

DoDEA
Human Resources
Regional Service Center

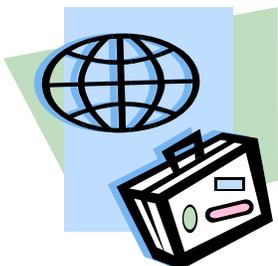
NSPS Performance Cycle - What's Next?

As the end of this first NSPS performance cycle comes to an end, we all need to start preparing annual self assessments to highlight the most significant achievements of this performance year. When preparing your assessment make the connection between what was done and why those actions matter to the organization and cite instances where actions reflect what is listed in the performance indicators for rating levels and benchmark descriptors for selected contributing factors. Make note of challenges that were encountered and how they were handled. Here are some tips for writing self assessments:

- Provide an assessment for each of your job objectives
- Your assessment statement should provide an overall summary of assessment up front and state whether you met, exceeded, or did not meet the objective
- Provide clear, concise examples of what was accomplished and the impact to the organization
- Discuss the results - what product or savings
- Use the "measure" to provide documentation of level of accomplishment
- Be sure what you write matches the stated objective
- Include references to the appropriate performance indicator
- Discuss the impact of the selected contributing factor
- Make the connection between what you did and why it helps your organization
- Note challenges you faced and how you addressed those challenges
- Include any additional accomplishments

Employee self assessments must be completed and entered into the Performance Appraisal Application (PAA) tool by October 1, 2008. New performance plans for next year must be established and approved in the PAA by October 31, 2008.

Travel Order Processing System (TOPS)



The Travel Order Processing System (TOPS) provides DoDEA employees with worldwide accessibility via the internet to create, submit, check the status, and print travel orders. TOPS online can be accessed 24-hour a day and is a direct line from the employee to the processor. The online system also provides a central location for making all required changes and updates to TOPS. Employees receive immediate notification of completed travel orders with a faster turnaround after processing.

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Did You Know:

DoDEA conducted Mock Pay Pools for nearly 2,500 employees worldwide covered by the National Security Personnel System (NSPS).

Highlights of the results include:

- Average Employee Rating 3.12
- Average Shares Awarded 2.21
- Average Share Value 1.9935%

Obligation to Exercise Prudence in Travel

When making reservations for travel the traveler must exercise the same care and regard for incurring expenses to be paid by the Government as would a prudent person traveling at personal expense. All receipts should be maintained as required by financial regulations. Receipts for individual expenses of \$75 or more including lodging receipts must be provided and submitted with your travel claim upon return. Travel should be by the scheduled transportation that most nearly coincides with the departure and arrival times needed to carry out the mission, Joint Travel Regulation, volume 2, paragraph C1058 (FTR 301-70.1)

When making reservations please consider the following :

- Is this TDY trip necessary and will the number of travelers be appropriate for the mission?
- Is the mode of travel (vehicle and route) the most advantageous to the government?
- Is a rental car needed and are there additional travelers going to the same TDY site that could accompany you?
- Lodging above per diem will be authorized only after careful consideration.
- Upgrades for flights, premium class travel (first and business class), **Must not**, result in an increase, in cost to the government, unless specifically approved in advance.



Employee Benefits Information System (EBIS)

The Employee Benefits Information System (EBIS) is a secure web site which provides current civilian employees access to general benefits information. Employees are also able to electronically enroll or make changes to health and life insurance, the Thrift Savings Plan and receive retirement estimates. The use of EBIS eliminates the paperwork and ensures that your benefits and payroll deductions begin timely.

Additional features of EBIS are:

- Federal Employee Health Benefits (FEHB) Transactions
- Federal Employees Group Life Insurance (FEGLI) Transactions
- Retirement Annuity Estimate Calculations
- Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) Transactions

If you require additional assistance with making your election through EBIS, please contact your local Human Resources Representative, email the Benefits Unit at benefits@hq.dodea.edu or call the Benefits Unit directly at 703-588-3981 or DSN 425-3981.



Post Hardship Differential



Post hardship differential is additional compensation of 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30 or 35 percent over basic compensation for service at places in foreign areas where conditions of environment differ substantially from conditions of environment in the United States. Post hardship differential is authorized under the provisions outlined in Chapter 500 of the Department of State Stan-

darized Regulations (DSSR). Post hardship differential may be granted to employees who are eligible for a living quarters allowance at differential posts. Post hardship differential is a percentage of basic compensation and is included in gross income for Federal income tax purposes. If you would like to read more on post hardship differential, or view the posts where a differential is authorized you may access the DSSR at: <http://aoprals.state.gov/>

The Hatch Act

The Hatch Act governs the political activity of government employees at the federal, state and local levels. Under the Hatch Act (5 U.S.C. Section 7321 -7326), most federal employees may take part in partisan political management and campaigns.

