

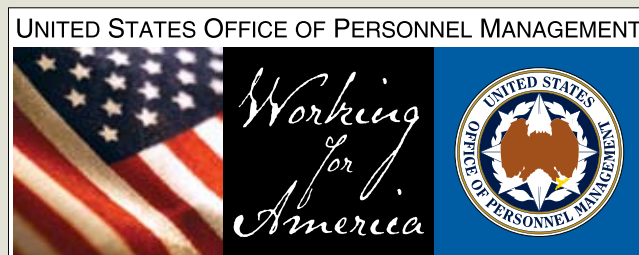


UNITED STATES OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

THE GUIDE TO PERSONNEL RECORDKEEPING

OPERATING MANUAL

September 2008



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- Chapter 1- General Personnel Recordkeeping Policies
 - General Records Management
 - Page(s) 1-2 through 1-6
 - Redacting of Social Security Numbers, Page(s) 1-7
 - Electronic Records
 - Pages(s) 1-9, 1-10
 - Transferring Electronic Official Personnel Folder (eOPF), Page(s) 1-12
 - Chapter 3- Filing Documents in the Personnel Folder
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Chapter 1 General Personnel Recordkeeping Policies

Overview

Introduction

This chapter describes general policies governing the creation, maintenance, and disposition of records used to document human resource management programs established by the Office of Personnel Management (OPM).

Regulation

Personnel recordkeeping regulations are found in [part 293 of title 5, Code of Federal Regulations](#). These regulations establish policies and minimum requirements governing the creation, development, maintenance, processing, use, dissemination and safeguarding of the personnel records OPM requires agencies maintain.

In this chapter

This chapter covers the following topics:

Topic	See Page
General Records Management	1-2
Safeguarding Records	1-7
Interagency Personnel Records	1-8
Electronic Records	1-10

General Records Management

Coverage

These instructions refer to storing Official Personnel Folders (OPFs), the permanent records that follow an employee throughout his or her career. The Official Personnel Folders are under OPM's control although they are in the physical custody of the employing agencies.

These instructions do **not** apply to agency personnel processing systems. These systems are designed to support personnel operations, feed payroll systems, and meet managers', personnelists', and employees' needs for information necessary to manage day-to-day operations. Agencies may create and store their internal, operational information as they choose, subject to general NARA recordkeeping guidance. These internal records are not a substitute for the official, permanent documentation that constitutes the Official Personnel Folder

Example: The payroll/ personnel system operated through National Finance Center processes personnel actions, uses that information to process pay actions, and stores personnel information for access by appropriate employees. The National Finance Center system is not covered by these instructions. The Standard Form 50 and other documents produced by the system become part of the Official Personnel Folder covered by these instructions.

Creating Records

These instructions apply to recordkeeping, not to the process for creating the record. The circumstances under which a record is created are defined in the appropriate program regulation and guidance.

Example: These instructions cover filing Official Personnel Folder copies of health benefits registration forms. The Office of Personnel Management manual, FEHB: HANDBOOK, explains when to create a health benefits registration form.

General Records Management, Continued

Agencies that want to create electronic versions of standard or optional forms must get approval from the sponsoring agency. OPM is the sponsoring agency for most of the forms in the official Personnel Folder.

Example: The Office of Personnel Management is the sponsoring agency for Standard Form 50, "Notification of Personnel Action."

Example: The Federal Retirement Thrift Investment Board is the sponsoring agency for TSP-1, "Thrift Savings Plan Election Form."

The sponsoring agency establishes procedures for approving electronic processing systems. These systems allow records to be generated, approved, and stored by electronic means. Program regulations or operational guidance are the usual sources for these procedures.

Example: Procedures creating electronic processing systems for the Standard Form 50, "Notification of Personnel Action" are in the Office of Personnel Management Operating Manual, [THE GUIDE TO PROCESSING PERSONNEL ACTIONS](#).

Definition: Records

Records include all papers, maps, photographs, machine-readable materials or other documentation, regardless of physical form, made or received by the Government in connection with the transaction of public business and preserved as evidence of decisions, operations, or other activities of the Government.

The National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) administers the Federal records management program. 44 U.S.C. section 3101. NARA's regulations on records creation, maintenance, and disposition are in [Chapter XII of title 36, Code of Federal Regulations](#).

General Records Management, Continued

Civilian personnel records are any records concerning an individual which are maintained and used in the personnel management or personnel policy setting process. These include records that relate to the supervision over, and management of, Federal civilian employees; records on the general administration and operation of human resource management programs and functions; as well as records that concern individual employees.

Examples:

- Position classification correspondence
- The Official Personnel Folder
- Adverse action case file

Creating Personnel Records

Personnel records may be created because they are required by:

- statute or Executive Order
- regulation
- operational guidance from central management agencies
- agency records management programs

Each Office program that requires agencies to create personnel records, which may be used in making any determination about an individual, is responsible for establishing minimum standards of accuracy, relevancy, necessity, timeliness, and completeness of the record that would promote fairness to the individual in the determination. 5 U.S.C. 552a (e)(5). An agency holding an OPF concerning one of its employees is the custodian of the OPF during the period the person to whom it pertains is an employee of the agency and is responsible for the maintenance of that record regardless of format or media employed.

Retention of Personnel Records

The National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) regulations in title 36, Code of Federal Regulations, include procedures for determining how long agencies must keep records and when they may dispose of records. NARA issues [General Records Schedules](#) that provide authority to dispose of such records, generally on a Government-wide basis. To cover records common to a number of agencies, General Records Schedule 1 covers civilian personnel records and General Records Schedule 20, Electronic Records.

Privacy Act Records

The [Privacy Act of 1974, as amended \(5 U.S.C. 552a\)](#) applies to individual records maintained in a “system of records,” meaning a group of records under the control of an agency. Information is retrieved by the name or other particular identifier (for example, employee number) assigned to the individual.

Example: The Privacy Act applies to the Official Personnel Folder.

Example: The Privacy Act does not apply to files on position classification standards development.

Agencies that maintain systems of records must publish notices in the Federal Register describing the records, their uses, and the ways people can access the records.

The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) publishes Government-wide guidance concerning the Privacy Act. [OMB Circular A-130](#) describes agencies’ responsibilities for implementing the reporting and publication requirements of the Privacy Act.

Government-wide Systems of Records

Agency must publish a notice in the Federal Register when it establishes or revises a system of records. 5 U.S.C. 552a(e)(4). OPM publishes systems of records for a number of Governmentwide human resource management functions. These are:

- OPM/GOVT-1 General Personnel Records
- OPM/GOVT-2 Employee Performance File System Records
- OPM/GOVT-3 Records of Adverse Actions, Performance Based Reduction in Grade and Removal Actions, and Termination of Probationers
- OPM/GOVT-5 Recruiting, Examining, and Placement Records
- OPM/GOVT-6 Personnel Research and Test Validation Records
- OPM/GOVT-7 Applicant Race, Sex, National Origin, and Disability Status Records
- OPM/GOVT-9 File on Position Classification Appeals, Job

Chapter 1 General Personnel Recordkeeping Policies

Grading Appeals, and Retained Grade or Pay Appeals

- OPM/GOVT-10 Employee Medical File System Records

These are OPM's records, although they are in the physical custody of other agencies. OPM's regulations implementing the Privacy Act are in [part 297 of title 5, Code of Federal Regulations](#). The notices that describe the Office's systems of records, including the Governmentwide systems of records, are published in the Federal Register.

Agency Records

Agencies may establish their own personnel recordkeeping requirements to meet special needs. If an agency establishes a system of records as defined in the Privacy Act, the agency is responsible for ensuring the Act's requirements are met following OMB's guidance. Note, however, [OMB Circular A-130](#) says "Agencies should not publish systems of records that wholly or partly duplicate existing government-wide systems of records."

Example: Life insurance coverage (FEGLI code) is contained in both the Official Personnel Folder and agency payroll records. Thus, agency payroll records may contain personnel information; but since agency payroll records are not covered by OPM's Governmentwide systems of records, only the FEGLI code in the OPF is within OPM's system of records.

Central Personnel Data File (CPDF) and Enterprise Human Resources Integration data warehouse's Central Employee Record (CER) are part of OPM/Govt-1 system of records. CPDF and CER are highly reliable sources of statistical data on the workforce of the Federal government. However, the accuracy and completeness of each data element within the individual records that comprise the aggregate files are not guaranteed, and should not be used as a substitute for the Official Personnel Folder in making personnel determinations or decisions concerning individuals.

Safeguarding Personnel Records

General Protection

Agencies should have management controls to ensure personnel records:

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- adequately document human resource management operations;
- are accurate and timely;
- are protected against loss or unauthorized alteration;
- document the employment history of individuals employed by the Federal Government;
- can be located when necessary;
- are retained and disposed of as required by [General Records Schedules 1.](#); and
- are secured against unauthorized access. For example, paper or microfiche/ microfilmed personnel records subject to the Privacy Act should be stored in locked metal file cabinets or in a secured room. Access to electronic records are limited to authorized users through use of logins, passwords, access codes and entry logs. 5 CFR 293.106,107,108 provide additional guidance and requirements.

Access to personnel records subject to the Privacy Act should be limited to those whose official duties require such access. This limitation applies to paper, microfiche/ microfilm, and electronic records. Agencies should establish procedures to allow employees or their designated representatives' access to their own records. These procedures should ensure the records remain subject to the agency's control at all times. Agencies must ensure those authorized to access personnel records, subject to the Privacy Act, understand how to apply the Act's restrictions on disclosing information from systems of records. See Chapter 6 of this Guide for special instructions on releasing information from personnel records.

Prior to transfer of a Personnel Folder (whether in a paper or electronic format) to an agency under OPM's recordkeeping authority, agencies must remove or conceal all Social Security Numbers (SSNs) and other personally identifying information belonging to someone other than the subject that are displayed on records in the Personnel Folder (i.e., lists covering more than one employee in a personnel action) and provide a copy to the employee of the changed record. Exceptions: Any SSNs for beneficiaries and assignees identified on FEGLI forms SF 2823, Designation of Beneficiary and RI 76-10, Assignment Federal Employee's Group Life Insurance Benefit; SF 2809 and SF 2810; and FEHB or FEGLI-related documents of a legal or medical nature such as those described in Section 3-D; Benefits (p. 3-19) must NOT have non-employee SSNs redacted, as this information is crucial to payment of benefits.

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In addition, agencies must guard against disclosure of personally identifying information (PII) belonging to someone other than the subject of the personnel file that may occur when an individual request access to his/her personnel files. Agencies must review a personnel file prior to providing access to the subject of the file and take appropriate action such as removal or concealment of SSNs and other PII.

Disciplinary Action

Any employee who discloses personal information from personnel records knowing that such a disclosure is unauthorized may be subject to disciplinary action as well as criminal sanctions as provided under the Privacy Act.

Interagency Personnel Records

Definition

Interagency personnel records are those transferred with the employee as he or she moves from agency to agency. The three types of interagency personnel records are:

- Official Personnel Folder (OPF)
- Employee performance records
- Employee Medical Folder (EMF)

Official Personnel Folder

The Official Personnel Folder (Standard Form 66) or its approved electronic equivalent is a file containing records that cover an individual's employment history. It covers Executive Branch service under title 5, United States Code. The long-term records included in the file protect the legal and financial rights of the Government and the employee.

Employee Performance Records

Employee performance records include ratings of record, supporting documentation for those ratings, and any other performance-related material required by agency performance appraisal system.

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The employee performance records are covered by the [Governmentwide system of records, OPM/GOVT-2](#). Agencies may decide what records to maintain and where to store such records. When an employee leaves (transfers to another agency or separates from Government), some information from the employee performance records must be put in the Official Personnel Folder. Chapter 7 of this Guide has instructions on transferring employee performance information.

Employee Medical Folder

The Employee Medical Folder (EMF) is Standard Form 66-D. Records from the EMF are transferred to long-term occupational medical records when an employee separates from the agency. Occupational medical records are records that contain employment-related information about an employee's health status, including personal and occupational health histories and the opinions and written evaluations generated in the course of diagnosis and/or employment-related treatment/examinations by medical health care professionals and technicians.

Medical records described above must never be filed in the Official Personnel Folder.

Agencies decide what medical records to maintain and where to store such records during the employee's service with the agency. Agencies may use the Employee Medical Folder to store medical records during the employee's service but must use the Employee Medical Folder to transfer long-term occupational medical records when the employee separates. The Employee Medical Folder transferred to another agency may not include drug testing records created under Executive Order 12564 or records relating to employee drug and alcohol abuse counseling or treatment or other counseling programs conducted under chapter 79 of title 5, United States Code. Refer to Chapter 7 of this Guide for instructions on transferring the Employee Medical Folder. The Employee Medical Folder is part of the [Governmentwide system of records, OPM/GOVT-10](#).

Other Federal Service

Federal service includes Government service outside of OPM's recordkeeping authority. Records documenting that service are not filed under the instructions in this Guide and are not kept in an Official Personnel Folder. OPM has reached agreements to share files with a number of agencies that create such records. Section 2-A of this Guide shows the agencies and types of employment not under OPM's recordkeeping authority. It also explains the procedures for transferring records created outside OPM's recordkeeping authority. When employment records created under OPM's

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recordkeeping authority are mixed in the same file with employment records created outside OPM's recordkeeping authority, they are generally kept in a Merged Records Personnel Folder (Standard Form 66-C) or approved electronic equivalent.

Example: Employment with the General Accountability Office is outside OPM's recordkeeping authority.

Electronic Records

Electronic records are information recorded in a form only a computer can process. Electronic formats include any media read by a computer.

Office of Personnel Management eOPF Requirements

The purpose of the electronic Official Personnel Folder (e-OPF) and the paper Official Personnel Folder (OPF) is to document the employment history of individuals employed by the Federal Government. The electronic Official Personnel Folder must be complete; that is, when combined with any other documents the agency chooses to retain in paper, or is required by law or regulation to be maintained in paper, it must contain all the information.

OPM requires that each agency ensures that electronic Official Personnel Folder systems

- Be thoroughly documented.
- Be able to produce legible paper copies of all records. These copies should be in compliance with the Guide to Preparing Personnel Actions, Chapter 3, Subchapter 3 for SFs 50 & 52 . Other form copies should be in conformance with the requirements of the program office that requires the collection and use of the information in accordance with 41 CFR subchapter B, Management and Use of Information and Records, part 101-11-203 (b), Standard Forms and Optional Forms Management Program.*
- Have access controls to ensure a high level of security and confidentiality.
- Allow correction and removal of erroneous records under strict authorization controls.
- Include backup and disaster recovery procedures.

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- Provide for regular recopying, reformatting, and other maintenance necessary to ensure that the records will be retained and useable throughout its life cycle.
- Identify information in a way that authorized users can retrieve and maintain the required records.

