



DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
Defense Commissary Agency
Fort Lee, VA 23801-1800

HANDBOOK

CIVILIAN EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK

DeCAH 50-6
March 25, 2011

Human Resources
OPR: HQ DeCA/HR

- 1. POLICY.** This Handbook reissues DeCAH 50-6, “Civilian Employee Handbook,” September 1, 1991, and implements policies as defined in various Human Resources Directorate Directives.
- 2. PURPOSE.** This Handbook outlines Defense Commissary Agency (DeCA) civilian employee benefits, privileges, and responsibilities. It is designed to be given to each civilian employee for retention as a reference throughout their period of employment.
- 3. APPLICABILITY.** This Handbook applies to all DeCA civilian employees.
- 4. RELEASABILITY – UNLIMITED.** This Handbook is approved for public release and is located on DeCA’s Internet Web site at www.commissaries.com.
- 5. MANAGEMENT CONTROL SYSTEM.** This Handbook does not contain Management Control provisions that are subject to evaluation, testing, and other requirements of DeCA Directive (DeCAD) 70-2 and as specified by the Federal Managers’ Financial Integrity Act.
- 6. EFFECTIVE DATE.** This Handbook is effective immediately.

Dear Employee:

Congratulations on your employment with the Defense Commissary Agency (DeCA). You have joined a team of over 18,000 employees who provide service to the Armed Forces by selling groceries and household goods to active-duty, Guard, Reserve, and retired service families at an average savings of more than 30 percent when compared to prices at local civilian supermarkets. Commissaries constitute one of the top benefits for today's military.

DeCA and the Department of Defense (DoD) appreciate and support the efforts of all Federal Government employees. Through your personal contributions, we are able to continue providing outstanding services to military members and their families throughout the world.

The Defense Commissary Agency Civilian Employee Handbook is designed to serve as an overview of personnel rules and help you understand important rights, responsibilities, benefits, and services you have as a Federal employee. Should you have specific questions regarding any topic in this Handbook, you are encouraged to contact your Human Resources Office.

We wish you success and personal satisfaction in your career with the Defense Commissary Agency.

Sincerely,



P. Kaye Kennedy
Director of Human Resources



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FOCUS

The following extracts from DeCA’s Strategic Plan are provided to give you an understanding of the Agency’s focus, to include its mission, vision, and values. Managers and employees all play an important role in ensuring that these initiatives are upheld as day-to-day operations are completed.

MISSION STATEMENT

“Deliver a vital benefit of the military pay system that sells grocery items at cost while enhancing quality of life and readiness.”

VISION STATEMENT

“A model government organization providing a valued commissary benefit.”

GOALS

- Goal 1 – Provide the military community with a great shopping experience
- Goal 2 – Sustain a capable, diverse, and engaged civilian workforce
- Goal 3 – Be a model organization through agility and governance

CORE VALUES

The seven words which comprise the acronym “**PASSION**” are the corporate values DeCA wants employees to represent as the Agency moves forward. These values are the engine behind a new vision that highlights DeCA’s commitment to the people who deliver and receive the commissary benefit.

We have **PASSION** for what we do!

- **P** We **PERSUE EXCELLENCE**
- **A** We are **ACCOUNTABLE** and **FISCALLY RESPONSIBLE**
- **S** We have a **SENSE OF URGENCY**
- **S** We **SET HIGH STANDARDS**
- **I** We value **INNOVATION**
- **O** We take **OWNERSHIP**
- **N** We are **NECESSARY**

IN-PROCESSING: EMPLOYEE BENEFITS, RIGHTS, AND RESPONSIBILITIES

➤ INSURANCE

Federal Employees Health Benefits Program (FEHBP)

If you are a permanent DeCA employee, you are eligible to enroll in the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program (FEHBP), unless your position is excluded by law or regulation. Temporary employees whose appointments are limited to 1-year or less will not be eligible to enroll in the FEHBP unless their appointments are extended without a break in service of more than 3 calendar days. Temporary employees do not receive a government contribution towards the cost of their health benefits (they pay both the employee and government shares of the premium). Intermittent employees (do not have a prearranged regular tour of duty) are not eligible for coverage. The following facts apply to all available plans:

- The plans do not require medical examinations or waiting periods, and age or physical condition restrictions do **not** apply.
- You choose whether you want to participate in the health program. The amount you contribute depends on the price of the plan you choose. The Government contributes to the cost of your plan; your contribution is made through payroll deductions on a pre-tax basis.
- A permanent part-time employee is eligible for participation in the program, but the Government's contribution to the cost of the plan is proportional to the hours worked.
- You have 31 days from the date you become eligible (date of appointment) to enroll in a health plan. You will be given a form and descriptions of the various plans from which you can

choose. If you don't make an election, you are considered to have declined coverage and must wait until the next Federal Benefits Open Season (which occurs once a year) to enroll.

- You may change your plan or enroll during each Federal Benefits Open Season (which occurs once a year), or you have a qualifying life event (QLE). The major QLEs that permit enrollment or change in enrollment are: marriage, birth or adoption of a child, acquisition of a foster child, legal separation, divorce, or death of spouse or dependent. QLE changes must be made within 60 days of the event.

You may enroll yourself and/or your family. A family member is considered as your spouse and/or dependent children. Currently, the FEHB Act defines dependent children as up to age 22 who are unmarried. A new provision under the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PAACA) signed on March 23, 2010 changed this requirement to extend the coverage of dependent children up to age 26. The change will take effect on January 1, 2011. Unmarried children of 26 years and older will also be included if they are not capable of supporting themselves due to a disability which began before the age of 26. For additional information, to go: www.opm.gov/insure/health

Health benefits law prohibits including your parent or other relatives, even if they live with you and are dependent upon you. If you enroll your family, the benefits for surviving members will continue after your death, provided you had five or more years of civilian service and they receive survivor annuities. Surviving members may cancel their enrollment at any time, but as long as they continue, the Government will pay part of the cost. Your family's share of the cost will be deducted from their survivor's annuities.

You should join the health program at your first opportunity if you want to continue your enrollment after you retire. Your benefits will continue into retirement if you meet the following two criteria:

- You retire on an immediate annuity after completing five years of service, including military service, or you retire on disability.

- You have been in the program from the time of your first opportunity to enroll or for the five years of service immediately before you retire.

If you leave the Government, you will have a 31-day coverage extension during which time you may convert your group enrollment to an individual plan. You will have to pay the entire cost for the individual plan.

Federal Employees Dental and Vision Insurance Program (FEDVIP)

Eligible employees and their family members can enroll in a vision and/or dental plan on an enrollee-pay-all basis. The rules for family member's eligibility are the same as they are for FEHBP. Employees must be eligible for the FEHBP in order to be eligible to enroll in FEDVIP. It does not matter if you are enrolled in FEHBP – eligibility is the key.

This program allows dental and vision insurance to be purchased on a group basis which means competitive premiums and no preexisting condition limitations. Premiums are withheld through payroll deduction on a pretax basis.

For information, enrollment, and premium questions regarding dental and vision insurance, you can visit www.BENEFEDS.com or call 1-877-888-3337.

Federal Flexible Spending Account Program (FSAFEDS)

Eligible employees can elect to participate in the FSAFEDS Program by enrolling each year during the Federal Benefits Open Season (the November/December timeframe).

The program offers three different flexible spending accounts (FSA): a health care FSA, a limited expense health care FSA, and a dependent care FSA.

Employees must enroll each year to continue participating in FSAFEDS; enrollment does not carry forward from year-to-year.

For information or enrollment questions, you can visit www.FSAFEDS.com or call 1-877-372-3337.

Federal Long Term Care Insurance Program (FLTCIP)

The FLTCIP provides long term care insurance to help pay for costs of care when enrollees need help with activities they perform every day, or you have a severe cognitive impairment such as Alzheimer's disease.

Most employees and their qualified relatives are eligible to apply for insurance coverage under the FLTCIP. You must apply in order to find out if you are eligible to enroll. It does not matter if you are enrolled in FEHBP – eligibility is the key.

For information or enrollment questions, you can visit www.ltcfeds.com or call 1-800-582-3337.

Premium Conversion Program

Employees can use pretax dollars to pay health insurance premiums under the Premium Conversion Program. Premium conversion uses Federal tax rules to let employees deduct their share of health insurance premiums from their taxable income, thereby reducing their taxes.

Federal Employees' Group Life Insurance (FEGLI) Program

All permanent employees may participate in the Federal Employees' Group Life Insurance (FEGLI) Program. It offers competitive rates and the convenience of payment through payroll deductions. FEGLI offers protection against loss due to death or accidental dismemberment. It also extends coverage to the death of your spouse or dependent child. If you are a new Federal employee, you are automatically covered by Basic life insurance and your payroll office deducts premiums from your paycheck unless you waive the coverage.

FEGLI provides Basic life coverage and three Optional coverages. Optional coverage is not automatic and you must have Basic life insurance in order to elect any of the options.

- Basic Life and Accidental Death and Dismemberment Coverage. The base accidental death and dismemberment coverage with the Basic life plan is equal to the greater of the following: annual basic pay, rounded to the next \$1,000, plus \$2,000 or \$10,000. The amount of Basic life insurance doubles if you are under age 35. This extra benefit decreases by 10 percent each year until age 45 when the extra benefit ceases. You pay two-thirds of the total cost of the insurance, and the Government pays one-third.
- Option A (Standard). This option includes \$10,000 life insurance coverage and \$10,000 accidental death and dismemberment coverage. You pay the total cost, which is based on your age.
- Option B (Additional). You may purchase additional life insurance coverage equal to one, two, three, four, or five times your annual basic pay. You pay the total cost.
- Option C (Family). \$5,000 coverage for your spouse and \$2,500 coverage for your child (or children) less than 22 years of age or who are incapable of self-support is available to you. You may elect any number of multiples (up to a total of five) of Option C. You pay the total cost.

If an employee has a life event of birth or adoption of an eligible child, or marriage, he or she may elect or increase Option B and/or Option C coverage. If an employee has a life event of divorce or death of a spouse, he or she may elect or increase Option B and/or Option C coverage if the employee has eligible children. You must make your election within 60 days from the date of the life event.

FEGLI does not build cash or loan value. FEGLI coverage, except accidental death or dismemberment, may be carried into retirement if you meet the requirements for continuation; however, most benefits are reduced or eliminated after age 65.

Resources to help you and your family make informative choices regarding health, life, dental, vision, long term, and flexible spending

accounts can be found in the following web sites:

www.opm.gov/insure/index.aspx

www.hr.dla.mil/dhrcd/Benefitsindex.html

Note: Overseas employees must go through the Employee Benefits Information System (EBIS) to elect or change their benefits elections by going to: <http://www.ebis.army.mil>. If you are a first time EBIS user, please select new user.

➤ **RETIREMENT**

There are 2 primary Federal retirement systems:

- Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS)
- Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS)

Both provide retirement pensions, disability income, and survivor's benefits. Most Federal civilian employees are covered by one of these two retirement systems. Contributions are mandatory and the amount you contribute is defined by law. Your contributions are made by automatic payroll deductions.

FERS Employees

Employees hired on or after January 1, 1984 are automatically covered under FERS. There are three sources of retirement income under this retirement system. (The Basic Benefit and Social Security parts of FERS require you to pay your share each pay period from your pay as payroll deductions.)

