HR Broadcast

Marketing & Regulatory Programs
Human Resources

July 2010 Issue

Improving the Federal Recruitment and Hiring Process

Submitted by Martha Gravagna

A Presidential Memorandum on improving the Federal recruitment and hiring process was released on May 11, 2010 and focused on three key objectives:

- Make it easier for applicants to apply for Federal jobs while raising the bar on candidate quality;
- Give managers and supervisors a greater leader-ship role in recruiting and selecting candidates; and
- Improve speed and quality of the hiring process and the satisfaction of managers and applicants.

Required Changes

By November 1, 2010, agencies must make the following changes to their hiring processes:

- Allow applicants to submit general resumes through USAJOBS.
- Eliminate the requirement that applicants respond to essay-style questions "KSAs" when first applying for Federal employment. Agencies will assess applicants using valid, reliable alternative tools.
- Implement Category Rating as a replacement for the Rule of Three when filling jobs open to all U.S. citizens.
- Actively engage managers and supervisors in workforce planning, identifying skills needed for the jobs they are filling, recruiting, and interviewing.
- Ensure supervisors and managers support the successful transition of new hires into Federal service.

What Remains the Same?

Although there are a number of changes being made, the following laws, regulations and guidelines will remain in effect:

- The Uniform Guidelines On Employee Selection -- states that a valid reliable assessment method based on a job analysis must be conducted prior to issuing a certificate.
- Veterans' Preference
- Time-In-Grade
- OPM Qualification Standards
- OPM 80-day Hiring Model

Human Resources' "To Do" List

To facilitate meeting the President's objectives, Human Resources Operations-Staffing will:

- Assist managers and supervisors in developing assessment questions for positions currently advertised using KSAs.
- Develop and test options for a phased evaluation process.
- Explore options for using other assessment tools such as job simulations and accomplishment records.
- Develop a user friendly website for supervisors and managers that provides the following information:
  - Position Descriptions
  - Hiring roadmap and checklist
  - Hiring authorities and flexibilities
  - Interviewing
  - Reference checking
  - Appointment process
- Conduct training sessions for supervisors and managers on the new assessment process.
- Provide information to applicants about changes for them.

Questions?

Please contact your Human Resources Specialist in HRO-Staffing if you have questions.

Inside this issue:

Automatic Enrollment in Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) Begins

August 1, 2010

. . . read more on page 4.

Noncompetitive Appointing Authorities for Veterans

Submitted by Martha Gravagna

Staffing Corner

Hiring managers have options for filling positions that do not require opening vacancy announcements on the USAJobs website. Summarized below are the noncompetitive appointing authorities established exclusively for veterans and their spouses and widows/widowers. Managers can tap into a highly skilled pool of applicants and streamline the recruitment and hiring process by utilizing these special appointing authorities instead of the traditional merit promotion and case examining processes.

⇒ **30 Percent or More Disabled Veterans**- These individuals can be given a non-competitive temporary appointment of more than 60 days or a term appointment. To be eligible, the veteran must be:

- Retired from active military service with a disability rating of 30 percent or more; or
- Rated by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) dated 1991 or later as having a compensable service-connected disability of 30 percent or more.

There is no grade level limitation for this authority, but the appointee must meet all qualification requirements, including any written test requirement. The agency may convert the employee, without a break in service, to a career or career-conditional appointment at any time during the employee's temporary or term appointment.

⇒ **Veterans Recruitment Appointment -** Agencies have the authority to appoint veterans in the excepted service under the Veterans Recruitment Appointment (VRA). (Excepted service positions are not subject to competitive examining procedures.) Agencies can appoint an eligible veteran up through the GS-11 or equivalent grade level without competition under this special authority. The candidate must meet specific eligibility requirements along with the applicable qualification requirements. The appointment is converted to career or career-conditional after 2 years of successful service. A person eligible for a VRA may also be given a term or a competitive service temporary appointment; however, neither appointment confers eligibility for conversion to a career or career-conditional appointment.

⇒ **Disabled Veterans Enrolled in a VA Training Program**- Disabled veterans eligible for training under the VA vocational rehabilitation program may enroll for training or work experience at an agency under the terms of an agreement between the agency and VA. While enrolled in the VA program, the veteran is **not a Federal employee**. Upon successful completion, the host agency and VA give the veteran a Certificate of Training showing the occupational series and grade level of the position for which trained. The Certificate of Training allows any agency to appoint the veteran noncompetitively under a status quo appointment that may be converted to career or career-conditional at any time.

