

12.9 - Hazard Pay for General Schedule Employees. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) regulations provide for payment of a differential to GS employees who are exposed to unusual physical hardship or hazardous duty.

This authorization is based upon the inability to mitigate the hazard. ICs and Agency Administrators should not unduly expose any person to hazardous situations and will document, in writing, the incident records if personnel are unduly exposed to hazardous situations. (Refer to 5 CFR 550.901 through 550.907.)

Incident Agencies and Incident Management Teams do not have the authority to approve hazard pay for conditions that do not meet the parameters stated in the CFR.

12.9-1 - Definitions.

1. Fireline For purposes of pay administration for hazardous duty, a fireline is defined as the area within or adjacent to the perimeter of an uncontrolled wildfire of any size in which action is being taken to control the fire. Such action includes operations, which directly support control of the fire (e.g., activities to extinguish the fire, ground scouting, spot fire patrolling, search and rescue operations, and backfiring).

This does not include personnel engaged in logistical support, service, and non-suppression activities (e.g., media tours to the fireline, IC's driving to the fire, drivers delivering tools or personnel).

2. Control of Fire. The IC or Agency Administrator will determine when the fire is controlled. Fire may be controlled even if confinement strategy is being applied.
3. Flying. Participating in limited control flights, such as those undertaken under unusual and adverse conditions (e.g., extreme weather, maximum load, limited visibility, extreme turbulence, or low level flights involving fixed or tactical patterns), which threaten or severely limit control of the aircraft.

12.9-2 - Positions Not Entitled to Hazard Pay Differential for Irregular and Intermittent Hazardous Duties.

Certain positions are not entitled to specific hazard pay differentials because the hazard has been considered in the classification of the position. The following positions are not entitled to hazard pay for the hazards shown:

<u>Position</u>	<u>Hazardous Duties</u>
Pilot, GS-2181	Operating aircraft in flight.
Forestry Technician (Smokejumper), GS-462	Parachute jumps.

GS employees in these positions are entitled to hazard pay differentials for performing other authorized duty as described below.

12.9-3 - Criteria for Entitlement to Hazardous Pay Differential for Irregular and Intermittent Hazardous Duties. (5 CFR 550.904.)

Fulltime, part-time, and intermittent GS employees are eligible for hazard pay differential computed at 25 percent of the base rate when performing duties specified below:

Any member of the incident fire suppression organization is eligible for hazard pay while carrying out assigned duties, if hazard pay criteria, as described in 1- 4 below, is met. Incident supervisors must manage for the appropriate application of the authority

1. Firefighting. Participating as a member of a firefighting crew in fighting forest and range fires on the fireline before the fire is controlled. Persons assigned to firefighting duties, after the official control time, are not entitled to hazard pay differential.

Incidental fireline exposure, such as the delivery of personnel and tools by truck drivers, does not qualify for hazard pay under the definition of firefighting.

2. Flying. Individuals, except pilots, who are participating in limited control or low-level flights.
3. Groundwork beneath Hovering Helicopter. Participating in ground operations under a helicopter hovering just overhead.
4. Work in rough and remote terrain. Working on cliffs, narrow ledges, or near vertical mountainous slopes where a loss of footing would result in serious injury or death, or when working in areas where there is danger of rock falls or avalanches.

Burned area rehabilitation (BAER Team) or other rehabilitation work does not meet the definition of firefighting for hazard pay eligibility; however, hazard pay under 2, 3, or 4 from above may apply.

Prescribed fire does not meet fireline hazard definition for hazard pay; however, hazard pay under 2, 3, or 4 above may apply.

12.9-4 - Regulations Governing Payment of Hazard Differential for General Schedule Employees.

1. All hazard pay differential for GS employees is based on a 24-hour day from 0001 to 2400 hours. An individual who performs duties for which hazard pay differential is authorized shall be paid the hazard differential for all hours in pay status during the calendar day in which the hazardous duty is performed.
 - A. The automatic cut off time is 2400 hours. An individual working through 2400 hours into the next day is entitled to hazard pay differential for 2 days only if exposed to the hazard before and after 2400 hours.
 - B. No minimum time requirements for exposure shall be established to earn entitlement to differential pay for hazardous duty. Any amount of actual exposure during a calendar day qualifies the individual for the pay differential for all compensable hours performed that day.
2. Hazard pay shall be computed on the basis of hours in pay status. If in an 8-hour workday the individual performs hazardous duty for 1 hour and is in paid leave for 7 hours, the hazard pay differential shall be computed on the full 8 hours.

If the individual were in non-pay status (leave without pay) for 7 hours, the hazard pay would be computed on the basis of the 1 hour in pay status.

3. Hazard pay shall be computed on the basis of an individual's basic compensation and shall be paid in addition to any other compensation, which the individual earns under other statutory authority.
4. Hazard pay differential is in addition to any other premium pay or allowances payable under other provisions of this chapter. It is not subject to the biweekly maximum limitation provisions, which the law places on the amount that may be received for overtime work (5 CFR 550.106 and 550.907) but is subject to the annual aggregate compensation limit (5 CFR 530.202(4)).

