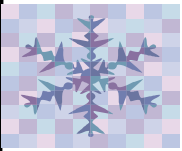


The HR Advisor

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DoDEA Human Resources Regional Service Center

SEASONS GREETINGS!

The Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA) Human Resources Service Center would like to wish all of you a safe and wonderful holiday season. This time of the year makes us truly appreciate all of the exceptional employees who make DoDEA such a wonderful organization. We would like you to know that we are available to assist you with any Human Resource related questions or problems you may have. School level employees should seek assistance from the school secretary or school administrator. Each district is serviced by a senior human resource specialist for guidance and help to all employees in that district. Also, the DoDEA website is a useful tool for information on what's new at DoDEA and it provides you with links to all of your personnel matters.

NSPS PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT RATE & REWARD TIMELINE

Under the National Security Personnel System (NSPS), the performance management Rate and Reward phases occur at the end of the performance cycle between 1 October and the payout date, which this year will be effective on 3 January 2010. The Rate portion of the cycle concluded when the manager/supervisor assessed the employee's accomplishments and recommended a rating, share allocation, and payout distribution in the PAA and submitted it to the Pay Pool. The final days of the Reward phase are upon us now. The Reward phase consists of the pay pool panel review and reconciliation of the recommendations for all employees in the pay pool, finalization of the decisions, and communication of the information with manager/supervisors. The Reward Phase concludes when the manager/supervisor communicates the results by conducting the required Annual Appraisal conversation with their employees. This conversation should include a discussion of the pay pool results (rating and reward information) and provide feedback on the year's performance to the employee. To the extent possible, manager/supervisors should plan on conducting Annual Appraisal conversations with their employees beginning in Mid-December prior to the 3 January 2010 payout effective date. The NSPS Program Office will publicize dates when to conduct the Annual Appraisal conversation as soon as the DoDEA-wide Pay Pool results are approved by the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness in Mid-December. When employees meet with their manager/supervisor, they will receive a copy of their appraisal (DD Form 2906) and the Addendum to the DD Form 2906, which provides the payout information regarding shares awarded, the share value and the distribution of shares to salary or as a bonus. The Addendum is an estimate and it should be noted that last minute changes in pay pool calculations could result in small changes to the share value, which will also affect the payout amount (up or down); also any change in the employee's salary between the end of the rating cycle (30 September 2009) and the payout date (3 January 2010) could affect the payout distribution. DoDEA pay pool results will be published and provided to the workforce within 30 days of the payout date, NLT 2 February 2010.

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Did You Know!

HQ DoDEA's CFC 2009 Campaign had a \$30,000 goal. Our end result was a total of \$46,647.32. Our percentage of giving was \$155%! This speaks volumes for the wonderful people at DoDEA!!

NSPS GENERAL PAY INCREASE JANUARY 2010

The Secretary of Defense has decided that for the FY 2009 rating cycle, NSPS employees who receive a rating of record of 2 or above and NSPS employees who are not eligible for a rating of record will receive the full amount of the base salary increase given to General Schedule (GS) employees in January 2010. This increase will be paid as an across the board "general salary increase" effective the same day as the GS pay adjustment. The Secretary has discretion to allocate up to 40 percent of the GS pay increase to pay pool funds, but has elected not to do so this year. The actual amount of the GS pay increase will not be known until the President signs an Executive Order implementing the January 2010 pay adjustment. Although NSPS pay pool funds will not include this component for pay pool activities taking place in the fall of 2009, funds will still be available for performance based salary increases and bonuses, preserving the link between pay and performance under NSPS.

EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (EAP)

In the past, the term "EAP" has been associated with substance abuse counseling. Today, the program offers advice and assistance to help employees cope with a variety of situations.

EAP services include free, voluntary, short-term counseling and referral for various issues such as mental and emotional well-being, alcohol and other substance abuse, stress, grief, family problems, and psychological disorders. EAP counselors work in a consultative role to help address employee and organizational challenges and needs. EAP also assists organizations in preventing and coping with workplace violence, trauma, and other emergency response situations.

