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A New Line of Business

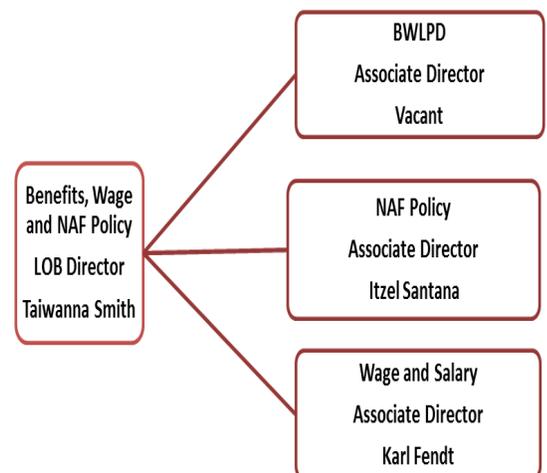
On July 1, 2017, the Defense Civilian Personnel Advisory Service (DCPAS) realigned several divisions and implemented Human Resource Lines of Business (HR LOB). This new structure aligns our Human Resources (HR) services to the DoD community with a unified vision and goal. The three divisions consisting of; Benefits & Work Life, Non-Appropriated Fund Personnel Policy, and Wage & Salary have been merged to form the Benefits Wage and NAF (BWNP LOB) diagram below. The overall vision and goal of the BWNP LOB is to develop DoD policy, provide technical advisory services and training to the Human Resources community.

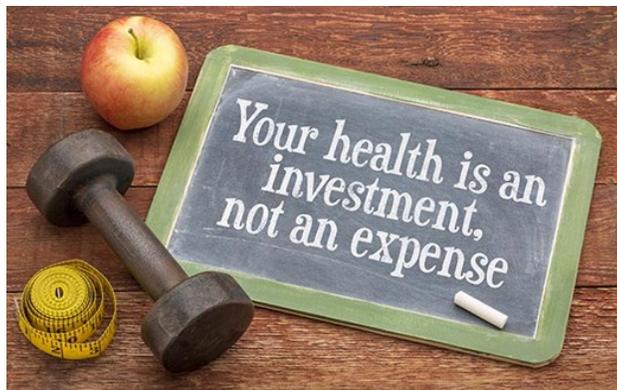
The Benefits and Work Life Programs Division (BWLPD) tier provides policy development, operational support, and guidance on a wide variety of employee benefit and work life program matters. BWLPD develops HR policies, rules, and programs mandated by law or regulation for the DoD civilian workforce.

The Wage and Salary Division tier conducts local prevailing rate wage surveys to develop and adjust pay schedules under the Federal Wage System and provides the Office of Personnel Management with pay setting technical expertise. The surveys ensure labor participation to develop pay lines and establish equal pay for equal work to attract and retain qualified personnel within a

local area. They advise on additional special rate schedules for DoD Educators, civilian mariners, power generation employees, health care professionals, foreign national pay programs, and white collar (General Schedule) special rates programs.

The Non-Appropriated Fund Policy Division (NAF) tier develops and maintains DoD-wide NAF personnel policies by providing policy oversight of DoD Component NAF employer personnel administration and providing advisory services to DoD Components and OSD leadership. NAF manages the DoD NAF benefits and programs and are aligned to core HR work that encompasses policy development, consultant and advisory services; training services; and operational processing in assigned programs.





This year's annual Open Season, will be held Monday November 13, 2017 - Monday December 11, 2017. Open Season provides an opportunity for eligible participants to start, stop or make changes to their Federal Employees Health Benefits Program (FEHBP), Federal Employee Dental and Vision Insurance Program (FEDVIP), and Flexible Spending Account (FSA) elections.

All open season elections will be effective the first day of the first full pay period in January. If you do not submit an open season election, your current enrollment for FEHB and FEDVIP will continue in 2018. Even if you are completely satisfied with your current health plan, please review your 2018 plan brochure and make sure you are aware of all changes made within your plan, including changes in premiums, coverage offered, and participating providers.

