



# THE ADVISOR NEWSLETTER

October 2019

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## CPAC Leadership Corner

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### “Changing with the Times”

We have heard the word “change” so much lately, especially within the government. There always seems to be another reorganization, upsizing, downsizing, streamlining or just plain old changes within the organization. Many of us as supervisors, managers, and leaders within our organizations hear about these changes first. Whether you have the official job title of “supervisor” or not, most of us have to deal with change, whether we like it or not. If you are a supervisor or a lead within your office, you might feel more stress because you feel responsible for the change that is happening (or going to happen) within your organization. How will you tell your teams? How will they react? Most good leaders within an organization will communicate that change is coming. Really good leaders will also be upfront and as transparent as they can be with describing the change (or what they know about it at the time). Sounds pretty easy doesn't it? We all know that it is not easy, and it can be difficult to communicate what's coming down the road.....especially if WE don't know all the specifics ourselves about what is coming down the road yet.

So what are some ways we can try and manage that change?

- Remember that it's all about understanding that change starts with YOU
- It's about taking risks, being innovative, doing something different
- It's about understanding that change will happen
- It's about understanding hard work and what you want from it
- It's about controlling your stressors



Within our CPAC, our summers are typically fast paced for us. We usually see a surge of hiring requests leading into the new fiscal year. This year has been different due to a self-imposed hiring pause by some of our larger medical customers (they are changing and/or anticipating change). In an effort to maximize the output and reduce fill times, we have been working our non-medical (OMA) actions differently this summer. For the last 90 days, we have been tasking work to a Specialist for action regardless of their assigned organization. Therefore, many of our customers have experienced working with various HR point of contacts for their “Request for Personnel Actions (RPAs) this summer. Our goal is to expedite their hiring as quickly as possible by using every available HR Specialist to move actions. Our work movement project has reduced our collective end to end fill time by approximately 25 days this summer. Many of our customers have expressed concerns with having various specialists work their actions. As part of this change, we would like to assure our customers that we are actively communicating internally in an attempt to make sure they are receiving the same standard of service as before. This is a firsthand example of change, how we are trying to manage it and offer options.

No matter what job you have, or what your position is, change is going to happen, but it's about how you will deal with it. You either will fight the change, or you will try and deal with it to the best of your ability. Remember, “Your attitude determines your direction.”





## Establishment of “Deputy” or “Assistant Chief” Positions

- Submitted by James Burns

Everyone wants a deputy! However, it's not always supportable. In the normal course of a week the CPAC receives several requests or inquires to establish “deputy” or “assistant chief” positions within organizations. There are times where this may be warranted, however by and large the majority of the time it is not. This is often-times predicated by the requester having not read the Army Regulation (AR) 570-4, the U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) standards and certifications, or both.

AR 570-4 states, *“The use of deputies will be limited to circumstances where the military or civilian head of an organization is frequently absent on official duties (and no other subordinate can serve in an acting capacity) or where the workload of the military or civilian head justifies the additional position. MA-COM approval is required to establish a deputy position.”* It also states *“Assistant-to-the-chief, special assistant, special project officer, or like positions, will not be used.”*

Additionally, there are several instances where OPM has provided guidance in appeals, digests, and the standards themselves concerning the establishment, identification, and use of “deputy” and “assistant chief” positions within the federal government to help with understanding.

Per the GS Supervisory Guide (GSSG) and the Classifier's Handbook, OPM defines a “deputy” as a position that serves as an alter ego to a manager of high rank or level and either fully shares with the manager the direction of all phases of the organization's program or is assigned continuing responsibility for managing a major part of the manager's program when the total authority for the organization is equally divided between the manager and the deputy. A deputy's opinion or direction is treated as if given by the chief.

The “deputy” concept used in the GSSG is intended to cover a limited number of positions that fit one of two very specific

situations. The first situation is the traditional organizational arrangement where a position is designated as a full assistant to the organization head and shares in the management of the entire organization. This “alter ego” arrangement requires that the deputy be authorized to make management decisions affecting the organization without prior clearance by the chief. The second situation describes an organizational arrangement where the chief and the deputy have responsibility for management of an equal (or nearly equal) portion of the total organization.

Only one position in an organization can reasonably meet the GSSG definition of “deputy.” Positions which do not share fully in the direction of the entire organization or direct an equal half of the total organization do not meet the guide's definition of “deputy.” OPM specifically excludes administrative, personal, or general staff assistants to managers, and positions at lower organizational or program segment levels that primarily involve performing super-

visory duties. When warranted, it is also anticipated that a chief position which has a deputy is in charge of a staff of substantial size and, often, multiple subordinate units.

