

**DIRECTOR'S CORNER**

Since Punxsutawney Phil did not see his shadow, they say that it will be an early spring. I hope so, since many of the APHIS hub locations are still seeing snow and cold temperatures. Here in the National Capitol Region (NCR), it depends on the day because lately, it is winter one day, then the next day, it soars to sixty degrees.

While the NCR weather may run hot and cold, my commitment to this organization never varies. I am honored to be a part of the APHIS team, particularly in the Human Resource Division (HRD). For those who may not know, I am on a detail as the HRD Director. My permanent position is in USDA's Office of Human Resource Management, where I am the HR Policy Director. My APHIS detail is part of my Senior Executive Service (SES) Candidate Development Program (CDP), where, before I graduate, I accept a detail outside my organization. It was perfect timing to have this opportunity to serve as your HRD Director.

The SES CDP program develops candidates who are interested in becoming leaders in the Federal Government. As a candidate, my goal is to develop those skills that the Office of Personnel Management has determined as vital to lead the Government into the future, which includes building coalitions and business acumen, leading change, leading people, and being results driven.

I have been extremely fortunate to work with all of you. Besides helping me develop my skills, I think I can bring an understanding of all the complexities of your positions to others outside the organization. I have been in the human resources field for over 20 years, holding positions from secretary to the director's level. I have worked and held leadership positions in OHRM, USDA's Office of the Inspector General, the Library of Congress, the U.S. Capitol Police, and the U.S. Mint. I know the difficulties that you all face, and I am your advocate to APHIS and USDA senior management.

It has been a great privilege getting to know you during my detail here. I have visited many of you in the DC Headquarters, the Riverdale facility, and the Minneapolis hub. Before I complete my detail, I promise to meet all of you in the other hubs.

You all have done such a fantastic job that APHIS HRD was recognized as a truly outstanding organization. Other agencies, including the Foreign Agricultural Service and the U.S. Merit Systems Protection Board have sought your services. In my detail, I have learned much from all of you on the varying human resources issues.

Therefore, as I approach my halfway mark as HR Acting Director, I want to thank you for this excellent learning experience.

*Sheila Williamson*  
Acting HR Director



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WELCOME  
SHEILA  
ACTING HR DIRECTOR  
WILLIAMSON!