*This is not to discourage the use of electronic summaries of information previously provided on a form. It is to ensure the information captured by the summary meets the requirements of the program office that requires the collection and use of the information.

Approval Process for eOPF

Requests for approval to establish electronic Official Personnel Folders should describe how the proposed system will meet requirements set by NARA, OMB, and OPM. Offices should request approval to create electronic Official Personnel Folders from:

Deputy Associate Director
Center for Workforce Information and Systems Requirements
Office of Personnel Management
1900 E Street, NW.
Washington DC 20415-6000
e-mail: hssystempolicy@opm.gov

An agency may create electronic Official Personnel Folders after OPM approves the system. OPM will work with the National Archives and Records Administration to authorize retention of the electronic Official Personnel Folder as the official record. Part of the process may include the conversion of paper OPFs to the electronic format. The general standard for the converted record is that it must be of a quality that is as legible as the paper original. This applies to the on screen image as well as paper reproduction from an electronic image. After conversion the agency must continue to maintain paper folders for the period specified in the approval.

Exceptions

The following documents must be initiated in paper:

- RI 76-10, Assignment of Federal Employee's Group Life Insurance

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- Standard Form 2823, Designation of Beneficiary under the Federal Employee's Group Life Insurance
- Standard Form 3102, Federal Employees Retirement System Designation of Beneficiary
- Standard Form 2808, Designation of Beneficiary, CSRS

Regarding the witness signatures on the preceding documents, the document must be initiated in paper with handwritten signatures. They may then be converted to an electronic format via electronic scanning.

Standards

Electronic Official Personnel Folders must meet the National Archives and Records Administration's standards for electronic records. These standards are in [part 1234 of title 36, Code of Federal Regulations](#).

Security Requirements

The electronic Official Personnel Folder system must meet the security requirements established under [OMB Circular No. A-130](#). Copies of this circular may be obtained from:

**Executive Office of the President
Publications Service, Suite G-2200
725 17th Street, NW.
Washington DC 20503**

Transferring Electronic Official Personnel Folders (OPF)

The last employing (losing) agency will provide access to the electronic folder in an appropriate electronic format designated by the gaining agency or provide a paper format if the electronic systems are not compatible or if the gaining agency is operating in a paper environment. The losing agency, after completion of a transfer of an electronic personnel folder, must disable its access to the electronic version of the personnel folder to ensure it complies with the requirements of regulations implementing the Privacy Act at 5 CFR 297.401.

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Electronic Signatures

This covers the use of electronic signatures on personnel documents except as specifically excluded on Part C-2 of the Standard Form 52 and block 50 of the Standard Form 50. Guidance on the use and approval for electronic signatures in Part C-2 of the Standard Form 52 and in block 50 of the Standard Form 50 is found in Chapter 3 of the Guide to Processing Personnel Actions. For the purpose of this policy, an electronic signature is defined as:

A signature initiated from an electronically generated process.

Listed below are two examples of electronic signatures:

- A computer data compilation of any symbol or series of symbols, executed, adopted, or authorized by an individual to be the legally binding equivalent of the individual's handwritten signature.
- A data element associated with a message that identifies a person and indicates his or her approval of the contents of the message.

The Government Paperwork Elimination Act (GPEA), Public Law 105-277, requires agencies to provide individuals or entities the option to submit information or transact with the agency electronically and to maintain records electronically when practicable. GPEA specifically states electronic records and their related electronic signatures are not to be denied legal effect, validity, or enforceability merely because they are in electronic form.

The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) issued guidance on the implementation of GPEA and use of electronic signatures in Appendix II of OMB Circular A-130, Management of Federal Information Resources.

Agencies may institute the use of electronic signatures for personnel records, business applications, and information collection whenever the use of electronic transactions is practicable and:

- the use is not prohibited by law or regulation;
- the document containing the electronic signature is not required to be retained in paper format; or the document is not on the following list of exclusions.

Electronic Signature Exclusions

- SF 2823 Designation of Beneficiary under FEGLI Program*
- SF 3102 Designation of Beneficiary FERS*
- SF 2808 Designation of Beneficiary(CSRS)
- RI 76-10 Assignment of Federal Employees, Group Life Insurance (FEGLI)
(must be witnessed)

*Regarding the witness signatures on the preceding documents, the document must be initiated in paper with handwritten signatures. They may then be converted to an electronic format via electronic scanning.

Signatures as Part of the Official Record

Agencies may accept both hand-written and electronic signatures as part of the official record. Agencies may recognize official records in either electronic or paper format.

If the agency recognizes the official record in an electronic format, it may accept:

- An electronic signature; or
- A hand-written signature as a part of a document and convert the document (i.e. scan it) into an accessible, reproducible, legible, quality approved electronic format. Once the conversion has been completed, the contents of the document along with the signature are recognized as the official record.

If the agency recognizes the official record in paper format, it can accept the electronic or hand-written signature as a part of a document and file the document on the appropriate side of the official personnel folder.

Inquiries

Questions concerning the technical use of electronic signatures and alternatives should be directed to the agency's CIO. Other questions about the use of electronic signature for personnel documents should be directed to:

Office of Personnel Management
Deputy Associate Director
Center for Workforce Information and Systems Requirements
1900 E Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20415-5000
E-mail: hssystempolicy@opm.gov

Microforms

OPM may approve requests to create microform Official Personnel Folders both for storage while the employee is serving with the office that creates the microform and for transfer to the next employing office or the National Personnel Records Center.

Microform Official Personnel Folders must meet NARA standards for microform records. These standards are found in [part 1230 of title 36, Code of Federal Regulations](#).

Offices planning to maintain microform Official Personnel Folders should obtain a copy of the Guidelines and Control Requirements for Microform Official Personnel Records. These guidelines include information on the format, organization, and maintenance of microform records. Address requests for a copy of the guidelines to:

Deputy Associate Director
Center for Workforce Information and Systems Requirements
Office of Personnel Management
1900 E Street, NW.
Washington DC 20415-6000
email: hssystempolicy@opm.gov

Offices must submit a microforms operations plan that describes how they will create and maintain microform Official Personnel Folders that meet NARA and OPM requirements. After the microforms operations plan is approved, the office may create microform folders but must continue to maintain paper folders for the period specified in the plan's approval. At the end of that period,

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the office must certify their microform system meets all requirements in the operations plan. The microform folders will then be the official records.

Offices maintaining microform Official Personnel Folders as the official record will transfer those microform records just as they would transfer paper records.

Reading Microforms

An office that receives a microform Official Personnel Folder must maintain that folder as the official record. If the receiving office cannot effectively use the microform Official Personnel Folder in its operating environment, it should contact the office that created the microform and arrange to get paper copies of necessary documents. These paper copies are for the receiving office's internal use; they will not replace the official microform record.

Chapter 2 Establishing Personnel Records

Overview

Introduction

This chapter describes procedures for establishing interagency personnel records when an agency hires an individual. Interagency personnel records include:

- o personnel folders
- o medical folders
- o performance records

General Rule

Each employee will have a single personnel folder which will document the entire period of Federal civilian service. If long-term occupational medical records are created on the employee, these records will be combined in a single medical folder that will be used for the entire period of Federal civilian service. The procedures described in this chapter are designed to ensure all appropriate interagency personnel records are available in a single folder.

In this chapter

This chapter covers the following topics.

Topic	See Page
Identifying Prior Federal Civilian Service	2-2
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Section 2-A: Employment Systems Outside the Office of Personnel Management's Recordkeeping Authority	2-13

Identifying Prior Federal Civilian Service

First Step

The first step in determining how to establish the appropriate records systems for a new employee is to identify whether or not he or she has been previously employed in the Federal civilian service. Records of such service are usually combined with records created during the current period of employment.

Where to look

Review the employee's application and the Standard Form 144, Statement of Prior Service to determine if he or she has been previously employed in the Federal civilian service.

Definition: Federal civilian service

Federal civilian service includes appointments with and without pay in the Executive, Legislative, and Judicial branches of the Federal Government. For this purpose, it also includes periods of volunteer service under [section 3111 of title 5, United States Code](#) documented on a Standard Form 50.

There are periods of service that are not Federal civilian service but may be creditable for certain purposes, such as annual leave accrual, reduction-in-force, and retirement.

Examples: military service, volunteer service with the Peace Corps or ACTION, employment under Department of Agriculture county committees, work with overseas broadcasting corporations.

Records covering these periods of service are retained by the agency or organization for which the service was performed. The actual records of such service are not combined with personnel records covering Federal civilian employment. Summaries or verification of such creditable service are made part of the employee's personnel folder as supporting documentation for service credit or other similar determinations. Chapter 6 of the Operating Manual, [THE GUIDE TO PROCESSING PERSONNEL ACTIONS](#), and Chapter 20 of the Operating Manual, [THE CSRS AND FERS HANDBOOK FOR PERSONNEL AND PAYROLL OFFICES](#) provide guidance on verifying such service.

Requesting Records for Prior Service

Requesting records

When the employee begins work, the personnel office must request the personnel records for new employees with prior Federal civilian service. Where and how to request prior service records depends on the type of prior service the employee had and whether he or she is currently a Federal employee.

National Personnel Records Center

Always contact the National Personnel Records Center to make sure all prior service records are filed together. The employee may not list all prior service in the application documents; a former employer may have failed to check for all prior service records.

Request both personnel and medical folders.

- Personnel Folder: Send a Standard Form 127, Request for Official Personnel Folder, in duplicate, to request any personnel folder(s).
- Employee Medical Folder: Send a Standard Form 184, Request for Employee Medical Folder, to request any medical folder(s).

Send the requests to:

National Archives and Records Administration

National Personnel Records Center

111 Winnebago Street

St. Louis, MO 63118-4126

Note there are two separate forms to request both the personnel and medical folders.

Performance records transferred from agency to agency will be on the left side of the personnel folder.

Requesting Records for Prior Service, Continued

Previous or current employer

Records generally will be with the previous employer if the person

- Is or has been on that employer's rolls within 90 days prior to the new appointment
- Is receiving severance pay
- Is on the previous employer's reemployment priority list
- Was last employed in the Foreign Service and has separated within the year prior to the new appointment

Send the previous employer a note requesting the personnel folder (including performance records) and medical folder. Include a copy of the Standard Form 50, Notification of Personnel Action, appointing the person. (If it is not available, use a copy of the Standard Form 52, Request for Personnel Action or other approved document showing the appointment and effective date).

Requesting Records for Prior Service, Continued

Employers using transcript

Some employers not within OPM's recordkeeping authority do not transfer personnel records. These employers will provide a transcript of service and documents on benefits. The benefits documents generally include the equivalent of the Official Personnel Folder copy of health insurance, life insurance, retirement, and Thrift Savings Plan documents. If the employer has a leave system similar to the civil service, the benefits documents may include information on the employee's leave balances. Request a transcript of service, benefits documents, and leave balances, instead of requesting the personnel and medical folders from these employers.

Employers who provide transcripts service include:

- Architect of the Capitol
- Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System
- Central Intelligence Agency
- Congressional Budget Office
- District of Columbia Government
- Federal Bureau of Investigation
- Tennessee Valley Authority*
- U.S. Botanical Gardens
- U.S. House of Representatives
- U.S. Senate.

*The Tennessee Valley Authority's transcript is a microfiche copy of their personnel records.

Establishing Folders

Performance records

Follow agency instructions to establish employee performance files. Performance records transferred from a previous employer may be filed with records created in the current agency. The [General Records Schedules](#) specifies performance records for non-Senior Executive Service employees should be destroyed when 4 years old; for Senior Executive Service employees, when 5 years old.

Medical records

Follow agency instructions to establish employee medical files. Medical records should be transferred from previous employers in an Employee Medical Folder, Standard Form 66 D. Agencies have the option to continue to use that folder for any medical records created during the current period of employment. Regardless of how the records are stored during the employee's service, all long-term occupational medical records must be placed in a single Employee Medical Folder when the employee leaves the agency. Chapter 7 contains information on transferring medical records when an employee separates.

Personnel records

Personnel records that document an individual's Federal career are placed in a single personnel folder. The type of folder to be used depends on the kinds of service the employee has. There are three authorized personnel folders:

- Official Personnel Folder, Standard Form 66
- Merged Records Personnel Folder, Standard Form 66 C
- Foreign Service Administrative Folder

Establishing Folders, Continued

Official Personnel Folder

The Standard Form 66, Official Personnel Folder must be used when:

- All of the employee's Federal service is under OPM's recordkeeping authority. (All employment in the competitive service, Senior Executive Service, excepted service under Schedule A, B or C is under the Office's recordkeeping authority.); **OR**
- Any service outside OPM's recordkeeping authority is documented by a transcript. Section 2-A lists service documented by a transcript rather than an exchange of records.

The Merged Records Personnel Folder

When the employee has service both under OPM's recordkeeping authority and under one of the personnel systems listed below. The Standard Form 66 C, Merged Records Personnel Folder must be used instead of the Standard Form 66, Official Personnel Folder. Records under the systems listed below are combined with records created under OPM's recordkeeping authority in a single folder but each agency retains "ownership" of its records.

- Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts
- Civilian Intelligence Personnel Management System within the Department of Defense
- Federal Judicial Center
- Government Accountability Office
- Library of Congress
- Medical positions filled under title 38 United States Code within the Department of Veterans Affairs
- National Security Agency
- Non-Appropriated Fund Instrumentalities within the Department of Defense
- Transportation Security Administration
- U.S. Postal Service
- White House - Executive Office of the President

Section 2-A contains more information on how to identify records for personnel systems not under OPM's recordkeeping authority.

Establishing Folders, Continued

Foreign Service Folder

The Foreign Service (Administrative) Folder must be used when the employee has any Foreign Service experience. Once a Foreign Service Folder has been created, all of the employee's personnel records are kept in that Folder. Section 2-A lists the agencies that make Foreign Service appointments.

Examples

- Employee held a Schedule B accepted appointment with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service prior to appointment to a competitive service position in the Internal Revenue Service. Use the Official Personnel Folder since all service is under OPM's recordkeeping authority.
- Employee held a competitive service position with the Bureau of Prisons and an excepted service position with the Federal Bureau of Investigation prior to appointment in the Senior Executive Service with the Forest Service. Use the Official Personnel Folder. The Federal Bureau of Investigation retains its personnel records and provides a transcript that becomes part of the Official Personnel Folder.
- Employee of the General Accountability Office is hired by the Bureau of Prisons. Use a Merged Records Personnel Folder. Service with the General Accountability Office since October 1, 1980, is not under OPM's recordkeeping authority but the General Accountability Office has agreed to transfer its personnel records using a Merged Records Personnel Folder.
- Foreign Service employee in Department of State is hired by the Internal Revenue Service. Use a Foreign Service Folder. Foreign Service is not under OPM's recordkeeping authority but the Department of State has agreed to transfer its personnel records using the Foreign Service Folder.
- Schedule A employee in the Department of State is hired for a competitive service position by the Internal Revenue Service. Use an Official Personnel Folder. Excepted service (Schedule A) and competitive service employment are under OPM's recordkeeping authority.