So now knowing the aforementioned information concerning the establishment of “deputy” or “assistant chief” positions, which can be easily and readily be found, it is hoped that adherence to Army Regulations and OPM standards and certifications can more readily be accomplished.



## SF-813, Crediting Military Retiree Service Time

- Submitted by Tony Gutierrez

Which periods of service do military retirees receive credit for in regards to leave accrual and Service Computation Date (SCD)? If campaign or expedition dates are not listed on the DD 214 can military retirees still receive credit for this service? How are these campaign or deployment dates verified? Military retirees only accrue service time in certain situations. Some military retirees are uncertain of which service is creditable. They will say, "My service credit was not accurately applied at the time of my appointment; or my buddy got credit for this similar situation and I didn't...etc."

The most common scenario in which a military retiree will get credit for all military service is when retirement is based on a disability that either resulted from an injury or disease received in the line of duty, as a direct

result of armed conflict, or was caused by an instrumentality of war and was incurred in the line of duty during a period of war as defined in 38 U.S.C. 101 (11).

Military retirees can also receive partial service credit for service in the armed forces during a war or in a campaign or expedition for which a campaign badge has been authorized. The DD 214 is used to determine creditable service for a retiree. There are some instances when the start and end dates for Campaigns or Deployments, which vary from service to service and from time period to time period, are not listed on the DD214.

A SF 813 *Verification of a Military Retiree's Service In NonWartime Campaigns or Expeditions* would be used to de-



termine the dates for creditable service of a retiree. The military retiree will fill out blocks 1-7 of the form. After the form is completed, it should be sent to CPAC for review. The form will ultimately be reviewed and verified by the records center for the component for which the retiree served. If you have additional questions about the SF 813 or service time that may be creditable please contact your HR Specialist.

For more information on how to complete the SF 813: [https://www.opm.gov/forms/pdf\\_fill/sf813.pdf](https://www.opm.gov/forms/pdf_fill/sf813.pdf)



**Where is your hometown?**

San Antonio, TX

**Which Branch do you work for?**

L/MER

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

I've been working here two months.

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

The diversity, opportunities and team building.

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

I love to hunt and fish.

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

Listening to the customer and providing accurate information and service.



## Thrift Savings Plan Change

- Submitted by Steve Gonzalez



The Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) has eliminated the six-month suspension of TSP contributions for participants who have taken a financial hardship in-service withdrawal. Implementation of this rule changed on September 15, 2019, at the same time that withdrawal changes related to the TSP Modernization Act of 2017 took effect.

### Key Points to Note:

- Any participant who received a financial hardship in-service withdrawal and is suspended from contributing to the TSP will be able to re-start TSP contributions effective September 15, 2019, even though the participant may not have completed the six-month suspension period.
- Participants whose TSP contributions were suspended as a result of a financial hardship in-service withdrawal will receive a TSP notice alerting them that they can resume contributions as of September 15, 2019. Restarting TSP contributions is the participant's responsibility.
- Participants and agencies will still need to follow current procedures to resume contributions by having the participant access their employer pay system, or by completing Form TSP-1, Election Form. The TSP Bulletin 19-3 announcing this change is posted on the ABC-C website (temporary site location): <https://portal.chra.army.mil/abc/>.



## 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 11, 2019 and will end December 9, 2019.

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 November 12, 2019 at the Warfighter and Family Center, 2010 Stanley Road, Bldg. 2797 and November 13, 2019 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.

## The Difference Between Eligibility and Qualifications and the Importance of Both

- Submitted by Dora Garcia-Meza

Being a federal employee doesn't mean you're eligible and/or qualified for every federal job, so it's important to understand:

- **What is eligibility**
- **Why is eligibility important**
- **What are qualifications**
- **Why are qualifications important**
- **How do I know if I'm eligible for a job**
- **How do I know if I'm qualified for a job**

Understanding this will help you know which jobs you're eligible or qualified for and may prevent you from spending time on jobs for which you may not meet eligibility or qualifications. Being eligible for a job is different from being qualified for a job.

### What is eligibility?

Eligibility, in the federal hiring process, refers to being part of a particular group of people that an agency wants to hire – whether it's a current federal employee, a veteran, or a recent graduate. There are several different eligibilities in the Federal Government. To find out if you meet eligibility requirements, click on the link for Proof of Eligibility on the job announcement.