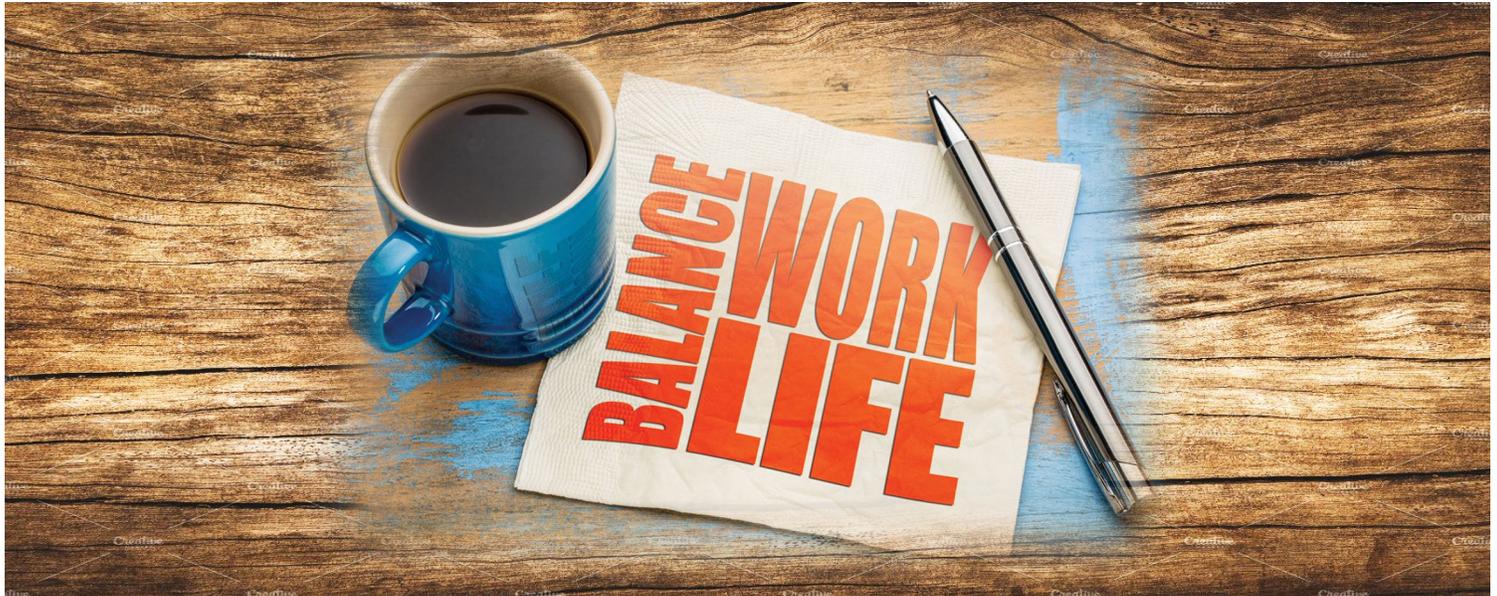
— HAPPY NEW YEAR —

We hope that the HR Broadcast is meeting your needs and communicating topics of interest, but if there are items you would like to see included in future issues, please contact our HR Broadcast Layout Editor Christina Furnkranz, at 301-851-2884 or at [Christina.S.Furnkranz@usda.gov](mailto:Christina.S.Furnkranz@usda.gov)



## RESOURCES AND REFERRAL SERVICES THROUGH THE WORKLIFE4YOU PROGRAM

By **Tara Abramowitz** ([Tara.Abramowitz@usda.gov](mailto:Tara.Abramowitz@usda.gov), 301-851-2883) and **Lisa Mason** ([LisaM.Mason@usda.gov](mailto:LisaM.Mason@usda.gov), 301-851-2880)



Leading a balanced life means you must often juggle competing demands of work, family life, and personal needs, and it can be stressful finding the time to manage all the important events in your life.

Looking for necessary resources like childcare, medical services, or elder care requires countless hours and competes for your time both at work and at home.

The WorkLife4You Program is a comprehensive resource and referral service that is available at no cost. Some of the resources available to you include:

<b>Family</b>	Adoption, Parenting, Child Care, Prenatal, Work and Family, Elder Care
<b>Health &amp; Wellness</b>	Safety, Diet and Nutrition, Fitness/Exercise, Men's/Women's/Senior's/Children's General and Emotional Health
<b>Education</b>	College, Summer Programs, Special Education, Preschool – High School Education
<b>Financial/Legal</b>	Credit and Debit, Insurance, Social Security, Personal Finance, Medicare/Medicaid, Real Estate and Loans, Retirement Planning
<b>Daily Life</b>	Travel, Pet Care, Moving/Relocation, Home Improvement, Automotive Services, Consumer Information

WorkLife4You is available to assist APHIS employees all day, all week, and all year.

Call the toll-free number at 1-800-222-0364 (1-888-262-7848 TTY) to speak to a specialist or visit the WorkLife4You website at [www.worklife4you.com](http://www.worklife4you.com). To log in, look for the Log In box and enter Screen Name: "aphis" and Password: "lifespan".





## GUIDANCE FOR WEATHER EMERGENCIES

By **Tara Abramowitz** ([Tara.Abramowitz@usda.gov](mailto:Tara.Abramowitz@usda.gov), 301-851-2883)  
and **Nella Roberts** ([Nella.H.Roberts@usda.gov](mailto:Nella.H.Roberts@usda.gov), 301-851-2910)

Winter weather has arrived in many parts of the USA! No matter what the weather emergency, it is important to be prepared to continue carrying out the Agency's mission. Being prepared means knowing what the emergency weather announcements, such as "Federal Offices are OPEN under Unscheduled Leave/Unscheduled Telework" or "Federal Offices are CLOSED to the Public," mean and how they apply to you. For MRP employees, a "Federal Offices are **OPEN** under Unscheduled Leave/Unscheduled Telework" announcement means that you may either take leave or telework instead of reporting to the office. This type of announcement covers regularly scheduled and ad hoc employees with telework agreements. If you opt for unscheduled telework under this scenario and your power goes out, you must either report to the office or take leave for the remainder of your workday.



An announcement of "Federal Offices are **CLOSED** to the Public" means that all employees who have approved telework agreements must telework. This includes regularly scheduled telework, ad hoc telework, etc. Due to the new law on Weather and Safety Leave (WSL), employees will **no** longer receive up to 2 hours of administrative leave on the day of a closure to take care of personal needs related to the closure, such as pumping water from flooded areas, etc. Leave must be used for these purposes. If the office is closed and your power goes out while teleworking, you will be granted administrative leave. However, if your power returns during your regularly scheduled workday, you are required to resume work.

