The FSH CPAC Presents:

Ft. Sam Houston
Vol. 3, Issue 2
October 2010

On A "Personnel" Note...

DIRECTOR'S PERSPECTIVE

Welcome to our first edition of "On A Personnel Note," our latest Fort Sam Houston Civilian Personnel Advisory Center Newsletter. This is the first of many editions where we will bring you the BEST and most up-to-date information from the world of human resources, from the leaders of Human Resources, here at Fort Sam Houston. We are proud of our many years of service to the warfighters of our nation and the sustaining civilian workforce that are part of this enduring mission.

There are many changes taking place here at Fort Sam and we welcome them all. From the challenges of transitioning to Joint Base San Antonio; to the BRAC movement of HQ, IMCOM from Northern Virginia to Fort Sam Houston; and through it all you will find the women and men who make-up the Civilian Human Resources Agency, Civilian Personnel Advisory Center (CPAC), committed to continuing to serve you and our nation.

Audrey R. Blake
Director, Fort Sam Houston
Civilian Personnel Advisory Center

Savings Bonds—Defense Finance and Accounting Service

Submitted by: LouAnn Reiser

On June 21, 2010, DFAS provided information regarding the new process for purchasing savings bonds.

The message stated that the U.S. Treasury will no longer issue paper savings bonds to federal employees through DFAS Payroll Savings Bond deductions after September 30, 2010, and DFAS customers will need to acquire a Treasury Direct account and start a voluntary allotment if they wish to continue to purchase savings bonds through payroll deduction beyond September 30, 2010. The updated message below changes the date from September 30, 2010 to August 29, 2010.

The number of allotments in DCPS will be increased by one to accommodate those employees who have already maxed out the number of allotments permitted and still desire to continue purchasing savings bonds through payroll deductions, effective August 29, 2010. The elimination of the Paper Savings Bond and refunds of any unused balances remaining will be effective August 29, 2010.

When implemented, this process will cease the 'old way' of processing bond transactions online, via myPay and the personnel process. Purchasing bonds will only be available via the allotment process.

If you have any questions contact the DFAS help desk at 1 800 538 9043 or DSN 699 0580, Monday - Friday 0730 to 1800 EDT, On July 6, 2010 Monday-Friday 0730 to 1700 DT.

Federal Employee Compensation Act (FECA)

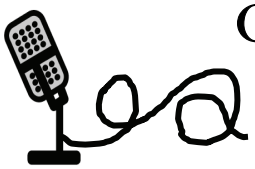
Submitted By: Tobby Proctor

Our Agency must strive to actively support our injured Employees and ensure that they receive all entitlements as approved by Department of Labor (DOL) under the FECA. When a federal civilian Employee incurs a traumatic injury that has been accepted as a work related injury by the DOL, he/she may be entitled to receive wage benefits after 45 calendar days of absence.

The Civilian Personnel Advisory Center's Labor/Management/Employee Relations office will assist the Employee in completing the Form CA-7 requesting wage compensation from the DOL. The Form CA-7 is required to be authorized by the worker's compensation representative prior to submitting it to the DOL. Medical documentation substantiating the continued disability and absence from work must be provided by the Employee when they complete the form.

At the appropriate time the worker's compensation representative will advise the Supervisor to place their Employee in a Leave With Out Pay (LWOP) status which is indicated on the timesheet as "KD". The next step is a Request for Personnel Action (RPA) which must be generated by management immediately. It is essential that the RPA be generated timely in order that the Employee's Federal Employee Health Benefits are paid while they are recuperating from the claimed workplace injury. The worker's compensation representative will work closely with the Supervisor to ensure the correct timecard codes are sub- mitted and the RPA is generated in order to prevent a financial hardship for the injured Employee.

The CPAC LMER Office is located in Building 144, Stanley Road. For additional FECA information contact Ms. Rosie Miller, via email or at 210-221-2420 or Mr. Angel Ponce, via email or at 210-221-1337.



ON THE MIC...

With Tara Montgomery

Each month we are going to pick a different CPAC employee to showcase in the newsletter. These people work hard and should be recognized! If you have recently visited the CPAC and feel someone deserves to be 'On The Mic,' just send an email to Tobby.Q.Proctor@us.army.mil, Subject line: On a Personnel Note....

Name: Tara Montgomery

Nickname: 'T'

Hometown: New Orleans, LA

Branch: LMER

What do you do at the CPAC: Management/ Employee Relation Specialist

How long have you been with the CPAC: 4 years

Favorite part of working at the CPAC: The learning environment, which is facilitated by the seasoned and friendly professionals I work with.

Something most people would not know about you: As a kid, I played street football with the boys.

