

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@lrm02.usace.army.mil.

Upcoming Events:

- ✓ **Federal Employee Health Benefits Open Season—1- November-8 December**
- ✓ **TSP CATCH UP--NOW UNTIL 13 December 2003**
- ✓ **TSP Open Season –15 October 2003-31 December 2003**

General News:

Help for Injured Federal Employees

President Bush has signed into law H.R. 978 <http://capwiz.com/govexec/issues/bills/?bill=1586036>, a bill that will help employees in the Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS) who suffer a disability on the job.

Under FERS, 1% of an employee's salary is set-aside for retirement. The two bills aim to help employees who become disabled and are unable to make Social Security or TSP contributions by increasing the amount set aside to 2 % while they are receiving disability payments. This is designed to keep the accrual of an employee's retirement benefits in line with what they would have been had the individual not been injured. Taken from govexec.com by Tanya Ballard

Salary Council Calls for 1.4% Locality Pay Raise In 2004

Federal employees would receive a 2.7 % salary increase and a 1.4 % locality pay increase in 2004 under a recommendation approved by the Federal Salary Council. In Aug, President Bush announced he would hold the white-collar pay raise to 2 % in 2004

because of budget constraints and national security needs. The administration initially proposed the 2 % raise in the fiscal 2004 budget it presented to Congress earlier this year. However, a month later the House passed an appropriations bill that included a 4.1 % pay raise in 2004 for civilian and wage grade federal employees. Though the amount of the 2004 pay raise is still up in the air, the council, a group led by the Office of Personnel Management that includes federal officials and federal union representatives, decided that the pay raise should be divvied up in a way that takes into account the size of the pay gap in each locality. For the past four years locality pay has been, on average, 1 %. TAKEN FROM GOVEXEC.COM BY TANYA BALLARD

USACE Team Established to Link Automated Training Management Program(ATMP) and Training Information Management System(TMIS)

ATMP is a tool that helps link mission essential tasks at the organizational level to the employee level. It also automates the Individual Development Plan process. TMIS was developed by the Professional Development Support Center (PDSC) to track enrollments and registration in PROSPECT courses and manage the PROSPECT program. Each of these systems uses data from CEFMS. A team has been established to examine these systems and determine ways to connect them. The PDT includes MSC, District, and PDSC representatives.

USACE Human Capital Plan Score Up Grade

USACE continues to meet the challenges of the President's Management Agenda (PMA) in Human Capital Mgmt. The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) upgraded USACE "status" score on Strategic Management of Human Capital to yellow, and awarded the third consecutive green score for "progress" for the 3rd quarter. Among the reasons for the upgrade are initiatives in the following areas: affirmative action, on-line recruiting tools, and launching Leadership for Learning Doctrine and accompanying training course.

Health and Benefits:

TSP's C and S Funds Fall In September

The Thrift Savings Plan's C and S funds dipped slightly in Sept. The C fund fell 1.14 % last month, after a 1.94 % boost in Aug. The C fund invests in common stocks and has increased by 24.16 % since Oct 02. The S fund, which invests in the stocks of small and

mid-sized companies, dropped 1.35 % in Sept, after increasing 4.12 % in Aug. The S fund has steadily risen 32.78 % in the past year. TAKEN FROM GOVEXEC.COM BY Kellie Lunney



Sick Leave
Chart.doc

CSRS Sick Leave conversion Chart

Annual Leave Carryover

The 2003 leave year ends on 10 January 2004. This is a reminder for employees and supervisors to review "use or lose" leave balances and ensure that all leave that would otherwise be forfeited at the end of the leave year is scheduled for use.

The agency may restore annual leave that would be lost if the agency determines that an exigency (work situation requiring immediate action) of the service exists, if the employee is ill or if the agency makes an administrative error that causes the loss of annual leave otherwise accruable. Leave restoration in these instances is only possible if the leave was scheduled at least three pay periods before the end of the leave year.

The employee must submit a request in writing through supervisory channels to the Commander to have leave restored. This request plus supporting documentation from the supervisor should be submitted to the Civilian Personnel Advisory Center (CPAC) no later than 10 January 2004. Supporting documentation should be the supervisor's written certification showing the date the leave was scheduled for use, the date the leave was approved, the date the leave was canceled and why it was not rescheduled for use and a copy of the commander's approval of the exigency.

Restored annual leave must be used no later than the end of the leave year ending two years after the termination of the exigency or after the sick employee returns to work.

Leave Restoration for Emergency Essential Employees in a Combat Zone

Emergency essential employees in a combat zone may have their leave restored whether it was scheduled in advance or not. This relieves the employees and supervisors from the administrative burden of scheduling, canceling, and restoring excess annual leave in this situation. Employees must still submit a request for restoration of their excess leave, through supervisory channels to the Commander. This request should be submitted to the CPAC no later than 10 January 2004.

Restored annual leave must be used by the end of the leave year ending two years after the termination of the exigency.

Donating to a Voluntary Leave Transfer Program Recipient

If there are approved leave recipients under the Voluntary Leave Transfer Program, use or lose leave may be donated to that employee. The same restrictions discussed above under the Voluntary Leave Bank apply to donations under this program.

If you have questions, please contact your CPAC Advisor.

Food For Thought:

There are two rules for success in life:

- a. Don't tell people everything you know.**
- b. (I'm not telling.)**