



Air Force District of Washington Civilian Personnel Newsletter

Use or Lose Leave

The 2012 leave year ends 12 January 2013. Generally, civilian employees may carry up to 240 hours of accrued annual leave into the next leave year. Any unused annual leave in excess of this amount is subject to being forfeited. For more detailed information, please visit the following link: <http://www.afdw.af.mil/news/story.asp?id=123322411>

National Disability Employment Awareness Month

Did you know that the President proclaimed the entire month of October as National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM). In his proclamation the president states “During National Disability Employment Awareness Month, we recognize the indispensable contributions people with disabilities make in our economy and recommit to building a country where each of us can realize the full extent of our dreams”. You may view the NDEAM Presidential Proclamation in its entirety at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2012/10/01/presidential-proclamation-national-disability-employment-awareness-month>

Inclement Weather

Fall is here and you may have already noticed our daylight incrementally lessening, the outdoor temperatures cooling a bit and the leaves turning into bright yellows, oranges and reds. While we hope to not have a repeat of winter 2009-2010 snowfalls, it is possible we could face some inclement weather in the coming months. As a reminder, if you work inside the beltway, you should check the Office of Personnel Management’s (OPM) “Operating Status” page on-line at <http://www.opm.gov/status/> to see if the Federal



government has any delays or closures before reporting to work. If you work outside the beltway (i.e. Joint Base Andrews, Ft. Meade, etc.) follow your base instructions for inclement weather. Another option is listen to the weather announcements on your local radio and television stations. The following are a few additional websites you may use to get up-to-date weather information:

<http://www.capitalweather.com/>

<http://www.wtop.com/index.php?nid=7> |

<http://www.weather.com/weather/local/USDC0001>

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Reminders

- For more information on obtaining a Civilian Retirement Card, visit www.dmdc.osd.mil/smartcard
- For employees who have been on a performance plan since 1 April, October is the mid-point and the appropriate time for a mid-year review
- For a retirement computation contact the Benefits and Entitlements Service Team (BEST) at 1-800-525-0102.
- Civilian personnel records (education, licenses, awards, training, and languages) may be added to your records through MyBiz (<https://compo.dcpds.cpms.osd.mil/>)
- Employment verifications may also be processed/obtained through MyBiz (<https://compo.dcpds.cpms.osd.mil/>)

Ask the CPO



The AFDW/A1C Civilian Personnel Officer (CPO), Mr. Marcus Lea, and the civilian personnel staff are committed to providing you with excellent customer service. We are available to answer questions you may have on a variety of civilian personnel issues to include VERA/VSIP, reassignments, etc. If you have a question for the CPO, please go into the GAL and type "AFDW Ask the CPO" your email will be sent to askthecpo@afncr.af.mil.

Ask the CPO Q & A

I have heard about a new TSP Roth feature. What is this and where can I find more information about it?

This option allows Federal civilian employees to contribute after-tax dollars into the TSP for the first time. Under the traditional TSP, employees invest tax-deferred dollars into their accounts, meaning the money isn't taxed until it's withdrawn. For more information please visit: <https://www.tsp.gov/whatsnew/roth/index.shtml>

Absence for Voting

The casting of a vote is a cornerstone of our democratic process and a civic responsibility in the public interest. The general election will be held Tuesday, 6 November 2012. In accordance with Air Force Instruction (AFI) 36-815, Chapter 8, Excused Absence, employees may be granted excused absence to vote or register to vote. If the employee does not have three hours outside of their normal work schedule after the polls open or before the polls close, they may be authorized up to three hours of excused absence after the polls open or three hours before the polls close, whichever results in the least amount of absence from duty. If the employee has three hours outside his or her normal work schedule after the polls open or before the polls close, no excused absence is authorized.



In Virginia, polls are open from 0600 to 1900. Time frames for excused absence are 0600 to 0900 hours and 1600 to 1900 hours. If the employee's duty day is 0800 to 1700 hours, he or she may report to work at 0900 hours or leave work at 1600 hours since the amount of excused absence is one hour on either side of the work schedule. If the employee's work hours are 0700 to 1600 hours, no excused absence is authorized since the employee's duty day is over three hours before the polls close.

Maryland and Washington DC polls are open from 0700 to 2000. Time-frames for excused absence are 0700 to 1000 hours and 1700 to 2000 hours. An employee whose duty day is 0800 to 1700 hours or 0700 to 1600 hours would not be authorized excused absence as his or her work day ends three hours prior to closure of the polls.

While most employees will vote in Virginia, Maryland, or Washington DC, some employees may live and vote in other states such as Pennsylvania, West Virginia, or Delaware. Under certain limited circumstances additional excused absence in excess of three hours may be authorized due to excess travel time. If you have questions concerning the circumstances under which excused absence in excess of three hours may be granted, or you feel additional information and/or clarification would be helpful, contact your servicing Human Resources Specialist (Employee Relations).

