JOINT FORCES HEADQUARTERS KANSAS

NATIONAL GUARD FEDERAL HUMAN RESOURCE OFFICE BULLETIN

2722 SW Topeka Blvd. Room 136 (North Side), Topeka, KS 66611

HAPPY HOLIDAYS EDITION 2010

November-December

Restoration of Forfeited Technician Annual Leave

Submitted by Bobbi Harvey
Human Resource Specialist/Employee Services

Technician annual leave may be restored to a technician after it has been forfeited at the end of a leave year in the following circumstances:

Administrative Error: The employing agency determines what constitutes an administrative error. Exigency of the Public Business, the employing determines that an exigency is of major importance and that excess annual leave cannot be used.

A request for restoration that was forfeited due to an agency of the public business or sickness of the employee may be considered only if the annual leave was scheduled in writing before the start of the third biweekly pay period to the end of the leave year. For this year that date would be November 21, 2010.

The time limit for using restored annual leave is no later than the end of the leave year ending two years after…

☐ The date of restorations of the annual leave forfeited because of an administrative error.

☐ The date fixed by the head of the agency or designated as the date of termination of the exigency of the public business.

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

The National Emergency by Reason of Certain Terrorist Attacks (Presidential Proclamation of 14 September, 2001) is deemed to be an exigency of the public business. For any technician who forfeits annual leave at the beginning of a leave year because the agency determined the employee's services were required in response to a national emergency, the forfeited annual leave is deemed to have been scheduled in advance. Requests for restoration of forfeited annual leave (IAW) should be quoted in the request submitted to HRO.

To avoid the loss of unused annual leave, all use or lose annual leave should be used by the end of the last pay period of 2010 which is 1 January 2011.

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Kansas National Guard Inclement Weather Policy Reminder/Clarification

Submitted by Bobbi Harvey
Human Resource Specialist/Employee Services

This is just a reminder/clarification of the Kansas National Guard Inclement Weather Policy for non-essential National Guard employees (AGR, Technician and NDS employees) as stated in TPP 610, Section 2-19, Para f and g. Please ensure your employees are aware of the policy as well as your expectations. This is a safety issue and supervisors should weigh the use of their flexibilities with our military requirements. The supervisor's use of administrative leave is limited to 1 hour and is discretionary, not an employee's entitlement.

Employees working in the Topeka area will use guidance for State Agencies/Offices, there will not be a specific announcement regarding the SDB or Forbes. Procedures for personnel assigned outside the Topeka area have not changed.

1. The National Guard is responsible for numerous emergency services and responses. Employees must remember that administrative leave is a benefit and not an entitlement. Everyone is subject to re-call if the need should arise.

2. Time & Leave:

A. Employees will receive administrative leave if an inclement weather determination is made.

B. Those employees who work during a Declaration of Inclement Weather will receive compensation at the same rate of pay the employees would have received had there not been a Declaration of Inclement Weather.

C. Employees who received prior approval for authorized leave (Military Leave, Annual Leave, Sick Leave, Comp Time, etc.) during the period covered by the Declaration of Inclement Weather will not be affected by the provision of this policy.

D. If any employee determines they cannot report to work due to weather conditions and a Declaration of Inclement Weather has not been issued, they should follow normal reporting for their unexpected absence.

E. Employees not reporting to work, reporting late to work, or leaving early due to weather conditions and a Declaration of Inclement Weather has not been declared will use annual leave, accrued compensatory time or leave without pay.

3. Questions dealing with this policy should be directed to Ms. Bobbi Harvey, 274-1172.

Tis the Season to Know Gift Policies

Submitted by Bobbi Harvey
Human Resource Specialist/Employee Benefits

With the holidays approaching, federal employees would do well to remember the general ethical prohibitions on giving or receiving gifts in the work environment (found in the Code of Federal Regulations at 5 C.F.R. Section 2635). In general, an employee may not give, or solicit contribution for a gift to an official supervisor, and may not accept a gift from an employee receiving less pay if the employee is a subordinate. But on the occasions where gifts are traditionally given such as a holiday, employees may give the following to an official supervisor; items other than cash, valued at $10 or less; items such as food and refreshments to be shared in the office, and personal hospitality provided at a residence which is of a type and value customarily provided by the employee to personal friends.

DEPARTMENTS OF THE ARMY AND THE AIR FORCE
JOINT FORCES HEADQUARTERS KANSAS
FEDERAL HUMAN RESOURCE OFFICE
2722 SW TOPEKA BLVD. ROOM 136
TOPEKA, KS 66611-1287

20 October 2010

NGKS-HRZ

MEMORANDUM FOR ALL FEDERAL EMPLOYEES

SUBJECT: Seasonal Influenza Information and Guidance

This document contains information concerning flu in general, how the flu is transmitted, how to reduce that transmission and leave guidance.

Flu Symptoms

- Influenza is a respiratory illness. Symptoms of flu include sudden onset of body aches, vomiting, diarrhea and being sick to your stomach can sometimes be related to the flu (such as cough, sore throat and runny nose).

- Many people use the term "stomach flu" to describe illnesses with nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea. These symptoms can be caused by many different viruses, bacteria or even parasites. While vomiting, diarrhea and being sick to your stomach can sometimes be related to the flu (particularly in children), theses problems are rarely the primary symptoms of influenza.

- Some persons can be infected with the flu virus but have no symptoms. During this time, these people can still spread the virus to others.

- Most people who get influenza will recover in one to two weeks; however, some people will develop life threatening complications (such as pneumonia) as a result of the flu.

- Some of the complications caused by flu include bacterial pneumonia, dehydration and worsening of chronic medical conditions, such as congestive heart failure, asthma or diabetes. Children may get sinus problems and ear infections as complications from the flu.

What to do if you have symptoms

- Sick employees should stay home. People with symptoms of flu-like illness should stay home until at least 24 hours after they are free of fever.

- Procedures for Technician Employees:

    - Employees who appear to have flu-like symptoms upon arrival, or who become sick during the work day, should be promptly separated from others and sent home. Technicians refusing to take leave will be placed on enforced leave. Administrative leave is not authorized.

    - Medical documentation for Technicians: Administrative leave procedures will be relaxed to provide approval and return to work without a health care certification from a medical

practitioner. Employees may self-certify their illness if they did not seek medical attention.

- Care for Family Members: Technicians may use sick leave to take care of sick family members (i.e. up to 13 days per leave year for routine family care illness and up to 12 weeks for a serious health condition).

- Types of leave available: Sick leave for the employees and care of family as discussed above, Advanced Sick Leave (refer to TPP 610, requires HRO approval), Annual Leave for care of children if school or daycare closes, Advanced Annual Leave (refer to TPP 610, Supervisor Approves), compensatory time off may be substituted for Annual Leave.

- Procedures for AGR's:

  - Employees who appear to have flu-like symptoms upon arrival, or who become sick during the workday, should be promptly separated from others and sent home. AGR's can be ordered to go home.

  - Reference AR 600-9-10 or AFI 36-3003 for appropriate procedures for personnel accountability and leave procedures.

Steps to reduce the spread of Influenza

- Encourage frequent hand washing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds (sing the alphabet song) or use an alcohol based hand cleanser, especially after coughing or sneezing.

- Cover your coughs and sneezes. Coughs and sneezes should be into a tissue or into the elbow area.

- Implement enhanced environmental cleaning measures to include: thorough cleaning of surfaces frequently touched with hands at least once each day. Each facility manager should establish an enhanced cleaning process to decontaminate sinks, handles on doors, drawers, key boards, railings, and countertops. Procedures will be implemented to task employees with keeping their work area clean and disinfecting phones.

Social Distancing

- Consider teleconferencing in lieu of face-to-face meetings, especially if travel outside of the duty facility is required.

- Encourage procedures for customer service and inter-office work arrangements to maintain a working location separation of 6 foot minimum from co-workers when possible.

Other Concerns

- Prepare for increased numbers of employee absences due to illness in employees and their family members and plan ways for essential business functions to continue. Cross-train staff to perform essential functions so that business operations can continue.

- Minimize travel to high traffic areas. Advise workers to check for signs of flu-like illnesses before traveling, to notify their supervisor, and stay home if they are sick. Tell employees who are traveling how to seek health care if they become sick enough on the road to require care. If employees become sick during travel, they should notify their supervisor and stay in their

hotel room until their fever has resolved for at least 24 hours, unless they are seeking medical care.