⇒ **Spouses and Widows/Widowers of Certain Military Members** can be appointed without competition to competitive service permanent, term, or temporary positions. The following are eligible:

- A spouse who relocates with an active duty service member who is issued permanent change of station orders with authorization for dependent travel.
- Spouse of an individual who retired or was discharged or released from active duty in the armed forces and has a disability rating of 100 percent
- Unmarried widow or widower of a member of the armed forces who was killed while on active duty (the death need not be combat-related).

There is no grade level limit to this authority, but the appointee must meet all qualification requirements. Eligibility is limited for a maximum of two years from the date of the documentation of the qualifying event. Interagency Career Transition Assistance Plan (ICTAP) clearance must be obtained before an appointment can be made.

Please visit our veterans hiring and employment website for additional information:
http://inside.aphis.usda.gov/mrpbs/veteran/index.shtml

Appointments of People with Disabilities

Submitted by Martha Gravagna

Did you know that people with disabilities may be appointed outside of the competitive process to temporary, time-limited (made for more than one year), or permanent positions? This means that you do not need to post a vacancy announcement on USAJobs. Instead, you can use other methods to publicize your vacancy and focus your recruitment efforts on people eligible for this special appointing authority.

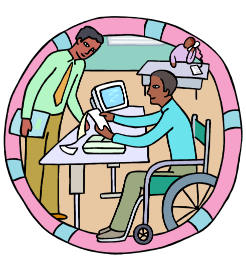
An applicant must be certified as being disabled and job ready, i.e., likely to succeed in the performance of the duties of the position for which he or she is applying. This proof may be in the form of documentation obtained from licensed medical professionals, state or private vocational rehabilitation specialists, or any Government agency that issues or provides disability benefits. In addition, the applicant must meet qualification requirements and be able to perform the essential duties of the position with or without reasonable accommodation. An individual may be hired for any type of position and at any grade level for which qualified.

If not certified as job ready, an agency may hire the candidate on a temporary appointment in order to determine job readiness and later convert the individual to a time-limited or permanent excepted appointment.

Conversion to a career-conditional or career appointment can take place after successful completion of a minimum of 2 years of service under a permanent Schedule A appointment, if recommended by the supervisor.

Please contact your servicing Human Resources Specialist for more information:

- AMS Staffing Specialists
- APHIS Staffing Specialists
- GIPSA Staffing Specialists



Automatic Enrollment in Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) Begins August 1, 2010

Submitted by Peigi Enzler

The Thrift Savings Plan Enhancement Act of 2009 signed into law on June 22, 2009, authorizes agencies to automatically enroll newly hired or rehired employees in TSP.

The automatic enrollment will commence on August 1, 2010, pay period 16. Newly hired employees or rehired employees, who have had a break in service of more than thirty-one days, will have an automatic 3% of their basic pay withheld from their salary and deposited into the G fund of their TSP account. Employees may choose to allocate their contributions and/or complete an interfund transfer once their account has been established. Employees currently on agencies' rolls, but who are not contributing, **will not** be automatically enrolled.

OPTING OUT

If an employee does not wish to participate in TSP or would like to increase the election amount, it is the employee's responsibility to complete a TSP-1, TSP Election Form, and fax it to the Benefits section of the HR Office in Minneapolis at (612) 336-3545.

If an employee would like to request a refund of the automatic TSP withholdings, he/she must complete a TSP-25, Request for an Automatic Enrollment Refund, and fax it to TSP at 1-866-817-5023 or mail it to:

Thrift Savings Plan
P.O. Box 385021
Birmingham, AL 35238

It is the employee's responsibility to submit the TSP-25 by the refund deadline date which is 90 days from the date TSP receives the first enrollment contribution. The deadline date will be in the TSP Welcome Letter which the employee will receive after his/her TSP account has been established. If a refund is issued to the employee, the agency matching contributions will be forfeited to the TSP.

If you have any questions, please contact your servicing Benefits Specialist

Have you paid a deposit or redeposit for retirement contributions to the Office of Personnel Management (OPM)?

OPM has identified errors in the interest computation process for deposit and redeposit service. They are in the process of notifying impacted employees.

