

The HR Advisor

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DoDEA
Human Resources
Regional Service Center

Student Teachers

Our student teachers are arriving in Fall 2008! So far, we have 92 student teachers confirmed to participate in the DoDDS Student Teaching Program.

DoDEA makes a concentrated effort to support U.S. accredited college and university student teaching programs. Student teaching programs are an effective vehicle for exposing student teachers to DoDDS to promote employment opportunities in the overseas areas. Through this program, DoDDS shares in the responsibility for developing mutually beneficial growth opportunities for students in an intercultural setting. Students pursuing studies in other fields related to education such as school psychology, counseling, nursing, library/information science, vocational, school administration, etc., also participate through this program.

Currently, DoDEA has student teaching agreements with 263 colleges and universities, of which 24 colleges/universities will be participating this fall. To date, Germany will host 43 student teachers; Okinawa - 14; Japan - 11; Italy - 10; England - 9; Belgium - 3; and both Portugal and Korea will host one each. Fifty-five prospective students are anxiously awaiting student teaching placements.

Please welcome the student teachers into your districts, and for those who show promise of outstanding success as professional educators in our overseas schools, we ask that you encourage them to apply for employment with DoDDS. Thanks to all the participating volunteer principals and mentor teachers who support this valuable staffing tool. The DoDDS Student Teaching Program would not be a success without you!



New Death Gratuity for Deployed Civilians

Public Law 110-181, enacted on January 28, 2008, adds a new death gratuity of up to \$100,000 to the survivors of an employee who expires due to injuries incurred in connection with the employee's service with an Armed Force in a contingency operation. This includes employees of non-appropriated fund instrumentalities. Unlike other gratuities that may be payable as a result of the expiration of a civilian employee, this gratuity is payable by the U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Workers' Compensation Programs (OWCP), as a death benefit under the Federal Employees' Compensation Act (FECA), Title 5 U.S.C 8102 (a).

OWCP has created a form for all Department of Defense (DOD) civilians who are deployed or will be in a contingency zone of operation, at

[http://www.dol.gov/esa/regs/compliance/owcp/DesignationForm\(4-4-08\).doc](http://www.dol.gov/esa/regs/compliance/owcp/DesignationForm(4-4-08).doc)

For additional information on this benefit, please email the Benefits Unit at Benefits@hq.dodea.edu or call the Benefits unit directly at (703) 588-3981 (DSN 4253981)

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Did You Know:

New regulations limiting the number of unrestricted interfund transfer requests to two per month became effective on May 1, 2008.

OPM cancelled DOD's waiver to use an alternative training form on July 2, 2007. DD form 1556 was replaced by SF-182. The SF-182 is the Request, Authorization, Agreement, and Certification for Training form, which is used to document instances of completed civilian employee training in the Department of Defense (DOD)

No-Fee Passports



The Special Issuance Agency, located in Washington, D.C., issues no-fee passports to citizens traveling abroad for the U.S. Government, their dependents (if permitted to accompany them), and certain others who are exempt by law from payment of the passport fee.

The United States Government only issues these types of passports to individuals traveling abroad in connection with official employment. No fees are charged for the issuance of these passports.

The DoDEA Headquarters' Passport Office, working in conjunction with the State Department Passport Issuance Office, provides oversight and certification assistance for issuance of official passports for the worldwide travel of educators and civilian employees. The goal of the Passport Office is to complete all transactions pertaining to your passport and procure visa stamps from the host country's Embassy if required.

If a visa is required by the country you will visit, obtain it from the appropriate foreign consular representative before proceeding abroad. Allow sufficient time for processing your visa application, especially if you are applying by mail. Most foreign consular representatives in the U.S. are located in principal cities, and, in many instances, a traveler may be required to obtain the visa from the consular office in the area of his/her residence. As soon as you receive your visa, check it to make sure no mistakes were made. Processing and visa fees vary, and can be claimed as reimbursable expenses on a travel voucher if required for official travel.

To view the "Entry/Exit Requirements" section of the State Department's Country Specific Information, go to http://www.travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/cis/cis_1765.html. Country specific information is available for every country of the world. These pages include such information as location of the U.S. Embassy or consulate in the subject country, unusual immigration practices, health conditions, minor political disturbances, unusual currency and entry regulations, crime and security information, and drug penalties.