In any of the above scenarios, please adhere to the following:

- Contact your supervisor to tell him/her that you are safe;
- Advise your supervisor of your choice to telework or take leave;
- Ensure you have your laptop and any other necessary equipment, paperwork, etc. at home with you. If you are out of the office, e.g., on leave, or it is your day off prior to one of the above announcements, you may need to go to the office to pick up your equipment in order to be able to telework when bad weather is affecting your area.
- If you are not prepared to telework, i.e., you do not have your laptop or other necessary equipment or supplies, you must take leave.

For more information about operations during a weather-related emergency, either within the DC metro area or in the field, please see: [https://www.aphis.usda.gov/aphis/ourfocus/business-services/forms\\_publications/hr\\_desk\\_guide/hrdg\\_4630/4630\\_sub\\_d\\_sec\\_b#weather](https://www.aphis.usda.gov/aphis/ourfocus/business-services/forms_publications/hr_desk_guide/hrdg_4630/4630_sub_d_sec_b#weather)

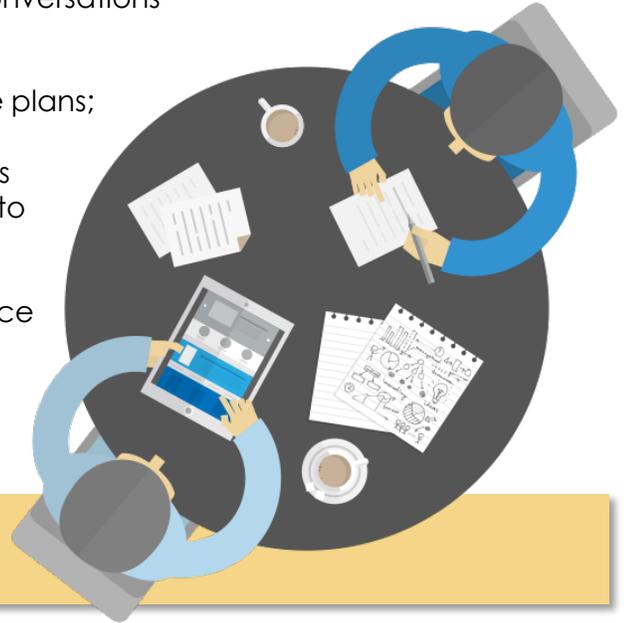


### QUARTERLY PROGRESS REVIEWS

By **Gwen Montgomery** ([Gwen.Montgomery@usda.gov](mailto:Gwen.Montgomery@usda.gov), 301-851-2928)

The USDA Departmental Regulation on Performance Management (DR-4040-430) requires the completion of quarterly progress reviews with all employees. Quarterly reviews are formal two-way conversations and should include:

- Discussing progress in relation to standards in performance plans;
- Clarifying existing expectations as necessary;
- Discussing potential concerns about meeting expectations and/or any obstacles hindering the employee's capacity to meet the expectations, and how they'll be handled;
- Documenting new assignments, potentially reprioritizing or eliminating other assignments, and revising the performance plan as necessary;
- Providing feedback on the quality of performance in that quarter.



### RESTORING LOST ANNUAL LEAVE

By **Nella Roberts** ([Nella.H.Roberts@usda.gov](mailto:Nella.H.Roberts@usda.gov), 301-851-2910)

Beginning pay period 1, 2020, employees who did not use and/or donate their use/lose annual leave forfeited (lost) that leave. However, that lost leave may be restored IF it meets the restoration criteria as summarized below:

- The leave was scheduled in writing (or electronically) by the end of pay period 23, 2019.
- The first level supervisor canceled the leave in a written memo due to an exigency of the public business (operational emergency).
- The memo had the written concurrence of the second level supervisor.
- The employee followed the leave usage order policy.

Leave restoration requests may be submitted to Nella Roberts no earlier than pay period 1, 2020. Please use the checklist when preparing requests and contact her directly if you have additional questions ([Nella.H.Roberts@usda.gov](mailto:Nella.H.Roberts@usda.gov), 301-851-2910).



## VOLUNTARY CHANGES IN OFFICIAL DUTY STATION (ODS)

By Nella Roberts (Nella.H.Roberts@usda.gov, 301-851-2910)



MRP is committed to supporting a balance between a family-friendly workplace and an efficient and focused workforce that successfully carries out our mission. There are many existing tools supporting that commitment including alternative work schedules and various work-life wellness programs. Now we have an additional tool to support our employees. It is through the issuance of the new Human Resources Desk Guide (HRDG) Subchapter 4335, Voluntary Changes in Official Duty Station.