In addition, employees can be referred for other legal services such as a healthcare power of attorney, living wills, family law, car accidents, identity theft, small claims court issues, and traffic violations. Financial service referrals include car buying, debt elimination, family budgeting, savings and investment strategies, home buying, college planning, and retirement.

With all that EAP has to offer, it's easy to see that it's not the "same old EAP" anymore! Please dial 1-800-222-0364 or log onto www.FOH4you.com for more information.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. What information should I have available when I call the EAP?

It helps to have your home and work addresses, telephone numbers, and zip codes available when you call. Be specific regarding the Federal agency name and division for which you work. This information is used to locate a counselor convenient to you. In addition you will be asked for a contact number to verify appointments, your date of birth, and pay grade level.

2. Is the information I provide protected?

Yes. All of this data is protected and is only shared with those who will be providing services to you. If for some reason you are uncomfortable providing this information, we will assist you to the best of our ability without the information

3. How will I be connected to an EAP Counselor?

If you decide to see a counselor, the Customer Service Associate (CSA) will personally connect you with an EAP counselor's office so that you can schedule an appointment.

4. Where are the EAP Counselors' offices located?

Many government buildings have FOH EAP counselors on site. Services are confidential and the EAP is independent from the agency. In addition to the on site counselors, there is a wide network of EAP counselors across the country that provides services in private offices. The CSA will work with you to locate a counselor that is convenient for you.

5. After my initial call, will I receive a follow-up call?

Yes. As a courtesy to our employees, FOH will place a follow-up call a few days after the initial request for services to see if there were any difficulties scheduling an appointment. If you were unable to successfully schedule an appointment, a Follow-Up Specialist from FOH will assist you in getting an appointment.

THRIFT SAVINGS PLAN (TSP) ELECTIONS

For 2010, the annual maximum contribution to a regular TSP account remains at \$16,500 (Same as 2009). FERS employees should use caution in determining the amount you will contribute each pay period. If your contribution reaches the \$16,500 maximum before the end of the year, both your contributions and agency matching contributions will be suspended for the remainder of the year.

The first pay date for 2010 TSP contributions will occur on January 9, 2010. If your 2010 TSP election was not effective on December 21, 2009, and you want to maximize your contributions based on the IRS Annual Deferral Limit you will need to adjust your contribution amount based on the remaining number of paychecks you expect to receive in 2010.

To determine the maximum amount you should contribute each pay period, you can use the online calculator available on the TSP website <http://www.tsp.gov/calc/contributions/index.html>

You may access EBIS at <https://hq-w3.dodea.edu/>. Elections are made through EBIS and transmitted electronically to payroll alleviating the need for you to complete an election form.

For additional information on the Thrift Savings Plan visit the TSP website at www.tsp.gov.

2010 TSP Catch-Up Contributions

To be eligible to make catch-up contributions, you must be able to certify that you will make (or have made) the maximum regular employee contributions of \$16,500 by the end of 2010. Both CSRS and FERS employees must contribute the full \$16,500.

Catch-up contributions are additional tax-deferred contributions. They are not the same as regular TSP contributions. They are in addition to regular contributions. Catch-up contributions have their own annual limit separate from the IRS elective deferral limit for regular TSP contributions. For 2009, the TSP Catch-Up elective deferral remains at \$5,500.

Although, the last date an election can be accepted for 2010 was December 4, 2010. You can start, change, or stop your catch-up contributions for 2010 at any time.

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

DoDEA HQ REDUCTION IN FORCE

For the past several months DoDEA HQ Human Resources Regional Service Center has been preparing for a Reduction in Force (RIF) due to the BRAC decision to transfer Human Resources transactional work to the Defense Logistics Agency in Columbus, Ohio. On Tuesday, November 10, 2009, DoDEA HQ employees impacted by the RIF were provided their Specific RIF Notices informing them of their RIF placement. Personnel actions associated with the RIF will be effective on February 1, 2010.