Click Here for more information and "Frequently Asked Questions" (FAQ's) to help you understand what happened, what actions OPM is expected to take, and what actions you can take to complete your deposits/redeposits.

Check out TSP's newly redesigned website at

https://www.tsp.gov

Federal Long Term Care Insurance Program (FLTCIP): Qualified Relatives now include Same-Sex Domestic Partners

Submitted by Peigi Enzler

In an effort to help agencies address the family needs of a diverse workforce and enhance the Federal Government's ability to compete with the private sector for talent, the President Memorandum of June 17, 2009, on Federal Benefits and Non-Discrimination requested that the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) extend certain benefits to same-sex domestic partners of Federal employees consistent with federal law. On June 1, 2010, OPM issued the final regulation establishing the 5 CFR 875.213 section which expands the definition of "qualified relative" as it pertains to FLTCIP to include same-sex partners of eligible Federal employees.

This provision does not currently extend to the Federal Employees Heath Benefits Program or the Federal Employees Group Life Insurance Program

OPM has defined the term "domestic partnership" as a committed relationship between two adults, of the same sex, in which the partners-

(1) Are each other's sole domestic partner and intend to remain so indefinitely;
(2) Have a common residence, and intend to continue the arrangement indefinitely;
(3) Are at least 18 years of age;
(4) Share responsibility for a significant measure of each other's financial obligations;
(5) Are not married to anyone else;
(6) Are not a domestic partner of anyone else;
(7) Are not related in a way that, if they were of opposite sex, would prohibit legal marriage in the State in which they reside; and
(8) Will certify they understand that willful falsification of information within the documentation may lead to disciplinary action, loss of insurance coverage and/or the recovery of the cost of benefits received related to such falsification and may constitute a criminal violation under 18 U.S.C. 1001.

A same-sex domestic partner applying for a long term care policy will be subject to full underwriting and applicants must answer questions about their health on their application. Certain medical conditions, or a combination of conditions, will prevent some people from being approved for coverage. An applicant must indicate on the FLTCIP application that a Declaration of Domestic Partnership form has been submitted to HR in Minneapolis at the following address:

USDA APHIS MRPBS HRD
Attention: Benefits
Butler Square, 100 N. 6th Street
Minneapolis, MN 55403

No other documentation is required. The Declaration form will be kept on file in the employee's Official Personnel File. If approved, the coverage will be effective the first day of the month following the application approval date.

For additional information and application forms, please visit **www.ltcfeds.com** or call

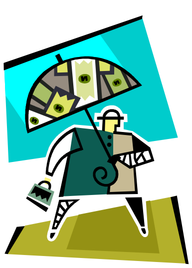
1-800-LTC-FEDS (1-800-582-3337).

Military Deposits

Submitted by Laura Frantes

If you are an employee covered under the Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS) or Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS or CSRS Offset) and have active duty military service, you'll need to understand the service credit rules for your retirement system to determine if you should complete a payment into the Civil Service Retirement and Disability Fund (Fund) to receive retirement service credit for your military service. Let's look at how military service credit rules differ between FERS and CSRS and clarify who might need to make a military deposit.

If you are a CSRS employee who was hired into federal civilian service prior to 10/01/1982, you are entitled to receive service credit for your active duty military service for retirement purposes without making a service credit payment into the Fund. There is a catch though, known as the "Catch 62". All military earnings after 1956 were subject to Social Security (SS) tax making military service creditable for SS purposes. As a CSRS or Offset employee, if you are eligible to receive a SS benefit at age 62,



or at retirement if retiring later than age 62, the Office of Personnel Management will remove the time attributable to your active duty military service from the computation of your annuity *unless* you have completed your military deposit. If you are not eligible for SS at age 62, or at retirement if retiring older than age 62, you will retain the military service credit in your CSRS annuity.

If you are a CSRS or CSRS Offset employee and were hired on or after 10/01/1982, or a FERS employee, you must make a military deposit for your active duty military service to be creditable for retirement purposes. For most employees, it is beneficial to complete their military deposits, as the amount paid to the Fund will generally be recovered through an increased annuity within a short time after retirement, sometimes as little as a few months.

For Reservists and National Guard military members that were, or are, called to active duty from civilian employment, service deposit rules depend on the nature of your active duty (state or federal) and the date you were reemployed in federal civilian service. Most employees that have this type of military service will be required to complete a military deposit to receive service credit for retirement purposes.