The FEHB program helps employees and family members meet the needs of healthcare and expenses incurred due to illness and accidents.

When choosing a health plan, you should consider not only the premium rates but also the covered benefits, out-of-pocket costs and availability of providers to ensure your enrollment plan fits the expected healthcare needs of you and your family for 2018. You may obtain individual plan brochures to compare costs, benefits, and features of each plan by visiting www.opm.gov.

FEDVIP provides supplemental vision and/or dental insurance coverage and is available to employees and their unmarried dependent children under the age of 22. Premiums are withheld on a pre-tax basis. You may visit <https://www.BENEFEDS.com> for more information.

FSAFEDS helps employees and family members save money for health care expenses with a Health Care (HCFSA) or Limited Expense Health Care (LEX- FSA) and provides the option for a Dependent Care account (DCFSA) for families with young children or elder care expenses. FSA requires annual enrollment for all three accounts. After you enroll in FSAFEDS, money is deducted automatically from your paycheck before taxes are taken out. HCFSA and LEX HCFSA funds equal to your entire annual election are available on January 1 – the first day of the benefit period. However, DCFSA funds are only available when withdrawn from your paycheck and deposited into your account. You may visit <https://www.FSAFEDS.com> for more information.

Hurricane Affected Employees

Because of the recent hurricanes, some Federal employees in the southern United States, Puerto Rico and other U.S. territories may be experiencing difficulties during this time of crisis. Newsflashes were sent regarding regulations for Thrift Savings Plan Financial Hardship Withdrawals, the Federal Employees' Group Life Insurance Open Season elections

effective October 1, 2017, the Federal Employees Dental and Vision Insurance Program and the Federal Long Term Care Insurance Program missed premium payments and employees attempting to change Federal Health Benefits Program plans due to relocation. Make sure that you read the Newsflashes for more information.

It's that time of year again! Non-Appropriated Fund (NAF) employees need to review their current benefit elections and think about their needs for 2018. The NAF Health Benefits Program (HBP) Open Enrollment will take place **November 6 through December 1, 2017**. During this time period, NAF employees can enroll in a healthcare plan based on their

employment status, switch plans (if applicable), and add/remove eligible dependents. To review premium rates, plan details, to find out how to enroll, or to find out other general information about NAF HBP, log onto www.nafhealthplans.com. Focus on health and wellness by taking charge of your health care.

New Employee Benefit Elections

As a new employee, there are several important decisions regarding your Benefits and Entitlements that you must make within the first few days, normally within 31 or 60 days, from your entry into the Federal Government. Below is a list of program options available to you and some tips on making sure you get the most out of your benefits as a new employee. For more information on benefits, you may visit <https://www.opm.gov/healthcare-insurance/>.

Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB)

- ◆ Coverage is *not* automatic - You must enroll within **60** days from entry on duty in any available plan, option, and enrollment type - if you do not make a health plan election you are considered to have declined coverage and must wait until the next annual Federal Open Season to enroll or if you experience a qualifying life event.
- ◆ Enrollment is *not* retroactive - the earliest your health plan will become effective is the beginning of the pay period that begins after your Agency receives your enrollment request
- ◆ 3 types of enrollment are available - Self Only, Self Plus One (covers you and one eligible family member), and Self and Family (covers you and ALL eligible family members - you cannot exclude any eligible family member and you cannot provide coverage for anyone who is not an eligible family member)

Federal Employees Dental & Vision Insurance Program (FEDVIP)

- ◆ You *must* be eligible for the FEHB program in order to enroll in this supplemental dental/vision insurance - it does not matter if you are enrolled in FEHB, but you must qualify to participate
- ◆ Coverage is *not* automatic - You must enroll within **60** days from entry on duty and can enroll in any of the seven dental plans and/or three vision plans available
- ◆ 3 types of enrollment are available - Self Only, Self Plus One, and Self and Family

Federal Employee Life Insurance (FEGLI)

