



# THE ADVISOR NEWSLETTER

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## CPAC Leadership Corner

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### Leadership Re-visited

By Latrice Benton

What is leadership? Who is considered a leader? Do you think you are a leader because of your title, grade, or rank? Leadership may not be what we think it is or what the old Dictionary says (do people still use the old paper dictionaries anyway?), or what definition comes up when you google the term. Or it may not be the Army's definition of leader or leadership. After the kind of year we have experienced with this terrible pandemic, it's interesting to revisit or redefine what we think about a "leader," especially as we start a new year.



I believe that all kinds of "leaders" were created this year filled with fantastic leadership examples. They were people that genuinely sacrificed and tried to make a difference in this pandemic. They were not looking for headlines; they only wanted to help people, especially those affected by this tragedy. They thought they could perhaps make a difference.

Although it might sound a bit "hokey," we are all leaders in our own right. Or we can be. A leader recognizes their subordinates' opinions. They allow their team members to have a purpose. They want them to belong and feel that they contribute, or at least try. A good leader thinks about their team members and how to advance them, even if they encourage them to leave the organization. Good leaders recognize that they are not alone in the organization or command, and they do not run the organization or a part of it all alone. If they think that they are probably not a good leader. A true leader recognizes that everyone in the organization plays a part in the overall success. Sure, it may sound odd, but they must recognize the importance of all in that organization, no matter the team members' positions or grade/rank.

Whether you are titled a supervisor or manager, as a leader, you are someone who ensures that everyone knows that their opinion is essential. This includes realizing that that a person's opinion may not be accepted or used, but at least their opinion was taken along with everyone else's input, and their opinion was heard. A good leader allows them to see the bigger picture and establishes a culture where the establishment of that positive culture is essential and truly is one of inclusion to make a decision based on multiple individual contributions.

A good leader not only recognizes the contributions, but they reward them. Everyone needs to feel needed in the organization. That leader looks after their staff and truly cares about them first as people. They should look at figuring out how do I do things better or how can I improve things? That person identifies flaws of the operation and not



## Leadership Re-visited

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only identifies them but looks to ways of doing better. They also admit that they don't have all the answers and appreciate the input of many. They recognize that the overall mission is the most significant. It's incumbent upon the leader to understand the mission and how best to make it as successful as possible.



Not all supervisors are true leaders. Not all of them understand the bigger picture, the whole of the staff contribution. If a leader cannot recognize that staff member with a monetary award, they should at least recognize them in front of the entire staff. At the very least, they show their contribution. That person who "leads" is not a braggart. They are humble and only want to contribute to the better of the entire organization. Regardless of title/grade, there are leaders that contribute to the mission. They come in all grades, male and female. That person contributes to better the mission. Leaders are individuals that know they can better the success of their mission.

So as we turn this page to a new year, think about how you lead, how you influence others in your organization, your neighborhood, your church, and your volunteer organizations. Hopefully, we will see a vaccine arrive for all in the New Year, but hopefully, we have learned many lessons this year about being "together" without physically being together. Did the pandemic of 2020 change you? Did it change the way you work with others or with your customers? Was there a time that you thought we could never all work from home for months and be effective? What we went through and continue to go through made us all stronger, more resilient, and perhaps made us realize how vital those work relationships are, and made us realize how critical our other relationships are. We all learned to communicate better and discovered that it takes us all as informal or formal "leaders" to exist together to accomplish the mission. So commit yourself to be stronger and more concerned about others, because in the end, we only have each other, and we are stronger if we are united.



## Civilian Education System (CES) Updates for FY 2021 Schedule

Submitted by Wanda Ward

Civilian Education System (CES) courses are currently 100% virtually throughout the 3rd Quarters of FY21. For the safety of students, faculty, and staff, all Civilian Education System (CES) courses will be delivered in a virtual classroom modality through 30 June 2021. The revised schedule is posted in ATRRS, and applications can be submitted through CHRTAS. The intention is to resume in-person classes beginning 3rd Quarter FY21, as reflected in the revised schedule; however, if safety conditions do not warrant, classes will continue to be delivered 100% virtually (SAFECON will be re-evaluated in December 2020).

The Civilian Education System (CES) courses are offered year round. To view upcoming classes, students may go to: <https://usacac.army.mil/organizations/cace/amsc/cesSchedule>



## Thrift Savings Plan (TSP)

Submitted by Lori Ruiz

### What is TSP?

The Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) is a retirement savings and investment plan for Federal employees and members of the uniformed services, including the Ready Reserve. It was established by Congress in the Federal Employees' Retirement System Act of 1986 and offers the same types of savings and tax benefits that many private corporations offer their employees under 401(k) plans. The TSP is a defined contribution plan, meaning that the retirement income you receive from your TSP account will depend on how much you (and your agency, if you are eligible to receive agency contributions) put into your account during your working years and the earnings accumulated over that time.

