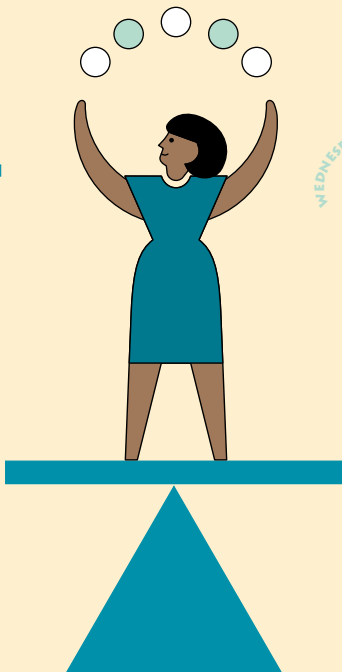
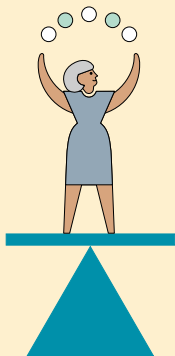


BALANCING WORK, FAMILY, & LIFE: *The APHIS Approach*



WEDNESDAY MEETING WITH BRANC

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INTRODUCTION

This booklet, titled “Balancing Work, Family and Life: The APHIS Approach,” describes options available to supervisors and employees in meeting their professional and personal needs.

I believe employees’ health and welfare are as important as the knowledge, skills, and abilities they bring to the job. The Work * Family * Life (WFL) Council developed this booklet to help Agency supervisors, work teams, and employees work more effectively. It describes flexibilities to help overcome difficulties that arise when balancing professional and personal responsibilities. This booklet is the second version; the first was published in 1992. This version contains more flexibilities and options than the first, demonstrating the progress that has been made in helping employees balance personal and professional life in the Agency and the rest of the Federal Government.

In July 1994, the President issued a memorandum (the text of which follows this Introduction) promoting the National Performance Review’s recommendation to encourage expanded use of flexible work arrangements. To comply with this directive, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has established itself as a family-friendly workplace—one that acknowledges the whole-person concept by providing a wide range of flexible work arrangements, enabling employees to better balance the competing demands of work and family in today’s fast-paced, complex environment. USDA defines a family member as “parents, spouses, children, children of a person standing in loco parents, and any individual related by blood or affinity whose close association with an employee is equivalent of a family relationship, regardless of gender or sexual orientation.” As USDA reinvents itself, it has developed a WFL policy and guide. Your staff’s WFL Council member or WFL Coordinator can provide a copy. Flexible work environments are considered essential to the Department’s efforts to reengineer and maintain a highly skilled and motivated workforce.

One of the APHIS vision elements is Valuing People in the Workplace. This element begins, “As an organization, APHIS is sensitive to the need to balance family and personal responsibilities and professional goals.” The APHIS Management Team supports WFL initiatives. Employees demonstrate loyalty, job satisfaction, and productivity in the workplace if they know that they and their coworkers are treated fairly and have access to a growing array of flexibilities to help improve productivity while meeting professional and personal obligations.

Supervisors are encouraged to identify jobs and situations in which flexible work arrangements are appropriate. All flexible work arrangements require thoughtful reflection, trust, and accountability, as well as ongoing discussions between supervisors and employees. Although most flexibilities are appropriate for many employees, utilization should not be viewed as an employee entitlement. Job requirements as well as an employee’s circumstances must be carefully considered when determining the appropriateness of using these flexibilities. Balancing a family-friendly workplace with achieving the critical mission of APHIS will continue to be a challenge. Nevertheless, it is a worthwhile and realistic goal, and a goal to which we are totally committed.

I am pleased that the WFL Council provides and distributes this booklet and similar materials because of the confidence and trust I have that APHIS employees will use flexible work options responsibly while maintaining commitment to Agency mission and goals. For further information or assistance, please contact the WFL Specialist at (301) 734-4989 or any of the WFL Council members or WFL Coordinators.

Lonnie J. King
Administrator

MEMO FROM THE PRESIDENT

JULY 11, 1994

MEMORANDUM FOR THE HEADS OF EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES

SUBJECT: Expanding Family-Friendly Work Arrangements in the Executive Branch

In order to recruit and retain a Federal workforce that will provide the highest quality of service to the American people, the executive branch must implement flexible work arrangements to create a "family-friendly" workplace. Broad use of flexible work arrangements to enable Federal employees to better balance their work and family responsibilities can increase employee effectiveness and job satisfaction, while decreasing turnover rates and absenteeism. I therefore adopt the National Performance Review's recommendation that a more family-friendly workplace be created by expanding opportunities for Federal workers to participate in flexible work arrangements, consistent with the mission of the executive branch to serve the public.

