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Interior



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PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT LETTER NO. 91-9 (550)

SUBJECT: Departmental Policy on Hazard Pay Differentials

Attached is the Department's policy regarding the implementation of section 203 of the Federal Employees Pay Comparability Act of 1990 which covers the payment of hazard pay differentials. This policy incorporates comments made by bureau personnel offices in response to Personnel Management Bulletin No. 91-120, dated August 12, 1991.

This policy will be incorporated in an appropriate chapter of the Departmental Manual when it is revised in the future.

Morris A. Simms  
Director of Personnel

Attachment

INQUIRIES: Alan Coulter, Division of Employee Relations,  
Room 5219, Telephone 208-5284, Mail Stop 5203

Pay for Duty Involving Physical Hardship or Hazard

## A. Authority.

5 U.S.C. 5545(d) and 5549(b); 5 CFR 550, Subpart I

## B. Policy.

The Department of the Interior hereby establishes a policy for the payment of a differential for duty involving an unusual physical hardship or hazard in accordance with the regulations issued by the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) in 5 CFR 550. Heads of bureaus and offices will be responsible for administering this policy. This authority may be further delegated at the discretion of the bureau or office head.

## C. Employee Eligibility Requirements. Payment of the differential is authorized by 5 CFR 550, Subpart I, if the following requirements exist:

- 1 The employee is covered by Chapter 51, title 5, U.S.C. or the Interior General Schedule (IGS).
- 2 The duty involving a hazard or physical hardship is published in appendix A to 5 CFR 550.
- 3 The hazardous duty or physical hardship has not been taken into account in the classification of the employee's position, unless a waiver has been approved by OPM (see Paragraph F).
- 4 Safety devices, training, or established practices cannot eliminate the hazard.

## D. Establishment of hazard pay differentials.

- 1 A schedule of hazard pay differentials, the hazardous duties or duties involving physical hardship for which they are payable, and the period during which they are payable is printed in appendix A to 5 CFR 550.
- 2 Changes to appendix A may be made at the request of an agency. A bureau may recommend the rate of hazard pay differential to be established and will submit with its request information about the hazardous duty or duty involving physical hardship showing the following:

- a. The nature of duty;
  - b. The degree to which the employee is exposed to the hazard or physical hardship;
  - c. The length of time during which the duty will continue to exist;
  - d. The degree to which control may be exercised over the physical hardship or hazard; and
  - e. The estimated annual cost to the bureau if the request is approved.
3. Recommendations made under this authority should be addressed to the Assistant Director for Pay and Performance, Personnel Systems and Oversight Group, Office of Personnel Management, Washington, D.C. 20415, for the signature of the Director of Personnel.
- E. Payment of hazard pay differential.
- A bureau shall pay the hazard pay differential listed in appendix A to an employee who is assigned to and performs any duty specified in the appendix. The bureau shall pay the differential for the hours in a pay status on the day (a calendar day or a 24-hour period, when designated by the bureau) on which the duty is performed.
- F. Request for Waiver.
1. A hazard pay differential may not be paid to an employee when the hazardous duty or physical hardship has been taken into account in the classification of his or her position, without regard to whether the hazardous duty or physical hardship is grade controlling, unless a waiver has been approved by OPM.
  2. A bureau desiring a waiver shall submit with its request the following information:
    - a. The specific hazardous duty or duty involving physical hardship;
    - b. The organizational component, position (title, series and grade) and number of employees to be covered;
    - c. The impact of the hazardous duty or physical hardship on the classification of the position;