Most employees of the United States Government are eligible to participate in the Thrift Savings Plan. You are eligible if you are:

- A Federal Employees' Retirement System (FERS) employee (generally if you were hired on or after January 1, 1984), or
- A Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS) employee (generally if you were hired before January 1, 1984 and did not convert to FERS), or
- A member of the uniformed services (active duty or Ready Reserve), or
- A civilian in certain other categories of Government service

\*If you are not certain which retirement system you are covered under, you should check with your personnel or benefits office.

### Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) Plan News and Announcements

TSP Plan News and Announcements can be found under Home> What's New> Plan News and Announcement: <https://www.tsp.gov/whatsnew/Content/index.html>.

### Stick to Your Plan

The stock and bond markets can change rapidly. By the time you react to the situation, the market may be moving in the opposite direction, and you could miss out on significant gains. Remember that investing for retirement is for the long-term. Try not to let short-term market movements steer you off course. To learn more, please visit <https://www.tsp.gov/PlanningTools/InvestmentStrategy/sticktoyourplan/index.html>.

### Catch-up Contributions are Changing

Starting in January 2021, the process for catch-up contributions will be easier for TSP participants. If you're turning age 50 or older, you'll no longer need to make separate catch-up elections to your TSP account to contribute toward the catch-up limit.

Here's how it will work:

If you reach the IRS elective deferral or annual addition limit before the end of the year and keep saving, your contributions will automatically continue toward the catch-up limit.

Contributions spilling over toward the catch-up limit will qualify for the match on up to 5% salary.

The contribution amount you choose will continue each year unless you change it.

Learn how to make catch-up contributions: <https://www.tsp.gov/making-contributions/catch-up-contributions/>

## Are Classification and Qualifications the Same Thing?

Submitted by Lori Ruiz

"Classification" and "qualifications" are often confused; however, each has its own distinct function. Classification pertains to a position or job description and the evaluation process that determines the appropriate pay system, occupational series, title, and grade/pay band. The aspects of a position is the basis for determining the occupational series. Grade levels, however, are dependent upon specific details for example, level of knowledge required to perform the work, difficulty of the assigned work, level of responsibility in accomplishing the work, and availability of guidelines to perform the work.



Qualifications pertain to a person and describe the knowledge skills and/or abilities a person must have to be successful in a particular occupation. Qualifications are intended to identify applicants who are likely to perform successfully on the job, and to screen out those who are unlikely to do so. OPM publishes minimum qualifications for white collar jobs in the Federal service in the Operating Manual: Qualifications Standards for General Schedule Positions. For trades, craft, and labor positions, refer to The Job Qualifications System for Trades and Labor Occupations. HR specialists use these manuals to evaluate applicants for vacant positions in the Federal service. The classification standards, guidance, and various publications dealing with qualification requirements can be found on the OPM web site, <https://opm.gov/>.



### Where is your hometown?

San Antonio, TX

### Which Branch do you work for?

Branch D - Dynamic D

### How long have you been with the CPAC?

3 years

### What is your favorite part about working at the CPAC?

I enjoy the camaraderie of the CPAC. Eventually you get to meet and/or work with everyone in the organization.

### What is something most people would not know about you?

Before the pandemic, my husband and I were avid concert-goers, regularly going to various venues locally and also traveling out-of-town.

### What is it that you do that sets you apart in providing excellent customer service?

Excellent customer service is a vital part of our job, so I always treat all of my encounters with professionalism and efficiency. In addition, it is also important to develop great partnerships with both internal and external customers.

## How Does Labor Relations Apply to Me as the Supervisor and Employee?

Submitted by Cathy Guerra



At the heart of labor relations is the desire of both management and labor to create an efficient and effective organization. When this happens, management is planning, organizing, and directing work such that employees understand their roles and responsibilities in a way they can produce the desired outcomes and create a healthy work environment and strong working relationship amongst everyone. This gives the employees an opportunity to contribute and feel valued as part of a collective team. Labor Relations facilitates an ongoing relationship between an employer and union members (employees). The CPAC Labor Relations team provides advice and guidance to employees regarding work rules, employment laws, legal issues, and

any work situations. The FSH CPAC Labor Relations Team also assist with general management regarding developing, maintaining and improving employee relationships via communication, performance management, processing grievances and/or disputes as well as interpreting and conveying policies.

**Supervisors Role** - The role of the supervisor includes the following:

- Administer and effectively apply the Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA)
- Know the rights provided for management
- Consistently enforce standards of behavior
- Communicate objectively
- Role model desirable behavior
- Know and adhere to the legal rights of employees; e.g. Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO), American Disability Act (ADA), Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) and Weingarten Rights

**What is a Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA)?** A collective bargaining agreement represents the terms and conditions of employment of those employees represented by the bargaining unit. It defines both the rights of management and those of the represented employees.