The head of each executive department or agency (hereafter collectively "agency" or "agencies") is hereby directed to establish a program to encourage and support the expansion of flexible family-friendly work arrangements, including: job sharing, career part-time employment, alternative work schedules, telecommuting, and satellite work locations. Such a program shall include:

- (1) identifying agency positions that are suitable for flexible work arrangements;
- (2) adopting appropriate policies to increase the opportunities for employees in suitable positions to participate in such flexible work arrangements;
- (3) providing appropriate training and support necessary to implement flexible work arrangements; and
- (4) identifying barriers to implementing this directive and providing recommendations for addressing such barriers to the President's Management Council.

I direct the Director of the Office of Personnel Management ("OPM") and the Administrator of General Services ("GSA") to take all necessary steps to support and encourage the expanded implementation of flexible work arrangements. The OPM and GSA shall work in concert to promptly review and revise regulations that are barriers to such work arrangements and develop legislative proposals, as needed, to achieve the goals of this directive. The OPM and GSA also shall assist agencies, as requested, to implement this directive.

The President's Management Council, in conjunction with the Office of Management and Budget, shall ensure that any guidance necessary to implement the actions set forth in this directive is provided.

Independent agencies are requested to adhere to this directive to the extent permitted by law.

This directive is for the internal management of the executive branch and is not intended to, and does not, create any right or benefit, substantive or procedural, enforceable by a party against the United States, its agencies or instrumentalities, its officers or employees, or any other person.

The Director of the Office of Management and Budget is authorized and directed to publish this directive in the Federal Register.

William J. Clinton



BALANCING THE WORLDS OF WORK AND HOME LIFE

Back in the 1950's, the national media portrayed American families as more alike than dissimilar. In the majority of households depicted, Dad worked outside the home while Mom kept house and took care of the children full time. Popular television series like "Ozzie and Harriet" and "Leave It to Beaver" immortalized this way of life.

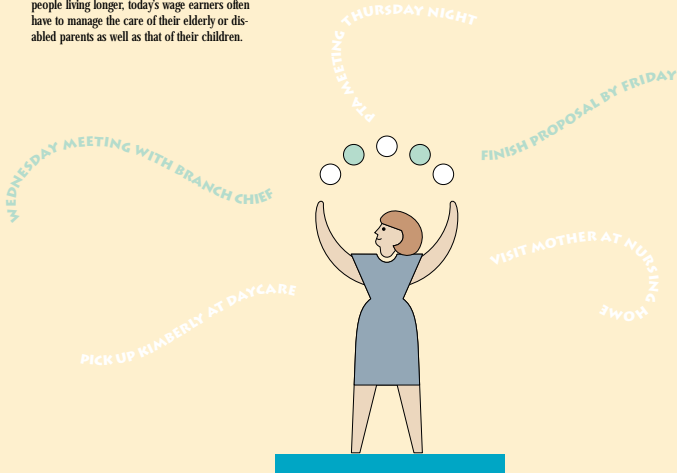
By the 1990's, though, television shows had switched to featuring multigenerational families under one roof, single-parent households, female heads-of-household with full-time jobs, unrelated adults living together, and two-career families. These changes reflect a more diverse society. In fact, now more than half of U.S. mothers hold down jobs outside the home. Single-parent households are common. And with people living longer, today's wage earners often have to manage the care of their elderly or disabled parents as well as that of their children.

Here at the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), we try to create an environment where work expectations and employment conditions are responsive to the needs of today's employees—not the workforce of the fifties. We know that you want to do right by your on-the-job responsibilities and meet your personal needs, too. But balancing the demands of your supervisor or work team and your kids, the branch chief and your father's nursing-home personnel, the people you supervise and your daughter's daycare provider can be quite a juggling act. The APHIS Work + Family + Life (WFL) Council strives to help APHIS employees balance these competing responsibilities.

Everybody making hiring decisions in APHIS, from top management through first-line supervisors, wants to staff the agency with the sharpest, most dedicated people we can find. And we want to keep them, too.

If you are a current employee, we want to be sure you know all your options. Current employees can contact their supervisor or WFL Coordinator for more details.

If you are a prospective employee, we want you to understand how choosing to work for APHIS can help you juggle the demands of everyday life and your desire for a meaningful career. Prospective employees can contact APHIS at (800) 762-2738 for further information about any of the following topics.





SCHEDULING OPTIONS

Most full-time employees of the Federal Government's executive branch work 80 hours in a 2-week pay period.

But with their supervisor's approval, APHIS employees at sites with alternative work schedules can arrange their schedules to help meet personal and family obligations more smoothly. Alternative work schedules let you drop the children off at school on certain mornings or make time for recurring appointments with the orthodontist. If every other Friday is your day to share teacher's-aide responsibilities with the other parents in your son's class, you can build a regular day off into your schedule. If your duties are portable, you may even be allowed to work at home, as discussed in the Flexiplace section of this booklet.

