraisal cycle.

Rating Reconsideration Process

Ratees who have dissatisfaction with their performance appraisals that they cannot resolve informally may request formal reconsideration. The formal request for reconsideration should be submitted in the form of a grievance, either through a negotiated procedure or through locally established procedures required by DoD CPM 1400.25M, subchapter 771. Employees may not challenge contents (e.g., performance elements or standards) of an employee performance plan and decisions to grant or not grant a performance award or quality step increase (QSI) through the administrative grievance system or, where applicable, negotiated grievance procedures.

Other Performance Evaluations

There are other organizations that participate in several Demonstration Projects. Depending on your activity and your pay system, your performance evaluation system will differ. See

Appendix 3A of **DoDI 1400.25-V431, February 4, 2016** for the requirements on other pay systems.Link:

http://www.esd.whs.mil/Portals/54/Documents/DD/issuances/140025/140025v431_dodi_2016.pdf?ver=2017-07-13-124635-753

Incentive Awards

The purpose of the Army Incentive Awards Program is to foster mission accomplishments by recognizing excellence of both military and civilian members of the force and motivating them to high levels of performance and service. A variety of awards exist, e.g., Performance Awards, Special Act or Service Awards, Time-off Awards, and a number of honorary Army Awards, etc. Eligibility requirements vary depending on the type of award.

Please note that the amount of awards given and/or not receiving an award is not a grievable matter. In addition, no awards may be granted to a person found guilty of discrimination or who was the subject of a disciplinary action in the last 120 days.

Special Act or Service Awards: A Special Act or Service Award is a cash award given to recognize a meritorious personal effort, act, service or other achievement accomplished within or outside assigned job responsibilities. Cash awards range from \$25 to \$25,000 depending on the achievement being recognized.

The amount of the award is determined by the cash award criteria for tangible or intangible benefits listed in Tables 7-1 and 7-2 of AR 672-20. The achievement by the nominee must result in either tangible or intangible benefits or both by the Government and may involve more than one employee.

On-the-Spot Cash Awards: The On-the-Spot cash award is a small Special Act or Service Award (\$50 not to exceed \$500) which may be given for the day to day accomplishments of subordinate employees. This award is used to recognize employees for superior accomplishments.

Time-Off Award (TOA): Employees may be granted up to 80 hours of time off during a leave year without charge to leave or loss of pay for achievements or performance contributing to the Army mission. The TOA may be used alone or in combination with monetary or non-monetary awards. Employee contributions must directly support the Army mission or result in benefits to the Government. The employee contribution is considered when determining the amount of time off to be approved. The TOA may be granted in amounts up to 40 hours for a single contribution and up to 80 hours in a leave year. It must be scheduled and used within one year of the approval date.

Rating-Based Awards: (Non-Demonstration Project Employees are eligible): Performance award are monetary and/or time off award given in recognition of high-level performance for a specific rating period. There are three types of rating-based awards: (1) time off, (2) performance-based cash, and (3) quality step increase (QSI). A rating-based performance cash award is a one-time, lump sum, cash payment. Time off awards may be granted in lieu of or in conjunction with cash awards and are granted in amounts of up to 40 hours for a single contribution. A QSI is an additional within-grade increase to recognize high quality performance which merits faster than normal salary enhancements. Only those

with a rating level 5 are eligible for a QSI. Employees with successful levels 3 and 5 ratings of record for the most recent rating period may be nominated for an award.

Honorary Awards

The following medals may be awarded to Department of the Army civilian employees to recognize high levels of performance and service. Supervisors recommend honorary awards in accordance with AR 672-20 and local guidance. They are listed in hierarchical order from the highest to the lowest, except for the humanitarian award.

Armed Forces Civilian Service Medal: Established to recognize the contributions and accomplishments of the DOD civilian workforce who directly support the military forces, when those members are engaged in military operations of a prolonged peacekeeping or humanitarian nature.

Decoration for Exceptional Civilian Service: For clearly exceptional performance of duties, exceptional achievement of major significance, providing outstanding leadership, or exhibiting great courage.

Meritorious Civilian Service: For performance of duties in an exemplary manner, demonstrating unusual initiative and skill, achieving outstanding results, or exhibiting unusual courage in an emergency.

Superior Civilian Service: For superior service or achievement, or heroism of a lesser degree than that recognized by the Meritorious Civilian Service Award.