- Prepare for the possibility of school dismissal or temporary closure of child care programs. Allow workers to use annual leave to stay at home to take care of their children if schools are dismissed or child care programs are closed. Encourage your employees with children to plan for child care alternatives if possible.

- Supervisors who experience adversely mission accomplishment secondary to absenteeism should follow their chain of command through their MSC AO/COS; or Group/Wing Commander and contact HRO (SMSgt Keith Guffy at (785) 274-1162) with all relevant information. HRO will assist supervisors and mitigate shortfalls as resources are available.

Supervisors should begin implementing this guidance immediately. By preparing now we can ensure a healthy workforce during the flu season.

FOR THE ADJUTANT GENERAL:

//signed//

KATHRYN L. HULSE, Col, KSANG
Human Resources Officer

Technician Retirements

Submitted by
MSgt Robin Lewis
HRO Specialist

The following Technicians have recently retired. We appreciate their many years of service and wish them the best in their retirement:

ARMY

Roy Musick, 27 July 2010
Mark Jensen, 30 July 2010
Larry Hannan, 3 August 2010
Clint Goheen, 3 August 2010
Danny Lundberg, 27 August 2010
Harry Salyer, 31 August 2010
Max Wharton, 31 August 2010
Larry Thomas, 31 August 2010

AIR

Newell Applegate, 1 August 2010
Donald Gerstenkorn, 13 August 2010
Timothy Johnson, 9 September 2010
Gary Cox, 30 September 2010
Russell Brotsky, 30 September 2010

Federal Benefits Fast Facts
The 2011 Federal Benefits Open Season is Coming!

Submitted by Bobbi Harvey
HRO Specialist/Employee Services

What is Open Season? This is the time for you to think about your health, dental, vision, and tax-saving needs and to make changes to or enroll in one of the Programs. The Programs that participate in the annual Open Season are the:

- Federal Employee Health Benefits Program (FEHBP)
- Federal Employees Dental and Vision Insurance Program (FEDVIP), and
- Federal Flexible Spending Account Program (FSAFEDS)

Why should you care? This is the time to make elections you usually can't make any other time of the year. All health or dental or vision plans are not alike. Open Season is about exercising your right of choice. Failure to consider your health plan choices could leave you without the healthcare services or supplies you need or with a premium you can't afford; dental and/or vision coverage can fill in the gaps of any coverage you now have or pay for services you now don't get; and a flexible spending account lets you save money and pay less tax.

Can you sit out this Open Season and do nothing?

- If you are already enrolled in FEHBP and FEDVIP, those enrollments **will** continue automatically (although benefits and premiums may change. Also, be sure to check that your plan is still participating). If you do nothing this Open Season and are later unhappy with your 2011 benefits or premiums, you cannot cancel or change your enrollment until the next Open Season.
- If you already have an **FSAFEDS** account, it **will not** continue automatically; you **must** re-enroll.

How will health care reform (the Affordable Care Act-ACA) affect me for 2011? The ACA:

- Changes the eligibility rules for coverage of children under the FEHB Program;
- Changes coverage of over-the-counter medicines or drugs under FSAFEDS; and
- Extends coverage of children's health care expenses under FSAFEDS.
- Increases the penalty for Health Savings Account (HSA) withdrawals prior to age 65 that are not used for qualified medical expenses.

  (The ACA does not impact FEDVIP.)

For more information on ACA changes, go to www.opm.gov/insure and follow the link for health care reform.

What are some things you should think about this Open Season?

- You must be covered by the Program for the five years of service before retiring to continue FEHBP coverage into retirement;
- There are no waiting periods and no pre-existing condition limitations under FEHBP, even if you change plans;

- There are many choices under **FEHBP** and **FEDVIP** to meet your needs;
- You may enroll in **FEDVIP** and/or **FSAFEDS** even if you are already enrolled in **FEHBP**.

FEDVIP

- Your coverage will continue into retirement automatically, without a five year enrollment requirement, if you retire on an immediate annuity;
- Participating dental and vision providers may be different from your health plan's providers;
- You can cancel your coverage only during open season, or deployment to active military duty;
- **FEDVIP** always pays benefits secondarily to your FEHBP insurance;
- You can submit copays and deductibles to your **FSA** account.

FSAFEDS

- There are three accounts from which to choose-a dependent care account, a health care account, and a limited expense health care account;
- Participating lowers your taxable income;
- You can pay for your FEHB and FEDVIP copays and deductibles.
- Not open to retirees.

How much do these Programs cost?

You can find the 2011 health insurance rates at:
www.opm.gov/insure/health/rates

You can find the 2011 dental rates at:
www.opm.gov/insure/dental/rates

You can find the 2011 vision rates at:
www.opm.gov/insure/vision/rates

For FSAFEDS go to:
www.FSAFEDS.com to see how much you may contribute.

Where can you go for more detail on the choices available to you?

- For **FEHBP** information go to www.opm.gov/insure/health, the 2011 Guide to Federal Benefits, or the 2011 plan brochures.
- For **FEDVIP** go to www.opm.gov/insure/dental/index.asp or www.opm.gov/insure/vision/index.asp, the 2011 Guide to Federal Benefits, or the 2011 Plan Brochures.
- For **FSAFEDS** go to www.FSAGEDS.com, call 1-877-372-3337, the 2011 Guide to Federal Benefits or the FSAFEDS Program Brochure.

How do you make an Open Season election? FEHB: Employees-use the Health Benefits Election form (SF 2809) or use an online self-service system; the Human Resources Office of your agency can help you. Retirees-go to https://retireefehb.opm.gov or call 1-877-888-3337, TTY 1-877-889-5680.

Dental or vision under **FEDVIP:** everyone-go to www.BENEFEDS.com or call 1-877-888-3337, TTY 1-877-889-5680.

Flexible spending accounts under **FSAFEDS** (employees only), go to www.FSAFEDS.com or call 1-877-372-3337, TTY 1-800-952-0450.

Where can I find additional information?

- Visit www.opm.gov/insure;
- Find us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/fedbenefits;
- Follow us on Twitter at http://twitter.com/FedEmployeeBen; or
  See your Human Resources Office.

Federal Benefits

FastFacts

What to Consider During the Federal Benefits Open Season (November 8-December 13, 2010)

Submitted by Ms. Bobbi Harvey
HRO Specialist/Employee Services

Open Season is the time of year when you have the opportunity to make decisions about your benefits under the Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB) Program, the Federal Employees Dental and Vision Insurance Program (FEDVIP) and the Federal Flexible Spending Account Program (FSAFEDS).

If you take no action, your current enrollment in FEHB and FEDVIP will continue automatically for 2011. You will be subject to any changes in premiums, benefits, and service areas. If you already have an FSAFEDS account **it will not** continue automatically; you must reenroll.

We strongly recommend you evaluate your current enrollment status in the Programs. We have listed three basic questions to ask yourself. All are equally important and should be considered carefully.

1. What are my and/or my family's expected health care needs for 2011?

- **Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB) Program**
  Are we expecting a new baby? Do I need surgery? Will my medication needs change?

- **Federal Employees Dental and Vision Insurance Program (FEDVIP)**

  Do I only need routine dental care? Will I need a crown or a root canal? Does my child need braces?

  Do I need glasses and/or contact lenses? Am I considering Lasik surgery?

- **Federal Flexible Spending Account Program (FSAFEDS)**
  What are my out-of-pocket expenses going to be (e.g., deductibles, copays, coinsurances, daycare and elder care expenses, over-the-counter drugs and medicines {prescription required beginning January 1, 2011, except for insulin} and other over-the-counter products, etc.)? Does my child need braces or use acne treatments? Will I send my children (under age 13) to a non-overnight summer camp next year?

2. What benefits are available in 2011?

Now that you have an idea of what services you may need, the next step is to determine what bene fits the plans provide in 2011. **If you are already enrolled, please review Section 2 "How we change for 2011" of your 2011 FEHB plan brochure and the "How We Have Changed for 2011" section of your 2011 FEDVIP brochure for any benefit changes.**

FEHB/FEDVIP

- Are there plan limitations such as number of visits or dollar maximums which will result in out-of-pocket expenses?
- Are any services I may need (such as chiropractic care or Lasik surgery) not covered?
- What is my share of the cost of prescription drugs? (FEHB only)
- What deductibles, copays and coinsurances must I pay?
- Do I have enough coverage for extensive dental work?
- Do I have enough coverage for glasses, exams, contact lenses, or other vision services?

