



CIVILIAN  
PERSONNEL  
ADVISORY  
CENTER



# UPDATE

## Civilian Personnel News

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# DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

Now that the holidays are behind us, it's great to look forward to warmer weather and less snow and ice! It's time to think about planting vegetables and flowers and enjoying the wonderful lives we have in America. Our resilience as Americans and as federal employees is evident everywhere from the quick smiles we have for each other to the great work we do.

I hope this edition of the UPDATE has lots of information that's relevant for you. If you have a topic or question you would like to see covered, don't hesitate to use the last page that has a hot link to our CPAC website.

If you have an article you would like to see published, send it to us. You may have a supervisor you want to acknowledge or an employee that deserves some public recognition. We love to hear and print good news stories about the Fort Leonard Wood workforce.

On a final note (for this edition), keep alert and in tune with what goes on around you. Report anything suspicious to the proper authorities. We are living in some tough times, but we can't let this get us down. Happy Spring!

**Director  
Civilian Personnel Advisor Center**

## *Hours of Operation*

The Civilian Personnel Advisory Center (CPAC) is open for business from 0900-1130 and 1230-1630. Appointments are encouraged in order that we may better serve your personnel needs. You can reach the advisor for your organization at 596-0927.

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# *Missouri Career Center*

The business hours for the Missouri Career Center (formerly Missouri Job Service), located in Building 470, Room 2203 are 0800 to 1630 hours. The Missouri Career Center provides a variety of services related to employment and training.

The Career Center has a "Self-Service" option available to job seekers in their resource center. Job seekers may search for jobs, complete resumes, take a typing test, complete an aptitude/skills survey or view a variety of printed and on-line information.

The Career Center utilizes an automated job match system that is designed to match applicant skills with employer requirements. The automated system matches an applicant's skills, knowledge, abilities, salary requirement, and location availability to the requirements of the position as determined by the employer.

The Career Center also offers a resume service for job seekers. Resumes are stored in a database and are used with the on-line job matching system. A computer software package is also available to provide applicants with the option of preparing their own professional looking resume.



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# ARMY FAMILY ACTION PLAN

## *AFLAC! No, that's AFAP!*

The Ft. Leonard Wood community will soon have another opportunity to make the post and the Army a better place to live. The 2002 Army Family Action Plan (AFAP) Conference was a huge success and the planning has begun for 2003! The 2003 AFAP Conference is scheduled for March 12 & 13, 2003. It will provide a vehicle for all members of the community to submit issues to be addressed. The issues will then be given to the Army leadership to be worked/resolved.

Through the AFAP process, many civilian issues have been resolved successfully (to include the creation of the Family Friendly Leave Act). Community issues can be addressed, and issues that require Department of the Army or Congressional input can be addressed. Everyone's issues and everyone's voice matters! Civilians are an active and positive force in the FLW community, and the AFAP Program recognizes that!

Since 1983, AFAP has resulted in 62 pieces of legislation, 128 Army policies and the initiation or improvements of 127 Army programs. The key to the Army wide program is the local level. Delegates, who represent a cross-section of the community's members, identify, develop and prioritize the issues and make recommendations for solutions. The majority of the issues are installation specific and can be resolved at a local level, therefore solutions and changes quickly.

The AFAP conference planners are currently looking for volunteers to participate as Delegates, Facilitators, Recorders and Issue Support Personnel for the conference this month. Childcare will be available for volunteers who participate in the conference. The AFAP Conference and training are official MWR activities that are sponsored by the installation command. Civil service employees who wish to participate in the conference as Delegates, Facilitators, Recorders and Issue Support Personnel may be excused from their normal duties to attend. No entry on the Time and Attendance Report or charge to leave will be necessary, but advance supervisory approval is required.

Please contact the Army Community Services at 596-0212 for more information.

**THRIFT SAVINGS PLAN (TSP) "CATCH-UP" CONTRIBUTIONS INTO LAW**

President Bush has signed into law legislation (PL 107-304) allowing TSP participants age 50 and older to make additional contributions of up to \$2,000 in 2003, above the current 8% of basic pay for CSRS and 13% for FERS. The limits on catch-up amounts are expected to rise each year by \$1,000 until 2006 when they will cap at \$5,000. These "catch-up" contributions potentially provide participants over 50 an opportunity to make up for working years when 401(k)'s and similar savings plans, like the TSP, were not available. The catch up contributions, just as current TSP contributions are made, will be transacted through payroll withholding only. The Thrift Investment Board (TIB) has not yet officially provided specific details about TSP catch-up contributions. Federal agencies must adapt payroll and personnel systems so employees can contribute catch up contributions to the TSP. The beginning date, will be dependent-in large part, on the ability of all government agencies to make these required system changes. Information will be provided as it becomes available from the TIB. TSP bulletins may be viewed on the TSP web site at [www.tsp.gov](http://www.tsp.gov) under section, Info for Agency Reps.