- ◆ If you're in a position eligible for FEGLI, you're automatically enrolled in Basic life insurance - your Agency payroll office will deduct premiums from your paycheck and it will be effective on the first day you enter in a pay and duty status *unless* you waive this coverage before the end of your first pay period - You do *not* get any additional (Optional) insurance automatically - you must voluntarily elect to have additional coverage
- ◆ You have **60** days from entry on duty to enroll in any Optional life insurance - if you do not make an election, you will be considered to have waived optional insurance
- ◆ You will pay the full cost of Optional (Voluntary) Insurance, and the cost depends on your age (increases every 5 years starting at age 35) - your age does not affect the cost of Basic insurance
- ◆ Basic Life Insurance coverage is equal to your annual basic pay, rounded to the next higher \$1,000 plus \$2,000
- ◆ Optional (Voluntary) Insurance options include: *Option A*, Standard, in the amount of \$10,000 - *Option B*, Additional, in an amount from 1 to 5 times your annual basic pay (rounded up to the next \$1,000) - *Option C*, Family, provides life insurance coverage for your spouse and eligible dependent children

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Federal Long Term Care Insurance Program (FLTCIP)

- ◆ Available to Federal employees in positions eligible for FEHB, even if you don't enroll in FEHB. Your parents, parents-in-law, stepparents, spouses, and adult children (at least 18 years old) are also eligible to participate
- ◆ You and your spouse, if married, have **60** days from your entry on duty to apply for long term care insurance using the abbreviated underwriting application with only a few health-related questions
- ◆ If you apply **AFTER** the 60 day period, you will have to use the long underwriting application with many health-related questions, and possibly a review of medical records and/or an interview with a nurse

Flexible Spending Accounts (FSA)

- ◆ You have **60** days from your entry on duty to sign-up - or until October 1, whichever comes first - Applications for the current calendar year are not accepted from October 1 through December 31 - If you wish to enroll after October 1 you will need to do so during Open Season for the following year - Your coverage will be effective the day after you complete the online enrollment process
- ◆ 3 types of accounts are available - Health Care FSA (HCFSA) for eligible health care expenses like copayments, deductibles, over-the-counter medications, etc., for you and your dependents - Limited Expense Health Care (LEX HCFSA) for employees in or covered by a High Deductible Health Plan with a Health Savings Account in which expenses are limited to dental and vision care for you and your dependents - Dependent Care (DCFSA) for eligible dependent care expenses for your child(ren) under age 13 or dependents unable to care for themselves that allow you (and your spouse if married) to work, look for work (as long as you have earned income for the year), or attend school full-time.

Thrift Savings Plan (TSP)

- ◆ You can begin making regular employee contributions at any time - Each pay period, your agency will automatically deduct 3% from your basic pay until you waive it or increase your contribution. If you choose not to save for retirement you must do so within the first pay period of your new hire date to avoid deductions from your pay. When you increase your contributions your agency will deduct it from your pay in the amount or percentage that you indicated when you submitted your election form.
- ◆ Most new employees can receive matching contributions from the Agency on the first 5% of pay that you contribute to your TSP account each pay period - Contributions above 5% of your pay will not be matched
- ◆ Most new employees become vested after completing 3 years of federal civilian service - if you leave federal service before satisfying the 3 year vesting requirement, the Agency Automatic (1%) and matching contributions and their earnings will be forfeited to the TSP - if you die before separating from service, you are automatically considered vested in all the money in your account

Retirement at the end of the year, Are You Ready?

As you approach retirement, there are many things to ponder such as nailing down a retirement date, completing and submitting an application for retirement, gathering pertinent documents, updating designation of beneficiary forms, understanding TSP withdrawal options process, and taking several moments to breathe and take it all in.

Choosing a retirement date may be simpler than you think! For FERS employees the best date to retire is the end of the month. For

CSRS employees the best date to retire is the last day of the month or 1st, 2nd, or 3rd day of the month. Retiring on these days will ensure that the annuity begins the next day. While choosing any date other than what's noted may impact the start date of your annuity, the absolute best day to retire is a decision that only you can make. Retirement is a very memorable moment; if there is a date that is of importance, then that is the absolute best date to retire.

