



Fort Eustis CPAC

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2012 BENEFITS OPEN SEASON

The next Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB), Flexible Spending Accounts (FSA) and Federal employees Dental and Vision Insurance Program (FEDVIP) Open Seasons will be held 14 November 2011 to 12 December 2011. During the open season, eligible employees can enroll in FEHB, FSA or FEDVIP and make changes to their health benefits or flexible spending accounts. To enroll/change health benefits, employees must access the Army Benefits Center – Civilian (ABC-C) website at <https://www.abc.army.mil> or call the toll-free number at 1-877-276-9287. Information on FEHB plan rates for 2012 can be found at <http://www.opm.gov/insure/health/index.asp>.



To enroll in the FSA program go to www.fsafeds.com or call their toll-free number at

1-877-372-3337. **Remember, current FSA Program participants must re-enroll to participate.** Employees may enroll in the FEDVIP on the BENEFEDS website (<https://www.benefeds.com>) during open season. Rate and Benefits Summary for the FEDVIP can be found at <http://www.opm.gov/insure/dental/index.asp> and <http://www.opm.gov/insure/vision/index.asp>.

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ELECTRONIC LEAVE AND EARNINGS STATEMENT (eLES)

The Efficiency Task Force selected the eLES as an opportunity for the Defense Finance and Accounting Service (DFAS) to increase savings. The eLES is offered to Department of Defense (DoD) employees through the myPay system. As of June 2011, approximately 539K of the 805K DoD civilian employees (67 percent) had elected the eLES. The current use of the eLES by civilian employees generates a savings of over \$6.3 million yearly for the DFAS. An additional \$3.1 million of savings could be generated if the remaining 266K civilian employees eliminated the hard copy print and mailing of the LES.



The Department turned off hard copy mailings of LES's to all non-bargaining unit civilians and all military members effective September 30, 2011. In the event the electronic standard causes a hardship, individuals retain the ability to turn on hard copy LES delivery by using myPay.



EMPLOYEE BENEFITS INFORMATION SYSTEM (EBIS) CAC ONLY ACCESS INFORMATION AND ASSISTANCE

As of October 3, 2011, the Army Benefits Center - Civilian (ABC-C) Employee Benefits Information System (EBIS) is accessible only by Common Access Card (CAC). This change was mandated in order to comply with Department of Defense (DOD) and Army policy. The safety and security of ABC-C customers is priority one.

EBIS will only be accessible from a computer with an installed and operational CAC reader. Most, if not all, DOD computers are already configured this way.

This will affect users who access EBIS from their home computers. Home users may still access EBIS if they have installed and configured a CAC reader on their home computers.

Additionally, benefit transactions can still be made through the Interactive Voice Response System (IVRS) which is the ABC-C automated self-service program you can access from a touch-tone telephone system. IVRS is available 24 hours a day. The toll-free number is 1 (877) 276-9287.



These links have been provided to provide information and assistance in using your CAC to access EBIS:

[Logging into EBIS using your Common Access Card \(CAC\)](#)

[Send an email to the Army Knowledge Online \(AKO\) helpdesk](#)

[View Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQs\) about AKO passwords and accounts](#)

[Instructions for resetting your AKO password](#)

[Step-by-step instructions for registering your Common Access Card \(CAC\)](#) - If you have followed the instructions in this CAC Registration guide, contacted your local Information Technology (IT) support staff, and are still not able to register your CAC, please call the Southwest Region helpdesk at (785) 239-2000 for assistance.

Information on CAC readers and installation instructions are available on the AKO website, <https://www.us.army.mil>. Once you have logged into the AKO website, select the "CAC Resource Center" tab, to the left of the announcement section. The AKO CAC Reference/Resource Center page includes information on where to obtain a CAC reader, how to install the software, and DOD certificate information.



BELIEVE YOU'VE SEEN EVIDENCE OF WORKERS' COMPENSATION FRAUD?

The U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) is investigating fraud and abuse in the Federal Employees' Compensation Act (FECA) program. Specifically, GAO is looking for information on cases in which federal employees are currently abusing workers' compensation benefits.



For example, fraud schemes might include a beneficiary working a second job, overstating their workers' compensation claim, or collecting benefits for a deceased individual. Anyone with information regarding fraud or abuse of the FECA program by federal employees is encouraged to contact GAO at workerscompfraud@gao.gov. All information about individuals who contact GAO will be kept confidential.