Establishing Folders, Continued

Use the existing personnel folder

If there is an existing personnel folder, use it unless it is in poor condition. Check to make sure the records are filed in the correct type of folder. Create a new folder if needed.

Folder label

The Official Personnel Folder, Merged Records Personnel Folder, and Employee Medical Folder (Standard Forms 66, 66 C, and 66 D) all require the same type label. The position of the label on the right side of the folder is indicated on the folder. The label must have the following three items.

- **NAME:** Type the employee's name exactly as it is on the Standard Form 50, Notification of Personnel Action.
- **DATE OF BIRTH:** Type the date of birth, month, day and year in six numerals with dashes between day, month, and year.
Example: January 14, 1974 is typed 01-14-74.
- **SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER:** Type the employee's social security number (SSN) directly under the name. Show an SSN for all United States citizens and for all foreign nationals serving in the 50 states and non-foreign areas listed in [section 591.205 of title 5, Code of Federal Regulations \(5 CFR 591.205\)](#).

Example: DOE, JANE R.

SSN: 999-99-9999

Use "FNO" instead of the social security number for foreign nationals serving in locations other than the 50 states or non-foreign areas listed in [5 CFR 591.205](#).

Establishing Folders, Continued

Do not make any marks or notations on the folder

Do not add any markings, notations, or tabs to the Official Personnel Folder, Merged Records Personnel Folder, or Employee Medical Folder. Do not add any markings or notations on the label. Only official codes authorized by the National Personnel Records Center are permitted on the front of the folder.

When using a bar code labeling system, place the bar code label:

- on the side of the folder containing the file label, but at the end opposite the employee's name; or
- on the back of the folder.

Reviewing and Combining Records

Rule

If the employee had prior Federal civilian service, records for that service must be combined with records for the current period of employment in a single file or folder. Follow the procedures below to review and combine records.

Example: The National Personnel Records Center sends two Official Personnel Folders in response to a request for a new employee's records. The records from these two folders must be combined with the records created during the appointment process into a single Official Personnel Folder.

Performance records

The left side of the personnel folder should contain the performance records transferred from agency to agency. These records are:

- Senior Executive Service: Annual summary ratings are five years old or less; any appraisals prepared since the most recent annual summary rating; and performance plans for each rating.
- All Others: Ratings of record four years old or less. Ratings of record include the evaluation of the employee's performance against the elements and standards plus the summary level, pattern, and ending date of the appraisal.

If the performance records are not in the folder and it appears the employee was subject to a performance appraisal system, request the records from the former employer. Follow the agency's instructions for filing performance records.

Medical records

Review records in the Employee Medical Folder to ensure they are in chronological order. Combine these records with any medical records created during the appointment process. Follow the agency's instructions for filing medical records.

Reviewing and Combining Records, Continued

Personnel Records

Step 1 Action:

Remove any documents transferred on the left side of the folder and follow agency instructions for processing those documents.

Documents transferred on the left side of the folder include the performance records, Record of Leave Data (Standard Form 1150) or equivalent record of leave balances, and documentation of indebtedness to the health benefits fund for pay periods begun before September 30, 1996.

Step 2 Action:

Remove inappropriately filed documents.

Always remove any reference to race or ethnicity including the Standard Form 181, Race and National Origin identification; the Standard Form 256, Self-identification of medical Disability; and OPM form 1635, Welfare to Work Program.

Do not remove any other records in a merged Records Personal Folder or Foreign Service Folder for periods of employment outside of OPM's recordkeeping authority. Refer to Chapter 3 to decide which documents should be filed in an Official Personnel Folder and in the portions of Merged Records Personnel Folder or Foreign Service Folder dealing with employment under the Office's authority.

Step 3 Action:

Check the documents for completeness and accuracy. Follow the appropriate program instructions to correct any errors.

Example: follow instructions in [THE GUIDE TO PROCESSING PERSONNEL ACTIONS](#) to correct Standard Form 50, Notification of Personnel Action.

Step 4 Action:

Combine all appropriate records in chronological order in a single folder.

Section 2-A: Employment Systems Outside the Office of Personnel Management's Recordkeeping Authority

Introduction

Federal civilian service includes Government service under employment systems outside OPM's recordkeeping authority. Some of the agencies authorized to use these employment systems have agreed to transfer their personnel records and mix those records with personnel records created during periods of employment under OPM's recordkeeping authority. Other agencies do not transfer personnel records but do provide transcripts of service and other documentation (for example, health insurance, life insurance, retirement, and Thrift Savings Plan documents).

The material in this section describes the employment systems outside OPM's recordkeeping authority, the agencies that use those systems and information that helps to identify service under those systems.

Employment System or Agency

- **Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts**
 - Description:
 - Identify service by the agency name.
 - Transfer personnel folders.
 - Use the Merged Records Personnel Folder.
- **Architect of the Capitol**
 - Description:
 - Identify service by the agency name.
 - Service documented by a transcript.
 - Use the Official Personnel Folder.
- **Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System**
 - Description:
 - Identify service by the agency name.
 - Service documented by a transcript.
 - Use the Official Personnel Folder.
- **Central Intelligence Agency**
 - Description:
 - Identify service by the agency name.
 - Service documented by a transcript.
 - Use the Official Personnel Folder.

Section 2-A: Employment Systems Outside the Office of Personnel Management's Recordkeeping Authority, Continued

Employment System or Agency, Continued

- **Civilian Intelligence Personnel Management System**

- Description:
- Used by Department of Defense, including the Departments of Air Force, Army, and Navy.
 - Identify by legal authority UAM on records.
 - Transfer personnel folders.
 - Use the Merged Records Personnel Folder.

- **Congressional Budget Office**

- Description:
- Identify service by the agency name.
 - Service documented by a transcript.
 - Use the Official Personnel Folder.

- **District of Columbia Government**

- Description:
- Identify service by the agency name.
 - Service prior to January 1, 1980 should be documented in an Official Personnel Folder.
 - Service on and after January 1, 1980 is documented by a transcript.
 - Use the Official Personnel Folder.

- **Federal Bureau of Investigation**

- Description:
- Identify service by the agency name.
 - Service documented by a transcript.
 - Use the Official Personnel Folder.

- **Federal Judicial Center**

- Description:
- Identify service by the agency name.
 - Transfer personnel folders.
 - Use the Merged Records Personnel Folder

Section 2-A: Employment Systems Outside the Office of Personnel Management's Recordkeeping Authority, Continued

Employment System or Agency, Continued

- **Foreign Service**

Description: Used by:

- Agency for International Development, Broadcasting Board of Governors, Departments of Agricultural (Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Foreign Agriculture Service), Department of Commerce (International Trade Administration), Department of State, Peace Corps
- Identify service by Foreign Service Folder and legal authority UFM and pay plan FA, FE, FO, FP, or FZ on records.
- Transfer personnel folders.
- Use the Foreign Service (Administrative) Folder.

- **General Accounting Office**

Description: - Identify service by the agency name.

- Transfer personnel folders.
- Use the Merged Records Personnel Folder.

- **Library of Congress**

Description: - Identify service by the agency name.

- Transfer personnel folders.
- Use the Merged Records Personnel Folder.

- **Medical and other positions Filed Under Title 38 United States Code-Department of Veterans Affairs**

Description: - Identify service by the agency name.

- Transfer personnel folders.
- Use the Merged Records Personnel Folder.

- **National Security Agency**

Description: - Identify service by the agency name.

- Transfer personnel folders.
- Use the Merged Records Personnel Folder

Section 2-A: Employment Systems Outside the Office of Personnel Management's Recordkeeping Authority, Continued

Employment System or Agency, Continued

- **Nonappropriated Fund Instrumentalities Department of Defense**

- Description:
- Identify service by Nonappropriated Fund folder and/or to nonappropriated fund, exchange services, open mess or other services provided by Defense agencies.
 - Transfer personnel folders.
 - Use the Merged Records Personnel Folder.

- **Tennessee Valley Authority**

- Description:
- Identify service by the agency name.
 - Service documented by a transcript on microfiche.
 - Use the Official Personnel Folder.

- **Transportation Safety Administration**

- Description:
- Identify service by the agency name.
 - Transfer personnel folders.
 - Use the Merged Records Personnel Folder.

- **U.S Botanical Gardens**

- Description:
- Identify service by the agency name.
 - Service documented by a transcript.
 - Use the Official Personnel Folder.

- **U.S. House of Representatives**

- Description:
- Identify service by the agency name.
 - Service documented by a transcript.
 - Use the Official Personnel Folder.

- **U.S. Postal Service**

- Description:
- Identify service by Postal Service, folder and/or PS form numbers on record.
 - Transfer personnel folders.
 - Use the Merged Records Personnel Folder

Section 2-A: Employment Systems Outside the Office of Personnel Management's Recordkeeping Authority, Continued

Employment System or Agency, Continued

- **U.S. Senate**

- Description:
- Identify service by the agency name.
 - Service documented by a transcript.
 - Use the Official Personnel Folder.

- **White House- Executive Office of the President**

- Description:
- Identify service by the agency name or title 3, United States Code on records.
 - Transfer personnel folders.
 - Use the Merged Records Personnel Folder.

Chapter 3 Filing Documents in the Personnel Folder

Overview

In this chapter

This chapter provides instructions for filing personnel folder. The subject categories are listed below.

Topic	See Page
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General Filing Procedures

Introduction

Records are filed in the Official Personnel Folder to document events in an individual's Federal employment history that have long-term consequences for the employee and the Government. Care should be exercised in filing documents correctly to ensure all documents pertaining to an employee's rights and benefits are available in the personnel folder when needed.

Personnel folder documents are either long-term or temporary documents. Certain documents must never be filed in the personnel folder.

Long-term documents

Long-term documents are records kept for the life of the folder, usually 115 years from the employee's date of birth. These documents are filed in chronological order on the right side of the personnel folder.

Temporary documents

Temporary documents are documents not kept for the life of the personnel folder. These documents are filed on the left side of the folder.

Prohibited documents

Prohibited documents are records that must never be replaced in a personnel folder. The prohibition may come from statutes, such as the Privacy Act, or from regulation such as [title 29, Code of Federal Regulations](#).

Example: Standard Form 181, Race and National Origin Identification

Rescinded filing requirements

Rescinded filing requirements are document filing requirements cancelled as of a given date. When filing requirements are rescinded, the document(s) should no longer be filed on the right side of the personnel folder. See section 3-H for instructions on handling documents already on file in the personnel folder.

General Filing Procedures, Continued

Obsolete Forms

Specific forms may become obsolete because of legislative or procedural changes in human resource programs. They may be replaced by other forms or documents. The entire process under which the forms were created may be discontinued. Even though the form is obsolete, the reason for keeping the form as a part of the employee's history may still exist. The form may still be filed appropriately as a long-term document in the personnel folder. Such obsolete forms are listed in the sections of this chapter as documents authorized for long-term retention in the personnel folder.

Procedures

Before filing documents in the personnel folder:

Step 1 Action:

Make sure the document should be filed in the personnel folder. Some documents must never be filed in the personnel folder. Other documents belong in case files rather than the personnel folder. Once a document is entered within the OPF, it will not be altered or amended except pursuant to law. *(On occasion, OPM has granted agency requests to block out the first five digits of the SSN and will continue to do so on a case-by-case basis.)*

Reminder: Social Security Numbers (SSNs) and other personally identifiable information belonging to someone other than the subject that are displayed on records in the Personnel Folder must be removed or concealed (*i.e.*, lists covering more than one employee in a personnel action), and the agency must provide a copy to the employee of the changed record

Step 2 Action:

Place the document correctly on the right or left side; and in chronological order.

Placement - Right Side

The right side of the personnel folder is reserved for long-term documents. Only documents

authorized by OPM may be placed on the right side of the folder. These documents are listed in the sections in this chapter. Note these instructions cover filing only. For information on when and how to create the document, refer to the appropriate program guidance.

General Filing Procedures, Continued

Placement - Left Side

The left side of the personnel folder is used for temporary documents. In a few cases, program guidance requires a document be filed on the left side of the personnel folder. Those cases are listed in the sections in this chapter. Documents not listed in the sections may be filed in the personnel folder at the agency's option.

Agencies may choose to file other material on the left side of the folder as long as:

- The document relates to the individual who is the subject of the folder. General documentation of personnel operations is not appropriate for filing in the personnel folder.
- The documents is a personnel record- travel, payroll or financial. Disclosure records are not personnel records
- OPM guidance does not prohibit filing the document in the folder. Prohibited documents are listed in the sections in this chapter.
- Other guidance does not require the materials be filed in separate files; for example, documentation of health benefits enrollments under temporary continuation of coverage.

Examples of material to be filed on the left side:

- Current position description;
- Standard Form 1152, Designation of Beneficiary for Unpaid Compensation;
- Letters of reprimand or caution.

Examples of material not to be filed on the left side:

- Time and attendance reports;
- Records on claims under the Federal Employee's Compensation Act;
- Equal Employment Opportunity complaint records.

When an employee leaves the agency, only specific temporary documents are transferred with the personnel folder. These documents include performance information, notice of employee indebtedness to health benefits fund, and records of leave data (Standard Form 1150). Chapter 7 contains more information on transferring personnel folders.

General Filing Procedures, Continued

Chronological order

Right hand side documents must be filed in the personnel folder in chronological order by effective date. File the document with the more recent date on top of the document with the earlier effective date. However, when:

- forms have no effective date, file them by completion date; and
- more than one form has the same effective date, file them in any order within the effective date.

Examples of chronological order:

- An employee's Standard form 2809, Health Benefits Registration, signed January 12, 1994, but effective the first day of the pay period beginning January 20, 1994, is placed on top of the employee's appointment Standard Form 50, Notification of Personnel Action effective January 12, 1994.
- An employee's standard Form 2817, Life Insurance Election, Standard Form 2809, Health Benefits Registration, and Thrift Savings Plan 1, Thrift Savings Plan Election Form are all effective on January 12, 1994. The three forms are filed together as a group in no particular order within the group.

Information About the Sections

Use chapter 8 to locate filing instructions

Chapter 8 of this Guide lists forms separately indexed by form number and by topic/title. Refer to Chapter 8 for the page in this chapter that has filing instructions for a particular form.

Agency forms

Agencies may have approved exceptions to Standard Forms. Procedures for creating personnel documentation may authorize agencies to create their own forms equivalent to the Governmentwide forms. Follow the filing instructions for the related Governmentwide forms to file any approved agency exceptions or equivalents.

Organization

Information in the sections is grouped by type of document. Specific documents are listed alphabetically within type of document. Obsolete forms are identified as such.

Section 3-A. Applications for Federal Employment

List of documents

This section provides instructions for filing documents related to applications for Federal employment.