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As you prepare to complete and submit your application for retirement, read the instructions carefully and thoroughly review each section of the application to ensure that all questions are answered. Pay particular attention to provide the correct telephone number for retirement. Review marital information carefully. If there is a former spouse, please indicate by selecting the correct tab and initial an annuity election. If married and leaving a spouse less than a full survivor annuity, ensure that the Spouse's Consent to Survivor Election is properly completed in the presence of a notary.

If military service is present, include Schedule A, B, and C of the application. Ensure that the benefits servicing office has copies of all Certificate of Release of Discharge from Active Duty, (DD214), as well as all paid in full receipts for all periods of active military service, deposit service, Insurance form to your application. Do not forget to provide banking information, and most importantly certify the application. Ensure that all designation of beneficiary forms are up to date. Each of these documents serves an important purpose, and failing to supply any may delay the processing of the application.

Retirement is that monumental period in life that requires all married federal employees to dust the cobwebs off their marriage certificate in order to provide a copy to their servicing office. If you have experienced a divorce, a copy of the divorce decree will be required.

It's very important that your benefits servicing office receives a complete package. This will ensure smooth and successful processing. Gathering supporting documents may be more difficult to ascertain than some may think, so start gathering necessary information early.

The servicing office will provide information about TSP withdrawal options. It may take up to eight weeks to process a withdrawal after all properly completed withdrawal forms and separation data have been received by the TSP Service Office. This process cannot begin until TSP has received Data Records from the servicing payroll office. Note an unpaid TSP loan may delay disbursement of the TSP account balance; inquire early about the effects of a TSP loan on withdrawal options.

In the final weeks of employment, the mindset of a prospective retiree should be wholeheartedly retirement. You should have already requested an estimate, discussed discrepancies, be fully informed of the required documents, counseled on the retirement process, and inquired about your servicing centers checkout process. Lastly, clear out your work area and celebrate as you transition into retirement! Visit OPM at www.opm.gov for more information.



Can I take Federal Employees Dental and Vision Program into Retirement?

Employees enrolled in Federal Employees Dental & Vision Program (FEDVIP) who retire on an immediate annuity or disability annuity will be eligible to automatically continue their FEDVIP enrollment into retirement. Contact BENEFEDS at 1- 877-888-3337 or TTY 1-877-889-5682 and inform them that you will be retiring.

During adjudication, you may receive direct billing for your premiums as they can't be withheld from your interim retirement annuity. If this is the case, you will be sent a letter informing you about the direct billing process. You need to pay premiums directly to the provider during this time in order to keep your coverage active.

When your annuity is finalized, FEDVIP premiums will be deducted directly from your annuity and BENEFEDS will stop sending direct bills. If there are any unpaid premiums,

BENEFEDS will collect them through double deductions from your annuity. You will receive an Adjustment Letter informing you there will be a change in your deduction amount. Premiums do not increase during retirement, but the frequency of deductions is 12 per year. As an employee premiums are paid bi-weekly or semi-monthly. Retirees premiums are paid monthly.

If you are not enrolled in FEDVIP at the time of retirement you can enroll during the annual Federal Benefits Open Season held each fall from the Monday of the second full week in November to the Monday of the second full week in December. All enrollments and changes for the next plan year will be effective starting January 1st. All cancellations mean coverage for the current plan year will end on December 31st at 11:59pm ET.

Hurricanes, Snow, Inclement Weather: Are You Prepared?

The U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) issues several different notifications of operating status to the Federal agencies in the Washington, D.C. area during emergencies or inclement weather. When you see these messages, do you know what to do?

What you do depends on your job. If your job designates you an "emergency employee", then you are expected to report on time to your worksite during the emergency, unless you are otherwise directed by management. If your job designates you a "non-emergency employee", then you must follow the procedures issued by OPM and your Agency during an emergency or inclement weather. Here are two of the most common notifications of operating status:

"OPEN WITH OPTION FOR UNSCHEDULED LEAVE OR UNSCHEDULED TELEWORK"

"Can I be required to come into the office?
The snow plows won't reach my
neighborhood until tomorrow!"

