



HR Broadcast

USDA APHIS Human Resources Division

January 2010 Issue

Earnings and Leave Statement Waiver Issue



NFC discovered that new employees were still receiving paper statements . . .

In Pay Period (PP) 12, 2007, it was mandated that USDA employees would no longer receive paper Earnings & Leave Statements (E&Ls). The printing of E&Ls was discontinued

at that time. A waiver process was implemented for those employees who wished to continue receiving paper E&Ls. The employee was required to submit the waiver to the Leave and Compensation Team in HRO, who in turn forwarded them to NFC electronically.

NFC discovered that new employees, and employees that transferred to USDA after PP 12, 2007 were still receiving paper statements. System modifications were made at NFC to correct this issue. The modification terminated the mailing of paper E&Ls to these employees.

However, the modification also



terminated the mailing of paper E&Ls to some employees that submitted waivers.

Employees who previously submitted waivers and stopped receiving paper statements should contact the **Leave and Compensation Team in HRO** for assistance. There is no need to complete an additional waiver form.

Please click on the link below to find your servicing Civilian Pay Technician on the Leave and Compensation Team.

http://www.aphis.usda.gov/mrpbs/contact_us/downloads/let.pdf

We apologize for any inconvenience this issue may have caused.

WebTA Reminder:

Please have your T&A's finalized by COB Tuesday of each T&A week (the first Tuesday of each pay period). It is very important to submit your T&A's timely, so the Leave and Compensation Team can verify with NFC that all employees have submitted a T&A and will be paid.

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For previous issues visit:

http://www.aphis.usda.gov/mrpbs/publications/hr_broadcast.shtml

Can You Increase Your Retirement Benefit?

Civilian Service Credit Deposits and Redeposits

Federal employees who have worked under appointments for which retirement contributions were not withheld (called **deposit service**), or those who have taken refunds of their retirement contributions, (known as **redeposit service**), may be eligible to deposit funds into the Civil Service Retirement and Disability Fund to receive credit for those periods of service under the Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS and CSRS Offset) or the Federal Employee Retirement System (FERS).

Periods of service may be creditable for retirement eligibility purposes, for annuity computation purposes, or both. Increasing your retirement service credit may allow you meet the age and service requirements needed to retire, and may also increase the amount of money you receive in your annuity upon retirement. The laws governing service credit entitlements for retirement purposes depend upon which retirement system you are under, when you were hired into federal service, when your deposit service was performed, or when you took a refund of your retirement contributions.

Increasing your retirement service credit may allow you meet the age and service requirements needed to retire . . .

CSRS or CSRS Offset

If you are a CSRS or CSRS Offset employee with deposit service prior to October 1, 1982, you receive service credit for both retirement eligibility and annuity computation purposes; however, your annuity will be reduced annually by one-tenth of the amount of the service credit deposit owed, unless you

complete your deposit. If your deposit service was on or after October 1, 1982, you receive service credit for retirement eligibility purposes, but you will not receive service credit for annuity computation purposes, unless you complete your deposit.

If you are a CSRS or CSRS Offset employee who took a refund of your retirement contributions prior to March 1, 1991, you retain service credit for both retirement eligibility and annuity computation purposes; however, your annuity is subject to an actuarial reduction designed to cover the amount of the redeposit owed. If you took a refund of your retirement contributions on or after March 1, 1991, you retain

service credit for retirement eligibility purposes, but you will not receive service credit for annuity computation purposes, unless you complete your redeposit.

FERS

Service credit rules for FERS employees are a bit more straightforward. A FERS employee does not receive service credit for retirement eligibility or annuity computation purposes unless retirement contributions are on file with the Office of Personnel Management (OPM). If you are a FERS employee with deposit service prior to January 1, 1989, you may obtain service credit for retirement eligibility and annuity computation purposes by completing a deposit for this service.

A recent change in Federal law allows FERS to redeposit previous refunds.

If you are a FERS employee who took a refund of your retirement contributions prior to obtaining FERS coverage—as in the case of an employee with CSRS coverage who withdrew their retirement contributions upon leaving federal employment and was later rehired under FERS—you may obtain service credit for retirement eligibility and annuity computation purposes by completing a FERS deposit for your period of refunded service.

If you are a FERS employee who took a refund of your retirement contributions after obtaining FERS coverage, a recent change to federal law now allows you to obtain service credit for retirement eligibility and annuity computation purposes by completing a FERS redeposit. Please be aware that it may be some time before the OPM implements the guidance necessary for agencies to assist employees with FERS redeposits.

Other special service credit rules may apply for FERS transferees, employees with D.C. Government, Peace Corp or VISTA service, or employees with prior coverage under other federal retirement systems.

For more information on deposits or redeposits please contact your servicing Benefits Specialist (http://www.aphis.usda.gov/mrpbs/contact_us/benefits.shtml).

Processing Tidbits

Now Is the Time to Verify Your Home Address

The National Finance Center (NFC) will be mailing 2009 W-2 forms in early January, so now is a good time to verify your home address to ensure that your W-2 arrives timely. If you have moved, please be sure that you complete an AD-349 form, Change of Address, and submit it to your Processing service provider (http://www.aphis.usda.gov/mrpbs/contact_us/downloads/processing_prog_assignments.pdf).



