

**ARIZONA NATIONAL GUARD**

**EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK**

DEPARTMENT OF EMERGENCY AND MILITARY AFFAIRS  
ARIZONA NATIONAL GUARD  
Office of the Adjutant General  
5636 East McDowell Road  
Phoenix, Arizona 85008-3495

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Supersession:

Applicability: This handbook is intended to be a quick reference for use by all Arizona National Guard employees to obtain information about responsibilities and benefits as a member of the Arizona National Guard employee work force.

Suggested Improvements: The proponent of this handbook is the Human Resource Office, Department of Emergency and Military Affairs. Users are invited to send comments and suggested improvements on DA Form 2028 (Recommended Changes to Publications and Blank Forms) directly to: Arizona National Guard, Human Resources Office, 5636 East McDowell Road, Phoenix, AZ 85008-3495.

Labor Agreements: Should negotiated labor contract(s) supplement, or modify, some of the instructions contained in the handbook, the negotiated contract(s) will take precedence. All Army and Air National Guard supervisors should become familiar with the contents of appropriate labor agreements.

Introduction

This handbook is intended to be a quick reference for use by all Arizona National Guard employees. It is geared directly toward those programs and benefits that are unique to the Employee Program. Responsibilities, as well as benefits, as a member of the National Guard employee workforce are presented in this handbook as a general overview. You are encouraged to talk to your supervisor or your Human Resource Office staff for more detailed information.

There are many benefits which you may be eligible for because you are a member of the Arizona National Guard. However, those benefits are generally administered through your military unit, designated specialty office, or a designated point of contact.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter 1 – Federal Employee Program	1
Responsibilities	1
Authority	1
Purpose	1
Chapter 2 – Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO)	1
Policy	1
Assistance	1
Chapter 3 – The Federal Civil Service Employee Program	
Employment Category	1
Appointment Types	2
Veteran’s Preference	2
Military Membership Requirement	2
Military Uniform (Dual Status Employees)	3
Compatible Military Assignment	3
Travel	3
Appeal Rights	3
Chapter 4 – Employee Assistance Program (TAP)	3
Overview	3
Confidentiality	3
Resources	3
Employment Protection	4
Affects on Performance	4
Chapter 5 – Sexual Harassment	4
Definition	4
Investigation	4
Disciplinary Action	4
Assistance	5
Chapter 6 – Workplace Violence	5
Definition	5
Policy	5
Assistance	5
Chapter 7 – Employee Personnel Record-Keeping	5
Official Personnel Folders (OPF)	5
Notification of Personnel Action	5
Chapter 8 – Pay Administration	5
General	5
Pay Administration	6
Within Grade Increases (WGI’s)	6
General Schedule (GS) Employees	6
Wage Grade (WG) Employees	7

Severance Pay	7
State Active Duty	7
Chapter 9 – Work Schedules	7
Work Schedule	7
Alternate Work Schedule (AWS)	7
Chapter 10 – Leave	8
General	8
Annual Leave	8
Advanced Annual Leave	8
Sick Leave	8
Requesting Sick Leave	9
Documenting Sickness	9
Sick Leave for Personal Medical Needs	9
Sick Leave for Childbirth (Paid Parental Leave)	9
Advanced Sick Leave	10
Sick Leave - Under the Family & Medical Leave Act	11
Compensatory Time and Travel Compensatory Time	12
Job Benefits and Protection	12
Advance Notice and Medical Certification	12
Blood Donation	12
Bone Marrow or Organ Donor	12
Military	13
Law Enforcement	13
Presidential Leave	13
Leave Without Pay (LWOP)	13
Court Leave	13
Voting or Registering to Vote	14
Conferences or Conventions	14
Leave Transfer Program	15
Leave Recipient	15
Limitations or Leave Donations	15
Administrative Dismissal	16
Physical Fitness	16
Absence Without Leave (AWOL)	16
Chapter 11 – Performance Appraisals	16
General	16
Performance Counseling	16
Performance Appraisal Appeals	16
Chapter 12 – Incentive Awards – Monetary	17
Sustained Superior Performance Award	17
Quality Step Increase (QSI)	17
Special Act or Service Award	17
Chapter 13 – Incentive Awards – Non-Monetary	17
Length of Service Award	17

Time-Off Award	17
Chapter 14 – Suggestion Program	17
Chapter 15 – Federal Employees Group Life Insurance (FEGLI)	17
General	18
Term Life Insurance	18
Basic Life Insurance	18
Extra Benefit Life Insurance	18
Optional Life Insurance	18
Cost	19
Chapter 16 – Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB) Program	19
General	19
Enrollment	19
Changing Plans	19
Open Season	19
Life-Changing Events	19
Status Changes	19
Continuation for Survivors	20
Temporary Continuation of Coverage (TCC)	20
Temporary Continuation of Coverage (TCC) Premium	20
Long Term Care Insurance	20
Chapter 17 – Volunteering for Military Service (Dual Status)	20
Chapter 18 – Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA)	21
Chapter 19 – Safety & Occupational Health Program	21
Chapter 20 – Office of Workers' Compensation Program (OWCP)	21
On-the-Job Injury	21
Process	21
Death	22
Chapter 21 – Retirement	22
Chapter 22 – Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS)	22
Coverage	22
Eligibility	23
Death Benefit	23
Contribution Refunds	23
Deferred Retirement/Annuity	23
Thrift Savings Plan	23
Chapter 23 – Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS)	23
General	23
Three Components of the Retirement System	24
Social Security	24

Basic Benefit Portion	24
Thrift Savings Plan	24
Retirement Eligibility	24
Deferred (or Delayed)	25
Disability	25
Death Benefit	25
Refund of Contributions	26
Chapter 24 – Thrift Savings Plan (TSP)	26
General	26
Self-Contributions	26
Government Contributions	26
Waiting Periods	27
Investments	27
Vesting	27
Loan Program	28
Loan Limits	28
Withdrawal of TSP Account	28
Penalty for Early Withdrawal	28
Chapter 25 – Political Activity	29
Overview	29
The Hatch Act	29
Filing a Hatch Act Complaint	30
Hatch Act Violation Penalty	30
Hatch Act Advisory Opinion	30
Chapter 26 – Standards of Conduct	31
Responsibilities and Standards	31
Violations and Penalties	32
Chapter 27 – Disciplinary and Adverse Actions	32
General	33
Disciplinary Actions	33
Adverse Actions	33
Process	33
Appeal and Grievance Procedures	33
Chapter 28 – Resignation from the Employee Program	34
Chapter 29 – Personal Matters	34
General	34
Designation of Beneficiary	34
Other Important Documents	34
Chapter 30 – Classification	35
Classification Overview	35
Position Descriptions	35
Classification Appeals	35

Chapter 31 – Staffing & Placement	36
General	36
Advertisements	36
Advanced In Hire	36
Opportunity	37
How to Apply	37
Chapter 32 – Reduction in Force (RIF)	41
Definition	41
Process	41
Results	41
Additional Information	42
Chapter 33 – Training and Development	42
Overview	42
Reference	43
Chapter 34 – Labor-Management Relations	43
Labor Management Relations Agreement (LMRA)	43
The Association of Civilian Employees (ACT)	43
Bargaining Unit Status (BUS)	43
Membership/Eligibility	43
Chapter 35 – Smoking Policy	44
Chapter 36 – Substance Abuse	44
Policy	44
Assistance	44
Supervisor Options	44
Chapter 37 – Cell Phone Use	44
Conclusion	45

## Chapter 1 – Federal Employee Program

1-1. Responsibilities: Welcome to the full-time workforce team of the Arizona National Guard and to federal employment. As a full-time employee, you represent all personnel of both the Arizona Army and Air National Guard. This document should address the majority of the questions you have regarding federal civil service employment. If you have questions regarding your employment, which are not addressed in this handbook, your supervisor should provide you the answers. If your supervisor doesn't have the answer, please contact the Human Resources Office for further information.

1-2. Authority: As a federal employee you are covered by the National Guard Employee Act of 1968 (Public Law 90-486). In the context of full-time work, employees are considered to be employees of the Department of the Army or Air Force. However, unlike other Federal employees, The Adjutant General of Arizona (TAG) has been designated, by the Secretary of the Army and the Secretary of the Air Force, as having the authority for hiring, managing and terminating employee personnel, and is the final authority of appeal for most personnel actions. With few exceptions, an employee enjoys the same benefits, rights and privileges as other Federal employees. The National Guard employs federal civil service employees who are hired under Title 5 United States Code (USC), and employees hired under the provisions of Title 32 USC (Section 709).

1-3. Purpose: The primary purpose of a National Guard employee is to provide day-to-day continuity in the training and operations of Army and Air National Guard units. You will work with Active Guard/Reserve (AGR) personnel, federal civilian civil service employees, state employees, contract personnel and DSG personnel. These programs have different personnel systems, but the employees have the same goals as you do, supporting the commands, units, Soldiers and Airmen of the Arizona National Guard.

## Chapter 2 – Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO)

2-1. Policy: The Arizona National Guard is committed to operational practices that will demonstrate full adherence to both the letter and spirit of the law, guaranteeing equal opportunity to all without regard to race, color, religion, gender, age, national origin or physical or mental handicap, or retaliation for involvement in an Equal Opportunity matter.

2-2. Assistance: Any person who believes that he or she has been the victim of unequal/ discriminatory treatment or has knowledge of this behavior is urged to report such conduct immediately to their supervisory chain or to the State Equal Employment Opportunity Manager at (602) 629-4811.

## Chapter 3 – The Federal Civil Service Employee Program

3-1. Employment Category: Dual Status and Title 5 employees fall into two categories:



- a. Dual Status Employees: Most positions in the National Guard Employee Program are “excepted service” and require military membership in the National Guard (in the state which employed) as a condition of employment under the provisions of Title 32, USC, Section 709.
- b. Title 5 employees: These positions do not require military membership in the National Guard. They’re civilian status excepted positions under T5 USC.

3-2. Appointment Types: There are several types of employee appointments in the Arizona National Guard. The following list includes the most common types of appointments.

- a. Permanent Employment (Tenure 1): Permanent appointed employees (Dual Status and Non-Dual Status) have successfully completed a one-year “trial” or probationary period.
- b. Trial / Probationary Period (Tenure 2): Permanent appointed employees must successfully complete a one year trial/probationary period. This period gives the supervisor an opportunity to assess the employee's conduct and job performance. An employee who does not meet acceptable standards may be removed during this period without formal procedures.
- c. Excepted Indefinite Employment (Tenure 3): Excepted indefinite employment is non- permanent, generally more than one year in length but usually without a time limit. Benefits are similar to those of a permanent employee; however, the employee may be separated, after being given a 30-day notice of termination at any time during the period of employment.
- d. Temporary Employment (Tenure 0): Employees may be hired for a limited period of time with a not-to-exceed date. These employees are considered temporary employees. They are eligible for fewer benefits than permanent or indefinite employees. Temporary employees may be separated at any time without the right to appeal.

3-3. Veteran’s Preference: By law, this does not apply to the T32 positions, however it does apply for T5 positions.

- a. In order to be considered for Veteran’s Preference when applying for vacant T5 positions, an applicant must supply proof of eligibility. (i.e.; DD214, SF15, or other official source document(s).)
- b. The Merit Placement Plan will provide guidance and procedure on the application of Veteran’s Preference.

