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# NEW EMPLOYEE ESSENTIALS

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Welcome to REE! We've developed this guide to help keep you on track and to equip you with the tools to prompt us if we miss something during your onboarding process. We encourage you to keep this guide handy and check in on it throughout your first year. If you ever need a new copy of this document, you can always find it on the AFM website at: <http://www.afm.ars.usda.gov/hrd/empdev/index.htm>

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## THINGS TO SEE AND DO DURING YOUR FIRST WEEK

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Your first week can be a rush of forms, briefings, and introductions. We want to highlight a few things that we think can't be missed and/or that you may want to revisit:

- **Briefing on Employee Benefits:** If you feel like there is something that you would like to go back and review, please feel free to access REE training courses on Federal Benefits anytime at: Retirement: <http://www.afm.ars.usda.gov/hrd/eNeo/benefits/retirement.htm>; Life Insurance: <http://www.afm.ars.usda.gov/hrd/eNeo/benefits/1fegli.htm>; and, TSP: <http://www.afm.ars.usda.gov/hrd/eNeo/benefits/tsp.htm>
- **Overview of REE Pay and Leave policies:** If you missed this video or would like to go back and review you may access it online anytime at: <http://www.afm.ars.usda.gov/hrd/payleave/video/1pay&leave%20template.htm>
- **Overview of the USDA, REE, your Agency, and of our stakeholders/customers:** Some employees may have received an in-person overview or videos about their agencies. Employees interested in more information on
  - ARS can review information at: <http://www.ars.usda.gov/aboutus/docs.htm?docid=1505> and the ARS videos "[Science in Your Shopping Cart](#)" and "[Research for a Growing World.](#)"
  - ERS can review an ERS overview at: <http://www.ers.usda.gov/AboutERS/Overview.htm>
  - NASS can review informative videos [Safeguarding America's Agricultural Statistics Video](#) and [USDA Keeps Info Locked Up Safe](#), and/or current information at: <http://www.nass.usda.gov/Newsroom/index.asp>; and,
  - NIFA can review information at: <http://www.nifa.usda.gov/about/background.html>)
- **Basic information related to Safety, Health and Environmental Management:** If you missed this information please review the brochure at <http://www.afm.ars.usda.gov/shem/files/Safety%20brochure.pdf>)
- **A map and/or tour of your facility**
- **An introduction to/from your "Sponsor"**
- **Meet with your supervisor** to discuss basic workplace expectations and substantive aspects of your job (including work schedule, any applicable specific workplace safety policies, terms of your position, work assignments, and developing a work plan, etc.).

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## THINGS THAT CAN'T BE MISSED IN YOUR FIRST MONTH

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We hope you will settle in to your new job and learn some great things about the agency in your first month. Just to be sure you stay on the right track, make sure that you:

- **E-Authenticate!** You should receive an e-mail prompting you to register for your e-Authentication account. e-Authentication is an important account that will get you access to many of the systems that

you will need to do your job, check on your personnel information and documents, and much more (including [AgLearn](#), [WebTA](#), [MyEPP](#), and [e-OPF](#))!

- **Review your Earning and Leave Statement:** Every pay period, the National Finance Center (NFC) produces a valuable document for you – your Statement of Earnings and Leave. It shows your salary and leave information for the pay period, including your gross pay, all deductions withheld, and current and projected leave balances. You are responsible for reviewing your Statement of Earnings and Leave for accuracy each pay period and to promptly report any errors to your servicing personnel office. You can and should regularly review your earnings and leave statements on the MyEPP website at: <https://www.nfc.usda.gov/personal/eplogin.aspx>.
- **Get your Performance Plan:** You should receive your Performance Plan from your supervisor and discuss your performance expectations.
- If you are a supervisor who has employees who are/will Telework, you must take the "[Telework 101 for Managers](#)" training in AgLearn

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### REMEMBER THE 60 DAY BENEFITS DEADLINES!

