

Civilian Personnel Newsletter



U.S. AIR FORCE

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Welcome to the July-September Edition of our Newsletter

It is a great time to take some leave and enjoy the long days and good weather. Speaking of leave we are now more than half way through the leave year; you should have a plan to ensure you use your annual leave so you do not lose it. We successfully completed the civilian appraisal and award period, but evaluating never stops. Please ensure you have an approved performance plan and supervisors need to ensure their plans include the required standardized elements as part of their plans. Employees should monitor their pay statements and personnel actions for accuracy; please report any inaccuracies as soon as possible. Enjoy your summer!



August

August 22nd → Back to school

September

September 2nd → Family Day
September 5th → Labor Day

Quote of the Month



eOPF MULTIFACTOR AUTHENTICATION IMPLEMENTATION

The electronic Official Personnel Folder (eOPF) is maintained by the Office of Personnel Management and contains official government documents covering your employment history. Unlike, the documents maintained on myBiz, the eOPF contains documents such as:

- Standard Form 50 - Notification of Personnel Actions, documenting your employment history
- Military Service documents, such as DD 214
- Benefits elections such as Standard Form 2809, Health Benefits Elections, Standard Form 2817, Life Insurance Elections, 2823, and Designation of Beneficiary forms

Beginning on or after September 26, 2022, a new process for signing into eOPF will be implemented. eOPF will require you to use your PIV or CAC to sign into your account. If your PIV or CAC is not registered, you will be required to register and create a PIN. After that, you will use your PIV/CAC and PIN to authenticate your identity and protect your account. You will no longer be able to log in using an eOPF ID and password. If you already logged into eOPF with your PIV/CAC, you do not need to do anything.

You do not have to wait until September 26, 2022 to authenticate your CAC, you can do it now. To register your PIV/CAC, you will need to:

1. Login to [eOPF](#)
2. Click on the button that says "Login with PIV or CAC"
3. Select the certificate that has "Client Authentication" and "Smart Card Logon" capabilities.
4. Enter your PIN. You created this PIN when you received your PIV/CAC and enter your eOPF ID and password
5. Click Continue and Continue to eOPF when the information is correct and a message indicates your card registration was successful

To create an eOPF account login to [myPers](#), Key word search 23070. The knowledge article includes information on creating your user account and the link to access the OPM eOPF system.

The benefits of having access to your eOPF include:

Immediate access to your documents

Ability to view or print your documents

Ability to review your documents and identify missing or incorrect information

If you currently have an eOPF account, it is recommended that you review the documents annually and alert your servicing Civilian Personnel Office of any discrepancies or missing documents.



DPMAP MID-YEAR REVIEW

1 October marks the half way point for the Defense Performance Management and Appraisal Program (DPMAP) cycle.

Supervisors are required to conduct a minimum of three formal documented performance discussions during each appraisal cycle including: the initial performance plan meeting to discuss performance expectations, one progress review, and the final performance appraisal discussion to communicate the rating of record. Per DoDI1400.25V431_AFI 36-1002, *Performance Management and Appraisal Program Administration in the Air Force*, performance discussions are to be used throughout the appraisal cycle to foster a culture of high performance between supervisors and employees.

Supervisors should conduct the progress review at the mid-year point (encouraged NLT 15 October 2022 for employees who have occupied a DPMAP-covered position through the entire rating cycle). As part of the two-way communication and meaningful feedback, employees are encouraged to highlight their successes, recommend any needed changes to performance elements, and identify any challenges impeding their ability to be successful.

The review should be a discussion between the supervisor and the employee and is tracked in the MyPerformance Tool - the supervisor annotates when and how the review has been completed and the employee acknowledges. A higher level review is NOT required.

It's important to note that failure to document the progress review feedback in the system can cause serious system issues and glitches when completing the annual appraisal later in the performance cycle.