DoDEA is very pleased to announce that every permanent employee impacted in this RIF was placed into a position at DoDEA HQ. No permanent employees will be separated as a result of this RIF. This wonderful outcome is due to the implementation of several avoidance procedures that included offering VERA/VSIP, conducting a Mock RIF to allow for early Priority Placement Program (PPP) registration, and the implementation of a DoDEA HQ hiring/promotion freeze. This positive outcome would not have been possible without the efforts of DoDEA senior leadership who fully supported all these placement initiatives. To those managers whose concern and generosity made this outcome possible, we thank you!

DLA TRANSITION

In May 2005, the Department of Defense issued the Base Closure Report, which among other things, directed the consolidation of all human resources transactional servicing for DoDEA, the Commissary agency (DeCA) and Washington Headquarters Service into the Defense Logistics Agency (DLA) located in Columbus, Ohio. Transactional servicing is defined as the backroom support, those services that do not generally require face-to-face contact with employees. As such, a schedule was developed to migrate that servicing to DLA with DoDEA scheduled to migrate in FY-10.

DoDEA has been working with DLA to make the transition as smooth as possible with minimal impact on our employees. Many of the functions that are transitioning involve the systems updates, and now, the employees finalizing those updates will be located at DLA instead of DoDEA. However, all the existing systems DoDEA employees use to request personnel actions will be used by DLA. Additional DLA applications will be made available to employees, which will further improve personnel servicing. From an employee standpoint, nothing much changes. Employees will still use TOPS and DAPS for travel and allowance actions, supervisors will still request actions in DCPDS, employees will still use EBIS for benefits actions, and DoDEA HQ will still develop policy and be the final say on any actions or situations. Employees will still work through the local Personnel Specialists (PCRs) and Payroll Technician (CSRs) for any questions on actions or payroll situations. The local PCRs and CSRs will contact DoDEA HQ, DLA or DFAS for issues they cannot resolve at the local level.

For direct questions, DLA will have email addresses and phone numbers available for employees. DLA employees will contact DoDEA employees directly if necessary for any actions they process.

DLA and DoDEA agreed to a phased in approach. In phase 1, the transition of our processing teams, DLA began providing support for the Pacific Area employees on October 1, 2009. DLA will begin providing support for the European Area employees on December 6, 2009. DLA will begin providing support for DDESS and HQ employees on February 1, 2010, and DLA is scheduled to begin providing retirement processing on April 1, 2010, though the schedule may be accelerated due to staff losses associated with the transition. At this time, a decision has been deferred on Staffing and Classification services, so DoDEA HQ will continue to perform those services in Arlington, VA. Labor/Employee Relations, Policy, Licensure and Passport/VISA functions were not part of the base closure and will remain at DoDEA HQ.

MY BIZ & WORKPLACE

MyBiz and MyWorkplace are important tools for employees and supervisors. Not only are they the key for the National Security Personnel System (NSPS), they also give employees and supervisors access to valuable human resources data. Employees can use MyBiz to view specific personal and position data on themselves, as well as to update certain data elements such as ethnicity, disability status, foreign language proficiency, email address, and emergency contact information. MyWorkplace allows managers and supervisors to see key information on the positions they supervise. Together, both systems give employees and supervisors under NSPS the ability to create and update performance appraisal information. Employees will be able to view and print SF-50 transactions in MyBiz. Over time, more functionality will be added to MyBiz, giving employees even more access to their personal information while ultimately empowering employees to initiate certain personnel actions for themselves.

To adhere to DoD IT security policies, the Defense Civilian Personnel Data System (including MyBiz and MyWorkplace) is now Common Access Card (CAC) enabled. This means you need your CAC card and personal identification number (PIN) to access MyBiz/MyWorkplace and you must access the system from a DoDEA computer. All employees are encouraged to access MyBiz and update their ethnicity, disability status, emergency contact information, email address, and foreign language proficiency.

For more assistance on new user registration or how to navigate MyBiz and MyWorkplace after registration, go to: <http://www.dodea.edu/offices/hr/news/documents/CACRegistrationforMyBizUsers.pdf>.