Alternatively, you can make the address change yourself via the NFC Employee Personal Page at: <https://www.nfc.usda.gov/>.



Electronic Official Personnel Folder (eOPF) Employee Access Completed

The eOPF is an electronic version of your OPF and contains the records required to document your Federal career. The Human Resources Division (HRD), in conjunction with the Office of Personnel Management (OPM), is providing access to all employees as part of a government wide initiative.

During the months of September to December, AMS and GIPSA employees were notified of the implementation of the electronic Official Personnel Folder (eOPF) and provided registration instructions. Thanks to all who have taken the time to register! With the advent of APHIS employee access earlier this year, the eOPF has been successfully rolled out to all MRP employees.

If you have registered for access to your eOPF, beginning January 1, 2010 you will be notified via email when a new document is added to your eOPF. Since SF-50 forms will automatically be deposited into the virtual “folders” in your eOPF, hard copy SF-50 forms will no longer be printed or mailed. Employees who do not have government or personal access to a computer or email may continue to receive hard copy SF-50s through the mail.

If you have registered for access to your eOPF, beginning January 1, 2010 you will be notified via email when a new document is added to your eOPF.



If you have NOT registered for access to your eOPF, and would like to, please use the following link for directions: [How to register](#).

If you have questions about any of the information above, please contact your servicing Processing team member or send an email message to the eOPF mailbox at eopfmrp@aphis.usda.gov. The HRD appreciates your continued support of the eOPF initiative.

It's that time again! Time to Revisit the Importance of Your Statement of Earnings and Leave

Reviewing your Statement of Earnings and Leave is an important responsibility of an employee and one that should be done each pay period. A review of your pay period one statement is a good habit to maintain, which allows you to ensure your leave balances are correct, along with the pay adjustment for the year, CFC elections, and changes to withholdings made during the annual Benefits Open Season. By regularly reviewing your statement and addressing any areas of concern, you can make sure your records are in order and that can make a difference in your pocket.

For more information on the importance of the Statement of Earnings and Leave, please visit our January 2009 edition of the HR Broadcast at http://www.aphis.usda.gov/mrpbs/hr/downloads/HR_broadcast_Jan_09.pdf.



To review you Statement of Earnings and Leave, please go to the Employee Personal Page at <https://www.nfc.usda.gov/personal/index.asp>. Log in using your eAuthentication ID and password. For questions on employee eAuthentication accounts, contact ATAC (APHIS Technical Assistance Center) at 877-944-8457, or send an email to ATAC@aphis.usda.gov

Water Cooler Talk



What questions do you have for us?

If you have a topic that you would like the HR Broadcast to address, please email Lorie Gleason at lorie.j.gleason@aphis.usda.gov or Emily Carlson at emily.l.carlson@aphis.usda.gov.

We will research and try to address in a future HR Broadcast.

The Electronic Position Organization Listing (E-POL)

The Electronic Position Organization Listing (E-POL) is a resource tool that supplies designated program managers with human resources and employee data. Data elements include employee names, job titles, series, grades, and duty stations, etc. The information supplied by the E-POL can assist managers with workforce planning, organizational structure, and design and can be utilized to run reports based on identified search criteria specific to their program. If you have general questions about the E-POL, contact your servicing Classification Specialist (http://www.aphis.usda.gov/mrpbs/contact_us/downloads/class_prog_assignments.pdf).



What is E-POL ?

Federal Income Tax Form (W-4)



TAX EXEMPT Information

If you were exempt from Federal Tax in 2009, and do not expect to owe any taxes in 2010, you must file a **new** W-4 restating your exempt status for the 2010 tax year. The new form must be completed and submitted **before February 15, 2010 (PP 4)**. If you do not file a new W-4, your 2010 tax withholdings will default to an exemption status of single with zero exemptions. After the February 15, 2010 deadline no adjustment will be made to reimburse you for taxes withheld at the single rate, so please file your 2010 W-4 in a timely manner!

HR Broadcast TRIVIA!

To challenge your memory and know-how, try to answer these Trivia Questions. All answers are found in this issue. You can also find them upside down to the right.

1. You need to submit a new W-4 if you were previously exempt from Federal Taxes. True or False?
2. You have registered for eOPF and viewed your records. True or False?
3. SF-50s will still be printed after January 1, 2010. True or False?
4. The laws governing service credit entitlements for retirement purposes are the same for CSRS, CSRS Offset, and FERS retirement systems. True or False?
5. You need to complete a new waiver form to receive earning and leave statement copies through the mail, if you requested in the past. True or False?
6. E-POL stands for electronic personnel office listings. True or False?



1. True, see pg. 5;
2. Answers may vary, see pg. 3;
3. False, see pg. 3—Note: if you do not have email access, SF-50 forms will be sent through the mail.
4. False, see pg. 2;
5. False, see pg. 1;
6. False, see pg. 4.