When OPM issues this message, non-emergency employees are automatically authorized to take leave or telework (if they have a telework agreement in place). Employees decide if they are able to make it into the office based on travel conditions in their area. However, you must notify your supervisor of your intent to request unscheduled leave or telework.

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Hurricanes, Snow, Inclement Weather: Are You Prepared? (continued)

When the Federal Government is closed in the Washington, D.C. area due to an emergency, procedures may differ.

“FEDERAL OFFICES ARE CLOSED – EMERGENCY AND TELEWORK-READY EMPLOYEES MUST FOLLOW THEIR AGENCY'S POLICIES”

“Hey, do I have to telework during a closure? I opted not to telework regularly when I was offered.”

When OPM issues this message, all of the Federal Agencies must abide by their emergency plans or continuity of operations plans (COOP). Take note of the phrase “Federal Offices are Closed”. It is DoD’s intent to continue with operations even when all Government buildings are closed.

Non-emergency employees are pre-determined to be “mission critical” or “non-mission critical”. Your supervisor will tell you which one you are based on your duties. If you are a non-emergency/mission critical employee, DoD requires you to telework during office closures (if management determines you are “telework-ready”). You must telework whether you telework regularly or not (voluntarily or prohibited). For this reason, all mission critical

employees should be telework-ready by having telework agreements (DD Form 2946 or equivalent form) in place in accordance with their agencies’ COOP. If you are a non-emergency/non-mission critical employee you may not be required to telework and you may be excused for the duration of the closure. Your supervisor will let you know what to do in accordance with your agency’s policy.

For more information on OPMs’ Emergency Operating Procedures, you may visit: <https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/snow-dismissal-procedures/current-status>.



Job Well Done!

It is remarkable the degree of success that can be attained once the Defense Civilian Personnel Advisory Service (DCPAS) Benefits and Work Life Programs Division (BWLPD) Injury and Unemployment Compensation (ICUC) Branch Program Advisor (ICPA), the installation ICPA, and agency management work together with determination towards a shared goal. Such has

been the recent experience after working for some time to increase the timely filing of workers’ compensation Notices of injury or disease and Claims for compensation at one of the Navy’s medium-size installations in Southern California, the United States Marine Corps (USMC) at Camp Pendleton.

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For several years now Camp Pendleton had not quite met its component's target for the timely filing of forms to the Federal government in wage compensation and medical bills, expedites the return to work effort, and minimizes lost production days, all key goals of a properly run workers' compensation program. Suddenly, however, things at Camp Pendleton began to change for the better.

In April 2017, a new performance year began for our office and, as part of our yearly reassessment and regrouping, ICUC Branch Advisor, Oscar Ramirez contacted Camp Pendleton to share a new plan of action for 2017-18. He was informed then that a new ICPA had been hired for the workers' compensation program, Mr. Johnny Lamb, Human Resources Specialist, and that along with this fresh start his Supervisor, Mr. Jay Smith, Labor-Management Relations Officer, was redoubling his own efforts to commit more time and drive into getting Pendleton on track towards the level of excellence that both Mr. Smith and our office had always known could be attained. Nevertheless, we certainly never expected the performance of timely filing to improve so quickly and as dramatically as it did: within just one month the timely filing of all forms (injury, disease, and compensation) had improved from less than standard to perfect, with an incredible 100% timely filing. Since then Camp Pendleton has kept achieving 100% timeliness during all the subsequent months up to the present. What led to this surprising success?

The short answer is a closer and more concerted effort towards a shared goal on the part of the ICPA, management, and our ICUC Branch Program Advisor office. When recently

asked to what he attributed the remarkable success of his installation, Supervisor Smith observed, "Avoid the temptation of benign neglect... we're all busy and it is easy to let FECA (Federal Employees' Compensation Act) slip from our 'Must Do' items." Smith observed as well that "if the program isn't monitored, it isn't managed." Supervisor Smith concluded that by recognizing the supervisors for their efforts, as it happens when timely filing is consistently achieved, they are made accountable, including the use of the Performance Element on their performance appraisal. When the timely filing of forms for injured employees is viewed from that angle, the superlative results recently being achieved at Camp Pendleton are easy to understand.