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If your appointment provided you with eligibility, make sure that you have submitted all of your benefits election related forms. More information on Federal Benefits programs can be found at:

[http://www.opm.gov/insure/new\\_employ/index.asp?MainQuestionId=1](http://www.opm.gov/insure/new_employ/index.asp?MainQuestionId=1). If you have questions about these programs, your eligibility, and/or the proper enrollment process make sure you contact your HR Specialist well BEFORE the 60 day deadline.

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### STAYING ON TARGET IN MONTHS 2-4

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By your second month we know most of you will be so busy at work it is easy to forget completing some basics, so we want to make sure that you:

- **Discuss your IDP:** You should discuss Individual Development Plans with your supervisor.
- **Take the USDA No FEAR Act Training** (full course) in AgLearn.
- **Review the Supervisor's Onboarding Checklist (AD-3020):** After 3 months, you should meet with your supervisor and review and sign the checklist.
- **USDA Ethics Orientation Online Training Module:** Must be completed within 90 days of your appointment, you can find the training at: <http://www.usda-ethics.net/science/training/orientation.htm>
- You should have been informed whether or not you are Telework eligible. If you are Telework eligible and wish to telework, you must take the "[Telework 101 for Employees](#)" training in AgLearn.

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### RECOMMENDED RESOURCES & REMINDERS

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**AFM:** Administrative & Financial Management (AFM) provides administrative and financial management services for the Research, Education, and Economics (REE) agencies. You can find REE Policies and Procedures, employee guides and references, contact lists, and more on the AFM website at:

<http://www.afm.ars.usda.gov/>

**ODEO:** The Office of Outreach, Diversity & Equal Opportunity provides EEO, Diversity and Cooperative Resolution services. More information can be found at: <http://www.afm.ars.usda.gov/ODEO/index.htm>;

**Work-Life Program Information** (including Telework; Transit Subsidy, REE Child Care Tuition Assistance, and more): <http://www.afm.ars.usda.gov/hrd/worklife/index.htm>

**Benefits Related Resources:**

- AFM Benefits Website: <http://www.afm.ars.usda.gov/hrd/benefits/index.htm>
- More detailed information on most Federal Benefits programs can be found anytime on the OPM website: <http://www.opm.gov/insure/health/planinfo/guides/index.asp>
- More detailed information on Federal Retirement can be found anytime on the OPM website: <http://www.opm.gov/retire/index.aspx>
- More detailed information on TSP can be found anytime on the TSP website: <https://www.tsp.gov/PDF/formspubs/tspb08.pdf>

**DigiTop:** the USDA’s Digital Desktop Library. DigiTop delivers around-the-clock access to published information about agriculture, forestry and allied fields, including government, economics and business. Discover the quality information resources available to you at <http://digitop.nal.usda.gov>

**Training Reminders:**

Mandatory Training		Recommended Training
SHEM: Employees Rights and Responsibilities at: <a href="http://www.afm.ars.usda.gov/shem/videos.htm">http://www.afm.ars.usda.gov/shem/videos.htm</a>		Performance Management in USDA (available in AgLearn)
If you manage employees who telework: "Telework 101 for Managers"		Safety, Health, and Environmental Management, We All Play a Role: at: <a href="http://www.afm.ars.usda.gov/shem/videos.htm">http://www.afm.ars.usda.gov/shem/videos.htm</a>
USDA No Fear Act Training (full course; in AgLearn)		
USDA Ethics Orientation Online Training Module: <a href="http://www.usda-ethics.net/science/training/orientation.htm">http://www.usda-ethics.net/science/training/orientation.htm</a>		
If you are eligible and wish to telework: "Telework 101 for Employees"		Agency-sponsored seminars including those related to technical topics as well as diversity, cultural, health, etc.
Managing Your Federal Career (available in AgLearn)		
Required Annual Trainings (training information will be provided by the corresponding program offices)	Information Security Awareness and Rules of Behavior Training	
	Ethics	
	Records Management	
	Diversity	

\*\*Check with your supervisor to for any additional job specific training they may require or recommend.\*\*