....And now some words from her Team Lead, Jerry Hines: "Tara is a hard worker and always willing to take on the most challenging assignments...she never backs down."

THRIFT SAVINGS PLAN (TSP) AUTOMATIC ENROLLMENT FOR NEW AND REHIRED

T he Thrift Savings Plan Enhancement Act of 2009, Public Law 111-31, authorized automatic enrollment in TSP for new and rehired employees covered by CSRS or FERS.

Beginning the first full pay period in August, all new and rehired employees with a break of more than 30 days will be automatically enrolled in the TSP at a rate of 3% of their basic pay each pay period. The contribution will be invested in the G fund until the employee changes the fund allocation. FERS employees will receive Agency Matching Contributions for the 3% in addition to the 1% Agency Automatic Contributions.

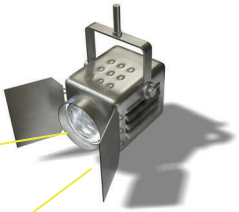
The employee will still have the option to change the contribution amount or stop the contribution and request a refund of the automatic contributions. The cancellation of the automatic contributions must be made within the first pay period.

Refunds will be taxed. The refund request must be sent directly to TSP no later than 90 days after TSP has received the first automatic enrollment contribution. TSP will provide a Welcome Letter to automatically enrolled participants that will include information about the refund process.

The Civilian Personnel Advisory Center is responsible for providing the employees with a guidance letter detailing all of their rights and responsibilities during inprocessing. This Act does not affect employees on the roles prior to the first pay period in August that are not currently participating in TSP.

THRIFT SAVINGS PLAN

HONORARY AWARDS



Question: Once the 1256 and the certificate are signed/ approved, where do we send it to ensure they are noted in the employee's awards history?

Once the DA 1256 has been approved, copies of the DA 1256 along with supporting documents are sent to the awards processing section at Rock Island. The DA 1256 can be sent one of three ways.

1. Electronically: Rock-Nccpoc.apprisal@conus.army.mil

2. Fax: 309-782-3041 or DSN 793-3041

3. Mail:
   USACHRA, NC Regional Processing Center
   ATTN: PECH-NCR-B (Appraisal Team)
   1 Rock Island Arsenal, Bldg 102
   Rock Island, IL 61299-7650

The following honorary awards are recorded in the employee's electronic personnel file or filed in the employee's Official Personnel File (OPF).

(Honorary award not listed below are not recorded it the employee's electronic personnel records or their OPF and should not be sent to Rock Island).

**Secretary of Defense Medal for Defense Freedom (entered in DPCPS under "Defense Freedom Medal")
**Secretary of the Army Award for Valor
**Decoration for Exceptional Civilian Service
**Meritorious Civilian Service Award
**Superior Civilian Services Award
**Commander's Award for Civilian Service
**Achievement Medial for Civilian Service

DEFINITION OF FAMILY MEMBER AND IMMEDIATE FAMILY

Submitted by: Marisela Rivera-Resio

The U.S. Office of Personnel Management issued final regulations to modify definitions related to *family member* and *immediate relative* in 5 CFR part 630 and to add other defined terms, for purposes of use of sick leave, funeral leave, and voluntary leave transfer. These regulations are effective 14 July 2010, and apply on the first day of the first applicable pay period which is 18 July 2010. The new definitions do not apply to the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA).

5 CFR part 630 is amended by revising the definition of *family member* and by adding definitions of *committed relationship, domestic partner, parent,* and *son* or *daughter* as follows:

Committed relationship means one in which the employee, and the domestic partner of the employee, are each other's sole domestic partner (and are not married to or are not domestic partners with anyone else) and share responsibility for a significant measure of each other's common welfare and financial obligations.

Domestic partner means an adult in a committed relationship with another adult, including both same-sex and opposite-sex relationships.

Family member means an individual with any of the following relationships to the employee: spouse and parents thereof; sons and daughters, and spouses therefore; parents, and spouses thereof; brothers and sisters, and spouses thereof; grandparents and grandchildren, and spouses thereof; domestic partner and parents thereof; any individual related by blood or affinity whose close association with the employee is the equivalent of a family relationship.

Parent means: a biological, adoptive, step, or foster parents of the employee, or a person who was a foster parent of an employee when the employee was a minor; a person who is the legal guardian of the employee or was the legal guardian of the employee when the employee was a minor or required a legal guardian; a person who stands *in loco parentis* to the employee when the employee was a minor or required someone to stand *in loco parentis;* a parent of an employee's spouse or domestic partner.

Son or *daughter* means: a biological, adoptive, step, or foster son or daughter of the employee; a person who is a legal ward or was a legal ward of the employee when that individual was a minor or required a legal guardian; a person for whom the employee stands *in loco parentis* or stood *in loco parentis* when that individual was a minor or required someone to stand *in loco parentis*; or a son or daughter of a employee's spouse or domestic partner.