APHIS also offers several part-time options so that we can attract and keep good employees. Some part-time employees have substantial dependent-care responsibilities and want to pur-

sue career enhancement. Others need to work less than a full-time schedule for a variety of reasons, including age or disability.

ALTERNATIVE WORK SCHEDULES

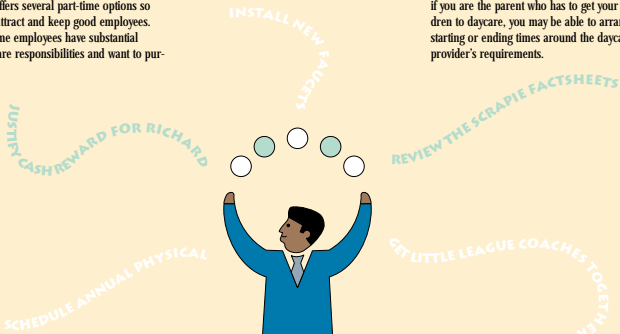
Relevant statutory requirements and other guidance: 5 U.S.C. 6120–6133; 5 CFR part 610, subpart D; Supervisor's Desk Guide, subchapter 4610, "Tours of Duty," August 1992.

In many work environments, workers typically come in and leave at the same times every day and work Monday through Friday. However, wherever possible, APHIS permits flexible work schedules. At many locations, employees have adopted tours of duty using flexitime, com-

pressed, or maxiflex schedules. (Due to scheduling demands at import and export facilities, only compressed schedules are currently offered at these locations.)

In some locations, the APHIS office workday begins as early as 6 a.m. and ends as late as 6 p.m. Full-time employees must be on duty during the agency's core hours, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Supervisors and employees cooperatively determine the schedule an employee will use. Likewise, self-directed work teams and their coaches cooperatively decide on the schedule or schedules to be used by the team.

If you have put yourself on an exercise program, you may be able to set up a schedule that allows for a 2-hour break over the lunch period so you can do your workout and shower afterwards. Or if you are the parent who has to get your children to daycare, you may be able to arrange your starting or ending times around the daycare provider's requirements.



Under compressed work schedules, which are available to many full-time APHIS employees, workers, work teams, and supervisors can agree on a schedule in which workers complete their 80-hour biweekly work requirements in less than 10 workdays.

Let's say that you need to visit your mother at her nursing home at least twice a month. By working eight 9-hour days plus one 8-hour day in a pay period, you could arrange to have a preset Monday or Friday off every other week without taking annual leave. A schedule like this also helps you save leave that might otherwise have to be used for preplanned medical or other appointments.

FLEXIPLACE

Relevant statutory requirements and other guidance: Guidelines for Pilot Flexible Workplace Arrangements, January 1990; Memorandum for Personnel Directors, October 21, 1993, from Lorraine Green, Deputy Director, Office of Personnel Management (OPM); OPM publication, "The Federal Flexible Workplace Pilot Project Work-at-Home Component," January 1993.

Because many kinds of jobs can be performed outside the traditional office setting, APHIS has adopted a flexiplace program. Workers in this program trade their daily drive for their disk drive.

The Human Resources Division for Marketing and Regulatory Programs manages the flexiplace program. Under this program, field and headquarters employees may perform their duties at home or at local satellite offices up to 3 days per week.

While working at home is not a substitute for daycare, it does provide parents increased flexibility in managing the care of their children or other dependent family members. Flexiplace also helps employees pursue educational opportunities or phase into retirement.

PART-TIME EMPLOYMENT

Relevant statutory requirements and other guidance (Part-Time Employment and Job Sharing): 5 U.S.C. 3401-3408; 5 CFR part 340, subparts A and B; OPM publication, "Job Sharing for Federal Employees," October 1990.

APHIS management understands that personal situations and family obligations make it impossible for some employees to work a conventional 40-hour week. So we offer several kinds of part-time scheduling options.

In passing the Federal Employees Part-Time Career Employment Act of 1978 (Public Law 95-437), Congress held that part-time career (permanent) employment benefits the Government by providing an alternative for those who require or prefer shorter hours. Generally, part-time employees work 16 to 32 hours per week (or up to 64 hours per pay period). These workers are eligible for health and life-insurance benefits.

Some APHIS employees utilize part-time employment to facilitate returning to work following childbirth or to help recover from an accident or illness. Also, APHIS believes that making part-time jobs available enhances our ability to ensure that older people and those with disabilities are proportionately represented in our workforce.

