

Pay & Personnel Newsletter

United States Coast Guard Pay & Personnel Center

Contents

Transfer Season 2017 is in Full Swing 2

Defense Travel Management Office Allowances and Regulations Update 2

Travel Authorizing-Approving Official Designation Procedures 2

DoD Launches Blended Retirement System Comparison Calculator..... 2

Thrift Savings Plan (TSP Blended Retirement System (BRS) Resources Available 4

The Next PPC Top 10 Tuesday is 15 August 4

CGHR: On the Radar Screen, 8 August..... 4

TMT Courses/Competencies Transmitted to Direct Access..... 5

Reserve Supplemental Advancement Lists Updated 5

Direct Access Reserve Order Discrepancies Report Explained 5

Overview of the SGLI Program..... 5

PPC Procedures and Development (P&D) Presentation Library..... 6

Digital Signatures on Travel Orders 7

Change to Notice of Overpayment Process..... 8

Leave Correction Report Now Available in Direct Access..... 8

Recertifying User Roles for Annual Direct Access User Audit..... 8

Family Emergency Leave Travel Claim Guide Added 8

SPO Consolidation Update: SPO at Sector Northern New England Closed 8

Critical Housing Areas (CHA) Update 8

Coast Guard Standard Meal Rate (CGSMR) Deduction Auto-Start..... 9



Join us on Tuesday, 15 August at 1300 (CDT) for PPC's Top Ten Tuesday. See article on page 4 for details.

About the PPC Customer Newsletter: An authorized publication, the PPC Customer Newsletter is published under the direction of the U.S. Coast Guard Pay & Personnel Center. Views and opinions expressed are not necessarily those of the Department of Homeland Security or the U.S. Coast Guard. The PPC Customer Newsletter shall not be considered an authority for any official action and is non-record material. The PPC Customer Newsletter is published quarterly. Articles are solicited from all readers.

How to submit an article: Articles for the PPC Customer Newsletter may be submitted by e-mail to [the Procedures & Development branch e-mail address "PPC-PF-PD"](#).

Pay & Personnel Newsletter

United States Coast Guard Pay & Personnel Center

Transfer Season 2017 is in Full Swing

Effective and successful transfers are an essential part of Coast Guard operations and affect every member at some point in their career. The Transfer Season team is consistently finding ways to simplify and improve the technical portion of this important process.

Under the technical guidance of TISCOM-EISI Product Line, automated by OSC CGFIXIT Team, and managed by Centralized Service Desk, Transfer Season 2017 leverages an automated method to move CGOne Standard User accounts and mailboxes from one unit to another. This process, which reconfigures user accounts for use at a new location, does **not** move user data, such as files maintained on the departing unit's file server, but does archive them for a specific time. For this reason, transferring personnel are responsible for performing a number of tasks on their own before departing their unit.

The automated portion of a PCS Transfer is triggered by the transferring member's submittal of a CGFIXIT ticket at least two weeks before departing their unit. Once a ticket is submitted, the User Transfer Service (UTS) system completes the account transfer process. Anyone who fails to submit a CGFIXIT ticket before departure will experience delays at their new unit.

Learn more about end user responsibilities and find helpful tips to ensure a smooth and successful transfer of IT resources by visiting the [User Account Transfer Resources](#) site on CG Portal.

After transferring to a new unit, users might receive an email with a survey about the technical portion of their transfer experience.

Our Transfer Season team encourages personnel to participate in the survey and share candid feedback that will help improve future transfer seasons.

Defense Travel Management Office Allowances and Regulations Update

The Defense Travel Management Office has updated the following information for 01 August 2017:

[OCONUS Non-Foreign and Foreign Per Diem Rates](#)
[Overseas Housing Allowances \(OHA\)](#)
[Overseas Cost of Living Allowances \(COLA\)](#)
[Joint Travel Regulations \(JTR\) and Appendices](#)

To access this information, visit the [DTMO Website](#).

Travel Authorizing-Approving Official Designation Procedures

Directions on how to properly submit the AO memo and CG-7421A New!

In order for a member to receive AO permissions, an AO designation memo must be filled out and digitally signed by the unit CO or OIC. Once that has been completed, the member **MUST** attach the PDF document (NOT SCANNED) to the CG 7421A form. Complete the form, digitally sign it, email it to the command supervisor for electronic signature approval. To complete this process correctly, please follow this guide "[Directions on how to properly submit the AO memo and CG7421A](#)".

DoD Launches Blended Retirement System Comparison Calculator

The Defense Department has launched a [comparison calculator](#) for eligible service

Pay & Personnel Newsletter

United States Coast Guard Pay & Personnel Center

members to analyze their estimated retirement benefits under the legacy system and the new [Blended Retirement System](#).