The regulations are available at http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2010-06-14/pdf/2010-14252.pdf.

San Antonio Calendar of October Events

1-2; 8-9: Oktoberfest San Antonio

Head over to the Beethoven Halle & Garten to celebrate the ultimate German festival! Music, food and dancing plus German specialties like bratwurst, reubens and beer will be available to help put you in the spirit! Suggested donation is $5 at the gate.

15-17: International Accordion Festival - San Antonio 10 Year Anniversary

A three-day festival of music, dancing, food and fun which celebrates the versatility of the accordion and accordion-based international styles of music. La Villita. Free.

29-31: AT&T Championship

The PGA Champions Tour returns to San Antonio for its 24th year. Nestled within 200 acres of majestic oak trees and rolling hills, the Oak Hills Country Club is the perfect setting for this tournament and charity event. Oak Hills Country Club. Admission.

SUGGESTIONS TO HELP RETIREMENT PROCESSING

Employees should be encouraged to review OPFs at least one-year prior to retirement to ensure that the information is complete and accurate. The ABC-C has created an "OPF Checklist" for employees to use when reviewing their OPF. This checklist can be found on the "ABC-C CPAC/HR Representative Information" page at https://www.abc.army.mil/CPACCPOC/CPACCPOC.htm; click on "OPF Checklist".
And, if something is missing or incorrect, action should be taken immediately to rectify the situation.

OPFs requested by the ABC-C should be sent on a daily basis as ABC-C also works time-sensitive actions.

Ensure OPFs are complete to include all periods of service and have been properly merged. Filing should be up-to-date, beneficiary forms must be properly completed, signed, and filed in the OPF as a priority as applicable.

Provide information on civilian deposits/redeposits and post-56 deposits to new hires and as general workforce reminders. Employees should also be informed that Post-56 payment receipt documentation (OPM Form 1515) and DD 214s should be filed in the OPF. The ABC-C has information that can be used for workforce education located at https://www.abc.army.mil/retirements/retire.htm.

CPACs are encouraged to assist employees with review of retirement application before sending to ABC-C to check for missing signatures, reminding that an original package is needed, etc.

CPACs are strongly encouraged to coordinate with ABC-C on special situations or significant events to include VERA and/or VSIP approval, etc., as soon as possible.

Employees should take advantage of available pre-retirement seminars or ABC-C briefings or VTTs at least five years prior to retirement. Spouses should be invited to attend if possible.

Ideally, ABC-C recommends that retirement applications are submitted within 120 days of the employee's intended date of retirement. This allows ABC-C to balance workload and process retirements efficiently.

Another important reason for advance submission is to allow time to resolve any issues that arise in connection with the retirement (i.e., missing documents/forms, application is incomplete, etc.) The 120-day recommendation allows time for most issues to be resolved to avoid delays in processing the retirements, and possible annuity payments.

The below article is suggested for this purpose and should be issued about 3-4 times per year.

SUGGESTED ARTICLE:

Planning to Retire Soon?

If you are preparing to retire, please note that the Army Benefits Center-Civilian (ABC-C) strongly recommends that you submit your retirement application package to them within 120 days of your intended retirement date.

Your early submission will help to ensure a timely receipt of your first annuity payment from the Office of Personnel Management. If you submit your retirement package to the ABC-C with less than 60 days notice, you should be financially prepared for a delay in the receipt of your first annuity payment.

Although there are circumstances that may cause a delay in an employee's application submission, the ABC-C strives to complete all packages expeditiously. However, employees are encouraged to follow the ABC-C's 120-day recommendation whenever possible to help achieve a smooth financial transition into retirement.

For more information on retirement, visit the ABC-C web site at https://www.abc.army.mil.

PRE & POST DEPLOYED CIVILIANS ACTION CHECKLISTS

For those individuals who are considering deploying as a civilian, below are a checklists that would be most beneficial for you for PRE & POST deployment for Personnel/Payroll Action:

Pre-Deployment:

Request for Personnel Action (RPA) - Submission of RPA to start the deployment using the applicable Nature of Action (NOA) 900 series codes.

Change in FLSA - As appropriate, submit RPA to change the FLSA from "N" to "E" following Personnel/Payroll Interface Workaround 09-0006. For these employees, ensure the NOA 900 action is processed first followed by the NOA 800 using the rules in the workaround. Official Payroll Workarounds are located at www.cpms.osd.mil/hrbits/latestinfo/payrollworkaround.aspx

Bi-Weekly Pay Cap Waiver - prepare memorandum for bi-weekly waiver. Memorandum must be provided to the local CSR for submission to DFAS.