- Basic Benefit Plan. FERS annuity is based on your number of years of service and your 3 years of highest earnings. Your "high-3" average pay is the highest average basic pay you earned during any 3 consecutive years of service. These 3 years are usually your final 3 years of service.
- FERS Annuity Supplement. These proceeds come from your Social Security benefits and supplement your FERS annuity. It

represents what you would receive for your FERS civilian service from the Social Security Administration (SSA) and is calculated as if you were eligible to receive SSA benefits on the day you retire. Eligibility for the annuity supplement continues until the earlier of:

- ✓ The last day of the month before the first month for which you would be entitled to actual Social Security benefits, or
 - ✓ The last day of the month in which you reach age 62.
- Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) Contributions and Matching Government Funds (lump sum or annuity). The TSP part of FERS is an account your agency automatically sets up for you. Each pay period your agency deposits into your account 1 percent of the base pay you earn for the pay period. You can also make voluntary contributions to your TSP account, and your agency will make a matching contribution. These contributions are tax-deferred and may be transferred to an individual retirement account (IRA).

Retirement eligibility attained at:

- Age 60 with 20 years of service
- Age 62 with 5 years service
- The “minimum retirement age” (MRA) with 30 years of service. The MRA was age 55 until the year 2002, when it began to rise by 2 months per year until it reaches age 57 in the year 2027

Effective October 28, 2009, employees are entitled to credit for 50 percent of their unused sick leave. Effective January 1, 2014, 100 percent of accrued and unused sick leave to an employee’s credit at date of retirement is used in computing the amount of annuity or survivor annuity. It is not used in determining the “high-3” average salary and cannot be counted toward the minimum length of service necessary to retire.

Reduced retirement benefits are also available to employees who have reached the MRA and have at least 10 years of creditable service. The reduction in annuity is 5 percent per year for each year the employee is under age 62.

Annuity payments are based on 1 percent for each year and 1.1 percent for each year over 62 and your “high-3” average. The 1.1 percent is only payable if you have over 20 years of service.

CSRS Employees

Employees hired before January 1, 1984, are covered under the CSRS retirement system. CSRS is a defined benefit, contributory retirement system. Employees share in the expense of the annuities to which they become entitled. The following provisions apply to employees under CSRS:

- Employees contributes 7 percent of pay to CSRS and while they generally pay no Social Security retirement; Old Age, Survivors and Disability Insurance (OASDI) tax, they must pay the Medicare tax. Agency matches the employee’s contributions.
- Annuity payments are based only on 1.5 percent times the first 5 years, plus 1.75 percent times the “high-3” for the second 5 years, plus 2 percent times “high-3” times all years and months of service over 10 years. Maximum annuity is 80 percent at 41 years 11 months of service, although sick leave can increase annuity over 80 percent.
- Prior military service may be creditable towards CSRS computations. If you have such service, contact your servicing Human Resources Office for additional information and advice.

Retirement eligibility attained at:

- Age 55 with 30 years of service
- Age 60 with 20 years of service
- Age 62 with 5 years of service

NOTE: CSRS employees must have been employed for at least 1-year within the 2-year period immediately preceding retirement to be eligible for an annuity. Accrued and unused sick leave to an employee’s credit at date of retirement is used in computing the amount of annuity or survivor

annuity. It is not used in determining the “high-3” average salary and cannot be counted toward the minimum length of service necessary to retire.

Types of Retirement

- **Optional Retirement.** Regular retirement for those employees meeting the eligibility requirements for their retirement system.
- **Deferred Retirement.** Available to both CSRS and FERS participants. When employees leave Federal service, they have an option of withdrawing retirement contributions or leaving these contributions in the system so they can draw a deferred annuity when they reach age 62. Employees must have completed 5 years of service (and not withdrawn retirement contributions) to be eligible for a deferred annuity at age 62.
- **Discontinued Service Retirement (DSR).** Applicable to both CSRS and FERS employees who are affected by reductions in force (RIF). Employees who are age 50 with 20 years of service or have 25 years of service at any age, are eligible for DSR, provided their job is abolished (or they are displaced out of their job in RIF) and they have not been offered an alternative job in the same commuting area within two grade levels of their current job. CSRS employees who take DSR receive an annuity that is reduced 2 percent per year for each year the employee is under age 55. For FERS employees there is no reduction.
- **Early Retirement.** Some involuntary separations, other than as a result of RIF under the DSR rules described above, also allow an employee to receive an early retirement. Involuntary separation means any separation against the will and without the consent of the employee, other than for cause on charges of misconduct or delinquency. The age/service requirements for receiving an annuity as a result of an involuntary separation are the same as those described for DSR above.
- **Voluntary Early Retirement Authority (VERA).** VERA is an authority that is sometimes requested during RIF. Retirement

eligibility for VERA is the same as for DSR. The employee does not have to receive a formal RIF notice to be eligible for VERA, but does have to be within the targeted series/grades identified by management as excess or otherwise eligible for VERA.

- **Disability Retirement.** Disability retirement benefits are available to CSRS and FERS employees who become unable to continue work in their Federal positions because of disability. You should consider applying for disability retirement only after you have provided your employing agency with complete documentation of your medical condition and your agency has exhausted all reasonable attempts to retain you in a productive capacity, through accommodation or reassignment.

Disability Eligibility Requirements

- CSRS employees must have completed at least 5 years of civilian service and FERS employees must have completed at least 18 months of civilian service.
- You must, while employed in a position subject to the retirement system, have become disabled, because of disease or injury, for useful and efficient service in your current position.
- The disability must be expected to last at least 1-year.
- DeCA must certify that it is unable to accommodate your disabling medical condition in your present position and the agency has considered you for other vacant positions at the same grade, pay, and within commuting area for which you are qualified for reassignment.
- You or your guardian must apply before your separation from service or within 1-year thereafter. The application must be received by DeCA or the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) within 1-year of the date of your separation.

- FERS employees are required to apply for social security benefits when applying for disability retirement benefits. If the application for Social Security disability benefits is withdrawn for any reason, OPM will dismiss the FERS disability retirement application upon notification by the Social Security Administration.
- The guaranteed minimum disability annuity under CSRS is the lesser of the two following amounts:
 - ✓ Forty percent times the “high-3” average (which provides an annuity as if he or she worked 21 years and 11 months); or
 - ✓ the amount obtained under the general formula after increasing the actual years, months, and days of service by the total years, months, and days remaining from the commencing date of the employee’s annuity through the date he or she becomes age 60.
- Under FERS the formula is as follows: For the first 12 months the annuitant receives 60 percent times the “high-3” average salary minus 100 percent of Social Security disability benefits. After 12 months, the annuitant receives 40 percent times the “high-3” average salary minus 60 percent of Social Security benefits (for any months they are entitled). Upon age 62 the annuity is recomputed based on the general formula with no offsets.

Contact your Benefits Specialist at your servicing Human Resources Office on how to apply for retirement.

For additional information please visit www.opm.gov/retire/index.aspx.

➤ SAVINGS OPTIONS

Thrift Savings Plan (TSP)

TSP is a defined contribution plan available to employees who are covered by either retirement system. The retirement income you receive from your TSP account will depend on how much you (and the agency, if you are a FERS employee) have contributed to your account during your working years and the earnings on those contributions. The participation rules are different for FERS and CSRS employees.

- **FERS Employees.** TSP is one of the three parts of your retirement package, along with your FERS Basic Annuity and Social Security. Participating in TSP does not affect the amount of your Social Security benefit or your FERS Basic Annuity.
- ✓ You may begin contributing to the TSP when you are first hired; there is no waiting period. The agency will automatically contribute an amount equal to 1 percent of your basic pay each pay period whether or not you are contributing to your TSP account. These are your Agency Automatic (1 percent) Contributions. Once you decide to contribute to your account, you will also receive the Agency Matching Contributions. Matching contributions apply to the first 5 percent of pay that you contribute each pay period. Your contributions are matched dollar-for-dollar on the first 3 percent and 50 cents on the dollar for the next 2 percent. These contributions are a principal benefit of the TSP.
- ✓ Federal income taxes are deferred on all contributions to your account.
- ✓ You can allocate any whole percentage of your future contributions to any of the TSP investment funds. You can also redistribute your existing balance among the funds.

- **CSRS Employees.** TSP can provide you with a supplemental retirement income in addition to your CSRS annuity.
 - ✓ You do not receive any agency contributions.
 - ✓ Federal income taxes are deferred on all contributions to your account.
 - ✓ You can allocate any whole percentage of your future contributions to any of the TSP investment funds and redistribute your existing balance among the funds.

For additional information on the Thrift Savings Plan, visit www.tsp.gov.

Federal Credit Union

All DeCA employees may become members of a Federal Credit Union. You become a member and save your money by buying shares in the credit union. You also may borrow money subject to approval of a loan application. The interest on loans provides the funds for the credit union's operating expenses. When the credit union declares a dividend, you benefit based on the number of shares you own.

U.S. Savings Bonds

There is an annual savings bond drive at host installations; however, you may purchase savings bonds at any time by visiting the site www.savingsbond.com or at a financial institution such as a bank or credit union. Please note: any questions should be referred to this Web site since this is not a Federal employee benefit such as your TSP or FEHB, and your servicing Human Resources Office may not be able to assist you with any questions or concerns.

➤ **LABOR RIGHTS AND ORGANIZATIONS**

Through labor organizations you have statutory protection to organize, bargain collectively, and participate in decisions which may affect you.

Nothing in this handbook is intended to conflict with a negotiated collective bargaining agreement, in the event there is a conflict concerning this handbook and a collective bargaining agreement, the collective bargaining agreement shall prevail.

Labor Unions

You are free to join or not join labor organizations. If you are a supervisor, management official, confidential employee, or an employee engaged in professional personnel work, you may not have union dues withheld from your paycheck. As an individual, you may:

- Form, join, or assist any labor organization or refrain from such activity
- File a grievance
- You DO have to follow the rules and regulations of the collective bargaining unit agreement that the Agency and union agreed upon
- A copy of the negotiated Collective Bargaining Agreements can be found under the Employee Toolbox section of DeCA's Internal Website OneNet.

Employees overseas are not eligible to join labor organization as all positions are exempt.

Employee Grievances

DeCA strives to ensure you are treated with consideration, fairness, and that the best possible working conditions are available. If at any time you are dissatisfied with your working conditions outside your control, grievance procedures exist. These procedures allow your complaint to be considered in an orderly fashion and without fear of punishment. For additional grievance information, you may contact your Union Representative, if applicable or an Employee Relations Specialist.

Actions you may be able to grieve are:

- Adverse or disciplinary actions as defined in 5 CFR 752
- Actions based on unacceptable performance
- Denial of within-grade increase
- Reduction in force
- And many other actions and decisions of management that affect your working conditions

When to Contact the Union

“An employee shall have the right to be represented by the Union at any examination by the Employer in connection with an investigation, if the employee reasonably believes that the examination may result in disciplinary action against the employee and the employee requests representation.” - Weingarten Rights

There are many other times to contact a Local Union Representative. Local Union Representatives often have information on orientation, work processes, local variations and other working conditions.

➤ PUBLIC HEALTH, SAFETY AND SECURITY

It is your responsibility to comply with job safety standards, to work in a safe manner, to wear personal protective equipment as necessary by exposure to potential hazards, and to report any safety hazards to your supervisor. Keep your equipment in good working order and your work area clutter free.

Management is responsible for providing a safe place to work free of known hazards.

If an accident or other emergency situation occurs, remain calm and immediately report it to your supervisor.

Your supervisor will tell you if there is a dress code, safety shoes, hard hats, or other personal protective equipment that applies to your work site related to safety issues.

Alcohol and drug use on the job are not allowed. Use of such substances can risk your safety and the safety of those around you.

DeCA promotes a smoke-free workplace. Restrict any smoking to designated areas.