3-4. Military Membership Requirement: As a Dual Status employee, military membership in the National Guard (in the state in which employed) is a condition of

employment. Loss of military membership, for any reason, will cause termination of employee employment.

3-5. Military Uniform (Dual Status employees): Your military uniform is required to be worn in accordance with service regulations, including prescribed grooming standards, while performing employee duties. While in uniform, even after duty hours, proper customs and courtesies shall be extended as appropriate. Replacement uniforms for enlisted employees will be accomplished through their military unit.

3-6. Compatible Military Assignment (Compatibility): T32 military employees are required, by law, to be assigned to a military unit and position compatible with their full-time job. Military grade inversion rules require that a subordinate employee cannot be of higher military grade than their immediate supervisor.

3-7. Travel: Employee employees may be required to travel periodically in a civilian travel order status. The mission may require the use of government transportation while traveling on official duty. Assignment to government quarters may be based on travel status at the civilian or military pay grade.

3-8. Appeal Rights: Certain appeal rights, such as appeals to adverse action and reduction in force, do not extend beyond The Adjutant General of Arizona. Contact your Human Resources Office for more information.

#### Chapter 4 – Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

4-1. Overview: The EAP is a voluntary and confidential program designed to address personal issues that may negatively impact an employee's job performance such as issues regarding family, finance, substance abuse, and mental health. The Arizona National Guard offers all federal civil service employees' access to the EAP. Additionally, supervisors may recommend referral to the EAP coordinator when they suspect that personal matters are negatively affecting employee job performance.

4-2. Confidentiality: The EAP personnel follow federal law and regulations that strictly prohibit the release of information from personal consultations. The EAP representatives will not release information to the Arizona National Guard without the employee's written consent.

4-3. Resources: There are multiple resources available that provide assistance depending on your employment status.

- a. Dual status employees are eligible to receive confidential guidance (intake & referral services) from trained social workers 24 hours/7 days per week through [www.militaryonesource.com](http://www.militaryonesource.com).
- b. All employees may receive confidential referral service through the Human

Resources Office at (602) 629-4800.

4-4. Employment Protection: No employee will have job security, or promotion opportunities jeopardized by requesting counseling or referral assistance through the EAP. Mandating employees to participate in the EAP by any AZNG personnel is strictly prohibited. However, those employees who do not correct employment-related problems or deficiencies are still subject to established performance and disciplinary procedures.

4-5. Effects on Performance: It is recognized that problems such as alcohol or drug abuse, family or marital crises, legal or financial difficulties, or personal stress exist for employees of the Arizona National Guard. These situations often display themselves as accidents, poor conduct, attendance problems, and decreased quality of work and production. Employees are often reluctant to seek assistance because they feel their problems often become employment problems. All employees need to be supportive and encourage our co-workers to seek needed assistance.

## Chapter 5 – Sexual Harassment

5-1. Definition: Anyone who uses or condones implicit or explicit sexual behavior to control, influence, or affect the career, pay, or job of a military member or civilian employee is engaging in sexual harassment. Similarly, anyone who makes deliberate or repeated unwelcome verbal comments, gestures, or physical contact of a sexual nature is also engaging in sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is a form of sex (gender) discrimination that involves unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when any of the following occur:

- a. Submission to or rejection of such conduct is made a direct or indirect condition of a person's job, pay, or career.
- b. Submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as a basis for career or employment decisions affecting that person.
- c. Such conduct interferes with an individual's performance or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment.

5-2. Investigation: Management will aggressively investigate allegations according to law and regulations. The matter will not be closed until resolved to the satisfaction of the complainant, withdrawn by the complainant, or until the matter has exhausted by all avenues of remedy available under the applicable laws and regulations and the final governing body issues a final decision.

5-3. Disciplinary Action: The Arizona National Guard will not tolerate sexual harassment, nor will allegations be ignored. Immediate disciplinary action will be taken against anyone engaging in sexual harassment or retaliating against an

individual for reporting such conduct. Such action may include, depending on the circumstances, suspension, demotion, or removal.

5-4. Assistance: Any person who believes that he or she has been the victim of sexual harassment, or who has knowledge of that type of behavior, is urged to report such conduct immediately to the State Sexual Assault Response Coordinator, commercial: (602) 267-2449, or DSN: 853-2449.

## Chapter 6 – Workplace Violence

6-1. Definition: Violence is any verbal, physical, or psychological threat or assault on an individual that results in physical or psychological damage. Violent and/or harassing or threatening behavior in the workplace which harms or instills fear in others is an unacceptable way of dealing with problems, no matter how severe the problems may be. The Arizona National Guard will not condone or tolerate such disruptive behavior, and it will not be allowed to go uncorrected.

6-2. Assistance: Address any questions to the Equal Employment Manager at DSN: 853-4806 or 602-629-4806, or to the Human Resources Officer at DSN 853-4800 or Commercial 602-629-4800.

## Chapter 7 – Employee Personnel Record-Keeping

7-1. Electronic Official Personnel Folders (eOPF): A digital eOPF for each employee is established and maintained by the Human Resource Office. This electronic folder is used to document employment history.

- a. Employees are encouraged to periodically review their records by accessing eOPF. Supervisors will maintain a Supervisor's Work Folder on each employee they supervise, in which many employment-related matters are recorded. The Supervisor's Work Folder may also be reviewed upon request.
- b. If an employee decides to leave federal employment, the eOPF is forwarded to the Federal Records Center in St. Louis, Missouri.

7-2. Notification of Personnel Action: Each Standard Form 50 (Notification of Personnel Action) that is generated on an employee is available in MyBiz for both the supervisor and the employee. Employees are encouraged to maintain a civilian personnel folder of their own, containing these SF 50's, along with other important employee service documents such as appraisals, employment application and resume.

## Chapter 8 – Pay Administration

8-1. General: The following information addresses information pertaining to your pay as a civil service employee. If you would like more detailed information, please visit

the following website: <http://www.dfas.mil/civilianpay/payandentitlements.html>

- a. Pay Period: Employees are paid every two weeks (bi-weekly), via Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT). Employees may elect for allotments to be taken out of their pay for the following purposes: Savings Bonds; union dues; allotments to financial institutions; and/or charitable institutions such as the Combined Federal Campaign (CFC).
- b. To start, stop or change allotments, go to <https://www.mypay.gov>
- c. Overtime Pay: T32 military employees are not entitled to overtime pay. T5 employee may be entitled to overtime pay based on the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) category defined in the position description. For additional information, please see DEMA Policy 20.15.
- d. Compensatory time-off (hour for hour) is earned for both T32 military employees and T5 employees. T5 employees, if eligible, have the option to choose compensatory time or overtime pay. As with overtime pay, please see DEMA Policy 20.15.
- e. Premium Pay: Premium pay is additional pay, which employees may receive when scheduled to work on holidays and/or Sundays.
- f. Environmental Differential Pay (EDP): EDP is reimbursed to Wage Grade (WG) employees who are exposed to certain hazards, physical hardships, and working conditions of an unusually severe nature.
- g. Hazardous Duty Pay (HDP): HDP is reimbursed only to General Service (GS) employees, while working in a high-risk area where accidents could result in serious injury or death. Examples of such duties are tasks involving exposure to extreme temperatures for a long period of time, or exposure to fumes, dust or noise that causes nausea, skin, eye, and ear or nose irritation.

8-2. Pay Administration: Employees receive various pay increases, such as annual cost of living adjustments and within grade or step increases. Typically, GS employees receive a cost-of-living increase in January. Wage Grade, Wage Supervisor (WG/WS) employees receive cost of living increases as a result of wage surveys, typically effective in May. Pay increases are granted upon receipt of revised pay schedules. Revised schedules are published and may be reviewed at any time at [www.opm.gov](http://www.opm.gov).

8-3. Within Grade Increases (WGI): A WGI, or sometimes referred to as a “step” increase is an incremental increase in pay and is based on performance and length of service. WGIs help in retaining our more experienced personnel.

8-4. General Schedule (GS) Employees: Only GS employees are eligible for WGIs. These WGI’s take effect during the next full pay period following completion of the

required waiting period provided the employee has performed at a fully acceptable level of competence (performance in all critical elements must be fully acceptable). Employee cannot receive an equivalent increase during the waiting period. Required waiting periods to the next higher step are:

- To Steps 2, 3 and 4 = 52 calendar weeks of creditable service.
- To Steps 5, 6 and 7 = 104 calendar weeks of creditable service.
- To Steps 8, 9 and 10 = 156 calendar weeks of creditable service.

8-5. Wage Grade (WG) Employees: Permanent, Indefinite and Temporary WG employees are eligible for Within Grade Increases (WGI's). These WGI's take effect during the next full pay period following completion of the required waiting period, provided performance is fully acceptable and no equivalent increase was received during the waiting period. Required waiting periods to the next higher Step are:

- To Step 2 = 26 calendar weeks of creditable service.
- To Step 3 = 78 calendar weeks of creditable service.
- To Step 4 = 104 calendar weeks of creditable service.
- To Step 5 = 104 calendar weeks of creditable service.

8-6. Severance Pay: Permanent or indefinite employees who have been employed for at least 12 months may be eligible for severance pay if separated involuntarily and they are not eligible for an immediate annuity. For additional information, please visit the OPM web site at <https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/pay-leave/pay-administration/fact-sheets/severance-pay/>

8-7. State Active Duty (SAD): As ordered by the Governor of Arizona, and directed by The Adjutant General, an employee, who still serves militarily, can serve on State Active Duty status to serve in State Emergencies (such as flood relief, law enforcement augmentation, or rescue missions). Employees must be in an approved leave status (annual, compensatory, law enforcement or leave without pay) prior to performing state active duty.

## Chapter 9 – Work Schedules

9-1. Work Schedule: The employee pay period is two weeks long. Each full-time pay period will be 80-hours. Your supervisory chain of command establishes the workday schedule (duty day). Your supervisor should also furnish you with adequate notice in the event your work schedule changes, so you can make any necessary arrangements.

9-2. Alternate Work Schedule (AWS): The Arizona National Guard does recognize Alternate Work Schedules which enables employees an additional day(s) off during each pay period. For the most recent guidance, please refer to DEMA Policy 20.12.

## Chapter 10 – Leave

10-1. General: This chapter provides information pertaining to leave as a civil service employee. If you would like more detailed information, please visit the following website: <http://www.opm.gov/oqa/leave/index.asp> There are basically two types of leave, paid and non-paid.

Approval to take leave is given by your supervisor after considering the needs of the organization and mission requirements. Leave must be approved in advance, by the first level supervisor. In emergency cases, employees will obtain telephonic approval from the employee's immediate supervisor. Such request will be made within one (1) hour before the start of the duty day. There are various types of leave categories available, and each are explained below.

10-2. Annual Leave: Annual leave is your personal leave to be used at your discretion. Examples include vacations, rest and relaxation, personal business, military duty, emergencies, etc... Annual leave accrual is based on years of service. Employees with less than three years of service earn four (4) hours of leave per pay period. Employees with 3-15 years of service earn six (6) hours per pay period, and employees with over 15 years of service earn eight (8) hours per pay period. Annual leave is personal time off in a paid status. The maximum amount of annual leave an employee can carry-over into the next leave year is 240 hours. Any annual leave accrued at the end of the leave year that exceeds 240 hours will be lost. The leave year starts at the beginning of the first full pay period in January.