Commander's Award for Civilian Service: For performance of duties in an outstanding manner, demonstrating initiative, skill and leadership in performing assigned duties, demonstrating courage or rendering service resulting in favorable local publicity.

Achievement Medal for Civilian Service: For noteworthy achievements that are of lesser degree than that recognized by the Commander's Award for Civilian Service.

Civilian Award for Humanitarian Service: For significant "hands-on" participation in an act or operation of a humanitarian nature directed toward an individual or groups of individuals.

Send the completed DA 1256 and a copy of the award certificate to your servicing CPAC representative so it may be entered in your (eOPF).

Standards of Conduct

As Federal employees, we are governed by regulations that outline our standards of conduct. Always be mindful that you are a representative of the Federal government and conduct yourself accordingly. Each Department of Defense Agency has a regulation that prescribes Standards of Conduct relating to possible conflicts between private interests and official duties. Violations of these standards may be cause for job related disciplinary action

that could be in addition to any penalty provided by law. Employees in a probationary status may be terminated within their probationary period for any infractions of conduct. All U.S. citizen employees must be familiar with the provisions of these regulations. Be aware, there may be local Code of Conduct instructions or policy for your particular organization.

Employees' Responsibilities under Executive Order 12674 (as amended):	
<u>Do</u>	<u>Do Not</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Place loyalty to the Constitution, the laws, and ethical principles above private gain. • Act impartially to all groups, persons, and organizations. • Fulfill in good faith your obligations as citizens, and pay your Federal, State, and local taxes. • Comply with all laws providing equal opportunity to all persons, regardless of their race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, or handicap • Give an honest effort in the performance of your duties. • Protect and conserve Federal property. Disclose waste, fraud, abuse, and corruption to appropriate authorities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use nonpublic information to benefit yourself or anyone else. • Solicit or accept gifts from persons or parties that do business with or seek official action from DOD (unless permitted by an exception). • Make unauthorized commitments or promises that bind the Government Use Federal property for unauthorized purposes. • Take jobs or hold financial interests that conflict with your government responsibilities • Take actions that give the appearance that they are illegal or unethical.

Guidance for DOD Personnel: Specific guidance for DOD personnel may be found in DOD 5500.7-R, Joint Ethics Regulation, and at the DOD Standards of Conduct Office website: www.defenselink.mil/dodqc/defense_ethics.

Employees' Responsibilities under Federal Conflict of Interest Statutes:

1. Conflicting Financial Interests: You may not do government work on a particular matter that could affect your financial interests or those of your spouse, minor children, general partner, or organization with which you are negotiating or have an arrangement for future or current employment. If you believe you have a conflicting financial interest, contact your ethics official to determine the appropriate remedy.

2. Bribery and Graft: You may not seek or accept anything of value, other than your government pay, for being influenced in your official duties.

3. Outside Representation or Compensation in Matters Involving Government: You generally may not represent anyone other than the Government to a federal agency or court on a particular matter involving the Government. You generally may share in any compensation derived from a representation that was made by anybody to a federal agency or court when you were a federal employee.

4. Supplementation of Federal Salary: You generally may not accept any compensation from a nonfederal source for your government work.

14 Principles of Ethical Conduct

These principles are a summary of the appropriate ethical behavior for Federal employees:

1. Public service is a public trust, requiring employees to place loyalty to the Constitution, the laws, and ethical principles above private gain.

2. Employees shall not hold financial interests that conflict with the conscientious performance of duty.

3. Employees shall not engage in financial transactions using nonpublic Government information, or allow the improper use of such information to further any private interest.

4. An employee shall not, except pursuant to such reasonable exceptions as are provided by regulation, solicit or accept any gift or other item of monetary value from any person or entity seeking official action from doing business with, or conducting activities regulated by the employee's agency, or whose interests may be substantially affected by the performance or nonperformance of the employee's duties.

5. Employees shall put forth honest effort in the performance of their duties.

6. Employees shall make no unauthorized commitments or promises of any kind purporting to bind the Government.

7. Employees shall not use public office for private gain.

8. Employees shall act impartially and not give preferential treatment to any private organization or individual.

9. Employees shall protect and conserve Federal property and shall not use it for other than authorized activities.

10. Employees shall not engage in outside employment or activities, including seeking or negotiating for employment, that conflict with official Government duties and responsibilities.

11. Employees shall disclose waste, fraud, abuse, and corruption to appropriate authorities.

12. Employees shall satisfy in good faith their obligations as citizens, including all just financial obligations, especially those such as Federal, State, or local taxes that are imposed by law.