This HRDG subchapter recognizes that at some point in a career, an employee may be faced with a significant life event which causes him/her to consider employment options including requesting a temporary or permanent change in ODS. While not all inclusive, "significant life events" may include:

- Spouse/significant other's job is transferred to another commuting area permanently or for a short-term duration;
- A divorced employee's former spouse relocates, and the employee also wants to relocate to be closer to their children;
- An elderly parent is seriously ill and requires assistance for a short-term duration. The employee may or may not have siblings and/or other family members who are able to assist;
- An adult child, who lives in another State, is terminally ill and the employee would like to be closer to the child during this difficult time period.

This subchapter was designed to apply to most GS and AD positions. It was developed to be an easy-to-use guide that provides essential information to:

- Employees on how to request a permanent or temporary change in ODS, and,
- Reviewing/approving officials on how to analyze and respond to such requests.

Please take a moment to review this new subchapter and contact your servicing personnel office with any questions.



Persons with disabilities who need program information in alternate formats (braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 or 844-433-2774 (voice and TTY). <https://www.targetcenter.dm.usda.gov/>





## PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT TIMEFRAMES

By **Gwen Montgomery** ([Gwen.Montgomery@usda.gov](mailto:Gwen.Montgomery@usda.gov), 301-851-2928)

During the first quarter of each fiscal year, the issuance of new performance plans and the initial discussion with employees concerning these new plans, will ensure that Rating Officials are in compliance with Departmental Regulation timelines. For Fiscal Year 2020, performance plans for current employees were to be issued by October 30, 2019. <sup>1</sup>

For the second and third quarters, reviews may be conducted anytime during each quarter, but **must be completed no later than the last day of the quarter**. For example, Quarter 2 performance discussions can take place at any time from January through March, but must occur no later than March 31<sup>st</sup> of each fiscal year. Similarly, Quarter 3 discussions can take place anytime from April through June, but must be completed by June 30<sup>th</sup> of that year. During the fourth quarter, because end of year reviews are conducted during this time, Rating Officials are given until October 30<sup>th</sup> to complete employee performance reviews and issue new standards for the upcoming fiscal year to their current employees.

There is no minimum period of time for the employee to perform under standards, or for the Rating Official to be in that role, before the quarterly review can take place. However, employees must be on their performance plan for a minimum of 90 days before an end of year rating can be given. Employees and Rating Officials must initial and date the Form AD-435E or Form AD-435S upon completion of each quarterly review.

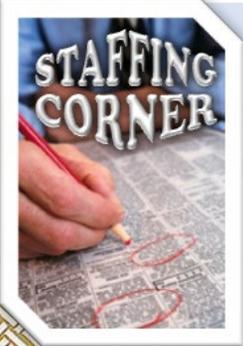
For FY2020, the following deadlines for quarterly reviews must be followed:

Quarterly Review	Deadline (due no later than)
1 <sup>st</sup> Quarter	October 30, 2019 Issuance of new plans constitutes compliance
2 <sup>nd</sup> Quarter	March 31, 2020
3 <sup>rd</sup> Quarter	June 30, 2020
4 <sup>th</sup> Quarter/FY2020 performance appraisal	October 30, 2020

The FY2020 Performance Management calendar is available on the [MRP Performance Management](#) webpage for reference. This calendar includes the quarterly review deadlines along with other activities occurring during the performance year. For questions regarding performance management, please contact Gwen Montgomery at (301) 851-2928 or via email.

<sup>1</sup> **Departmental Regulation 4040-430 Employee Performance Management pp14-15:** "An approved performance plan must be issued to eligible employees no later than: (a) 30 days from the beginning of the new performance year; (b) 15 days of when an employee starts a new position, or a detail or temporary promotion of 90 or more days; and/or (c) 15 days of a new assignment or change in assignment that impacts the expectations of the position during the appraisal period."





## LENGTH OF SERVICE RECOGNITION

By **Jackie Mayer** ([Jacqueline.M.Mayer@usda.gov](mailto:Jacqueline.M.Mayer@usda.gov), 612-336-3320)  
and **Rebecca Meyer** ([Rebecca.Meyer@usda.gov](mailto:Rebecca.Meyer@usda.gov), 612-336-3426)

Permanent agency employees are recognized for their length of service to the Government with a formal certificate and service pin (e.g., 10 year pin). Human Resources will provide quarterly length of service reports to program points of contact that will include the names and service computation dates for all employees who are due to receive recognition. The report is based upon total Federal service including civilian and all honorable military service credited to their Service Computation Date for leave purposes.