DPMAP progress review resources can be found in the DPMAP Monitoring Performance Fact Sheet located on the Ramstein DPMAP SharePoint site >[DPMAP Guidance and Instructions](#)>[Monitoring Performance Guidance and Resources](#)

HATCH ACT FOR FEDERAL EMPLOYEES

The political activity of DoD civilians is regulated by a number of sources: the Hatch Act (5 USC 7321 - 7326), implementing regulations (5 CFR 733 and 5 CFR 734), as well as DoD policy. Because the application of the rules varies depending on an employee's position or office, it is extremely important that employees who are engaging in political activity know which rules apply. [Hatch Act information](#) .

While all personnel are encouraged to carry out the obligations of citizenship, they must be mindful of the long-standing tradition that DoD remain apolitical. DoD Civilian employees (in the "less restricted employees" category) may volunteer with a political campaign or political organization while in their personal capacities. Examples of permitted volunteer activities include: organizing political rallies and meetings, making phone calls on behalf of a candidate, serving as a delegate to a party convention, and working for a political party to get out the vote. These employees are, however, prohibited from soliciting, accepting, or receiving political contributions.

See [Partisan Political Activity Rules for "Less Restricted" DoD Civilians](#).

Employees may never engage in political activity while on-duty or in a Federal building. Specifically, an employee may not send or forward political emails, post political messages to social media, such as a Facebook account or political "tweeting" while in a Federal building (including when off-duty), even if the employee is using her personal smartphone, tablet, or computer. Employees may never use government equipment to engage in political activities.

Civilian personnel may generally express their personal views on public issues or political candidates via personal accounts on social media platforms, such as Facebook, Twitter, or personal blogs, in the same way they could write a letter to the editor of a newspaper. If, when expressing a personal opinion, personnel are identified by a social media site as DoD employees, the posting must clearly and prominently state that the views expressed are those of the individual only and not of the Department of Defense.

Potential Hatch Act violations by US appropriated fund civilian employees should be reported to 86fss.fsec.us-emr@us.af.mil. Employees that violate the Hatch Act may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including removal from federal employment.

MERIT SYSTEM PRINCIPLES

[Merit Systems Principles](#) (5 USC 2301(b)) outline requirements for managing the workforce in a fair and equitable manner and protect employees from arbitrary and capricious personnel actions and decisions.

CIVILIAN HEALTH AND WELLNESS PROGRAM

The Civilian Health and Wellness Program is designed to encourage U.S. appropriated fund civilian employees to become physically active and promote a healthier workforce. Participation in the program established under DoDI1400.25V630_AFI36-815, *Leave*, are limited to a cumulative total of 3 hours of duty time per week based on mission and workload requirements.

Employees may participate in physical fitness and wellness activities. Health and wellness activities include but are not limited to: health fairs; alcohol and tobacco cessation programs; diet and nutrition classes; relaxation and stress management classes or seminars; lactation classes and seminars; and work-life programs. Employees must request/obtain permission from their supervisors in advance of the events to ensure attendance does not conflict with work center requirements.

Before participating, a signed agreement is to be executed by both the employee and supervisor. At a minimum, the agreement will include self-certification by the employee of fitness to engage in physical activity and describe the number of days per week and duration of absences. A sample agreement can be found in the [Health and Wellness Program CPF factsheet](#)



Time off for physical fitness activities will be coordinated in advance with management officials, and documented with an approved leave request in ATAAPS. Use of duty time (excused absence) is appropriate only if approved by the supervisor in accordance with procedures. Mission impact is the key element in making this decision.

-Normally, overtime, compensatory time, and credit hours may not be approved nor earned on days when use of duty time is authorized under this program. Credit hours, overtime, and compensatory time may not be earned while an employee is actually performing fitness activities.

-The employee and supervisor are required to document physical fitness time in ATAAPS with the appropriate code (LN) for administrative leave. The sub code (PF) should be used to specify the type of administrative leave being used.

-Participation is strictly voluntary and supervisors have the authority to revoke participation privileges at any time.

-To minimize travel time away from work, employees are encouraged to utilize installation fitness facilities, or facilities immediately adjacent to the installation or work center with which the employee or agency may have an agreement.

For questions, please contact your supervisor or email Employee Management Relations at: 86fss.fsec.us-emr@us.af.mil.