## FLEXIBLE SPENDING ACCOUNT

The Office of Personnel Management introduced the Federal Flexible Benefits Plan (FedFlex) with the implementation of the first Fed Flex benefit, Health Benefits Premium Conversion (HB-PC) in October 2000. OPM anticipates expanding FedFlex in calendar year 2003 by offering a new type of benefit called Flexible Spending Accounts (FSAs). Employees will be able to set up a health care and dependent care FSAs to use for out-of-pocket costs for health care expenses not covered by insurance. Both health and dependent care FSA's are arrangements made by an employee to have his or her pay reduced for the next year by a selected amount through a pre-tax allotment.

OPM has a new section on their web site for Flexible Spending Accounts, <http://www.opm.gov/insure/pretax>. This is an excellent resource for information on this new benefit. OPM will be updating the site frequently as new information regarding FSAs becomes available. An informative slide presentation is available under the "Flexible Spending Account" option on this web site.

OPM is in the final stages of choosing a contractor, that will serve as a Third Party Administrator (TPA) to establish and administer individual FSAs. The TPA is also responsible for setting up arrangements with payroll offices to receive the allotments from the employees' pay. Communication materials and conducting events, such as Open Seasons, are also the responsibility of the TPA. OPM predicts that the first open season for employees to enroll in FSAs may begin as early as May 2003. Following the initial

open season enrollment period, OPM plans to align the FSA sign-up season with the FEHB program open season.

## **4.1% PAY RAISE SIGNED INTO LAW**

Despite reservations about its allotment for homeland security first responders, the President signed into law a \$397.4 billion fiscal 2003 omnibus spending bill that includes a 4.1 percent civil service pay raise for 2003.

The long-awaited 4.1 percent raise for white-collar civil servants will be retroactive to the first pay period of 2003, starting (12 Jan 03), though employees won't immediately see the extra money in their paychecks. The President's Pay Agent which is a group consisting of representatives of the Office of Personnel Management, Office of Management and Budget, and Labor Department must first decide how to divide up the funds and make a recommendation to the President.

The legislation also included language supporting military-civilian pay parity. Congress gave military service members a 4.1 percent average pay raise for this year in the fiscal 2003 Defense Authorization Act approved in November.

To further encourage telework programs, lawmakers added \$500,000 to the omnibus legislation to create training programs for managers at agencies where less than 2 percent of employees telecommute. An American Federation of Government Employees official at the Education Department applauded the measure.

"This employee benefit is most critical to many Department of Education workers whose jobs are appropriate for a telework assignment," said the executive vice president of AFGE Council 252, which helps coordinate the work of all the local AFGE units at Education. "Education workers are balancing delicate issues of work, family obligations of child-care, elder care, spousal care and disability issues for themselves and family members."

White House officials said the President was concerned about homeland security funding issues, but decided to sign the bill anyway. While the President asked that \$3.5 billion

in fiscal 2003 funds be earmarked for state and local first responders, who would use the money to develop and implement local emergency response plans, the bill allocated only \$1.3 billion for that purpose.

"He requested \$3.5 billion, and Congress approved \$1.3 billion for first responders, with the \$2.2 billion balance being put toward grant programs that, while meritorious, are not directly linked to the war on terrorism," said White House spokesman. "These are good programs, but unrelated to homeland security, and the President is disappointed because of that."

The administration's fiscal 2004 budget proposal released earlier this month included another \$3.5 billion request for first responders. The White House spokesman said the President plans to work closely with Congress to get that money.

## **Past, Present and Future Predictions**

Over the past several years, many permanent positions have been filled with temporary or term employees. The reason for this was to help protect the current permanent civilian workforce in the event of a reduction-in-force (RIF) resulting from A-76 (aka Contracting Out Studies). Temporary and term employees were hired in these positions, which would allow affected permanent employees to be placed in them if their permanent positions were abolished.

