



THE ADVISOR NEWSLETTER

October 2018

Volume 11, Issue 2

POSITION CLASSIFICATION BASICS: CLARIFYING THE CLASSIFICATION PROCESS

- By James Burns

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We classify positions in order to ensure and be responsible for, fair and consistent treatment of employees in levels of responsibility and in pay. Classification also supports in projecting budgets, designing organizational structures, hiring, and other organizational responsibilities. In this respect, the public and private sectors are comparable. Where they diverge from one another is in the reasoning and the legality involved for classification of positions. In the Federal Government, the Congress has established the law governing classification and the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) has provided ways of employing these regulations. Specific positions are classified and the results of the classification - the determination of title, series, and grade - become the lawful foundation for paying an employee in that position. This became the "law of the land" in Chapter 51 of Title 5 U.S.C., as amended, enacted in 1949 regarding Classification of positions (Chapter 51, Classification). This law authorized each agency (e.g., an Executive agency) subject to the Act to take classification action on positions, for OPM to conduct post-audits for compliance, and for employees to appeal classification decisions, at OPM's discretion, directly to OPM, (i.e., making any decisions immediate and final with no option of further appeal).

Supervisors and managers are responsible for identifying the work to be performed; describing that work in Position Descriptions; and ensuring they have organizational structures that are proficient, cost-effective, and quick to respond to the needs of personnel and agency management. The classifier is responsible for determining that the posi-

tion does in fact meet a particular pay plan, series, or grade in reality and not just on paper. To begin to classify a position, the classifier collects background information about the position being evaluated and other positions in the organization where it is located. In addition, the classifier evaluates applicable classification standards. Classification may also include a site visit. This practice often consists of extensive research, investigation, reading, and may include several discussions with the supervisor of the position, the employee, other employees within the organization, or other organizations across the agency to fully understand the functions and duties of the position and the organization in which it resides.

Upon completion of the site visit, if a visit is required, and other fact finding efforts, the classifier begins "classifying" the position. By law, we must classify positions solely by comparing their current duties and responsibilities to OPM position classification standards and guidelines (5 U.S.C. §5106, and §5107). Since comparison to standards is the exclusive method for classifying positions, we cannot compare any particular position to other positions which may or may not be classified correctly. Furthermore, agencies must classify positions, like OPM, based on comparison to OPM position classification standards and guidelines. Section §511.612 of title 5, Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), requires that agencies review their own classification decisions for identical, similar, or related positions to assure consistency with OPM certificates. As a result, the agency has the primary responsibility for ensuring that its positions are classified con-

sistently with OPM appeal decisions. In accordance with The Classifier's Handbook, Chapter 5 page 39, Factors not considered in determining the grade level of a position are issues such as volume of work, financial need of the employee, salary comparability, quality of work, efficiency of performance, the employee's length of service, difficulty in recruiting for the occupation, or duties performed only in the absence of another employee. Other areas of the personnel management system take these considerations into account. Performance and incentive awards, the merit promotion plan, periodic step increases, and special pay rates, for example, are all tools used to deal with issues not properly resolved through the classification of positions.

The process can be lengthy and is not to be considered a quick turnaround, especially in the event a position is written to claim knowledge levels above the norm for their organizational placement within an agency, in situations where it is "encumbered", or when someone is claiming that there has been an accretion of duties, of which is the Classifier's decision or whomever has been delegated the authority to classify the position. The process may take less time when the work is common in the organization and the classifier has evaluated similar positions before in that organization. It takes more time if the PD is not well written, does not accurately reflect the responsibilities of the job, or numerous other issues. Please be assured that any advisory will be thorough and will be prepared in a way that will assist you in the event it is selected in any potential OPM Audits.



Safeguarding Personally Identifiable Information (PII)

- By Diana Kent

As a Department of Army employee, safeguarding Personally Identifiable Information (PII) and protecting information that has been entrusted to your organization is every employee's responsibility. In many instances, one of our primary methods of communication is via e-mail. It is important that e-mail containing PII be encrypted. It is also important to note that PII can be in hard copy (paper

copy files) or electronic format, stored on personal computers, lap-tops, and personal electronic devices such as black-berries or other smart devices.

PII is information that identifies, links, relates, or unique to, or describes the individual, such as name, SSN, date and place of birth, mother's maiden name, biometric records, home phone numbers, other demographic, per-

sonnel, medical, and financial information, or any other PII which is linked or linkable to a specified individual. This definition of PII is not anchored to any single category of information or technology. Non-PII can become PII when information is publicly available and when combined could identify an individual.