13. Employees shall adhere to all laws and regulations that provide equal opportunity for all Americans regardless of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, or handicap.

14. Employees shall endeavor to avoid any actions creating the appearance that they are violating the law or the ethical standards promulgated pursuant to this order.

Employee Assistance Programs

Equal Employment Opportunity

The Army is an Equal Opportunity Employer, and is committed to attaining a diverse civilian workforce that reflects American Society.

Employees and job applicants of the Department of the Army are guaranteed equal employment opportunity without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, mental or physical handicap. Employment opportunities are not limited by anything other than mission needs and the individual's experience ability and demonstrated performance. You, as an individual employee, will be uniformly and fairly treated under the EEO Program. You will receive full and impartial consideration for initial employment and subsequent promotions. You will possess equitable standing and security as an employee of the Federal government, and you will enjoy equal opportunity to receive training, to develop skills and to advance in your chosen occupation and career, subject only to job requirements prescribed by higher authority.

The contact information for the White Sands Missile Range EEO is (575) 678-5803, The EEO office is located at on Crozier Street, Building 124, Room 223 , WSMR, NM

Army Substance Abuse Program (ASAP)

The ASAP supports the Army's individual and unit readiness by providing alcohol and other drug abuse deterrence through alcohol and drug testing, prevention, rehabilitation, program evaluation and research. ASAP consists of four main areas: biochemical testing program; clinical services; employee assistance programs and prevention services.

Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

Provides confidential evaluations, counseling assistance and referral services for all Department of the Army civilian employees and their family members, retirees, and military family members, the Employee Assistance Program connects employees with essential civilian services including:

- Family and human service agencies
- Marriage counselors
- Career counselors
- Alcohol counselors/programs
- Drug counselors/programs
- Community support groups
- Attorneys
- Physicians and psychologists
- Social workers
- Clergy
- Financial and credit counselors

Training Information

The U.S. Army has many training courses, resident and correspondence, available to improve the skills and abilities of employees. For courses requiring travel outside your normal duty station, you will need to establish a Defense Travel System (DTS) account and possess a Government Travel Card. If you desire training that may help you do a better job or help you learn new skills, you should contact your supervisor for information and assistance in enrolling for courses.

Training Links are as follows:

Army Training Requirements and Resources System - <https://www.atrrs.army.mil/>

Army Learning Management System– <https://www.lms.army.mil>

Civilian Human Resources Training Application System -
<https://www.atrrs.army.mil/channels/chrtas/student/main.aspx>

Go Army Ed - <https://www.goarmyed.com/>

You supervisor will inform you of any mandatory training requirements.

Worker's Compensation

As an employee, you are covered by the Federal Employees Compensation Act (FECA) which provides compensation under certain conditions for injuries or diseases that are sustained as a direct result of performing your job.

Every job-related injury should be reported immediately to your supervisor within 2 calendar days. An injured person is entitled to first aid and medical or hospital care, if needed. If the employee is incapacitated, someone may take this action on the employee's behalf, including a family member, union official, representative, or agency official.

Worker's Compensation claims are currently being filed electronically. You can visit the website and file your claim from the office, your home, or anywhere you have an internet connection now. The website is www.ecomp.dol.gov

The injured/ill employee must first go into this website and register. Anyone with an existing claim should also go into the system and register so they can scan their support documents up to Department of Labor, OWCP as soon as possible. OWCP will be able to review these documents within 4 hours of receipt.