FSAFEDS

- Should I enroll in a dependent care account and/or a health care account? How much should I contribute to my FSAFEDS account (s)?

3. How much will it cost?

Now that you have an idea of what services you may need and what types of benefits your FEHB and/or FEDVIP plans and FSAFEDS provide, the third consideration is cost.

Look at the 2011 premiums for the FEHB and/or FEDVIP plan you are already enrolled in or considering enrolling in – in the 2011 FEHB and FEDVIP brochures, the 2011 Guide to Federal Benefits, and on our website at www.opm.gov/insure.

Enrolling in FSAFEDS is free to you. You just have to decide how much to contribute from your salary, which you'll get back when you incur eligible expenses.

4. What do I do now?

Now that you have considered these three questions, you are on your way to making more informed decisions about your benefit choices for 2011. If you are satisfied with your FEHB plan and/or FEDVIP plan, you do not have to do anything. Your FEHB and/or FEDVIP enrollment(s) will continue for 2011. If you want to participate in FSAFEDS for 2011, you **must** make a new election.

If you are not satisfied with your current enrollment status, look at the resources OPM provides to assist you in making decisions, located at www.opm.gov/insure and in your Human Resources Office.

- The 2011 Guide to Federal Benefits
- FEHB and FEDVIP Plan Brochures
- FSAGEDS brochure-www.FSAFEDS.com
- OPM's plan comparison tool
- Other plan comparison tools such as PlanSmartChoice or Checkbook

Do not rely solely on this fact sheet.
Always refer to the individual plan brochures before making your final decision

DEPARTMENTS OF THE ARMY AND THE AIR FORCE
JOINT FORCES HEADQUARTERS KANSAS
2800 SOUTHWEST TOPEKA BOULEVARD
TOPEKA, KS 66611-1287

22 October 2010

MEMORANDUM FOR All Army and Air National Guard Technicians

FROM: NGKS-HRZ

SUBJECT: Federal Employee Benefits Open Season Enrollment for the Federal Employees Benefits Programs (FEHB) & the Federal Dental and Vision Program (FEDVIP) & the Flexible Spending Account (FSA)

1. An open season during which eligible Federal employees may enroll or change enrollment to a new Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB) Plan, enroll in the Federal Employees Dental and Vision Insurance Program (FEDVIP) or the Flexible Spending Account (FSA) will be held from 8 November through 13 December 2010. Under open season regulations, any eligible employee may change from one plan or option to or from self only to self and family, or any combination of these. Those employees who do not wish to make a change in their current enrollment need take no action during this open season. **Please review your current plan for any changes.**

2. There are four basic types of plans available under the FEHB Program:

a. Fee-for-service Plans (FFS) - These plans reimburse you or your health care provider for covered services. If you enroll in one of these plans, you may choose your own physician, hospital, and other health care provider arrangements in many parts of the country. By using preferred providers, you can reduce your out-of-pocket expenses and, in some cases, receive enhanced benefits. Fee-for-service plans include the Service Benefit plan sponsored by Blue Cross and Blue Shield and plans sponsored by unions and other employee organizations. Several employee organization plans are open to all eligible employees who are full or associate members of the organizations that sponsor the plans; other employee organization plans are restricted to employee organization groups and/or agencies. (See the employee organization plan brochures for information about membership and membership fees, which are in addition to your bi-weekly premiums.)

b. Health Maintenance Organizations (HMOs) - A prepaid health plan that provides an array of medical services, emphasizing prevention and early detection, through contracted physicians, hospitals, and other providers. Care received from a non-plan provider, other than emergency care, is not covered.

c. Point of Service (POS) - A managed care product that provides members with the option of using a selected network of providers. By using in-network providers, your out of pocket expenses are minimal, or the same as an HMO. If you use out-of-network providers, you are subject to substantial out-of-pocket costs in the form of deductibles, coinsurance, and co-payments.

d. High Deductible Health Plans (HDHP) – A health care option that gives you additional opportunities to save and better manage your hard-earned dollars. High Deductible Health Plans (HDHP) was introduced by the FEHB Program in 2006. These plans together with a Health Savings Account (HSA) or a Health Reimbursement Arrangement (HRA) provide a tax advantage savings vehicle for the purpose of paying for your medical expenses. To learn more about HDHP go to www.opm.gov/hsa. Additional information will be in the 2011 FEHB Brochure.

3. The OPM web site contains RI 70-1, 2011 Enrollment Information Guide and Plan Comparison Chart, and the individual plan brochures in order that all employees may have the opportunity to compare the various plans. The address is http://www.opm.gov/insure/health. If you do not have access to the Internet, a limited amount of brochures will be made available to your base/headquarters/activity—the designated location to be centrally located in order that all employees may have the opportunity to compare the various plans. The RI-70-1 provides you with summaries and general descriptions of the benefits and the 2011 Bi-weekly rates for each plan available.

It can also be used to compare benefits among plans. However, since they contain only a general description of plan benefits, do not rely solely on benefit summaries when deciding to enroll in or change enrolment to another plan.

It is important to remember that only you can decide which plan is best for you and your family. After examining the benefits summary, if you decide that you are interested in enrolling in or changing to a particular plan, you may want to review the brochure of that plan for a complete description of the benefits.

4. Should you desire to enroll or change enrollment, you can access the EBIS (Employee Benefits Information System) at https://www.abc.army.mil or by using the IVRS (Interactive Voice Response System) by calling the toll-free number 1-877-276-9287. New enrollments and changes during open season will become effective 2 January 2011, as well as the cost change on all plans.

5. If you change plans, you will receive a 2011 brochure for the plan in which enrolled from the insurance carrier after open season. The brochure in addition to providing complete information on plan benefits provides information on how plan benefits or services can be obtained. Be advised that some employees, when changing plans, have experienced a delay in receiving membership cards and had some problems with bills being paid until they are entered in the new plan's system. This could take up to 60 days. Your copy of the SF-2809 should prove insurance coverage until then.

6. Temporary Continuation of Coverage (TCC): You should be aware that if you leave Federal employment, you will probably be eligible for TCC (unless you are separated for gross misconduct). TCC can continue your enrollment for up to 18 months. TCC is also available for up to 36 months for dependents who lose eligibility as family members under your enrollment. This includes spouses who lose coverage because of divorce and children who lose coverage because they marry or reach age 26. TCC enrollees must pay the total plan premium (without a Government contribution) plus a 2% charge for administrative expenses. There are specific time frames in which you or your dependent must enroll for TCC. Contact HRO for a copy of RI 79-27 to obtain additional information.

7. Also note that a technician must have been enrolled in the Federal Health Benefits Program for at least five years immediately before retirement or since the first opportunity to enroll in order to carry health benefits into retirement. Also note that information you provide by enrolling in the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program may also be used for computer matching with Federal, State or local agencies files to determine whether you qualify for benefits, payments, or eligibility in the Federal Employee Health Benefits Program, Medicare, or other government benefits programs.

8. If you participate in **Premium Conversion,** FEHB Open Season is the only time you may change from family to self or cancel your enrollment without experiencing a Qualifying Life Event (QLE). You may **waive** your participation in Premium Conversion during FEHB Open Season only. Contact this office if you are interested.

9. The Federal Employees Dental and Vision Program (FEDVIP) is available to eligible federal employees during this year's FEDVIP Open Season. FEDVIP will offer enrollees group dental and vision insurance at competitive rates without pre-existing conditions. Employees can enroll in self only, self plus one or self and family coverage. For information about the program including plan rating areas and premiums, a plan comparison tool, and links to plans' websites, plan brochures and to enroll on BENEFEDS.com go to www.opm.gov./insure/dental/index.asp or www.opm.gov/insure.vision/index.asp. Employees will be able to enroll on www.BENEFEDS.com only starting 8 November 2010 by 5:00 a.m. Eastern Time. The site will turn off at midnight Eastern Time on 13 December 2010. For additional information you may contact a Customer Service Representative at 877-888-3337.

