

# Nashville District Human Resources Newsletter "News You Can Use"

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The purpose of this newsletter is to keep Nashville District employees informed about personnel issues, concerns, and topics. You are encouraged to review the information and disseminate to your organization. If there are particular areas of interest that you would like to see addressed in future issues, an article of general interest, or general comments, please contact John Restey at 615-736-5538 or [John.G.Restey@lrn02.usace.army.mil](mailto:John.G.Restey@lrn02.usace.army.mil).

## Upcoming Events:

- ✓ **Federal Employee Health Benefits Open Season—10- November-8 December**
- ✓ **TSP CATCH UP--NOW UNTIL 13 December 2003**
- ✓ **TSP Open Season –15 October 2003-31 December 2003**

## General News:

### Temporary Promotion

A temporary promotion is the temporary assignment of an employee to a higher graded position for a specified period of time, with the employee returning to his/her permanent position upon the expiration of the temporary action. **In order for an employee to be temporarily promoted, he/she must meet the same qualification requirements that are necessary for a permanent promotion.** The temporarily promoted employee receives the higher graded salary for the period assigned and gains quality experience and time-in-grade at the higher grade level.

Temporary promotions are intended for meeting temporary needs of the agency's work program when necessary services cannot be provided by other means. Temporary promotions can be used to:

- fill temporary positions
- accomplish project work
- fill positions temporarily pending reorganization or downsizing

- or meet other temporary needs

The initial 120 days of a temporary promotion may be made noncompetitively, which means the selected employee does not have to compete with other employees for the temporary assignment. All time spent on noncompetitive temporary promotions and details to higher graded positions during the preceding 12 months counts toward the 120-day total. **If the temporary promotion is extended beyond 120 days, competition is required.**

The maximum time period for a temporary promotion is 5 years, unless the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) authorizes the agency to make and/or extend it for a longer period. A temporary promotion that was originally made under competitive procedures can be extended up to 5 years without further competition.

A temporary promotion may be made permanent without further competition provided the temporary promotion was originally made under competitive procedures and the fact that it might lead to a permanent promotion was made known to all potential candidates.

## **IMPORTANT W-2 INFORMATION**

Effective September 17, 2003, all current myPay military users and Defense Finance and Accounting Service (DFAS) civilian employees who request or already have a myPay Personal Identification Number (PIN) and access myPay are consenting to receive only an electronic W-2. They may, however, elect to receive a hardcopy W-2. All other Department of Defense (DoD) civilian employees who use myPay may elect to receive an electronic W-2 in lieu of a hardcopy W-2 through the myPay system.

## **Health and Benefits:**

### **TSP Open Season**

The TSP Open Season has begun and will run until 31 December 2003. FERS employees can elect up to 14% and CSRS employees can elect up to 9% of their base pay. To make a change, go the Army Benefits Web Site, <https://www.abc.army.mil> and click on the Benefits/EBIS button.

### **TSP Catch-Up - 2004**

TSP catch-up contributions are additional tax-deferred contributions available to TSP participants age 50 and older who meet the eligibility requirements. If you are an eligible Army civilian employee, you may enroll by selecting the Benefits/EBIS button on the Army Benefits Web Site.

If you are planning for 2004, the first pay period you can make your elections to be effective for pay received during 2004 is the pay period starting 30 November. Since the pay received for that pay period is actually January 2004, that is the first pay period that

elections can be made for the new year. The elections will be effective on 14 December. The maximum amount of contributions for 2004 has increased to \$3,000.

### **Federal Health Employee Benefits**

The 2004 FEHB Open Season runs until 8 December 2003. To make a change, please click on the Benefits/EBIS button on the Army Benefits Web Site.

### **ABC Transaction Receipts**

It is important that when you make benefit elections thru the Army Benefits Center website that you print out a copy of your ABC Transaction Receipt of pending actions. That way if the effective date comes and deductions are not taken out of your LES, you can provide a copy of the printed benefit transaction receipt to your CSR (Customer Service Rep) in Payroll to find out thru DFAS why the appropriate deduction was not taken out.

### **Federal Long Term Care Insurance Program (FLTCIP)**

If you have questions about the Federal Long Term Care Insurance Program (FLTCIP), or your deductions or premiums, Long Term Care Partners has dedicated staff available during convenient hours to answer questions. You can contact the Long Term Care Partners at 1-800-LTC-FEDS (1-800-582-3337) (TTY 1-800-843-3557). They are available Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 7 p.m., Eastern Time.

If you are currently enrolled in the FLTCIP on payroll deductions and are planning to transfer to another federal agency or retire, you must contact Long Term Care Partners so that they can begin requesting deductions from the new payroll/annuity location. Deductions do not automatically transfer to the gaining agency/retirement system as they do with Federal Employees' Health Benefits (FEHB) and Federal Employees' Group Life Insurance (FEGLI) premiums.

You should contact Long Term Care Partners as soon as you know the specifics of when and where you will be transferring. Depending on when you contact Long Term Care Partners, they may not be able to get a payroll deduction changed over in time for the first paycheck at the new agency. If that's the case, you will receive a direct bill from Long Term Care Partners for the premiums due that were not collected through payroll deduction.

Premiums for FLTCIP coverage cannot be deducted from the annuities of employees retiring under CSRS or FERS while they are receiving interim payments (sometimes called "special pay"). This means that until OPM finalizes their annuities, Long Term Care Partners must bill them directly for the premiums due. It is important that employees promptly pay bill(s) they receive to keep their FLTCIP coverage current.

Additional information is available on Frequently Asked Questions and Featured Questions sections of the FLTCIP web site at [www.opm.gov/insure/ltc](http://www.opm.gov/insure/ltc).

## **Leave and Earnings Statement (LES) Changes:**

DFAS will implement a change in how it prints the Leave and Earnings Statements (LES) effective with the pay period that ends 24 January 2004 so only the last 4 digits of the employee's Social Security Number will be printed on the LES. This is to help protect against identify theft. The whole SSN will still be on the electronic LES printed from the MyPay web site.

## **Court and Military Leave**

Employees are required to submit documentation when they are called for court service or when they are ordered to report for military leave. For court service, a copy of the court order, subpoena, or summons must be presented to the supervisor in advance and a copy of a certificate of attendance from the clerk of court must be submitted upon completion. For military leave, a copy of the orders directing him or her to military duty and a certified verification of attendance indicating completion of training duty upon return to duty. These documents are to be forwarded to the CSR in a reasonable time. A reasonable time is hereby defined to be 30 days. If documentation is not received within 30 days, the CSR will notify the supervisor and the employee that the leave will be converted to annual leave. If annual leave is not available, DCPS will go through the normal leave conversion, as defined in DOD 7000.14-R, Volume 8, Table 5-2 (Leave Conversion Matrix), and use any credit/comp time available before it reverts to leave without pay.

## **Planning on Retiring Soon**

The ABC-C strongly suggests that you initiate your retirement process by submitting your application 120 days in advance of your retirement date. Please note that retirement is not an "electronic" process - you must complete a retirement package and mail to the ABC-C.

To assist ABC-C in processing timely retirements, it is important that managers forward the Request for Personnel Action (RPA) to the ABC-C Inbox as soon as the retirement action is submitted by the employee. Please help us help you by reminding your manager to submit your personnel action as soon as you submit your retirement action to the ABC-C.

## **Food For Thought:**

Two antennas meet on a roof, fall in love and get married. The ceremony wasn't much but the reception was great.