The tool walks members through five screens, allowing users to adjust 12 data fields and compare benefit scenarios under both systems, Air Force Maj. Michael Odle, the Defense Department's assistant director of military compensation policy, explained.

The calculator is aimed at helping eligible members make the best decision about whether to remain in the current retirement plan, known as the High-3 System, or opt into the Blended Retirement System, which goes into effect Jan. 1, he said.

Eligible service members have until Dec. 31, 2018, to enroll in the new system. Military members who enter service on or after Jan. 1 will automatically be enrolled in the BRS.

The tool is meant to provide flexibility so members can compare estimated benefits under a variety of situations, said Steve Galing, the lead analyst in the Defense Military Personnel Policy Analytical Directorate.

Members are advised to consult with a financial professional, he said. "This is a personal decision," he added. "There are a lot of various resources available to our members, but ultimately it is up to the member."

DoD-Endorsed Calculator

The calculator is a comprehensive tool designed to take into account the unique financial situations of all who serve -- active duty, National Guard members and reservists, Odle said, and it's designed to be used in conjunction with the mandatory BRS opt-in course.

This comparison calculator is the only comparison tool endorsed by DoD, he added.

The opt-in BRS course is available with a common access card through [Joint Knowledge](#)

[Online](#) or through a service's learning management system. [Military OneSource](#) offers the course without a CAC. Military OneSource is hosting a Blended Retirement System question-and-answer session June 8 at 1 p.m. EDT on its [Facebook page](#).

Additionally, an optional training course for the calculator will be available in the next weeks, Odle said.

Exploring Options Under Calculator

An information box will pop up when users hover over underlined text in the calculator, providing further information on that topic, Odle explained. Further information is available through the links in the "more info" section under each page of the calculator.

After a user inputs all the information, the calculator will generate a results page. Service members are encouraged to go through the process several times to see how their projected benefits change under various situations, Odle said.

The comparison calculator does not take into account optional [Thrift Savings Plan](#) service member contributions under the legacy plan, and it does not account for optional monthly automatic Treasury Direct Government Savings Bonds purchased under the legacy retirement plan, he explained.

All currently serving members are grandfathered under their legacy retirement plans. Active component service members with fewer than 12 years of service as of Dec. 31, 2017, and reservists in a pay status with fewer than 4,320 retirement points as of Dec. 31, 2017, are covered under the existing system, but are eligible to opt into the Blended Retirement System.

(Follow Lisa Ferdinando on Twitter [@FerdinandoDoD](#))

Pay & Personnel Newsletter

United States Coast Guard Pay & Personnel Center

Thrift Savings Plan (TSP Blended Retirement System (BRS) Resources Available

Thrift Savings Plan (TSP Blended Retirement System (BRS) Resources Available — (June 2, 2017) Two new sources of information—a fact sheet and a video—about the new Blended Retirement System (BRS) are now available. The information is meant to help members of the uniformed services who will have fewer than 12 years of service on December 31, 2017 decide whether to opt into BRS or stay with their current system. See the fact sheet [Questions and Answers about Opting into the Blended Retirement System \(BRS\)](#) and the video “[Opting into the Blended Retirement System \(BRS\)](#).”

know. We look forward to seeing all of you online and ready for some fun! For those of you who cannot make it, the session will be recorded and it along with the Q&A portion will be posted on the PPC Procedures and Development Website.

DATE: Tuesday, August 15, 2017

TIME: 1300 CDT

MEETING

LINK: <https://dhsconnect.connectsolutions.com/top10tuesday/>

To see PPC's Top 10 Tuesday schedule for 2017, click [here](#).

The Next PPC Top 10 Tuesday is 15 August

The Pay & Personnel Center's next **Top Ten Tuesday** is 15 August 2017 at 1300 Hrs. (Central Time).



The topic this month is all about overpayments and the debt collection process!

The July Top 10 isn't just for Yeoman, this month's Top 10 will provide attendees in-depth insight into overpayments and the debt collection process. Please promote to any and everyone.

Please mark your calendars, bring your questions and remember to tell everyone you

CGHR: On the Radar Screen, 8 August

Welcome to the latest issue of CGHR: On the Radar Screen. You can access the newsletter when (and how) it's convenient for you – from work, from home, your smartphone, or your tablet. CGHR is your calendar for upcoming training and professional development events, as well as time-sensitive news.

You can read CGHR in its entirety by going to <http://www.dcms.uscg.mil/CGHR/8-8-17-CGHR/>

If you have trouble accessing any of the newsletter links from your Coast Guard workstation, forward this email so you can read CGHR at home (or share with your family).