Remember safeguarding PII is critically important. If

you have any questions regarding the safeguarding of PII, contact your organization's Information Assurance Support Officer (IASO) or your Security Manager.



UNIFORMED SERVICES EMPLOYMENT AND REEMPLOYMENT RIGHTS ACT (USERRA)

- By Jan Barnard

Is there a law governing a service member's right to reemployment after completion of military training or service?

Yes. Since 1940, there has been such a law, known as the Veterans' Reemployment Rights (VRR). On October 13, 1994, President Clinton signed the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act – a comprehensive revision of the VRR, USERRA became fully effective December 12, 1994, and is contained in Title 38, United States Code, at chapter 43. (Sections 4301 through 4333)

Basic protections provided by USERRA:

- Prohibits discrimination in initial employment, reemployment, retention in employment, promotion, or any benefit of employment due in any part

to a person's past, present, or future military service, status, or obligations; prohibits discrimination or retaliation in employment against any person because such person;

- (1) has taken an action to enforce a USERRA protection
- (2) has testified or otherwise made a statement in or in connection with any USERRA proceeding
- (3) has assisted or otherwise participated in a USERRA investigation, or
- (4) has exercised a USERRA right

- Provides benefits during the performance of military service such as health plan coverage and other non-seniority benefits (e.g., life insurance, holiday pay); provides for prompt restoration to employment with the pre-service employer as well as restoration of seniority-based benefits.

For more information regarding rights under USERRA, you can visit the Department of Labor website at: http://www.dol.gov/vets/programs/userra/userra_fs.htm



THE PATHWAYS PROGRAM

- By Hilda Alvarado

On December 27, 2010, President Obama signed Executive Order 13562, entitled "Recruiting and Hiring Students and Recent Graduates". The Executive Order was signed to address the recruitment and hiring of students and recent graduates to advance the competitiveness within the Federal Government. Three programs were established with the President's Executive Order, the Internship Program and the Recent Graduates Program known as The Pathways Program.

The first program is the Internship Program for current students. The program was created to replace the Student Career Experience Program (SCEP) and the Student Temporary Employment Program (STEP). The Internship program affords

students in high school, colleges, trade schools and other qualifying educational institutions with paid opportunities to work in agencies and explore Federal careers while completing their education.

The second program, the Recent Graduates Program, recruits people who have recently graduated from a qualifying educational institutions or programs with an associates, bachelors, masters, professional, doctorate, vocational or technical degree or certificate (2 years from the date the graduate completed an academic course of study). The program provides graduates with developmental experiences in the Federal Government. Applicants must apply within the previous two years of degree or certificate, except for veterans precluded from do-

ing so due to their military service obligation, who have up to six years after degree or certificate completion to apply.

The third program, The Presidential Management Fellows (PMF). The PMF Program has been the Federal Government's premier leadership development program for advanced degree (e.g., masters or professional degree) candidates for more than three decades. This program expands the eligibility window for applicants, making it more "student friendly" by aligning it with academic calendars and allowing those who have received a qualifying advanced degree within the preceding two years to participate. It also directs OPM to set eligibility requirements and minimum qualification standards, and to make the

PMF experience more robust and substantive for participants.

The programs are primarily administered by each hiring agency. Each of the programs provide current students and recent graduates an opportunity to consider and explore Federal careers. For more information on the Pathways Programs please visit <https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/hiring-information/students-recent-graduates/#url=Program-Fact-Sheets>



The 1st day of autumn 2018 in Northern Hemisphere will be on Sunday, September 23. And the last day of autumn 2018 will be on Friday, December 21.





With the upcoming mid-term elections, it is important for all federal civilian employees and their supervisors to be reminded of the rules and legal limitations concerning participation in political activities.

In addition to the summary below of permitted and protected activities, the following websites contain guidance for federal employees on this topic:

U.S. Office of Special Counsel, Hatch Act, <<https://osc.gov/Pages/HatchAct.aspx>>

The list of prohibited activity includes “engaging in political activity while on duty, in a government office or building, while wearing an official uniform, or using a government vehicle.” This prohibition includes displaying political material such as buttons, T-Shirts, bumper stickers, etc. while on duty, in a government office or building, or using a government vehicle. However, the Hatch Act does not prohibit employees from placing bumper stickers on their privately-owned vehicles.

