

**Electronic Official Personnel Folder**  
**Frequently Asked Questions**  
**eOPF-FAQ's**

**1. What is the Electronic Official Personnel Folder (eOPF)?**

The eOPF is an electronic version of your Official Personnel Folder and contains all the official records required to document your Federal career. The eOPF solution provides electronic, Web enabled access for all Federal Agency staff members to view eOPF documents. All employees are able to view their own OPF through the eOPF solution. eOPF includes security measures to ensure the integrity of the system. For example, users are able to view their own eOPF documents, but not modify the documents.

The Human Resources Division in conjunction with the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) is launching the electronic Official Personnel Folder (eOPF).

**2. Why are there documents listed with a 1-1-1901 effective date?**

These are documents that did not have any effective date or signature date on the paper document when it was sent for scanning. This date was a Business Rule that was agreed upon between the scanning facility and USDA. Your servicing HR Processing Assistant continues to work on these documents to determine a correct effective date.

**3. What process was used to get old documents into the eOPFs?**

All paper documents stored in the OPF were inventoried, boxed, and shipped to an off-site facility where they underwent the "backfile" conversion process. Backfile conversion included scanning, indexing, and quality assurance checks of each document in the file.

**4. Who will input new documents into the eOPFs?**

All new OPF forms will be electronically transmitted from the National Finance Center Personnel/Payroll system to the eOPF system or scanned by the HR staff.

**5. How secure is my personal information in the eOPF system?**

USDA has taken several steps to ensure that all employee information is protected. First, the eOPF can only be accessed through an Internet browser using Secure Socket Layer (SSL) with 128-bit encryption. This ensures that all of the information the eOPF sends over the Internet is encrypted or 'scrambled' and thus cannot be intercepted and read. Second, access to your eOPF account is controlled by your e-authentication password. Do not give your password to anyone else. Third, the eOPF has been programmed to limit movement between screens to ensure that someone cannot go directly to your documents using a temporary URL. Fourth, system timeouts will inactivate the system after periods of inactivity.

**6. Who will have access to the eOPFs?**

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HR Specialists will have access to employees that they service; OPM investigators will have access when conducting a background investigation; and employees will be able to see their own information. Each employee is responsible for the consequences of providing others access to their eOPF.

**7. How can I get e-mail notification when new documents are added to my eOPF?**

It is your responsibility to ensure that your correct email address is entered. You can either use your government provided email or your personal email. At the initial eOPF entry screen, follow the links to input an email address of your choice. Once an email address is added and the employee notification feature is activated, you will be notified each time a document, such as an SF-50 (Notification of Personnel Action), is added to your eOPF account.

**8. What information will be included in the email notification?**

The email notification sent to the employee when a document is added will contain only basic information about the document, such as form number, type of action, and effective date.

**9. Will employees be notified when items are removed from their eOPF?**

The removal of documents; such as the expiration of a Letter of Reprimand or a Cancellation SF-50 will not generate notifications.

**10. Will employees be notified if someone looks at their eOPF?**

No. email notification occurs only when a new document is added to the eOPF.

**11. Who processes removal of documents?**

All questions regarding the content of your eOPF should be directed to your servicing processing HR Assistant.

**12. What measures will be taken to ensure that eOPF data will not be lost?**

OPM will be hosting the eOPF system for the USDA and other government agencies. There will be nightly incremental backups of all new documents and any related information added on a given day. Full system-wide backups will occur weekly. OPM will back-up completely and store off-site the entire data repository on a monthly basis.

**13. Who owns the OPF and eOPF, the employee or the agency?**

Neither. According to OPM's Guide to Personnel Recordkeeping: "The Office of Personnel Management owns the personnel folder and its contents." The Guide

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contains the Office of Personnel Management's rules for creating, maintaining, using, and disposing of the Official Personnel Folder.

**14. How will employees without access to a PC or email address be notified of a new document in their eOPF?**

HR will be responsible for providing copies of SF-50Bs to the employees mailing address on record.

**15. Does any other agency use electronic Official Personnel Folders?**

Several agencies including the HHS, DHS, FAA, DLA, Air Force, and the State Department have already implemented electronic OPF systems. All eOPF vendors are following 36 CFR 1228.270 which discusses transfer of permanent electronic records.

**16. I have reviewed my folder and it appears that the latest document is missing. What should I do?**

All questions regarding the content of your eOPF should be directed to your servicing processing HR Assistant.

**17. I am a new USDA employee, how soon can I expect my eOPF user ID and e-authentication password?**

Information regarding your user ID and e-authentication password will be provided to you during your enter-on-duty processing. It will take approximately five (5) weeks from the time you enter-on-duty until your account is set-up in the eOPF system.

**18. I noticed that a document in my eOPF is incorrect, what do I do?**

All questions regarding the content of your eOPF should be directed to your servicing processing HR Assistant.

**19. Is there a 'Help' feature for eOPF?**

eOPF has an online 'Help' function that you can reach by clicking on the word 'Help' at the top of most pages within the web site. The 'Help' instructions can be printed out.

**20. Is it mandatory to complete the Emergency Contact information?**

Employees will be able to enter information regarding whom to contact in an emergency on the Emergency Contact Information page. Entering this data is voluntary and it will be up to the employee to maintain its accuracy but also encouraged.

**21. I click on a document to see it through the Adobe Acrobat viewer and then click on another document and it does not open up. What do I do?**

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Only one document can be viewed at a time. Close out the first document by clicking on the "X" in the right corner of the Acrobat viewer and then click on the next document.

**22. What is needed on my computer to run this application?**

You must have Microsoft Internet Explorer version 6.0 or higher and Adobe Acrobat Reader version 6.01 or higher.

**23. Key Benefits of eOPF?**

Enhanced portability and security of personnel records; Increased employee awareness and accountability through email modification of personnel actions (SF-50Bs); Immediate access to OPF forms and information for a geographically dispersed workforce.

**24. Why are we implementing eOPF?**

The e-GOV initiative of the President's Management Agenda has challenged the Federal government to automate where it makes sense. The Office of Management and Budget has been charged with the implementation of the President's Management and Budget Agenda and has directed agencies to reduce the amount of paper used by automating business processes. The Office of Personnel Management, working with the Office of Management and Budget has advised agencies that they will have to convert the Official Personnel Folders of their employees to an electronic format. eOPF is the solution that the Office of Personnel Management has chosen for the Federal government.