

DATES: Comments on this proposal should be received within 30 calendar days from the date of this publication.

ADDRESSES: Send or deliver comments to—

Lorraine E. Dettman, Chief, Operations Support Division, Retirement and Insurance Service, U.S. Office of Personnel Management, 1900 E Street, NW, Room 3349, Washington, DC 20415-0001

and

Joseph Lackey, OPM Desk Officer, Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, Office of Management and Budget, New Executive Office Building, NW, Room 3002, Washington, DC 20503

FOR INFORMATION REGARDING

ADMINISTRATIVE COORDINATION—CONTACT: Mary Beth Smith-Toomey, Budget & Administrative Service Division, (202) 606-0623.

Office of Personnel Management.

Janice R. Lachance,

Director.

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**OFFICE OF PERSONNEL
MANAGEMENT**

January 1998 Pay Adjustments

AGENCY: Office of Personnel Management.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The rates of basic pay and locality payments for certain categories of Federal employees were adjusted in January 1998, as authorized by the President. This notice documents those pay adjustments for the public record.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Sharon Herzberg, Office of Compensation Administration, Workforce Compensation and Performance Service, Office of Personnel Management, (202) 606-2858, FAX (202) 606-0864, or email to payleave@opm.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: On August 29, 1997, the President transmitted to Congress an alternative plan under the authority of 5 U.S.C. 5303(b) and 5304a that established the January 1998 across-the-board adjustments for statutory pay systems and the 1998 locality pay adjustments for General Schedule (GS) employees in the 48 contiguous States and the District of Columbia. On

December 29, 1997, the President signed Executive Order 13071 (62 FR 68521). This order implemented increases in rates of basic pay for various categories of Federal employees in 1998, as required by 5 U.S.C. 5303 and other statutes. The 1998 General Schedule, reflecting the 2.3 percent general increase, was published as Schedule 1 of Executive Order 13071. Executive Order 13071 also included the percentage amounts of the 1998 locality payments as established by the President's alternative plan of August 29, 1997. (See Section 5 and Schedule 9 of Executive Order 13071.) The publication of this notice satisfies the requirement in section 5(b) of Executive Order 13071 that the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) publish appropriate notice of the 1998 locality payments in the **Federal Register**.

Locality payments are authorized for General Schedule employees under 5 U.S.C. 5304 and 5304a. They apply in the 48 contiguous States and the District of Columbia. In 1998, there are 32 separate locality pay areas with locality payments ranging from 5.42 percent to 12.06 percent. These 1998 locality pay percentages, which replaced the locality pay percentages that were applicable in 1997, became effective on the first day of the first applicable pay period beginning on or after January 1, 1998. An employee's locality-adjusted annual rate of pay is computed by increasing his or her scheduled annual rate of basic pay (as defined in 5 U.S.C. 5302(8) and 5 CFR 531.602) by the applicable locality pay percentage. (See 5 CFR 531.604 and 531.605.)

On December 4, 1997, the Director of OPM, on behalf of the President's Pay Agent, extended the 1998 locality-based comparability payments to the same Governmentwide and single-agency categories of non-GS employees that were authorized to receive the 1997 locality payments. The Governmentwide categories include members of the Senior Executive Service (SES), the Foreign Service, the Senior Foreign Service, employees in senior-level (SL) and scientific or professional (ST) positions, administrative law judges, and members of Boards of Contract Appeals. By law, the maximum locality rate of pay for these employees is the rate for level III of the Executive Schedule.

Executive Order 13071 shows the 1998 Executive Schedule reflecting the 2.3 percent pay adjustment granted under 5 U.S.C. 5318. The Executive

order also reflects a decision by the President to increase the rates of basic pay for members of the Senior Executive Service (SES) by 2.3 percent (rounded to the nearest \$100) at levels ES-1 through ES-6. Because of previous pay cap restrictions, the new ES-5 and ES-6 rates of basic pay are the same.

The rates of basic pay for administrative law judges (ALJs) and Board of Contract Appeals (BCA) members are calculated as a percentage of the rate for level IV of the Executive Schedule. (See 5 U.S.C. 5372 and 5372a.) Therefore, ALJ and BCA rates have been increased by 2.3 percent. Also, the maximum rate of basic pay for senior-level (SL) and scientific or professional (ST) positions has been increased by 2.3 percent (to \$118,400) because it is tied to the rate for level IV of the Executive Schedule. The minimum rate for SL/ST positions is equal to 120 percent of the minimum rate of basic pay for GS-15, and it has been increased by 2.3 percent (to \$87,030) because of the 2.3 percent across-the-board GS pay adjustment. (See 5 U.S.C. 5376.)

OPM has published "Salary Tables for 1998" (OPM Doc. 124-48-6, March 1998), which provides complete salary tables incorporating the 1998 pay adjustments, information on general pay administration matters, locality pay area definitions, Internal Revenue Service withholding tables, and other related information. The rates of pay shown in "Salary Tables for 1998" are the official rates of pay for affected employees and are hereby incorporated as part of this notice. Copies of "Salary Tables for 1998" may be purchased from the Government Printing Office (GPO) by calling (202) 512-1800 or FAX (202) 512-2250. Copies of "Salary Tables for 1998" may also be ordered directly from GPO on the Internet at http://www.gpo.gov/su_docs/sale/prf/prf.html.

In addition, pay tables may be downloaded from OPM's Internet website at <http://www.opm.gov/oca/payrates/index.htm>. Pay schedules also may be downloaded directly from OPM's electronic bulletin board, OPM ONLINE, which is reached by dialing (202) 606-4800 via modem.

Office of Personnel Management.

Janice R. Lachance,

Director.

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