PERMITTED AND PROHIBITED ACTIVITIES FOR EMPLOYEES WHO MAY ENGAGE IN PARTISAN ACTIVITY:

MAY be candidates for public office in nonpartisan elections

MAY register and vote as they choose

MAY assist in voter registration drives

MAY express opinions about candidates and issues

MAY contribute money to political organizations

MAY attend political fundraising functions

MAY attend and be active at political rallies and meetings

MAY join and be an active member of a political party or club

MAY sign nominating petitions

POLITICAL ACTIVITY AND CIVILIAN EMPLOYEES HATCH ACT REMINDER

- By Jan Barnard

MAY campaign for or against referendum questions, constitutional amendments, municipal ordinances

MAY campaign for or against candidates in partisan elections

MAY make campaign speeches for candidates in partisan elections

MAY distribute campaign literature in partisan elections

MAY hold office in political clubs or parties including serving as a delegate to a convention

MAY NOT use their official authority or influence to interfere with an election

MAY NOT solicit, accept or receive political contributions unless both individuals are members of the same federal labor organization or employee organization and the one solicited is not a subordinate employee

MAY NOT knowingly solicit or discourage the political activity of any person who has business before the agency

MAY NOT engage in political activity while on duty

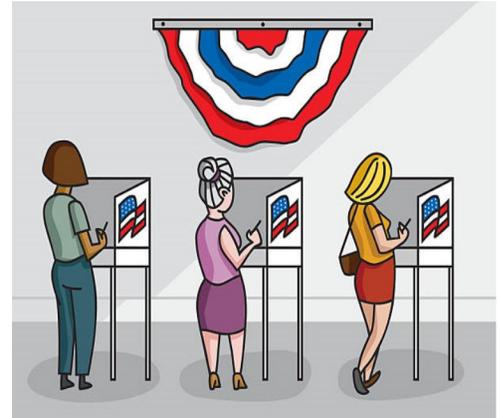
MAY NOT engage in political activity in any government office

MAY NOT engage in political activity while wearing an official uniform

MAY NOT engage in political activity while using a government vehicle

MAY NOT be candidates for public office in partisan elections

MAY NOT wear political buttons on duty





FEDERAL EMPLOYEES HEALTH BENEFITS OPEN



Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB) open season is the time of year to ensure that you have the right health, dental, or vision insurance coverage for you and your family. This year's FEHB open season begins November 12, 2018 and will end December 10, 2018.

During the Open Season, FEHB enrollees can change their health-care coverage. Employees who are not enrolled, but eligible to participate, may elect coverage. For more information on eligibility, enrollment, plan comparison, premium information and much more, visit the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) website: <https://www.opm.gov/healthcare-insurance>

This year's Health Benefits Fairs are being held on October 24, 2018 at the Warfighter and Family Center, 2010 Stanley Road, Bldg. 2797 and October 25, 2018 at the San Antonio Military Medical Center (SAMMC) Medical Mall. Health fairs are open to current and retired civilian federal employees. Representatives will be on-site to discuss various insurance options.

HAIL and FAREWELL

Welcome

Patricia Chaplin
Steve Gonzalez
Corina Berwick



Farewell

Daniel Jennings
Dan Cook
Tonia Littlejohn
Shannon Franklin
Lori Ruiz
Franco Ruiz



Retired

Jan Bernard



WHAT'S HAPPENING



Ms. Tonia Littlejohn, HR Specialist, received a coin from DENTAC Commander, COL Olpinski for a job well done!

What's Happening

Ms. Janette Barnard, CPAC HR Specialist (Employee/Labor Relations) retired from Federal Government after 38+ years!



Human Resources Training for Supervisors Course



The FSH CPAC presents an HR topic to Fort Sam Houston Supervisors of Army Civilian employees during the 21-23 Aug 2018, HR Training for Supervisors course. The HR Training for Supervisors course is held quarterly. To learn more, contact CPAC HR Development Specialist, Mr. Steve Gonzalez at 210-221-9345.



Ms. Tonia Littlejohn received special recognition from her customer, MEDCOM.