MRP programs are responsible for preparing and distributing length of service certificates and pins to eligible employees when they meet the length of service milestone. Recognition of 50 years of service should be coordinated with the Secretary of Agriculture's Office and 55 years or more of service can be coordinated to include a letter from the President, a plaque, and a letter from the Secretary. Instructions for requesting Federal career service awards from the Secretary of Agriculture and the President are outlined in Departmental Regulation 4040-451-1, USDA Employee Awards and Recognition Program <https://www.ocio.usda.gov/sites/default/files/docs/2012/DR4040-451-1.htm>  
Ordering Length of Service Certificates and Pins.

Length of Service certificates may be ordered from the USDA Material Management Service Center (MMSC) in Beltsville, MD. MMSC ordering and contact information can be found at the following website: <https://www.bsc.usda.gov/>

Length of service lapel pins may be ordered from the Armed Forces Super Store for service between 10-50 years in length <https://www.usamilitarymedals.com/collections/lapel-pins/federal-length-of-service>.

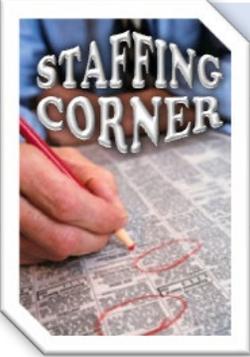
Programs are encouraged to anticipate their needs over an extended time period and order accordingly. To avoid possible damage to the certificate and/or pin, it is recommended that you use a structured mailing box rather than an envelope to ship the items.

### Distribution

Completed certificates and pins will be sent to the employee's direct supervisor, timekeeper, or central point of contact within a State or field office. This can be decided within your program.



# HR BROADCAST



## WHEN TO SUBMIT SF-52s

By **Susan Ramirez** ([Susan.R.Ramirez@usda.gov](mailto:Susan.R.Ramirez@usda.gov), 816-737-4221)

The Human Resources Division (HRD) recommends that all employee personnel actions (or SF-52s) be transmitted to Human Resources Operations (HRO) no later than **2 weeks prior** to the proposed effective date. In the e-Tracker system, there are two steps to submit an SF-52 to HRO. First, the SF-52 must be initiated. Second, the supervisor/approver must authorize the request; the SF-52 **does not** transmit to HRO until the second step is complete. It is critical that SF-52s for employee actions are submitted timely to prevent pay issues and/or a de facto employment status.

Here are two examples of commonly delayed SF-52s and the impact:

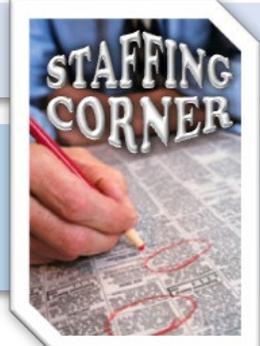
**Example 1:** The supervisor of a term or temporary appointed employee intends to extend the not to exceed (NTE) date but fails to submit the SF-52 timely. In this situation, the employee's appointment expires at the end of the day on the NTE date and he/she enters a period of de facto employment (the employee is working but has no legal basis to perform work or be paid). When an employee enters a de facto status, a separation action must be processed and if the determination is made to rehire the employee, he/she cannot return to work until a new appointment is authorized by the servicing HR Specialist. Any period of de facto employment causes immediate and additional work on behalf of management and HRO. This also delays the payment for work performed to the employee at no fault of his/her own and can result in the termination of his/hers benefits, if covered.

**Example 2:** The supervisor of an employee in a career ladder position intends to promote the employee to the next grade level after completion of 1 year; however, fails to submit the SF-52 timely. The employee's promotion will be delayed for the amount of time it takes for the SF-52 to be submitted, received in HRO, and approved by the servicing HR Specialist.

HRO does not possess the authority to retroactively authorize and process most SF-52s. Therefore, it is of the utmost importance to track NTE dates, career ladder promotion dates, resignations, leave without pay, etc. to ensure that the SF-52 is submitted no later than **2 weeks prior** to the proposed effective date. For assistance in submitting SF-52s, please contact your servicing HR Specialist.