10. FSAFEDS is the Federal Flexible Spending Account program available to Federal employees. FSA allows you to set aside pre-tax money for eligible health care and dependent care expenses. FSAFEDS offers three types of FSAs: A general purpose Health Care FSA, a Limited Expense Health Care FSA and a Dependent Care FSA. A general purpose Health Care FSA (HCFSA) is used to pay for eligible health care expenses not covered by your FEHB, FEDVIP or any other insurance. Expenses such as co-payments, co-insurance, deductibles, over-the-counter medicines, medical supplies, prescription drugs, vision care, dental care, shipping and handling charges for mail-order prescriptions and eligible over-the-counter items are covered. **Beginning January 1, 2011, currently eligible over-the-counter (OTC) products that are medicines or drugs (e.g., acne treatments, allergy and cold medicines, antacids, etc.) will not be eligible for reimbursement from your Health Care FSA – unless, you have a prescription for that item written by your physician. The only exception is insulin – which will not require a prescription from January 1, 2011 forward. Other currently eligible OTC items that are not medicines or drugs, such as bandages and nasal strips, will not require a prescription.** Go to https://www.fsafeds.com/fsafeds/eligibleexpenses.asp to view an extensive list of eligible health care services and products. A Limited Expense Health Care FSA (LEX HCFSA) is designed for individuals who are enrolled in or covered under a High Deductible Health Plan (HDHP) with a Health Savings Account (HSA). Under IRS rules, you cannot enroll in a general purpose HCFSA and HSA at the same time. You can enroll in a LEX HCFSA and an HSA at the same time. A LEX HCFSA limits coverage to eligible dental and vision expenses not covered by other insurance. A Dependent Care FSA (DCFSA) is used to pay for childcare and/or adult dependent care expenses that are necessary to allow you and your spouse (if married) to work, look for work or attend school full-time. You must enroll every year. **ATTENTION CURRENT 2010 PARTICIPANTS: If you want to participate in 2011 you must RE-ENROLL. Enrollments DO NOT carry forward year-to-year.** Visit www.FSAFEDS.com for additional information or call 1-877-888-3337.

11. If you have any questions about anything covered in this letter or the FEHB, FEDVIP or FSA in general, you may contact Bobbi Harvey at (785) 274-1172, DSN 720-8172, MSgt Robin Lewis at (785) 274-1206, DSN 720-8206 or MSgt Kathy Thornton at (785) 274-1187, DSN 720-8187.

FOR THE ADJUTANT GENERAL:

//signed//

KATHRYN L. HULSE, Col, KSANG
Human Resources Officer

Non-Postal Premium Rates for the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program

Fee-for-Service Plans (FFS)			2010 Total Biweekly Premium	2011 Biweekly premium rates				2010 Total Monthly Premium	2011 Monthly premium rates			
Plan - Option - Enrollment Code				Total Premium	Gov't Pays	Empl. Pays	Change in empl. payment		Total Premium	Gov't Pays	Empl. Pays	Change in empl. payment
APWU Health Plan												
	High Self	471	205.78	220.19	165.14	55.05	3.61	445.86	477.08	357.81	119.27	7.81
	High Family	472	465.30	497.87	373.40	124.47	8.15	1008.15	1078.72	809.04	269.68	17.64
	CDHP Self	474	155.40	155.40	116.55	38.85	.00	336.70	336.70	252.53	84.17	.00
	CDHP Family	475	349.60	349.60	262.20	87.40	.00	757.47	757.47	568.10	189.37	.00
Compass Rose Health Plan*												
	High Self	421	225.04	235.61	176.71	58.90	1.47	487.59	510.49	382.87	127.62	3.19
	High Family	422	518.39	546.89	403.98	142.91	.56	1123.18	1184.93	875.29	309.64	1.21
Blue Cross and Blue Shield Service Benefit Plan												
	Standard Self	104	248.42	267.05	180.66	86.39	5.58	538.24	578.61	391.43	187.18	12.10
	Standard Family	105	561.10	603.18	403.98	199.20	14.14	1215.72	1306.89	875.29	431.60	30.63
Blue Cross and Blue Shield Service Benefit Plan												
	Basic self	111	186.02	209.30	156.98	52.32	5.82	403.04	453.48	340.11	113.37	12.61
	Basic Family	112	435.66	490.14	367.61	122.53	13.62	943.93	1061.97	796.48	265.49	29.51
Foreign Service Benefit Plan												
	High Self	401	211.03	227.98	170.99	56.99	4.23	457.23	493.96	370.47	123.49	9.18
	High Family	402	512.01	545.29	403.98	141.31	5.34	1109.36	1181.46	875.29	306.17	11.56
GEHA Benefit Plan												
	High Self	311	247.15	261.98	180.66	81.32	1.78	535.49	567.62	391.43	176.19	3.86
	High Family	312	562.10	595.83	403.98	191.85	5.79	1217.88	1290.97	875.29	415.68	12.55
	Standard Self	314	148.10	159.98	119.99	39.99	2.97	320.88	346.62	259.97	86.65	6.43
	Standard Family	315	336.54	363.82	272.87	90.95	6.82	729.17	788.28	591.21	197.07	14.78
GEHA High Deductible Health Plan												
	HDHP self	341	175.76	175.76	131.82	43.94	.00	380.81	380.81	285.61	95.20	.00
	HDHP Family	342	401.44	401.44	301.08	100.36	.00	869.79	869.79	652.34	217.45	.00
Mail Handlers Benefit Plan												
	Standard Self	454	244.23	282.09	180.66	101.43	24.81	529.17	611.20	391.43	219.77	53.76
	Standard Family	455	558.94	645.58	403.98	241.60	58.70	1211.04	1398.76	875.29	523.47	127.18

*formerly The Association Health Benefit Plan

Changes to Flexible Spending Accounts

Submitted by Ms. Bobbi Harvey, HRO Specialist/Employee Services

Health Care Flexible Spending Accounts (HCFSA and LEX HCFSA) Will Change as a Result of the Healthcare Reform Legislation.

Beginning January 1, 2011, currently eligible over-the-counter (OTC) products that are medicines or drugs (e.g., acne treatments, allergy and cold medicines, antacids, etc.) will not be eligible for reimbursement from your Health Care FSA – unless, you have a prescription for that item written by your physician.

The only exception is insulin – which will not require a prescription from January 1, 2011 forward. Other currently eligible OTC items that are not medicines or drugs, such as bandages and nasal strips, will not require a prescription.

Dependent Care Flexible Spending Accounts (DCFSA) are not impacted by the Healthcare Reform Legislation.

Financial Tips
(The New World of Credit Cards)

Submitted by Ms. Bobbi Harvey
HRO Specialist/Employee Services

How can you avoid potential pitfalls in the new world of credit cards? Learn about the new realities and new directions for credit card holders in these FDIC tips.
http://www.fdic.gov/consumers/consumer/news/cnspr10/new_realities.html#youngadult

Technician Passings

Submitted by MSgt Robin Lewis
HRO Specialist

In memory of the following Technicians;
we extend our sympathy to the families:

Joseph Goad, 20 Jul 2010

Victor Pape, 31 Jul 2010

Robert Wilhelm, 20 Sep 2010

Martha McCoy, 21 Sep 2010

Submitted by Ms. Bobbi Harvey, HRO Specialist/Employee Services

SAVE MONEY

on Health Care and Day Care expenses

With FSAFEDS (the Federal Flexible Spending Account Program) you PAY LESS IN TAXES which means you SAVE MONEY!

It's like this—if you make $1,000 per pay date, you pay taxes on $1,000 per pay date. But if you enroll in FSAFEDS and put, say $20 per pay date in your FSA account, you pay taxes on only $980 per pay date. So, you save money, because less money is withheld for taxes.

Who wouldn't want to save money?! It's like getting an instant raise.

FSAFEDS works very easily. First you enroll. Money is withheld from your pay and put in your account. Starting with your effective date, you pay out-of-pocket for eligible expenses. You submit a claim and receive reimbursement from your account.

Here are just a few examples of eligible expenses:

Health Care FSA

- Co-payments, co-insurances and deductibles
- Acupuncture
- Body scans
- Hand sanitizer
- Hearing aids
- Mental health counseling
- Orthodontia
- Physical therapy
- Prescription drugs
- Sunscreen
- Vision and dental care

Dependent Care FSA

- Care for children under the age of 13 including:
  - Child care at a day care center, day camp, sports camp or by a private sitter
  - Before and after-school care
  - Late pick-up fees
- Adult day care
- Expenses for a housekeeper whose duties include caring for an eligible dependent
- Placement fee and stipend for hiring an au pair

See our videos at www.FSAFEDS.com

1-877-FSAFEDS (372-3337) TTY: 1-800-952-0450

Current enrollees must re-enroll to participate in the 2011 Benefit Period.