Safety “Buddy System”

What it is: A two-part system.

- Part One – a commitment by each person to be the eyes for their co-workers who may have momentarily lost focus – to never walk by unsafe act or situation without calling attention to it or correcting it.
- Part Two – requires the worker who is alerted to his or her unsafe act or situation to thank the other person for pointing it out.

Who does it apply to: This system places ‘safety’ duty and responsibility, not just belonging to the appointed activity safety representative. Simply stated, “It applies to everyone.” It is interaction among people, between and among all grade/rank layers, and between and among all occupations.

Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS)

The MSDS is a document that describes the physical and chemical properties of products, their physical and health hazards, and special precautions for safe handling, use, and store. Maintaining MSDS is part of an overall chemical safety program called “Hazard Communication.” This name is derived from the basic principle of “right-to-know” for chemical safety; that is, you must communicate to employees the hazard(s) of chemicals used/store in their work area. If hazardous chemicals are used/stored within your work area, the MSDS for each chemical will be on file and accessible to you for review. Your supervisor will brief you on the hazard communication program.

Potentially Hazardous Areas

In any work site there may be hazardous areas. These areas may be where refrigerants are stored; batteries are charged; electrical or mechanical equipment is maintained; and/or flammable, corrosive reactive and toxic substances are stored. Your supervisor will discuss the procedures for in-place management of these materials and areas during your orientation process.

➤ EMPLOYEE CLAIMS

The U.S. Government provides specific procedures to follow when seeking compensation for injuries to yourself or your property. If you are injured, orally report the time, location, people involved, witnesses, extent of loss, and trigger event to your supervisor. Programs for compensation are outlined in the following acts:

Federal Employees' Compensation Act (FECA)

FECA is administered by the Office of Workers' Compensation Program (OWCP) of the U.S. Department of Labor. It provides medical care, monetary compensation, vocational rehabilitation, and retention rights to Federal employees who are injured or incur an occupational disease as a result of their employment with the Federal Government. It also provides payment for funeral expenses and for compensation benefits to all qualified survivors of the deceased in cases of employment-related deaths. Work-related medical conditions fall into one of two categories: traumatic injury or occupational disease.

- A traumatic injury is defined as “a wound or other condition of the body caused by external force, including stress or strain.” It must be identifiable as to time and place of occurrence and member or function of the body affected. It must be caused by a specific event or incident, or series of events or incidents within a single day or work shift.
- An occupational disease is reported when an injury or illness has developed over a period greater than one single day or work

shift. Employees must furnish administratively acceptable medical documentation and a narrative statement explaining how the ailment is related to the work environment.

If you become sick or are injured while on duty, you must notify your supervisor immediately, and complete appropriate paperwork.

Employees are entitled to the initial choice of physician for treatment of an injury. You may choose any licensed physician in private practice who is not excluded from Department of Labor's list of approved physicians, or you may choose to be treated at a government medical facility if one is available. For a list of licensed physicians, visit:

<http://owcp.dol.acs-inc.com>.

Federal Tort Claims Act (FTCA)

FTCA provides compensation if you suffer a work-related injury or death as the result of a wrongful or negligent act or failure to act by another government employee within the scope of employment. You must make a claim within 2 years of the wrongful or negligent act using Standard Form 95 (SF95), Claim for Damage, Injury, or Death. You must follow the administrative procedures before filing in court. If your claim is denied administratively, you have 6 months to file the claim in court. Basic rules governing claims filed under FTCA are as follows:

- No minimum amount
- Will not exceed \$2,500
- Will cover out-of-pocket medical expenses
- Will cover burial costs
- Will cover replacement or repair costs

Civilian Employees Claims Act (CECA)

CECA provides compensation if you incur damage to or loss of personal property while performing government service. Contributory negligence; i.e., your involvement in the damage, may prevent compensation. A depreciation schedule will also apply to the damaged property when determining the amount of compensation due. You must

make the claim within 2 years using Form DOJ-110, Employee Claim for Loss or Damage to Personal Property.

➤ **ETHICS AND STANDARDS OF CONDUCT**

Ethics

Work related ethics are governed by statutes and regulations. If you maintain honesty, integrity, and fairness in all of your actions and follow the guidelines set forth below, you should not have an ethics problem. However, if you are ever unsure, ask your supervisor or Designated Agency Ethics Official (DAEO). DAEOs are DeCA attorneys who are ethics professionals. You do not need to go through command channels to reach a DAEO.

Standards of Conduct

DeCA expects you to conduct yourself, both on- and off-duty, in a manner that will not discredit you or DeCA.

You must:

- Treat all persons according to their merit without regard to race, age, religion, color, or gender
- Pay all debts and obligations promptly
- Furnish a statement of financial interests if required by the position description or job announcement

You must not:

- Accept awards, donations, or gifts from foreign governments
- Solicit or accept any gift, gratuity, favor, entertainment, loan, or any other thing of monetary value from any person or entity that engages, or hopes to engage, in business activities with the Government; this applies to meals, drinks, favors, or other gratuities including benefits, discounts, tickets, passes, transportation accommodations, and so on

- Conduct any private business that appears to be a conflict of interest with your government responsibilities
- Engage in criminal, infamous, dishonest, or notoriously immoral conduct, or use your public office for private gain
- Give preferential treatment to any person
- Impede government efficiency and economy
- Lose impartiality or solicit, accept, or agree to accept anything of value in return for performing or refraining from performing an official act
- Make a government decision outside official channels
- Give a gift to a superior or accept a gift from another employee making less pay; this does not prohibit voluntary gifts or donation of nominal value given on special occasions such as marriage, illness, or retirement
- Allow the use of government property for other than totally approved activities; this includes use of government vehicles; deviating from authorized travel to address personal matters can, by law, result in an automatic 30-day suspension without pay
- Use your civilian or military titles in connection with any commercial enterprise
- Engage in gambling while on government property or on duty for the Government
- Use your position, or information gained from your position, for financial benefit for yourself, your family, or persons with whom you have financial ties
- Divulge procurement or sales information in advance of its public release
- Commit the Government by unauthorized statements, or acts outside the scope of your authority
- Falsify any writing or document
- Remove or destroy a government record without proper authority
- Conduct official business outside business hours at other than official places of business
- Gamble with contractors or their representatives, or let them place bets on your behalf
- Represent anyone other than the Government before a court or agency in a matter that the United States has an interest
- Permit members of your family to do what you should not do

Responsibilities

You are responsible for upholding the standards of conduct. Your supervisor is responsible for providing periodic reminders of the standards and for providing requested advice and assistance.

Political Activity

As a part of the Government's career civil service, you are protected by law from providing political service or tribute. The law protects you from any political considerations that might damage your job tenure. It protects you against political "reprisals" because it eliminates the grounds for such reprisals.

In general, whether you are career or excepted, part-time or temporary, you are subject to political-activity restrictions. If you are on an intermittent schedule, you are subject to these restrictions while on active duty status only and for the 24 hours of any day of actual employment.

As a Federal employee you may:

- Be a candidate for public office in nonpartisan elections
- Register and vote as you choose
- Assist in voter registration drives
- Express your opinions about candidates and issues
- Contribute money to political organizations
- Attend political fund raising functions
- Attend and be active at political rallies and meetings
- Join and be an active member of a political party or club
- Sign nominating petitions
- Campaign for or against referendum questions, constitutional amendments, and municipal ordinances
- Campaign for or against candidates in partisan elections
- Make campaign speeches for candidates in partisan elections
- Distribute campaign literature in partisan elections
- Hold office in political clubs or parties

As a Federal employee you may not:

- Use your official authority or influence to interfere with an election
- Solicit, accept, or receive political contributions unless both individuals are members of the same Federal labor organization and the one solicited is not a subordinate employee
- Knowingly solicit or discourage the political activity of any person who has business before the agency
- Engage in political activity while on duty
- Engage in political activity in any government office
- Engage in political activity while wearing an official uniform
- Engage in political activity while using a government vehicle
- Be candidates for public office in partisan elections
- Wear political buttons on duty

The minimum penalty for violation of these political restrictions is suspension without pay for 30 days; the most severe penalty is removal from DeCA. In cases of removal, you may not be reemployed in any position funded from the same appropriation as the job from which you were removed (i.e., DoD).

If you are uncertain about a particular activity, ask your supervisor or write to the Office of General Counsel, Office of Personnel Management, Washington, DC 20415. Ignorance of the provisions of the law will not excuse behavior found to be in violation.

➤ **CONTRACTOR, CONCESSION AND VENDOR EMPLOYEES**

When working in the commissary, you will work with people who are NOT DeCA/Federal employees. People who stock the grocery shelves, the baggers, the people who demonstrate food products, and the deli and bakery workers, may not be Federal employees. These people do not have to follow the same rules and regulations you do; therefore, you must be aware of and follow DeCA's rules, regulations, policies, and procedures. Do not hesitate to ask your supervisor for guidance.

➤ ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS

You, as well as DeCA, can be found liable for civil and criminal penalties, and fined for violation of any local, state, or federal environmental laws. Therefore, you have an individual responsibility for environmental protection and pollution prevention. If you have any questions about how these laws may affect you, ask your supervisor.

Procedures for Waste Systems

Your supervisor will explain your work site's procedures for waste systems, including the recycling program.

DeCA's Energy Management Program

The Energy Management Program Directive is DeCAD 20-6. DeCA's goal is to conserve energy while keeping it comfortable for patrons to shop and for you to work. These are some general actions you may take to support this goal:

- Turn lights and water off when you leave a room, break area, or workstation
- Turn computers off if you will be away for 30 minutes or more
- Close freezer doors when you enter and exit
- Report damaged doors, door hinges and rollers, strip curtains, and door seals to your supervisor
- Lower loading dock bumper seals when receiving products
- Do not overstock refrigerated cases or block case air grilles
- Do not cutoff strip curtains
- Keep doors closed between the warehouse and the sales area

➤ **SPECIAL ISSUES**

Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) & Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS)

You should be both knowledgeable about and behave in accordance with Federal guidelines established in response to HIV/AIDS. Policy guidance concerning the impact of HIV/AIDS on workplace duties includes the topic areas of getting the work done, respecting employee rights and benefits, and accessing resources to address HIV/AIDS-related problems.

You will receive periodic training on this topic to help you understand the reasonable impact HIV/AIDS may have on you in the workplace. If you have any questions about how to handle HIV/AIDS situations on the job, ask your supervisor.

Crime and Violence in the Workplace

DeCA has “Zero Tolerance” regarding threats and violence in the workplace. All incidents of workplace violence are to be considered serious misconduct and will be dealt with swiftly and decisively.

Violence includes physical and verbal assault as well as the threat of physical assault against persons or property. It also includes behavior that intimidates or frightens others, such as threats, gestures, and expressions of rage or anger. A threat is an expression of intent to inflict pain, injury, or death or other harm on a person or thing. Finally, all threats will be taken as a statement of an employee’s intent to do harm.

DeCA employees will conduct themselves in a respectful and courteous manner in all of their contacts with superiors, subordinates, coworkers, and patrons. They shall, at all times, refrain from all forms of violent, harassing, or intimidating behavior. Each employee is responsible for notifying his or her supervisor or other management official of any violent behavior witnessed, received, or heard about from another person.