AFDW Civilian Personnel Location and Hours

JB Andrews, Jones Building, Rm 5300

Civilian Personnel Officer (CPO): Marcus Lea

Assistant CPO: Cynthia Manchester

Customer Service Hours: 0730-1630

Phone: (240) 612-6608

Website: www.afdw.af.mil/civilian

Open Season

Did you know that on the 20 September 2012 the U. S. Office of Personnel Management announced that the average premium for the 8.2 million people covered by the Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB) Program will increase by 3.4 percent in 2013, which is lower than last year's increase of 3.8 percent. The average premium increase for the Federal Employees Dental and Vision Insurance Program (FEDVIP) will be less than 1 percent. There are no significant benefit changes for 2013. On average, FEHB Program enrollees with self only coverage will pay \$2.75 more per bi-weekly pay period, and enrollees with family coverage will pay \$6.39 more. Premiums for Health Maintenance Organizations will increase an average of 5.3 percent, while Fee-for-Service plans will see an average increase of 3.0 percent. Another change for the 2013 benefit period is the maximum amount you may contribute to your Flexible Spending Account (FSA). This amount has decreased from \$5000 to \$2500. Please remember that you have to re-enroll annually to continue participation in the flexible spending account.

The 2013 Open Season for health, dental, and vision insurance and flexible spending accounts will be held from November 12, 2012 to December 10, 2012. The annual Open Season gives federal employees and retirees the opportunity to review their health plan choices and make changes for the following year. It also allows eligible employees to enroll for coverage. FEHB Program enrollees should review the benefits and premiums for their health plan choices and decide what coverage will best fit their healthcare needs in the coming year.

For more information about open season please visit: <http://www.opm.gov/insure/openseason/factsheet.asp>

Voluntary Leave Transfer Program

The Voluntary Leave Transfer Program (VLTP) allows an employee who has a personal emergency, to receive transferred annual leave directly from other employees. A personal emergency is defined as a medical condition, family emergency or other hardship situation that is expected to require an employee's absence from duty for a prolonged period of time and result in a substantial loss of income.

The cutoff date for donating leave under the VLTP is 14 December 2012. Please keep in mind that leave donors may donate no more than the number of hours remaining in the leave year (as of the date of the transfer) for which the leave donor is scheduled to work and receive pay. Employees wishing to donate leave should do so as soon as possible in order to ensure they are able to donate the desired number of hours.

Mid Year Review

It's that time again!! The General Schedule (GS) Performance Management System requires at least one formal feedback session during the performance year. No specific timeframe is established, but the midpoint of the year is recommended for at least one feedback based on the current appraisal cycle of 1 April 2012 through 31 March 2013. For employees who have been on a performance plan since 1 April, October is the midpoint and the appropriate time for formal performance feedback. GS Performance feedback is accomplished using the AF Form 860B, available on the AF Publications website (<http://www.e-publishing.af.mil/>). Rating officials may conduct feedback as frequently as required. The AF Form 860B is maintained in the Supervisor's Employee Work Folder.

For more information on performance management contact your servicing Human Resources Specialist (Employee Relations).

Pre-Retirement Videos

Did you miss the pre-retirement briefings? No worries! You can watch the entire briefing by clicking on the following link: <http://www.afdw.af.mil/news/video/index.asp?cid=666>

The videos are divided into eight, twenty minute segments. Start with the segment labeled "Retirement"

Top Myths about the Travel Card Program

As a government travel card holder, do you have a clear understanding about what you can and cannot purchase with your government credit card? Do you know if and when your pay check can be used by DOD to pay your credit card balance? Below are the most common myths about the government travel card and the facts to dispel them.

MYTH: I have to pay interest on my Department of Defense (DoD) Government Travel Charge Card (GTCC).

FACT: *Interest rates are **never** applied to the DoD GTCC.*

MYTH: I can use my personal charge card to pay for my official travel expenses.

FACT: *Use of the DoD GTCC is **mandatory** for all purchases related to official travel expenses, unless deemed otherwise exempt.*

MYTH: Late Fees begin to incur on my delinquent account after 60 days.

FACT: *A bill becomes **delinquent** 60 days after the billing due date. Late fees do not begin to incur on delinquent accounts until a total of 75 days have passed and the bill remains unpaid.*

MYTH: DoD does not have the authority to use my paycheck to pay for my undisputed delinquencies if I do not pay my delinquent bill within 120 days.

FACT: *DoD **has the authority** to use salary offset to pay a cardholder's delinquent bill after the bill has become 120 days delinquent. The maximum percentage that DoD can deduct from a delinquent cardholder's disposable income to pay the GTCC contractor is 15%.*

MYTH: If DoD does not reimburse me for my official travel within 30 days, there's nothing I can do about it.

FACT: *By law, DoD must pay reimbursements to travelers within 30 days. If reimbursements remain unpaid after this timeframe has passed, travelers will be paid interest on authorized reimbursement amounts.*

MYTH: If my bill is delinquent, the GTCC contractor will automatically report my delinquency to the credit bureaus, affecting my credit score.

FACT: *An outstanding bill will not be reported to the credit bureau **UNLESS** the bill has remained unpaid for 210 days.*

MYTH: As long as I reimburse the bank, I can use my GTCC travel card to pay for personal expenses while on official travel duty.

FACT: *Use of the travel card is limited to official travel costs only.*

For more information about the government travel card program, please visit <http://www.defensetravel.dod.mil/site/govtravelcard.cfm> or contact your organizations Travel Card Program Manager.