Permitted Activities for Employees Who May Engage in Partisan Activity:

- **May** be candidates for public office in nonpartisan elections.
- **May** register and vote as they choose.
- **May** assist in voter registration drives.
- **May** express opinions about candidates and issues.
- **May** contribute money to political organizations.
- **May** attend political fundraising functions.
- **May** attend and be active at political rallies and meetings.
- **May** join and be an active member of a political party or club.
- **May** sign nominating petitions.
- **May** campaign for or against referendum questions, constitutional amendments, municipal ordinances.
- **May** campaign for or against candidates in partisan elections.
- **May** make campaign speeches for candidates in partisan elections.
- **May** distribute campaign literature in partisan elections.
- **May** hold office in political clubs or parties including serving as a delegate to a convention.

Prohibited Activities for Employees Who May Engage in Partisan Activity:

- **May not** use their official authority or influence to interfere with an election.
- **May not** solicit or receive political contributions unless both individuals are members of the same federal labor organization or employee organization and the one solicited is not a subordinate employee.
- **May not** knowingly solicit or discourage the political activity of any person who has business before the agency.
- **May not** engage in political activity while on duty.
- **May not** engage in political activity in any government office.
- **May not** engage in political activity while wearing an official uniform.
- **May not** engage in political activity while using a government vehicle.
- **May not** be candidates for public office in partisan elections.
- **May not** wear partisan political buttons or other paraphernalia on duty.



The National Defense Authorization Act



Changes in Federal employee pay and leave laws resulting from the enactment of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2008 (hereafter referred to as "the Act"), which was signed into law by President George W. Bush on January 28, 2008 follow:

FMLA leave to care for injured members of the Armed Forces, Section 585(b) - amends Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) provisions in 5 U.S.C. 6381-6383 (applicable to Federal employees) to provide military family leave entitlements for a Federal employee who is the spouse, son, daughter, parent, or next of kin (defined as the nearest blood relative) of a covered service member with a serious injury or illness; and provides care for such service member.

Travel hours for Federal Wage System (FWS) employees, Section 1110 - amends 5 U.S.C. 5544(a) to provide that FWS employees may be credited with compensable hours of work for return travel from an administratively uncontrollable event.

Compensatory time off for travel for FWS employees, Section 1111 - covers FWS employees under the compensatory time off for travel provision in 5 U.S.C. 5550b. (See OPM's current regulations at 5 CFR part 550, subpart N.)

Pay-setting for NAFI employees who move to General Schedule (GS) positions, Section 1114 - amends 5 U.S.C. 5334(f) to provide that a NAFI employee of DOD or USCG who moves voluntarily to a GS position in the same agency without a break in service of more than 3 days may (at the employing agency's discretion) have the GS rate set at the lowest step rate that equals or exceeds the former NAFI rate.

Voluntary leave transfer to Federal employees who are wounded veterans, Section 1675 - amends 5 U.S.C. 6333(b) to allow certain wounded veterans to participate in the Voluntary Leave Transfer Program without first having to exhaust their own available paid leave. This provision will apply to an employee who sustains a combat-related disability while serving as a member of the Armed Forces (including a reserve component) and is undergoing medical treatment for that disability. A qualified leave recipient is eligible to receive donated annual leave for up to 5 years from the start of the employee's treatment, as long as the employee continues to undergo such medical treatment.

See Office of Personnel Management's (OPM) Memo at <http://www.opm.gov/oca/compmemo/2008/2008-04.asp>.

Federal Long Term Care Insurance Program (FLTCIP)

Long term care is care that you need if you can no longer perform activities of daily living without assistance due to a chronic illness, injury, disability, a severe cognitive impairment or the aging process. It is chronic care that you may need for the rest of your life. You can receive long term care in your own home, a nursing home or another long term care facility, such as an assisted living facility. Long term care is often confused with disability or short-term medical care.

Long term care is not:

- care that you receive in the hospital or your doctor's office
- care you need to get well from a sickness or an injury
- short-term rehabilitation from an accident
- recuperation from surgery



The FLTCIP offers insurance that helps cover the costs of certain long term care services. Most Federal employees are eligible to apply for coverage. If you are eligible for the FEHB Program you are eligible to apply for coverage under the FLTCIP, even if you are not enrolled in the FEHB Program. Retirees are eligible to apply. Spouses and adult children of eligible employees and retirees may also apply, as well as parents, parents-in-law, and stepparents of employees (but not of retirees).

You apply by completing an application found at www.ltcfeds.com or by calling 1-800-LTC-FEDS. You must pass a medical screening (called underwriting). Certain medical conditions, or combinations of conditions, will prevent some people from being approved for coverage. If you are a new or newly eligible employee, you (and your spouse, if applicable) have 60 days to apply using the abbreviated underwriting application, which asks fewer questions about your health. Open seasons for the FLTCIP are infrequent, but you don't have to wait for an open season - you may apply anytime using the full underwriting application.

To request an information kit and application, call 1-800-LTC-FEDS (1-800-582-3337) (TTY 1-800-843-3557) or visit www.ltcfeds.com.