You will receive periodic training on crime and violence in the workplace that will help you recognize potentially violent people and/or situations. This will help to protect you and others. **If you become aware of an increasingly dangerous situation involving yourself or other coworkers, alert your supervisor as soon as possible.**

➤ **COMMON ACCESS CARD (CAC)**

Passport to the DoD Digital World

DoD has implemented a smart card technology as a Department-wide Common Access Card (CAC). When DeCA employees come to work they are issued a CAC for identification (ID), but it's more than just an ID card. Your CAC has a computer chip built into it that contains information about you. You use it similar to a debit card. By inserting it into a card reader and entering a personal identification number (PIN), you gain access to a computer and information stored on it. That is why it is important to protect your CAC and not share it with anyone. If you do, you risk identity theft. To protect your card and the information it contains, information assurance officials advise:

- Never leave your CAC in your vehicle. If someone breaks in, they could steal your card and gain unauthorized access to DoD buildings and computers.
- Make sure to keep your CAC out of the sunlight so it does not get damaged or faded.
- Never leave your CAC lying on your desk or in your computer card reader. It is a security risk. Take it with you when you leave your area.
- Never write down your PIN. Always memorize it.
- A CAC is DoD property. If you lose it, report it to your supervisor and the DeCA Help Desk immediately at 1-877-332-2471 in the United States or your respective DeCA Help Desk overseas.

EMPLOYEE ORIENTATION PROGRAM

➤ WHAT IS THE DeCA EMPLOYEE ORIENTATION PROGRAM (EOP)?

The Employee Orientation Program is designed to assist new employees with their transition into the DeCA workforce and provide existing employees with a reference and refresher course. It is a comprehensive, yet flexible program used at all grade levels and for all job series. Newly hired DeCA Federal employees are required to complete the EOP. Use of the EOP by contractor personnel is optional.

The EOP consists of several phases and will take approximately 30 days to complete with a follow-up interview at the 60- to 90-day mark. These phases are:

- ✓ Selection and Reporting-In
- ✓ Welcome and Introduction from Supervisor
- ✓ Location/Facility/Installation Tour
- ✓ Job Review with Supervisor
- ✓ Two Web-Based Training Sessions

Progress and completion of the orientation will be recorded on DeCA Form (DeCAF) 50-45. This form should be initialed by both the supervisor and employee as each applicable phase on the orientation is completed. Once the employee's orientation is complete, the DeCAF 50-45 should be signed by both the supervisor and employee. A copy of this form will be filed in the employee's local personnel folder.

SPONSOR FOR A NEW EMPLOYEE

Your supervisor may match you with an employee who has been with DeCA for a while (between 12 and 24 months works the best). The new employee/sponsor relationship typically does not extend for more than 30 to 60 days. There are two goals of the sponsor:

- To provide new employees with a point of contact (POC) for general queries regarding day-to-day operational issues; such as the location of facilities, information processing requirements, and relevant policies and procedures
- To help new employees integrate with DeCA by providing access to someone who is familiar with our culture, attitude, values, and expectations

➤ WEB-BASED TRAINING (WBT)

DeCA Orientation

Within the first 10 working days your supervisor or sponsor will assist you in learning about DeCA by having you review the Web-based lesson “This is DeCA.” This session provides basic information about DeCA – its history, mission, values, and contributions to military readiness. Specific topics include:

- What is DeCA?
 - ✓ DeCA’s history and lineage
 - ✓ DeCA’s contribution to America’s military
 - ✓ DeCA’s Mission
 - ✓ DeCA’s Shared Values
 - ✓ The role of the patron
 - ✓ Facts and figures about DeCA
- Commitment to service
- Commitment to our employees
- Ancillary programs and partnerships
- Vision magazine

DeCA Employee Information

The last formal phase of the EOP is a WBT session that will provide new employees with required annual training. This WBT session is called “Employee Information” and will provide the new employee with training in areas such as Prevention of Sexual Harassment (POSH), Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO), use of DeCA communication systems, and safety. The specific topics covered in this session are:

- Safety, Security, and Sanitation
 - ✓ Employee responsibility
 - ✓ Easily remembered principles
 - ✓ Common sense
- Policies, Procedures, and Personnel
 - ✓ Key points from the DeCA Employee Handbook
- Ethics and Standards of Conduct
- EEO/Diversity/POSH/Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR)
- E-Mail/Web Access and Policies/DeCA Business Systems
- Center for Learning/Available Training

To access these lessons go to:

https://www.commissaries.com/employees/careers_and_training/center_for_learning/index.cfm

APPOINTMENT TYPES

In DeCA, an employee is hired by an appointment. *The most common types of appointments are shown below.* In addition to the type of appointment, your employment is categorized based on your scheduled work hours and the duration of your employment; these are summarized in the table below.

Criteria	Variable	Description
scheduled work hours	full-time	Regularly scheduled work of at least 40 hours per week
	part-time (permanent)	Regularly scheduled work of 16 to 32 hours per week
	part-time (temporary)	Regularly scheduled work up to 39 hours per week
	intermittent	Work that cannot be regularly scheduled and is sporadic and unpredictable in nature
duration of employment	permanent	Work that is not time limited in nature; there are two kinds: career-conditional appointments and career appointments
	temporary	Work is temporary in nature and is not to exceed 1-year; appointment may be terminated at any time; employees cannot be promoted or transferred
	term	Work projected to last more than 1-year but less than 4 years; employees can be promoted/reassigned to other positions within the project for which they were hired

➤ **APPOINTMENT TYPES**

There are many different appointment types which management may use to fill positions. The following is an overview of the most common types.

Career-Conditional

A career-conditional appointment is usually made when an employee is selected competitively from a list of eligible applicants. A career-conditional appointment leads to a career appointment after 3 years of continuous service (780 days for employees on intermittent work schedules). After completion of the 1-year probationary period, a career-conditional appointed employee may not be removed without evidence of misconduct, delinquency, or inefficiency on the job. If you are serving on a career-conditional appointment or a career appointment, you have permanent status as a Federal Government employee and the associated rights and privileges.

Reinstatement

Reinstatement are appointments of former Federal employees being rehired for a vacant position for which qualified.

Temporary Appointment

The employee serves in a position, either on a scheduled or as needed basis, not to exceed (NTE) 1-year. An employee serving under a temporary appointment is not eligible to receive benefits. These appointments can be terminated at any time upon written notice.

Term Appointment

The employee serves in a position longer than 1-year, but not to exceed 4 years. Term appointment may be made to work on a specific project. They can be terminated before the scheduled NTE date, but employees

are entitled to a 6-day advance notice of such termination. The employee is eligible to participate in benefits plans, accrues annual and sick leave, and must serve a 1-year probationary period upon initial appointment.

Excepted Appointment

This type of appointment is made for positions excepted from the competitive system by law, executive order, or with OPM approval. If you were hired under an excepted appointment, your appointment was made without the competitive requirements of the civil service rules and regulations. There are also different appointing authorities that exist to facilitate the hiring of employees in overseas locations.

Veterans' Recruitment Appointment (VRA)

There are also a variety of other appointing authorities that may be used to hire employees throughout DeCA. One frequently used appointing authority is the Veterans' Recruitment Appointment (VRA); this is an excepted appointment.

VRA is an excepted service. After 2 years of substantially continuous service under a VRA appointment, provided your performance has been satisfactory, your appointment may be converted to the competitive service; i.e., a permanent appointment.

➤ BENEFITS ASSOCIATED WITH APPOINTMENTS

Your eligibility for benefits will vary depending on your appointment. The following table outlines the benefits associated with appointments found in DeCA. Each benefit is described in more detail in the In-Processing - Employee Benefits, Rights, and Responsibilities section of this handbook.

Eligibility for Employee Benefits								
Appointment/ Work Schedule	Benefits							
		Health	Life Ins.	Retirement	Soc. Sec.	Within- grade Increase	Leave	Holiday
Permanent	FT	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes ¹	Yes	Yes	Yes
	PT	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes ¹	Yes	Yes	Yes ²
	Int.	No	No	Yes	Yes ¹	Yes	No	No
Temporary	FT	No ³	No	No	Yes	No ⁴ /Yes	Yes	Yes
	PT	No ³	No	No	Yes	No ⁴ /Yes	Yes	Yes ²
	Int.	No	No	No	Yes	No ⁴ /Yes	No	No
Term	FT	Yes	Yes	Yes ¹	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
	PT	Yes	Yes	Yes ¹	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes ²
	Int.	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	No

¹ Applies to an employee hired after 12/31/83.

² A part-time employee receives holiday pay only for holidays that fall on scheduled workdays.

³ The employee becomes eligible to enroll after 1-year of current, continuous temporary employment.

⁴ A temporary General Schedule (GS) employee does not receive within-grade increases. A temporary Wage Grade (WG) employee does receive within-grade increases.

➤ **PROBATIONARY/TRIAL PERIOD**

The purpose of the probationary period is to afford a final test of the employee's ability and fitness for the position, as demonstrated by actual performance and/or conduct. If your appointment has a probationary/trial period, the length of the probationary period is shown in item 45 of your Notification of Personnel Action. The probationary/trial period is an on-the-job evaluation period during which your supervisor will work with you to ensure that you can perform the duties of the position. If your performance or conduct is unsatisfactory, you may be terminated from DeCA.

An employee is also required to serve a probationary period upon initial appointment to a supervisory or managerial position. However, inability to perform supervisory duties and subsequent placement in a nonsupervisory position is not considered an adverse action.

EMPLOYEE PAY

Two basic systems are used for salary scales or wage rates. They are General Schedule (GS) positions (i.e., GS-1, GS-7), and Federal Wage System (FWS) positions (i.e., WS-5, WL-5, WG-5). Your pay depends primarily on your position's grade in one of these systems.

➤ GENERAL SCHEDULE POSITION

The General Schedule covers positions with professional, administrative, and clerical responsibilities. Within each GS grade, there are 10 steps. Ordinarily, a new employee in this system is paid at the minimum rate for his or her grade, or Step One. If you have previous Federal service, you may begin at a higher step.

➤ FEDERAL WAGE SYSTEM POSITION

The Federal Wage System (WS), often referred to as the wage board system, covers trade and craft positions. Wage grade pay is based on the prevailing hourly rates paid by private industry for the same kind of work in the same locality or wage area. There are five steps within each grade.

➤ GRADE AND PAY RETENTION

On rare occasions, an employee may experience a reduction in force (RIF), or a change to lower grade as a result of reclassification of their position. In the event of such an action, the incumbent is granted grade retention for 2 years. Under grade retention, the employee will continue to receive step increases, if applicable, and annually authorized cost of living increases as if they were still occupying their prior grade. At the conclusion of the 2-year period for grade retention, the employee becomes eligible for pay retention. Pay retention can be for an

indefinite period of time or until the current salary of the employee falls within the salary range of the encumbered position and grade. Unlike grade retention, an employee on pay retention no longer receives step increases, if applicable, and will receive only half of the authorized annual cost of living increase.

➤ **GENERAL PAY INCREASE**

Generally, cost-of-living pay increases are “legislated” by Congress to increase your pay to the national cost of living and are applicable to GS employees only.

➤ **WITHIN-GRADE PAY INCREASE**

A within-grade increase (WGI), or step increase, is an increase in pay within your current position and grade. See the eligibility table (pages 36) to determine if you are eligible based upon the type of appointment and pay schedule. A WGI is not an “automatic” pay increase. You are given a WGI when you meet the following three requirements:

- Your supervisor determines that your performance is satisfactory
- Your present pay is below the maximum for the grade
- Nonpay status within the waiting period can affect your within grade increase

(Waiting period chart next page.)