- a. An employee will receive a lump-sum payment for accumulated and accrued annual leave when separated from federal service or entering active duty in the armed forces and elects to receive a lump-sum payment.
- b. Temporary employees employed less than 90 days are not authorized to accrue or utilize annual leave. After 90 days of continuous employment, the temporary employee will accrue leave at the rate listed in paragraph 10-2, and may utilize annual leave.

10-3. Advanced Annual Leave: Employees must have a valid reason for requesting advanced annual leave. Advanced annual leave is not an entitlement. You must provide justification to your supervisor. Your supervisor will consider your request, considering the impact on the organization, and make a recommendation to the HRO. The amount of annual leave that may be advanced is limited to the amount of annual leave an employee would accrue in the remainder of the leave year. If an employee separates from federal service, the indebted amount of advanced annual leave must be repaid.

10-4. Sick Leave: Employees, regardless of years of employee service, are eligible to earn and use sick leave. Sick leave is earned at the rate of four (4) hours per pay period, there is no maximum carry-over limit, and it must be used in whole hour

increments.

10-5. Requesting Sick Leave: Employees requesting sick leave are responsible for notifying his or her supervisor as soon as practical. Requests for scheduled appointments must be made in advance of the date/time of the need for the sick leave.

10-6. Documenting Sickness: A Medical Certificate may be required by your supervisor for the following reasons:

- a. For absences in excess of three consecutive workdays.
- b. For shorter periods of time, if there is a reason to believe sick leave privileges are being abused.

10-7. Sick Leave for Personal Medical Needs: An employee may use sick leave when he/she:

- a. Is incapacitated for the performance of duties by physical or mental illness, injury, pregnancy, or childbirth.
- b. Receives medical, dental, or optical examination or treatment.
- c. Would, as determined by the health authorities having jurisdiction or by a health care provider, jeopardize the health of others by his or her presence on the job because of exposure to a communicable disease.

10-8. Sick Leave for Childbirth (Paid Parental Leave): Per Presidential Executive Order, the use of the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) has been expanded to include up to 12 weeks of Paid Parental Leave (PPL).

- a. Eligibility: In order to be eligible for PPL, the employee must have more than 12 months of Federal service. For temporary employees, their "Not to Exceed" date must be greater than one (1) year.
- b. The employee must have a qualifying birth or placement event - that is, the birth or placement (for adoption or foster care) of the employee's child must occur on or after 1 October 2020. An employee must invoke FMLA unpaid leave for the birth of a child or placement of a child with the employee for adoption or foster care in order to receive PPL. PPL is limited to 12 weeks in connection with a birth or placement of an employee's child. PPL may be used only during the 12-month period following the birth or placement. There are no carryover provisions for any unused PPL. An employee may not be paid for unused or expired PPL. Use of PPL is reserved for periods when an employee is acting in a parental role and engaged in activities directly related to the care of the child whose birth or placement triggered the leave



entitlement. At the request of management, an employee must provide to them the appropriate documentation showing that the employee's use of PPL is directly connected to a birth or placement that has occurred.

- c. Prior to using PPL, an employee is required to enter into a written service agreement to work for this agency for 12 weeks after the day on which PPL concludes. The 12-week work obligation is statutorily fixed and applies regardless of the actual amount of leave used (i.e., an employee who uses less than 12 weeks of PPL would still be obligated to work 12 weeks). The work obligation refers to a period during which the employee is in a duty status. Any periods of paid or unpaid leave or time off, or other periods of nonduty status (e.g., furlough or AWOL) will not count toward the 12-week work obligation. The service agreement will note the possible need to provide a reimbursement to this agency if an employee fails to meet the required work obligation.
- d. Failure to complete the 12-week work obligation may result in an employee being required to make a reimbursement to this agency (or other agencies) that employed the employee during use of PPL. The determination to impose the reimbursement is at the agency's sole and exclusive discretion, unless a waiver is required by statute and regulation. The reimbursement is equal to the total amount of any Government contribution the agency paid to maintain the employee's health insurance coverage under the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program during the period that PPL was used.
- e. If an employee has multiple children born or placed on the same day, the multiple-child birth/placement event is considered to be a single event that initiates a single entitlement of up to 12 weeks of PPL. If an employee has one or more children born or placed during the 12-month period following the date of an earlier birth or placement of a child of the employee, each event will generate a 12-week leave entitlement to be used during the 12-month period following birth/placement; however, any use of PPL during an overlap period (i.e., period contained within more than one 12-month period following birth/placement) will count toward the 12-week limit for each birth/placement involved.
- f. A "Paid Parental Leave Request Form", "12-Week Agreement to Complete Work Obligation" and "Types of Supporting Documentation for the Use of Paid Parental Leave" are attached. The anticipated date for Defense Finance and Accounting Service (DFAS) to be able to have the functionality for PPL is April 2021. Agencies should approve the use of 12 weeks paid leave as substitution for non-paid FMLA leave. Timecards should be coded "LV" and usage should be tracked manually.

10-9. Advanced Sick Leave: Upon approval of a employee's supervisor and approval of the HRO, up to 30 days of Advanced Sick Leave may be granted (not to exceed

240 hours), when supported by medical certificate describing the illness, emergency, or injury and the anticipated time of disability. Sick leave may also be advanced for adoption-related purposes.

10-10. Sick Leave Under the Family and Medical Leave Act: All covered full-time employees may use up to 104 hours of sick leave to provide care for a family member. Examples of care for family members are as follows:

- a. Provide care for a family member who is incapacitated as a result of physical or mental illness, injury, pregnancy, or childbirth.
- b. Provide care for a family member as a result of medical, dental, or optical examination or treatment.
- c. Make arrangements necessitated by the death of a family member or attend the funeral of a family member (maximum 40-hour entitlement).

NOTE: All covered full-time employees may use up to a maximum of 12 weeks (480 hours) of sick leave to care for a family member with a "serious health condition." If an employee uses any or all of his or her 13-day entitlement of sick leave for family care purposes, that amount would be subtracted from the 12-week entitlement. To use more than 40 hours of sick leave for any family care purpose, an employee must maintain a sick leave balance of 80 hours.

- d. Definition of Family Member: A "family member" is defined as a spouse, and parents thereof; children, including adopted children, and spouses thereof; parents; brothers and sisters, and spouses thereof; and any individual related by blood or affinity whose close association with the employee is the equivalent of a family relationship.
- e. Entitlement: Under the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 (FMLA), employees are entitled to a total of 12 workweeks of unpaid leave during any 12-month period for the following purposes:
  - i. Birth of a son or daughter of the employee and the care of such son or daughter.
  - ii. Placement of a son or daughter, or parent of the employee who has a serious health condition.
  - iii. Care of spouse, son, daughter, or parent of the employee who has a serious health condition.
  - iv. Serious health condition of the employee that makes the employee unable to perform the essential functions of his or her position.

- f. Holidays are not counted against the 12-week entitlement.
- g. Under certain conditions, an employee may use the 12 weeks of FMLA leave intermittently.

10-11. Compensatory Time (comp time) & Travel Compensatory Time (travel comp): In accordance with the Employee Act of 1968 (PL 90-486), National Guard employees are not entitled to overtime pay. If overtime work is required, the employee is entitled to compensatory time off equal to the time spent in regular or irregular overtime work, subject to management approval and controls. All comp time must be requested and approved in advance of the period of duty. An employee in compensatory time off status is considered to be in a status equal to annual leave. Like Comp time, Travel comp time is time outside the normal duty hours when the employee is traveling under a civilian travel order on official business. All comp time must be taken within 1 year of accrual date or it will be forfeited.

10-12. Job Benefits and Protection: Upon return from FMLA leave, an employee must be returned to the same position or to an "equivalent position with equivalent benefits, pay, status, and other terms and conditions of employment." An employee who takes FMLA leave is entitled to maintain health benefits coverage. An employee on unpaid FMLA leave may pay the employee share of the premiums on a current basis or pay upon return to work.

10-13. Advance Notice and Medical Certification: An employee must provide notice of his or her intent to take family and medical leave not less than 30 days before leave is to begin or, in emergencies, as soon as it's practical. The agency may request medical certification for FMLA leave taken to care for an employee's spouse, son, daughter, or parent who has a serious health condition, or for the serious health condition of the employee.

10-14. Blood Donation: Management and the labor organization recognize the importance of the humanitarian need for community blood donors. An employee who makes a blood donation, without compensation, may be granted a reasonable period of excused absence for travel, rest and recuperation in order to provide this beneficial community service. Such time will normally be consistent for all employees and normally will not exceed 4 hours. Unless a donation is based on an emergency request, the supervisor will schedule routine donations so as to minimize workforce disruptions or adverse impact on work scheduling or work hour requirements. The time allowed for donation may vary according to circumstances, travel, and recuperation time as mentioned above, and is not to be considered an automatic entitlement. Allowable recovery time from donating will not be carried forward or granted on another day. An employee may be required to provide proof of donation, if requested by the supervisor.

10-15. Bone Marrow or Organ Donor Leave: An employee may use up to seven (7)

days of paid leave (excused absence) 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. Leave for bone marrow and organ donation is a separate category of leave that is in addition to annual and sick leave.

10-16. Military Leave:

- a. Employees who maintain military membership in the National Guard are authorized 120 hours of Military Leave (LM) each fiscal year to be used for periods of absence from their employee employment to serve on active duty, active duty for training, or Inactive Duty for Training (IDT). The maximum number of hours an employee can have accrued at any given time is 240 hours.
- b. Military Leave needs to be submitted and approved in ATAAPS the same as any other leave request.

10-17. Law Enforcement Leave: Twenty-two (22) workdays per calendar year can be used for emergency duty as ordered by the President or Governor of Arizona. This can be for law enforcement or the protection of life and property and to serve on State Active Duty. Eligible employees are authorized up to 22 workdays (to serve in the interest of public safety) per calendar year for emergency duty as ordered by the President or a State Governor. This can be for law enforcement (LE), providing military aid to LE for the purpose of providing assistance to civil authorities in the saving of life, protection of property, or the prevention of injury. Employees may choose to use Annual Leave, Compensatory time or Leave Without Pay instead of Law Enforcement Leave for any of the 22 workdays.

10-18. Presidential Leave: Currently under Presidential Order, Federal employees who are returning from 42 days or more of active duty service in support of the Global War on Terrorism (GWOT) are entitled to 5 days of uncharged leave. The 5 days must be taken immediately upon returning to federal service. No more than 5 days will be granted for any consecutive 12 month period.

10-19. Absent Uniformed Service (AUS): AUS is absence from duty in a non-pay status. AUS requests will be submitted to your supervisor with the reasons for the request annotated. AUS requests less than 30 days are submitted on an OPM Form 71. AUS requests in excess of 30 days are submitted on a Standard Form (SF) 52. AUS is approved at the discretion of the supervisor.

