

# The HR Advisor

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## DoDEA Human Resources Regional Service Center

### Welcome Back!

The Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA), Human Resources Regional Service Center would like to formally welcome all of you to the 2008-2009 School year. We are glad to have you back and look forward to an exciting school year. The Human Resources Service Center would like you to know that we are available to assist you with any Human Resource related questions you may have. School level employees should seek assistance from the school secretary or school administrator. Each district is serviced by a senior human resource specialist for guidance and help to all employees in that district. Also, the DoDEA website is a useful tool for information on what's new at DoDEA and it provides you with links to all of your personnel matters. The following contact information will reach specialists at HQ DoDEA:

#### Human Resource Hotline

For general HR related questions call the HR Hotline at (703) 588-3800, DSN 425-3800 or email to [personnelhelpline@hq.dodea.edu](mailto:personnelhelpline@hq.dodea.edu)

#### Benefits

For questions concerning benefits contact your local Human Resources Representative, email the benefits Unit at [Benefits@hq.dodea.edu](mailto:Benefits@hq.dodea.edu) or call the Benefits Unit directly at (703) 588-3981, DSN 425-3981

#### LMER

For questions concerning Labor Management and Employee Relations contact the LMER section at (703) 588-3990, or DSN 425-3990

#### Licensure Unit

For questions concerning Certification contact the Licensure Unit at (703) 588-3898, DSN 425-3898

#### Staffing

For staffing and recruitment questions contact the Staffing Unit at (703) 588-3934, DSN 425-3934, or email [Recruitment@hq.dodea.edu](mailto:Recruitment@hq.dodea.edu)

#### NSPS

Email NSPS questions to [DoDEA.NSPS.Inquires@HQ.DoDEA.edu](mailto:DoDEA.NSPS.Inquires@HQ.DoDEA.edu)

#### Pacific Customer Operations Team

(703) 588-3984, DSN 425-3984

#### Europe Customer Operations Team

(703) 588-3985, DSN 425-3985

#### DDESS/Cuba Customer Operations Team

(703) 588-3986, DSN 425-3986

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#### Did You Know:

"Kaizen" means continuous improvement in Japanese.

#### PAA Deadlines:

Employees NLT October 1, 2008

Rating Official NLT October 10, 2008

Higher Level Review NLT October 17, 2008

(Europe and Pacific check with you HR Office for deadlines)



## Training Tidbits

### What is an IDP?

An Individual Development Plan (IDP) is a plan developed jointly by the employee and manager that identifies individual goals for employee growth in the context of the organizational mission. The plan lists training, education, and development activities (formal and informal) to develop the competencies needed to meet IDP goals.

IDPs are not mandatory, but they are helpful in determining what training is needed for career progression. Managers should use IDPs to plan employee training. Application packages for training programs, such as long-term training, require IDPs.

Requests for training identified on IDPs must comply with:

- The Government Employees Training Act (GETA) <http://www.opm.gov/hrd/lead/Pubs/handbook/lfft1.asp>;
- Executive Orders;
- Regulations, merit principles and equal employment opportunity considerations; and Comptroller General Decisions.

IDPs are a win/win strategy because they benefit both the employee and the organization. Employees benefit, because implementing an IDP helps them enhance their knowledge, skills, and experiences. Improved competencies help them achieve personal and career goals both inside of and external to the organization. The organization benefits by developing improved employee capabilities and work load planning. Competent employee performance, in conjunction with the added bonus of improved morale, and personal job satisfaction can make the organization more effective.

Below is the DoDEA HR Training website with a sample of an IDP.

<http://www.dodea.edu/offices/hr/employees/training/samples/attachment-2b.pdf>

If you have any questions, contact your Human Resource Development Specialists at 703-588-3801.



## Emergency Contact Information



In the event of an emergency your supervisor may need to contact you or a person you have designated as your emergency point of contact. This information is vital to ensuring that you or your family is notified quickly with situational updates. It is in your best interest to ensure that your supervisor has information regarding any special health considerations you may have. This information may be crucial in the event you should become ill at work and require medical assistance. You should update this information in MyBiz and submit on either the form used by your organization or the DD Form 93, Record of Emergency Data. Please remember to update MyBiz regularly as this information changes. It is also very important that you provide your family or emergency contact with your work contact information, i.e., your supervisor or co-worker's name and phone number.



## NSPS End of Cycle

The NSPS Program Executive Office has decided to postpone deployment of the new PAA Version 3.0. You will continue to use the PAA you have within the MyBiz and MyWorkplace self service DCPDS modules to wrap up this performance year and to establish objectives for the 2009 performance year.

In preparation for the NSPS end of cycle assessments, employees should have their annual appraisals in Word completed and ready to take to their end of cycle meeting with their rating official.

Rating Officials (RO) should have end of cycle meetings scheduled with their subordinate employees from September 15 - 30, 2008.

### Headquarters PAA Deadlines:

Employee assessments input in PAA - NLT October 1, 2008

RO assessments and ratings in PAA - NLT October 10, 2008

Higher Level Review completed in PAA - NLT October 17, 2008

(Europe and Pacific have similar deadline - check with you HR Office)

### Writing Self Assessments - More Tips on How to Do It!

Be confident, not arrogant.

Highlight your contributions and accomplishments, in a humble but direct fashion.

Do not exaggerate, or boast.

Simply lay out the facts, enthusiastically.

Ask yourself - are you doing things that make a difference and are worthwhile?