Waiting Periods for Within-Grade Pay Increases						
GS Employees (Permanent)				WG, WL, & WS Employees		
Step to be Reached	Full- Time	Part- Time	Intermittent	Full- Time	Part- Time	Intermittent
Step 2	52 weeks*	52 weeks*	260 days	26 weeks*	26 weeks*	130 days
Step 3	52 weeks*	52 weeks*	260 days	78 weeks*	78 weeks*	380 days
Step 4	52 weeks*	52 weeks*	260 days	104 weeks*	104 weeks*	520 days
Step 5	104 weeks*	104 weeks*	520 days	104 weeks*	104 weeks*	520 days
Step 6	104 weeks*	104 weeks*	520 days	--	--	--
Step 7	104 weeks*	104 weeks*	520 days	--	--	--
Step 8	156 weeks*	156 weeks*	780 days	--	--	--
Step 9	156 weeks*	156 weeks*	780 days	--	--	--
Step 10	156 weeks*	156 weeks*	780 days	--	--	--

* Weeks are calendar weeks

➤ PREMIUM PAY

Premium pay is additional compensation beyond the basic rate of pay that an employee is entitled to receive for such situations as overtime work, work at night, and work on Sundays or holidays. This section provides an overview of premium pay; however, it is not all-inclusive and you should understand that there may be variables associated with the premium pay entitlements, depending on different circumstances.

When working in the United States (U.S.), a Federal employee's entitlement to premium pay is governed by two different laws: Title 5, United States Code, Chapter 55; and Title 29, United States Code, Chapter 8 (usually called the Fair Labor Standards Act [FLSA]). U.S. employees are categorized as either exempt or nonexempt from the provisions of the FLSA. Employees who are exempt from FLSA are

entitled to premium pay under conditions defined in Title 5. Employees who are nonexempt from FLSA may be entitled to premium pay under provisions of the FLSA or under Title 5, whichever offers them the greater entitlement. (The FLSA does not apply to employees stationed overseas unless the employee is on temporary duty to the U.S.)

➤ **OVERTIME PAY**

Overtime is appropriate when an employee is required to work either in excess of 8 hours in a day or in excess of 40 hours in a week. It is DeCA's policy that employees who work in excess of 8 hours in a day or 40 hours in a week will be appropriately compensated for such work. Therefore, it is important employees not work overtime hours unless they have the advance approval from their supervisor. Overtime pay calculations are based on whether an employee is in a position that is exempt or nonexempt from the FLSA. Generally, overtime pay calculations are computed as follows:

- For FLSA exempt positions, the overtime rate for each GS employee whose rate of basic pay does not exceed the minimum rate for GS-10 is 1.5 times the hourly rate of basic pay. For FLSA exempt GS employees whose rate of basic pay exceeds the minimum rate for GS-10, the overtime rate is 1.5 times the hourly rate of basic pay at the minimum rate for GS-10 or employee's rate of basic pay, whichever is greater.
- For FLSA nonexempt GS employees, the overtime rate is 1.5 times their regular rate of pay.
- For WG employees, the overtime rate is generally 1.5 times the hourly rate of pay.

Irregular or occasional overtime work performed by an employee on a day when work was not regularly scheduled or for which the employee was required to return to the place of employment shall be considered to be at least 2 hours in duration for the purpose of overtime pay.

➤ **COMPENSATORY TIME**

At the request of the employee, compensatory time off may be granted instead of overtime payment for irregular or occasional overtime. The compensatory time off will be granted in an amount equal to the amount of overtime worked.

Managers, supervisors, or employees may not directly or indirectly intimidate, threaten, or coerce any employee for the purpose of interfering with such employee's right to request or not to request compensatory time off in lieu of payment for overtime hours.

If compensatory time off is not taken by the end of the 26th pay period after the pay period in which it was earned, the employee must be paid for overtime work at the overtime rate in effect for the work period in which it was earned.

An employee may earn compensatory time off for time spent in a travel status away from the employer's official duty station when such time is not otherwise compensable by submitting DeCAF 50-74, Claim for Creditable Time in a Travel Status.

To qualify for compensatory time for travel, travel must be officially authorized in that it must be for work purposes and must be approved by an authorized agency official. Travel status includes only the time actually spent traveling between the official duty station and a temporary duty station; or between two duty stations; and the usual waiting time that precedes or interrupts such travel.

Generally, an employee must use the accrued compensatory time off for travel by the end of the 26th pay period after the pay period in which it was earned or the employee must forfeit such compensatory time off.

Compensatory time off is subject to approval by the supervisor, as is all other leave.

Upon voluntary transfer to another agency, the employee will forfeit all of the unused compensatory time for travel. When separating from an agency, the law prohibits payment for unused compensatory time for travel.

➤ **NIGHT PAY/NIGHT DIFFERENTIAL**

Night pay is different for GS and FWS employees. GS employees receive night pay for regularly scheduled hours worked after 6 p.m. and before 6 a.m. The compensation for GS employees is 10 percent of the rate of pay. FWS employees receive night pay only when the majority of their regularly assigned shift falls in the night-pay period. FWS employees who work from 3 p.m. to midnight are compensated at 7.5 percent of the rate of pay; FWS employees who work from 11 p.m. to 8 a.m. are compensated at 10 percent the rate of pay. Intermittent GS employees with no regular tour of duty are not eligible for night differential.

➤ **HOLIDAY PAY**

Holiday pay is paid to both GS and FWS employees if they are required to work on a holiday. The compensation is twice the basic rate of pay for the hours worked, up to a maximum of 8 hours. Any hours worked in excess of 8 hours are paid at the regular overtime rate. Employees who work part-time are not entitled to holiday pay unless the holiday falls on their scheduled workday. Employees who work standby or intermittent are not authorized holiday premium.

➤ **SUNDAY PAY**

Sunday pay is paid when a full-time or part-time employee is required to work on Sunday at the rate of 1.25 times the basic rate of pay for each hour of Sunday work, up to a maximum of 8 hours. Hours worked in excess of 8 hours are paid at the regular overtime rate. Employees who work intermittent work schedules are not entitled to Sunday pay.

➤ PAY DEDUCTIONS

Two types of deductions, mandatory and optional, are taken from your paycheck.

Mandatory deductions include:

- Federal income tax
- Medicare tax
- State and local taxes
- Life insurance (unless waived)
- Basic retirement deduction and Social Security (if not a participant in CSRS)

Optional deductions. Optional deductions are initiated at your request if eligibility requirements are met and may include any of the following:

- Health insurance
- Labor organization dues
- Charitable contributions
- Allotments to savings accounts or credit union
- Thrift Savings Plan
- U.S. Savings Bonds purchase

Your earnings statement documents these deductions and should be carefully reviewed.

➤ WAGE ASSIGNMENTS AND GARNISHES

If your wages are legally garnished, a biweekly deduction will be made from your pay until your debt is resolved. For more information about garnishments or child care payments, consult your servicing Human Resources Office.

➤ **PAYMENT**

You will be paid every 2 weeks through the Defense Finance and Accounting System (DFAS). You will receive your first paycheck approximately 1-month after your first day on the job. You are required to have your paycheck deposited directly into your bank or credit union account.

➤ **LEAVE AND EARNINGS STATEMENT (LES)**

Every pay period you will receive a Leave and Earnings Statement (LES). This is a record you should check carefully and retain with your employment records. Annual and sick leave balances, premium pay, and deductions are reflected on this statement. Report any errors in your deduction amounts or sudden or unexplained changes in pay to the servicing HR Office. You may also review your LES online by using myPay.

➤ **myPay**

myPay is an innovative, automated system that puts you in control of processing certain discretionary pay data items without using paper forms. It saves you time; it eliminates the need to write letters or fill out forms by letting you make your own changes immediately with user-friendly technology. It is reliable and has the same procedural check for accuracy as our paper forms. You can access myPay nearly 24 hours a day, 7 days a week to change or review your current information, or to check your most recent pay statement. With myPay you can perform the following activities:

- Change Federal and state tax withholdings
- Update bank account and electronic funds transfer information
- Manage allotments
- Make address changes
- Purchase U.S. Savings Bonds

- View, save, and print LES, travel vouchers, tax statements (W-2)

myPay's design helps you by:

- Finding the information needed and completing the transaction in three clicks
- Improving customer confidence by providing clear confirmation messages

For instructions on accessing myPay, go to page 73.

LEAVE AND HOLIDAYS

Employees accrue leave and have a right to use accrued leave in accordance with applicable laws, regulations, and bargaining agreements.

It is the employee's responsibility to complete DeCAF 50-63, Request for Leave or Approved Absence, in advance from the supervisor when requesting leave.

A chart located at the end of this section provides specific procedures for requesting the different types of leave.

➤ ACCRUED LEAVE

Annual Leave

An employee may request annual leave but the determination as to the time and amount of leave granted is made by the supervisor.

The annual leave is accrued per pay period at the following rates:

Employee type	Less than 3 years of service	3 yrs but less than 15 years of service	15 or more years of service
Full-time employees	4 hours	6 hours	8 hours
Part-time employees	1-hour for each 20 hours in a pay status	1-hour for each 13 hours in a pay status	1-hour for each 10 hours in a pay status

Annual Leave Ceiling

Maximum Annual Leave That May Be Carried Over into the New Leave Year	
Federal employees stationed within the U.S.	30 days
Federal employees stationed overseas when originally hired from the U.S.	45 days
Members of Senior Executive Services	90 days

Any accrued annual leave in excess of the maximum allowed by law will normally be forfeited. Employees forfeit accrued leave of more than 240 hours (30 days) during a leave year (i.e., use it or lose it). Employees returning from overseas tours forfeit accrued leave of more than 360 hours (45 days) or their maximum carry over, whichever is less. Exception to this is employees working at installations that are affected by Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC). These employees may carry over an unlimited number of hours of annual leave.

Leave Transfer Program

This program allows employees to donate annual leave to other employees who have medical emergencies and who have exhausted their available leave. There is no limit on the amount of donated annual leave a leave recipient may receive. However, any unused donated leave must be returned to the leave donor when the medical emergency ends.

To become a donor or leave recipient, contact the Human Resources Office for additional information.

Sick Leave

Sick leave covers time lost because of illness and medical appointments for personal medical needs, care of a family member, care of a family member with a serious health condition, and adoption related purposes. Sick leave is a benefit that is defined by law and regulation and/or in the bargaining agreement.

Employees must use their sick leave properly by notifying their supervisor as early as possible. The employee will make the notification personally; unless the degree of injury or illness prevents it, prior to the start of your tour of duty (see appropriate bargaining agreement).

For absences that exceed 3 consecutive workdays, the employee is required to provide acceptable medical documentation. If an employee is suspected of abusing sick leave, they may be asked to provide documentation for each absence due to illness or incapacitation for duty, regardless of the duration.

Sick leave is earned as follows:

Sick Leave Accrual	
Full-time employees	4 hours for each pay period
Part-time employees	1-hour for each 20 hours in a pay status
There are no limits on the amount of sick leave that can be accrued.	

Family and Medical Leave

Under the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) of 1993, most employees are entitled to a total of up to 12 workweeks of unpaid leave during any 12-month period for the following purpose:

- The birth of a son or daughter of the employee and the care of such son or daughter
- The placement of a son or daughter with the employee for adoption or foster care
- The care of spouse, son, daughter, or parent of the employee who has a serious health condition
- A serious health condition of the employee that makes the employee unable to perform the essential functions of his or her position

You may use any accrued annual or sick leave, as appropriate, for any part of the 12-week period. You must notify your supervisor of your intent to take leave. You may be required to provide acceptable medical documentation. If you take leave for these reasons, you are entitled to return to the same or equivalent position without loss of benefits, pay, status, or other conditions of employment.