**What are your rights as an employee?** All employees have basic rights in the workplace including fair compensation and freedom from discrimination.

**How does an employee find out if they are a Bargaining Union Employee (BUE)?** There are several ways this can be accomplished.

- Your bargaining status in block 37, of your SF-50 (if there are numbers such as 8888 and 7777 you are not in a bargaining unit.)
- Bargaining status should be on your position description

**What does this mean to you as a Bargaining Union Employee (BUE)?** In accordance with The Federal Service Labor-Management Relations Statute; each employee has the right to form, join, or assist any labor organization, or to refrain from any such activity, freely without fear of penalty or reprisal, and each employee shall be protected in the exercise of such right. Except, as otherwise provided under this chapter, such right includes the right:

- To act for a labor organization in the capacity of a representative and the right, in that capacity, to present the views of the labor organization to heads of agencies and other officials of the executive branch of the Government, the Congress, or other appropriate authorities, and
- To engage in collective bargaining with respect to conditions of employment through representatives chosen by employees.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding labor relations please contact your FSH CPAC Labor Relations Specialist Team, Robert Rodriguez, Catherine Guerra or Melba Viera @ usarmy.jbsa.hqda-cpac.mbx.labor@mail.mil

## The Importance of Training

Submitted by Anthony Jenkins and Sabrina Clay



The primary motivator for employee training is to improve productivity and performance. It provides employees with the expertise they need to fulfill their responsibilities and make a positive impact. The skills learned enable them to deliver a better product with a fast turnaround rate. It also gives employees a clear understanding of their roles and

responsibilities within the organization.

Involved employees have an increased level of productivity. Training engages employees and enables them to engage back, creating an environment that promotes two-way communication. Employees and trainers share work processes and their opinions on those processes, allowing both to gain and ensure there is a full understanding of what is being taught.

Training boosts a feeling of value in employees and improves growth. It shows the organization is committed to providing them with the resources needed to ensure they're doing a good job. In turn, they're more likely to enjoy their work and remain in your organization. It also supports them further in their career within the organization. The biggest benefit is the ability to hire from within which reduces recruiting time and other business costs.

Creating consistency within an organization is difficult to maintain but training helps reduce a disparity between teams. Each employee should have baseline knowledge of their individual and their organization's goals, which would put everyone on the same page. All employees receive the same training allowing them to share responsibility and they are aware of their role on the team.

Tracking training is very important to the organization and has two big advantages. First, you know if your employees are up to date with their training through the use of accurate reporting. Reports are a valuable tool if you have to prove training has taken place, such as compliance training. Tracking training also facilitates improved training for employees. It helps to identify which employees are and aren't engaged. Training plans can be adjusted based on findings, ensuring employees received better training.

An impactful aspect of employee training is its effect on an organization's growth. Well trained employees make more productive team members that deliver quality products and service to customers. This results in customer satisfaction which make employees feel they're making an impact. Training can be a powerful tool to assist in an organization's growth.



## Performance Improvement Plan (PIP)

Submitted by Andrew Faucett



Evaluating an employee's performance can be one of the most difficult tasks for any supervisor. More so, how do supervisors address poor performance? In many instances, poor performance can be addressed informally through oral and written counseling. But, if informal attempts fail to address the issue, a formal Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) may be necessary to correct the employee's performance.

Before you begin a formal PIP, you have to determine whether the employee's performance issue is due to their inability to perform or a refusal to perform assigned duties. These are dealt with differently and your servicing specialist within the L/MER Branch can assist you with making that determination. For this article, we will focus on "inability".

A Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) is designed to provide an employee with an opportunity to demonstrate an acceptable level of performance. The supervisor has the responsibility for providing feedback, clearly expressing his or her expectations, and the potential consequences of not meeting those expectations.

A Performance Improvement Plan is established based on the elements and standards of the employee's performance appraisal in DPMAP. The minimum requirement of time for a PIP is 30 days, however it can be extended if progress is made. At the expiration of the PIP, if acceptable performance is attained, the employee must maintain acceptable performance for the next twelve (12) months. However, if the employee is not successful, further action will be warranted.

The potential consequences for failing to successfully complete a PIP are reassignment, change to a lower grade, or removal from federal service. These consequences can also be enforced should the employee fail to maintain successful performance for next twelve (12) months.

For more information on the PIP process and requirements, please contact your servicing L/MER Specialist.