10-20. Court Leave: An employee is entitled to paid time off without charge to leave for service as a juror or witness. An employee is responsible for informing his or her supervisor if he or she is excused from jury or witness service for 1 day or more or for a substantial part of a day. To avoid undue hardship, an agency may adjust the schedule of an employee who works nights or weekends and is called to jury duty.

- a. Jury Duty: An employee who is summoned to serve as a juror in a judicial proceeding is entitled to court leave.
- b. Witnesses: An employee who is summoned as a witness in a judicial proceeding, in which the Federal, State, or local government is a party, is entitled to court leave. If you work as a part-time police officer, you are excluded from this portion of the entitlement.
- c. Official Duty: An employee who is summoned as a witness in an official capacity on behalf of the Federal Government is on official duty, not court leave.
- d. Fees/Expenses: Employees must reimburse the AZNG any fees they are paid for service as a juror or witness, unless they are on annual leave status. However, monies paid to jurors for reimbursable expenses (such as mileage and parking) do not have to be reimbursed to the agency. Employees must check with the Employee Relations representative at HRO for more guidance before accepting any payments. If the witness service is in a non-official capacity and is performed on behalf of a private party, the employee's absence from duty must be charged as either annual leave or leave without pay.

10-21. Voting or Registering to Vote: It is the Employer's policy to excuse employees for a reasonable time, when practical, to do so without seriously interfering with operational requirements, to register or vote in any election or in referendums on a civic matter in the employee's registered voting area. If the polls are not open for a reasonable time before or after an employee's regular hours of work, a supervisor may grant an employee whichever of the following requires the lesser amount of time off:

- a. Permit reporting for work for a reasonable amount of time after the polls open.
- b. Permit leaving work a reasonable amount of time before the polls close. The supervisor is responsible for determining, reporting, and releasing schedules based on the circumstances surrounding a particular election and in consideration of work scheduling. To avoid potential abuses, proof of registration and/or voting may be required to substantiate the granting of time off from work. Under exceptional circumstances, an employee may be excused for additional time as needed to enable the employee to vote, depending upon the particular circumstances in each individual case, but not to exceed a full day. Supervisors will schedule employee releases for voting purposes in such a manner to ensure that activities remain open and operational on election days.

10-22. Conferences or Conventions: An employee may be excused to attend a conference or convention when in the best interest of the Arizona National Guard and

approved by the HRO.

10-23. Leave Transfer Program: An employee may donate annual leave directly to another federal employee who has a personal or family medical emergency and has exhausted his or her available paid leave. HRO administers a voluntary leave transfer program for its employees. There is no limit on the amount of donated annual leave a leave recipient may receive from the leave donor(s).

10-24. Leave Recipient: A potential leave recipient's employing agency must determine that a covered full-time employee's absence from duty (without available paid leave because of the medical emergency) is, or was expected to be, at least 24 hours. An employee may receive donated annual leave when an approved leave recipient.

10-25. Limitations on Leave Donations: In any leave year, an employee may donate not more than one-half of the total amount of annual leave accrued during a leave year. For employees with "use or lose" annual leave, the employee may donate the lesser of one-half of the annual leave that would be accrued in a leave year or the number of hours remaining in the leave year for which the employee is scheduled to work and receive pay. There is no provision or legal authority for transfer of sick leave.

10-26. Administrative Dismissal: When the Employer authorizes the shut-down or closure of an activity or unit because of weather conditions or emergency situations, the following criteria shall govern the status of affected employees: All employees are to presume that all installations will be operational each regular work day regardless of weather or other emergency conditions. Activity or facility supervisors shall determine (through normal supervisory channels) if their activity shall remain open or if it is to be closed based on anticipated or prevailing conditions, and if employees are to be dismissed. Closure of any AZNG facility, which would prevent employees from reporting to or remaining at work, must be coordinated with, and approved by, the HRO prior to such closure. Employee status at the time of the supervisory determination (and concurrence by the HRO) to close the activity and dismiss will be as follows:

- a. If the employee is on duty and excused, there is no charge to leave for the remaining hours of the work schedule following dismissal.
- b. If the employee is on duty and departed on leave after official word was received but before the time set for dismissal, leave is charged only from the time the employee departed until the time set for dismissal. Employees will not be permitted to depart before the time set for dismissal without charge to leave.
- c. If the employee is scheduled to report for duty after an initial period of leave and dismissal is given before the employee can report, then leave will be

charged until the time set for dismissal.

- d. If the employee is absent on approved leave for the entire work shift, the entire absence is charged to appropriate leave status requested.
- e. If a situation develops during non-working hours as a result of a natural disaster in which proper authority has declared roads closed or impassable, a supervisor may excuse up to 59 minutes of tardiness without charge to leave. Tardiness of longer periods may also be excused without charge to leave in cases which are personally reviewed and authorized by higher levels of supervision (with concurrence by the HRO). Annual leave or LWOP will be charged for absences in excess of the authorized tardiness, unless the supervisor determines that the employee made every reasonable effort to get to work, but was unable to do so.

10-27. Physical Fitness: Employees are authorized a maximum of six hours (three hours per week) of official duty time per pay period (2 weeks) to work on maintaining physical fitness. It is considered part of the duty day and is not charged as leave. The fitness program must comply with AZNG policy, approved by individual's supervisor, and not conflict with mission accomplishment. For additional guidance and procedures, please reference DEMA Policy 20.11.

10-28. Absence Without Leave (AWOL): An unexcused or unauthorized absence from work may be charged to AWOL. In addition to not receiving pay for the unexcused period of unauthorized absence, disciplinary action may be taken.

## Chapter 11 – Performance Appraisals

11-1. General: Performance appraisals will clearly document how each employee's performance will be measured throughout the appraisal cycle. Appraisals will consist of a minimum of one (1) and a maximum of ten (10) performance elements; all are considered critical. Each element has two parts; the element, or task, being performed and the standard as to how the element will be rated.

- a. A Critical Element is a work assignment, or responsibility, of such importance that unacceptable performance of the element would result in a determination that an employee's overall performance is rated as unacceptable.

11-2. Performance Feedback: Each supervisor will discuss and evaluate their employee's performance regularly throughout the appraisal cycle. Supervisors are required to have at least three (3) interactions with their employees during each appraisal cycle. The three (3) interactions are performance plan creation, progress review discussion and the final appraisal discussion.

11-3. Performance Appraisal Appeals: Employees may file an appeal if they are

dissatisfied with their performance appraisal. The timeline for filing appeals are as follows:

- a. Acceptable performance rating (3 to 5) – within thirty (30) calendar days of receiving the original copy of the appraisal.
- b. Unacceptable performance rating (1) – within fifteen (15) calendar days of receipt of written notice or original copy of the appraisal.

#### Chapter 12 – Incentive Awards - Monetary

12-1. Sustained Superior Performance Award: A Sustained Superior Performance Award is available for both GS and WG Employees. Outstanding performance must be articulated on the award submission and the employee's performance appraisal.

12-2. Quality Step Increase (QSI): A Quality Step Increase is granted only to GS employees below step 10. In order to be eligible, an employee's most recent performance appraisal must be "Outstanding," and the period of performance must have been in the same job and grade level for a 12-month period.

12-3. Special Act or Service Award: A Special Act or Service Award is granted in recognition of an act of heroism, or similar one-time special act, service, or scientific achievement that contributes to the efficiency, economy, or other improvement of Government operations, or is otherwise in the public interest.

#### Chapter 13 – Incentive Awards - Non-Monetary

13-1. Length of Service Award: Length of service emblems and certificates will be awarded at established intervals beginning with ten years of creditable Federal service and every five years thereafter.

13-2. Time-Off Award: A time off award is based on a special act or service or other personal effort that contributes to the quality, efficiency, or economy of Government operations.

#### Chapter 14 – Suggestion Program

14-1. If you think of ways to do things better, you can submit a suggestion. A suggestion must be an original way of doing work, a modification of a part, an invention, or any other contribution which promotes efficiency in the way we do our jobs. Your suggestions must be submitted to the person responsible for processing suggestions. Check with your supervisor or the Employee Services Supervisor in the HRO for more information. If a cash award is appropriate, the amount is determined based on benefits derived by the Government.

#### Chapter 15 – Federal Employees Group Life Insurance (FEGLI)



15-1. General: FEGLI is the largest group life insurance program in the world, covering over 4 million federal employees and retirees, as well as many of their family members.

15-2. Term Life Insurance: FEGLI provides group term life insurance. As such, it does not build up any cash value or paid-up value. It consists of Basic life insurance coverage and three options.

New federal employees are automatically covered by Basic life insurance with premiums deducted unless coverage is waived. You can carry FEGLI into retirement at generally the same cost as if still employed.

15-3. Basic Life Insurance: Basic life insurance is equal to your annual rate of basic pay rounded up to the next \$1,000, plus \$2,000. Basic insurance includes the extra benefit of Accidental Death and Dismemberment coverage. Federal employees currently pay 15-1/2 cents per thousand dollars of Basic coverage, regardless of their age.

15-4. Extra Benefit Life Insurance: FEGLI also offers an extra benefit to employees under age 45 at no additional cost. This extra benefit doubles the amount of basic life insurance payable if you are age 35 or younger. Beginning on your 36th birthday, the extra benefit decreases 10% each year, until at age 45, when there is no extra benefit remaining.

15-5. Optional Life Insurance: While Basic life insurance may be enough coverage for some people, others may want additional protection. In addition to the Basic, there are three forms of Optional insurance that you can elect. You must have Basic insurance in order to elect any of the options. Unlike Basic, enrollment in Optional insurance is not automatic. You must take action to elect the options. You must submit a completed Life Insurance Election form (SF 2817) to the Employee Services Section in the HRO within 31 days of becoming eligible. The three coverage options are:

- a. Option A: Standard life insurance in the amount of \$10,000. The cost is based on your age.
- b. Option B: Additional in an amount from one to five times your annual basic pay (after rounding up to the next \$1,000). The cost is based on your age and number of multiples you choose.
- c. Option C: Family, provides life insurance for your spouse and eligible dependent children. When you elect Option C coverage, all of your eligible family members are automatically covered. You may now choose one, two, three, four or five multiples of coverage. Each multiple is equal to \$5,000 for your spouse, and \$2,500 for each of your eligible dependent children. Each multiple is a unit. For example, if you elect

two multiples, that means you have two multiples on your spouse and two multiples on each of your eligible dependent children. You cannot elect a number of multiples for your spouse that is different from the number of multiples for your eligible children. The cost is based on your age and number of multiples you choose.

15-6. Cost: The cost of Basic insurance is shared between you and the Government. You pay 2/3 of the total cost and the Government pays 1/3. Your age does not affect the cost of Basic insurance. You pay the full cost of Optional insurance, and the cost depends on your age.

## Chapter 16 – Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB) Program

16-1. General: The FEHB Program is the largest employer-sponsored health benefits program of its kind. It provides benefits to some 9 million federal enrollees and dependents. Both you (the employee) and the Government pay a percentage of the cost. The Government picks up the largest portion of the premium.

16-2. Enrollment: To get information about enrolling in the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program, contact the HRO Employee Relations Section. They will explain the program to you, determine if you are eligible, give you appropriate literature, caution you against canceling any private health insurance you may already have before coverage becomes effective, and urge you to study the literature and decide which plan is best suited to your needs. Federal Law prohibits a person from being enrolled in more than one plan. You have 60 days from your initial appointment to enroll. For more information visit [www.opm.gov](http://www.opm.gov).