Family Friendly Leave Act

A full-time employee may use a total of up to 104 hours (13 days) of sick leave each year for family care or bereavement purposes to:

- Provide care for a family member who is incapacitated as a result of physical or mental illness, injury, pregnancy, or childbirth
- Provide care for a family member as a result of medical, dental, or optical examination or treatment
- Make arrangement necessitated by the death of a family member or attend the funeral of a family member

Part-time employees and employees with uncommon tour of duty are also covered, and the amount of sick leave permitted for family care and bereavement purposes is prorated in proportion to the average number of hours of work in the employees scheduled tour of duty each week.

Advance Leave

Employees who have exhausted their annual or sick leave accounts may request advances of such leave. Thirty days of advance sick and/or annual leave may be authorized. Advance leave creates a negative leave balance. Subsequent leave accruals will be used to repay your leave account. Requests for advance leave must be submitted to your immediate supervisor for review and approval. Approval of a request for advance leave will depend upon such factors as the Agency's work load, the employee's leave record, and the expectation you will return to duty and accrue sufficient leave to repay the leave debt.

➤ MISCELLANEOUS LEAVE

Court Leave

If you are officially summoned for a judicial proceeding that will require you to be absent from work, notify your supervisor immediately and

provide a copy of the subpoena or summons. You may be granted court leave to perform the duties. Contact your Human Resources Office to determine the duty status and/or requirements to return fees received.

Leave Without Pay

Leave without pay (LWOP) is an approved temporary nonpay status and absence from duty. The approval of LWOP is at the discretion of your supervisor. LWOP is typically used and approved in the following circumstances:

- A DeCA employee who is incapacitated due to illness or injury and no other leave is available
- A DeCA employee currently collecting workers' compensation benefits
- A military Reservist or a member of the National Guard who is entitled to LWOP to perform military training duties
- A disabled veteran who is entitled for LWOP for medical treatment under the Executive Order 5396
- A permanent DeCA employee who is the spouse of a transferring active duty member or civilian sponsor in receipt of permanent change of station (PCS) orders. In such cases, you should submit a Request for Personnel Action (RPA) to your supervisor requesting LWOP to accompany your sponsor. A copy of the military sponsor's PCS orders must be attached to the RPA.

Excused Absence

Under some circumstances, supervisors may excuse you without charging you leave or loss of pay for the following:

- Permanent change of station
- Volunteering as blood donors (may not receive compensation and will be excused for up to 4 hours)
- Issuance of CAC
- Attending professional meetings that benefit the Agency and have a direct relationship to official assignments
- Agency sponsored events (may be granted at supervisor's discretion, depending on the workload requirements)

- Counseling
- Voting
- Overseas unique situations, such as activities in relation to deployment of spouses

Bone Marrow or Organ Donor Leave

An employee may use up to 7 days of paid leave each calendar year to serve as a bone marrow donor. An employee also may use up to 30 days of paid leave each calendar year to serve as an organ donor. Contact your Human Resources Office for more information.

Military Leave

An employee who is a member of a Reserve component or National Guard will accrue 15 days (120 hours) of military leave per fiscal year. The employee is entitled to time off at full pay for certain types of active or inactive duty training. Contact your Human Resources Office for more information.

- Any full-time employee whose appointment is not limited to 1-year is entitled to military leave. Military leave is prorated for part-time career employees and employees on an uncommon tour of duty. You may be charged military leave only for the hours you would have normally worked and received pay.

➤ EXTENDED PERIODS OF LEAVE

Type of Leave	Reason	Employee Documentation	Action by Organization
Advance Sick Leave	No available accrued sick leave; up to a maximum of 30 days	DeCAF 50-63* State how much advanced leave is requested and a physician's note	Approve/ Disapprove
Advance Annual Leave	No available accrued annual leave. The amount of leave that may be advanced is limited to the amount of AL the employee would accrue for the remainder of the leave year	DeCAF50-63*	Approve/ Disapprove
Leave Recipient Program	Cover time for medical time off for full-time employees	Complete OF-630** and turn in to Human Resources along with a note***stating reason for absence and date when employee is expected to return to work	Approve/ Disapprove and forward to HR Technician to advertise and coordinate with payroll
Family and Medical Leave (FMLA)	Entitled to 12 workweeks of unpaid leave during any 12-month period if <u>you have at least 12 months of service and are in a permanent position</u>	DeCAF 50-63* Medical documentation, if required by agency	Prepare an RPA if over 30 days
LWOP	Military Service	DeCAF 50-63* Copy of orders	Prepare an RPA if over 30 days
LWOP	Workers' Compensation	CA-7,7a form Medical documentation	Prepare an RPA if over 80 hours
LWOP	Relocating	DeCAF 50-63* Spouses orders and/or memorandum stating reason for relocation	Prepare an RPA if over 30 days
LWOP	Illness	DeCAF 50-63* Physician's note	Prepare an RPA if over 30 days
LWOP	If out of accrued leave	DeCAF 50-63* Memorandum stating reason for leave	Approve/ Disapprove

NOTE: Employees that are on a nonpay status (LWOP) will not accrue annual or sick leave with the exception of those employees that are on LWOP due to an on-the-job injury.

*DeCAF 50-63, Request for Leave or Approved Absence

**OF-630, Leave Receipt Application

***Administratively acceptable medical documentation from a medical provider

➤ HOLIDAYS

The following are paid holidays for DeCA employees:

Holiday	Date
New Year's Day	January 1
Birthday of Martin Luther King, Jr.	Third Monday in January
President's Day	Third Monday in February
Memorial Day	Last Monday in May
Independence Day	July 4
Labor Day	First Monday in September
Columbus Day	Second Monday in October
Veteran's Day	November 11
Thanksgiving	Fourth Thursday in November
Christmas Day	December 25

WORK SCHEDULE

Employees on a full-time schedule work 40 hours per week. Specific days, hours, and shifts vary by work sites. Your supervisor will specify lunch and other types of breaks.

Part-time schedules may be from 16 to 32 hours per week and work schedules are provided prior to the workweek (see appropriate bargaining agreement). Intermittent work schedules require an irregular number of hours work, and there are no prearranged schedules.

Breaks and lunch are to be taken when they are assigned to ensure there is sufficient coverage.

An official Time and Attendance Record will be available at your work site to record the time you arrive to work and depart from work each day. See your supervisor for more information.

You are expected to be on time and have good attendance. When you are absent because of illness or for other legitimate reasons, notify your supervisor prior to your tour of duty, if possible, so arrangements can be made to cover your duties. Your supervisor will inform you of procedures for reporting your absence. Disciplinary action may be taken for unexcused absence or tardiness.

ADMINISTRATIVE ACCEPTABLE MEDICAL DOCUMENTATION

Employees are expected to provide medical documentation when they:

- Are absent from work for more than 3 days
- Are requesting accommodations due to a nonwork related medical condition
- Have suffered a work related injury or illness

➤ Requirements for medical reports for a **nonwork related** injury or illness:

An employee may be required to furnish administratively acceptable medical evidence to substantiate a request for approval of sick leave, if required by the supervisor. Supervisors will notify employees when medical documentation is required and time limits for submitting the documentation. Administratively acceptable medical documentation includes:

- The type of health condition and the date it commenced
- A general statement of the employee's condition(s)
- Whether the employee is presently incapacitated for duty
- The expected duration of the condition and the date the employee can be expected to return to duty

➤ Requirements for medical reports for a **work related** injury or illness:

Administratively acceptable medical documentation must include the following in order for your supervisor to determine what duties you will be able to perform within the medical/physical restrictions imposed by your treating physician:

- Date of examination and treatment
- History given by the employee
- Physical findings
- Results of diagnostic tests
- Diagnosis
- Course of treatment
- A description of any other conditions found but not due to the claimed injury
- The treatment given or recommended for the claimed injury
- The physician's opinion, with medical reasons, as to causal relationship between the diagnosed condition(s) and the factors or conditions of the employment
- The extent of disability affecting the employee's ability to work due to the injury
- The prognosis for recovery
- **Signature and date of a board certified physician**

To put in simpler terms, the Agency has the right to know:

- What is wrong with an employee
- How long the condition will last
- Whether it will interfere with his or her job and if so, how and for how long
- Whether an employee might become more incapacitated or relapse if he or she performs certain duties

For the purpose of leave taken to care for a family member, medical documentation may be required and includes a written statement from the health care provider concerning the family member's need for psychological comfort and/or physical care. The statement must certify that:

- The family member requires psychological comfort and/or physical care
- The family member would benefit from the employee's care or presence
- The employee is needed to care for the family member for a specified period of time

CAREER DEVELOPMENT

➤ ADVANCEMENT

Once you have been in your new job for a period of time, you may wonder how you can advance in your career with DeCA. There are several avenues available. If you are interested in advancement, you may want to discuss your desires with your supervisor.

General and/or Specialized Experience Requirements

All candidates must meet the general and/or specialized experience requirements for a particular position. The specific type of experience required usually differs for each vacancy. In some instances, certain types of education may be substituted for the general or specialized experience. The vacancy announcement for a position will outline the type of general or specialized experience required. It will also include information regarding the substitution of education.

Job Vacancies

Job vacancy announcements are openly posted in each DeCA location. You may apply for any job for which you are interested by submitting your paperwork in accordance with the guidance specified in the job announcement.

DeCA's positions in a wide range of grades and locations both statewide and overseas are listed on DeCA's OneNet and the USA Jobs Web site.

Take your future into your hands search open jobs today!

Commissary Career Program (CCP)

The CCP is DeCA's program for recruiting, developing, and advancing employees to positions in the commissary management series, GS-1144, or assigned to a limited number of positions in other occupational series directly related to the management of commissaries.

CCP procedures for store administrator and department manager positions can be found on OneNet under Career and Training tab, then select Careers at DeCA.

Vacancy Announcements for GS-1144 positions can be found at www.usajobs.gov.

For positions at the store director level and above, the Executive Steering Council (ESC) makes a recommendation to the Director on selections for permanent, temporary, or developmental assignments, regardless of job series or location in the Agency. The Director has final concurrence on such positions.

Promotion

In general, if you are promoted from one GS position to another, you are entitled to pay that is equivalent to a two-step increase of your former grade. To be eligible for promotion, you must meet any general and/or specialized experience requirements, and time in grade requirements. Permanent and temporary promotions expected to last more than 120 days are made in accordance with merit promotion procedures.

- **Time-in-Grade (TIG)**. To be promoted to a higher grade, employees must meet certain regulatory TIG requirements. TIG requirements are summarized below. Your servicing HR service provider can advise you about TIG requirements as they pertain to your situation.
 - ✓ Candidates may be advanced without time restriction to positions up to GS-5 if the position to be filled is no more than two grades above the lowest grade the employee held within the preceding 52 weeks under his or her latest non-temporary, competitive appointment.
 - ✓ For clerical and administrative support positions at the GS-6 through GS-11, you must usually serve one year in the next lower grade (example: must hold a GS-6 for one year to meet TIG requirements for promotion to GS-7).

- ✓ To meet TIG requirements for administrative, management, and professional positions, GS-6 through GS-11, you must serve one year in the second lower grade (example: must hold a GS-7 position for one year to qualify for GS-9).
- ✓ To meet TIG requirements for any position at the GS-12 grade level or above, you must serve one year in the next lower grade (example: must hold a GS-12 for one year to meet TIG requirements for promotion to GS-13).

It is very important to remember that TIG is an entirely separate issue from *quality of experience* or *specialized experience*. An employee may meet TIG, but not have the necessary specialized experience needed for promotion.