JBSA HIRING HEROES CAREER FAIR



The DoD/DCPAS and Joint Base San Antonio (JBSA)502nd FSG, BAMC WTB and the SFAC sponsored the Hiring Heroes Career Fair on September 19, 2018 at the JBSA Ft. Sam Houston Community Center. The employers who attended were from various DoD, Federal, and Private sector organizations. The Fort Sam Houston (FSH) Civilian Personnel Advisory Center (CPAC) did an excellent job of sharing their expertise, providing resources, addressing concerns, and answering questions with attendees. The next Hiring Heroes

Career Fair is scheduled for March 20, 2019 at the JBSA Community Center, 1395 Chaffee Rd., Joint JBSA Ft. Sam Houston, TX 78234 from 0900 - 1400. The DoD Hiring Heroes Program provides continuing outreach, recruitment assistance products and services to wounded, ill, injured and transitioning Service members, Veterans, spouses and primary caregivers through organizing and conducting specialized career fairs to increase awareness of job opportunities. The Hiring Heroes Career Fair website is <http://godefense.cpmms.osd.mil/veterans/hiringheroes.aspx>.

Chat with a Career Counselor at <http://godefense.cpmms.osd.mil/absolutels/UserForm.aspx?busy=true&deptid=&userid> Tuesdays and Thursdays, from 12:30 pm to 2:30 pm EST.



From left to right: Estella Harris, Daniel Moore and Deonece Acfalle-Deleon



2018 CPAC Annual Holiday Open House

Come one, come all!

Our Annual Holiday Open House is soon approaching. We invite our customers to join us:

Date: 29 Nov 2018

Time: 1:00 p.m.— 3:00 p.m.

Place: 2438 Stanley Rd., Bldg. 144

Refreshments will be served.

For more information, call 210-221-0093.



2018 CPAC Holiday Party

CPAC team members, mark your calendars for our annual Holiday Party.

Date: 4 Dec 2018

Time: 11:00 a.m.— 4:00 p.m.

Place: FSH Community Center

Customers, Please Note: The CPAC will be closed during this time so that our team members can enjoy an afternoon of holiday celebration.



CIVILIAN
PERSONNEL
ADVISORY CENTER



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Fort Sam Houston, TX. 78234

Phone: (210) 221-1425

Fax: (210) 221-1015



<https://www.samhouston.army.mil/cpac/index.aspx>



<https://www.facebook.com/Ft-Sam-Houston-Civilian-Personnel-Advisory-Center-217123538373277/>



<https://twitter.com/FSHCPAC>



usarmy.jbsa.hqda-cpac.mbx.inquiry@mail.mil

CPAC 2018 MENTORSHIP PROGRAM

The FSH CPAC is re-initiating the Mentorship Program. The program will focus on improving and developing a leadership mindset. This six-month program begins in December 2018 and continues through May 2019 with a kick-off meeting in November 2018. This is a worthwhile opportunity to assist in realizing your professional potential by taking ownership of your development.

The program is open to FSH CPAC team members who are not in a Supervisory or ACTEDS position.

Applications are currently being accepted through 15 October 2018. For more information, please contact either Diana Inkel, diana.inkel.civ@mail.mil, 221-0093 or Steve Gonzalez, steven.gonzalez21.civ@mail.mil, 221-0466.

FSH CPAC OPERATING HOURS



The Fort Sam Houston (FSH) Civilian Personnel Advisory Center (CPAC) operating business hours are from 0800 -1500. Anything outside the FSH CPAC core business hours will always be supported. However, we ask that an appointment or prior coordination be made accordingly. For additional information, questions, or inquiries please call (210) 221-1425.

The FSH CPAC is closed for training on the first Thursday of each month from 1400 -1600. We appreciate your patience and support during this time. The FSH CPAC staff will return phone calls and emails the next business day.

DIRECTOR'S CORNER

I arrived a year ago to a great CPAC team and many supportive Army organizations. I would like take a few minutes to say thank you to the CPAC staff and the FSH Army community for the outstanding year. The FSH CPAC staff has made great strides to reduce HR time 48.19 days down to 38.92 days. Together we have reduced hiring timelines from FY17 average of 170.46 days down to the FY18 average of 138.03 days; a reduction of 32.43 days. We are working to reduce this even further in FY19. We have piloted some programs that have yielded great results and provided feedback on where we could improve. Together we have made a difference in HR servicing.



As many of you may know, we (CHRA) have been under a hiring freeze for the entire FY18 year and I expect that to end sometime in FY19. As CHRA and the Army continue its review of CHRA's structure, we are still focused on our primary mission, you - our customer. We will continue to build flexibilities and our "Excellence through Partnership" to continue to reduce the hiring timeline and improve service. As I visit units or receive feedback, I am looking forward to FY19 and to build upon the success we experienced this year.

Sincerely,

Norman Fernaays

Director, FSH CPAC