Employees who are retired from active duty military service are not

eligible to complete a military deposit unless they waive their military retired pay, or unless their retirement was due to a service-connected disability incurred in combat or caused by an instrumentality of war and incurred in the line of duty during a period of war. If your military retirement is based on Reserve or National Guard duty, you are eligible to make your military deposit for periods of active duty military service.

If you have active duty military service and think it might be creditable for retirement purposes, or if you would like to make a military deposit to receive retirement service credit, please contact your servicing Benefits Specialist.

Benefits Buzz

Do the lazy days of summer have you thinking about retirement?

Submitted by Peigi Enzler

You should start planning early for retirement to make sure you are ready for when the day comes. You can start planning today by visiting our retirement website

We suggest contacting a Benefits Specialist to request an annuity estimate about **one year** in advance and submit your retirement application to the HR Office in Minneapolis about 60 days before the effective date.

The finalization of the processing of your retirement paperwork can take a few months. Your first few annuity checks (interim payments) are usually about 75-80% of your estimated annuity. You should be prepared to supplement your income with savings to assist you during the period of transition.

Remember to start planning early!

Keep up to date on Benefits News **.**

ProcessingTidbits

Elimination of Federal Payroll Savings Deductions for Bonds

Submitted by Margaret McKinney

The U.S. Department of the Treasury has announced it will stop issuing paper savings bonds through federal payroll savings plans as of **September 30, 2010**. This change will reduce the costs associated with the U.S. Savings Bond Program and supports the Treasury's long-term plan to issue all securities electronically.

The last pay period that bond deductions will be taken towards the purchase of paper bonds will be Pay Period 19 (PP19). An employee can change the paper savings bond deduction amount at any time between now and Pay Period 19 to ensure the bond purchase price is completed in PP19. Effective September 26, 2010, NFC will cancel all employee payroll paper bonds so deductions will no longer be made. If employee deductions to that date have not been sufficient to purchase a bond, previous deductions will be refunded to the employee in Pay Period 20. This bond refund will be displayed as a separate line item on the employee's Earning and Leave Statement. The Employee Self Service section of the Employee Personal Page will display a message in the News Section informing employees of the discontinuation of paper bond deductions. Employees who wish to continue bonds may do so by enrolling in the electronic bond program via Treasury Direct (**www.treasurydirect.gov**).

ProcessingTidbits

Submitted by Margaret McKinney

Redesigned Employee Personal Page

NFC recently redesigned the Employee Personal Page (EPP). The newl EPP provides an improved user interface and expanded functionality. While the basic processes of EPP have not changed, the navigation is now menu-driven and the pages within EPP have a new look and feel. Each benefit type contains current information and self-service processing on the same page.

There is also a Self-Service History feature where users are able to view the current status of documents being processed through Employee Self Service(ESS). Employees are able to follow a document as it is processed from EPP to the Payroll/Personnel System database. The status of a document may include:

Pending – The document has been entered into ESS but has not been sent for editing by the NFC database. It can still be modified or deleted by the employee.

In Process – The document has been sent for editing by the NFC database. It can no longer be modified or deleted by the employee.

Processed/Future - The document has been edited by the NFC database and is in the future file. It can no longer be modified or deleted by the employee. The employee must contact their Processing Service Provider to have the document modified or deleted.

Processed/Error – The document did not apply to the NFC database and is in suspense. The employee must contact their Processing Service Provider to have the document corrected or deleted.

Processed/Complete - The document has successfully applied to the NFC database. No action can be taken to change or delete this document. The employee can verify the change in EPP.

The Employee Personal Page can be accessed at: https://www.nfc.usda.gov/personal/index.aspx

TRIVIA!!

Submitted by Kim Kilde

1. True or False: For the first few months after I retire, my annuity checks may only be about 75-80% of my estimated annuity.

2. True or False: If I submit the TSP-25 Request for an Automatic Enrollment Refund within the 90 day deadline, I will forfeit the agency's matching contribution.

3. Effective Pay Period 12, the Employee Personal Page:
   A. Will have a new look.
   B. Will be easier to use
   C. Will let me track the status of the self-service documents I entered.
   D. All of the above.