Document(s)

- **Applications including:**
 - Civil Service Commission Form 8 (obsolete),
 - Application Form,
 - Optional Form 612 (Optional Application for Federal Employment),
 - Resume
- **Standard Forms (obsolete):**
 - 57, Application for Federal Employment,
 - 58, Supplemental experience and Qualifications Statement,
 - 60, Job Application,
 - 171, Application for Federal Employment,
 - 171-A, continuation Sheet for Standard Form 171,
 - 172, Amendment to Application for Federal Employment,
 - 173, Job Qualification Statement

Personnel Folder Filing Instructions

File on the right side only when the document is used for one of the purposes listed below:

- as basis for first Federal appointment;
- as basis for latest Federal appointment;
- as latest certification of eligibility for veterans' preference;
- as basis for rating in a civil service examination; or
- to show OPM has completed a background investigation. (The application will have a note the case was processed. File by stamped date; when not stamped, file by signature date).

Note: A position change (promotion, reassignment) in the same agency is not a new appointment. These applications should not be filed on the right side.

Section 3-A. Applications for Federal Employment, continued

Document(s)

○ **Attachments to Applications**

Attachments authorized for retention in the personnel folder include only items requested in the job announcement and refer to basic qualifications, such as:

Civil service Commission (obsolete):

226, Certification of Scholastic Achievement,

1170, Supplemental Qualifications Statement

License

Office of Personnel Management Form 1170/17

Supplemental Qualifications Statement/List of College Courses and Certificate of Scholastic Achievement

School Transcript

Personnel Folder Filing Instructions

File these forms on the right side when they are part of an application authorized for right side retention.

Note: Remove other documents from the application, such as:

- Photographs,
- Publications submitted as proof of accomplishments,
- Position Descriptions,
- Diplomas,
- Training Certificates, or
- Performance Appraisals.

Section 3-B. Appointment Support

List documents

This section provides filing instructions for documents that support appointments.

Document(s)

- **Appointment Affidavit**
Standard Form 61, Appointment Affidavit

Personnel Folder Filing Instructions

File all forms on the right side. Keep only those forms required by OPM guidance, not those completed at the agency's option.

Document(s)

- **Approvals/Authorizations**
Approvals and authorizations required for an appointment include:
Civil Service Commission Forms (obsolete):
492, Application to Establish Eligibility for Reinstatement to Career Conditional
493, Application to Establish Eligibility for Conversion to Career- Conditional
617, Application to Establish Eligibility for Reinstatement to Career Conditional under Public Law 84-380 and 85-847
618, Application to Establish Eligibility for Conversion to Career Conditional under Public Law 84-380 and 85-847
648, Recommendation for Conversion to Career Appointment Under Regulation 315.703a.

Personnel Folder Filing Instructions

File these documents on the right side.

Section 3-B. Application Support, Continued

Document(s)

- **Approvals/Authorizations, Continued**

- Civil Service Commission Forms (obsolete), Continued**

- 2800a**, Proof of Selection for Career (or Career- Conditional) Appointment

- 2800b**, Authorization of a Career-Conditional Appointment

- Form or letter** from the Office of Personnel Management or an agency appointing officer identifying the individual employee and:

- cancels competitive status;
 - authorizes a personnel action; (This refers to a unique authorization NOT to standard authorizations such as those on Standard Form 52.)
 - verifies competitive status, veterans' preference, or service history;
 - disapproves a personnel action because of nonexistence of competitive status.

- Recommendation by Postmaster General** to convert an employee to career appointment in the Post Office under Public law 84-836 (process is no longer in effect.)

- Standard Form 59**, Request for Approval of Non- Competitive Action

Personnel Folder Filing Instructions

File these documents on the right side.

Section 3-B. Application Support, Continued

Document(s)

- **Appointment Affidavit**
 - Optional Form 306**, Declaration for Federal Employment
 - Standard Form 61-B (obsolete)**, Declaration Appointee

Personnel Folder Filing Instructions

File these documents on the right side.

Document(s)

- **Military Service**

Records that document military service creditable for leave accrual, reduction- in- force, retirement or veterans' preference include:

 - DD214**, Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty
 - Letters**
 - National Guard Bureau and Reserve** reports of separation and records of service
 - Standard Form 813 (formerly Office of Personnel Management Form 813)**,
Verification of a Military Retiree's Service in Nonwartime Campaigns or Expeditions
 - Statements from the Armed Forces** accepted by the agency as proof of military service

Personnel Folder Filing Instructions

File these military service records on the right side.

These records may be attached to other forms, such as the Standard Form 15, Application for 10-Point Veteran Preference or the Standard Form 144, Statement of Prior Federal Service.

Section 3-B. Application Support, Continued

Document(s)

- **Reference Checks/Pre-employment Inquiries**

Documents that show results from checks made of employment or personal references, or pre-employment vouchers and inquiries (including telephone inquiries)

Personnel Folder Filing Instructions

Do not file such documents in the personnel folder. If kept, file documents in the recruitment file.

Document(s)

- **Selective Service Registration**

Proof of Selective Service registration status includes:

Acknowledge letter or other proof of registration or exemption issued by Selective Service System annotated and signed by the employee;

Agency reproduction of Applicant's Statement of Selective Service Registration Status in 5 Code of Federal Regulations 300.704;

Office of Personnel Management Form 813(obsolete), Statement of Selective Service Registration Status

Optional Form 306, Declaration for Federal Employment

Personnel Folder Filing Instructions

File the statement or other proof on the right side.

Section 3-B. Application Support, Continued

Document(s)

- **Senior Executive Service**

Appointment support specifically applicable to the Senior Executive Service includes:

Statement by a career appointee that he/she elects to continue under the provisions of the Senior Executive Service upon receiving an appointment by the President that requires Senate confirmation.

Statement of acceptance or declination of conversion to a position in the Senior Executive Service

Written agreement that the individual voluntarily accepts the conditions when changing from a career to a non-career or limited appointment

Personnel Folder Filing Instructions

File signed documents on the right side.

Section 3-B. Application Support, Continued

Document(s)

- **Statement of Prior Federal Service**

This material documenting the calculation of creditable service for leave may include:

Agency substitute for Standard Form 144-A, such as a printout with the information listed in Chapter 6 of [THE GUIDE TO PROCESSING PERSONNEL ACTIONS](#)

Standard Form 144, Statement of Prior Creditable Service

Standard Form 144-A, Statement of Prior Creditable Service -- Worksheet

Supporting documentation, such as:

Affidavits accepted as proof of service creditable for leave;

Agency annotated verification of prior service;

Letters verifying active service with the Public Health Service and National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration;

Proof of creditable military service; and

Statements showing proof of creditable volunteer service with the Peace Corps, Corporation for National Service (formerly ACTION), or Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA).

Personnel Folder Filing Instructions

File these documents on the right side.

NOTE: The list of supporting documentation is not exhaustive. Any credible material the agency accepts as proof or verification of service for leave may be attached to the Statement of Prior Federal Service Worksheet.

Section 3-B. Application Support, Continued

Document(s)

- **Statements of Understanding**

Written statement that the employee understands he/she is leaving the competitive service voluntarily to accept an appointment in the excepted service.

Example: Competitive service employee selected for the Presidential Management Fellows Program

Personnel Folder Filing Instructions

File statements of understanding on the right side when signed by the employee.

Document(s)

- **Test Material**

Answer sheets from written examinations

Personnel Folder Filing Instructions

Do not file test material in the personnel folder.

Document(s)

- **Veterans' Preference**

Material that supports veterans' preference determinations includes:

Standard Form 14 (obsolete), Claim for Veteran's Preference

Standard Form 15, Application for 10-Point Veteran Preference

Supporting documentation, such as:

Death certificate; and

Decree of annulment.

Personnel Folder Filing Instructions

File documents on the right side.

NOTE: The list of supporting documentation is not exhaustive. Any material the agency accepts as proof or verification used in determining veterans' preference may be attached to the Application for 10-Point Veteran Preference.

Section 3-B. Application Support, Continued

Document(s)

- **Veterans' Preference, Continue**

Supporting documentation, continued:

Documentation of military service and separation under honorable conditions;

Official statement from the Department of Veterans Affairs or a branch of the Armed Forces documenting a service-connected disability;

Official statement, citation or certificate showing the award of the Purple Heart;

Physician's statement.

Personnel Folder Filing Instructions

File documents on the right side.

NOTE: The list of supporting documentation is not exhaustive. Any material the agency accepts as proof or verification used in determining veterans' preference may be attached to the Application for 10-Point Veteran Preference.

Section 3-C: Awards

List documents

This section provides instructions for filing awards.

Document(s)

- **Agency Award Forms**

Agency forms, certificates, letters, etc. for cash awards that do not affect an employee's rate of basic pay

Personnel Folder Filing Instructions

Retain documents on the right side only if they show an award was granted under a formal agency award program and:

- the award was dated prior to 1986. (Standard Form 50 became the official documentation for awards in 1986.); **OR**
- the award was dated between 1986 and 1998 and the agency form was an approved substitute for the Standard Form 50.

Effective January 1, 1999, only documentation of Presidential rank awards and separation incentives may be filed on the right side of the Official Personnel Folder. No other awards actions effective after December 31, 1998, are authorized for long term (right side) retention.

Document(s)

- **Award Justification**

Award justification and other reference material

Personnel Folder Filing Instructions

Do not file this material in the personnel folder.

File this material according to agency instructions. Recommendations for awards and supporting documentation are part of the Employee Performance Records system discussed in Chapter 1.

Section 3-D: Benefits

List documents

This section provides instructions for filing benefits.

Document(s)

- **Health Insurance**
- **Enrollment**

Standard Form 2809, Health Benefits Registration Form including any authorized attachments, such as:

- Court or Administrative Order under FEHB Children's Equity Act
- Medical documentation used in making a self-support determination for a child 22 years of age or over;
- Statement of foster child status;
- Statement supporting acceptance of a late registration.

Standard Form 2810, Notice of Change in Health Benefits including any authorized attachments, such as:

- Employee's election to terminate benefits during a period of nonpay status or insufficient pay.

Transcript, Office of Personnel Management approved documentation of health benefits enrollments processed electronically (for example, through Employee Express)

Personnel Folder Filing Instructions

File these documents on the right side.

NOTE: Medical certificates and documentation should be placed in a sealed envelope before being attached to any enrollment forms to limit access.

Section 3-D, Benefits, ContinuedDocument(s)○ **Health Insurance**

Legal/medical documentation applicable to FEGLI Program such as:

Court orders awarding FEGLI benefits

Medical documentation used in making a disabled dependant child determination

Statement of foster child status

OFEGLI approval section of application SF 2822 “Request for Insurance”

○ **Indebtedness to Health Benefits Fund**

Documentation the employee is indebted to the health benefits fund, including election to continue coverage and the amount owed.

Personnel Folder Filing Instructions

File these documents on the left side until the debt is paid. Once the debt is paid, the material must be removed.

NOTE: These procedures apply to debt for pay periods that began before September 30, 1996. Debt for later periods is to the agency, not to the health benefits fund, and all documentation remains with the agency to which the employee is indebted.

Document(s)○ **Health Insurance**○ **Premium Conversion Waiver/Election**

Form used to elect or waive pre-tax treatment of employee FEHB premiums.

Personnel Folder Filing Instructions

File this form on the right side.

Document(s)○ **Health Insurance**○ **Temporary Continuation of Coverage**

Notice of eligibility for temporary continuation of health benefits coverage (signed copy or file copy with delivery receipt attached).

Personnel Folder Filing Instructions

File these documents on the right side.

NOTE: Information on enrollment, payments, and other correspondence on the period of continued coverage should be part of a separate health benefits file.

Document(s)

- **Life Insurance**
- **Life Insurance Forms**
 - All life insurance forms must be filed in the Official Personnel Folder unless a form contains specific instructions to do something different
- RI 76-10, Assignment of Federal Employee's Group Life Insurance
- Standard Form 2823, Designation of Beneficiary under the Federal Employee's Group Life Insurance
- Standard Form 3102, Federal Employees Retirement System Designation of Beneficiary

Personnel Folder Filing Instructions

Follow instructions on the life insurance form. In general, file these documents on the right side.

Refer to the [Federal Employees' Group Life Insurance Program Handbook for Employees, Annuitants, Compensationers and Employing Offices.](#)

Document(s)

- **Retirement**
- **Coverage Determinations**
 - Any documentations of an individual's retirement coverage, including approval of CSRS coverage under 5 CFR 831.205 and coverage under CSRS- Special or FERS- Special.

Personnel Folder Filing Instructions

File these documents on the right side.

NOTE: Determinations may be made by the agency or the Office of Personnel Management.

Section 3-D, Benefits, Continued

Document(s)

- **Retirement**
- **Deposits for Military Service**
 - Applications:
 - Standard Form 2803**, Application to Make Deposit or Redeposit - Civil Service Retirement System
 - Standard Form 3108**, Application to Make Service Credit Payment for Civilian Service - Federal Employees Retirement System

Personnel Folder Filing Instructions

File applications on the left side.

Document(s)

- **Retirement**
- **Deposits for Military Service, Continued**
 - Earnings:
 - RI 20-97**, Estimated Earnings during Military Service
 - Election:
 - Office of Personnel Management Form 1515**, Military Service Deposit Election
 - Worksheet:
 - Office of Personnel Management Form 1514**, Military Deposit Worksheet

Personnel Folder Filing Instructions

File these documents on the right side.

Section 3-D, Benefits, Continued

Document(s)

- **Retirement**
- **Designation of Beneficiary**
Standard Form 3102, Federal Employees Retirement System Designation of Beneficiary including any authorized attachments, such as a trustee designation.

Personnel Folder Filing Instructions

File these documents on the right side.

NOTE: This form is sent to the Office of Personnel Management when the employee leaves Federal service.

Document(s)

- **Retirement**
- **Disability Retirement**
Notice of Approval of Disability Retirement Application

Personnel Folder Filing Instructions

File these documents on the right side.

Section 3-D, Benefits, ContinuedDocument(s)

- **Retirement**
- **Elections**

Election of Federal Employees Retirement System with Credit for Non-appropriated Fund Instrumentality Service under Public Law 104-106

Election of Retroactive Non-appropriated Fund Instrumentality Retirement

Coverage by Federal Employees Retirement System Employees under Public Law 104-106

Notice employee elected to retain coverage under a Non-appropriated Fund Retirement Plan

Notice of right to elect continued coverage while serving in a non- Federal organization

Office of Personnel Management Form 1561 (obsolete), Retirement Election for Certain Senior Officials

RI 38-130(formerly Standard Form 2816), Retirement, Life Insurance, and Health Benefits under the Indian Self-Determination and Educational Assistance Act - Public Law 93-638

Standard Form 3109 (formerly Office of Personnel Management Form 1555), Election of Coverage and any approved attachments such as an authorization for retroactive election

Standard Form 3110 (formerly Office of Personnel Management Form 1556), Former Spouse's Consent to Federal Employees Retirement System Election

Standard Form 3111 (formerly Office of Personnel Management Form 1560), Request for Waiver, Extension or Search in Connection with Election of Federal Employees Retirement System and any authorized attachments

Personnel Folder Filing Instructions

File these documents on the right side.