## Hail and Farewell



Tracy Flack  
Soye Kim



Milna Arroyo  
James Burns  
Tasha Escarmant  
Raymond Famania  
Anthony Gutierrez  
Robert Lopez  
Marcus Truley  
Venus Vandeventer

# SOCIAL SECURITY

## Collection of Payroll Tax Deferral

**For employees who had Social Security taxes deferred between September and December 2020, the collection will take place January through April 30, 2021.**

### BACKGROUND

Pursuant to IRS Notice 2020-65 and at the direction of the Office of Management and Budget and Office of Personnel Management, Social Security (Old Age, Survivors, and Disability Insurance) or “OASDI” tax withholdings were temporarily deferred from September through December 2020 and will be collected from wages paid between **January 1, 2021 and April 30, 2021**, for employees who had wages subject to OASDI of less than \$4,000 in any given pay period. These actions were in response to the Presidential Memorandum issued on August 8, 2020.

### KEY FACTS

- Per IRS guidance, the deferred taxes will be collected from your wages between **January and April 30, 2021**.
  - The total 2020 deferred taxes will be collected in **8 installments** beginning pay period ending January 16 through April 24, 2021.
- Beginning in January 2021, your myPay LES Remarks section will include the 2020 deferred OASDI collection amount as well as your remaining balance to be collected.
- The amount of OASDI deferred in 2020 can be calculated using your final 2020 LES and subtracting the OASDI year-to-date (deductions tab) from the OASDI year-to-date (benefits tab).
- If you separate, you will be responsible for any remaining unpaid portion of your deferred Social Security tax that cannot be collected prior to separation. The unpaid balance will either be collected from your final pay or you may receive a debt letter with instructions for repayment.
- Your 2020 W-2 will be issued in January.
  - Per IRS guidance, a Form W-2c (Corrected Wages and Tax Statement) will be issued after April 30, 2021 for employees who have 2020 deferred Social Security taxes collected from wages during 2021. Note, a Form W-2c may not be required for employees who separated in 2020.
  - **The issuance of this W-2c does not change the deadlines established by the IRS for filing your 2020 income tax returns.**

*If you have questions on tax filing, the IRS provided instructions for employees receiving a W-2c due to the Social Security tax deferral. See W-2 Reporting link below.*

### ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

If you have questions on the collection process:

- Visit the IRS page:
  - Tax Deferral Implementation: <https://www.irs.gov/newsroom/guidance-issued-to-implement-presidential-memorandum-deferring-certain-employee-social-security-tax-withholding>
  - W-2 Reporting: <https://www.irs.gov/forms-pubs/form-w-2-reporting-of-employee-social-security-tax-deferred-under-notice-2020-65>
- Visit the DFAS page: <https://www.dfas.mil/taxes/Social-Security-Deferral>

For more information on impacts of the payroll deferral, consult with a private financial advisor.



#### COLLECTION TIMEFRAME



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Submitted by Diana Kent

## What's the Latest on DCHRMS...

In the April/May and July 2020 DCHRMS bulletins we used home building as a metaphor for the development of DCHRMS, starting with the foundation and the framework, and building upon previous work until the project is complete.

The house building metaphor implies that there is a completed blueprint to be followed, but with DCHRMS development, that is not the case. The blueprint itself is continuously evolving as new functionality is delivered with each consecutive Conference Room Pilot (CRP).

With each CRP, component representatives are given the opportunity to test the functionality delivered to date and request changes and/or recommend improvements.  
–Delivered improvements may also need to be improved upon in a subsequent CRP.

No DCHRMS functionality is 100% complete to date, and is therefore still subject to changes before deployment.

In CRP 3 (Oct-Nov 2020), options were added to certain data fields to allow a user to select a temporary/placeholder value from the list of values. This improvement will allow the transaction to continue moving through the workflow without unnecessary delay, and users can go back and update those data values before the transaction is finalized.

After seeing this improvement, component reps requested changing certain placeholder values to something more intuitive. The updated values will be delivered in CRP 4 (Dec 2020).

The component reps will have their 2nd opportunity to review the placeholder values during CRP 4 and may request additional changes if necessary.

Finally, DCHRMS hasn't put a hold on new HR initiatives that can potentially impact our HR databases (both DCPDS and DCHRMS), for example, by adding or modifying data fields and/or introducing new data coding requirements.

–Example: recent changes to Position Sensitivity, Security Access, and Security Clearance Level coding on position builds.

New HR initiatives may or may not result in new Core HR requirements, and therefore may or may not impact the DCHRMS deployment timeline.

DoD still has a long way to go before DCHRMS is ready for deployment, but the more time and effort spent on developing (and perfecting!) the Core HR functionality, the more successful DCHRMS deployment will be.

## FSH CPAC OPERATING HOURS



Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, our staff is working virtually. Our doors are currently closed to walk-in customers until further notice. However, you may contact your servicing specialist directly via email or MS Teams. For additional information, questions, or inquiries please call (210) 221-1425.

We appreciate your patience and support during this time.