TELEWORK EXCEPTION TO POLICY EXTENDED

DoD and AF have again extended the limited exception to policy which allows US employees teleworking during an emergency to do so with a child or other person requiring care or supervision present in the home. This flexibility has been extended through 30 Sep 2022.

Employees must still account for work and non-work hours during their tours of duty and take appropriate leave (paid or unpaid) to account for time spent away from normal work-related duties (e.g., to care for a child or dependent).

The temporary exception from the OPM requirement that teleworking employees report to the worksite a minimum of two days per pay period is still in effect. However, that exception will end when Components fully complete workforce reentry in accordance with Department of Defense (DoD) policy or when the President declares the end of the COVID-19 pandemic national emergency status.

Please review the Telework Factsheet and the Extension of Maximum Telework Flexibilities memo posted to the COVID section of our [Ramstein CPF website](#). Any additional questions on this topic may be addressed to your supervisor or our US EMR team at 86fss.fsec.us-emr@us.af.mil



APPLYING FOR A FEDERAL EMPLOYEES' RETIREMENT SYSTEM (FERS) DISABILITY RETIREMENT



If an employee becomes disabled while in a position covered under the Federal Employees' Retirement System (FERS) they may retire on disability. FERS employees may submit a disability retirement at any age, if they have at least 18 months of creditable civilian service and meet the criteria for being disabled.

If an employee considers applying for disability retirement they should provide the Air Force Personnel Center (AFPC) Benefits & Entitlements Service Team (BEST) with complete documentation of their medical condition and the CPS should exhaust all reasonable attempts to retain the employee in a productive capacity through reasonable accommodation or reassignment.

To start the disability process the employee or their designated representative must complete the following forms:

- 1) Standard Form 3107 (SF 3107), FERS Application for Immediate Retirement; and
- 2) SF 3112 (A-D), Documentation in Support of Disability Retirement Application. The employee's supervisor and the CPS assist the employee with completing the SF 3112B & SF 3112D. The SF 3112E will be completed by BEST.

For more information regarding a FERS disability retirement, visit myPers article, [Federal Employees' Retirement System Disability Retirement](#) ,

For more information regarding the medical documentation or documentation of a medical condition, review the myPers article: [Disability Retirement Medical Documentation](#).

For additional information regarding accommodation, review the Reasonable Accommodations for [People with Disabilities factsheet](#)

Questions from employees on disability retirement should be directed to the Total Force Service Center (TFSC) at 1-800-525-0102. For assistance with reasonable accommodation or guidance on supervisory responsibilities, contact 86fss.fsec.us-emr@us.af.mil

OVERTIME & COMPENSATORY TIME

Overtime is work in excess of 8 hours in a day or 40 hours in an administrative workweek (Sun - Sat), or work in excess of the basic work requirement for employees assigned to a compressed work schedule. Overtime must be officially ordered and approved. All overseas appropriated fund AF civilian employees are exempt from the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) and are eligible for overtime under Title 5 of the United States Code (5 CFR 551.212); therefore, the following guidance only includes rules apply to FLSA-exempt employees.

Overtime rates are as follows:

- For Federal Wage System (WG/WL/WS) employees, and for other employees whose basic hourly rate is **equal to or less than** the rate of basic pay for GS-10 step 1, the overtime hourly rate is the employee's hourly rate of basic pay multiplied by 1.5.
- For other employees whose basic hourly rate is **greater than** the basic pay for GS-10, step 1, the overtime hourly rate is the **greater** of:
 - *the hourly rate of basic pay for GS-10, step 1, multiplied by 1.5
 - *OR***
 - *the employee's hourly rate of basic pay

Compensatory Time (or Comp Time) is time off in lieu of overtime pay. Just like overtime, it is work in excess of 8 hours per day or 40 hours in an administrative workweek that is officially ordered and approved. Employees are entitled to the same amount of comp time off as the amount of overtime hours worked (e.g., 1 hour of comp time off is granted for each hour of overtime worked). FWS employees, and other employees paid at the rate of GS-10 step 10 and below, must be allowed the choice of either overtime pay or comp time.