Section 3-D, Benefits, Continued

Document(s)

- **Retirement**
- **Retirement Fund Data**

Retirement fund data may be:

Correspondence dealing with a payment, refund form, or repayment to the Civil Service Retirement System or the Federal Employees Retirement System

Standard Form 2802, Application for Refund of Retirement Deductions

Standard Form 2804, Application to Make Voluntary Contributions

Standard Forms 2806 and 3100, Individual Retirement Record

Personnel Folder Filing Instructions

Do not file any of these forms in the personnel folder.

NOTE: OPM retains individual retirement files that include this information.

Document(s)

- **Retirement**
- **Summary of Service**

Summaries of creditable service include:

Standard Form 2801-1, Certified Summary of Federal Service (Civil Service Retirement System)

Standard Form 2815 (obsolete), Employee Service Statement

Standard Form 3107-1, Certified Summary of Federal Service (Federal Employees Retirement System)

Personnel Folder Filing Instructions

File these documents on the right side.

Section 3-D, Benefits, Continued

Document(s)

- **Thrift Savings Plan**

- TSP 1**, Thrift Savings Plan Election Form

- TSP-1-C**, Catch up Contribution Election Form

- TSP-967-AO**, Notice That Employee Contributions Cannot Be Made Because a Financial Hardship In-Service Withdrawal Has Been Issued

- TRANSCRIPT**, Transcript of thrift savings plan changes approved for use by the Federal Retirement Thrift Investment Board

Personnel Folder Filing Instructions

File these documents on the right side.

The Federal Retirement Thrift Investment Board authorizes the use of electronic signature for TSP-1 and TSP-1-C.

Section 3-E: Investigative Process

List documents

This section provides instructions for filing documents about the investigative process.

Document(s)

- **Investigative Notices**

Investigative notices contain information showing the case was investigated, the level of the investigation, confirmation the case was adjudicated, and the date a determination was made.

Investigative notices include:

Certification of Investigation Notice, Form DG-04 or similar agency form

Closed-Discontinued Notice

Closed-Incomplete Notice

Standard Form 85, Data for Non-Sensitive or Non-critical Sensitive Positions

Personnel Folder Filing Instructions

If the agency recognizes the electronic format as the official record, agencies may convert the document into an accessible, reproducible, legible, quality approved electronic format. Once the conversion has been completed, the contents of the document may be recognized as the official record.

For agencies that recognize the paper format as the official record, all contents of the document will be accepted in their original form and filed on the right side.

NOTE: The Closed-Discontinued Notice and Closed-Incomplete Notice should be removed when the case is adjudicated and the Certification of Investigation Notice is filed.

Prior to 4/1/1990, the Standard Form 85 may have served as notice that a security/suitability determination had been made. Those documents contain the words "Stamped EO 10450." Only those forms (stamped and completed prior to 4/1/1990) may be retained in the Official Personnel Folder.

Section 3-E, Investigative Process, Continued

Document(s)

- **Investigation Scheduled Notice**

Personnel Folder Filing Instructions

File these documents on the left side.

Document(s)

- **Investigative Report Material**

This material includes:

Investigative reports, memos, other material generated during the investigation process

Office of Federal Investigations Form 36, Special Background Investigations Additional Data

Standard Form 85, Data for Non-Sensitive or Noncritical Sensitive Positions

Standard Form 85-P, Data for Public Trust Positions

Standard Form 86, Security Investigation Data for Sensitive Positions

Standard Form 87, Fingerprint Chart

Personnel Folder Filing Instructions

Do not file copies of this material in the Official Personnel Folder.

Follow your agency's instructions; copies are generally filed in the agency security file.

EXCEPTION:

A Standard Form 85 completed prior to 4/1/1990 which also has an annotation "Stamped EO 10450" may be filed in the folder. These are the only copies of Standard Form 85 included in the Official Personnel Folder.

Section 3-F: Personnel Actions

List documents

This section provides instructions for filing notification of personnel action.

Document(s)

- **Grade and Pay Retention**

Documentation of the application of grade and/or pay retention including copy of a letter to the employee describing the circumstances warranting the grade and/or pay retention and nature of the entitlement.

Personnel Folder Filing Instructions

File these documents on the right side.

Section 3-F, Personnel Actions, Continued

Document(s)

- **Notification of Personnel Action**

The Office of Personnel Management's Operating Manual, [THE GUIDE TO PROCESSING PERSONNEL ACTIONS](#), identifies employment events documented as personnel actions. Only those personnel actions that have long term consequences for the employee's Federal career are filed on the right side of the OPF.

Approved forms for documenting these actions include:

Standard Form 50, Notification of Personnel Action

Standard Form 50-A (obsolete), Notice of Short Term Employment

Personnel Folder Filing Instructions

File these documents on the right side. Agency exceptions to the Standard Form 50 were authorized under special circumstances; most of these exceptions were rescinded in 1986.

NOTES: Refer to the instructions in [THE GUIDE TO PROCESSING PERSONNEL ACTIONS](#) to determine if a particular action is to be documented on the right side of the Official Personnel Folder. Any of the following actions effective on or after January 1, 1999, are not authorized for right side retention in the Official Personnel Folder:

- Exception to Reduction in Force Release;
- Realignment;
- Student Loan Repayment; and
- All awards, bonuses, lump sum performance payments, or incentives, except Presidential Rank awards and separation incentives.

If agencies choose to produce a Standard Form 50 for these actions, (for example, performance awards), these Standard Form 50s may not be filed on the right side of the Official Personnel Folder. Agencies may use an agency-issued nature of action code beginning with 9 and a Standard Form 50 to document some actions taken during an employee's career. Examples include: change in accounting code, change in ceiling slot, details to positions at the same grade level with no promotion potential. These are not personnel actions as defined in [THE GUIDE TO PROCESSING PERSONNEL ACTIONS](#). Unless the action is one that is to be documented using any agency-approved form (for example, completion of supervisory/managerial probationary period), it is not authorized for right side retention in the Official Personnel Folder.

Section 3-F, Personnel Actions, Continued

Document(s)

- **Notification of Personnel Action, Continued**

Other documents used in lieu of the Standard Form 50 as authorized in [THE GUIDE TO PROCESSING PERSONNEL ACTIONS](#). Examples include:

Computer printed notice of pay increase

List forms

Optional Form 69, Assignment Agreement - Title IV of the Intergovernmental Personnel Act of 1970 (prior to 5-13-87)

Pay schedule annotated to indicate new pay rate

Standard Form 52, Request for Personnel Action

Standard Form 1126 (obsolete), Payroll Change Slip

Personnel Folder Filing Instructions

File these documents on the right side.

These documents are authorized for long-term retention only as they document personnel actions.

Example: pay slip that documents a within-grade increase.

Non-Example: pay slip that describes an employee's pay in a particular pay period.

Optional Form 69, Do not file agreements dated after 5-13-87.

Document(s)

- **PMRS Termination**

Notification letter to employee that the Performance Management and Recognition System ended

Personnel Folder Filing Instructions

File the notification on the right side.

Section 3-F, Personnel Actions, Continued

Document(s)

- **Reconstructed History Under Public Law 95-454**
Office of Personnel Management Form 1368 (obsolete), Pay Authorization Under the Civil Service Reform Act of 1978

Personnel Folder Filing Instructions

File the document on the right side.

Document(s)

- **Resignation**
Documentation of employee's decision to resign includes:
Agency notice accepting resignation by Presidentially appointed policy-making officers
President's acceptance of resignation by Presidentially appointed policy-making officers
Record of the conversation between an agency official and an employee who submits an oral resignation
Standard Form 52, Request for Personnel Action
Written resignation by the employee when submitted on document other than the Standard Form 52

Personnel Folder Filing Instructions

File documentation of the employee's decision on the right side.

Section 3-F, Personnel Actions, Continued

Document(s)

- **Retirement Reason**

Documentation of the employee's reason for retiring may include:

Reduction-in-force notice

Written documentation of reason for retiring other than the Standard Form 52

Standard Form 52, Request for Personnel Action

Personnel Folder Filing Instructions

File these documents on the right side.

NOTE: These documents show the employee's reason for retiring. They are retained as part of the personnel action documenting the retirement. The retirement application is not authorized for long-term retention in the folder.

Document(s)

- **Transcript of Service**

Documents showing appointments, and position or salary changes created to:

- Reconstruct an employee's history when the personnel folder was lost or destroyed, or
- Document employment information for service in personnel systems not under OPM's recordkeeping authority.

Personnel Folder Filing Instructions

File the documents on the right side.

Section 3-G: Other Personnel Documents

List documents

This section provides instructions for filing documents not found on the previous sections.

Document(s)

- **Alcohol and Drug Abuse**
Records on employee alcohol or drug abuse counseling or treatment

Personnel Folder Filing Instructions

Do not file these documents in the personnel folder.

NOTE: Follow agency instructions. These documents should not be filed in the Employee Medical Folder.

Document(s)

- **Appeals**
Appeal files and related correspondence

Personnel Folder Filing Instructions

Do not file these documents in the personnel folder.

Document(s)

- **Authorized by Specific Directive**
Documents specifically approved or required for long-term retention in the personnel folder. These documents may be authorized by OPM, the Merit Systems Protection Board, or similar agency to ensure the employee's career history is correctly interpreted.

Personnel Folder Filing Instructions

File these types of documents on the right side.

Section 3-G, Other Personnel Documents, Continued

Document(s)

- **Birth Certificate**

Certified birth certificate or any other certified record of birth

Personnel Folder Filing Instructions

File the certified record of birth on the right side when needed, to be sure date of birth is correct.

Document(s)

- **Briefing/Debriefing**

Standard Form 312 (formerly Standard Form 189), Classified Information

Nondisclosure Agreement

Other documents such as:

- agency checklists
- employee certifications

Personnel Folder Filing Instructions

File the Standard Form 312 and Standard Form 189 on the right side.

Do not file other documents in the personnel folder.

Document(s)

- **Complaints**

Personnel Folder Filing Instructions

Do not file documents about complaints in the personnel folder.

Section 3-G, Other Personnel Documents, Continued

Document(s)

- **Decisions and Settlement Agreements**

These include:

An **arbitral award**

Court order*

*Court orders involving the compliance or non-compliance of individuals insured under the FEGLI program to name his/her children or former spouse as the beneficiary or Court or Administrative Order under the FEHB Children's Equity Act;

Decision of an agency head which adopts the recommendations of an agency fact finder

A decision, order, or a settlement agreement reached under the rules and regulations of:

- The Merit Systems Protection Board
- The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission
- The Federal Labor Relations Authority
 - OPM or the agency

Settlement agreement between an individual and an agency under circumstances other than those above

Personnel Folder Filing Instructions

Do not file copies of decisions and agreements in the personnel folder.

* Court Orders

- File these documents on the right side.
- The OPF must be flagged in some way to indicate that it contains a court order.
- When an employee retires and is eligible to continue FEGLI as an annuitant, any court order in his/her OPF must be sent to OPM with the retirement application and other life insurance forms.
- When an employee dies, any court order in his/her OPF must be sent to the Office of Federal Employees' Group Life Insurance (OFEGLI), along with other life insurance forms.

- When a compensationner separates or completes 12 months in nonpay status and is eligible to continue FEGLI as a compensationner, any court order in his/her OPF must be sent to OPM along with other life insurance forms.

Document(s)

- **Demonstration Project**

Documents that explain impact of demonstration project (for example, pay-setting policies to be used when employee leaves project)

Personnel Folder Filing Instructions

File these documents on the right side.

Section 3-G, Other Personnel Documents, Continued

Document(s)

- **Disclosure from Personnel Folder**

These documents are required by the Privacy Act of 1974, as amended. They include the date, nature, purpose of each disclosure of information from the folder and the name and address of the person or agency to whom the disclosure was made. They include:

A document prepared by the agency releasing information from the folder

Standard Form 127, Request for Official Personnel Folder (Separated Employee)

Personnel Folder Filing Instructions

File the accounting of disclosure on the right side.

NOTE: The Standard Form 127 is filed by the National Personnel Records Center, not by agencies.

Refer to Chapter 6 for instructions on documenting accountings of disclosure.

NOTE: An agency may choose to use the form on which information was disclosed as the accounting, for example, the Standard Form 75, "Request for Preliminary Employment Data," or use a single sheet of paper to document the disclosure.

Document(s)

- **Drug Testing Records**

- Drug testing program records under an agency plan implementing Executive Order 12564

Personnel Folder Filing Instructions

Do not file these records in the personnel folder.

Section 3-G, Other Personnel Documents, Continued

Document(s)

- **Garnishment**

- Documents about garnishment of an employee's wages

Personnel Folder Filing Instructions

Do not file these documents in the personnel folder.

Document(s)

- **Grievance**

- Grievance files and correspondence

Personnel Folder Filing Instructions

Do not file these documents in the personnel folder.

Document(s)

- **Medical Disability**

- **Standard Form 256, Self-Identification of Medical Disability**

Personnel Folder Filing Instructions

Do not file such documents in the personnel folder.

Section 3-G, Other Personnel Documents, Continued

Document(s)

- **Medical Records**

Records on employee occupational illnesses, accidents, injuries, exposures, and other medical or health maintenance matters. Examples of medical records include:

- Agency dispensary or health unit files or records
- Certification of disability, job readiness and need for reasonable accommodation
- Standard Form 177 (obsolete), Statement of Physical Ability for Light Duty Work
- Records and correspondence about an employee's claim for compensation from the Office of Workers' Compensation Programs, for a job related disease or injury

Personnel Folder Filing Instructions

Do not file medical records in the personnel folder.

Document(s)

- **Medical Eligibility**

Office of Personnel Management Form 1528 (obsolete), Notification of Earnings for Medicare Eligibility

Personnel Folder Filing Instructions

File the form on the right side.

Document(s)

- **Minority Group Identifiers**

These include:

Office of Personnel Management Form 1468

Race and National Origin Identification-Hawaii (Obsolete)

Standard Form 181, Ethnicity and Race Identification

Personnel Folder Filing Instructions

Do not file any designation of minority status in the personnel folder.

Section 3-G, Other Personnel Documents, Continued

Document(s)

- **Payroll, Leave, Financial Records**

These records include:

Employee's tax withholding forms

Leave requests

Statements of financial withholdings

Time and attendance records

Personnel Folder Filing Instructions

Do not file payroll records in the personnel folder.

NOTE: This prohibition does not include the Standard Form 1150 and Standard Form 1150-A.