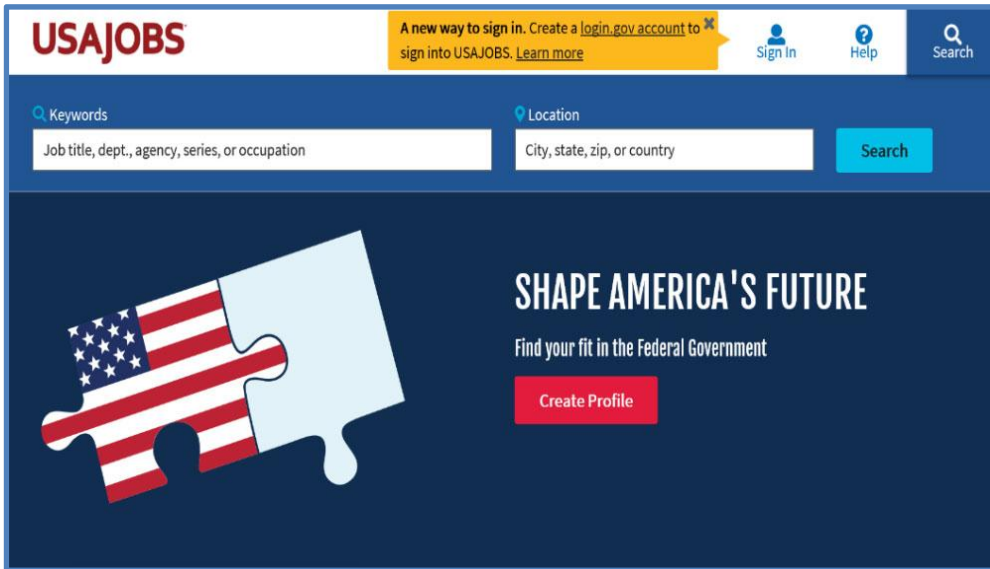
NEVER transport an injured/ill employee to the medical facility. The only options are to contact local 911 or allow the employee to transport themselves. They can also contact a family member to transport them wherever they wish to go for treatment.

Applying for Other Federal Positions

U.S. Federal Government relies on more than two million Americans and foreign nationals to work in the civil service.

As a part of the U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM), USAJOBS helps recruit, retain, and honor a world-class government workforce for the American people.

Federal agencies use USAJOBS to facilitate their hiring processes and match qualified applicants to job openings. Therefore, USAJOBS serves as the central location to find job openings within hundreds of federal agencies and organizations.



USAJOBS connects job seekers with federal employment opportunities across the United States and around the world. As the Federal Government’s official employment site, USAJOBS provides resources to help the right people find the right jobs.

Please note all applicant inquiries about recruitments need to be submitted thru your account in USA Jobs.

Time in Grade Restrictions (TIG): General Schedule (GS) positions – Code of Federal Regulations, subchapter 300-602, prevents employees in the GS pay plan system from receiving excessively rapid promotions. You must serve 52 weeks at the previous lower grade in order to be considered eligible for a promotion to the next higher grade (providing performance requirements are met). For positions GS-5 and lower, the interval is one grade. If your position is a two grade interval position, you would progress from a GS-7 to a GS-9 once you met the 52 week TIG and performance requirements, before being eligible for a GS-11 position. For positions graded GS-11 and higher, promotions occur at one grade intervals (i.e., GS-11 to GS-12). These restrictions apply even though you may have qualifications required for a higher grade at the time of appointment.

Note: Demonstration Projects do not have TIG restrictions. However, they do require 1 year specialized experience.

Leaving your current Position for another Federal Position

There are many opportunities to advance while in the federal government. If you are selected for another position that is within the federal government within any agency, you will be able to transfer to your new position without formally resigning from your current position. If your new position is still within any government agency, **do not resign**, if you do, there could be issues with your accrued leave, health benefits, pay, etc. The transfer of your information and documentation is handled through the CPAC representatives when you have an official start date for your new position.

Leaving Federal Employment

Voluntary/Optional Retirement Eligibility: Your retirement eligibility is based on your age, years of service and type of retirement plan.

Under **Civil Service Retirement System**, you must have at least five years of creditable civilian service to be eligible for an annuity. Additionally, you must be subject to CSRS for one out of the two years of service before separation on which your retirement is based (this requirement does not apply in disability retirement cases). If you retire on the 1st, 2nd, 3rd or last day of the month, your annuity will commence on the next day. If your retirement date is on the 4th day of the month or later, your annuity will commence on the 1st day of the following month.

To qualify for an immediate retirement you must meet age and service requirements as follows:

Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS/CSRS Offset)	
Age	Years of Service
55	30
60	20
62	5

Under **Federal Employment Retirement System (FERS)**, you must have at least five years of creditable civilian service to be eligible for an annuity and be covered by the retirement system on the day of separation.

To qualify for an immediate retirement you must meet age and service requirements as shown in the table below.

Federal Employment Retirement System (FERS)	
Age	Years of Service
*Minimum Retirement Age (55-57)	30
60	20
62	5
*MRA (Reduced Benefit)	10

You are eligible to retire as early as your MRA with as little as 10 years of service. An MRA + 10 retirement is effective the first day of the month following separation from service. There is a permanent reduction in your annuity of 5% for each year you are under age 62. A separating employee can reduce or eliminate the age reduction by postponing the commencing date of the MRA + 10 annuity. A postponed MRA + 10 annuity becomes effective the first day of the month the individual elects to receive payments. (MRA + 10 optional retirement means that you have met the age before separating.)