JOB SHARING

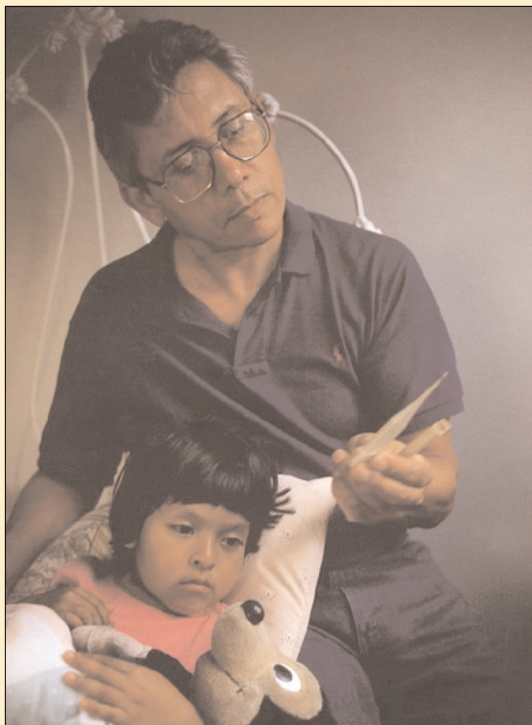
Job sharing is a form of part-time employment in which the tours of duty of two (or more) employees are arranged so they can perform the duties of one full-time position. For instance, we might hire one typist to work mornings only and another to complete that job-sharing assignment by working solely in the afternoons. Or we might select one program analyst who wanted to work Mondays and Tuesdays only and pair that individual with another analyst who could commit to Wednesdays through Fridays.

Individuals may be attracted to job sharing because it allows increased flexibility to balance family responsibilities, pursue educational opportunities, phase into retirement, care for elderly parents or ill family members, or reenter the workforce.

Each job sharer may work up to 32 hours per week. Job sharers may also cover each other's absences and thereby reduce their use of sick and annual leave.

Because job sharing is a form of part-time employment, workers are eligible for health and life insurance benefits.





LEAVE POLICIES

Full-time Federal employees in the executive branch earn 4 hours of sick leave every 2-week pay period and from 4 to 8 hours of annual leave every pay period, depending on how long they have been employed by the Government. Traditionally, employees used sick leave to cover absences from work due to illness, recuperation following childbirth, and medical and dental appointments. Workers used annual leave to cover absences due to vacations, the illnesses of family members, and nonmedical appointments.

But in 1986, OPM issued guidance urging Federal agencies to be as flexible as possible in granting leave to employees with dependent-care responsibilities, and in 1993 and 1994, legislation extended the use of leave for more dependent-care issues. These changes provide clear evidence that the Government supports flexible conditions and personnel policies that help you balance the demands of your professional and personal life.

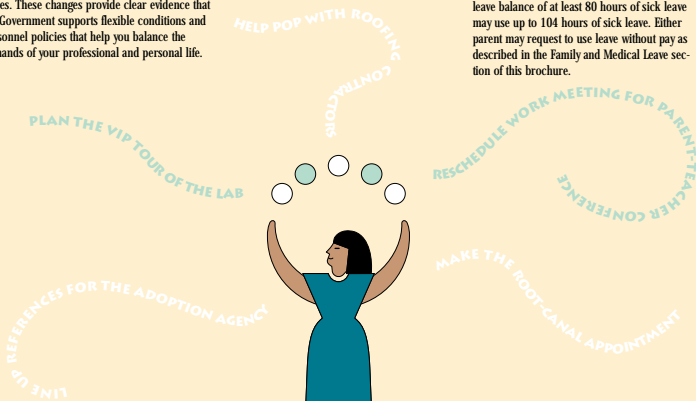
APHIS encourages its supervisors and work teams to make every attempt to help employees strike a balance between these competing needs. Employees who have exhausted their available leave for care of family members may, depending on the circumstances involved, use a combination of accrued annual leave, advanced annual leave, and leave without pay to take time off to handle parental and family responsibilities, such as childbirth, adoption, or the care of sick children.

Supervisors and employees should refer to the Supervisor's Desk Guide for more detailed information.

ABSENCE FOR CHILDBIRTH

Relevant statutory requirements (Absence for Childbirth, Absence for Children's Needs, Caring for Family Members and Bereavement): 5 U.S.C. 6307(d); 5 CFR part 630, subparts D and E; Supervisor's Desk Guide, subchapter 4630, "Absence and Leave."

The Federal Government provides sick leave to a mother for childbirth based on certification of a medical care provider. A male employee may request authorization to use annual leave to care for the mother of his newborn child while she is incapacitated for maternity reasons. In addition, full-time male employees may use up to 40 hours of sick leave for this purpose; those having a sick leave balance of at least 80 hours of sick leave may use up to 104 hours of sick leave. Either parent may request to use leave without pay as described in the Family and Medical Leave section of this brochure.



LEAVE FOR ADOPTION

Relevant statutory requirements (Leave for Adoption and Administrative Leave [bone marrow or organ donations]): 5 U.S.C. 6307 and 6327; 5 CFR part 630, subpart D; Supervisor's Desk Guide, subchapter 4630, "Absence and Leave," June 1994.