Those forms should be filed on the left side when the employee leaves the agency.

Document(s)

- **Performance**

Ratings of record and related material

Personnel Folder Filing Instructions

Follow agency guidance for filing performance records in the Employee Performance File System.

Refer to Chapter 7 of this Guide for instructions on filing performance records in the personnel folder when the employee leaves the agency.

Document(s)

- **Reconstruction**

Agency notice the personnel folder was reconstructed

Personnel Folder Filing Instructions

File the agency notice on the right side. The notice will be the top document on the reconstructed portion of the folder.

Section 3-G, Other Personnel Documents, Continued

Document(s)

- **Supervisory /Managerial Probation**

Evidence of satisfactory completion of probationary period for managerial and supervisory positions

Personnel Folder Filing Instructions

File the form established under agency procedures for documenting satisfactory completion of probationary period on the right side.

NOTE: Performance appraisals/performance ratings are not to be filed as part of the probationary period completion documentation.

Document(s)

- **Welfare to Work Program**

Office of Personnel Management Form 1635 (Obsolete), Welfare to Work Program

Personnel Folder Filing Instructions

Do not file this document in the folder.

Section 3-H: Changes in Filing Requirements

Introduction

This Section contains the rules to follow when filing requirements change. Instructions on filing specific documents as long-term records in the Official Personnel Folder may change whether or not the requirements to prepare the document change. An obsolete form may continue to be filed because it contains information important to the individual's career history. Current forms may no longer be filed as long-term records because the information they contain applies only to the current agency. This Section covers changes in filing requirements for long-term (right side) Official Personnel Folder documents.

Example: The Immigration and Naturalization Service form I-9, "Employment Eligibility Verification" was filed on the right side of the Official Personnel Folder. Effective January 1997, the filing requirement was changed and the form was no longer authorized as a right side document. The form and the Immigration and Naturalization Service's implementing instructions did not change.

Document Removal

When the requirement to file a document as a long-term Official Personnel Folder record is rescinded, agencies should issue instructions for handling the document. When appropriate, the agency may file the document as a temporary or left hand side Official Personnel Folder record. Agencies may also establish their own separate filing procedures.

Elimination of the long term Official Personnel Folder filing requirement is not authorization to destroy the document. NARA issues instructions on records disposition. The [General Records Schedules](#) provide disposal authorization for records common to a number of Federal agencies. Agencies must follow these instructions on records disposition.

Rules

This section contains guidance on implementing changes in Official Personnel Folder filing requirements.

Section 3-H, Changes in Filing Requirements, Continued

When:

The requirement to file a document as a long-term Official Personnel Folder record is rescinded

And:

The document is received on or after the rescission date

Then:

Do not file the document on the long-term (right) side in the Official Personnel Folder. Follow agency filing instructions.

When:

The requirement to file a document as a long-term Official Personnel Folder record is rescinded

And:

The document is already in the Official Personnel Folder

Then:

Remove the document immediately from the right hand side and follow agency filing instructions.

OR

Leave the document in the Official Personnel Folder until the employee leaves the agency and then remove it before transferring the Folder.

When:

A filing requirement for a document is revised from long-term to temporary

And:

The document is received on or after the revision date

Then:

File the document on the left hand side of the Folder.

Section 3-H, Changes in Filing Requirements, Continued

When:

A filing requirement for a document is revised from long-term to temporary

And:

The document is already on the right hand side in the Official Personnel Folder

Then:

Move the document immediately from the right to the left hand side.

OR

Leave the document on the right hand side until the employee leaves the agency and then remove it before transferring the Folder.

Section 3-I: Training

Introduction

Agencies will collect all training data elements identified in this chapter and submit this information to OPM. Combined with other information, the training data collected will help agencies achieve their mission and human capital objectives. Additionally, Human Resource Development (HRD) specialists will regularly analyze training data as a way to continuously improve their agency's training program.

Data collected will represent the training portion of an employee's official personnel folder and will be in an electronic format. The electronic format will include training events for all coursework including, but not limited to, supervisory, managerial, and leadership development programs; formal mentoring programs; SES candidates programs, etc. Such training events must be reported to OPM using the specific codes prescribed in the [Guide to Human Resources Reporting](#).

Regulation

Personnel recordkeeping regulations are found in [section 293 of title 5, Code of Federal Regulations](#). Federal agencies must report the training data elements specified in this guide for each employee, and establish a schedule of records in accordance with regulations promulgated by NARA and the General Service Administration.

OPM's authority for requiring the collection and reporting of training data is found in [section 4115 of title 5, United States Code](#) and [section 410 of title 5, Code of Federal Regulations](#).

Training Data Collection

Agencies must collect the following training data elements which will constitute the training portion of an employee's official personnel folder:

- Training Title
- Training Type Code
- Training Sub-Type Code
- Training Start Date
- Training End Date
- Continued Service Agreement Expiration Date
- Continued Service Agreement Required Indicator
- Training Accreditation Indicator
- Training Credit
- Training Credit Designation Type Code
- Training Credit Type Code
- Training Duty Hours
- Training Non Duty Hours
- Training Delivery Type Code
- Training Purpose Type Code
- Training Source Type Code
- Training Materials Cost
- Training Per Diem Cost
- Training Travel Cost
- Training Tuition and Fees Cost
- Training Nongovernmental Contribution Cost

Alpha-numeric, or numeric, codes for the Training data elements are found in Chapter 4 of the [Guide to Human Resources Reporting](#).

Chapter 4 How to Reconstruct a Personnel Folder

Introduction

An agency must start to reconstruct the personnel folder upon learning the folder is lost or destroyed. Reconstruction includes:

- Copying all applicable documents the agency can get from the employee, personnel office files, payroll office, Social Security Administration, etc., and
- Documenting the reconstruction.

Place a notice of the reconstruction in the folder

A transcript of service serves as the notice of reconstruction. The transcript is to remain as the top document of the reconstructed portion in the personnel folder. See Chapter 7 of this Guide for instructions on creating a transcript of service.

Use the following procedures to reconstruct the personnel folder.

Step 1 Action

Copy any relevant documents the employee can furnish. For example:

- Applications for Federal Employment,
- Standard Forms 50, Notifications of Personnel Action,
- Earnings and Leave Statements.

Step 2 Action

Request a computer-generated employment history from agencies where the individual was previously employed.

NOTE: While agencies are no longer required to keep Chronological File copies of Standard Forms 50, Notification of Personnel Action, request copies when they may be available.

How to Reconstruct a Personnel Folder, Continued

Step 3 Action

Request retirement records.

- If the employee made retirement contributions...

Request a copy of all Individual Retirement Records, Standard Form 2806 and 3100.

Provide the employee's name, social security number, and date of birth for each Individual Retirement Record requested.

Send the request to:

**Office of Personnel Management
Retirement Operations Center,
P. O. Box 45
Boyers, PA 16017**

Requests may also be faxed to 724-794-4668. Take care privacy of the personal information is maintained when requesting an Individual Retirement Record be faxed to the personnel office.

- If the employee made retirement contributions...

Request the individual get detailed earnings information from the Social Security Administration, 6401 Security Boulevard, Baltimore, MD 21235.

NOTE: Advise the employee to use Form SSA-7050-F3 to request this information.

Requested information should be earnings by each employer.

It is important the employee know the Social Security Administration will charge a fee for this service and the fee is based on the number of years of earnings to be reported.

How to Reconstruct a Personnel Folder, Continued

Step 4 Action

Ask the National Personnel Records Center to search for personnel and payroll records. Address the request to:

National Archives and Records Administration, National Personnel Records Center, 111 Winnebago Street, St. Louis, MO 63118-4126, ATTENTION: Chief, Civilian Reference Branch (DO NOT OPEN IN MAILROOM).

- To request a search for the personnel folder:
Submit a Standard Form 127, Request for Official Personnel Folder (OPF). In the Remarks section, put:
"The OPF for this employee is lost or destroyed. This is to request a search be made by NPRC for the OPF of the named employee."
This statement is required to insure the missing Official Personnel Folder was not inadvertently returned to the National Personnel Records Center.
- To request a search for payroll records:
Submit a memo on the agency letterhead. Include the employee's name, social security number, agency in which employed and the following:
"This is to request a search of any payroll records on the named employee that may be stored at NPRC."
Not all agencies store payroll records at the National Personnel Records Center. If the records are not there, contact the agency.

Step 5 Action

Obtain any copies of certificates establishing the employee's qualifications for specific jobs. Contact the office that issued appointment certificates for the individual.

Step 6 Action

Use records that document Federal service from the investigative files, and security clearances where appropriate.

How to Reconstruct a Personnel Folder, Continued

Step 7 Action

Prepare a transcript of service. Refer to Chapter 7 of this Guide for instructions on transcript preparation.

An introductory paragraph should be added to the transcript identifying the documents used to prepare the transcript.

Example: "The following transcript of Federal service was prepared from an Individual Retirement Record, maintained by the Office of Personnel Management."

Step 8 Action

Follow instructions in Chapter 2 of this Guide to select the correct folder. File the transcript of service in the folder. The transcript will be the top form of the reconstructed portion of the personnel folder. Documents located during the reconstruction process should be filed beneath the transcript.

Step 9 Action

Use the sections in Chapter 3 of this Guide. Documents listed as prohibited in Chapter 3 may not be filed in a reconstructed personnel folder.

- Documents filed with the transcript:
 - Any documents that support benefits
 - Any Standard Forms 50, Notification of Personnel Actions

- Documents NOT filed with the transcript:
 - Standard Form 2806 or 3100, Individual Retirement Record
 - Computer-generated employment histories
 - Payroll records
 - Social Security earnings report

Chapter 5 "Jointly-Owned" Personnel Folders

Recordkeeping agreements with the Office of Personnel Management

Chapter 1 of this Guide indicated OPM owned the personnel folder records agencies establish under the Office’s recordkeeping authority. Legislative and Judicial Branch agencies, some Executive Branch agencies such as the Central Intelligence Agency, and quasi-Government agencies such as the U.S. Postal Service are not subject to OPM’s personnel folder recordkeeping authority. These agencies have their own authority to establish and maintain personnel records in a personnel folder.

Agencies maintaining records under OPM’s recordkeeping authority must establish a single personnel folder for an employee’s entire Federal employment history. This single folder may contain personnel records established by agencies that have their own personnel folder recordkeeping authority. We refer to such folders as jointly-owned personnel folders.

OPM has recordkeeping agreements with agencies that have their own recordkeeping authority. The agreements describe what an agency maintaining a jointly-owned personnel folder is to do:

- When the employee (subject of folder) separates
- When there is a request for access to or disclosure of information from such a folder.

Who sends what

Chapter 2 of this Guide identifies the agencies that have agreements with OPM concerning jointly-owned personnel folders. Chapter 2 also provides information on whether these agencies will provide a personnel folder or an administrative folder. Chapter 6 of this Guide provides the mailing addresses for these agencies.

"Jointly-Owned" Personnel Folders, Continued

Agency Responsibility

Once an agency receives, or establishes a jointly-owned Standard Form 66-C, Merged Records Personnel Folder, that agency MUST:

- Maintain a single personnel folder, containing all required records;
- Use all records to make personnel decisions affecting the employee;
- Permit the employee to review all records;
- Provide a copy of all records to the employee, at the employee's request;
- Provide a copy of records to anyone with the employee's written permission to receive or review the records;
- Disclose information from all records to agency employees and officials that need the records to perform their duties; and
- Remove or conceal all Social Security Numbers (SSNs) and other personally identifiable information belonging to someone other than the subject that are displayed on records in the Personnel Folder. (*i.e.*, lists covering more than one employee in a personnel action) and provide a copy to the employee of the changed record

What agencies are not permitted to do

After an agency receives or establishes a jointly-owned personnel folder that agency MAY NOT:

- Amend any records in the folder OPM does not own;
- Destroy any records in the folder OPM does not own;
- Remove any records that OPM does not own; except for Standard Form 181 and Standard Form 256;
- Adjudicate an appeal of an amendment to a record OPM does not own;
- Enter into a settlement agreement on disposition of records OPM does not own; and
- Disclose information to the public from any record OPM does not own.
Redact any SSNs on benefits forms or documents that involve payment of benefits, such as FEGLI forms SF 2823, RI 76-10, FEHB forms SF 2809 and SF 2810, or court orders, even if the SSNs are for someone other than the employee

"Jointly-Owned" Personnel Folders, Continued

Exception to disclosure prohibition

You must disclose information to:

- The employee who is the subject of the record;
- Agency officials and employees who use the employee records to perform their duties
- Someone with the employee's written permission to review or receive a copy of his/her records.

Refer requests to the "owner"

The agency maintaining a jointly-owned personnel folder may wish to initiate one or more of the above-listed actions or may receive a request for such actions. In such situations, the maintaining agency should refer the proposed action or the request to the agency that owns the records. Refer to Chapter 6, Section 6-A, of this Guide for agency addresses.

Chapter 6 How to Respond to Requests for Information

Coverage

This chapter covers how to respond to a request for information contained in Employee Medical Folders (EMF) and personnel folders (Official Personnel Folders (OPF), Merged Records Personnel Folders (MRPF), and Foreign Service folders). These records come under the purview of the [Privacy Act](#) of 1974, as amended, and can be identified within OPM's Governmentwide systems of records. For example, this chapter covers an employee's request for a copy of his or her Official Personnel Folder. This chapter does not cover requests for information developed from other records systems like payroll records. For example, it does not cover a request for information on the amount of union dues deducted from an individual's salary.

Consult your privacy officer if you have any questions concerning access to or disclosure from an OPF, MRPF, or Foreign Service Folder.

Request from Current Employee

OPM's regulation on privacy procedures for personnel records are in Title 5, Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 297

An employee's EMF or OPF must be made available to the employee for review upon request. This is called access. Employees are required to present proper identification before the personnel folder is provided to them. Employees reviewing their own folders must be accompanied by a record custodian at all times. Employees may bring a personal representative with them when they review their records. Employees may obtain copies of records in their personnel folders. Observe agency policies with regard to any charges for copies.

If an access request is denied, the denial must be writing and will include a statement of the reason for denial and the procedures available to appeal the denial. Refer to 5 CFR Part 297.

Amendment requests

Amendment of personnel folders means the correction, addition, deletion, or destruction of a specific portion of a folder. Request for amendment should include:

- A precise identification of the record to be amended.
- Identification of the specific material to be deleted, added or changed.
- A statement of the reasons for the request, including all available material substantiating the request.

In processing amendment requests, the agency should ensure any amendments comply with the Office of Personnel Management's recordkeeping procedures and regulations in 5 CFR part 293 and 297.

Privacy Act amendments do not take the place of other appeal procedures established by law or regulation, for example, adverse action appeals or classification appeals. Privacy Act amendment procedures are designed to ensure the records reflects what occurred accurately, not as a method to challenge an agency's application of its personnel procedures.