Employees should use previously earned compensatory time before using accrued annual leave. Comp time that is earned but not used within 26 pay periods shall be paid at the overtime rate at which it was earned.

Overtime / Comp Time Approval Procedures: Before overtime or comp time is ordered and worked, the supervisor must obtain approval from their overtime authorizing official (exceptions to this requirement may apply in an emergency). The premium request available within the ATAAPS timekeeping system will be used. If ATAAPS is unavailable an AF Form 428, *Request for Premium Pay*, will be used and the supervisor will maintain the hard copy form. Only two-digit officials and their deputies, or three-digit delegates with a formal appointment letter, may authorize overtime work. For the 86 AW, approval authority has been delegated to the squadron commander level.

For additional information, please reference the Ramstein Factsheet on [Overtime, Comp Time, and Credit Hours](#)



COMPENSATORY TIME FOR TRAVEL (TRAVEL COMP)

Questions often come up regarding when an employee accrues "travel comp" time. Below are some of the more common questions, but additional [Q and A's](#)

Q: What is Travel Comp?

A: Basically, Compensatory time off for travel (AKA travel comp) is a separate form of compensatory time off that may be earned by an employee for time spent in a travel status away from the employee's official duty station to/from an authorized temporary duty (TDY) station or between TDY stations, when such time is not otherwise compensable.

Q: Can I Earn Travel Comp for PCS Travel?

A: No. Although PCS travel is officially authorized travel, it is not travel between an official duty station and a TDY station. Therefore, it is not considered time in a travel status for the purpose of earning compensatory time off for travel. Your travel orders allot a specified amount of travel time when PCS'ing in or out and additional travel comp time cannot be claimed.

Q: What Time in a Travel Status Counts?

A: Travel status includes only the uncompensated time actually spent traveling between the official duty station and a temporary duty station, or between two temporary duty stations, and the usual waiting time that precedes or interrupts such travel.

- ◇ An employee may not earn compensatory time off for travel for traveling on a workday during regular working hours or even on paid holidays because the employee is receiving his or her rate of basic pay for those hours. In other words, no double dipping.
- ◇ The usual wait time prior to the scheduled flight departure is 2-3 hours when flying internationally. The usual wait time for a connecting flight is 1-2 hours. If an employee experiences an unusually long wait (e.g., delayed/cancelled flights, maintenance delays) during which the employee is free to rest, sleep, or otherwise use the time for his or her own purposes this time is not creditable. An extended waiting period that occurs during an employee's regular working hours is compensable as part of the employee's regularly scheduled administrative workweek.
- ◇ Meal periods are not creditable travel time. For every eight and one-half (8 $\frac{1}{2}$) hours of compensatory time for travel claimed, $\frac{1}{2}$ hour must be deducted as a bona fide meal period. EXCEPTION: In a situation where the employee is continuously traveling in a conveyance (aircraft, train, automobile) the deduction does not apply.

Employees should request compensatory time off for travel in advance when possible, but must do so by the end of the pay period following the time in travel status or it may be denied.

When an employee's travel involves two or more time zones, the time zone from the point of first departure must be used to determine how many hours the employee actually spent in a travel status for the purpose of accruing compensatory time off.

Example: Leave USA to return to Germany from EST zone at 0800 arriving in Germany 9 hours later at 2300 German time. Travel hours are calculated based upon your point of departure (EST), therefore, your arrival in Germany is equivalent to 1700 pm EST. Thus, the actual travel time is 9 hours NOT 15.

Q: Will Travel Comp Get Paid-Out?



A: Payment for unused Travel Comp is not authorized under any circumstance. Earned travel comp time must be used within one year or it is lost. It is also forfeited if an employee transfers to another agency; moves to an uncovered position; or separates from Federal Government.

For additional information, view the [Compensatory Time Off for Travel Factsheet](#)

If you have any questions, please contact your servicing Employee Relations Specialist at 86fss.fsec.us-emr@us.af.mil

USE OR LOSE LEAVE, APPROVAL OF EXIGENCIES, AND THE DONATED LEAVE PROGRAM

Use it or Lose it!