Enroll from November 8 – December 13, 2010

Most Executive Branch employees and employees from a few other agencies are eligible to participate in the FSAFEDS Program. However, some agencies, such as FDIC, Department of Treasury-OCC, OTS, U.S. Postal Service, etc., have their own FSA program. Employees from those agencies and other non-participating agencies cannot participate in the FSAFEDS Program.

FSA FEDS

TSP - Changes to the L 2010 Fund

Submitted by Ms. Bobbi Harvey, HRO Specialist/Employee Services

Combined Individual/L Funds Monthly Returns (Past 12 Months)

Month	L Income	L 2010	L 2020	L 2030	L 2040	G Fund	F Fund	C Fund	S Fund	I Fund
2009										
Oct	(0.26%)	(0.38%)	(1.39%)	(1.81%)	(2.15%)	0.26%	0.51%	(1.86%)	(5.51%)	(2.41%)
Nov	1.27%	1.47%	3.00%	3.55%	3.98%	0.26%	1.30%	6.00%	3.85%	3.16%
Dec	0.59%	0.70%	1.50%	1.85%	2.12%	0.25%	(1.55%)	1.94%	6.57%	1.43%
2010										
Jan	(0.45%)	(0.58%)	(2.03%)	(2.49%)	(2.88%)	0.29%	1.54%	(3.60%)	(2.43%)	(5.17%)
Feb	0.74%	0.81%	1.61%	1.94%	2.18%	0.24%	0.38%	3.11%	4.89%	0.06%
Mar	1.43%	1.61%	3.75%	4.52%	5.15%	0.27%	(0.11%)	6.04%	7.39%	6.28%
Apr	0.50%	0.51%	0.76%	0.94%	1.05%	0.28%	1.07%	1.58%	4.82%	(2.35%)
May	(1.50%)	(1.64%)	(4.98%)	(6.07%)	(6.97%)	0.28%	0.85%	(7.99%)	(7.51%)	(11.20%)
Jun	(0.61%)	(0.68%)	(2.34%)	(2.98%)	(3.47%)	0.24%	1.56%	(5.24%)	(6.90%)	(1.75%)
Jul	1.81%	1.81%	4.82%	5.80%	6.60%	0.23%	1.07%	7.01%	7.00%	10.78%
Aug	(0.63%)	(0.62%)	(2.29%)	(2.88%)	(3.33%)	0.22%	1.28%	(4.51%)	(5.59%)	(3.14%)
Sep	2.00%	2.00%	5.54%	6.77%	7.76%	0.17%	0.17%	8.92%	11.47%	9.81%
YTD	3.28%	3.20%	4.38%	4.85%	5.15%	2.24%	8.07%	3.89%	11.70%	1.24%
Last 12 mo	4.94%	5.04%	7.61%	8.57%	9.24%	3.02%	8.32%	10.18%	16.82%	3.39%

Percentages in ( ) are negative.

The L Funds are invested in the five individual TSP funds.

L 2010 Fund to close — The L 2010 Fund reached its time horizon on July 1, 2010 and now has a final asset allocation that is identical to the L Income Fund.

On December 31, the L 2010 Fund will be closed. If you have investments in the L 2010 Fund, they will be moved to the L Income Fund on December 31.

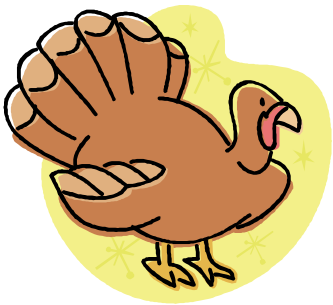
If you have allocated any portion of future contributions to the L 2010 Fund, that allocation will be automatically changed to the L Income Fund.

You do not need to take any action, but if you want to change your *contribution allocation or do an **interfund transfer to change the investment mix of money already in your account, visit My Account at www.tsp.gov/tsp/login.shtml

For more information on L Fund and L Income:
https://www.tsp.gov/investmentfunds/lfundsheet/fundPerformance_L2010.shtml

*Contribution Allocation: A participant's choice that tells the TSP how contributions, rollovers, and loan payments that are going into his or her account should be invested among the TSP funds.

**Interfund Transfer (IFT): An IFT allows the participant to redistribute all or part of his or her TSP account among the different TSP funds. For each calendar month, the participant's first two IFTs can redistribute money in his or her account among any or all of the TSP funds. After that, for the remainder of the month, the participant's IFTs can only move money into the Government Securities Investment (G) Fund (in which case, the participant will increase the percentage of his or her account held in the G Fund by reducing the percentage held in one or more of the other TSP funds). This transaction does not change the way new contributions, transfers or rollovers into the TSP, or loan payments are invested.



2011 TSP Contribution Limit

Elective Deferral Limit*	$16,500 IRC §402(g)	Applies only to regular employee contributions that are made in before-tax (i.e., tax-deferred) dollars. For members of the uniformed services, this includes all tax-deferred contributions from taxable basic pay, incentive pay, special pay, and bonus pay.
Annual Addition Limit	$49,000 IRC §415(c)	An additional limit imposed on the total amount of all contributions made on behalf of an employee in a calendar year. Uniformed service members become subject to this limit when tax-exempt contributions are made to their TSP accounts. This limit includes employee contributions (both tax-deferred and tax-exempt), Agency Automatic (1%), and Agency Matching Contributions.
Catch-up Contribution Limit	$5,500 IRC §414(v)	The maximum amount of catch-up contributions that can be contributed in a given year by participants age 50 and older. It is separate from the elective deferral and annual addition limit imposed on regular employee contributions.

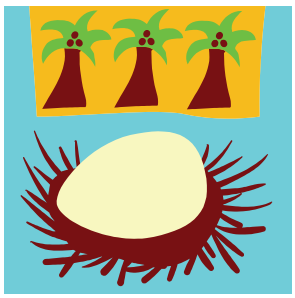
*The elective deferral limit does not apply to contributions made from the tax-exempt pay a member of the uniformed services may receive.

If you are a member of the uniformed services, you should pay particular attention to the Section 415(c) annual addition limit. If you contribute from pay that is subject to the combat zone exclusion, this limit allows you to put more money into your TSP account than the elective deferral limit would permit.

In addition, if you are eligible to make catch-up contributions and you are deployed to a designated combat zone, you must earn basic pay each month that is not subject to the combat zone tax exclusion. If 100% of your pay is tax-exempt, you will not be able to make catch-up contributions.

If you are a member of the Ready Reserve and you are contributing to both a uniformed services and a civilian TSP account as a FERS employee, the elective deferral and catch-up limits apply to the total amount of tax-deferred employee contributions you make in a calendar year to both accounts.

If you are called to active duty and make tax-exempt contributions to the TSP while deployed in a designated combat zone, the sum of all of your regular tax-exempt and tax-deferred contributions to both your uniformed services and civilian TSP accounts combined (including any agency contributions made to your civilian account) cannot exceed the section 415(c) annual addition limit.