The A-76 process was completed a few months ago. The results of these studies resulted with "in-house" decisions; however organizations are now in various stages of moving toward their most efficient organizations (MEOs). This means that many positions in the new organizations have changed. Some changes will be in the form of reassignments within their current organizations and others will be in the form of changes to lower grades. Some employees will be reassigned to different organizations if they are qualified and in certain situations, qualifications may be waived so as to not send permanent employees home. The CPAC is currently working with Commanders and Directors to determine which positions fall into these various categories.

Many of the temporary and term employees performed so well in their jobs that their supervisors want to make their jobs permanent. Converting these employees is not without some risk due to the protection of other permanent employees who are registered

in the Priority Placement Program (PPP). This, however, will be the last part of the process after excess employees are placed.

It would be nice to predict that the Fort Leonard Wood federal workforce is about to enter a period with some kind of stability. However, the Army continues to explore more efficient ways to conduct business, which includes the best ways to utilize its resources.

## **FRONT GATE DELAYS**

Traffic congestion at the front gate is not expected to improve in the immediate future. Increased traffic and new construction involving lane closures are also expected soon. Suggest that supervisors discuss with their employees their options to ensure they report to work on time. This could include, changing work schedules, taking alternate routes to enter post, or projecting for additional delays getting through the gates. Supervisors and employees need to approach this subject with common sense.

Supervisors and employees should listen to local radio stations for announced traffic delays. General Schedule (GS) supervisors must keep their employees' regular and recurring tour of duty between the hours of 0600 to 1800, to avoid incurring Night Differential Pay.

## **NAF Corner**

Beginning March 15, 2003 through April 15, 2003 Nonappropriated Fund (NAF) will be accepting applications for summer employment. This is open to all who would like to apply. For more information contact NAF at (573) 596-0283, or come to the office at building 470, room 2204.

For all NAF employees who are interested in enrolling in NAF retirement or 401k, you may do so at any time.

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# DIRECT RPA IS COMING

Once again we are changing the way we conduct business. Requests for Personnel Actions (RPAs) have been originating from organizational coordinators, to the Directorate of Resource Management (DRM), CPAC, then to the CPOC. In an effort to speed up the process, the Deputy Chief of Staff for Civilian Personnel Policy decided that RPAs will go from the organizations to DRM then to the CPOC.

This does not mean that the CPACs will be or should be completely left out of the routing process. Organizations should still coordinate all recruitment actions with their CPAC advisor prior to sending RPAs to DRM.

Coordination should be completed up front to ensure that RPAs provide the true picture of the personnel action sent forward.

This new way of doing business was tested from 29 April 2002 through 30 November 2002 in Europe and all Continental United States CPOCs, as well as selected CPACs. The test period was positive; therefore, the decision to make this change is now mandatory and must be in place on Fort Leonard Wood not later than 28 June 2003.

The Army Regional Tool, Gatekeeper, will facilitate this new process. Gatekeeper has a checklist function, which contains standardized automated checklists, which will help managers properly, prepare RPAs, and to collect information required to process them. In conjunction with RPA Direct, respective Gatekeeper automated checklists must be completed and accompany all RPAs prior to submission to the CPOC.

The Training Management Division of the Civilian Personnel Operations Center Management Agency (CPOCMA) developed a 16-minute instructional ScreenCam that introduces and demonstrates the Gatekeeper tool. You can access this "How-To-Movie" by clicking "Gatekeeper" at <http://www.cpocma.army.mil/howtomovies/index.htm>.

More information to come, but wanted to let you know of the upcoming changes. Contact your CPAC advisor if you have concerns or questions about this or any other personnel subject.

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## ***POSITION DESCRIPTIONS***

The Position Description is commonly referred to as a PD. The PD briefly describes the key or major duties and responsibilities of a position or a number of positions. The primary use of PDs is for classification and pay purposes, however, a PD also serves as the basis for preparing an employee's performance plan or objectives, developing a formal training plan, or reviewing and evaluating employee's current or prior work experience. Since a supervisor determines work assignments for employees they supervise, it follows that he or she also has responsibility for ensuring that position descriptions accurately describe the duties and responsibilities required and performed. A supervisor should periodically review PDs to assure the PD accurately reflects the current duties, responsibilities, and supervisory controls of each job. Sometimes a job changes over a period of time or, in order to achieve more effective economical services to the public, supervisors may realign or reassign duties. These changes may change the title, series, or grade of the altered positions. On both the Base System and Senior System Performance Evaluation forms, accuracy of the PD is checked.