Answers:
1. True (see page 7)
2. True (see page 4)
3. D (see page 8)

Leave and Compensation

Payment of Housing Subsidy for Summer Interns

Submitted by Cindy Hadlich

Now is the time of the year when MRP hires summer interns. Who are summer interns? Per the USDA Personnel Bulletin No. 302-2, a summer intern is: "A person who is employed by the Department of Agriculture to assist scientific, professional, administrative, or technical employees of the Department during the summer; and is a student in good standing at an institution of higher education pursuing a course work of study related to the field in which the person is employed by the Department." USDA Agencies are authorized to pay the lodging expenses of a student intern who meets eligibility requirements. For more information, please click on the link below:
Summer Intern Program (SIP)

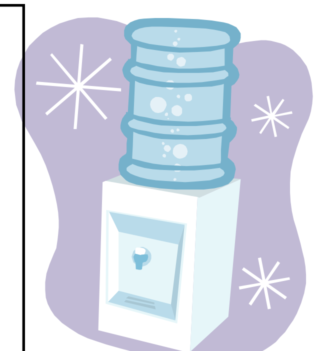
The appropriate approving official (usually the supervisor) must complete the HRO343SH to request and authorize payment for the student's housing.
The Leave and Compensation Team in HRO works with the National Finance Center to make these payments. These payments may be sent directly to the student or to the hotel, apartment, or other location on behalf of the student.
If the payment is sent to the student, he/she is responsible for paying the rent, lease, etc. Please note: the payments issued in the student's name for housing will be included on their W-2 at year's end. The HRO343SH form and some additional instructions may be found on the MRPBS website.

Please contact your servicing Civilian Pay Technician on the Leave and Compensation Team with any questions.

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.



Frequently Asked Questions about LincPass
(your USDA PIV Credential)

The most commonly asked questions about obtaining your Personal Identity Verification (PIV) credential are listed below. More information can be found at: **http://www.fedidcard.gov/credential.aspx** (and) **http://hspd12.usda.gov/**

Q: Why do I need this PIV Credential. also known as LincPass or Smart Card?

A: Three years ago, USDA began participating in GSA's USAccess program, which facilitates the PIV credentialing process. The program was developed in response to Homeland Security Presidential Directive 12 (HSPD-12) requiring federal agencies to issue a common identity credential. Ultimately, your LincPass credential will enable you to gain access to buildings and systems for which you are authorized. Without a PIV credential, you may not be able to enter certain buildings (ePACS) or access your computer (via 2-factor authentication).

Q: Why does USDA call it a LincPass?

A: USDA named its PIV credential *"LincPass"* in honor of President Abraham Lincoln, founder of the Department of Agriculture.

Q: What is the process of obtaining a LincPass credential?

A: Employee information is uploaded into GSA's USAccess System from the NFC Payroll/Personnel System and employee e-authentication profiles. Agency Sponsors add other relevant information which completes the sponsorship and creates a system generated email notifying employees to schedule an appointment to enroll at one of the credentialing sites. Personnel Security also enters background investigation information into these records. A credential can be issued *only* when the sponsorship, enrollment, and investigation verifications are completed. Without all three being marked as completed, a card cannot be issued.

Q: How do I find my Sponsor?

A: The name of the person who sponsored you is included in the email you receive prompting you to make an appointment to enroll for your USAccess PIV Credential. The person's name and email address are listed in this email. *Your primary MRPBS sponsors are Twyla Menlove (612-336-3399) and Sue Burnette (612-336-3325)*

Q: I have forgotten my PIN. How do I reset my PIV Credential PIN?

A: The PIV Credential PIN can be reset at any USAccess Activation station. If you do not know or have not reset your one time use Activation Password, the PIN must be reset with the assistance of an Activator using "Attended Activation." *(Activation stations can be found at* http://www.fedidcard.gov/centerlocator.aspx *- enter your duty station and then select ACTIVITY (enrollment/activation or activation only) – also select TYPE "shared center".)*

Q: How do I make an appointment at a USAccess Credentialing Center?

A: Once sponsored in the USAccess system, applicants will receive an email prompting them to make an appointment at a nearby USAccess Center. To make the appointment, you will use the GSA Online Scheduling System. The email you receive will contain a link to the home page of the GSA Online Scheduling System.

Q: My name is not correct in the sponsorship e-mail. Who do I contact?

A: You will need to contact your sponsor whose contact information is included in the email. Please note that the name in the system should match two authoritative sources of documentation. It is important that the name displayed in the system (and is included in the e-mail you received) matches the name that is on your proof of identification documents that you will need to present to enroll and pick up your PIV Credential. See the List of Acceptable Forms of ID in the PIV Credential section of the website referenced at the beginning of this article.