In this issue, you will find:

- On the Horizon
- Articles and Resources
- Recent Flag Voices
- Coast Guard All Hands and Compass Blogs
- Recent Messages
- CG SUPRT
- From the SETA Newsletter

Pay & Personnel Newsletter

United States Coast Guard Pay & Personnel Center

Earlier issues of CGHR can be accessed at <http://www.dcms.uscg.mil/CGHR>

TMT Courses/Competencies Transmitted to Direct Access

Ever wonder which courses automatically get transmitted to DA when entered in TMT? There are two methods to check.

You can use the Competency Dictionary located on our website at

<https://cg.portal.uscg.mil/units/ppc/PD/guides/Documents/SPO/PersonProfile/CompetencyDictionary.xls>.

- Column "M" shows the competencies that are mapped to TMT and Column "R" shows which courses are automatically assigned in DA upon completion in TMT.
- This file is updated every month or two. Updates to the dictionary are posted at <http://www.dcms.uscg.mil/ppc/news/T ag/85100/competencies/>.

We got this from the TMT folks:

"TMT is the system of record for members training information. Competencies certified in TMT are mapped to Direct Access if found here; <https://aopsweb.osc.uscg.mil/cgi-bin/listing.pl?opt=damapping.html&typ=view>. All remaining competencies will need to be entered manually in both systems (if available) to report in CGBI correctly. For further information regarding competencies not found in TMT, member can contact CG1B1 for further direction."

Reserve Supplemental Advancement Lists Updated

The advancement eligibility lists for [Reserve supplemental advancements](#) have been updated to reflect requests processed prior to 04 August 2017.

The lists and other helpful information are available on the [Advancements branch CG Portal page](#).

Direct Access Reserve Order Discrepancies Report Explained

There are many Reserve Orders in Direct Access in various stages of processing that need to have various action taken to cancel, or process the orders to an En route or Finished status.

Administrative Offices, SPOs, District (dxr) and RFRS Staffs, DOL, and PAC-13 should run Reserve Order Discrepancy Report to ensure complete and timely processing of all Reserve Active Duty orders.

[A user guide for running the Reserve Order Discrepancy Report is now available.](#)

Overview of the SGLI Program

An Overview of the SGLI Program is being offered to all branches of service on Thursday, August 17 at 2 PM. Eastern. The training will be done by phone, so no travel is involved.

Who Should Attend?

The session is designed for Branch of Service Casualty Officers, clerks and human resource staff who are new to their roles. You are

Pay & Personnel Newsletter

United States Coast Guard Pay & Personnel Center

welcome to invite others who you think might benefit.

What will it cover?

Here are the topics we'll cover:

- Program History
- Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance (SGLI)
- Family Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance (FSGLI)
- Accelerated Benefit Option (ABO)
- Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance Traumatic Injury Protection Program (TSGLI)
- Veterans' Group Life Insurance (VGLI)
- Payment Options
- Q&A

When and How to Register

Date: Thursday, August 17

Time: 2:00 - 3:00 PM Eastern Time

Registration: Email Bernadette Striano at Bernadette.Striano@prudential.com by Tuesday, August 15. by Tuesday, August 15.

The training material and dial in information will be provided to all registered participants by Wednesday, August 16.

PPC Procedures and Development (P&D) Presentation Library

The Pay and Personnel Center has a library of Direct Access informational material available in Power Point (PPTX) format. Contact PPC Procedures and Development Branch (P&D) at PPC-PF-PD@uscg.mil for more information or for a copy of any of the presentations listed below.