- Merit Promotion. Permanent promotions and temporary promotions expected to last for more than 120 days are made in accordance with merit promotion procedures. These procedures do not guarantee that you will be promoted, but they do ensure that you receive consideration for higher level jobs for which you are interested and eligible. Merit promotion opportunities for vacancies are advertised through Job Opportunity Announcements (JOAs). Each JOA summarizes the duties of the position and specifies the qualification requirements and procedures for applying.
- Temporary Promotion. A temporary promotion is the temporary assignment of an employee to a higher graded position for a specified period of time. The employee returns to his/her permanent position upon the expiration of the temporary action. In order for an employee to be temporarily promoted, he or she must meet the same qualification requirements that are necessary for a permanent promotion. The temporarily promoted employee receives the higher salary for the period assigned and gains quality experience.

Reassignment

A reassignment is a movement of an employee at the same grade from one position to another. Reassignment may be management-directed or initiated by the employee. If you desire a reassignment for reasons such as career development, you should talk to your supervisor. DeCA tries to consider the career development and preferences of its employees. There may be occasions where DeCA's needs require that you accept an assignment that is not your first choice.

Detail

A detail is the temporary assignment of an employee to a different position or set of duties for a specified period of time. There is no formal position change. Officially, the employee continues to hold the position from which detailed and keeps the same status and pay. An employee may not be detailed to a different position for at least 90 days after initial competitive appointment. Employees do not need to meet qualification standards in order to be detailed. However, employees must meet positive education and special license requirements in order to be detailed into a position with these requirements.

Details are intended to meet temporary needs of the Agency's mission requirements when necessary services cannot be provided by other means. Details can be used in situations such as temporary shortage of civilian personnel or emergency work situations.

Student Career Experience Program (SCEP)

The SCEP is a planned, progressive educational program that provides high school, vocational/technical, and college students with job-related work directly related to their field of study. There are opportunities in numerous career fields such as commissary management, human resources management, information systems and technology, financial management and accounting, procurement and purchasing, marketing, etc., with the potential for noncompetitive conversion to Federal career service.

Eligibility requirements:

- U.S. citizen
- Actively enrolled in an accredited academic institution, at least half-time
- At least 16 years old
- In good academic standing

Must have a working agreement with DeCA (SCEP only)

Student Temporary Employment Program (STEP)

The STEP provides employment opportunities primarily in clerical support or wage grade positions that enable students to gain valuable experience in a structured work environment that is not necessarily related to the student's field of study. This program does not provide the potential for noncompetitive conversion to Federal career service; however, there is potential for conversion into the SCEP.

Eligibility Requirements:

- U.S. citizen
- Actively enrolled in an accredited academic institution, at least half-time, and working towards a degree or diploma
- At least 16 years old
- In good academic standing

Note: Additional eligibility requirements may apply for both programs.

➤ TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

DeCA strives to help you meet your career goals. The development “tools” available to assist you and your supervisor on meeting your goals are:

Occupational Training Plan (OTP)

An OTP describes the knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs) required to perform the duties of your job and other jobs in your occupational family. Your occupational family includes your job and other related jobs above and below in the career path. An OTP also identifies the training activities necessary to help you progress from one job to another and is used by your supervisor in preparing your Individual Development Plan (IDP).

Individual Development Plan (IDP)

An IDP will be completed jointly by you and your supervisor. The IDP will identify training required for an orderly progression in your career field. You will receive more information from your supervisor about your IDP.

Training Resources

You may receive many kinds of training as a DeCA employee. Some of the training will be mandatory, and other training will be available to help you improve job performance and advance your career. Your supervisor or designated training coordinator can tell you more about training.

Tuition Assistance

DeCA may provide tuition assistance for job/career-related courses taken through a state-accredited institution of higher learning. However, Federal law prohibits DeCA from providing tuition assistance for the sole purpose of obtaining an academic degree. For more information on the availability of tuition assistance, contact your supervisor or training coordinator.

SF 182

Standard Form (SF) 182, Authorization, Agreement and Certification of Training, must be completed when requesting training, obtaining authorization for training, documenting training, and ensuring that training is reported upon completion. You will complete an SF 182 for any formal, classroom training you attend that requires you to leave your job for any length of time. Your training coordinator will help you complete this form.

DISCIPLINE

In the workplace, discipline can be thought of in two parts. The first part involves establishing clear and fair rules by which you can work. The second part involves making sure everyone follows the rules that are established. Action will be taken against any employee who violates the rules. If you have any questions, ask your supervisor about the rules. Your supervisor should:

- Know the rules
- Strive to prevent situations requiring disciplinary actions
- Keep you informed of established rules
- Evaluate all the facts about an incident before taking action
- Impose penalties to correct offenses

➤ **DISCIPLINARY INFRACTIONS**

Just as it is your supervisor's responsibility to inform you of the rules, it is your responsibility to follow these rules. A disciplinary infraction is any action you take that breaks the established rules.

➤ **DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS**

Should you or another employee commit a disciplinary infraction, your supervisor may take disciplinary action. A standard table of penalties exists to serve as a guide for imposing disciplinary actions. In order of severity (from least to most), the possible disciplinary actions are:

- Oral admonishment
- Letter of counseling/warning
- Written reprimand
- Suspension
- Demotion
- Dismissal
- Termination/Removal

Depending on the action taken, you may be able to appeal and/or grieve it. If you have any questions, contact your Employee Relations Specialist or Labor Relations Specialist, if applicable.

EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY PROGRAMS

It is the objective of DeCA to have a workforce that is representative of the nation's diverse cultures. Equal employment opportunity (EEO) programs provide equal access to jobs, training, awards, and promotions. EEO laws prohibit discrimination in employment on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age (over 40 years), mental or physical disability. It is also unlawful for a manager or supervisor to take retaliatory action because of an employee's participation in the complaint process.

Affirmative Employment Programs are designed to remedy the effects of past discrimination against specific groups. DeCA has an EEO program to alleviate any existing manifest imbalance or conspicuous absence of minorities and women. The program includes:

- An Affirmative Employment Recruitment Program to ensure applicant pools are representative of the cultural diversity of our country.
- The Wounded Warrior Program provides employment opportunities for wounded or disabled veterans.
- Special Emphasis Programs (entitled the Federal Women's Program, Hispanic Employment Program, African American Employment Program, Program for People with Disabilities, Asian/Pacific Islander Employment, and American Indian/Alaskan Native Employment Program) established to:
 - ✓ Ensure the full use of employee abilities
 - ✓ Ensure reasonable accommodation for qualified persons with disabilities
 - ✓ Ensure the implementation of EEO/Affirmative Employment policies
 - ✓ Provide training and advancement opportunities
 - ✓ Assist in recruitment, hiring, retention, and career counseling

➤ **LEADERSHIP RESPONSIBILITIES**

An employee in a leadership position is:

- Responsible for providing equal opportunity in employment
- Responsible for ensuring discriminatory practices do not exist in defined work areas
- Accountable for subordinates discriminatory actions of which the supervisor was aware or should have been aware

➤ **EMPLOYMENT OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES**

A highly trained and developed workforce includes people with disabilities. DeCA's Affirmative Employment Program to employ people with disabilities emphasizes that persons with disabilities must receive full and fair consideration for employment in all grade levels and occupations. Every manager and supervisor should make a good faith effort to do their share to help DeCA achieve the DoD 2 percent goal of increasing representation of persons with targeted (severe) disabilities.

➤ **EMPLOYEE RESPONSIBILITIES**

If you believe you have been subjected to discrimination based on your race, sex, age, national origin, religion, mental or physical disability, or prior EEO activity, contact an EEO counselor within 4 days of the incident or the date you learned of the incident. Instructions for contacting an EEO counselor may be found on the official bulletin board in your commissary or other DeCA facility. You may also call the Headquarters (HQ) DeCA EEO office toll free at 877-435-7336. Procedures for using the toll free number from overseas location are on the official bulletin board.

➤ **PREVENTION OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT (POSH) PROGRAM**

It is DeCA's policy that all DeCA facilities will be managed so you can perform your duties in an environment free of sexually harassing behavior. The POSH program is intended to inform all DeCA employees of DeCA's policy.

Sexual harassment means unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:

- Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of employment
- Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting such individuals
- Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment

Any person who makes deliberate or repeated unwelcome verbal comments, gestures, or physical contact of a sexual nature is engaging in sexual harassment. It is DeCA's firm policy that sexual harassment is unacceptable behavior and will not be condoned or tolerated in any way.

It is recommended you take the following steps if you feel you are a victim of sexually harassing behavior by another employee:

- Notify the harasser that the behavior is unwelcome
- Report the incident to your supervisor. If your supervisor is involved, contact the next higher level supervisor in your chain of command.
- Contact the HQ DeCA EEO office, an EEO counselor, or the Inspector General (IG). Instructions for contacting an EEO counselor or the HQ DeCA EEO Office are on page 63 of this manual. You may call the DeCA IG Hotline toll free at 800-294-2744, commercial 804-734-8000 (DSN 687-8000), extension 48189, or e-mail DeCAHotline@deca.mil.

COMMUNICATIONS

➤ MEDIA

If you are approached for official comment about DeCA or your worksite by any representative of the media (i.e., television, newspaper) refer the inquiry to your supervisor, who will contact HQ DeCA and installation public affairs representatives. Any comment you make on an informal basis may be misquoted or taken out of context.

➤ TELEPHONE USE

When you answer the telephone, be courteous and responsive. When making calls on behalf of DeCA be brief, courteous, and informative.

Telephones are intended to be used for official DeCA business during working hours. When you must make or receive personal phone calls, limit their length and frequency. Employees are not allowed to charge tolls for personal phone calls to DeCA.

➤ CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION

If you should receive any requests for information that is confidential to either DeCA or your fellow employees, refer the request to your supervisor.

➤ HANDBILLS AND SOLICITING

DeCA does not allow an employee or visitor to distribute handbills, leaflets, or catalogs; nor to solicit memberships, pledges, subscriptions, petitions, or sales articles during business hours.

➤ **INAPPROPRIATE E-MAIL**

Employees must comply with DoD and DeCA's e-mail policies. The e-mail system should be used for official or duty purposes only. In complying with these policies, employees are responsible for the content of their e-mails and must ensure that messages sent meet the standards regarding acceptable use of e-mail.

➤ **PROTECTING DeCA'S INFORMATION IN E-MAIL**

E-mail has become a leading means of communication and also a popular means to steal sensitive information. DoD has created a way for employees to protect themselves from becoming victims to these activities. Employees using DeCA's e-mail must register their CAC with DeCA's e-mail system and begin using it to sign and encrypt e-mail containing sensitive information in accordance with guidelines.

You should encrypt e-mail containing sensitive information such as privacy act data or personally identifiable information, Web site links, or attachments, financial data, credit card numbers, information related to payroll, etc.

Please note that employees will not be able to encrypt e-mail to someone who does not have a CAC or similar capability.

For additional information and step-by-step instructions on signed and encrypted e-mail visit:

http://www.commissaries.com/employees/resource_center/documents/ia/pocket_guide.pdf

➤ **USE OF REMOVABLE FLASH MEDIA**

- Personal devices and media are not permitted on DeCA computers
- Government-issued digital cameras with government-issued flash cards are permitted. This includes connecting the cameras to DeCA workstations to download pictures from flash cards as well as USB thumb drives
- Cameras that do not use flash cards are permitted
- Government-issued media cannot be attached/inserted to nongovernment devices (e.g., home computers or other personal devices, or third party processing equipment such as Walgreen)
- Other government issued devices (e.g., flash card readers that provide the capability to write to flash cards or MP3 players) have limited business purposes and are not permitted

EMPLOYEE PROGRAMS

➤ INCENTIVE AWARDS PROGRAM

DeCA continuously seeks to improve its programs, procedures, and operations. The Incentive Awards Program (DeCAD 50-8) exists to encourage you to participate in improving government operations and to provide a means of rewarding your superior performance.