For his part, ICPA Johnny Lamb, a relatively recent arrival to the workers' compensation program, but a most promising addition, finds that the key to success lies to a great extent in "training each department at the installation on the Employee Compensation Operational Management Portal (ECOMP) filing process." Lamb, in fact, conducts the actual direct, platform training on the timely filing of forms (i.e., the why and the how) for the installation supervisors at all the departments within Camp Pendleton. Supervisors receive Lamb's PowerPoint presentation ahead of time and are thus already familiar with the topic on the day of training. Once they are thoroughly trained, Lamb adds, "I give the supervisors/managers a short timeline to complete their portion of the forms, sign, and route them to me." When asked to single out the most important factors of his program's success over the last half-year, (a 100% timely filing rate), Lamb explains how "I hold supervisors/managers accountable for their roles (in timely filing) as pertaining to

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ECOMP and the FECA Program. I contact them if they don't go into ECOMP by the given time, complete the portions of the forms, and route them to me. If they don't meet the timelines that I give them, I let my Supervisor Ms. Taiwana Smith know and I contact their Supervisor or Deputy Director and inform them of the issue." With such thoroughness and efficiency, it is no wonder, then, the program has completely turned around and is now one of the highest achievers.

Finally, for our part, back in April 2017, and as part of our new "Camp Pendleton campaign strategy", ICUC Branch Program Advisor Oscar Ramirez created a spreadsheet to itemize all the forms that were filed at the installation for each month, including the dates, time lags, reasons for any untimeliness, and specific correction/s the installation took to prevent the same problem in the future. At the beginning of the subsequent month, the ICUC Branch advisor, the ICPA, and his Supervisor would teleconference the results and discuss what if anything needed improvement in the current month and into

the future. Ironically, since Camp Pendleton began immediately to achieve a perfect score in the timely filing of all forms, these telecoms in reality became pep-talks for reinforcing what was being done efficiently and successfully and for preventing any possible obstacle that might be forthcoming. After six months of these conferences, the ICUC Branch Program Advisor has requested the ICPA to simply submit the completed monthly spreadsheets and to contact the Advisor *ad hoc* as soon as any issue might arise.

It is truly remarkable, then, the high degree of achievement that can be attained by the joint effort of the three key players, including the consistent determination of the ICPA, the reinforced commitment and support of management, and the on-going advice and guidance of the DCPAS ICUC Branch. Camp Pendleton today should be proud of their 100% success rate in timely filing. Well done and congratulations to Mr. Johnny Lamb, Mr. Jay Smith and Mr. Oscar Ramirez!

Don't Forget, Save the Date!



The banner features the DCPAS logo on the left and a classical building icon on the right. The central text reads "DOD BENEFITS SYMPOSIUM 2018" in large, bold letters, with the dates "11-15 June" and the location "Mark Center, 4800 Mark Center Drive, Alexandria, Virginia 22350". Surrounding this central text are various benefit topics in different colors: Retirement, Premium Conversion, Military Deposits, FEGLI, FECA Fraud, FERS, Injury Compensation, Pipeline, Continuation of Pay, Dual Benefits, and Unemployment Compensation. At the bottom right, there is a circular graphic for "DOD BENEFITS ADVISOR CREDENTIALS Testing On-site!!". A footer at the very bottom provides the contact email: [Send inquiries to: dodhra.mc-alex.dcpas.mbx.benefits-contacts@mail.mil](mailto:dodhra.mc-alex.dcpas.mbx.benefits-contacts@mail.mil)

What is the purpose of the card?

Since many retired DoD civilians have no way of identifying their association with the Department of Defense, this card provides them with a trusted credential to establish their identity and affiliation. Some, but not all, military installations allow retired civilians access to DoD Morale, Welfare, and Recreation (MWR) facilities with proper identification.

Who is eligible to receive the card?

Civilians who have retired from any DoD Service Component or Agency on an immediate voluntary retirement. Civilian retirees from other Federal agencies are not eligible.