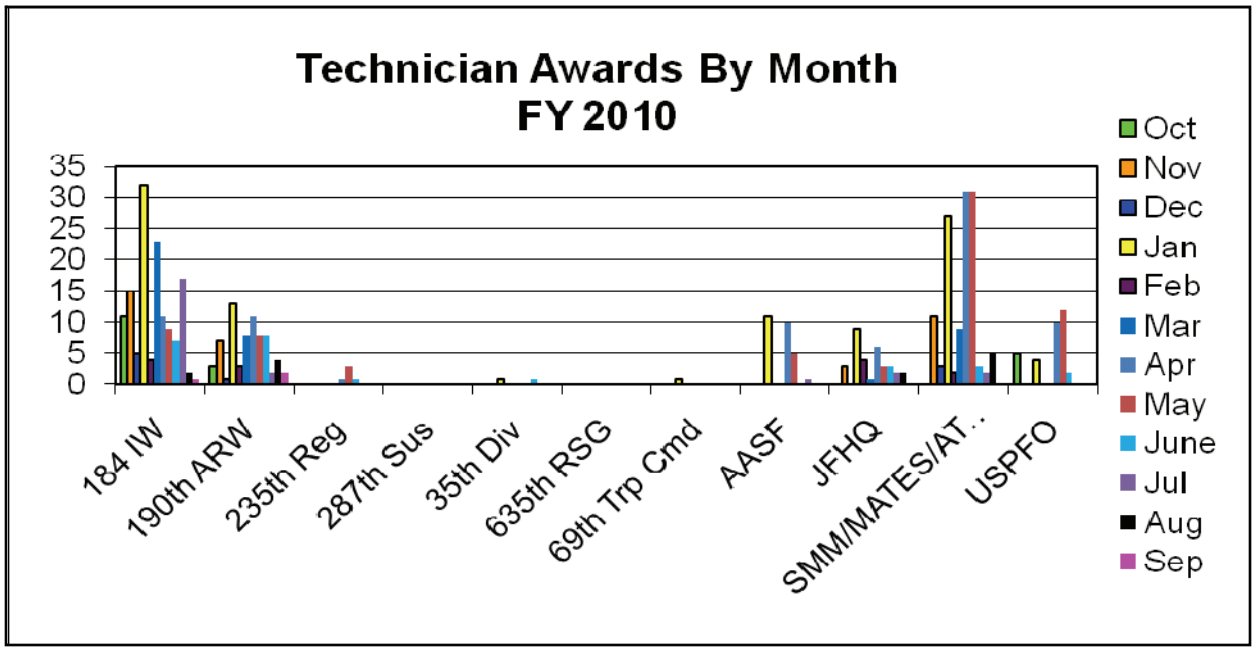
TECHNICIANS

August & September 2010

Submitted by MSgt Kathy Thornton
HRO Assistant

Technician Awards

The graph below shows technician awards processed, i.e. Time-Off, On the Spot, Sustained Superior Performance, and Quality Step Increases (QSI) for FY 2010, (October 2009-September 2010).



ACCESSIONS

BALL, ARUN T., 184 IW
BRYAN, JENNIFER A., 184 IW
BRYANT, WILLIAM P. 190 ARW
CLINE, KEVIN R., 190 ARW
COLLINS, ANTHONY M., 184 IW
DAVID, TOMMY L., DOM
FINKEMEIER, SHANNA D., 190 ARW
FOX, THOMAS C., 184 IW
FREITAG, RACHEL A., MATES
GILPIN, MATTHEW J., 891ST ENGR BN
GROGAN, MICKY V., 184 IW
HAIJNEY, DAVID J., FMS 8
HAIJNEY, LONNIE J., 891ST ENGR BN
GROGAN, MICKY V., 184 IW
HAPKE, MATTHEW H., MIL PER SPT OFC
HAYDON, JOSHUA B., 184 IW
HUMMER, PHILLIP R., RECRUIT & RETEN
JESSIP, SEAN C., 635 RSG
KIEFFER, CHRISTOPHER A., 190 ARW
KOHN, KAYLA S., 190 ARW
LANING, JAMES H,. KSJOC
LEE, ASHLEY A., 184 IW
LEEDS, DEREK V., USPFO
LEISURE, ALYSHIA C., 190 ARW
MARSHALL, CHRISTOPHER A., 35 IN DIV
MERRIGAN, BRENDEN S., AASF 2
MORRIS, PHILIP N., 2-130 BN FA

ACCESSIONS CONTINUED…

PAQUETTE, MICHAEL J., 184 IW
ROUNDS, BRENT S., AASF
SALAHUDDIN, MITHUN, MIL PER SPT OFC
SAMPSON, PATRICK A., DCS FOR INFO MGT
SANDERS, SHANA N., JFHQ
SEABA, DAVID W., JFHQ
SIHONGHEUNE, BAGONE, FMS 7
SMITH, SHAWN A., ATEAM
STUDT, RYLER B., 287TH SUST BDE
TOYNE, RAYMOND M., KSJOC
YOHO, MICHAEL D., CONSTR & FAC MGT

PROMOTIONS

ANGSTADT, WILLIAM, 184 IW
BURRELL, SHAWN K., MIL PER SPT OFC
CORNELIUS, BENJAMIN L., MATES
FARRIS, DENNIS G., 184 IW
FOUQUET, DEAN J. JR., MIL PER SPT OFC
FRASER, HUGH A. JR., 184 IW
HENRY, BRADLEY A., MATES
JARVIS, JIMMY L., ATEAM
JOHNSTON, JOHN B., USPFO
KUKER, BRANDON L., FMS 13
MOORE, JESSICA L., 184 IW
MURDOCK, ROGER D., USPFO
O'NEIL, TIMOTHY E., USPFO
PAQUETTE, MICHAEL J., 184 IW

PROMOTIONS CONTINUED...
PETERSON, ALIKE A., 190 ARW
RIOS, KRISTINA L., DCS FOR INFO MGT
SNYDER, RONALD K., USPFO
WEBER, SCOTT J., SMO

REASSIGNMENTS
BERKENMEIER, JASON E., ATEAM
GOLDENSTEIN, JACOB G., 184 IW
GREEN, TIMOTHY A., 184 IW
HENNIS, JOHNATHAN L., USPFO
SHIELDS, ERIC E., 184 IW
TAYLOR, CHRIS A., 184 IW
WALLINE, HOLLY A., DCS FOR INFO MGT

SEPARATIONS
APPLEGATE, NEWELL F., 184 IW
AARAGON, JOE L., USPFO
AUDANO, ROBERT D., FMS 8
BEARDEN, MARY L., DCS FOR INFO MGT
BELL, CATHERINE A., 69 TRP CMD
BIERY, JEREMIE J., FMS 11
BLANTON, RICHARD G. JR., 184 IW
BROTSKY, RUSSELL L., 184 IW
CHILDS, NORMAN B., USPFO
CLINE, KEVIN R., 190 ARW
COX, GARY WAYNE, 190 ARW
CROCHRAN, YOLANDRA V., USPFO
CRUZ, SAMUEL, HQ STARC
CUTRIGHT, JAMES R., USPFO
DAVILIA, LUIS A., 184 IW
DIRK, AARON W., USPFO
DRALLETTE, NATALIE E., DOM
DUGAN, TRAVIS D., 184 IW
DYKE, LOGAN C., MATES
EPPERLY, JOSHUA K., 190 ARW
GARST, KADE D., JFHQ
GERSTENKORN, DONALD L., 184 IW
GOHEEN, CLINTON C., AASF1
HANNAN, LAWRENCE E., DOL
HELMER, ROBERT S., USPFO
HIGGINS, JACOB E., MATES
ISMERT, MICHAEL P., FMS 7
JACOBS, JUSTIN P., JFHQ
JOHNSON, TIMOTHY P., 190 ARW
KIRKHAM, ZACHORY R., 137-IN BN

SEPARATIONS CONTINUED...
KLINE, MICHAEL D., ATEAM
KOCI, PAUL E., CSMS
KOHN, KAYLA S., 190 ARW
LARSON, CHERYL L., DOL
LEISURE, MATTHEW D., 190 ARW
LINDSEY, ERIN E., MATES
LITTLEJOHN, JOSHUA D., CSMS
LUNDBERG, DANNY C., ATEAM
MACDOUGALL, JACOB L., FMS 7
MCNUTT, TRINITA D., 190 ARW
MUGG, DAVID W. JR., 287TH SUST BDE
NIXON, SHELLY L., DOL
PEARSON, ANGELA D., 235TH REG
PFLUG, RACHEL L., 190 ARW
PUTNAM, ROBERT W. JR., FMS 3
RUSSELL, CORY R., USPFO
SALYER, HARRY H., CSMS
HOWELL, JEFFREY B., USPFO
SAMPSON, PATRICK A., 190 ARW
SCHLINGMANN, ROBERT F., FMS 7
SCOTT, RICKY E., ATEAM
THOMAS, JESSE L., MATES
THOMAS, LAWRENCE S., DOM
WHARTON, MAX L., ATEAM
THOMPSON, PAUL D., ATEAM
TOLBERT, MARCUS P., FMS 7
UKEN, KENDRA D., ATEAM
WAGNER, ROY R III., MATES
WHEELER, CODY A., DET 2 HQ STARC

EAP CONSULTANTS, INC.
HEALTHY™ EXCHANGE
THE NEWSLETTER OF YOUR EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM
FALL 2010

Submitted by Maj Julie Burns, Chief, Employee Services

Inside This Issue:

1. Positive Emotions Increase Life Satisfaction
2. Co-Use of Alcohol and Caffeine Can Raise Risk of Intoxication
3. How to Avoid Holiday Debt
4. For Your Information

EAP Services:

1. How to Use Your EAP

Positive Emotions Increase Life Satisfaction

Most everyone would prefer to experience positive emotions such as joy, interest, love, serenity, awe, amusement or pride rather than negative states such as fear, depression or anxiety. Simply put, positive emotions feel good. The latest research reports that they can also make you healthier and happier if you take the time to cultivate them.