Federal employees may use sick leave for purposes of adopting a child. Since procedures and processes vary from State to State and adoption agency to adoption agency, the amount of sick leave granted may vary from person to person. If you used annual leave for adoption purposes during the period of October 1, 1991, to September 30, 1994, you may request that your used annual leave be replaced with used sick leave. These requests must be made by September 30, 1996.

See the Family and Medical Leave section of this booklet for information about using leave without pay for adoption purposes.

ABSENCE FOR CHILDREN'S NEEDS

We understand that all parents have to miss work from time to time because of their children. Your daughter has the starring role in the class play, which is being staged only once—at 10 a.m. on a Wednesday. Your twins' school suddenly decides to shut down for all of Easter week because it didn't use all its planned snow days. Your child care arrangements for your infant son break down because your babysitter is sick with the flu.

You may request to use accrued annual leave or leave without pay to cover such absences. Or with your work team or supervisor's concurrence, you may be able to alter your usual work schedule to accommodate such events.



BEREAVEMENT AND CARING FOR FAMILY MEMBERS

We recognize that there will be times when employees need time off to attend to the medical needs of a family member or following the death of a loved one. All full-time employees may use

up to 40 hours of sick leave each year to take care of sick or injured family members, to take family members to medical appointments, or for bereavement. In addition, employees who maintain a balance of at least 80 hours of sick leave may use an additional 64 hours a year (for a total of 13 workdays) for these purposes. Additionally, annual leave and flexible schedules may

be used to cover such absences, provided the supervisor agrees. Leave without pay may be used as described in the next section.

FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE

Relevant statutory requirements and other guidance: 5 U.S.C. 6381–6387; 5 CFR part 630, subpart L; Supervisor’s Desk Guide, subchapter 4630, “Absence and Leave.”

In addition to the leave options described above, the Family and Medical Leave Act entitles all Federal employees up to 12 weeks of leave without pay to care for a newborn, adopted child, seriously ill or injured family member, or oneself, if ill or injured.

An employee may request to use available annual leave for all or part of the time used under the Family and Medical Leave Act, but use of annual leave is not required. Sick leave can be used only as already defined. The use of available leave does not extend the 12-week period.

Additionally, with supervisory concurrence, an employee may use leave under the Family and Medical Leave Act intermittently—for example, 10 hours a week for as long as rehabilitation and care is needed to recover from an illness or injury. The intermittent leave may not exceed the 12 weeks allowed in a 12-month period. Employees are encouraged to request leave 30 days before it is needed or as soon as possible.

LEAVE-TRANSFER PROGRAM

Relevant statutory requirements and other guidance: 5 U.S.C. 6331–6373; 5 CFR part 630, subparts I and J; “Report to Congress on First-Year Operations Under the Federal Employees Leave Sharing Act of 1988,” October 31, 1990;

Supervisor’s Desk Guide, subchapter 4630, “Absence and Leave.”

Serious illnesses strike employees without regard to how much annual or sick leave they have been able to accumulate. To ease the emotional and financial burdens these emergencies generate, APHIS has set up a leave-transfer program. Once the agency approves an employee’s request for leave donations, coworkers can voluntarily transfer some of their annual leave to the qualifying employee. We believe both donors and recipients benefit from a program that encourages mutual assistance among fellow workers.

The leave-transfer program has some restrictions. Only accrued annual leave can be donated, and recipients cannot be declared eligible until they have exhausted all of their own annual and sick leave.

For details about how to apply for the leave-transfer program, contact your servicing personnel office.

TIME-OFF INCENTIVE AWARDS

Employees who are frequently called on to meet their children’s needs or provide assistance to their spouse, parents, or other adult family member need all the leave they can possibly get. Sometimes extra leave is more valuable to an employee than a cash award. APHIS and other Federal agencies may grant time off—without loss of pay or charge to leave already accrued—to employees for their efforts, accomplishments, or achievements that enhance the mission of the agency or contribute to the quality, efficiency, or economy of Government operations.

A time-off award does not convert to cash under any circumstances. One to 5 days off, with a maximum of 80 hours per year, can be awarded to a

full-time employee, and smaller amounts of time off can be awarded to part-time employees. This leave must be used within 1 year of when it is awarded. The days and hours that the employee will be off must be coordinated with the supervisor.

Here are four examples of accomplishments and achievements that could be rewarded with time off:

- Ensuring that work or the agency’s mission is accomplished during a difficult period by completing additional work or project assignments while maintaining your own workload,
- Making a high-quality contribution to a difficult or important project or assignment,
- Displaying special initiative and skill in completing a project or assignment before the deadline, and
- Using initiative and creativity in making improvements in a product, activity, program, or service.