Q: Quite some time ago I enrolled at one of the mobile sites but still do not have my credential, how do I find out its status?

A: Your points of contact for locating your card are *Seandra Cosgrove* and *Lindsay Cox.* They can be reached at the MRPBS Physical Security Office in Fort Collins office (number: 970-494-7156).

Q: What do I do if I've lost my card or it was stolen or damaged?

A: Contact the MRPBS Physical Security Office in Fort Collins office (number: 970-494-7156). Typically cards are suspended for one week before requesting a replacement. After that, the Fort Collins staff will submit a reissuance request, to which you will receive an email notification with further instructions for re-enrolling. It's equally important that you notify the Fort Collins staff if the card has been found so they can un-suspend the credential.

Q: What do I do if my card no longer works for computer or facility access?

A: Contact the MRPBS Physical Security Office in Fort Collins office (number: 970-494-7156). They will submit a credential reprint request. In approximately 10 work days you'll receive an email notification to schedule an appointment to pick up your new card.

Q: How long before I receive my PIV Credential?

A: The entire PIV credentialing process can take up to 6 weeks or more. Steps include sponsoring and enrolling, PIV Credential printing and delivery, and when you (the applicant) schedule an appointment to pick up and activate the PIV Credential. It also depends on whether or not your background investigation has been verified. There are several other things that can affect the process and are agency specific such has how the agency decides to distribute and activate the PIV Credentials. To learn the status of your PIV Credential, contact the MRPBS Physical Security Office in Fort Collins office (number: 970-494-7156) who can verify where you are in the process.

From the Policy Branch

A New Kind of FMLA

Submitted by Nella Roberts

The National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) of 2010 authorized various Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) entitlements for Federal employees who are family members of military servicemen or women. The new entitlements will be included in FMLA policy guidance issued by Human Resources in the Human Resources Desk Guide (HRDG). The NDAA authorizations for Federal employees include:

1) Entitlement to Emergency Leave under FMLA for:

- Short-notice deployments
- Military events and related activities
- Childcare and school activities
- Making financial and legal arrangements
- Counseling

2) Expanding the coverage for the use of 26 weeks FMLA entitlement for family members to care for a seriously injured/ill covered service member.

3) Expanding existing FMLA coverage to care for a covered service member by adding veterans to the definition of “covered service member.”

Reservist Differential

Submitted by Nella Roberts

Civilian employees who are members of the military Reserve or National Guard (Reservists) who are called or ordered to active duty may be entitled to a Reservist Pay Differential (RD). The RD will be paid for those pay periods when reservists are called to active military duty and it is determined that the projected civilian “basic pay” for the affected period exceeds the military “pay and allowances." Human Resources is developing guidance on this pay differential; guidance will be published in the Absence and Leave (4630) subchapter of the Human Resources Desk Guide.

Student Employment Performance Feedback Tool

Submitted by Gwen Montgomery

The USDA, Office of Human Resources Management (OHRM) recently introduced the Student Employment Program Performance Feedback Tool. This tool is part of a Department-wide effort to improve the USDA student employment program and position the student program to play a significant role in the Agency’s succession and workforce planning efforts, as well as help the Agency advance its Cultural Transformation goals and objectives. The tool was developed to provide performance feedback to those students who will be working less than 90 days and who do not fall within the regulatory requirement to have formal performance plans implemented. The Feedback Tool will allow supervisors to communicate performance expectations at the beginning of the student’s period of employment; identify how the work of the program aligns with the goals of the Agency and the USDA mission; and provide feedback regarding the student’s performance at the conclusion of their appointment. It is believed the proactive engagement created by the tool between the supervisor and the student will help contribute to a positive, meaningful experience for the student.

While the Performance Feedback Tool is in the pilot stage, OHRM is encouraging all mission area agencies to utilize the Tool this summer. Supervisors (with summer students) are now receiving information about the Feedback Tool and its use. The Student Employment Program Feedback Tool will also be available on the Intranet. Should you have any questions related the tool and its implementation, please contact Gwen Montgomery at gwen.montgomery@aphis.usda.gov. If you have questions related to the student employment program, please contact your servicing HR specialist in the HR Operations office in Minneapolis.