VOTING AND EXCUSED LEAVE

Generally, where the polls are not open at least 3 hours either before or after an employee's regular work hours, an agency may grant a limited amount of excused absence that will permit the employee to report for work 3 hours after the polls open or leave from work 3 hours before the polls close, **whichever requires the lesser amount of time off**. An employee's regular work hours should be determined by reference to the time of the day the employee normally arrives at and departs from work. Employees on **flexible work schedules** can be excused only for those hours that cannot be accommodated by their flexi-time schedule. Normally, where the polls are open either three hours before or three hours after the employee's regularly scheduled duty hours, no time off is granted. This is the case in most jurisdictions.



Virginia polling hours begin at 6:00 a.m. and close at 7:00 p.m. **Examples:** If an employee's working hours are 8:00 a.m. until 4:30 p.m., that employee could be granted 30 minutes of excused absence (from 4:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.), which would allow the 3 hours before the polls close. That would be the lesser amount of time off. If an employee's working hours are 9:00 a.m. until 5:30 p.m., the employee would not be entitled to excused absence because he/she would have 3 full hours when the polls open before reporting to duty. However, the granting of limited amounts of excused absence is always at the discretion of the supervisor.



RESTORATION OF ANNUAL LEAVE

Agencies may restore annual leave that was forfeited because it was in excess of the maximum leave ceilings (i.e., 30, 45, or 90 days) if the leave was forfeited because of an administrative error, exigency of the public business, or sickness of the employee. An agency must restore the annual leave in a separate leave account.

Administrative Error: The employing agency determines what constitutes an administrative error.

Exigency of the Public Business: The employing agency determines that an exigency—i.e., an urgent need for the employee to be at work—is of major importance and that excess annual leave cannot be used. An employee's use of earned compensatory time off or credit hours does not constitute an exigency of the public business. If the use of earned compensatory time off or credit hours that are about to expire results in the forfeiture of excess annual leave, the forfeited leave cannot be restored.

Sickness: The employing agency determines that the annual leave was forfeited because of a period of absence due to an employee's sickness or injury that occurred late in the leave year or was of such duration that the excess annual leave could not be rescheduled for use before the end of the leave year.

An agency may consider for restoration annual leave that was forfeited due to an exigency of the public business or sickness of the employee *only* if the annual leave was scheduled in writing before the start of the *third biweekly pay period prior to the end of the leave year*. The last date to have scheduled leave for the 2011 leave year is *19 November 2011*.

Time Limit for Using Restored Annual Leave

An employee must schedule and use restored annual leave not later than the end of the leave year ending 2 years after--

the date of restoration of the annual leave forfeited because of administrative error;

the date fixed by the head of the agency or designee as the date of termination of the exigency of the public business; **or**

the date the employee is determined to be recovered from illness or injury and able to return to duty.

Restored annual leave that is not used within the established time limits is forfeited with no further right to restoration. Administrative error may not serve as the basis to extend the time limit within which to use re-stored annual leave. This is so even if the agency fails to establish a separate leave account, fix the date for the expiration of the time limit, or properly advise the employee regarding the rules for using restored annual leave, absent agency regulations requiring otherwise.

National Emergency by Reason of Certain Terrorist Attacks

On March 4, 2002, OPM issued final regulations that permit "use or lose" annual leave to be restored to employees whose services are determined to be necessary for the current national emergency. Such employees are entitled to have their excess annual leave restored without the administrative burden of scheduling and canceling such leave. In addition, the time limitations for using restored annual leave are sus-



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suspended for the entire period during which employees' services are determined to be essential for activities associated with the national emergency. At the end of the national emergency, or when the services of the employee no longer are determined to be necessary, a new time limit will be established for using all restored leave available to the employee.

NOTE TO CSRS AND CSRS OFFSET EMPLOYEES WHO PLAN TO RETIRE ON JANUARY 1, 2, OR 3 OF 2012: It is extremely important for Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS) and CSRS Offset employees who plan to retire on January 1, 2, or 3 of 2012, to schedule their "use or lose" annual leave to avoid forfeiture. For example, if an employee's "use or lose" annual leave (any leave above the employee's leave ceiling (e.g., 240, 360 or 720 hours are the common leave ceiling categories) is not used prior to December 31, 2011, the annual leave will be forfeited. If it is forfeited and does not meet the requirements for restoration, it will not be included in the employee's lump sum payment for annual leave.