| Topic | Description |
|--|---|
| Advancement | This provides a stem-to-stern explanation of the Enlisted Advancement process. |
| Aviation Career Incentive Pay (ACIP) | This provides a basic understanding of the policy/rules/definitions regarding ACIP. |
| BAH/COLA/Payroll Verification Reports | This provides detailed instructions on how to run the BAH/COLA and the Payroll Verification reports in DA. |
| Contracts | This provides instructions and guiding principles for processing/approving/printing Reenlistment, Extensions/Reextensions Contracts in Direct Access. This also covers Extension reports available in DA. |
| Corrections, Deletions and Stops | This provides instructions on which specific pay entitlements can be corrected, deleted or stopped in DA using Pay Corrections. It also addresses BAH and CONUS COLA changes as well as In Range vs Out of Range. |
| Debts, Payments, Advances and Payslips | This discusses debts, payments, advances and payslips. |
| Identifying In-Service Debts in DA | This provides the procedures for Identifying In-Service Debts, Determining the Remaining Balance owed for a Debt and doing Research when a member has multiple debts open in Direct Access. |
| IDT Orders - Command | This provides instructions for a Command to process IDT Orders. |
| IDT Orders - Multiple | This provides instructions for a Command to process IDT Orders for multiple members. |
| IDT Orders - Resubmitting Denied IDTs | This provides instructions for correcting & resubmitting denied IDT Orders |
| IDT Orders - Self Service Member | This provides instructions for a Member to process IDT Orders. |
| IDT Payments in Direct Access | This provides instructions for identifying Paid IDT Drill Dates in Direct Access. |
| Job Data | This provides instructions for reading & understanding Job Data in Direct Access. |
| My Reserve Point Statement - Member | This provides guidance for the member to read and understand the Reserve Retirement Points Statement. |
| Pay Entitlements | This provides a basic understanding of Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH), Coast Guard Standard Meal Rate (CGSMR), Refund Missed Meals (RMM) & Career Sea Pay (CSP)/Career Sea Pay Premium (CSPP) |
| Pay Processing Shortcuts | This provides a basic understanding of Pay Calculation Results, Element Assignment by Payee (EABP) and One Time (Positive Input) (OTPI) in Direct Access. |
| PCS Orders | This provides the basic information regarding PCS orders in Direct Access. |
| Reserve Active Duty Orders - Command | This provides instructions for the Command processing of Reserve AD Orders. |
| Reserve AD Orders - SPO Processing | This provides instructions for SPO processing of Reserve AD Orders. |

Pay & Personnel Newsletter

United States Coast Guard Pay & Personnel Center

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|-----------------------------------|---|
| Reserve Member Balances - Command | This provides guidance for the Command to read and understand the Reserve Retirement Points Statement. |
| Reserve Reports - Command | This provides instructions for running Reserve reports (View Member Drills, Member All Duty Report) in DA. |
| Reserve Reports - Member | This provides instructions for running Reserve reports (My Reserve Drills, Member All Duty Report) in DA. |
| Separations | This provides basic information about the different types of Separations and how to process them in Direct Access. This also covers Separation reports as well as information regarding the DD-214. |
| SGLI, FSGLI and TSGLI Arrears | This provides procedures to correctly identify whether a member is in arrears for SGLI, FSGLI, and TSGLI as well as the amount of the arrears. |
| Travel | This provides some basic information and common errors in the submission of TDY and PCS claims. |

audits/internal control processes. Here is a real world example of a digital signature issue. I had to get a new CAC card this past Monday. Every single PAO memo that I signed prior to that date now has an invalid digital signature because it states that "my identity has been revoked". This will also happen when a member that digitally signed a document separates from the CG.

Let's say all of you attended the YN Symposium last week. 5 years later all those claims get audited. 25% of the "Approving Officials" that signed these orders are now out of the CG and their digital signatures are no longer valid. Will audit controls determine that the orders are not valid because the digital signature is not currently valid? Will they also determine that the travel order is not valid because it could have been altered after the AO had signed it (by another user converting back to MS Word, altering it, then converting back to pdf)? If considered invalid, we may be required to recoup these monies. Are 25% of you willing to pay back a travel debt if the digital signature is ruled invalid???

We are working to confirm how digital signatures will be treated with regards to PCS/TDY travel. Prior to approving the use of digital signatures, we want to be confident that our customers will not be impacted later by having a debt created on a travel claim due to any digital signature issues.

Reserve Orders:

Due to issues with digital signatures (see above) we are rescinding the use of digital signatures on Reserve Orders from this date forward.

Digital Signatures on Travel Orders

We continue to get asked why we don't authorize electronic signatures on travel orders. The primary reason is that we want to ensure there are no negative downstream impacts to our customers with the use of digital signature on travel orders.

FTR and COMDTINST 5200.5 authorizes the use of electronic signatures. A digital signature is a technology that provides a valid method of electronic signature. When applying a digital signature, the system has to validate that the signature is valid AND it has verified that the document was not altered.

Many of our current forms do not prevent altering the document once it has been digitally signed. CG-1650 is a good example. Once it has been signed by the first person, they can route it up the chain. The next person can alter data, digitally sign and forward to the next person. You can also get a word document, convert to pdf and digitally sign. This does lock the document. BUT, I can open up the pdf document, convert it back to Word, make changes and convert back to pdf, all the while maintaining the original digital signature.