16-3. Changing Plans: You can change plans at “Open Season” (usually in the late fall time frame), and when certain “life-changing events” permit you to make changes outside the Open Season. Becoming aware of another plan that has better benefits, even if you didn't expect to want the extra benefits, does not qualify as a "life-changing event" that allows you to change plans.

16-4. Open Season: The HRO will provide notification when the nation-wide Open Season begins and ends. If you plan to carry your FEHB plan into retirement, you must have coverage for the last five years prior to your retirement.

16-5. Life-Changing Events: The birth of a child or adding a spouse is automatically covered by an existing family enrollment from the date the person becomes a family member. An employee with self-only enrollment must change to self and family in order to cover new family members. Change may be made from 31 days before to 60 days after marriage. You may review the SF 2809 for other events and timeframes that allow changes in FEHB.

16-6. Status Changes: You should inform your Human Resource Office staff and your health insurance carrier of any changes in your family status immediately.

16-7. Continuation for Survivors: Coverage is automatically continued to your eligible survivors if you die during your employee employment. You may continue health benefits coverage into retirement if you have it continuous for 5 years, or from the first opportunity to enroll.

16-8. Temporary Continuation of Coverage (TCC): TCC allows former employees to continue their Federal Employees Health Benefits Program coverage for up to 18 months, and former family members (children and former spouses) to continue Federal Employees Health Benefits Program coverage for up to 36 months. TCC is available to the following:

- a. Employees who lose their Federal Employees Health Benefits Program coverage because they leave their federal jobs.
- b. Children who lose their Federal Employees Health Benefits Program family member status because they become age 22 or marry.
- c. Former spouses who lose their Federal Employees Health Benefits Program family member status because of divorce or annulment.

16-9. Temporary Continuation of Coverage (TCC) Premium: Enrollees must pay the plan 100% of the total premium (employee and Government share) directly to the insurance provider (without a Government contribution) plus a 2% administrative charge. There are specific time periods in which you or your dependent must enroll for TCC. TCC is not available to employees separated for gross misconduct.

16-10. Long Term Care Insurance: Long term care is something you may need if you can no longer perform everyday tasks by yourself. For example, there may come a time when you need help getting dressed, eating or bathing. It also includes the kind of care you would need if you had impairment like Alzheimer's disease. You can receive this care in a variety of settings, including your home, an assisted living facility or a nursing home. Long term care isn't the type of care that you receive in the hospital or your doctor's office. It isn't the medical care you need to get well from a sickness or an injury. It isn't short-term rehabilitation from an accident or recuperation from surgery. New or newly eligible federal employees will be able to apply for the Program using the abbreviated application within 60 days of becoming eligible. For more information on the program and its cost, visit: [www.opm.gov](http://www.opm.gov)

## Chapter 17 – Volunteering for Military Service (Dual Status)

T32 employees who volunteer to perform military duty (ADOS, Title 10, Active Duty, etc...) will notify their immediate employee supervisor and their military chain of command of their request. The employee's supervisory chain of command, in consultation with the military unit, will make a recommendation for approval or denial. After considering the employees request, the employee supervisor's recommendation

and the unit commander's recommendation, The Adjutant General will approve or deny the request. TAG is the final approval authority for all military orders.

### Chapter 18 – Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA)

In accordance with the provisions of the USERRA of 1994, DOD employees who are absent from a position of employment by reason of service in the Uniformed Services shall be entitled to reemployment rights (or restoration rights). This applies to both active duty and active duty for training in the Armed Forces. The Human Resources Office must be contacted to schedule an out-processing briefing prior to entrance on active duty. Your reemployment rights expire five years after your last paid day from the employee force. You must notify HRO of your return from active duty within the below timeframes in order to be entitled to restoration:

- a. Less than 31 days: Must report back to work at the beginning of the next regularly scheduled work day following completion of service, and the expiration of 8 hours of time for safe transportation back to their residence.
- b. More than 30 days, but less than 181 days: Must apply for reemployment no later than 14 days after completion of service.
- c. More than 180 days: Have 90 days after completion of service to apply for restoration.

### Chapter 19 – Safety & Occupational Health Program

The AZNG Safety & Occupational Health Program promotes a safe and healthy working environment for all Arizona National Guard personnel. As a federal employee, the Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSHA) gives you rights and responsibilities as they apply to the OSHA law.

### Chapter 20 – Office of Workers' Compensation Program (OWCP)

20-1. On-the-Job Injury: The Federal Employees' Compensation Act (FECA) provides compensation benefits for a permanent/temporary disability due to personal injury or disease sustained in the performance of duty.

20-2. Process: If injured at work, seek medical attention and contact your supervisor immediately. Your supervisor will secure the forms required to document your injury. No matter how small the injury may seem to you, it is important that you discuss the matter with your supervisor. If your injury requires absence from the workplace, it is possible for you to be compensated for this time without charge to sick or annual leave. You are expected to return to work even if in a light duty status. Return to duty is subject to written medical restrictions. Claims for on-the-job injuries must be filed

with the Employee Relations Section in the HRO within three (3) workdays from date of injury. If a employee files a false claim, he/she is subject to prosecution and, if found guilty, could be fined or imprisoned, which could be grounds for disciplinary action.

20-3. Death: The FECA provides for the payment of benefits to survivors if the employee dies due to a work-related injury or disease.

## Chapter 21 – Retirement

The National Guard employee Program consists of two (2) basic retirement systems. Both systems give the employee a measure of income protection in case of disability, will help provide for your family in case of death, and pay you an annuity after retirement:

- a. Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS): CSRS covered employees contribute 7, 7½ or 8 percent of pay to CSRS and, while they generally pay no Social Security retirement survivor and disability (OASDI) tax, they must pay the Medicare tax. The employing agency matches the employee's CSRS contributions. It was replaced by the Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS) on 01 January 1987.
- b. Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS): FERS is a retirement plan that provides benefits from three different sources: Basic Benefit Plan, Social Security, and the Thrift Savings Plan (TSP). FERS Employees hired between 01 January 1987 and 31 December 2012 contribute 0.8% of their salary to FERS. New employees first hired in a covered position between 01 January and 31 December 2013 are considered FERS-Revised Annuity Employees (FERS-RAE) and contribute 3.1% of salary to FERS. New employees first hired into a covered position on/after 01 January 2014 are considered FERS-Further Revised Annuity Employees (FERS-FRAE) and contribute 4.4% of salary to FERS. Two of the three parts of FERS (Social Security and TSP) can go with you to your next job if you leave the Federal Government before retirement. The Basic Benefit and Social Security parts of FERS require you to pay your share each pay period. Your agency withholds the cost of the Basic Benefit and Social Security from your pay as payroll deductions. Your agency pays its part too. Then, after you retire, you receive annuity payments each month for the rest of your life.

## Chapter 22 – Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS)

22-1. Coverage: CSRS covers most National Guard employees employed prior to 1 January 1984.

22-2. Eligibility: Eligibility for retirement is determined by your age and number of years of Federal service. To be eligible for an immediate annuity you must be:

- a. Voluntary: Age 62 with 5 years of service; Age 60 with 20 years of service; or, Age 55 with 30 years of service.
- b. Involuntary: Age 50 with 20 years or 25 years any age (example: Involuntary loss of military membership not related to misconduct or delinquency) 2% reduction for each year under age 55.
- c. Disability: If you become permanently disabled after completing at least 5 years of civilian service, you may apply for a disability retirement. If you lose military membership for medical reasons and do not qualify for regular disability retirement benefits, there are special provisions which may permit you to receive an annuity.
- d. Computation of Annuity: Your retirement annuity is based on length of service and your highest pay earned during any three consecutive years of Federal employment ("high three").

22-3. Death Benefit: Your widow(er) will get an annuity if you completed at least 18 months of service at the time of your death. Unmarried dependent children will also be entitled to an annuity.

22-4. Contribution Refunds: If you quit, you can withdraw all the money which was withheld for the retirement fund. If you have completed 5 years of service but are not eligible to retire with an immediate annuity, you may leave the money in the fund.

22-5. Deferred Retirement/Annuity: At age 62 you will be entitled to a "deferred annuity." If you quit and die before reaching age 62, your survivor is entitled to a lump sum payment of your contributions.

22-6. Thrift Savings Plan: You can contribute a percentage of your salary; however, you will not receive government match fund option. For more information please visit: <http://www.tsp.gov/bulletins/05-2.pdf>. The contribution limits are set by the IRS maximums.

### Chapter 23 – Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS)

23-1. General: The Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS) became effective in 1987. Almost all new Federal employees hired after this date are automatically covered by this retirement system. The FERS is a response to the changing times and federal workforce needs. Many of its features are "portable," so that employees who leave federal employment may still qualify for the benefits. FERS employees are able to choose what is best for their individual situation. It allows for the fact that many employees may not retire from the federal government, and builds on the Social

Security credits that employees already have, or may earn in the future, from non-federal work.

23-2. Three Components of the retirement system: The retirement system is a three-tiered retirement plan consisting of the following components:

- a. Social Security Benefits, <http://www.ssa.gov/>
- b. Basic Benefit Plan, <http://www.opm.gov/retire/pre/fers/index.asp>
- c. Thrift Savings Plan Benefits <http://www.tsp.gov/>

23-3. Social Security: The first available part is Social Security. It provides monthly payments if you are retired and have reached at least age 62, monthly benefits if you become disabled, monthly benefits for your eligible survivors, and a lump sum benefit upon your death. The taxable amount deducted from an employees pay for Social Security may be adjusted as law changes.

23-4. Basic Benefit Portion: The second part, the Basic Benefit portion, is financed by a very small contribution from the employee and from the Government. Basic Plan Benefits are a monthly payment depending on the employee's pay and length of service. As in most retirement plans, a formula is used to compute the payments under the Basic Benefit Plan. The Government averages the highest three consecutive years of basic pay. This "high-three" average pay, together with the employee's length of service, is used in the benefit formula. A payroll deduction of 1.05% is contributed to the Basic Benefit Plan for your civil service retirement. The general formula for the FERS basic benefit annuity is one percent of the high-three average salary multiplied by length of creditable service (avg. high 3 x 1% for each year of service = yearly benefit or annuity). This supplement approximates the Social Security benefit earned by the employee while they were employed by the federal government. For more information please visit: <http://www.opm.gov/retire/pre/fers/computation.asp>.

23-5. Thrift Savings Plan (TSP): The TSP is a tax-deferred retirement savings and investment plan that offers the same type of savings and tax benefits that many private corporations offer their employees under 401(k) plans. The TSP will most likely be the largest portion of your retirement portfolio. (See TSP portion of this Handbook.)

23-6. Retirement Eligibility: Is determined by your age and number of years of creditable federal service. Contact the Employee Services Section in the HRO concerning your Minimum Retirement Age (MRA) and instances where your benefits may be reduced. Most employees will retire under one of the following two options:

- a. Voluntary: To be eligible for an immediate voluntary annuity you must meet one of the following criteria:
  - i. Age 62 with 5 years of service.