A PD is adequate when it contains enough information to determine the title, series and grade of the position. The essential elements are: (1) A description of the major duties that show the knowledge, skill and ability required to perform the significant tasks of the job; (2) The percentage of time spent on each major duty; and (3) An unnumbered statement at the end of major duties: "Performs other duties as assigned." This statement makes it clear that the assignment of duties to employees is not limited by the content of the position description. Supervisors are to avoid assigning incidental duties that are inappropriate of an employee's position and qualifications.

The PD should be as brief as possible while still including all significant facts. Before starting to write a PD, the person who is writing the PD should consider and obtain answers to the following questions: (1) What are the duties and responsibilities of the new position? (2) What knowledge and skills must the new employee have to perform in the position successfully? (3) What are the individual authorities the future employee can exercise? (4) To whom will the incumbent in the new position report and how much oversight will there be? (5) What is the relationship of this new position to already existing positions under the authority of the supervisor? (6) Is the position temporary or permanent and is it full-time or part-time?

Supervisors should prepare newly written PDs only when there is no match in Army's PD Library, when the occupational series is not available in COREDOC, or the Fully Automated System for Classification (FASCLASS). You may access these sources through the CPAC Webpage menu, under Classification.

When it becomes necessary to prepare a new PD, publications are available through the OPM Web site to give additional information on format and content of a PD. New or revised PDs should be prepared and submitted on a Request For Personnel Action (RPA) to the Civilian Personnel Operations Center (CPOC) through the Civilian Personnel Advisory Center (CPAC) by electronic means. Also, you may contact your CPAC Advisor by telephone at 596-0927.

## DRM Tidbits- Leave Recipient Program

There are many employees who need your generous donations of annual leave you cannot use before the end of the leave year. Visit [www.wood.army.mil/CPO/leavetra.htm](http://www.wood.army.mil/CPO/leavetra.htm) for general information about the leave transfer program and forms to become a recipient, as well to transfer leave.

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## TAX TOOL FOR YOU

The Missouri Department of Revenue has a withholding calculator in their website that shows how much state and federal taxes should be withheld each pay period, based on gross income. <http://dort.state.mo.us/>

### *A NOTE FROM EEO*

The EEO staff is ready and willing to travel to your organization to provide training to Supervisors on the following topics:

*Discrimination – what is a basis, what is an issue and what constitutes an act of unlawful discrimination?;*

*Alternative Dispute Resolution – the possible “win-win” method to processing an informal discrimination complaint;*

*EEO’s role in evaluating Support Forms and Performance Evaluations;*

*Affirmative Employment – what is it and how does it impact your organization?*

**Depending on questions and answers, this training should last no more than two hours.**

Because we continue to be contacted by employees expressing a desire to file a discrimination complaint against a co-worker, we are also ready and willing to travel to your organization to provide training for all employees on the following topics:

*Discrimination – what is a basis, what is an issue and what constitutes an act of unlawful discrimination?*

*Alternative Dispute Resolution – the possible “win-win” method to processing an informal discrimination complaint.*

Depending on questions and answers, this training should last no more than one hour.

**Please contact the EEO Office at 6-0602 with your request to schedule the above training. Training can be scheduled from 31 Mar through 30 Apr. We will conduct**

as many training sessions as possible during that time frame. Since Millie will be retiring 3 May, and we will be even shorter staffed at that point, training for your organization may not be scheduled until mid summer. Scheduling for the April sessions will be provided on a first requested, first scheduled basis.

Please forward any other requests for this assistance to me via e-mail or call me at 6-0602.

## ***CHECK OUT THE WEATHER!***

With the weather playing havoc, even Spring is no guarantee that bad weather will hibernate! In case of inclement weather or other events that could affect the installation as to whether or not a delayed opening order has been given, the radio stations below are notified of these decisions as soon as possible and broadcast 24 hours a day. They are:



- 1. KJEL-Lebanon 103.7 FM**
- 2. KTTR-Rolla 99.7**
- 3. KZNN-Rolla 105.3 FM**
- 4. KJPW-Waynesville/St. Robert 102.3 FM**

These stations start broadcasting at 0500 hrs daily:



- 1. FLW-Waynesville/St. Robert 98.9 FM**
- 2. KRMS-Lakes area 93.5 FM**
- 3. KF BD-Waynesville/St. Robert 97.9 FM**
- 4. KDAY- Rolla 97.5 FM**

Also check out this Television Station: **CHANNEL 12 OR 59**

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## **Glad You Asked**

There have been many questions regarding Vacancy Announcements and the area of consideration for them. A summary of these questions and answers are below.