We are currently in the process of verifying/confirming how a digital signatures would be handled by internal and external

Pay & Personnel Newsletter

United States Coast Guard Pay & Personnel Center

Change to Notice of Overpayment Process

We made minor changes to [Chapter 9 of the Personnel & Pay Procedures Manual \(PPCINST M1000.2 \(series\)\)](#):

9.A.1.3 How a member is notified of an overpayment

PPC (MAS) will provide a Notice of Overpayment (NOO) letter for each member with a debt of \$1000.00 or more **via email**. Servicing Personnel Offices will be provided a courtesy copy for their awareness. Members with debts of \$999.99 or less will be notified by a message on their Pay Slip.

9.A.1.4 Action upon receipt of a Notice of Overpayment letter

Upon receipt of a Notice of Overpayment (NOO) letter:

- member provides a copy of the NOO letter to their Chain of Command and their Personnel and Administration (P&A) Office.
 - P&A Office counsels the member regarding the debt and the collection procedure.
-

Leave Correction Report Now Available in Direct Access

The purpose of the Leave Correction report is to show all leave transactions that have been corrected or deleted within a specified time-frame and ensure that they are valid. [This guide provides the procedures for running the Leave Correction Report in Direct Access.](#)

Recertifying User Roles for Annual Direct Access User Audit

The [Recertifying User Roles User Guide](#) provides the procedure for recertifying your user roles in Direct Access for compliance with annual user role audits.

Family Emergency Leave Travel Claim Guide Added

The [Family Emergency Leave Travel Claim guide](#) provides procedures for entering Family Emergency Leave (FEMLE) Travel claim in TPAX

SPO Consolidation Update: SPO at Sector Northern New England Closed

The SPO located at SEC N NEW ENG ADMIN/PERS DIV (007479) has been disestablished in DA. All records previously serviced by the SPO at SEC N NEW ENG ADMIN/PERS DIV have been moved to BASE CAPE COD SPO (045431).

Critical Housing Areas (CHA) Update

R 24 JUL 17
BT UNCLAS //N11101//
ALCGPSC 083/17
SUBJ: 2017 ANNUAL REVIEW OF CRITICAL HOUSING AREAS (CHA) UPDATE
A. Critical Housing Areas, COMDTINST 11101.15
B. ALCGPSC 001/17
C. Joint Travel Regulations
1. In accordance with Ref A, Para 2.D of Ref B, is hereby updated to add Southwest Harbor, ME

Pay & Personnel Newsletter

United States Coast Guard Pay & Personnel Center

(Zip Code 04679) as a designated CHA, effective 12 JUL 2017.

2. Members with dependents with a Permanent Change of Station (PCS) reporting date on or after 12 JUL 2017 to a Coast Guard unit located in Zip Code 04679, who have no intention of relocating their dependents to that unit, may submit a Housing Allowance Protection Worksheet (CG Form 2025A) to PSC-PSD-fs requesting housing allowances be based on a location other than their new Permanent Duty Station (PDS). Members authorized a housing allowance based on the payment of child support are not eligible to submit a CG-2025A under the CHA policy.

3. In accordance with Ref C, travel and shipment of household good (HHG) costs exceeding the maximum allowed for travel of dependents and shipment of HHG from the last PDS to the new PDS will be at the member's expense. Dependent travel and HHG transportation costs associated with future PCS orders will be based upon the member's PDS, vice the authorized CHA Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH) location of dependents.

4. Members must provide their Servicing Personnel Office with an approved BAH Protection Authorization from PSC-PSD-fs to change BAH and Cost of Living (COLA) entitlements. These changes will be effective on the member's reporting date.

5. Locations designated as CHAs are reviewed annually to ensure continued eligibility.

6. PSC-PSD-fs POCs: YNCS Amariyls Wozniak (703) 795-6638 and Mr. Wayne Canfield (510) 437-5796.

7. Released by: RDML M.T. Bell Jr., CG Personnel Service Center. The Service Center for Our Most Important Resource - Our People.

8. Internet release is authorized.

Coast Guard Standard Meal Rate (CGSMR) Deduction Auto-Start

CGSMR auto-starts the day after reporting PCS to an Essential Unit Messing (ESU) or Essential Station Messing (ESM) unit. The auto-start is processed when a reporting PCS transaction is approved.

The following cutters do not have a galley. DA has been updated to NOT auto-start CG SMR on these cutters:

USCGC BAYBERRY
USCGC BOLLARD
USCGC BRIDLE
USCGC CAPSTAN
USCGC CHOCK
USCGC CLEAT
USCGC ELDERBERRY
USCGC HAWSER
USCGC LINE
USCGC PENDANT
USCGC SHACKLE
USCGC TACKLE
USCGC WIRE

CGSMR auto-stops the day prior to PCS departure. The auto-stop is processed when a departing PCS transaction is approved.