SF1190, Foreign Allowances Application, Grant and Report - employee must submit SF1190 along with Foreign Location Record to the servicing CPAC of the home duty station upon arrival in theater. **NOTE: Delay in submission will postpone the start of foreign allowance payments.** For more information and guidance go to CHRA Job Aids > CHRA's HR Related Guidance, Instructions and Samples website > Foreign Entitlements.

CENTCOM Increase of Annual Premium Pay Limitation - prepare memorandum for increase of annual premium pay limitation. Provide memorandum to MACOM POC for submission to CHRA along with spreadsheet. **NOTE: Delay in submission to CHRA could result in cutbacks on employee's paycheck. Additional NOTE: This higher annual premium pay limit cannot be applied to the employee's record until DoD and Army issue the**

Post-Deployment:

Request for Personnel Action (RPA) - Submission of RPA for termination of deployment using the applicable Nature of Action (NOA) 900 series codes.

Change in FLSA - As appropriate, submit RPA to change the FLSA from "E" to "N" following Personnel/Payroll Interface Workaround 09-0006. For these employees, ensure the NOA 900 action is processed first followed by the NOA 800 using the rules in the workaround. Official Payroll Workarounds are located at www.cpms.osd.mil/hrbits/latest info/payrollworkaround.aspx

Bi-Weekly Pay Cap Waiver - prepare memorandum to remove the bi-weekly waiver. Memorandum must be provided to the local CSR for submission to DFAS.

SF1190, Foreign Allowances Application, Grant and Report - employee must submit SF1190 along with Foreign Location Record to the servicing CPAC of the home duty station upon departure and return to assigned post. **NOTE: Delay in submission will result in debt.** For more information and guidance go to CHRA Job Aids >CHRA's HR Related Guidance, Instructions and Samples website >Foreign Entitlements.

CENTCOM Increase of Annual Premium Pay Limitation - prepare memorandum for removal of increase of annual premium pay limitation. Provide memorandum to MACOM POC for submission to CHRA along with spreadsheet. **NOTE: Delay in submission to CHRA could result in debt.**

NOTE: This checklist is to be used to ensure the proper Personnel and Payroll actions are completed on the employee's record at the time of deployment and return from deployment. This is NOT a complete pre-deployment checklist. Employees must still report to their servicing Civilian Personnel Advisory Center (CPAC) and complete all required actions prior to deployment according to their organization or Civilian Expeditionary Workforce (CEW) checklist.

Your service during this time is greatly appreciated, as Civilian Personnel, we want to ensure your transition is a smooth one.

PERFORMANCE RATINGS FOR EMPLOYEES TRANSITIONED FROM NSPS to TAPES PRIOR TO July 3, 2010

Submitted by: Jerri Hines

Department of the Army, G-1, Policy and Program Development Division, issued additional guidance on August 30, 2010, regarding the issuance of performance ratings to employees who have transitioned out of NSPS prior to July 3, 2010.

The most recent guidance provides for employees covered by this special rating cycle (1 Oct 2009 - 31 Oct 2010), who transitioned from NSPS to TAPES prior to 3 July 2010 with the same job objectives, performed under those objectives for at least 120 days during this special rating cycle, and who are leaving for a different position within the last 120 days of the rating cycle (4 July - 31 Oct) may receive an annual rating under TAPES.

Performance plans and appraisals under TAPES must be documented on DA Forms 7222-1 and 7222 (Senior System) and the DA Forms 7223-1 and 7223 (Base System), which may be obtained at http://www.apd.army.mil/USAPA_PUB_formnum_f.asp.If you have any questions regarding this guidance, please contact your servicing Management Employee Relations Specialist at 221-9692.

FSH CPAC OFFICE CLOSURE

Submitted by: Rosalinda Jenkins

The Fort Sam Houston Civilian Personnel Advisory Center (CPAC) will be closed the **first** Wednesday of each month from 2:00pm to 4:00pm.

FSH CPAC will be closed on **Wednesday, October 6th**, this marks our first official closure for a duty day to accomplish internal training.

Our Customer Service Center staff will still be available during this time to assist or take messages for the Production Branches.

We appreciate your patience and support during this time. The FSH CPAC CSC staff will work to assist you with your needs during this time.

Army Civilian Corps Creed

- I am an Army Civilian – a member of the Army Team
- I am dedicated to our Army, our Soldiers and Civilians
- I will always support the mission
- I provide stability and continuity during war and peace
- I support and defend the Constitution of the United States and consider it an honor to serve our Nation and our Army
- I live the Army values of Loyalty, Duty, Respect, Selfless Service, Honor, Integrity, and Personal Courage