- ii. Age 60 with 20 years of service.
  - iii. Minimum Retirement Age (MRA) with 30 years of service.
  - iv. MRA with 10 years of service (reduction of 5% per year for each year under age 62).
- b. Involuntary (Early): To qualify for an involuntary annuity you must meet one of the following criteria:
  - i. Age 50 with 20 years of service.
  - ii. Any age with 25 years of service.
- c. If you lose your military membership, you may retire with a full annuity if you are at least age 50 with 25 years of service. You may also be eligible to receive a Special Retirement Supplement until you reach age 62, at which time you become eligible for Social Security benefits.

23-7. Deferred (or Delayed): If you leave federal service before you meet the age and service requirements for an immediate retirement benefit, you may be eligible for deferred retirement benefits. To be eligible, you must have completed at least 5 years of creditable civilian service. You may receive benefits when you reach one of the following ages:

- a. Age 62 with 5 years of service.
- b. Age 60 with 20 years of service.
- c. MRA with 30 years of service.
- d. MRA with 10 years of service with reduced benefit.

23-8. Disability: If you become disabled after completing 18 months of employee service, you may apply for a disability retirement. If you lose military membership for medical reasons and do not qualify for regular disability retirement benefits, there are special provisions which may permit you to receive an annuity.

23-9. Death Benefit: If you were married and worked for the federal government for at least 18 months, your surviving spouse may receive a lump sum payment. Survivors may also be eligible for monthly annuity payments.

- a. To be eligible for a surviving spouse annuity, the former employee must have been entitled to a deferred annuity and had at least ten years of service. In such a case, the surviving spouse is entitled to 50 percent of



the employee's annuity (which would have been payable had the former employee been eligible for an immediate annuity).

- b. Social Security also pays survivor benefits to the eligible survivors of an employee who met the minimum Social Security eligibility requirements. Eligibility requirements vary; however, the minimum number of credits required is eighteen months.

23-10. Refund of Contributions: If you leave federal service, you can withdraw all the money which you contributed to the FERS retirement fund through payroll deductions, as long as you have completed at least five (5) years of service, but are not eligible to retire with an immediate annuity. You may also leave the money in the fund and, at age 62, you will be entitled to a "deferred annuity." If you leave federal service and die before reaching age 62, your survivor is entitled to a lump sum payment of your contributions. Obtaining a refund permanently voids any future annuity for this period of service. You cannot redeposit a FERS refund once it's withdrawn. Additional information pertaining to your FERS retirement plan may be obtained from the Employee Services Section of the HRO.

#### Chapter 24 – Thrift Savings Plan (TSP)

24-1. General: The Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) is a retirement savings and investment plan for FERS and CSRS employees. Because your TSP account is intended to significantly augment your retirement income, you should not withdraw it until you leave federal service. Withdrawing it early may result in a significant increase in the amount of taxes you'll pay. A major advantage of the TSP is that you pay no taxes on contributions or earnings until you receive the money. The Thrift Savings Plan has an extensive, easy to use web-site and Thrift-Line (not toll-free), where you can get up-to-date rates of returns and make inter-fund transfers. When your TSP is first established, the TSP Office will automatically mail you a Personal Identification Number (PIN). You will need this PIN in order to access your account or to move money between funds. You can also obtain forms, publications, and up-to-date rates from their website at: <http://www.tsp.gov/>.

24-2. Self-Contributions: There are no longer any percentage limits on employee contributions to the TSP. TSP contributions are limited only by the restrictions imposed by the [Internal Revenue Code](#). The Elective Deferral Limit (I.R.C. Section 402(g)) can be viewed at: <http://www.tsp.gov/curinfo/data.html>. The elective deferral limit changes year to year. The Government matching funds will not change; it will remain 5 percent of a FERS employee's basic pay.

24-3. Government Contributions: The Government automatically contributes 1% of a FERS employee's basic pay each pay period once you are eligible (generally, about 6 to 12 months after you start). This 1% is above and beyond your pay and will be contributed to your TSP in your name whether you participate or not. This 1% Agency money does not become yours until after you are vested (3 years). The Government

will match the first 5% of your contributions (this includes the Agency Automatic 1%) if you are a FERS employee.

24-4. Waiting Periods: You may start making contributions right away. If you have any questions about your eligibility to begin contributing, contact the Employee Benefits section in the HRO.

24-5. Investments:

The TSP provides six funds in which you can invest:

- a. G-Fund: The G-Fund consists exclusively of investments in short-term non-marketable.
- b. U.S. Treasury securities specially issued to the TSP.
- c. F-Fund: The F-Fund is invested primarily in the Barclays U.S. Debt Index Fund, a commingled bond index fund designed to track, as closely as possible, the Lehman Brothers U.S. Aggregate (LBA) index.
- d. C-Fund: The C-Fund is invested primarily in the Barclays Equity Index Fund, a commingled stock index fund that tracks the Standard & Poor's 500 (S&P 500) stock index.
- e. I-Fund: The I-Fund tracks the Barclays EAFE international stock index.
- f. S-Fund: The S-Fund tracks the Wilshire 4500 index of small and medium-sized companies.
- g. L-Fund: If you want to diversify your investment with all the funds, you may want to review the Lifecycle Option or the L-Fund. The L-Funds provide you with a convenient way to diversify your account among the G, F, C, S, and I-Funds, using professionally determined investment mixes that are tailored to different time horizons. Your "time horizon" is the date (after you leave Federal service) that you think you will need the money in your TSP account. Because it is important for each L-Fund to maintain its target investment mix, the TSP will automatically rebalance each L-Fund daily. Then, each quarter, the investments in each L-Fund will shift to a slightly more conservative mix. In addition, experts will review the investment mixes periodically to be sure they are still appropriate.
- h. Earnings on the various funds are published on the TSP website (<https://www.tsp.gov>).

24-6. Vesting: Vesting means that you have met the service requirements that entitle

you to Agency Automatic (1%) Contributions and their earnings when you leave Federal service. Service requirements for vesting do not apply to any other type of contributions. Therefore:

- a. FERS and CSRS participants are always vested in their own contributions and the earnings on their contributions.
- b. FERS participants are always vested in the matching contributions their agencies make, as well as the earnings on the matching contributions. Most FERS employees become vested in their Agency Automatic (1%) Contributions after completing three (3) years of federal civilian service.

24-7. Loan Program: There are two types of TSP loans:

- a. General purpose and residential. General-purpose loans are available for a repayment period of one to four years.
- b. Loans for the purpose of a primary residence are available for a repayment period of one to 15 years.

24-8. Loan Limits: The maximum amount a TSP participant can borrow is limited by the Federal Employees' Retirement System Act of 1986 and the Internal Revenue Code. The minimum loan amount is \$1,000.

24-9. Withdrawal of TSP Account: Contributions to the TSP fund are tax deferred. Therefore, the money, and its earnings, is taxable upon withdrawal from your account after separation from federal service. You will have several withdrawal options when you leave federal service, such as:

- a. Leave money in account, which continues to accrue interest.
- b. Transfer money into Individual Retirement Account (IRA).
- c. Withdraw the lump sum.
- d. Take series of monthly payments.
- e. Purchase a life annuity.

24-10. Penalty for Early Withdrawal: If you leave federal service before the year in which you turn 55 and you withdraw your account in a single payment (including an automatic cash-out) or a series of monthly payments not based on the IRS life expectancy table, you will be subject to a 10% early withdrawal penalty tax on all direct payments you receive before age 59 ½. (This does not apply if you leave federal service on a disability retirement.)

## Chapter 25 – Political Activity

25-1. Overview: All National Guard employees are certainly encouraged to become and/or remain politically active within their home community. However, as a federal civil service employee, you are subject to certain restrictions. Any questions regarding political activities should be addressed with the Labor Relations Specialist, Human Resources Office, at (904) 823-0658.

25-2. The Hatch Act: All National Guard employees are subject to the basic political activity restrictions of the Hatch Act. Below are the guidelines established by the U.S. Office of Special Counsel (OSC). The Hatch Act governs the political activity of government employees at the federal, state and local levels. Under the Hatch Act, as amended (5 USC 7321), most federal and DC government employees:

- a. May:
  - i. Be candidates for public office in nonpartisan elections.
  - ii. Register and vote as they choose.
  - iii. Assist in voter registration drives.
  - iv. Express opinions about candidates and issues.
  - v. Contribute money to political organizations.
  - vi. Attend political fundraising functions.
  - vii. Attend and be active at political rallies and meetings.
  - viii. Join and be an active member of a political party or club.
  - ix. Sign nominating petitions.
  - x. Campaign for or against referendum questions, constitutional amendments, and municipal ordinances.
  - xi. Campaign for or against candidates in partisan elections.
  - xii. Make campaign speeches for candidates in partisan elections.
  - xiii. Distribute campaign literature in partisan elections.
  - xiv. Hold office in political clubs or parties, including serving as a delegate to a convention.

b. May not:

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

25-3. Filing a Hatch Act Complaint: Individuals may report suspected Hatch Act violations to the OSC. Complaints of such activities should be submitted to the OSC in writing. A complaint form can be found at [www.osc.gov](http://www.osc.gov). However, employees are encouraged to inform their supervisors of any perceived Hatch Act violation by any employee working for the Arizona National Guard. If such a perceived violation involves a federal employee working for another federal agency, direct contact with OSC would certainly be in order.

25-4. Hatch Act Violation Penalty: The United States Office of Special Counsel (OSC), is authorized by law to provide Hatch Act advisory opinions. These opinions respond to questions from government employees, managers or supervisors, and others about whether or not they (or someone else) may engage in specific political activities under the act. The OSC may recommend to The Adjutant General to impose a penalty for a violation. The penalty ranges from a 30-day suspension without pay, to removal from federal civil service employment.

25-5. Hatch Act Advisory Opinion: Individuals may request oral and written opinion advice about activities which are permitted or prohibited by the Hatch Act, and receive an oral or written opinion, as appropriate, from the OSC. If a federal employee is interested in getting involved in political activities and is contacting OSC for an opinion, it is recommended that the requestor ask OSC to respond with a written

opinion, so the employee can provide the OSC opinion to the supervisor should a difference of opinion arise. Requests may be submitted to the following address:

Hatch Act Unit  
US Office of Special Counsel 1730 M Street,  
NW (Suite 201)  
Washington, DC 20036-4505  
Telephone: (800) 84H-ATCH (854-2824)  
Telephone: (202) 653-7143  
Fax: (202) 653-5151  
Email: hatchact@osc.gov

## Chapter 26 – Standards of Conduct

26-1. Responsibilities and Standards: Each employee is expected to display only the highest degree of honesty and integrity at all times. An employee's actions must always demonstrate the utmost honor and respect associated with being an employee of the National Guard. Should your conduct breach any statute, regulation, or other proper authority, you will be subject to disciplinary or adverse action. Examples of such prohibited conduct include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Using or being under the influence of illegal drugs or intoxicants Using, or being, under the influence of alcohol during duty hours Gambling or betting on duty.
- Stealing or wrongful appropriation Misuse or abuse of government property.
- Using government property or information for private gain or personal use. (example: using a government-issued travel card for personal use)
- Viewing or possessing pornographic or obscene material of any kind on duty.
- Engaging in riots or civil disorders.
- Participating in or provoking a strike or work stoppage Accepting gifts or favors from subordinates or customers Relationships between a supervisor and subordinate employee that violates either AR 600-20 or AFI 36-2909.
- Bribery or graft.
- Failure to pay debts and financial obligations in a timely manner.
- Sexual harassment.
- Discrimination for any reason, to include, but not limited to: race, color, religion, age, sex, national origin, handicap, reprisal, political affiliation or marital status.