Agencies have authority to process Privacy Act amendment requests from their employees as long as those requests pertain to records generated under OPM's recordkeeping authority. The Office's recordkeeping authority applies to Official Personnel Folder records documenting employment in the competitive service, Senior Executive Service, or excepted service (Schedule A, B, or C). Agencies do not have authority to amend records in Merged Personnel Records Folders and Foreign Service folders created under another agency's employment system. Requests to amend records created under another employment system should be referred to the agency that created the record. Refer to Section 6-A for more information on this

Certain administrative errors such as key stroke mistakes, misspelling etc. do not need to follow the formal amendment process to be corrected if they do not substantially change the intent of the record.

Review of denial of an amendment request

When an agency denies an employee's request to amend a personnel record, the employee should be notified of the decision and informed that he or she may ask for an administrative review of the decision in accordance with 5 CFR part 297.301. The request for a review should be directed to the Deputy Associate Director, Center for Workforce Information and Systems Requirements, Office of Personnel Management, 1900 E Street, NW, Room 7439, Washington, DC 20415-6000. The request for a review should include a copy of the amendment request, the initial denial, and a statement of the specific reasons why the initial denial is believed to be in error.

Request from Former Employee

Access requests

Former employees may receive copies of their own personnel and medical folders. Requests for copies must be made in writing and should include: the full name (or names) used while employed; social security number; date of birth; year of separation, and last employing agency (if known).

Requests for individual documents or for complete copies of personnel and medical folders should be sent to the National Personnel Records Center, Civilian Personnel Records, 111 Winnebago Street, St. Louis, MO 63118-4126.

Amendment requests

Former employees submit requests to amend records created under OPM's recordkeeping authority to the Deputy Associate Director, Center for Workforce Information and Systems Requirements, Office of Personnel Management, 1900 E Street, NW, Room 7439, Washington, DC 20415-6000. Requests to amend other records should be sent to the agency that created the record.

Request for amendment should include:

- A precise identification of the record to be amended.
- Identification of the specific material to be deleted, added or changed.
- A statement of the reasons for the request, including all available material substantiating the request.

In processing amendment requests, the agency should ensure any amendments comply with the Office of Personnel Management's recordkeeping procedures and regulations in 5 CFR part 293 and 297.

The words "Privacy Act Amendment Request" should be on the request and on the envelope to ensure proper handling.

Request from Government Official

Officers and employees of the agency

Disclosure is providing personal review of a record, or a copy thereof, to someone other than the data subject or the data subject's authorized representative. The specific conditions of disclosure are found in 5 CFR Part 297.401.

Personnel and medical folders are available to officials within the agency who need to review records to perform their assigned official functions. This includes records in Merged Records Personnel Folders and Foreign Service folders whether or not those records were created under OPM's recordkeeping authority. Agency officials include personnelists, managers, and supervisors.

Government Officials outside the agency

Government officials outside the agency may be authorized to review an employee's records under limited conditions such as:

- The employee has authorized such access in writing; or
- The release is specifically authorized by the Privacy Act; or
- A routine use published in the Governmentwide systems of records allows disclosure of the records.

OPM has published notices for Governmentwide systems of records that cover the Official Personnel Folder (OPM/GOVT-1) and the Employee Medical Folder (OPM/GOVT-10). These notices include descriptions of routine uses that allow release of records without the employee's prior written consent to specific officials outside the employing agency for specific purposes.

Some of the routine uses that apply to Official Personnel Folders allow records to be provided to:

- The Merit Systems Protection Board, Office of Special Counsel or Equal Employment Opportunity Commission in relation to appeals, investigations, and special studies;

- Any Federal agency involved in a legal or administrative proceeding in which the Government is a party;
- Any Federal agency in relation to hiring an employee, issuing a security clearance, and conducting a security or suitability investigation;
- Federal, state, or local agencies for the adjudication of a claim under any retirement, insurance, unemployment, or health benefits program.

Requests from officials outside the employing agency for records in a Merged Records Personnel Folder or a Foreign Service folder not created under OPM's recordkeeping authority should be honored only if the requestor has the employee's written consent to the release of the information. All other requests should be referred to the agency that created the record.

When in doubt... Check with the agency Privacy Act or Freedom of Information Officer when unsure whether records may be disclosed.

Request from the Public

Introduction

Requests from the public for information from personnel and medical folders must be handled in compliance with both the Privacy Act of 1974, as amended (5 U.S.C. 552a) and the Freedom of Information Act (5 U.S.C. 552). The Privacy Act restricts access to records in a system of records. The Freedom of Information Act establishes the public's right to information contained in Government records. Agencies are authorized to respond to requests for information from the public on all Official Personnel Folders and Employee Medical Folders in their possession.

Merged Records Personnel Folders and Foreign Service Folders

Merged Records Personnel Folders and Foreign Service Folders contain records created under employment systems outside OPM's recordkeeping authority. Agencies should respond to requests for information that pertain to records created under OPM's authority. The guidance in this section applies only to those records under the Office's authority. Refer any requests for information from the public on any other records in the folder to the agency that created the record. Refer to Section 6-A.

Requests for information on former employees

Requests from the public for information from the folder of a former employee whose folder has been sent to the National Personnel Records Center should be addressed to the National Personnel Record Center, 111 Winnebago Street, St. Louis, MO 63118-4126.

Employee's consent

An employee may authorize release of information to a member of the public, including an organization. That authorization must be in writing.

Request from the Public, Continued

Routine use

Information may be released to the public under one of the routine uses applicable to the folder and published in the Governmentwide systems of records in limited cases. Routine uses allow agencies to also provide information from Official Personnel Folders to:

- Contractors, grantees, or volunteers working for the Government;
- Prospective non-Federal employers who ask for the former employee's tenure, civil service status, length of service, or date and nature of action on the employee's separation.

Available Information

In most cases, the following information is available to the public without the prior written consent of the employee(s):

- Name;
- Present and past position titles and occupational series;
- Present and past grades;
- Present and past annual salary rates (includes Meritorious or Distinguished Executive Ranks, awards, and allowances and differentials);
- Present and past duty stations (includes room numbers, shop designations, or other identifying information regarding buildings or places of employment); and
- Position descriptions, identification of job elements, and those performance standards (but not actual summary ratings) the release of which would not interfere with law enforcement programs or severely inhibit agency effectiveness. Performance elements and standards (or work expectations) may be withheld when they are so intertwined with performance appraisals their disclosure would reveal an individual's summary rating.

These data may be withheld if the disclosure would reveal more about an individual on whom information is sought than the listed items. Such disclosure

would create a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy. The data may also be withheld if it is otherwise protected from mandatory disclosure under an exception of the Freedom of Information Act. Refer to 5 CFR 293.311

Do not release

Do not provide an employee's social security number or date of birth in response to a request for information from the public.

When in doubt... Check with the agency Privacy Act or Freedom of Information Officer when unsure about what information from personnel records can be provided a member of the public.

Accounting of Disclosure from Personnel Records

Privacy Act requirement: See Title 5 CFR 297.403

The Office or agency will maintain a record of disclosure in cases where records about the individual are disclosed from an Office system of records except:

- The employee who is the subject of the folder (the data subject);
- Someone who has the employee's prior written consent to receive the information;
- Agency employees and officials using the records to perform their duties; and
- The public as required by the Freedom of Information Act.

Content of accounting of disclosure

An accounting of disclosure must include the following information:

- A brief description of the record disclosed.
- Date, nature, and purpose of each disclosure.
- Name and address of the person, agency or other entity to whom the disclosure is made.

Filing an accounting of disclosure

An accounting of disclosure from the Official Personnel Folder must be retained for the life of the record. File any accounting of disclosure of information from right side personnel documents as a long-term record on the right side of the personnel folder.

Section 6-A: Request for information Owned by Other Agencies

Who “owns” the record

Merged Records Personnel Folders and Foreign Service folders contain records created under employment systems not covered by OPM’s recordkeeping authority. The agency that created these records retains “ownership” of the records, even though they are filed in the same physical folder as records created under OPM’s authority.

Access and amendment requests

Agencies may provide access to all records in Merged Records Personnel Folders and Foreign Service folders to:

- The employee who is the subject of the record;
- Anyone who has the employee’s written authorization;
- Officials in the agency who need access to the records to perform their assigned duties.

All other requests for access to or amendment of records created under an employment system not covered by OPM’s recordkeeping authority should be referred to the agency that created the record.

Section 6-A: Request for information Owned by Other Agencies, Continued

Address

This section provides addresses for agencies that may own records in a Merged Records Personnel Folder or Foreign Service folder. Use this section to refer requests for access to, disclosure from, or amendment of any records created by that agency.

Agency/Address

Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts

Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts
Human Resources Division
1 Columbus Circle, NE.
Washington, DC 20544

Agency for International Development

(Foreign Service employees)

Agency for International Development
M-HR-OD
320 21st Street, NW.
Room 640, SA-36
Washington, DC 20523-3604

Army and Air Force Exchange Service

(Non-appropriated Fund employees)

Army and Air Force Exchange Service
HA-AAFES, ATTN:PE-P
P.O. Box 660202
Dallas, TX 75266-0202

Section 6-A: Request for information Owned by Other Agencies, Continued

Department of Agriculture

Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service

(Foreign Service employees)

Chief, Resource Management Support Staff

International Services

Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service

U.S. Department of Agriculture

4700 River Road, Unit 65

Riverdale, MD 20737

Foreign Agriculture Service

(Foreign Service employees)

Personnel Officer

Foreign Agriculture Service

U.S. Department of Agriculture 14th & Independence Avenue

Washington, DC 20250

Department of Air Force

(Defense Civilian Intelligence Personnel Management System employees)

Department of the Air Force

HQ USAF/DPCE

1040 Air Force Pentagon

Washington, DC 20330-1040

(Non-appropriated Fund employees)

Department of the Air Force

HQ AFMWRSA/MWXHC

550 C Street W, Suite 56

Randolph AFB, TX 78150-4758

Section 6-A: Request for information Owned by Other Agencies, Continued

Department of Army

(Defense Civilian Intelligence Personnel Management System employees)

HQDA, ODCS, G-2

Attn: DAMI-CP

1000 Army Pentagon

Washington, DC 20310-1000

(Non-appropriated Fund employees)

Department of Army

NAF Personnel Division

Human Resources, HQDA (CFSC-HR-P), Room IN39, Hoffman 2

200 Stovall Street

Alexandria, VA 22331-0532

Department of Commerce

(Foreign Service employees)

Department of Commerce

Office of Foreign Service Personnel, Room 3226

14th and Constitution Avenue, NW.

Washington, DC 20230

Department of Navy

(Defense Civilian Intelligence Personnel Management System employees)

Department of Navy

Civilian Intelligence Personnel

4251 Suitland Road, Room 2A101

Washington, DC 20395-5720

Section 6-A: Request for information Owned by Other Agencies, Continued

Department of Navy (continued)

(Non-appropriated Fund Employees)

- Bureau of Personnel
 - Department of Navy
 - MWR Human Resource Division
 - Naval Support Memphis (PERS-653)
 - 7800 3rd Avenue, Bldg 457
 - Millington, TN 38054-5054
- Navy Exchange Command
 - NEXCOM Human Resource
 - Principal Associate Director
 - 3280 Virginia Beach Blvd.
 - Virginia Beach, VA 23452
- Other Department of Navy activities
 - Department of Navy
 - Office of Civilian Personnel Management
 - Director for NAF Human Resources
 - Code 02N, BTC#1, Room 1205
 - 800 North Quincy Street
 - Arlington, VA 22203-1998

Section 6-A: Request for information Owned by Other Agencies, Continued

Department of State

(Foreign Service employees)

Chief, Personnel Records Branch

Bureau of Personnel

PER/EX/ADM/RM, Room 1609NS

U.S. Department of State

Washington, DC 20520

Department of Veterans Affairs

(Medical positions filled under title 38, United States Code)

Department of Veterans Affairs

Shared Service Center

3401 SW 21st Street

Topeka, KS 66604

Federal Judicial Center

Federal Judicial Center

Personnel Office, Room 6190

Thurgood Marshall Federal Judiciary Building

One Columbus Circle, NE.

Washington, DC 20002-8003

General Accounting Office

General Accounting Office

Director of Personnel

Washington, DC 20548

Section 6-A: Request for information Owned by Other Agencies, Continued

Library of Congress

- For amendment requests:
 - General Counsel
 - Library of Congress
 - Personnel Operations Office
 - Washington, DC 20540
- For access requests:
 - Library of Congress
 - Personnel Office
 - 101 Independence Avenue, SE.
 - Washington, DC 20540

Marine Corps

(Non-appropriated Fund employees)

MWR Human Resource Branch
HQ US Marine Corps
3044 Catlin Avenue
Quantico, VA 22134-5099

National Security Agency

National Security Agency
Civilian Personnel
Ft. George G. Meade, MD 20755

Peace Corps

(Foreign Service employees)

Peace Corps
Director of Personnel
1990 K Street, NW.
Washington, DC 20526

Section 6-A: Request for information Owned by Other Agencies, Continued

U.S. Postal Service

- For amendment requests:
 - Manager
 - Corporate Personnel Operations
 - Room 1813
 - 475 L'Enfant Plaza, SW.
 - Washington, DC 20260-4261
- For access requests:
 - Last employing office.

White House - Executive Office of the President

Director of Human Resources Division
Office of Administration
Executive Office of the President
725 17th Street, NW.
Washington, DC 20503

Chapter 7 Transferring Records

Overview

Introduction

When an employee leaves, the losing personnel office sends interagency personnel records to the next Federal employer. If the employee is leaving Federal service, the losing personnel office sends interagency personnel records to the National Personnel Records Center.

This chapter describes the procedures used to transfer interagency personnel records (personnel folders, medical folders, performance records) to another personnel office or the National Personnel Records Center.

In this chapter

This chapter includes the following topics.

Topic	See Page
Transferring Personnel Records	7-2
Transferring Electronic Official Personnel Folders (OPF)	7-2
Transferring Records Within the Agency	7-3
Transferring Records to Another Agency	7-4
Section 7-A: Sample Transcript Used in Lieu of Transferring Folders	7-8
Transferring Records to the National personnel Records Center	7-9
Notice to Separated Employees- retention of Personnel and Medical Folders	7-13
Sending Records	7-14

Transferring Personnel Records

Background

The general rule is that each employee will have a single personnel folder which documents the entire period of Federal civilian service. If long-term occupational medical records are created during the employee's service, those records will be in a single medical folder. The personnel and medical folder "travel" with the employee throughout his or her entire Federal career. When an employee separates from Federal service, the folders are stored by NARA, National Personnel Records Center until retention requirements expire. Folders are retained for 65 years from date of last separation from Federal employment.