Q: Lately I have noticed in Vacancy Announcements that certain organizations are requesting that only employees currently working in that organization need apply. What policy or regulation governs this type of recruitment?

A: Management may select what area of consideration they want to consider for their positions. Management can choose to concurrently consider any source or to restrict consideration to one or more sources. For example, if management wants to restrict an announcement to current Army employees, they have that option, which would not allow eligibles from other sources (including veterans eligible as 30% disabled veterans and Veteran's Readjustment Appointment eligibles) to apply. By the same token, management could choose to restrict consideration only to veterans group eligibles. Regulations still permit current Army employees to apply for position advertised, however, the selecting official has the right to select individuals in the area of consideration indicated if he/she chooses to do so.

These types of announcements are tools used to ensure excess employees in particular organizations are given the highest priority in order to keep them employed. The current policy memorandum that addresses placement of excess employees is Command Policy 20-01, Placement of Excess Civilian Employees. This memorandum currently under revision.

Q: Is this not pre-selection?

A: This is not pre-selection, because potential placement is afforded to excess employees. When the installation is in a pre-RIF situation, as it currently is, it helps to restrict vacancy announcements to those affected activities to allow potentially displaced employees to apply.

Q: What happens to the people that are on priority placement or those veterans that may qualify?

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A: Pre-RIF placements are an exception to the priority placement program (PPP) because these employees are excess to their competitive levels and are, therefore, eligible for PPP. If referral occurs from an announcement which is open to all US citizens, the top 3 candidates can be referred for each vacancy. (Code of Federal Regulations, Title 5, Part 332.404) If a veteran is in the top 3 and their score places them above a non-preference eligible, the non-preference eligible cannot be selected unless the veteran is also selected or declines selection. However, there is a provision for objecting to the qualifications of a preference eligible and if the objection is withheld, the preference eligible may be removed from the list. (Code of Federal Regulations, Title 5, Part 332.406(b)) . They do not have to actually be registered in PPP as long as we have determined they have that entitlement.

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If you have questions regarding civilian personnel, please forward them to the email address below. The answer will be provided in the June 2003 UPDATE.

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**Editorial Policy:**

**YOU ARE ENCOURAGED TO SHARE YOUR OPINIONS, IDEAS, AND SUGGESTIONS. ALL CORRESPONDENCE MUST HAVE THE NAME AND LOCATION OF THE ORIGINATOR IN THE EVENT THERE IS A NEED FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION. PLEASE FORWARD COMMENTS, SUGGESTIONS, OR NEWS ITEMS FOR PUBLICATION TO THE EDITOR,  
E-MAIL: [atztcp@wood.army.mil](mailto:atztcp@wood.army.mil).**

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**CPAC CUSTOMER FEEDBACK FORM**

We are very interested in getting your feedback regarding the kind of service we provide. Our goal is to provide TIMELY, ACCURATE AND PERSONAL service. We need feedback to analyze how we are doing. Would you please take the time to complete the following items?

- |  | YES              | NO                |
|--|------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Was this action completed/service provided in an acceptable time frame?   | ___              | ___               |
| 2. Do you think the product is accurate and represents good staff work?  | ___              | ___               |
| 3. Did you get the kind of information you needed to make informed choices?  | ___              | ___               |
| 4. Were our interactions with you courteous?   | ___              | ___               |
| 5. Overall, how would you rate the product/service you received?   |                  |                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Good <input type="checkbox"/> Adequate <input type="checkbox"/> Unsatisfactory   |                  |                   |
| 6. Please provide any suggestions you may have for ways that we can improve our service. We are particularly interested in specific feedback on any of the items you may have checked "NO". Please use additional space if needed. |                  |                   |
| 7. If you would like a <i>personal response</i> to your suggestion or comments, please provide your name, phone number and electronic mail address.  |                  |                   |
| 8. Please identify the product or service below:   |                  |                   |
| PERSACTION Number: _____   | Award _____      | Advice _____      |
| Referral list number: _____  | Counseling _____ | Information _____ |
| Training _____   | Benefits _____   | Other: _____      |

**Thank you** for taking the time to complete this feedback form. Please mail it directly to me, send it electronically to [atztcp@wood.army.mil](mailto:atztcp@wood.army.mil), or fax it to 573-596-0289. If you would like to discuss this or any other matter, I can be reached at 573-596-0280 or via email. I look forward to hearing from you.

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