ADMINISTRATIVE LEAVE

Federal employees who donate organs or bone marrow are entitled to up to 7 days of administrative leave. An employee can request additional sick or annual leave, if medically needed and approved by a supervisor.

USDA employees can use up to 2 hours a week of administrative leave, if approved by their supervisor, to mentor or tutor at schools sponsored by the Department. Two hours of administrative leave per week can also be approved for Department employees who are involved in any startup group, organizing committee, or board of directors of a federally sponsored on- or near-site child care center.



OTHER ASSISTANCE AVAILABLE

Exactly what are APHIS' responsibilities in providing help for employees who experience personal or job-related problems that affect their productivity? Is there any way the Government or agency can help you or your children foot the bill for college?

What will the agency do for you if you are selected for a promotion to a new job location? Can APHIS assist your spouse in finding work after your transfer? What if your office is relocated causing staff functions to change? We are working hard to address employee concerns in all areas of business and family life.

EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Employee assistance programs (EAP) were initially introduced to help workers deal with alcohol and drug-abuse problems. Since then, EAP's have broadened to include confidential counseling and referral services to employees facing per-

sonal health-related problems that might affect work performance or employee well-being. In addition to substance-abuse issues, counseling could address problems related to marital, legal, financial, or emotional difficulties.

APHIS established its EAP to provide no-cost confidential counseling and referral services to workers who have problems that might adversely affect their performance, attendance, or conduct in the workplace. While this program is not a substitute for long-term therapy sessions with an EAP counselor can help employees come to grips with the issues that threaten the stability of their work and family life. If you are a field employee and need a telephone number to contact an EAP counselor, call (612) 370-2117. Headquarters employees should call (301) 734-5991.

APHIS also believes that an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. When and where possible, the agency schedules presentations on family problems and wellness issues for supervisors and employees.

FAMILY RESOURCE SERVICE

Finding quality child care or caring for an older family member can be the source of many headaches for employees. To help deal with these and similar issues, APHIS offers the Family Resource Service, a consultation and referral service on dependent and family care. This service is open to APHIS employees in the 50 States, Guam, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands and also to APHIS Foreign Service employees in Mexico, Central America, and the Caribbean through dedicated lines.

Domestic employees can call 1-800-847-5437, TDD 1-800-346-9188, free of charge, for help on prenatal care, infants, toddlers, preschoolers,



school-age children, preteens and teenagers, children in college, adult and elder care, relocating with your family, managing conflict in work and family needs, and more. APHIS Foreign Service employees in the areas covered can call collect (215) 362-8900.

When you call the service, you will speak directly with a counselor. In addition to counseling over the phone, the counselors can provide educational materials or a list of community resources and services. However, selection of any recommended services is a personal decision.

All calls to the Family Resource Service are confidential. You may talk with a counselor about any number of issues as often as you wish. APHIS pays for any assistance employees receive from the Family Resource Service; you pay for the services of any provider you select.

WFL SUPERVISOR'S ADVISORY COMMITTEE

How many employees have had a family or personal emergency that interfered with work? How many supervisors have had a productive employee who is just not making it anymore because of such a conflict? Supervisors and work teams do not always know what options and flexibilities are available to help balance professional and personal responsibilities. An employee may have questions on how to approach a supervisor in order to reach a win-win agreement. Supervisors and employees can call the WFL Supervisor's Advisory Committee (WFLSAC) at (301) 734-4989 for help.

WFLSAC counselors can help supervisors retain qualified employees by recommending ways to balance competing professional and personal needs and reduce the potential for conflict. WFLSAC can help employees with conflicts between their professional and personal lives by

suggesting ways to discuss their concerns with their supervisor.

IMPROVED INSURANCE BENEFITS

Recent changes in insurance benefits have kept up with societal trends. For example, breast cancer is now the second leading cause of death among women in the United States. As a result, OPM has mandated that all insurance plans participating in the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program provide coverage for high-dose chemotherapy and autologous bone marrow transplantations for the treatment of breast cancer, and certain other conditions, when deemed medically appropriate.

Recent legislation has provided irrevocable assignment of life insurance benefits. The law provides a means of enforcing a court order directing a spouse in a divorce settlement to continue carrying life insurance for the benefit of a former spouse. Once the life insurance has been irrevocably assigned, the enrollee can no longer change beneficiaries.

Federal agencies are allowed to convert current temporary employees to term-appointment employees so they can receive benefits, including eligibility for health insurance.

HEALTH AND WELLNESS

Physical fitness, smoking cessation, and balanced and wholesome nutritional practices have been shown to be effective in promoting longer, healthier, and more productive lives. Internal APHIS studies have shown decreased sick leave usage and tardiness, lowered stress, and increased morale and productivity among employees taking part in wellness activities. Through the APHIS Wellness Program, APHIS

encourages employees to participate in such activities. Guidance on this program's many aspects can be found in Chapter 9 of the APHIS Safety and Health Manual.