The Foreign Clearance Guide specifies the identification credentials required for official overseas travel, <https://www.fcg.pentagon.mil/>.

To renew no-fee official passports DoDDS employees may contact their servicing Human Resources Specialist for assistance. DoDEA employees may contact Kim Glasoe at (703) 588-3856 or via email at Passports@hq.dodea.edu.

Home Leave

Home leave is leave earned by service abroad, on or after September 6, 1960, by an employee at a post of duty outside the Continental U.S. and outside the employee's place of residence, if the place of residence is in the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico.

Home leave is earned and credited on a monthly basis. Home leave is credited to an employee's leave account in multiples of one day. Home leave is charged to an employee's account at a minimum of one day. Additional home leave charges are in multiples of one day. If transferring between agencies or reemployment with a break in service for no more than 90 days; the home leave can be credited to the employee's leave account. Home leave can not be the basis for a lump sum payment or be used as terminal leave (leave taken immediately before leaving Federal service).

Employees should normally have 6 months remaining on their overseas tour after completing home leave. If an employee fails to return to service abroad after using home leave, the employee is indebted for the amount of home leave used. The HQ Human Resources Regional Service Center is authorized to waive a refund of home leave in certain circumstances. For information and guidance on home leave, please contact your local LMER Specialist. A DODEA HQ LMER Specialist can be reached at (703) 588-3990.



Compensatory Time Off for Travel Prevailing Rate (Wage) Employees

Based on the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for Fiscal Year 2008, prevailing rate, wage grade employees became eligible for compensatory time for travel effective April 27, 2008.

The Defense Civilian Pay System (DCPS) codes for compensatory time for travel will be the same as used currently for graded employees: CB for earned travel compensatory time and CF for used travel compensatory time.

Information to be maintained for each employee should include: the pay period ending dates, the number of hours and date compensatory time earned, the number of hours and date compensatory time used, and the ending balance. The pay period ending date is important in order to establish a forfeiture date.

For employees in a leave without pay status for active military duty or those employees paid by the Office of Workmen's Compensation due to an on-the-job injury, the compensatory time for travel balance must be retained to restore it upon the employees return to duty.

Additional information can be found on the OPM website at http://www.opm.gov/oca/pay/HTML/compensatory_time.asp

Training Tidbits



OPM OFFERS ON-LINE e-TRAINING

Employees can develop their own customized training with OPM's new "GoLearn," web-based learning management system. GoLearn offers extensive courseware libraries. When you purchase a library from OPM, you purchase several complete curricula each offering a block of classes. For instance, the Skill Soft Business

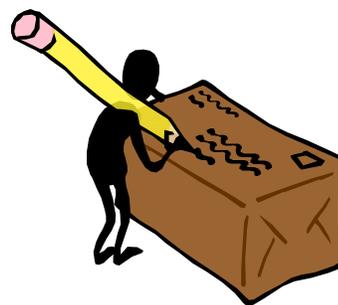
Skills Library contains 15 curricula and 90 on-line classes in such areas as business mathematics, government charge cards, and multiple courses on planning, developing, and maintaining Microsoft Windows. The best part is that this training can be taken at your own pace and is reasonably priced. A library of multiple curricula is available for purchase for only \$36.75 per person, per year.

For more information on available courses and how to apply, visit OPM's website at: <http://www.golearn.gov/MaestroC/index.cfm?room=welcome&roomaction=welcome>. If you have additional questions, please contact the Training Section at (703) 588-3801.