For example, some jobs are only open to current or former federal employees—this means you must be a current or former federal employee to be **eligible**. Other jobs may be open to a current student or recent graduate—if you're not a current student or recent graduate, you don't meet the eligibility requirement.

### Why is eligibility important?

Understanding your eligibility will help you know which jobs you should apply to. You can apply to any job, but **you may not be eligible for the job if you don't fall into one of the required "Eligibilities" listed on the job announcement**. If you do not fall under any of those eligibilities listed on the job announcement, you will not be considered. Your eligibility has nothing to do with your work experience, skills, and other qualifications.

### What are qualifications?

Qualifications include your work experience (years, type of work), skills, education level and your overall knowledge of a particular field of study. The hiring agency will look at your qualifications after they determine your eligibility. The hiring agency will rank you based on how well you meet the qualifications of the job. Regardless of your qualifications, again, if you're not eligible or do not fall under any of those eligibilities listed on the job announcement you will not be considered.

### Why are qualifications important?

If you are a job seeker or considering a change of career, your resume should always reflect the qualifications requirements for the job announcement you are applying to. Each job you apply for may require you to make small changes and tweaks, so your most relevant qualifications and work experience stand out. While a potential employer may look favorably on the education you've completed, it's not the only factor which affects their decision. Hiring is a complex process and employers consider many different points when considering candidates to fill their positions.

### How do I know if I'm eligible for a job?

#### **Before you apply:**

You must read the **"This job is open to"** and **"Who may apply"** sections of the job announcement to see if you're eligible for the job. If you fall into one of the "Eligibilities" listed, you're eligible for the job.

### How do I know if I'm qualified?

#### **Before you apply:**

You must read the **Qualifications** and **Specialized Experience** and if applicable, the "Time in Grade" section of the job announcement. Your application **MUST** show you have the specialized experience, education, and other qualifications listed in the job announcement.

#### **After you apply:**

The agency will determine if you're eligible for the job and will review your qualifications and rank you based on how well you meet the qualifications. The agency may rank you as "minimally qualified", "highest qualified", or somewhere in between. Based on how well you meet the qualifications, your application may, or may not, continue through the application process.



Anisa Ainsworth  
Tasha Escarmant  
Tracy Foreman  
Roberto Gonzalez  
Joseph Hammonds  
Mario Hernandez  
Jackie Hill  
Irma Martinez  
Melba Viera  
Laporcha Williams

### Hail and Farewell



Corina Berwick  
Steve Gonzalez  
Raul Guevara  
Luis Montanez  
Troy Phillips  
Diana Robinson



- Autumn, also known as fall in North American English, is one of the four temperate seasons.
- Autumn is the transition season between summer and winter, best noticed by the color change in leaves and the harvest.
- The date of the beginning of autumn varies according to climate, tradition and culture, but when it is autumn in the Northern Hemisphere, it is spring in the Southern Hemisphere, and vice versa.
- In the Northern Hemisphere autumn lasts from the autumnal equinox (September 22 or 23) to the Winter Solstice (21 or 22 December). In the Southern Hemisphere, autumn lasts from March until June.
- The 1st day of autumn 2019 in Northern Hemisphere will be on Monday, September 23rd. And the last day of autumn 2019 will be on Sunday, December 22nd.



# WHAT'S HAPPENING

## HR Training for Supervisory Class — July 2019



## CPAC's Social Committee Pancake Breakfast - May 2019



## CPAC Staff Participated in AMEDD's Mock Training— Sept 2019



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[usarmy.jbsa.hqda-cpac.mbx.inquiry@mail.mil](mailto:usarmy.jbsa.hqda-cpac.mbx.inquiry@mail.mil)



- Submitted by Diana Kent

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

#### New Deployment Schedule:

One of the most significant updates regarding DCHRMS is that the deployment has been delayed and now scheduled for July 2020. This additional time will allow DCHRMS Workgroup professionals sufficient time to mitigate any remaining critical gaps; develop and deliver Business Rules and User Training; and to complete the 2020 annual pay adjustments and the DPMAP performance appraisal prior to migration to DCHRMS.

#### What's Next:

In addition to the DCHRMS Workgroups developing training materials, the HR professionals with the Defense Civilian Personnel Advisory Service (DCPAS) are busy working on communication and training plans. This includes DCHRMS videos and roadshows as well as Train-the Trainer (T3) training plans. To learn more visit the DCPAS, DCHRMS website at <https://www.dcpas.osd.mil/OD/DCHRMS>.

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### 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.

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