# SF-52 BEING TIMELY IS IMPORTANT!





## WHAT HAPPENS IF THE SF-52 TO EXTEND AN APPOINTMENT IS NOT SUBMITTED TO HRO?

By **Martha Gravagna** ([Martha.L.Gravagna@usda.gov](mailto:Martha.L.Gravagna@usda.gov), 612 336-3355)

When you have a temporary or term employee on your team, he/she will have a NTE date associated with his/her appointment. If you plan to extend the employee's appointment to have him/her work for an additional period of time, you must submit an SF-52 to HRO. If the SF-52 is not submitted timely, the employee may enter a de facto status.

When an employee enters a de facto status, the impact goes beyond the SF-52. The employee's pay, leave balances, and benefits are also affected. Below are the most commonly asked questions regarding how an employee is affected when in a de facto status.

### **Q1: Can an employee continue to work while in de facto status?**

A: No, the employee's appointment has expired and he/she is no longer considered to be an official employee. This means he/she is not authorized to provide service for the Government.

### **Q2: Will the employee be paid for the time he/she was in de facto status?**

A: Yes, an employee in de facto status must be paid for his/her services rendered to the Federal Government. A Time and Attendance (T&A) form will need to be submitted from the NTE date to the date the de facto was discovered. However, the T&A may not process automatically as it normally would. You may need to work with the Leave and Compensation Team to get the employee paid manually.

### **Q3: Can an employee use leave or earn credit hours or compensatory time while in de facto status?**

A: No, an employee may only be paid for his/her services rendered to the Federal Government. He/she may not use or earn any leave while in de facto status. If the employee worked compensatory time while in de facto status, it must be changed to overtime worked. If the employee worked credit hours while in de facto status, the supervisor must decide whether or not to change the hours to overtime worked.

### **Q4: What happens to the employee's leave?**

A: Regulations require that annual leave balances, unused compensatory time, and credit hours be paid out upon separation. Because a de facto employee must be separated, his/her annual leave, credit hours, and compensatory time will be paid out in a lump sum. HRO does not have the authority to hold or waive the payment. However, the employee will be able to retain his/her sick leave, if rehired.



[Continue reading on next page...](#)



Continued from page 9...

## **Q5: What happens to the employee's health insurance (FEHB)?**

A: The employee's health insurance is terminated on the last day of the pay period before he/she became de facto. However, there is an additional 31-day extension at no charge. If the employee is rehired within 3 days and eligible for health insurance, there is no break in coverage and his/her current FEHB election will be automatically reinstated. However, if the employee is rehired after 3 days, it is considered a break in coverage and he/she will have to re-enroll. Please remember that the effective date of an FEHB election is always the first day of the pay period after it is received by HRO. This means the employee's coverage will not begin for 2 weeks after his/her first day if the SF-2809 form to re-enroll is submitted promptly.

## **Q6: What happens to the employee's retirement?**

A: If the employee is rehired and eligible for retirement, his/her coverage will depend on the type of appointment, work schedule, and, in some cases, how long he/she were previously covered under a Federal civilian retirement system.

## **Q7: What happens to the employee's life insurance (FEGLI)?**

A: The employee will not be covered by life insurance while in de facto status. His/her previous FEGLI coverage will be reinstated upon the new appointment. The employee is not eligible to increase coverage based on his/her new appointment.

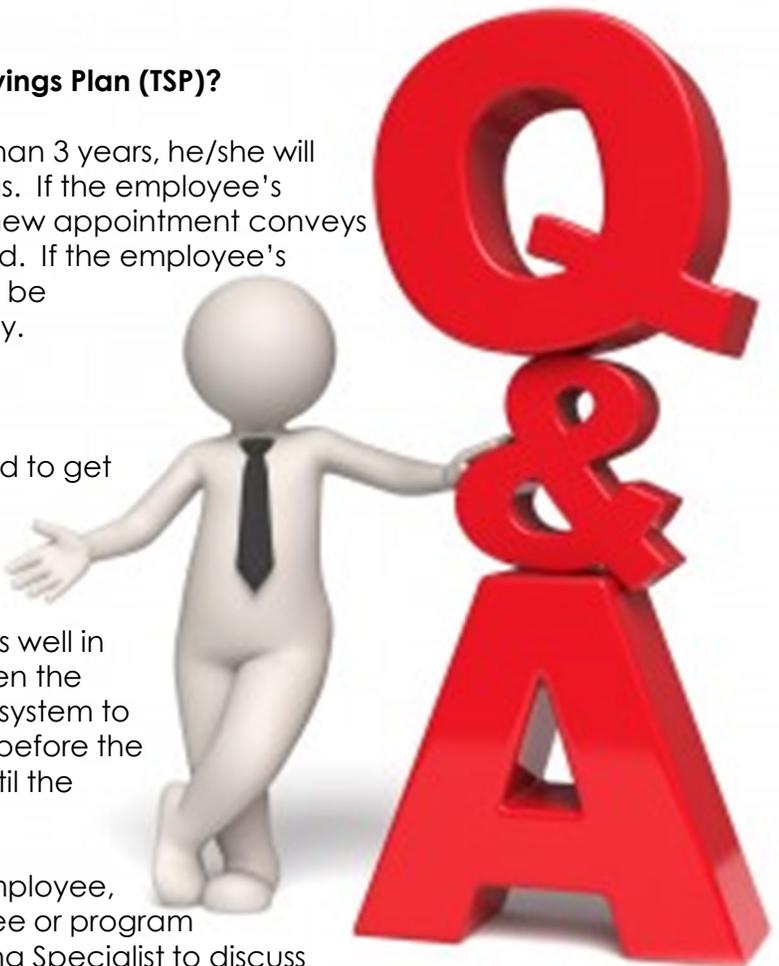
## **Q8: How does de facto status affect the Thrift Savings Plan (TSP)?**