- Conduct prejudicial to the government inappropriate political activity.
- Violating prohibited personnel practices violating the merit system principles.
- Accepting outside employment that conflicts with employee duties or discredits the National Guard.
- Being absent without leave.
- Failure to follow established leave procedures (tardiness, leave abuse, etc...).
- Workplace violence of any kind.
- Using obscene or vulgar language in the workplace.
- Making or inciting false statements.
- Discourtesy.
- Insubordination.
- Obstructing or failing to cooperate with official investigations / fact finding.
- Sleeping or loafing on duty.
- Delay in carrying out work.
- Dereliction in the performance of duty.
- Engaging in acts of retaliation.
- Failure to obey or adhere to all constitutional obligations.
- Conduct that is unbecoming a National Guard employee.

26-2. Violations and Penalties: Any violation of these standards is punishable by disciplinary or adverse action. In addition to punishment imposed by the agency, there may also be civil and/or criminal penalties depending on the nature of the offense. These standards of conduct are common standards expected of all employees of the Arizona National Guard and enforced by supervisors at all levels. It is your supervisor's decision to determine violations and appropriate action. Your supervisor may have additional guidance and expectations that further addresses these common standards.

#### Chapter 27 – Disciplinary and Adverse Actions

27-1. General: There are countless situations that arise periodically which warrant disciplinary or adverse action. Violations to the standards of conduct, misconduct and other inappropriate actions/behavior/attitude constitute the utilization of these measures. The determination of the level of disciplinary or adverse action imposed on an employee is determined by the supervisor. The timeliness of disciplinary or adverse action after a violation has occurred will vary based on many factors (examples: fact finding, mission load, annual training, TDY, training, supervisory coordination, etc...).

27-2. Disciplinary Actions: There are two types of disciplinary actions:

- a. Oral Admonishments: A verbal admonishment that notifies a employee to desist from certain behavior/misconduct/course of action. This conversation may be documented in a local supervisor's file.
- b. Letter of Reprimand (Written Reprimand): A more formal method of discipline than an oral admonishment, it formalizes discipline in writing. It also serves as a warning of what might happen if the situation is not corrected. This document is filed in your official personnel folder maintained in the HRO along with a copy filed locally for a period of up to three (3) years.

27-3. Adverse Actions: There are three types of adverse actions:

- a. Suspension (from work without pay): A suspension can range from 1 day through an indefinite period of time, depending on the offense. All suspensions are without pay.
- b. Change to Lower Grade: A change to lower grade means the reduction in employee pay grade level to a lower level. This is a long-term adverse action affecting pay.
- c. Removal (from employment): This is the involuntary termination of employee employment. This is the most severe action that can be imposed on an employee regarding employee employment, excluding any civil action depending on the offense.

27-4. Process: In all adverse action matters, there are considerable due process protections in place, including the right to an administrative hearing or appellate review. The final level of appeal on these actions rests with The Adjutant General.

27-5. Appeal and Grievance Procedures: Information on appeal and grievance procedures is contained in the Labor Management Relations Agreement, provided at new employee orientation and as required thereafter. For more information, see Employee Personnel Regulation (TPR) 752, Disciplinary and Adverse Actions. If you have questions regarding this, which your supervisor cannot answer, you may contact



the Arizona National Guard's Labor Relations Specialist at (904) 823-0658.

### Chapter 28 – Resignation from the Employee Program

This is a voluntary action and notice should be given to your supervisor at the earliest possible date. Under normal circumstances, an employee must submit a Standard Form 52 (Request for Personnel Action), indicating their intent to resign as a federal employee. The form must include the effective date of the resignation. Supervisors can address questions regarding the resignation process and provide the form with additional guidance for completing it. This does not apply to temporary employees or indefinite employees when their term of appointment is the reason for separation.

### Chapter 29 – Personal Matters

29-1. General: Tragedies can occur when you least expect them. You should keep your family informed regarding their potential benefits or entitlements. In the event of a death of an employee, a representative from the Human Resources Office will assist the family in filing a death claim.

29-2. Designation of Beneficiary(ies): You do not need to prepare designation of beneficiary forms unless you wish to have your beneficiary other than "by-law." If you do designate beneficiaries, you must keep them current; once designated, a designation takes effect over a will or any other document. Benefits paid by law unless designated are:

- a. Unpaid compensation.
- b. Federal Employee Group Life Insurance.
- c. Thrift Savings.
- d. Retirement.
- e. Unpaid compensation and allowances.
- f. Wills.

NOTE: You are reminded that you should prepare a will and keep it current. You also need to pursue the possibility of preparing a power of attorney and living will.

29-3. Other Important Documents: We suggest that you keep the following documents together in a safe place and advise your family of the location:

- Birth Certificate(s)
- Contracts
- Marriage Certificate(s)

- Social Security Card
- Adoption Papers, if applicable
- Military Personnel File
- Savings Bond(s)
- Employee Personnel File
- Divorce Decree(s), if applicable
- A Copy of your Will
- Real Estate Tax Receipts
- Insurance Policies
- Auto Tag Receipt(s)
- Thrift Savings Plan Documents
- Deeds
- Claim Number assigned by the VA, if applicable
- Social Security Cards

### Chapter 30 – Classification

30-1. Classification Overview: Position Classification is a comprehensive, orderly system for the identification of positions by title, occupational groups/series, and grades according to duties, responsibilities and qualifications required. The process used to determine the pay grade of a position evaluates the duties and responsibilities of the position, and has nothing do with the employee occupying the position. The following list breaks down federal positions:

- a. Salary is paid in accordance with the assigned grade of your position as provided by law.
- b. General Schedule (GS) positions generally cover work that is professional, management, administrative, clerical, non-trade and other miscellaneous type of work.
- c. Wage Grade (WG) positions generally cover work that is in the trades or craft field, and that is of a technical nature.

30-2. Position Descriptions: Employees have a Position Description (PD) that lists in order of importance or frequency, all major duties and responsibilities required of the position occupied. Major duties govern the primary reason(s) for the position's existence. Position descriptions have been established by utilizing Position Classification Standards published by the Office of Personnel Management. The publications are not National Guard unique or specific. NGB publishes position descriptions for state and territories. These are the only position descriptions authorized for use.

30-3. Classification Appeals:

- a. The first step is to ask for a position review. This gives the classifier an

opportunity to review the position and render a decision based on the most current information. If an incumbent disagrees with the findings, he/she may file a classification appeal.

- b. A classification appeal may be filed instead of asking for a position review, provided the duties and responsibilities described in the position description are accurate.
- c. One of three things can happen as a result of an appeal. The position will be:
  - i. Upgraded
  - ii. Downgraded
  - iii. Unchanged
- d. The Classification Specialist in the HRO can provide information concerning classification appeal procedures.

## Chapter 31 – Staffing and Placement

(PPP, RRR, Temps, temp promos, details, change to lower grades, retain pay/grade)

31-1. General: The Arizona National Guard has a Merit Promotion Plan which specifies how we advertise, hire, and promote employees. Promotions are based on a system of merit. Position advertisements list the minimum qualification requirements in order to qualify for the position. Interested applicants submit applications via USA Jobs website (<https://www.usajobs.gov>) for positions which they feel qualified (See “How to Apply” in section 31-4 below). Applications are staffed for qualifications, and applicants who are found qualified are forwarded to the selecting official for consideration. It is up to each applicant to check the careers website (<https://dema.az.gov/acreers/dema-jobs>) for available opportunities (updated daily).

31-2. Advertisements: Generally advertisements are open for a period of anywhere from 5 to 21 days depending on the Area of Consideration (AoC). Each position advertisement will outline the specific requirements of the job to be filled. It is important for applicants to pay particular attention to the area of consideration to ensure they meet all eligibility requirements.

31-3. Advanced in Hire: A Superior Qualifications, Special Needs Appointment and Advanced In-Hire Rate Appointments provide the ability to set pay at a step higher than the minimum step in the GS/WG pay system due to the candidate’s superior qualifications or the agency’s special need for the employee’s unique abilities. An individual who is deemed superiorly qualified may receive a rate higher than step 1 if approved by the HRO. The Selecting Official must submit the Advanced in Hire Form

(available here: <https://dema.az.gov/careers/hro>) to HRO for approval/disapproval prior to the individual's start date.

31-3. Opportunity: The employee program is a career program designed with you and your interests in mind. You are encouraged to seek promotion opportunities to enhance your career.

31-4. How to Apply: The instructions below explain step-by-step how to apply for an employee vacancy posted on USAJOBS.

- a. Go to <https://dema.az.gov/careers/hro>
- b. All vacancy announcements will be displayed after clicking on the appropriate category.
- c. When you select the vacancy of interest, click on the indicated hyperlink to view the vacancy.
- d. At this point you will be linked to the USAJOBS website.
- e. The vacancy announcement will be displayed along with the area of consideration for who can apply.
- f. The menu at the top of the page represent hyperlinks to the various parts of the vacancy announcement.
- g. Each tab is labeled: Overview, Locations, Duties, and Requirements.
- h. Select all tabs to review the entire organized vacancy announcement.

**IMPORTANT NOTES:**

- ❖ The “Search Jobs” tab is where you go to find additional federal job openings.
- ❖ The “My USA Jobs” tab is where you can establish a username and password to access the system and post your resume and supporting documentation online.
- ❖ To print the ENTIRE announcement, click “PRINT PREVIEW.”
- i. Once you are linked to the job, you can go back to the USAJOBS home page and click on “My USA Jobs.”
- j. The system will prompt you to establish a username and password so

you can access the system and post your resume and supporting documents online. (Follow the instructions on the screen.)

- k. Once you establish your password, you can create your customer account. (Follow the instructions on the screen.)
- l. After you enter all the necessary data and have successfully established your account, you can create your resume. (Follow the instructions on the screen for completing your resume.)
- m. Now create your resume (add the information you want on your resume).
  - i. Be sure to include both the beginning and ending month and year for job experience.
  - ii. Please ensure that your job descriptions are as detailed as possible regarding your experience which is related to the position for which you are applying (i.e., when applying for a Supply Employee position, emphasize any supply-related experience).
- n. Now click on “activate resume.” You have successfully created and saved a resume in USAJOBS which can be uploaded to the system.

**IMPORTANT NOTE: Important Confidentiality Statement:** Choose “confidential” to hide your contact information, current employer name (your current job is defined by an end date or “present”), and references, from recruiters performing resume searches. If you apply online with a confidential resume, all information will be visible to the selecting official of the position.

- o. Now go back to your vacancy of interest and click on the “How to Apply” tab. \*\*Once you have completed a resume once, you do not have to follow the above steps. You may go straight to the announcement and apply. \*\*
  - i. Click on the button “APPLY ONLINE” located at the bottom of the page.
  - ii. You will then be directed to logon if you have not already done so.
  - iii. You will then need to select the resume that you wish to use for the position. (You can create up to 5 resumes in USAJOBS.)