References:

5 U.S.C. 6304(d) and (e)

5 CFR 630.305-311

EMPLOYEES TRANSFERRING TO OTHER GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

If you accept a position with another government agency to include other Army installations, you should provide the gaining Personnel Office with the name and phone number of the Human Resource Specialist at the Fort Eustis Civilian Personnel Advisory Center (CPAC) who services your organization so they can coordinate a release date. It is to your benefit to do this so as to avoid possible pay issues and transfer of leave balances and other benefits. This allows the Fort Eustis CPAC an opportunity to provide needed documentation to your new employer to ensure a smooth transition.

Prior to your departure, please take a few minutes to complete the Army Exit Survey. The website address is: <http://cpol.army.mil/library/survey/exitsurvey/>. The survey is also located under the "Employee" tab on the CPOL – Civilian Personnel On-Line (<http://acpol.army.mil>).

The main contact phone number for the Ft. Eustis CPAC is (757) 878-2125.





TOP TEN REASONS TO HIRE VETERANS



1. Accelerated Learning Curve

Veterans have the proven ability to learn new skills and concepts. In addition, they can enter your workforce with identifiable and transferable skills, proven in real world situations. This background can enhance your organization's productivity.

2. Leadership

The military trains people to lead by example as well as through direction, delegation, motivation and inspiration. Veterans understand the practical ways to manage behaviors for results, even in the most trying circumstances. They also know the dynamics of leadership as part of both hierarchical and peer structures.

3. Teamwork

Veterans understand how genuine teamwork grows out of a responsibility to one's colleagues. Military duties involve a blend of individual and group productivity. They also necessitate a perception of how groups of all sizes relate to each other and an overarching objective.

4. Diversity and Inclusion in Action

Veterans have learned to work side by side with individuals regardless of diverse race, gender, geographic origin, ethnic background, religion and economic status as well as mental, physical and attitudinal capabilities. They have the sensitivity to cooperate with many different types of individuals.

5. Efficient performance under pressure

Veterans understand the rigors of tight schedules and limited resources. They have developed the capacity to know how to accomplish priorities on time, in spite of tremendous stress. They know the critical importance of staying with a task until it is done right.

6. Respect for procedures

Veterans have gained a unique perspective on the value of accountability. They can grasp their place within an organizational framework, becoming responsible for subordinates' actions to higher supervisory levels. They know how policies and procedures enable an organization to exist.

7. Technology and globalization

Because of their experiences in the service, veterans are usually aware of international and technical trends pertinent to business and industry. They can bring the kind of global outlook and technological savvy that all enterprises of any size need to succeed.

8. Integrity

Veterans know what it means to do "an honest day's work." Prospective employers can take advantage of a track record of integrity, often including security clearances. This integrity translates into qualities of sincerity and trustworthiness.



TOP TEN REASONS TO HIRE VETERANS CON'T

9. Conscious of health and safety standards

Thanks to extensive training, veterans are aware of health and safety protocols both for themselves and the welfare of others. Individually, they represent a drug-free workforce that is cognizant of maintaining personal health and fitness. On a company level, their awareness and conscientiousness translate into protection of employees, property and materials.



10. Triumph over adversity

In addition to dealing positively with the typical issues of personal maturity, veterans have frequently triumphed over great adversity. They likely have proven their mettle in mission critical situations demanding endurance, stamina and flexibility. They may have overcome personal disabilities through strengths and determination.

Source: www.veteranstoday.com

POLITICAL ACTIVITY IN THE FEDERAL WORKPLACE

As government employees, we have to be cautious with our political activity. The law that governs a federal employee's involvement in political activities is the Hatch Act of 1939. Under the 1939 Hatch Act, federal employees faced significant restrictions on their ability to participate in political activities. In 1993, Congress amended the Hatch act to permit more political activity by federal employees. The penalties for violating the Hatch Act are very severe, up to and including removal from government service. Therefore, it is very important that employees understand these restrictions. Below is a list of permitted/prohibited activities:

Federal Employees May:

- Be candidates for public offices in nonpartisan elections
- Register and vote as they choose
- Assist in voter registration drives
- Express opinions about candidates and issues
- Contribute money to political organizations
- Attend political fundraising 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





POLITICAL ACTIVITY IN THE FEDERAL WORKPLACE CON'T

- Make campaign speeches for candidates in partisan elections
- Distribute campaign literature in partisan elections
- Hold office in political clubs or parties
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Federal Employees May Not:

- Use official authority or influence to interfere with an election
- Solicit or discourage political activity of anyone with business before their agency
- Solicit or receive political contributions (may be done in certain limited situations by Federal or other employee organizations)
- Be candidates for public office in partisan elections
- Engage in political activity while on duty, in a government office, wearing an official uniform or using a government vehicle
- Wear partisan political buttons on duty

More detailed information about the Hatch Act and federal employee political activities can be found at this website: http://www.osc.gov/documents/hatchact/post_ha1.pdf.