When can I get this card?

When you are in receipt of your DoD retirement pay.

Where can I go to get the card?

Contact your nearest RAPIDS site (www.dmdc.osd.mil/rsl). Customer service hours vary.

What do I need to bring with me?

Two forms of ID from the OMB I-9 document list. One must be a federal or state issued picture ID.

Visit <http://www.uscis.gov/les/form/i-9.pdf> for more information. Also bring proof of pay grade at retirement.

Does the card expire?

Yes. It is renewable every four years.

If I already have a retiree card from my DoD Service Component or Agency, do I need this card?

No. It does not convey any additional privileges.

Is this card optional?

Yes. This is an optional card that can be issued for civilian retirees that use base MWR facilities.

The installation commander retains the authority to restrict access to MWR facilities for reasons such as local demand, facility capacity, and security concerns.

Who may I contact if my retirement record does not show in DEERS?

You may contact the Civilian Benefits Information Line by email at dodhra.mc-alex.dcpas.mbx.benefits-contacts@mail.mil or by phone at 703-545-7486.

Pending Legislation

Federal employees benefits have had several changes over the years, some good and some less appealing. A recent bill introduced within the House (HR-3031), known as the Thrift Saving Plan (TSP) Moderation Act of 2017, is worth watching. If this bill works its way through the legislative process and becomes law, it is one that will benefit federal employees during their career and into their retirement.

The Bill, once law, will provide flexibility in making withdrawals from the Thrift Savings Fund. The key features will let Federal Retiree's make multiple age-based and post-separation withdrawals, as opposed to the current one time

withdrawal upon reaching age 59-and-a half. Another benefit will provide the ability to access your money by revising the timing and amounts of periodic payments. This gives employees the option of combining partial withdrawals or taking an annuity with periodic payments and eliminating automatic annuities as the default option if participants don't elect an alternative.

When this becomes law, it will involve a modernization of the TSP program with providing greater access and flexibility to investments. For more information visit Congress.gov.

The long awaited DoD Employee Benefit Advisor (EBA) Credentialing Program will be implemented this month when the official “kick off” testing begins at the Navy Benefits Center, Portsmouth, Virginia and the Army Benefits Center-Civilian, Fort Riley, Kansas.

The Credentialing Program was developed with the Office of Personnel Management’s (OPM) Human Resource (HR) Competencies in mind. After successful completion of this program, participants will have achieved the required expertise to apply the principles and core competencies of a well-trained EBA.

EBAs earn “credentials” through enrollment and completion of the three-tier DoD Program that consists of the (3) certificate levels: Basic, Intermediate, and Advanced. Candidates must attend 3 resident courses and complete the corresponding online examinations no later than 30 days after attending the resident course.

The exams are proctored and contain all multiple choice questions. The passing grade for each exam is 85% and graduates will receive their certificate via e-mail once the test has been graded. In the event a passing grade isn’t achieved on the first attempt, there will be opportunities to retake the test.

All course instruction focuses on the research, interpretation and application of federal laws, regulations, DoD policy and practices within the Employee Benefits functional area.

The Basic Benefits course introduces Title 5 USC and 5 CFR; outlines insurance programs (FEHB, FSA, FEDVIP, FEGLI, FLTCIP); and examines each retirement program, creditable civilian and military service, deposit procedures, Thrift Savings Plan, annuity computations, and service computation dates. This course is a pre-requisite for the Benefits Intermediate Course (BIC).

BIC is for HR professionals with at least 1 year of benefits experience. Course material is designed to strengthen inter-personal, team-building, and counseling skills. Course instruction further examines the 5 USC and 5 CFR with case studies and exercises. Materials cover in-depth concentration of retirement eligibility, retirement coverage determinations, annuity computations, disability retirement and other benefits programs. This course is a pre-requisite for the Advanced Benefits Workshop (ABW).

ABW includes a CAPSTONE project requiring advanced literature review and research. Participants work in teams to discuss and exchange perspectives. Course material

includes 4 modules: Special Retirement, Reemployed Annuitants, USERRA and Advanced Annuity Computations. Pre-requisites for this course are: Basic and BIC.