Due to professional and personal obligations, many employees find it difficult to include fitness activities into their lives. APHIS allows employees to use flexitime to pursue personal fitness. The Riverdale facility includes a fitness center. In addition, as local funds and interest will allow, APHIS supervisors may negotiate agreements with local fitness centers for employee use.

ONSITE OR NEAR-SITE CHILD CARE CENTERS

Statutory authority: Tribble Amendment (1985), 40 U.S.C. 490(b); APHIS Directive 4230.1, "Establishing Child Care Centers," April 22, 1994.

A growing number of onsite or near-site child care centers are operating in Federal space under the auspices of the General Services Administration (GSA). Although the care these centers provide is not free, parents who use them enjoy having access to quality care for their children nearby during the workday.

As of 1995, APHIS is participating in two federally sponsored child care centers, one in Ames, IA, and the other in Riverdale, MD. Both of these centers are provider operated under the direction of a nonprofit, private board of directors with USDA covering the rent and utilities. APHIS can participate with other Federal employers, through GSA, in privately sponsored child care centers. Written guidance on how to establish a child care center is available from the WFL Specialist or any WFL Council member or Coordinator.



BREASTFEEDING CAMPAIGN

Breastfeeding benefits more than the mother and her child. Research in the private sector has demonstrated that breastfeeding mothers return to work earlier if they are able to continue breastfeeding while working. Moreover, mother's milk reduces illness in babies so breastfeeding mothers use less leave to care for sick infants.

The WFL Council has obtained lactation equipment for use in the field. Contact your WFL Coordinator for more information. Lactation equipment that may be used by multiple users (breastfeeding mothers purchase their own accessories) is available through WFL Coordinators in Minneapolis, MN, Fort Collins, CO, Miami, FL, Ames, IA, and San Juan, PR. Single-user equipment is available through the WFL Coordinators at field regional and sector offices. The Women's Advisory Committee offers multiuser

lactation equipment for headquarters at Riverdale, MD.

CHILD SUPPORT

This section is derived from text prepared and disseminated by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Child Support Enforcement, Washington, DC 20447.

Executive Order 12953 requires the Federal Government to be a model employer in assisting with the establishment and enforcement of child support. As a Federal employee, you have the same rights and responsibilities under child support laws as other parents.

If you need information about the Child Support Enforcement (CSE) Program or how to establish or enforce an order, contact your EAP or your

local CSE office. Check your telephone book for the local social services agency listing or call the State CSE agency for the telephone number of your local office.

Federal personnel records are regularly cross-matched with records of persons who owe child support. If you owe child support, keep your payments current. A convenient way is to have the payment withheld from your wages and automatically sent to the collecting authority. You can obtain more information from the payroll office.

EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

No, neither APHIS nor any other Federal agency can put you through school. But a nonprofit corporation supported by the contributions of Federal employees can provide substantial financial assistance to Federal employees and their children, spouses, and survivors.

The Federal Employee Education and Assistance (FEEA) program awards educational scholarships and grants ranging from \$250 to \$1,500 to deserving Federal employees and to members of their families to attend 2- or 4-year colleges or schools granting graduate degrees. Recipients win a scholarship on their merits. The selectors consider academic achievement, extracurricular or community-service activities, written recommendations, and the contents of an original essay.

The FEEA educational loan program offers employees another way to pay for college. The program makes available loans from \$2,000 to \$20,000 per year at relatively low interest rates and with flexible repayment schedules. An especially appealing feature of the program is the fact that FEEA evaluates the applicant's creditworthiness, not family income, in deciding who should receive loans.

For scholarship and student-loan information, send a stamped, self-addressed envelope to FEEA, Suite 200, 8441 West Bowles Avenue, Littleton, CO 80123.

FEEA also administers the awarding of emergency grants and loans to Federal employees faced with a variety of emergencies such as natural disasters, unforeseen illnesses, and accidents. For information about this program and an emergency-assistance application, call FEEA toll free (800) 323-4140.

WHEN YOU MOVE AT OUR REQUEST

Although there are exceptions, Federal agencies generally do not pay the cost of moving employees to their first duty station. But after that, when your job change is "for the benefit of the U.S. Government," APHIS offers an extensive array of financial assistance to help you get to—and get set up in—your new location.

We reimburse you for real-estate-related costs in selling your old residence and buying your new one (or getting out of your lease if you are renting). We cover the costs of sending you on a househunting trip and moving your possessions. We pay the travel costs to get you and your family to your new duty station and give you time off to handle the move itself. (APHIS employees serving abroad receive different benefits. For more particulars on their employment benefits, see the section entitled "Would You Like To Work Abroad?")