Tip of the day: Draft your self-assessment. THEN - revise it!

a. If you write your accomplishments according to what your job objective and the corresponding performance indicator/factors describe, congratulations, you've likely just reached Level 3. If you are in the upper pay range, then receiving a Level 3 rating with 1 share should not be a surprise. If you believe you exceed level 3, it should be reflected in your self assessment. Supporting documentation should back it up. The facts don't change, but the manner in which you communicate those facts, to a panel of pay pool members unfamiliar with your work, can make a huge difference in pay. It makes a difference in the self-assessment to carefully analyze the relationship between the written objective and the levels of performance as described by the performance indicators and contributing factors. For example, when applying the contributing factors, employees are unaware that in order to have an upward adjustment on your basic rating you have to describe performance that not only Exceeds the expected level, but actually Reaches the enhanced level. If you believe that a contributing factor should increase your job objective rating, be sure to describe performance that actually reaches the "Enhanced" definition, not just exceeds the "Expected" definition.

b. After your first few revisions, go thru your self-assessment again and do a "verb clean up". Just look at your verbs. Don't short change yourself by using words like "supported" and "helped" when you could use "strategized" and "co-authored".

c. When your verb clean up is done, go thru the draft again and do an "adjective and adverb clean up". You can get some great mileage here.

d. As a finishing touch, revise your self-assessment one more time and add the Impact of your hard work. Did you save many people from doing the same work? Did you avert a disaster? Did you receive recognition? Did processes or service improve? Did customers express satisfaction? Add a concise impact statement to your accomplishments.

Remember, some rating panel members might be unfamiliar with your type of work or what it really affects. They can't be expected to imagine the unstated impact. Don't leave the pay pool panel asking themselves, "So what?" Lay it out.

You would be amazed how much you can improve your self-assessment by taking these incremental steps.

## Voting 2008



The 2008 United States election cycle is in full swing. Tuesday, November 4th, is the General Election for the United States President and Vice President, Senators, and Members of the House of Representatives, as well as local elections. All U.S. citizens 18 years or older who are or will be residing outside the United States during an election period are eligible to vote absentee in any Federal election.

Civilian employees and their family members whose residence in the overseas area is NOT connected with a military sponsor, have an established voting residence in the state/territory in which they last resided prior to the permanent change of station (PCS) from the United States. This applies even though there may no longer be any ties to the last state/territory of residence or intent to return to that state/territory.

Civilian employees and their family members whose residence in the overseas area is connected with a military sponsor, may not arbitrarily choose which state/territory to declare as their voting residence without meeting the residency requirements of that state/territory.

Voting eligibility and residency requirements to vote absentee are determined according to state requirements which are available on line at [www.fvap.gov](http://www.fvap.gov). Under normal circumstances, most states and territories begin sending ballots to overseas citizens 30-45 days before an election. More information can be found at [www.fvap.gov/reference/links/index.html](http://www.fvap.gov/reference/links/index.html).

For agency employees in the Continental United States, excused absence may be granted to vote in the election on Tuesday, November 4, 2008. Generally, where the polls are not open at least 3 hours either before or after an employee's regular work hours, an agency may grant a limited amount of excused absence that will permit the employee to report for work 3 hours after the polls open, or leave work 3 hours before the polls close, which ever requires the lesser amount of time off. An employee's "regular work hours" are considered to be the time that the employee normally is scheduled to arrive and depart from work. Normally, where polls are open either 3 hours before or after the employee's regular work hours, no time off is granted. This is the case in most surrounding jurisdictions even though there are different polling times.

Questions can be directed to the Labor Management and Employee Relations Section of the Human Resources Regional Service Center at (703) 588-3990.

## Miscellaneous Expense Allowance

The Department of State Standardized Regulations (DSSR) and the Joint Travel Regulations (JTR), Volume 2, authorizes a miscellaneous expense allowance (MEA) to reimburse various costs in connection with a permanent change of station residence relocation. Section 240 of the DSSR authorizes MEA for new appointees performing first duty station travel to a foreign post. Chapter 5, Part G, of the JTR authorizes reimbursement for MEA for employees transferring on permanent change of station (PCS) or Temporary Change of Station (TCS) travel. The MEA for employees transferring are claimed on the "Travel Voucher or Subvoucher", DD Form 1351-2. Reimbursement for MEA for new appointees on first duty station travel to a foreign post are claimed on the "Foreign Allowances Application, Grant and Report", SF-1190.

Employees may elect to claim a flat amount at the current rate of either \$500 (without dependents) or \$1,000 (with dependents) for allowable miscellaneous expenses without receipts or itemized statements. The authorizing official may approve a higher amount in excess of the flat rate if the claim is supported by evidence of expenses incurred and the total amount does not exceed: (1) one week's salary if the employee is without dependents or one week's salary for an employee at GS-13, step 10, whichever is the lesser amount, or (2) two weeks' salary if the employee is with dependents or two weeks' salary for an employee at GS-13, step 10, whichever is the lesser amount. Examples of reimbursable costs include: disconnecting/connecting appliances, equipment and utilities involved in relocation, and converting appliances for operation on available utilities (this does not include purchasing appliances or equipment in lieu of conversion); cutting and fitting rugs, draperies and curtains moved from one residence to another; non-refundable utility fees/deposits; automobile registration and driver's license; shipment and/or required quarantine of pet(s); and rental agent's fee incurred for living quarters in a foreign area that are not offset by an eventual refund provided the fees were not authorized as an allowable living quarters allowance expense.