A: If an employee has been on the rolls for less than 3 years, he/she will lose the 1% contribution and associated earnings. If the employee's break in service is less than 31 days and his/her new appointment conveys eligibility, the TSP election on file will be reinstated. If the employee's break in service is more than 31 days, he/she will be automatically enrolled for 3% of his/her basic pay.

## **Q9: What happens to the employee's LincPass?**

A: The employee will lose access and be required to get a new card. As you can see, while a de facto situation will cause extra work for the program and HRO, it will have the greatest impact on the employee. Please take extra caution to avoid de facto situations by submitting extension SF-52s well in advance of the employee's NTE date. Also, when the SF-52 is created in e-Tracker, please monitor the system to ensure that the authorization step is completed before the NTE date. The SF-52 is not transmitted to HRO until the authorization piece is completed.

If you do run into a de facto situation with an employee, we strongly recommend that either the employee or program contact reach out to his/her Benefits and Staffing Specialist to discuss all of the impacts of de facto status on the employee.





## THE TWO-WEEK NFC PROCESSING CYCLE

By **Scott Koscielniak** ([Scott.A.Koscielniak@usda.gov](mailto:Scott.A.Koscielniak@usda.gov), 612-336-3246)

How do your personnel actions get processed in HR?

There is a 2-week cycle that HR uses to organize the submitted personnel actions. The actions are reviewed, prepped, and then entered into the National Finance Center (NFC) payroll system.

The HR Processing Team is continuously working to enter the personnel actions submitted by customers in eTracker. The personnel actions must be entered into the NFC payroll system by the middle of the first week of the pay period. The reason for that is - NFC runs their pay system that first Thursday night of the pay period. If the personnel action is received late, it may not apply in the NFC database until the following pay period. The NFC processes the personnel actions and payroll during this time. That is also why your timesheet must be completed early that same week.

The goal in HR is to get the personnel actions for new employees entered into the NFC system before the pay period starts. If so, the supervisor can access his/her timesheet in webTA to ensure the employee is paid timely. If your new employee is not listed in webTA during the second week of the pay period, please let us know immediately.

Please submit personnel actions in eTracker at least 2 pay periods prior to the effective date of the action so HR can route it through all sections and get it processed timely in NFC.

Please contact the Processing Team with any questions.

[https://www.aphis.usda.gov/aphis/ourfocus/business-services/contact\\_us/hrd/hrd](https://www.aphis.usda.gov/aphis/ourfocus/business-services/contact_us/hrd/hrd)

## POSITION DESCRIPTIONS AND PRIORITY LISTS

By **Mandy Olson** ([Mandy.M.Olson@usda.gov](mailto:Mandy.M.Olson@usda.gov), 612-336-3295)



When is it appropriate to add a position description (PD) to a priority list?

A PD can be added to the priority list after it has been officially classified. The classification must be complete with no further edits or review needed. If a PD has not been completed by the quarterly submission deadline, please follow these instructions:



### Position Descriptions

- Positions should not be submitted on your quarterly list if there is not a classified PD and/or the PD will need updates prior to announcing (e.g., need to add a grade level, changes to duties).
- If a position is classified after the quarterly list has been submitted, you may request to add the position to the current quarterly list by emailing [HRDHIRE@usda.gov](mailto:HRDHIRE@usda.gov).