CONDUCTING AN EFFECTIVE JOB INTERVIEW

When it comes to filling a vacant position, there are a variety of selection techniques available to managers. Typically, these include resume reviews and reference checks. For some jobs, physical examinations might not be required. Nevertheless, the face-to-face interview remains the most widely accepted means of evaluating job candidates.

Summary of Steps:

- Plan the Interview
- Develop/Select Interview Questions
- Conduct the Interview
- Avoid Prohibited Questions or Practices



1. Plan the Interview

The planning process should include the following:

- **Review and analyze the position.** Review the position description and qualification requirements of the position for which you are conducting interviews.



CONDUCTING AN EFFECTIVE JOB INTERVIEW CON'T

- **Review the application package.** The next step is to review the candidate's application. Prior to your receiving the applications, Human Resources has already determined that the candidate meets the *minimum* qualification requirements. It now becomes your job to determine which applicants have the *maximum* potential to meet your needs.
- **Select and arrange for interview space.** This part of the planning process may seem insignificant, and it is often overlooked. However, securing an appropriate space for the interview minimizes distractions for you and the candidate.

Schedule/confirm interview with candidate. You may schedule interviews with candidates on the telephone. However, it is often a good idea to confirm the scheduled time, date, and location of the interview in writing.

2. Develop/Select Interview Questions

Each question you ask during the course of the interview *must* be job-related. You are trying to elicit information from the candidate that reveals whether or not he/she is able to do the job, is willing to do the job, and if he/she will make a good match for your organization.

The following are samples questions:

- **Attention to detail.** Describe a project or task that required you to pay particular attention to small points and issues in order to complete the task correctly. How were you made aware of these details? How did you handle them?
- **Clerical skills.** Describe the type of routine office procedures that you have had to follow. What volume of paperwork have you been responsible for? What experience have you had in handling confidential records? How do you ensure the confidentiality/security of information/records maintained in the office?
- **Customer service.** In this job you will be interacting with individuals both within and outside of the agency. Occasionally, you will interact with individuals who are dissatisfied with the service they received. Describe a difficult customer situation you have encountered and how you solved it.
- **Interpersonal skills.** How would you describe your relationship with your most recent supervisor and co-workers? If I were to contact them today, what would they say about you?

Teamwork. Provide me with an example of when you worked very effectively as a member of a team. What was the task? How many people were involved? What was your role?

3. Conduct the Interview

The following steps will ensure an effective job interview:

- **Welcome the job candidate.** You should immediately meet and greet the candidate, thank him/her for coming, and chat informally for a few minutes (try to keep your topics limited to commuting, weather, or traffic).
- **Conduct a formal interview.** As you begin the formal interview, provide the candidate with a brief overview of the job and the mission of the agency. Next, you can begin asking the candidate the questions you have prepared and brought with you to the interview.



CONDUCTING AN EFFECTIVE JOB INTERVIEW CON'T

- **Give the candidate an opportunity to ask questions.** After you have finished asking the candidate questions, allow the candidate time to ask questions of you.

Closing. Inform the candidate of your anticipated time frame for decision-making. Be realistic. If you expect to make a final decision on the job in the next two weeks, say so.

4. Avoid Prohibited Questions or Practices

Remember, always ask questions that are related to the job and avoid asking questions that are a clear or potential violation of the rights of a protected group. For example – “How old are you?”

These are just a few hints that may make the interview process easier. For more information on this process, you may contact the CPAC office.



ELEVEN PRINCIPLES OF LEADERSHIP

1. Be tactically and technically proficient
2. Know yourself and seek self-improvement
3. Make sound and timely decisions
4. Know your employees and look out for their welfare
5. Keep your employees informed
6. Develop a sense of responsibility in yourself and your subordinates

FEEDBACK



This bulletin is designed to inform employees and supervisors of new civilian human resources issues and refresh their knowledge of existing policies and procedures. We welcome your feedback; contact your servicing Human Resources Specialist. The bulletin is available on our web page, <http://www.eustis.army.mil/cpac> Request you print and post on Bulletin Boards throughout your organization for those employees who do not have access to our web page. The CPAC uses the Interactive Customer Evaluation (ICE) and we would appreciate you taking the time to rate us and provide feedback on the service you receive from our office. Just click on the following website: http://ice.disa.mil/index.cfm?fa=site&site_id=439