In the overseas area, U.S. APF employees may carry over 240 hours (local hires) or 360 hours (employees brought to the overseas area from the United States under a transportation agreement) from one year to the next. Leave in excess of those amounts is lost at the end of the leave year, hence the term "use or lose."

All supervisors and employees are reminded that the leave year ends 31 Dec 2022. Lost annual leave can be restored if the loss was due to an approved exigency of the service, or because of employee illness, but **ONLY IF** the lost leave was **requested,**

approved, and scheduled in writing prior to Sunday, 20 Nov 2022. Exigencies require organizational commander approval and coordination with Civilian Personnel. Normally, commander's approval of an exigency is required **in advance of cancellation** of leave.

Leave lost for employees whose work is deemed essential in direct support of declared national emergencies, such as the current COVID-19 national emergency, by employees assigned to a combat zone, employees undergoing a base closure or realignment, or due to an administrative error, may also qualify to have their leave restored. Reference the Restoration of Forfeited Annual Leave factsheet on the Civilian Personnel Flight (CPF) website or DODI1400.25V630_AFI36-815, *Leave*, for more detailed information.

If you have leave you know you will not take and which may otherwise be lost, you may wish to consider donating to an employee in the Voluntary Leave Transfer Program (VLTP). There may be individuals locally or AF wide in need of leave donations. While the maximum donation of leave may not exceed a total of one-half of the amount of annual leave an employee would be entitled to accrue during the leave year in which the donation is made, there are special rules for end of year donations. Reference the VLTP factsheet on the CPF website for more detailed information.

Therefore, it's time to start thinking ahead to prevent forfeiture of "use or lose" leave:

- ◆ Ensure all your "use or lose" leave is requested, approved, and scheduled in writing (i.e., in ATAAPS) prior to the deadline above.
- ◆ Employees wishing to donate leave will fill out the OPM Form 630-A (Within Agency) or 630-B (Outside Agency) as soon as possible and forward it to 86fss.fsec.us-emr@us.af.mil.

REFERENCES: [DODI1400.25V630 AFI36-815, Leave](#); and [CPF website factsheets](#)

Please contact 86fss.fsec.us-emr@us.af.mil for additional information on this topic.

If you have any questions, please contact your servicing Employee Relations Specialist at 86fss.fsec.us-emr@us.af.mil



WORK FLEXIBILITIES FOR HOT WEATHER

As we experience severe heat this summer, and typically without the luxury of air conditioning in the workplace, we want to remind supervisors and employees of flexibilities that may be used to reduce health risks and increase comfort.

Employee's Personal Leave: Employees may request annual leave, earned compensatory time off, earned time-off awards, or earned credit hours on a day when severe heat and humidity are threatening to the employee's health and welfare.

Early Dismissal: In certain rare and extreme situations where working or commuting conditions are unusually severe and the health of employees is endangered, all or part of the installation may be closed and employees will be dismissed from the office to telework (if possible) for the remainder of the work day or granted weather and safety leave (ATAAPS code LN- PS). Telework participants working in the office when an early departure is announced may generally receive Weather and Safety Leave only for the amount of time required to commute home (excluding the period of time for an unpaid lunch break, if applicable).

- * Supervisors do not have the authority to grant this dismissal. Group dismissal for civilian employees working on Ramstein Air Base may only be authorized by the installation commander (86 AW/CC). For those employees that do not work at Ramstein, the approval authority would lie with their installation commander, commander of combatant commands, or lead commander designated in areas with more than one activity, as applicable.
- * Employees who leave before the scheduled dismissal time, or who are already in a leave status and scheduled to be in a leave status during the time of dismissal, continue to be charged leave.
- *

Telework or Flexible Work Schedule: With supervisory approval, an eligible employee with an approved telework agreement whom is telework-ready, may telework from home on a day when the temperatures in the office are expected to be high. Additionally, if permitted by management and mission requirements, an employee working a flexible work schedule may adjust arrival and departure times within the limits of the core hours to avoid commuting/working during the hottest periods of the day.