➤ INFORMAL AWARDS

Informal awards require no paperwork or formal approvals. Often, these awards require little expense. An informal award may be recognition (e.g., praise, public recognition) or a change in your job responsibilities that includes more self-management, more authority, and so on. These awards are at your supervisor's discretion.

➤ FORMAL AWARDS

DeCA's Employee Recognition and Incentive Awards Program provide many ways of rewarding workers for superior performance or conduct. Awards may be monetary, honorary, or both, and can improve your chance for advancement because they are considered when you compete for a promotion.

Honorary awards may be given alone or together with a monetary award. An honorary award is typically a medal, certificate, plaque, or other item that can be displayed.

Monetary awards are given to recognize an individual or group of employees based on acts, services, or achievements beyond their typical job responsibilities that somehow benefit the Government. Your supervisor has the authority to grant the following awards:

- Performance Award. Performance awards are given to motivate employees by recognizing and rewarding those who attain high levels of performance. They are based on the employee's Rating of Record for the current appraisal period and are calculated as a percentage of your salary.
- Quality Step Increase. Quality step increases are given to GS employees for outstanding performance. The employee is expected to continue at the same level of efficiency in the future. They are given an early step increase within a grade.
- Special Act Award. Special act awards are given for a one-time, extraordinary achievement (e.g., acts of heroism; single scientific achievement; or disclosure of fraud, waste, or abuse) by an individual or group of employees that serves the public interest. They may be monetary and/or nonmonetary awards.
- On-the-Spot Award. On-the-spot awards are given to recognize superior, day-to-day work accomplishments that exceed normal job requirements, but not yet significant enough to warrant a larger special act or service award. Your supervisor can use this award to immediately reward excellent performance.
- Time-Off Award. Time-off awards are given for contributions directly supporting the DeCA mission that benefit the Government. They provide for approval of up to 40 hours of time-off at one time for full-time employees, and a prorated amount for part-time and other employees. Time-off granted to any one individual will not exceed 80 hours in any 1 leave year. (Employees on intermittent work schedules are not entitled to time-off awards.) Time-off awards may not be converted to cash if not used with the required 1-year period from the effective date of the award.

➤ **SUGGESTION PROGRAM**

DeCA has a suggestion program called IDEAS (Improve DeCA's Efficiency and Service). It is described in detail in DeCAD 60-1. You may submit ideas on how to do a job faster and better. To be eligible, the idea must identify a problem and offer a well-defined solution. The idea should provide enough possible benefits to warrant a change and must be your own thought. To submit an idea, use DeCAF 60-7, Improve DeCA's Efficiency and Service (IDEAS).

➤ **EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (EAP)**

EAP brings together a variety of personal services under one roof. We all face issues such as emotional problems, loss and grief, alcohol and/or drug abuse, financial and legal concerns, work related concerns, marriage and family problems, aging parents, illness and accidents, and relationship difficulties. EAP is a confidential, free counseling and referral service provided by licensed, master-degreed mental health professionals. The program is available to all employees (except foreign national) and their family members. EAP provides telephone consultations, problem assessments, face-to-face short-term counseling, referral if necessary, and 24-hour coverage no matter where you are.

You may access EAP service by calling toll free 1-800-222-0364 or 1-888-262-7848 (TTY/TDD). Identify DeCA as your servicing agency. DeCA employees who are overseas should call collect at (314) 387-4701. Online services are also available at www.foh4you.com and include a wide variety of helpful resources ranging from self-assessment, interactive self-improvement programs, child- and eldercare resource search capability, to managing changes to physical health with items on nutrition and a medication interaction database. The EAP is there for you. It is free. It is confidential. Use it!

OUT-PROCESSING

➤ **OUT-PROCESSING REQUIREMENTS**

Employees must out-process when separating from DeCA whether it is due to retirement, resignation, removal, expiration of temporary appointment, reassignment to another region within DeCA, or another Government agency.

It is the employee's responsibility to inform their immediate supervisor and the office administrative POC of the date they are leaving. Give your supervisor as much advance notice as possible (at least 2 weeks notice is preferred).

Employees who resign from their position must sign an SF52 Request for Personnel Action (RPA) or a statement prior to departing the Agency. Depending on the type and duration of your appointment, you may be paid for all unused annual leave accrued through your last full pay period. If you are reinstated, your sick leave will be credited to your leave account. Information about your benefits is listed below:

- **Retirement Funds.** You may apply for a refund of your retirement contributions 31 days after your resignation if you are not eligible for an immediate retirement annuity. If you have at least 5 years service, you may leave the contributions in the plan and receive a deferred annuity at age 62.
- **Thrift Savings Plan.** There are several options available regarding your TSP funds when you resign:
 - ✓ Transferring to an IRA or other eligible retirement fund
 - ✓ Withdrawing entire balance in a single payment
 - ✓ Receiving a series of equal monthly payments
 - ✓ Receiving a life annuity
 - ✓ Leaving money in TSP account

- Health Benefits. Your Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB) coverage terminates after a free 31-day extension of coverage. You may be eligible for Temporary Continuation of Coverage (TCC) for up to 18 months during which you would pay the total premium (both employee and government share). You are also eligible to convert to an individual policy either at the time you resign or at the end of the 18-month TCC.
- Life Insurance – Federal Employees’ Group Life Insurance (FEGLI) coverage terminates at the end of the pay period in which you resign. You then have a free 31-day extension of coverage during which you may convert to an individual policy.
- Annual Leave – You will receive lump-sum payment for any unused annual leave at the end of the pay period in which you resign.

If you are transferring to another Government agency, you do not need to resign. However, you do need to notify your supervisor as soon as you have accepted another job. The date of release from your DeCA job should be arranged by your servicing Human Resources Office. Your annual and sick leave balances will be transferred to your new agency.

Check with your administrative POC on the internal requirements for out-processing, such as returning building entry card, uniforms, travel and/or government credit cards, keys, decal from car.

RESOURCES ON THE WEB

➤ **myPay**

The myPay Web site can be reached at: <http://mypay.dfas.mil> or <https://www.dod.mil/dfas> (click on the myPay icons). When logging into the system the first time, you will use your Social Security number (SSN). The system will then prompt you to create a user login and password. After accessing the system, menus will guide you through desired transactions. Once you have made changes, the system will ask you to confirm the action and reflect when the change will be effective.

➤ **ELECTRONIC OFFICIAL PERSONNEL FOLDER (EOPF)**

Human Resources offices are required to maintain a file of personnel action related documents for every active civilian employee. This file is started when you are first hired by the Federal Government and it follows you through your career until you leave Federal service. Every time you are promoted, reassigned, given an award, etc., a new Notification of Personnel Action (SF50) is created and placed in your personnel folder, along with other supporting documents. These documents are now being created electronically or scanned into an account established in the EOPF, in order for you to access them at your convenience. Access and information to the EOPF Web site will be sent to your home address by your servicing Human Resources Office.

<http://www.hr.dla.mil/resources/employment/current/eopf.html>

➤ **THE WORK NUMBER**

The Work Number, in cooperation with DeCA, provides a secure and convenient way to authorize third-parties such as lenders, social service agencies, and prospective employers to verify your employment and/or income. Benefits of this service are:

- Easier loan approvals
- Improved confidentiality – your servicing Human Resources Office is no longer filling your requests for employment or income verification
- Much faster than filling a request for verification, the Work Number reduces this to minutes
- Improved security – you are in control of authorizing the verification
- Improved accuracy – the Work Number does not change the date provided by DeCA, this eliminates the chance of human error

Employees needing verification of employment must setup an account by calling toll free 1-800-367-2834 or by visiting the Web site at www.theworknumber.com. You must provide your Company Code (10365), SSN, and a PIN. Verifiers call 1-800-367-5690. For customer service, please call 1-800-996-7566.

➤ **MyBiz**

MyBiz allows employees to view their own personnel information which includes appointments, position, personal salary, benefits, awards, bonuses, performance, and Notification of Personnel Action (SF50). In addition, employees may update their telephone number, e-mail address, disability codes, race and national origin (ethnicity and race identification), and foreign language proficiency information on-line.

➤ **ONE NET – RESOURCE CENTER**

All the information and tools you will need as a DeCA employee are at your fingertips. You can find everything from benefits, policies and procedures, employee recognition and awards programs, news and information, education and employment opportunities, and much more by going to:

https://www.commissaries.com/employees/resource_center/index.cfm

➤ **EMPLOYEE BENEFITS INFORMATION SYSTEM (EBIS)**

The **Employee Benefits Information System** is an automated tool providing 24-hour access to information you need about programs such as health benefits, life insurance, retirement, and the Thrift Savings Plan. Get detailed program information and even make changes to your enrollments during open seasons or because of other life events. Your personal information is protected and available only to you.

You may access the web based EBIS by going to:

<http://www.hr.dla.mil/DHRCD/DECA.html>. If you are a first time EBIS user, please select new user.

ACRONYMS

ADR	Alternative Dispute Resolution
AIDS	acquired immune deficiency syndrome
BRAC	base realignment and closure
CAC	common access card
CCP	Commissary Career Program
CECA	Civilian Employees Claims Act
CSRS	Civil Service Retirement System
DeCAD	Defense Commissary Agency Directive
DeCAF	Defense Commissary Agency Form
DAEO	Designated Agency Ethics Official
DFAS	Defense Finance and Accounting System
DoD	Department of Defense
DSR	discontinued service retirement
EAP	Employee Assistance Program
EBIS	Employee Benefits Information System
EEO	equal employment opportunity
EOP	Employee Orientation Program
EOPF	Electronic Official Personnel Folder
ESC	Executive Steering Council
FECA	Federal Employees' Compensation Act
FEDVIP	Federal Employees Dental and Vision Insurance Program
FEGLI	Federal Employees' Group Life Insurance
FEHBP	Federal Employees Health Benefits Program
FERS	Federal Employees Retirement System
FLSA	Fair Labor Standards Act
FLTCIP	Federal Life Term Care Insurance Program
FMLA	Family and Medical Leave Act
FSA	flexible spending account
FSAFEDS	Federal Flexible Spending Account
FTCA	Federal Tort Claims Act
FWS	Federal Wage System
GS	general service

HIV	human immunodeficiency virus
HQ	headquarters
ID	identification
IDEAS	Improve DeCA's Efficiency and Service
IDP	individual development plan
IG	Inspector General
IRA	individual retirement account
JOA	job opportunity announcement
KSA	knowledge, skills, abilities
LES	leave and earning statement
LWOP	leave without pay
MRA	minimum retirement age
MSDS	Material Safety Data Sheets
NTE	not to exceed
OASDI	Old Age, Survivors and Disability Insurance
OPM	Office of Personnel Management
OTP	Occupational Training Plan
OWCP	Office of Workers' Compensation Program
PAACA	Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act
PCS	permanent change of station
PIN	personal identification number
POC	point of contact
POSH	Prevention of Sexual Harassment
QLE	qualifying life event
RPA	request for personnel action
RIF	reduction in force

SCEP	Student Career Experience Program
SF	standard form
SSA	Social Security Administration
SSN	Social Security number
STEP	Student Temporary Employment Program
TCC	temporary continuation of coverage
TIG	time-in-grade
TSP	Thrift Savings Plan
VERA	voluntary early retirement authority
VRA	veterans' recruitment appointment
U.S.	United States
WBT	Web-Based Training
WG	wage grade
WGI	within grade increase