Fully credentialed EBAs will be recognized across DoD and throughout the Federal Government as the experts in Federal employee benefits.

Are you ready?

Watch for upcoming DCPAS sponsored Benefits classes on the HRU website: <https://dodhrinfo.cpms.osd.mil/Pages/Training-Center.aspx>



Class: Advance Benefits Workshop

Date: August 22-25, 2017

Location: New Cumberland, PA



Class: Basic Benefits Course

Date: September 12-15, 2017

Location: Alexandria, VA

Do You Want to Mentor Part-Time?

Retirement is a major milestone in a person's life. It scores right up there with graduating from school, getting married, or having children. It's something that most people look forward to while others can't imagine not going to work every day or giving up the social connections that they have on the job.

So, what can a Federal employee do if they're not ready to jump into retirement 100%? The Phased Retirement program offers employees an opportunity to work part time and mentor other employees while receiving a partial paycheck and a partial retirement annuity. This program provides employees time to adapt to not working on a full time basis, while they spend time broadening their personal life. If that sounds appealing make sure to review the requirements to participate at:

<https://www.opm.gov/retirement-services/phased-retirement/>.

Before making any final decisions employees need to be aware of any financial ramifications that can come from working after retiring. For example, if a FERS employee qualifies for Phased Retirement and is under 62 years old, they will not receive an annuity supplement until they fully retire. Retirement can sound ideal, but the reality can be different than expected. Boredom, a lack of interaction with people or less money than planned can drive a retiree back into the job market. However, retirees need to research the facts covering their own retirement situation and plan for any financial problems that could impact their goals. The Phased Retirement Program may be the first step in reaching retirement goals.

Benefits & Work Life Programs Division



4800 Mark Center Drive
Alexandria, VA 22350
(703) 882-5197

Email address:

dodhra.mc-alex.dcpas.mbx.benefits-contacts@mail.mil

BE

Knowledgeable

BE

Informed

BE

Reliable

DCPAS

A Successful Training Year

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One of the main goals of the Benefits and Work Life Programs Division (BWLPD) is to ensure that the DoD Human Resources (HR) community has the necessary skills, knowledge, and resources to successfully carry out their duties. This is accomplished by providing training and technical advisory services to DoD and non-DoD HR Specialist and employees. Every year, BWLPD provides training sessions on: Basic, Intermediate, and Advanced Benefits; Retirement Counseling; Pipeline; Beginning and Advanced Defense Injury and Unemployment Compensation System (DIUCS); and Injury Compensation Program Administration.

During the past training season (Jan - Sep 2017), the staff conducted eighteen training sessions. Training was provided to approximately 639 participants through classroom based and teleconference methods at six different locations to include:

Alexandria, VA, San Antonio, TX, Columbus, OH, Cumberland, PA, Kansas City, KS and Atlanta, GA. Participating agencies included the Department of the Army, the Department of the Air Force, the Department of Defense Education Activity, the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, the Federal Aviation Administration, the Defense Logistics Agency, the Defense Finance and Accounting Service, the Federal Election Commission, the General Services Administration, the United States Postal Service, the Internal Revenue Service, the National Guard Bureau, and the U.S. Department of Justice amongst others.

BWLPD will continue to focus efforts to ensure effective programs that strengthened and provide resilience to the HR community. The staff looks forward to another great training season in 2018!

As We Close Another Year

As this year draws to a close, we can look back at the accomplishments and milestones that were achieved in the Federal Benefits and Work Life functional areas. Thrift Savings Plan turned 30; OPM released an addendum to the existing Telework Guidance that focused on the use of telework to support employees with caregiving responsibilities; and the National Defense Authorization Act in December 2016 that

approved buyouts of up to \$40,000 for Defense Department Federal employees to name a few. We are committed to providing information to the DoD Workforce, retirees, and their families by constantly improving the way we guide, advise and administer benefits. We are ready to make significant strides and look forward to supporting you in the coming year!