Transferring Electronic Official Personnel Folders (OPF)

The last employing agency (losing agency) will provide access to the electronic folder in an appropriate electronic format designated by the gaining agency or provide a paper format if the electronic systems are not compatible or if the gaining agency is operating in a paper environment. The losing agency, after completion of a transfer of an electronic personnel folder, must disable its access to the electronic version of the personnel folder to ensure it complies with the requirements of the Privacy Act and implementing regulations. 5 U.S.C. 552a(b); 5 CFR 297.401.

Movement within the Federal government

Instructions on the transfer of personnel folders differ when the employee moves to a position:

- serviced by a different personnel office in the same agency.
- in another agency when both offices transfer personnel and medical folders.
- in an agency that does not transfer personnel and medical folders.

Transferring Records Within the Agency

Follow agency instructions

Follow agency instructions on transferring personnel records from one personnel office to another in the same agency.

As a minimum, the following records must be transferred:

- personnel folder (Official Personnel Folder, Merged Records Personnel Folder or Foreign Service Folder) with all long-term (right side) documents;
- all long-term medical documents;
- performance records that include

Senior Executive Service

Annual summary ratings that are five years old or less; any appraisals prepared since the most recent annual summary rating; and performance plans for each rating.

All Others

Ratings of record that are four years old or less, including the performance plan on which the most recent rating was based. Ratings of record include the evaluation of the employee's performance against the elements and standards plus the summary level, pattern, and ending date of the appraisal.

Transferring Records to Another Agency

Requests

Request for an employee's personnel records should be made in writing and should include documentation of the employee's appointment in the requesting agency. (A Standard form 50, Notification of Personnel Action, or a Standard Form 52, Request for Personnel Action showing the appointment and its effective date are the normal documentation sent when requesting personnel records from another agency.)

The records should be sent to the new agency within 5 working days after receipt of the request. If long-term records that should be transferred are not available, wait until those records have been filed before sending the records. Notify the requester and explain the delay.

Transferring folders

Normally, agencies will transfer personnel and medical folders to the next agency. Certain performance records will be transferred in the personnel folder. The personnel folder may be an Official Personnel Folder, Merged Records Personnel folder or Foreign Service Folder. Employers who are outside OPM's recordkeeping authority and do not transfer folders should request a transcript of service rather than a folder.

Transferring Records to Another Agency, Continued

Preparing folders

Follow these steps to prepare the personnel and medical folders for transfer.

Step 1 Action

Check the personnel folder to make sure that it contains all the long-term documents that should be in the folder and only the long-term documents authorized in Chapter 3. Make sure that all documents are filed in chronological order.

Prior to transfer of a Personnel Folder (whether in a paper or electronic format) to an agency under OPM's recordkeeping authority, agencies must remove or conceal all Social Security Numbers (SSNs) and other personally identifiable information belonging to someone other than the subject that are displayed on records in the Personnel Folder. (*i.e.*, lists covering more than one employee in a personnel action) and provide a copy to the employee of the changed record.

Step 2 Action

Put the following documents and only those documents on the left side of the personnel folder:

- Record of Leave Data (standard Form 1150) or equivalent record of leave balances;
- Documentation of indebtedness to the health benefits fund for pay periods that began for September 30, 1996;
- Performance records. For Senior Executive Service employees, these are: annual summary ratings that are 5 years old or less; any appraisals prepared since the most recent annual summary rating; and performance plans for each rating. For all other employees, these are ratings of record that are 4 years old or less, including the performance plan on which the most recent rating was based. Ratings of record include the evaluation of the employee's performance against the elements and standards plus the summary level, pattern, and ending date of the appraisal.

Step 3 Action

Put long-term occupational medical records in an Employee Medical Folder, standard Form 66-D.

Step 4 Action

Send the folders to the next agency.

Follow agency instructions for documents that are not transferred to the next agency.

Transferring Records to Another Agency, Continued

Records erroneously left out

When long-term documents that should have been transferred to the next agency are discovered after the folders have been mailed, send them immediately to the next agency. Attach the documents to a cover letter that identifies the employee by name, the last four digits of employees' social security number, and date of birth. Reference the date the folder was originally sent.

Request for transcript in lieu of folders

Some employers who are outside of OPM's recordkeeping authority should request a transcript of service and other documents rather than personnel and medical folders. These employers are:

- Architect of the Capitol
- Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System
- Central Intelligence Agency
- Congressional Budget Office
- District of Columbia Government
- Federal Bureau of investigation
- Tennessee Valley Authority
- U.S. Botanical Gardens
- U.S. House of Representatives.

The U.S. Senate sends transcript but receives folders when employees move from employment under the Office's recordkeeping authority to the Senate.

Transferring Records to Another Agency, Continued

Preparing transcripts in lieu of folders

Take the following steps to prepare transcripts in lieu of folders.

Step 1 Action

Prepare the transcript summarizing all personnel actions processed during the employee's Federal career. Use the example in Section 7-A.

Step 2 Action

Copy the benefits documents if requested. Benefits documents cover retirement, health insurance, and life insurance. Send the originals with the transcript. File the copies in the folder.

Step 3 Action

Copy performance records, long-term medical records and a statement of leave balances if requested.

Step 4 Action

Send the transcript and any other requested documents to the next agency.

Step 5 Action

Follow the steps required to send the folders to the National Personnel Records Center.

Section 7-A: Sample Transcript Used in Lieu of Transferring Folders

Transcript of Services

Name: Doe, John X. SSN: 000-000-0000 DOB: 00-00-00 SCD: 08-12-67

The following transcript of Federal service was prepared from the Official Personnel Folder.

Name: Doe, John P.		SSN: xxx-xx-xxxx		DOB: xx-xx-xxxx		SCD: xx-xx-xx	
05-12-84	317/Resignation RPM Reg.715.202		Assistant Bank Examiner(Assistant Bank Examiner II) 1208153; CP 00570 02/00 \$19,800; Comptroller of the Treasury; Midwestern District; Omaha Field Office, Sioux Falls Duty Station; Washington DC				
	Work Schedule:	Part-Times Hours:	Basic Pay:	Locality Adj:	Adj Basic Pay:	Other Pay:	
	Full time		\$19,800				
	Retirement Plan:	Annuitant Indicator:	FEGLI:	Tenure:	Position Occupied:	Veterans Preference:	Pay Rate Determinant:
	1 CS	9 Not Applicable	B All Life Insurance Waived	1	2 Excepted Service	1 None	O Regular Pay
<p>REMARKS: FORWARDING ADDRESS: 123 MAIN ST., ANYTOWN, SD 57105 REASON FOR RESIGNATION: TO ACCEPT POSITION TO SERVE AS A FULL TIME MISSIONARY IN SAN PAULO, BRAZIL CP-2 EQUIVALENT TO GS-7 LUMP-SUM PAYMENT TO BE MADE FOR ANY UNUSED ANNUAL LEAVE</p>							
03-04-84	891/Merit Increase 6CP 12 USC 481 AND 482		Assistant Bank Examiner(Assistant Bank Examiner II) 0008163 1208153; CP 00570 02/00 \$17,900; Comptroller of the Treasury; Midwestern District; Omaha Field Office, Sioux Falls Duty Station; Washington DC				
	702 Promotion V5M SCH B,213.32 05 (A)		To Assistant Bank Examiner(Assistant Bank Examiner II) 0008153 1208153; CP 00570 02/00 \$19,800; Comptroller of the Treasury; Midwestern District; Omaha Field Office, Sioux Falls Duty Station; Washington DC				
	Work Schedule:	Part-Times Hours:	Basic Pay:	Locality Adj:	Adj Basic Pay:	Other Pay:	
Full time		\$19,800					

Retirement Plan:	Annuitant Indicator:	FEGLI:	Tenure:	Position Occupied	Veterans Preference:	Pay Rate Determinant:
1-CS	9 Not Applicable	B All Life Insurance Waived	1	2 Excepted Service	1 None	O Regular Pay
REMARKS: SALRY INCLUDES A MERIT INCREASE OF \$79.						

Prepared 10-15-2007 by:

NAME AND SIGNATURE: Jane Smith

TITLE: Personnel Assistant

OFFICE: Personnel Processing Branch

AGENCY: Office of Personnel Management

TELEPHONE NO: (202) 606-4476

Transferring Records to the National Personnel Records Center

Timing

Under normal circumstances, the agency should send the personnel folder, including performance records and the medical folder to the National Personnel Records Center within 90 days after the employee separates from the Federal service.

Agencies may need to retain the folders for more than 90 days under circumstances like those shown in the following section.

If:

A retirement or death claim is being processed.

Then Keep the Folder:

120 days after separation or until notified that the claim has been processed.

If:

The agency expects to reemploy the person shortly after the separation.

Then Keep the Folder:

As long as the agency reasonably expects to reemploy the person.

If:

The employee separated under conditions that provide reemployment or restoration rights (for example, separation to enter military service or separation due to compensable injury).

Then Keep the Folder:

Until the employee returns or reemployment/ restoration rights expire.

If:

The employee is placed on a reemployment priority list.

Then Keep the Folder:

Until employee's name is removed from the list.

Transferring Records to the National Personnel Records Center, Continued

If:

The employee has ongoing appeal, grievance, complaint, or similar process.

Then Keep the Folder:

Until the appeal is resolved

If:

The employee is entitled to severance pay

Then Keep the Folder:

Until the employee is rehired or severance pay expires.

Transferring Records to the National Personnel Records Center, Continued

Preparing folders

Follow these steps to prepare the personnel and medical folders for transfer.

Step 1 Action

Check the personnel folder to make sure that it contains all the long-term documents that should be in the folder and only the long-term documents authorized in Chapter 3. Make sure that all documents are filed in chronological order.

Step 2 Action

Put the following documents and only those documents the left side of the personnel folder:

- Record of Leave Data (standard Form 1150) or equivalent record of leave balances;
- Documentation of indebtedness to the health benefits fund for pay periods that began for September 30, 1996;
- Performance records. For Senior Executive Service employees, these are: annual summary ratings that are 5 years old or less; any appraisals prepared since the most recent annual summary rating; and performance plans for each rating. For all other employees, these are ratings of record that are 4 years old or less, including the performance plan on which the most recent rating was based. Ratings of record include the evaluation of the employee's performance against the elements and standards plus the summary level, pattern, and ending date of the appraisal.

Step 3 Action

Put long-term occupational medical records in an Employee Medical Folder, standard Form 66-D. Oversized x-rays that will not fit in the folder may be microfiched and put in an envelope in the folder or retained by the agency. If retained, the agency should put a note in the folder explaining how to obtain the x-ray.

Step 4 Action

Send the folders to the National Personnel Records Center

Follow agency instructions for documents that are not transferred to the National Personnel Records Center.

Transferring Records to the National Personnel Records Center, Continued

Retirement and death cases

When an employee retires or dies, there are special requirements for processing the separation. The Office of Personnel Management's Operating Manual, [THE CSRS AND FERS HANDBOOK FOR PERSONNEL AND PAYROLL OFFICES](#) contains the processing instructions for these actions. Follow these instructions and send the Official Personnel Folder copy of all required documents with the application for benefits as specified in the Manual.

Records erroneously left out

When long-term documents that should have been in the folder are discovered after the folders have been mailed, send them immediately to the National Personnel Records Center. Attach the documents to a cover letter that identifies the employee by name and date of birth. Reference the date the folder was originally sent. Clearly identify the name and address of the office submitting the records.

Notice to employees

It is good practice to tell separated employees how they can request copies of documents in their personnel and medical folders. A sample notice is on the next page of this Guide.

Notice to Separated Employees - Retention of Personnel and Medical Folders

Long-term records documenting individuals' Federal careers are stored in the Official Personnel Folder. The employee received copies of these records when they were created. When an employee separates from the Federal service, the last employing agency sends the Official Personnel Folder to the National Personnel Records Center for storage. Normally, the agency sends the Folder within 120 days after the employee separates. The National Personnel Records Center retains the folders for 65 years after separation. Former employees' request for copies of their personnel records must be in writing and should include:

- the full name(or names) used while employed;
- social security number;
- date of birth; and
- if known, the year of separation and last employing agency.

For Copies of Specific Documents or a Copy of the Entire Folder Write to:

National Personnel Records Center
Civilian Personnel Records
111 Winnebago Street
St. Louis, MO 63118-4126

Since 1984 the Employee Medical Folder has been used to store long-term occupational medical records that were created during an employee's Federal career. These records do not include records on claims filed under the Federal Employee's Compensation Act. There may not be an Employee Medical folder for each employee. When an employee for whom there are long-term occupational medical records separates from Federal service, the last employing agency sends the Employee Medical Folder to the National Personnel Records Center. The National Personnel Records Center retains these Folders for 30 years after separation.

Former employees' requests for copies of their Employee Medical Folder should be in writing and include all identifying information (name, social security number, date of birth). These requests should be sent to:

National Personnel Records Center
Civilian Personnel Records
111 Winnebago Street
St. Louis, MO 63118-4126

Sending Records

Packaging

Personnel records should be securely packaged to be sure that they arrive in good condition. Transcripts or individual folders may be sent in an envelope. Folders require envelopes or those made from material similar to “Ty-Vek” are recommended.

Carriers

Employees may not be authorized to carry their own records to the next employer. Under the Privacy Act, employees are entitled to copies of their records but the agency is responsible for transferring the employee’s official records to the next employer.

Records may be sent by regular mail. Certified mail or commercial package shipping service is the preferred method since these methods allow agencies to verify that the records were delivered to the addressee.

National Personnel Records Center

When records are transferred to the National Personnel Records Center, they should be sent to:

National Personnel Records Center
Civilian Personnel Records
111 Winnebago Street
St. Louis, MO 63118-4126

A small number of folders may be sent in an envelope. Larger numbers of folders should be sent in a carton. Each carton should include a list of the enclosed folders, identifying each employee by name and social security number.

Employee Medical Folders may be in the same envelope or carton as personnel folders. Medical folders should be placed after the personnel folders (Official personnel Folders, Merged Records Personnel Folders, or Foreign Service Folders).

Agencies are not required to notify the National Personnel Records Center before sending folders. The National Personnel Records Center will not issue a receipt for records sent by regular mail.

Chapter 8 Index of Documents

Overview

Introduction

This chapter provides two indexes for locating documents in Chapter 3 of this Guide. (Chapter 3 provides instructions for filing documents in personnel folders.)

Two- indexes are available

Searching for records using different criteria is possible depending on how a form or document is identified. Some forms and documents have form numbers and codes; some do not. To assist you in finding documents in Chapter 3 of this Guide, this chapter provides:

- Index of Documents by Form Number covers those forms listed in Chapter 3 that have an identifying number. The list is in sequence by the kind of form (Optional Form, Standard Form). Within the kind of form, the list is in numeric sequence.
- Index of Documents by Title covers all documents listed in Chapter 3 whether they have an identifying code or not. The listing is alphabetical by title or descriptor.

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