Please also ensure that all PDs have gone through any internal review/approval process prior to submitting to Human Resources - Classification for review. This helps to ensure efficient use of HR resources and will speed up the length of the review process.

Any questions should be directed to your servicing Classification Specialist:

[https://www.aphis.usda.gov/aphis/ourfocus/business-services/HRD/Contact\\_Us](https://www.aphis.usda.gov/aphis/ourfocus/business-services/HRD/Contact_Us)





## TWO-FACTOR AUTHENTICATION FOR EPP AND TSP

By **Brian Fleming** ([Brian.B.Fleming@usda.gov](mailto:Brian.B.Fleming@usda.gov), 612-336-3621)

As an added security enhancement, NFC has added two-factor authentication to the Employee Personal Page (EPP) effective December 4, 2019. This enhancement was added for all EPP users whether they utilize a user ID and password or eAuthentication to access EPP.

NFC strongly encourages all users to log in and verify access before the end of the calendar year.

Instructions on how to validate your email address can be found in [NFC bulletin 19-09](#). You can also review the [EPP User ID/Password Quick Reference Guide](#) to find more information about how to log in to EPP, two-factor authentication, etc.

The Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) has announced that they are also going to require two-step authentication for users who log on to their TSP account online. This was previously an optional tool to keep participants' [TSP.gov](#) accounts secure, but will soon become mandatory.

Participants who use the TSP's online My Account service had until the end of 2019 to log in, validate their contact information, and set up two-factor authentication. Two-factor authentication is a security measure by which users must confirm their identity across multiple platforms—the website, and their email address or phone number—during the log-in process.

For instructions on how to validate your contact information with TSP, please see this [how to guide](#).





## WHO RECEIVES MY BENEFITS WHEN I PASS AWAY?

By **Kristi Carrier** ([Kristi.Carrier@usda.gov](mailto:Kristi.Carrier@usda.gov), 612-336-3313)

Death is not something we generally like to think about. It's going to happen eventually, yes...a long way down the road, but what if it happens sooner than expected? If it does, hopefully you have your designation of beneficiaries up-to-date reflecting your current wishes or that you are alright with the normal order of precedence set by law (spouse, children, parents, executor of estate, next of kin). A will does not supersede either your designation of beneficiaries or the normal order of precedence in determining who will receive your Federal benefits. Therefore, if you still have an ex-spouse listed as a beneficiary, even if you have been divorced longer than you were married and are currently happily married, the ex-spouse would receive your benefits. Some people chuckle at this, but it happens more than you would think. Therefore, I advise you to review what designation of beneficiaries you have on file regularly, or at the very least, when life events happen, to make sure they are up-to-date.

Here are the different Federal benefits and the designation forms:

- **SF-1152, Unpaid Compensation of Deceased Civilian Employee.** This form is used for payment of unpaid compensation such as the final salary check, unused annual leave, unpaid travel vouchers, or other monies the Agency would owe you. This remains in effect until you 1) change or cancel it with a new SF-1152, 2) transfer to another agency, or 3) are reemployed by the same agency or another department or agency of the Government.
- **SF-3102, Federal Employees Retirement System.** This determines who receives your employee contributions to the Federal Employees Retirement System only when there is no survivor benefit payable. This remains in effect until you 1) change or cancel it by filing a new SF-3102, or 2) receive a refund of your retirement deductions before retirement.
- **SF-2808, Civil Service Retirement System.** This determines who receives your employee contributions to the Civil Service Retirement System only when there is no survivor benefit payable. This remains in effect until you 1) change or cancel it by filing a new SF-3102, or 2) receive a refund of your retirement deductions before retirement.
- **SF-2823, Federal Employees Group Life Insurance.** This form is used to pay out your life insurance. This remains in effect until you 1) change or cancel it by filing a new SF-2823, or 2) are separated from the Government for more than 31 days.
- **TSP-3, Thrift Savings Plan.** This form designates who receives the money in your Thrift Savings Plan account. This remains in effect until you submit a new, valid TSP-3.

If you would like to review the designations you have on file, you can find processed SF-1152s, SF-3102s, and SF-2823s in your eOPF. The SF-2808 is maintained by the Office of Personnel Management and the TSP-3 is maintained by TSP. If you are submitting new designation forms, they become valid once a correctly completed form is received by the administrating office. These forms cannot have any erasures or alterations and the originals must be submitted by mail.

If you have questions about designation of beneficiaries or the forms, please contact your servicing [Benefits Assistant](#).