Voluntary Early Retirement Authority (VERA) and Voluntary Separation Incentive Pay (VSIP) Programs

These two programs are not entitlements but a tool for organizations to use in order to avoid a reduction in force. VERA/VSIP are often used together, however, they are two separate programs and an organization may approve one or the other. Each has its own rules and eligibility requirements. You may be eligible for one, but not the other. The fact that you are not eligible for one will not necessarily keep you from getting the benefits of the other.

The philosophy of the Federal government is that as the government downsizes it is better for employees to voluntarily separate from Federal service rather than taking actions that involuntarily separate employees, such as reduction-in-force (RIF). Both of these programs, Voluntary Separation Incentive Pay (VSIP) and Voluntary Early Retirement Authority (VERA), are intended to meet this philosophy.

VERA: Permit organizations that are undergoing substantial restructuring, reshaping, downsizing, transfer of function, or reorganization to temporarily lower the age and service requirements in order to increase the number of employees who are eligible for retirement. The authority encourages more voluntary separations and helps the organization complete the needed organizational change with minimal disruption to the work force. By offering these short term opportunities, an organization can make it possible for employees to receive an immediate annuity years before they would otherwise be eligible.

Each organization received VERA/VSIP allotments from their major command. The organization may limit this program to a geographic area or to a specific series in which they are over strength.

To be eligible for voluntary early retirement (VERA), an employee must be at least 50 with 20 or more years of service or have 25 years of service at any age. For employees under CSRS, annuities will be reduced by 2% a year for each year they are under age 55. There is no age reduction for employees covered by FERS. For more information please see this link: <https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/workforce-restructuring/voluntary-early-retirement-authority/>

VSIP: Is a separation program and does not have to be linked to a retirement program. It is a special program that allows Department of Defense (DoD) activities to pay separation incentives to employees who quit or take regular or early retirement. Employees who wish to retire must meet regular age and length of service requirements. While the law does not impose age or length of service requirements, it does allow agencies to target VSIP to specific types of positions in organizations and/or specific occupations (including grade levels). This means that organizations may choose not to offer VSIP to scarce-skill or hard-to-fill occupations.

Incentive pay has temporarily been increased from \$25,000 to \$40,000. The actual amount an employee would receive used is determined by the standard severance pay formula or \$40,000.00, whichever is less. This formula is based on the employee's current salary, age and time employed. An employee may not be eligible for the full amount of VSIP if they have not been with the federal service long or if they held a lower grade. The amount of each employee's incentive pay will vary as it will be reduced by deductions such as Medicare, Federal and State income taxes, etc.

There are restrictions on reemployment with the Federal government if an employee accepts payment of a VSIP. More information is available at this link: <https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/workforce-restructuring/voluntary-separation-incentive-payments>

Resignation: If you decide to leave Federal employment, it is recommended that you give two weeks notice. Notice of your resignation must be in written format and written in clear, concise and respectful language and include the reason for your resignation, the last date of your employment, your forwarding address and must be signed. Longer notice would be appreciated if your position is a critical role or particularly difficult to fill.

All personnel actions are processed through the Southwest Central Processing Center. Once your personnel action is processed, they will forward an informational packet, complete with information for continuing health insurance (if eligible and you would be responsible for the entire cost). This is the reason for the forwarding address.

Any unused Annual leave balance will be paid out on your final LES. Unused Sick Leave stays on your personnel record so that if you ever return to the federal government your sick leave can be restored. This is true even if you return to a completely separate department or agency.

Unused compensatory time, accrued by traveling on official duty during off-duty times, for working overtime, or as a form of non-monetary bonus, is not paid out or maintained in your official personnel file. This leave will be forfeited.

TSP required you to be 'vested', meaning you must work for the Federal Government for at least 3 years, if you want to keep the entire amount in the plan. If you leave Government service before satisfying the vesting requirement, the Agency/Service Automatic (1%) Contributions and their earnings will be forfeited to the TSP.

Reinstatement Eligibility: Reinstatement allows you to reenter the Federal competitive service workforce without competing with the public. Reinstatement eligibility enables you to apply for Federal jobs open only to status candidates.

You must have held a career or career-conditional appointment at some time in the past. If you were career-conditional when you left Federal employment, you are eligible to be reinstated within 3 years after the date of your separation. If you were career status when you departed, your reinstatement eligibility has no limitations.