The 3 to 1 Positivity Ratio

If your life isn't quite how you'd like it to be, researchers studying human emotions report that you can start improving your life by increasing the ratio at which you experience positive to negative emotions (known as your positivity ratio). Scientists have even determined the "tipping point," or the minimum positivity ratio necessary for you to improve your life. That ratio is at least 3 to 1. For each negative emotional experience you endure, you need to experience at least three positive emotional experiences that lift you up.
A summary of positivity ratios from the book *Positivity* by Barbara Frederickson, Ph.D.:

- People who are flourishing report a positivity ratio of at least 3 to 1. This includes approximately 20 percent of the population.
- Those in the "normal" range report a positivity ratio of 2 to 1. According to Frederickson, these people feel like they're "just getting by" and comprise approximately 60 percent of the population.
- People who are depressed report a positivity ratio of 1 to 1, or lower.

THE BENEFITS OF POSITIVITY

Broaden and build. Barbara Frederickson, Ph.D., has been studying positive emotions for over 20 years. According to Frederickson, when we experience a positive emotion our thinking expands (Negative emotions, on the other hand, narrow our thinking.). "We literally see more," she says, "allowing us to face our problems with clear eyes, make creative connections and see more possible solutions for problems." Frederickson has named this the "broaden effect." Additionally, says Frederickson, as we make a habit of seeking out positive emotions we change and grow for the better. We discover and build new skills, new knowledge and new ways of being that allow us to live healthier and happier (the build effect). "Positivity presents an opportunity to step up to the next level of existence, to broaden your mind and build your best self," says Frederickson.

Healthier and happier. According to current research, those who practice a steady diet of positive emotions:

- Report fewer aches and pains, headaches and other physical symptoms. They also have lower blood pressure, fewer colds and sleep better.

- Are better able to rebound from adversity and stress. Positive emotions create a calming effect in your body that can lower blood pressure, dissipate stress energy and lift your mood.

- Develop more positive and closer relationships with others. They tend to have more friends and a larger social network to rely on during crises.

- Become more optimistic, more resilient, less depressed and more satisfied with life. In a study tracking the outcomes of patients undergoing treatment for depression, the patients whose positivity ratios rose to 4 to 1 showed no signs of depressive symptoms and displayed optimal functioning.

HOW TO INCREASE YOUR POSITIVITY RATIO

1. **Track your positivity ratio.** Take the "Positivity Self Test" online at PositivityRatio.com. Track your positivity ratio nightly for two weeks to see what your average is. Tracking helps you become more mindful of your sources of positive emotions and the triggers for your negative ones. The self test is also available in the book *Positivity*, by Frederickson.

2. Increasing your positive emotions. Some practical ways to increase the frequency of positive emotions in daily life include:

- Focus more on the present moment. Frederickson says that most moments are positive and that we miss many opportunities for positive emotions by thinking too much about the past or worrying about the future.

- Find positive meaning more frequently in your daily life.

- Savor the good things in your life and the good things that happen to you. Keep a daily list of the things you are thankful for.

- Practice altruistic behaviors and small acts of kindness.

- Focus on your personal strengths and follow your passions. Give yourself permission to play and find activities that uniquely engage you.

- Connect with others. Scientists have documented that people gain more positivity by being with others than by being alone.

- Spend more time outdoors and/or in nature. According to a recent study, people who spent twenty or more minutes outside when the weather was nice boosted their positive emotions.

- Learn and practice meditation. According to Frederickson, meditation opens your mind and an open mind breeds positivity.

3. Decreasing your negativity. At times, negative emotions are appropriate and can serve useful functions. The key is to eliminate negativity that is neither helpful nor healthy. The following suggestions can help:

- **Dispute negative thinking.** Ask yourself: What are the facts of my situation? What negative thoughts and beliefs got triggered and how did they make me feel? How do those thoughts and beliefs compare to reality? By examining the facts you can bring a calm and rational perspective to the picture. Rather than suppressing negativity or attempting to push negativity out of your mind, you are simply checking it against reality and often will find it is not as bad as you first thought.

- **Stop ruminating.** Don't keep going over and over your negative thoughts and feelings. Doing so only gets you stuck in a rut and continues to fan the flames of your negativity. Learn to recognize when you are ruminating on negative thoughts and then stop it by finding a healthy activity to distract you and break the cycle. Go for a walk or jog, do yoga, read a book, or anything that fully absorbs you and takes your mind off of your negative feelings.

- **Avoid the circumstances that trigger your negativity.** Examine your typical daily routine and ask yourself which circumstances create the most negativity. Then, do whatever you possibly can to eliminate or diffuse the situation. Do certain people bring you down? Avoid them. Look for positive solutions. You can't diffuse or eliminate everything, but the more you can eliminate, the higher your positivity ratio will rise.

Employee Assistance Program Services – For All Kansas National Guard Technicians

PROVIDED BY YOUR EMPLOYER FOR YOU AND YOUR DEPENDENTS

Your Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is available to help you overcome life's challenges…both large and small. We provide confidential counseling, referrals or information to help you or your dependents with personal, family or work-related issues. If you need help, why not call a professional EAP counselor today? We're here to help you.

Co-use of Alcohol and Caffeine Can Raise Risks from Intoxication

If you drink, you should know that coffee won't sober you up if you've had too much to drink. Instead, a cup of coffee may make it harder for you to realize that you're drunk. This, according to a study reported in the December 2009 journal *Behavioral Neuroscience*.

The myth about coffee's sobering powers is particularly important to debunk, said the researchers, because the co-use of caffeine and alcohol can actually lead to poor decisions with disastrous outcomes. People who have consumed only alcohol, who feel tired and intoxicated, may be more likely to acknowledge that they are

drunk. Conversely, people who have consumed both alcohol and caffeine may feel awake and competent enough to handle potentially harmful situations, such as driving while intoxicated or placing themselves in dangerous social situations.

In recent years, alcohol-energy drink combinations have skyrocketed in popularity. The study authors noted evidence that these drinks produce deficits in general cognitive ability and raise the odds of alcohol-related problems such as drunken-driving citations, sexual misconduct, and needing medical assistance.

TIPS FOR DRINKING WISELY (OR NOT AT ALL)

- Develop a responsible attitude toward drinking. This basically means not becoming drunk. Consider the rights of those who choose to abstain. You don't need to drink in order to have a good time, even though it has become an accepted part of socializing in this country. If you don't want to drink, ask for a non-alcoholic beverage. You can be just as sociable with a ginger ale in your hand.

- Measure your drinks. Five ounces of wine, 12 ounces of beer, or 1-1/2 ounces of spirits is the maximum that a 160-pound man should consume in an hour.

- Know your limit when you drink. If you drink slowly (instead of gulping), you won't get drunk as quickly. If your drink somehow vanishes before an hour is up, switch to juice or a soft drink. Don't accept unfamiliar drinks. They may contain more alcohol than you are used to drinking.

- Never drink on an empty stomach. When drinking, eat starches, proteins, or fats to keep alcohol from being absorbed too quickly.

- Never take drugs (even non-prescription ones) in combination with drinking. Alcohol can negate the action of some drugs, can make you sick when combined with others, and can be fatal (for example when you combine alcohol with too many sleeping pills).

- Never drive after you've been drinking. If you must drive, wait at least an hour before driving for each drink you've had (equivalent to one beer or one ounce of whiskey).

For All Kansas National Guard Technicians - PROVIDED BY YOUR EMPLOYER FOR YOU AND YOUR DEPENDENTS

If you or a dependent needs help with issues related to alcohol or drug use, contact your Employee Assistance Program (EAP) for FREE and CONFIDENTIAL counseling, referrals or information. We're here to help you.