- iv. You will then be directed to the Application Manager website.
  - v. On this page you will need to logon to start the application process.
  - vi. Once you are logged in, you will see 3 boxes:
  - vii. “My application packages” will be any and all positions that you have started the application process for.
  - viii. “Start a New Application” is where you will apply for a new position by typing in the vacancy ID #.
  - ix. “My Profile” is where you can edit/view your Application Manager Profile information.
- p. Enter the Vacancy Identification Number OR the control number (from the vacancy announcement). The vacancy ID number is 8 characters (will always start with PZ) and the control number is 8 characters and is the last 8 digits of the web link. This will bring you to the questionnaire to register for USAJOBS.
- q. Follow the steps to answer all questions in the application questionnaire.
- r. Now that you have completed your questionnaire, you are ready to upload your resume or any additional documents required for the position.
- s. If you wish to upload additional documents IN ADDITION to your USAJOBS created resume:
- i. Select the “Document Type” from the dropdown menu (Resume, Transcript, or Miscellaneous).
  - ii. Click “Browse” to locate the document on your computer.
  - iii. Click the “Upload” button.
  - iv. When the message “Upload Successful” appears below the “Upload” button, you will get a “documentation on file” status bar. This indicates your document is on file for the Vacancy ID entered for the job in which you are applying.
  - v. Repeat the three steps above to upload additional supporting documents, like your OF-612 or your Resume. (We no longer

use the SF-171.)

- vi. Once you upload your supporting documents you will see the “Upload Successful” in blue under Step #4. There will also be a blue bar titled “Documents on File”. This will list all your documents uploaded and their status.
- vii. Again, repeat the three steps above to upload miscellaneous documents like transcripts and licenses. DD 214’s are NOT required, as we do not offer veteran’s preference since the majority of our positions require membership in the National Guard.
- t. You will then be routed to the next step “Submit My Answers.” Click the “Submit My Answers” if you are ready to submit. Make sure the box is checked next to “Save this application package information to my profile.” If you still need more time to update your resume or documents, then click “Main” or “Logout.”
- u. Congratulations! You have completed your upload of supporting documents, and you have successfully completed your online application. You will receive an automated confirmation that your application has been submitted to the email address provided. \*\*If you wish to confirm that your application was received, please contact HRO-Staffing PRIOR to the closing date of the position.\*\*
- v. If you have supporting documents in electronic format, please submit them using the “Document Upload Service.” If you have hard copies of some of your supporting documents AND ARE UNABLE TO SCAN THEM, follow these steps to submit them via fax:
  - i. Download and print the fax cover page.
  - ii. Fill in the fax cover page accurately and neatly.
  - iii. Complete the OPM 1203 FX form in its entirety.
  - iv. Fax the cover page and the supporting documents to 478-757-3144 (OPM Macon).
- w. Tips for faxing supporting documents:
  - i. If you have submitted a USAJOBS resume or uploaded other supporting documents, you DO NOT need to submit additional copies via fax.

- ii. A legible, accurate fax cover page allows your faxed documents to be matched with your electronic record. Pay careful attention to the Vacancy ID number, your name and your SSN. If this information is inaccurate or incomplete, your application may not be considered and/or received.
- iii. You need Adobe Reader to download the fax cover page. To obtain a free version of Adobe Reader, click on the following link: [www.adobe.com](http://www.adobe.com).
- x. Once you have faxed all your supporting documents, you have completed the application process.
- y. You will receive confirmation that your application was successfully submitted to the email address provided on the OPM form 1203FX. If you DO NOT provide an email address, you will NOT be able to receive receipt confirmation of your application.
- z. Note: Please DO NOT forward hard copy or email applications and supporting documents to HRO CONTACTS. We can ONLY accept documents in electronic format through the USAJOBS Application Manager.

## Chapter 32 – Reduction in Force (RIF)

32-1. Definition: A Reduction-In-Force (RIF) occurs when an agency is obligated to furlough one or more employees for 30 or more days, change to lower grade, or separate, because of a lack of work, shortage of funds, reassignment or realignment, reorganization or reduction. The cause may come from the action of Congress, the President, the Office of Management and Budget, or from decisions of the head of the agency. Whatever the source, officials of the agency determines the organizational structure and the positions that will remain resourced.

32-2. Process: The employee program is a career program and you are considered a valuable part of it. Therefore, every effort will be made to avoid a RIF. In the event a RIF cannot be avoided, the agency must describe the organizational and geographic limits within which employees will compete for retention of their jobs. This is called the competitive area. The competitive area may consist of units/activities or cities, or combinations thereof. The second limit is by grade and occupation. This is called the competitive level. Each competitive level consists of all positions in a competitive area in the same grade and series. These levels are similar enough in duties, qualification requirements, pay schedules, and working conditions, that the incumbent of one position could successfully perform the critical elements of any other position, with minimum training or interruption of work operations.

32-3. Results: The names of all employees in a competitive level are listed on a



retention register in the order of their relative standing. The factors used to determine RIF retention register standing are listed in sequential order: Type of Appointment/Employee Tenure (1, 2, 3 or 0), then Performance Appraisal (rating category & score). Employees reduced in grade through the RIF process will be entitled to Grade then Pay retention as authorized by regulation. In the event the RIF process results in an employee being separated, the employee would be placed on a reemployment priority list (a list of employees separated as a result of a RIF action, which have priority consideration prior to any equal or intervening position being filled) and enrolled in the Department of Defense, Priority Placement Program.

32-4. Additional Information: RIF regulations are very complex. The information provided in this handbook is intended to give you only the most basic understanding. Consult your HRO for complete RIF regulations.

### Chapter 33 – Training and Development

33-1. Overview: Supervisors will determine training needs and develop an Individual Training Plan (ITP) for each employee based on the position description and wage/pay grade of the position, as well as the individual's experience and prior training. Training and development activities may occur as full-time or part-time, on or off-duty, day or evening, or any combination of these. A tool to assist can be found at the Civilian Human Resources Training Application System:

<https://www.atrrs.army.mil/channels/chrtas/student/logon.aspx?caller=1>. Training and development needs may be met by the following:

- a. Mandated training-attendance at the National Guard Professional Education Center (PEC), Little Rock, Arkansas is the first training to be attended by the majority of full-time employees. Attendance to a course designed for the specific position is required within the first 24 months. The National Guard Bureau, as well as other agencies, conducts many specialized courses specifically designed for employees. See <https://www.pec.ng.mil/>.
- b. Developmental assignments include staff assignments, operational assignments and job cross-training.
- c. Self-development training gained on your own time with or without Federal tuition assistance.
- d. Training and education provided through agency facilities, other government and military facilities, military technical schools, and non-government facilities. There are many resources available (i.e., USDA Graduate School Course Catalog: <https://www.graduateschool.edu>).
- e. On the job training.

33-2. Reference: CNGBI 1400.25, Vol 400.

### Chapter 34 – Labor-Management Relations

34-1. Labor-Management Relations Agreement (LMRA), also known as a Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA): In the AZNG we have developed a LMRA which is a contract that documents how we conduct the administrative and support business between management and the workforce. Management and the workforce, of both the Arizona Army and Air Guard, are subject to the stipulations in this document.

34-2. The Association of Civilian Employees (ACT): The AZNG has two labor organizations that support the interests of the employees each represents. The union that represents Arizona is The Association of Civilian Employees, The Arizona Army National Guard chapter is represented by Chapter 61, and the Arizona Air National Guard is represented by Chapter 71.

34-3. Bargaining Unit Status (BUS): All Federal Civil Service positions have a BUS code assigned which determines if the position is eligible for inclusion in the bargaining unit. If you occupy a position that is within the bargaining unit, you have the legal right to, or not to, form, join, or assist your respective labor organization. If you occupy a bargaining unit position, you are entitled to representation. To determine your BUS, look in block 37 of your latest SF 50 and find your code below:

- f. BUS Code 8888: This code excludes an employee from belonging to a labor organization. These are usually managers, supervisors, management representatives and similar employees.
- g. BUS Code 5004: This code is for Arizona Army National Guard personnel who may belong to the Army labor organization. This excludes those employees described in paragraph “a.” above.
- h. BUS Code 5003: This code is for Arizona Air National Guard personnel who may belong to the Air labor organization. This excludes those employees described in paragraph “a.” above.
- i. BUS Code 7777: This code is for all temporary employees and excludes these employees from belonging to the labor organization.

34-4. Membership/Eligibility: Eligible employees may choose to join the union as a dues paying member at anytime. Nothing in the LMRA requires a employee to become or to remain a member of the union, or to pay dues to the organization. The labor organizations have the forms necessary to start or stop payroll deductions for labor organization dues. Once an employee becomes a dues paying member, union dues deductions may not be revoked by the dues paying member for a minimum of one (1) year. If you have questions regarding our labor organizations, contact them directly. Other labor questions should be addressed to the Labor Relations Specialist,

who can be contacted at DSN: 822-0658 or Commercial: 904-823-0658.

### Chapter 35 – Smoking Policy

Smoking is prohibited in all occupied buildings and work areas. This includes, but is not limited to; private offices, hallways, auditoriums, conference rooms, restrooms, and supply rooms. Smoking is also prohibited in all AZNG vehicles and aircraft, to include GSA leased vehicles. Those employees and visitors who choose to smoke, may only do so in designated smoking areas.

### Chapter 36 – Substance Abuse

36-1. Policy: The policy of the Arizona National Guard is to provide for a workforce and workplace that is free of substance abuse and illegal drug use. Leaders and supervisors must be ready to help those who confront their addiction or use, through self-referral. Successful rehabilitation and return to duty is the desirable goal. Employees who choose to use illegal drugs are subject to disciplinary action and could be terminated from federal employment.

36-2. Assistance: There are many programs available to provide assistance to an employee affected by substance abuse. See Chapter 4 of this handbook for more information on the Employee Assistance Program. This assistance is designed to help the employee resolve problems that may be affecting his/her job performance and overall well-being.

36-3. Supervisor Options: If a supervisor suspects an employee under his/her supervision may be abusing alcohol or drugs, or appears to be under the influence of such while in a work environment, the supervisor must remove the employee from the work-site (have the offending employee transported home). Management has the right to require an employee to leave the work-site when it is determined that: (1) the employee is not ready, willing and able to perform his/her assigned duties; and/or (2) the employee's continued presence is highly undesirable or presents an immediate threat to Government property or the well-being employees, co-workers, or the public.

### Chapter 37 – Cell Phone Use

37-1. Cell phone distractions can impug on your spatial awareness, recognition of hazards, and operation of dangerous equipment. OSHA considers this to be a "recognized hazard" to employee safety under the General Duty Clause, Section 5(a)(1) of the Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSHA).

37-2. Cell phone use will be permitted in the workplace provided that it does not interfere with the Performance of duties or create a safety hazard. Management may identify areas where cell phone use is banned based on safety (fuel points, heavy traffic areas, etc). Abuse of cell phones will be dealt with on an individual basis.

## Conclusion

We hope this Employee Handbook provided you with a general overview of what you and your supervisor expect out of this program. For more details, contact your supervisor or the POC's listed within this booklet.

Congratulations on your career selection, and we wish you all the best.

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