

Office of Personnel Management

§ 550.808

and differentials otherwise due an employee, the payment of reasonable attorney fees shall be deemed to be warranted only if—

(1) Such payment is in the interest of justice, as determined by the appropriate authority in accordance with standards established by the Merit Systems Protection Board under section 7701(g) of title 5, United States Code; and

(2) There is a specific finding by the appropriate authority setting forth the reasons such payment is in the interest of justice.

(d) When an appropriate authority determines that such payment is warranted, it shall require payment of attorney fees in an amount determined to be reasonable by the appropriate authority. When an appropriate authority determines that such payment is not warranted, no such payment shall be required.

(e) When a determination by an appropriate authority that an employee has been affected by an unjustified or unwarranted personnel action that resulted in the withdrawal, reduction, or denial of all or part of the pay, allowances, and differentials otherwise due the employee is based on a finding of discrimination prohibited under section 2302(b)(1) of title 5, United States Code, the payment of attorney fees shall be in accordance with the standards prescribed under section 706(k) of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended (42 U.S.C. 2000e-5(k)).

(f) The payment of reasonable attorney fees shall be allowed only for the services of members of the Bar and for the services of law clerks, paralegals, or law students, when assisting members of the Bar. However, no payment may be allowed under section 5596 of title 5, United States Code, and this subpart for the services of any employee of the Federal Government, ex-

cept as provided in section 205 of title 18, United States Code, relating to the activities of officers and employees in matters affecting the Government.

(g) A determination concerning whether the payment of reasonable attorney fees is in the interest of justice and concerning the amount of any such payment shall be subject to review or appeal only if provided for by statute or regulation.

(h) This section does not apply to any administrative proceeding that was pending on January 11, 1979.

[46 FR 58275, Dec. 1, 1981. Redesignated at 53 FR 18072, May 20, 1988, and 53 FR 45886, Nov. 15, 1988]

§ 550.808 Prohibition against setting aside proper promotions.

Nothing in section 5596 of title 5, United States Code, or this subpart shall be construed as authorizing the setting aside of an otherwise proper promotion by a selecting official from a group of properly ranked and certified candidates.

[46 FR 58275, Dec. 1, 1981, as amended at 53 FR 18072, May 20, 1988, and 53 FR 45886, Nov. 15, 1988]

APPENDIX A TO SUBPART H OF PART 550—INFORMATION ON COMPUTING CERTAIN COMMON DEDUCTIONS FROM BACK PAY AWARDS

To determine the net back payment owed an employee, an agency must make certain required deductions. (See §550.805(e)(3).) To compute these deductions, an agency must determine the appropriate base or follow other rules, consistent with applicable law. Some deductions, such as tax deductions, are not subject to OPM regulation. To assist agencies, this appendix summarizes the rules for certain common deductions. For further information on Federal tax deductions from back pay awards, please contact the Internal Revenue Service directly or review relevant IRS publications.

Type of deduction	How to Compute the deduction
(a) Mandatory employee retirement contributions	Compute the deduction based on the basic pay portion of gross back pay before adding interest or applying any offset or deduction.
(b) Life insurance premiums	Compute the deduction based on the basic pay portion of gross back pay before adding interest or applying any offset or deduction.

Type of deduction	How to Compute the deduction
(c) Social Security (OASDI) and Medicare taxes	<p>Compute the deduction based on adjusted gross back pay (gross back pay less the offset for outside earnings under § 550.805(e)(1), but before adding interest). The deduction may be reduced dollar-for-dollar by the amount of any Social Security or Medicare taxes that were withheld from erroneous payments made in the same calendar year as the back pay award, but only if—</p> <p>(1) Those erroneous payments were actually recovered by the Government by offsetting the back pay award as provided in § 550.805(e)(2); and</p> <p>(2) Those withheld taxes have not already been repaid to the employee.</p> <p>Note: Social Security taxes are subject to the applicable Social Security tax wage base limit. In addition, see IRS guidance regarding possible correction and refunding of Social Security and Medicare taxes withheld from erroneous payments in a prior calendar year.</p>
(d) Federal income tax withholdings	<p>Compute the deduction based on adjusted gross back pay (gross back pay less the offset for outside earnings under § 550.805(e)(1), but before adding interest) less any part of back pay not subject to income tax deductions, such as non-foreign area cost-of-living allowances and contributions to the Thrift Savings Plan that are deducted from the pay of the employee. The deduction may be reduced dollar-for-dollar by the amount of any Federal income taxes withheld from erroneous payments made in the same calendar year as the back pay award, but only if—</p> <p>(1) Those erroneous payments were actually recovered by the Government by offsetting the back pay award as provided in § 550.805(e)(2); and</p> <p>(2) Those withheld taxes have not already been repaid to the employee.</p> <p>Note: Additional Federal income tax withholdings from the interest portion of the back pay award may be required by the Internal Revenue Service in certain specific circumstances.</p>

[64 FR 69179, Dec. 10, 1999]

Subpart I—Pay for Duty Involving Physical Hardship or Hazard

AUTHORITY: 5 U.S.C. 5545(d), 5548(b).

§ 550.901 Purpose.

This subpart prescribes the regulations required by sections 5545(d) and 5548(b) of title 5, United States Code, for the payment of differentials for duty involving unusual physical hardship or hazard to employees.

[56 FR 20344, May 3, 1991]

§ 550.902 Definitions.

In this subpart: *Agency* has the meaning given that term in 5 U.S.C. 5102(a)(1).

Duty involving physical hardship means duty that may not in itself be hazardous, but causes extreme physical discomfort or distress and is not adequately alleviated by protective or mechanical devices, such as duty involv-

ing exposure to extreme temperatures for a long period of time, arduous physical exertion, or exposure to fumes, dust, or noise that causes nausea, skin, eye, ear, or nose irritation.

Employee means an employee covered by the General Schedule (i.e., covered by chapter 51 and subchapter III of chapter 53 of title 5, United States Code).

Hazardous duty means duty performed under circumstances in which an accident could result in serious injury or death, such as duty performed on a high structure where protective facilities are not used or on an open structure where adverse conditions such as darkness, lightning, steady rain, or high wind velocity exist.

Hazard pay differential means additional pay for the performance of hazardous duty or duty involving physical hardship.

Head of an agency means the head of an agency or an official who has been delegated the authority to act for the