When recording hazard pay, show the category of hazardous exposure period (e.g., firefighting, rough terrain, hover hookup) on a Crew Time Report, SF-261. The Emergency Firefighter Time Report, OF-288, should show an "H" for the on-shift.

12.10 - Environmental Differential for Prevailing Rate Employees (5 CFR 532.511).

OPM regulations provide for payment of environmental differential for exposure to various degrees of hazards, physical hardships, or working conditions likely to be encountered in an emergency situation. (See Section 12.9-1 for definitions of hazardous work situations.)

An employee shall be paid an environmental differential when exposed to a working condition or hazard that falls within one of the categories approved below by the Office of Personnel Management (See 5 CFR 550.511, Appendix A):

1. Flying. Individuals, except pilots, who are participating in limited control or low-level flights.
2. High Work. Working on any structure of at least 30 meters (100 feet) above the ground, deck, floor or roof, or from the bottom of a tank or pit. Working at a lesser height if the footing is unsure or the structure is unstable.
3. Exposure to hazardous weather or terrain. Working on cliffs, narrow ledges, or steep mountainous slopes, where a loss of footing would result in serious injury or death, or when working in areas where there is danger of rock falls or avalanches.
4. Groundwork beneath Hovering Helicopter. Participating in ground operations under a helicopter hovering just overhead.

12.10-1 - Criteria for Entitlement to Environmental Differential for Prevailing Rate Employees.

Full-time, part-time, and intermittent prevailing rate employees are eligible for an environmental differential at the rate specified for each category.

The amount of the environmental differential is determined by multiplying the percentage rate authorized for the described exposure by the second step for WG-10. Exposures to hazards, physical hardships, or working conditions listed in this section have not been taken into consideration in the job-grading process. (See 5 CFR 532.511 for all differential rates (percents) and for other categories.)

1. Compensation Based on All Hours in Pay Status.

<u>Differential</u>	<u>Category</u>
25 Percent	Fighting wildfires or range on the fireline.

Participating in firefighting operations on the immediate fire scene and in direct exposure to the hazards inherent in containing or extinguishing wildfires.

2. Compensation Based on Actual Exposure.

<u>Differential</u>	<u>Category</u>
100 Percent	Participating in low level flights in small aircraft, including helicopters.

4 Percent Performing work, which subjects the individual to soil his/her clothing:

A. Beyond that normally to be expected in the duties of the classification.

B. Where the condition is not adequately alleviated by the mechanical equipment or protective devices being used or which are readily available; or when such devices are not feasible for use due to health considerations (such as excessive temperature or asthmatic conditions).

15 Percent Participating in operations to attach (see 12.9-3—3) external load to or from helicopter hovering just overhead.

Regulations Governing Payment of Environmental Differential.

1. Shift Basis. When a prevailing rate employee is exposed to a hazard for which an environmental differential is authorized on a shift basis, the individual is paid the differential for all hours in pay status on the calendar day on which exposed to the hazard. (See Section 12.9-4 for explanation of all hours.)
2. Actual Exposure Basis. When an environmental differential is paid on an actual exposure basis, a prevailing rate employee is paid a minimum of 1 hour's differential for the exposure. Intermittent exposures during a 1-hour period do not qualify an individual for more than 1 hour's differential pay for that hour. For exposure beyond 1 hour, the individual is paid in increments of

one-quarter hour for each 15 minutes and portion thereof in excess of 15 minutes.

When an individual is exposed at intermittent times during a day, each exposure is considered separately. The amount of time the individual is exposed is not added together before payment is made for exposure beyond 1 hour's duration, except that pay for the differential may not exceed the number of hours of active duty by the individual on the day of exposure.

3. Multiple Exposures. When a prevailing rate employee is entitled to an environmental differential, which is payable on a shift basis on the same day, the individual is entitled to a differential which is payable on an actual exposure basis at a higher rate. The individual is paid the differential on the basis of actual exposure for that exposure and the differential on the shift basis for the remaining hours in pay status for that day.

When an individual is subjected to more than one hazard at the same time for which a differential is authorized, the individual is paid for the exposure, which results in the higher differential, but may not be paid for more than one differential for the same hours (e.g., a prevailing rate employee may be paid at 100 percent for 1 hour of low-level flight and the balance of the on shift time at 25 percent for firefighting).

4. Two-Day Exposure. The automatic cut off time is 2400 hours for an environmental differential. A prevailing rate employee working through 2400 hours into the next day earns entitlement to environmental differential for 2 days only if exposed to the hazard before and after 2400 hours.
5. Base Pay. Environmental differential is included as part of a prevailing rate employee's basic rate of pay and is used to compute premium pay for overtime and holiday work.
6. Recording. When recording environmental differential for actual exposure, show the actual hours of exposure and the category on a Crew Time Report, SF-261.

The Emergency Firefighter Time Report, OF-288, should show the percentage and the appropriate category in the remarks block and an "E" for actual hours of exposure.