Many of APHIS' best career jobs are located in high-cost areas. We recognize that moving to such an area can be a threatening prospect. So APHIS set up the Employee Relocation Assistance Program for one high-cost area, metropolitan Washington, DC. This program helps individuals hired at or transferred to headquarters in making the transition to the Nation's Capital.

When a headquarters position is filled from outside the Washington, DC, area, the hiring office with APHIS notifies Riverdale staff at (301) 734-4949. The two offices then begin a collaborative process designed to assist the new employee and his or her dependents in relocating.

Now that most American families have two breadwinners, it is natural that job transfers for one person can give that individual's spouse a bad case of career heartburn. APHIS' Spousal Employment Assistance Program is set up to help the husband or wife of a newly arrived APHIS headquarters employee locate suitable employment in the metro Washington area. Riverdale staff manage this program, and the APHIS office of the newly arrived employee provides financial and logistical assistance as necessary.

The hiring office is responsible for notifying the employee of the program's availability, notifying appropriate Riverdale staff each time an

employee is to be transferred to the DC metropolitan area, permitting vacancies to be filled on a temporary basis by a qualified spouse (not necessarily the spouse of an employee in that office), and helping provide the spouse a network of contacts for job-search assistance.

Riverdale staff members are responsible for providing the services related to reviewing vacancies, preparing applications and supporting material, applying and interviewing for vacancies, and counseling the spouse on job-search and interview methods. In addition, after being notified by the hiring office, that staff contacts each employee prior to transfer to determine the extent to which spousal placement services will be required.

For more information on employee relocation matters or the Spousal Employment Assistance Program, call (301) 734-4949 or (800) 762-2738.



WOULD YOU LIKE TO WORK ABROAD?

Although the vast majority of APHIS' positions are located in the United States, about 100 of our people work in foreign countries.

These workers are agency employees and members of the Foreign Service. They work in entomology, plant protection and quarantine, veterinary medicine, and administration, among other occupations.

Foreign Service employees enjoy all of the work options described earlier in this brochure except for flexiplace, part-time employment, and job sharing. Incumbents in some Foreign Service positions can work under flexible and compressed schedules. When Foreign Service employees are working in the United States on a domestic rotation, they can make use of APHIS' and USDA's Employee Assistance Programs and child care centers as well.

Coping with personal and community crises while serving overseas requires a strong support system. The State Department created a Family Liaison Office to help all employees working in U.S. embassies and consulates overseas. This office directly serves individuals in Washington, DC, and—through its 154 Community Liaison Offices—those working at missions abroad. The Community Liaison Offices work to maintain high morale in the Foreign Service community primarily through orientation activities, cultural and recreational programs, counseling and referral, and assistance with security education, and family member employment. To help the spouses of members of the Foreign Service find local

employment, the Family Liaison Office maintains a computerized data base listing participants' job skills, experience, and training. Employment counseling and workshops are also available to Foreign Service spouses. In addition, the Employee Consultation Service, part of the State Department's Office of Medical Services, provides free confidential counseling for individuals and families anticipating, or returning from, an overseas assignment or actually serving overseas. The Overseas Briefing Center in the Foreign Service Institute offers courses to assist those going overseas, and its "briefing boxes" contain extensive post-specific information.

Many of APHIS' Foreign Service positions are filled from a roster of eligible individuals. To find out more about getting onto a roster for jobs in your particular skills area, contact APHIS at (301) 734-4906.






OPM REPORT

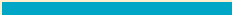
The following is an excerpt from "A Report to the President, Balancing Work and Family Demands: The Federal Response," issued by OPM, January 1995.

As a nation competing in a global market, it is important that Americans be the best educated, trained, and motivated workers in the world. But employees are distinct individuals bringing to the workplace special skills, viewpoints, and experiences. Their lives are shaped by experiences at work and at home. The two existences are not separate and removed from one another. It is critical for employers to recognize that their employees are mothers, fathers, spouses, brothers, sisters, grandparents, and friends with responsibilities, problems, and concerns that reach beyond the workplace.

The Federal Government has long acknowledged the importance of employer involvement in maintaining strong, healthy American families. As the largest employer in the United States, the Government strives to help its employees achieve a balance between the challenges of work and home life. President Clinton has often spoken of the importance of balancing work and family demands as they relate to productivity effectiveness, and personal satisfaction and happiness.

The Administration, with recommendations from the National Performance Review (NPR), has championed increased Government support of Federal employees and their families. Without such support, retention and recruitment of skilled and talented workers will be difficult. In addition, the NPR draws a correlation between employee productivity and strong work and family programs.





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To file a complaint, write the Secretary of Agriculture, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, DC, 20250, or call (202) 720-7327 (voice) or (202) 720-1127 (TDD). USDA is an equal employment opportunity employer.

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