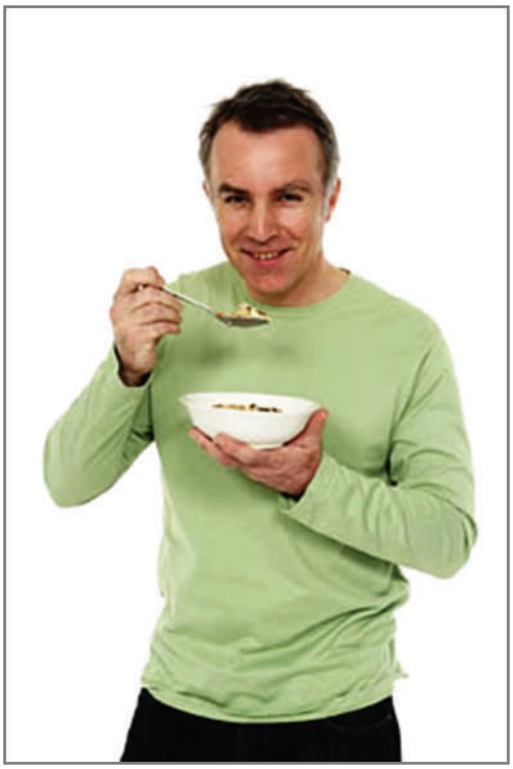
How to Avoid Holiday Debt

According to financial experts, the average American family racks up more debt during the holidays than in any other season. Think you'll pay off all of those holiday credit card charges by February? Think again. Financial experts say it takes most people six to 18 months to pay off their holiday credit card bills.

It seems to be especially hard for some people not to overspend during the holidays because of an emotional need to express love, appreciation and friendship. Below are strategies and spending tips to help you eliminate overspending and prevent a financial "holiday hangover." Here's what to do:

1. **Set a budget and do not exceed it.** Set an overall budget for all holiday spending and do not exceed it, under any circumstances. This is the amount you can afford to spend on the holidays, without going into debt.

2. **Create a written spending plan.** Create a written plan for holiday spending and gift giving a month or two in advance of the holidays. Be sure to include all holiday spending including gifts, wrapping paper, cards, party supplies, wardrobe, food, etc. Estimate the cost of each planned expenditure. If the total exceeds your allocated budget, delete, revise or rethink your projected purchases until the budget covers all expenditures. Finalize a written shopping list of projected holiday expenditures.



3. **Bring your shopping list.** Enter a store only when you have your shopping list and the total amount you plan to spend. Review your spending at the end of each shopping day. If you overspend in one area, deduct that amount from another area you had planned to spend money on.

4. **Treat credit card purchases as part of your total budget.** Your goal this year is to avoid holiday debt, so any purchases made by credit card must be subtracted from your budget, just as you would account for a check or cash purchase.

5. **Plan ahead for next year.** Open a holiday savings account in January and save for holiday spending year 'round. Save a specific amount of cash each month throughout the year. You'll have a great head start on your holiday budget.

For Your Information

JUMP START YOUR WORK WEEK

To help get your work week off to a good start, get up earlier on Monday morning and have a good breakfast. Arrive to work earlier. The head start will help you feel more in charge of your workday.

BETTER COMMUNICATION FOR COUPLES

To improve communication with your partner, describe your feelings. Don't assume your partner knows your needs, feelings or opinions without telling him or her. To express yourself clearly use "feeling" words like "sad," "happy," "excited," "angry," etc.

MOVE YOUR BODY

Exercise for at least 30 minutes four to five days per week. Exercise isn't just good for your body; it's also good for your mind. Studies show that regular physical activity increases happiness and self-esteem, reduce anxiety and stress, and can even lift symptoms of depression.

Employee Assistance Program Services – For All Kansas National Guard Technicians

PROVIDED BY YOUR EMPLOYER FOR YOU AND YOUR DEPENDENTS

Your Employee Assistance Program is a prepaid and confidential program designed to help employees and their dependents resolve problems which may be interfering with their personal, work or home life. EAP Consultants offers help for marital and family issues, substance abuse, job concerns, emotional problems, life adjustments, legal issues, financial matters, and elder care and child care referrals.

If you're experiencing problems which are causing concern, you and your EAP Counselor can work as a team to find solutions.

For assistance, call EAP Consultants at: **800-869-0276** or request services by secure e-mail on the Member Access page of our website at http://www.eapconsultants.com/.

NOVEMBER – National American Indian Heritage Month (Established 1990)

Submitted by CW3 Sandra Lashley, SEEM

This year's theme: "Life is Sacred – Celebrate Healthy Native Communities"

National American Indian Heritage Month honors the many contributions and accomplishments of American Indians and Alaska Natives. During November, we remember the legacy of the first Americans and celebrate their vibrant culture and heritage. Since the Revolutionary War, Native Americans and Alaska Natives have played a vital role in our country's freedom and security. They proudly serve in all departments of the United States Government today.

In 1990 President George H. W. Bush approved a joint resolution designating November 1990 "National American Indian Heritage Month." Similar proclamations have been issued each year since 1994. *Information taken from Defense Equal Opportunity Institute (DEOMI)*

Photo from Visit: http://www.defense.gov/specials/nativeamerican01 for additional information

Federal Human Resource Office Staff Contacts
2722 SW Topeka Blvd. Room 136
Topeka, KS 66611
Commercial Fax: (785) 274-1604

Col Kathryn Hulse	Human Resource Officer	x1181	Rm 142
LTC Roger Krull	Deputy HRO Officer	x1167	Rm 141
SMSgt Keith Guffy	State Labor Relations Specialist	x1162	Rm 140

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CMSgt Lynn McConnell	Personnel Systems Manager	x1165	Rm 136
SGT Jason Collier	Personnel Systems Assistant	x1163	Rm 136
MSgt Tammy Wells	Classification Specialist	x1161	Rm 136
MSG Lyle Babcock	Management Analyst	x1941	Rm 136

EMPLOYEE SERVICES DIVISION

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Bobbi Harvey	Employee Benefits Specialist	x1172	Rm 136
MSgt Robin Lewis	Human Resource Specialist	x1206	Rm 136
MSgt Kathy Thornton	Human Resource Assistant	x1187	Rm 136
MSgt Terry Spangler	Staffing Specialist	x1160	Rm 136
OC Jennifer Walters	Staffing Specialist	x1184	Rm 136
TSgt Orlando Saucedo	Staffing Specialist	x1053	Rm 136
Dottie Clark	Employee Development Specialist	x1185	Rm 136
Michele Wright	Human Resource Assistant	x1180	Rm 136

AGR BRANCH

CW2 Morgan Davis	AGR Manager	x1182	Rm 135
SFC Katie Carnahan	AGR Staffing Specialist	x1186	Rm 136
MSG Chris Kuti	AGR Pay Specialist	x1636	Rm 136
MSgt Doug Roudybush	Tricare Specialist	x1164	Rm 136

EEO/EO DIVISION

CW3 Sandra Lashley	EEO/EO Manager	x1166	Rm 143
SFC Francisca Jimenez	EEO/EO Specialist	x1168	Rm 143

FAMILY PROGRAMS/WORKFORCE SUPPORT

MAJ Robert Stinson	Chief, Workforce Support	x1183	Rm 105
Mary Nesbitt	Family Programs Director	x1171	Rm 101
Michelle Williams	Family Readiness Assistant	x1173	Rm 102
TSgt Deanna Davis	Family Programs Specialist	x1553	Rm 102
PFC Stephanie Hodges	Family Support Specialist	x1512	Rm 102
SGT Jennifer Gold	Yellow Ribbon Event Accountability Mgr.	x1512	Rm 102
Heather Wellman	Yellow Ribbon Specialist	x1211	Rm 112
Jes Robinson	Yellow Ribbon Specialist	x1211	Rm 112
Amanda Herlinger	State Youth Coordinator	x1491	Rm 102
Darcy L. Seitz	State Youth Coordinator	x1967	Rm 102
Bonnie Murdock	Military OneSource JFSAP	x1557	Rm 102
Robert Johnson	Military Family Life Consultant	x1129	Rm 104

TRANSITION BENEFITS

DC Hannah	Transition Assistance Specialist	x1129	Rm 112
Howard Steanson	Transition Assistance Advisor	x1188	Rm 112

ESGR

Fred Waller	ESGR Director	x1559	Rm 112

Reach us on the web at: www.kansastag.gov/

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2. Federal HRO
3. Click "Here" for On-Board Personnel
(Takes you to HRO Main Page)

Technician Job Vacancy link:
http://kansastag.ks.gov/FED_jobs_tech.asp
1. Drop down menu (Choose job type from list)