Household Goods

In connection with permanent change of station travel, household goods (HHG) are those items associated with the home and all personal effects belonging to an employee and dependents on the employee's effective date of transfer or appointment that legally may be accepted and transported by a commercial HHG carrier. The worldwide maximum weight of HHG that may be transported (and/or stored in connection with transportation) is 18,000 pounds net weight for each employee. For employees assigned to an OCONUS duty station, non-temporary storage of household goods may be authorized in lieu of shipment. HHGs may be transported when shipment originates at the employee's last PDS, actual residence, or another point; part of the shipment originates at the last permanent duty station (PDS) and the remainder at one or more other points; the destination is the new PDS or another point; or the destination for part of the HHG is the new PDS and the remainder is shipped to one or more other points. The total amount paid by the Government must not exceed the cost of transporting the HHGs in one lot from the

employee's last PDS (or new appointee's actual residence at the time of appointment) to the new PDS. The definition of HHG may be accessed from Appendix A of the Joint Travel Regulations, Volume 2, if you would like to read more on what items may or may not be included as household goods: <http://perdiem.hqda.pentagon.mil/perdiem/trvlregs.html>



Leave Without Pay Affect on Benefits



Leave without pay (LWOP) is a temporary nonpay status and absence from duty. Except in certain situations, employees can not demand LWOP. LWOP is subject to approval by an employee's supervisor or higher level official. Employees should be aware that LWOP may affect entitlement to or eligibility for certain Federal benefits. Basic information is available at [DoD CPMS :: FAS :: Employee Handouts](#) or https://www.opm.gov/flsa/oca/leave/HTML/lwop_eff.htm; however, because rules vary depending upon the type of benefit employees should seek immediate assistance before requesting LWOP.

Employees entering nonpay status due to summer recess should note that unlike FEHB and FEGLI premiums, FSA and FEDVIP

premiums do not automatically adjust if you are paid less than 26 pay periods. Therefore, if you did not accelerate your premiums when you enrolled premiums will be missed and you are responsible for the missed premiums.

To make arrangements for missed premiums you must contact FSA and FEDVIP directly. FSAFEDs representatives are available Monday through Friday from 9:00 A.M. until 9:00 P.M., Eastern Time at 1-877-FSAFEDS (372-3337) or by email at FSAFEDS@shps.com.

For FEDVIP assistance, contact BENEFEDS at the BENEFEDS Customer Service telephone number, 1-877-888-FEDS (888-3337). BENEFEDS Customer Service is open Monday to Friday from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. Eastern Time or send an email from the following link [Welcome to Benefeds.com](#). For information regarding leave without pay contact your local Human Resources Representative.

Living Benefits

While it is hoped that this benefit is one you'll never need, it is a benefit which could be very helpful, if needed. Federal employees, to include retirees, who have life insurance under the Federal Employees Group Life Insurance (FEGLI), may be paid living benefits if they are terminally ill and if they have been given a life expectancy of nine months or less. Eligible employees or retirees may receive a lump sum insurance payment in an amount equal to their basic insurance amount. Employees (but not retirees) may elect to receive all or part of their basic insurance amount. An election for living benefits will not apply to any optional insurance you may have. Living benefit elections are irrevocable and cannot be withdrawn.

Life insurance amounts are generally tax-free. It is important to note that living benefits may only be elected once. If you elect to receive only part of your basic insurance amount, you may not later elect to receive the remaining amount. Retirees may receive a lump sum which is based on any appropriate post-age 65 reductions which would be in effect as of nine months after the application for a living benefit is filed.

Additional information concerning living benefits is available on OPM's website at [FEGLI Handbook Chapter on Living Benefits](#). Employees and retirees who wish to apply for a Living Benefit must contact OFEGLI directly by calling 1-800-633-4542.

Airline Baggage

Recently many airlines have changed their free checked baggage policy. We understand that travelers who are using a Government city-pair airfare, may be able to check a second bag at no cost. However, all travelers need to check with the individual air carrier or the applicable Government travel office to be sure they know their free checked baggage allowance prior to departure. Authority for excess baggage charges for TDY or PCS may be allowed only when specifically authorized/approved.

Currently, an employee traveling on renewal agreement travel (RAT) from OCONUS by air, may request reimbursement for the cost of the accompanied baggage (not to exceed 100 lbs-per person) on their travel voucher. The claim must include a receipt for the cost of the accompanied baggage (not to exceed 100 lbs.

per person); a certification of the poundage; a statement that the baggage included personal clothing and/or articles necessary for the trip; along with a properly completed/signed DD Form 1351-2 (travel voucher); a copy of the DD Form 1614 (travel order/authorization) to include any/all amendments if applicable; and a completed DD Form 2762 Direct Deposit Form.