For additional information and references please review the [Excused Absence/Leave/Telework Due to Extreme Weather factsheet](#)

Questions regarding US appropriated fund civilian employees can be addressed to 86fss.fsec.us-emr@us.af.mil



BERATUNG DER PARTNERMONATE

Bei den sogenannten Partnermonaten handelt es sich um zwei zusätzliche Monate die zum regulären Bezug des Elterngeldes hinzukommen. Hierzu müssen beide Elternteile Elterngeld beantragen und in Elternzeit gehen. Ein Anspruch auf die zusätzlichen Partnermonate besteht, wenn mindestens ein Elternteil gar nicht mehr oder in Teilzeit, somit maximal 32 Stunden pro Woche, arbeitet. Entscheidend ist, dass das Einkommen im Vergleich zum Einkommen vor der Geburt gemindert wird. Ist dies der Fall, verlängert sich der Bezugszeitraum des Elterngeldes für beide Elternteile zusammen um zwei Monate auf maximal 14 Monate.

Die Aufteilung der Partnermonate kann frei gewählt werden. Jedes Elternteil muss und diese nicht des 14 Lebensmonats werden können.

Partnermonate, im Gegensatz zur Elternzeit, nicht pro Geburt bewilligt. Bei

sich der Anspruch auf Partnermonate nicht. Die Partnermonate und das Elterngeld müssen bei der zuständigen Elterngeldstelle der Kreis- und Stadtverwaltungen beantragt werden.

Beim Arbeitgeber ist die Inanspruchnahme der Partnermonate 7 Wochen vor dem gewünschten Beginn, unter Angabe eines genauen Zeitraums, schriftlich im Original, einzureichen. Es muss verbindlich mitgeteilt werden, für welche Zeiträume die Partnermonate beantragt und Kopie der Geburtsurkunde dem Antrag beigelegt werden. Werden die Partnermonate ab Geburt beantragt, ist das voraussichtliche Geburtsdatum anzugeben. Sollte das Neugeborene früher oder später zur Welt kommen, bedarf es dann eines neuen, korrigierten Schreibens. Stimmt das Geburtsdatum mit dem errechneten Geburtstermin überein, muss dem Arbeitgeber nur noch eine Kopie der Geburtsurkunde nachgereicht werden.

Bei Fragen steht Ihnen Ihr Non-US EMR Team (DSN 480-5365) gerne zur Verfügung.
Ihr EMR-Team



Partnermonate kann zu beachten ist, dass mindestens 2 Monate nach der Vollendung des Kindes genommen werden. Zudem werden pro Kind sondern pro Zwillingen verdoppelt.

APPLICATION FOR PARTNER MONTHS

Partner months are two additional months that are added to the regular parental leave benefit. For this purpose, both parents must apply for parental allowance and take parental leave. An entitlement to the additional partner months exists, if at least one parent no longer works at all or works part-time, i.e. a maximum of 32 hours per week. The deciding factor is that the income is reduced in comparison to the income before the birth. If this is the case, the period for which both parents are entitled to parental leave benefits is extended by two months to a maximum of 14 months. The sharing of the partner months can be freely chosen. It should be noted that each



parent must apply for at least 2 months and a maximum of 12 months, and these cannot be taken after the child has reached the age of 14 months. In addition, unlike parental leave, partner months are not granted per child but per birth. In the case of twins, the entitlement to partner months is not doubled. The partner months and the parental allowance must be applied for at the responsible parental benefit office of the district and city administrations.

The application for partner months must be submitted to the employer in writing and as an original 7 weeks before the wanted beginning of the partner months, specifying the exact periods of time. It must be bindingly stated for which periods the partner months are requested and a copy of the birth certificate must be attached to the request. If the partner months are requested from the date of birth, the expected date of birth must be indicated. If the newborn is born earlier or later, a new, corrected letter is then required. If the date of birth coincides with the calculated date of birth, only a copy of the birth certificate must be submitted to the employer.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact your Non-US EMR Team (DSN 480-5365).

Your EMR Team