

# Pay & Personnel Newsletter

United States Coast Guard Pay & Personnel Center

---

## Contents

Direct Access / WebNow Outage Scheduled for 10 November..... 2

Hardship Duty Pay (HDP) - Location Rate Changes in Certain Localities ..... 2

Defense Travel Management Office Allowances and Regulations Update ..... 2

Recording of the Top 10 Things You Should Know About Direct Access Self Service Posted..... 2

Direct Access Competency Dictionary Update ..... 2

Blended Retirement System Continuation Pay Policy ..... 3

20178 Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) Contribution Limits..... 5

Revised Annual Verification Process (E-Mail ALSPO B/17) ..... 6

TSP in Blended Retirement System Webinar, 7 November ..... 6

TSP Investment Funds Webinar 8 November at 1300..... 7

End-Month October Military Payroll Processing Complete..... 7

**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"](mailto:PPC-PF-PD).

# Pay & Personnel Newsletter

United States Coast Guard Pay & Personnel Center

---


## Direct Access / WebNow Outage Scheduled for 10 November

Direct Access and WebNow will not be available on Friday, 10 November 2017 from 0700 (CST) to 2000 (CST). This downtime is necessary to complete required annual disaster recovery testing.

Friday, 10 November 2017, is a federal holiday - Veterans Day (Observed).

---

## Hardship Duty Pay (HDP) - Location Rate Changes in Certain Localities

The Department of Defense (DoD) [has issued a memorandum](#)  detailing changes in Hardship Duty Pay (Location (HDP-L) & Mission (HDP-M)).

Changes in locality rates are highlighted in yellow in the memo's attachment.

- Rate increases are effective 1 October 2017
- and rate decreases are effective 1 January 2018 - giving localities experiencing reductions a 3-month period to adjust to the reduced rates.

The HDP-L rates changes were prompted by changes in the U. S. Department of State's hardship pay differentials in the affected localities and not as the result of requests from COCOMs.

---

## Defense Travel Management Office Allowances and Regulations Update

The Defense Travel Management Office has updated the following information for 01 November 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](#).

---

## Recording of the Top 10 Things You Should Know About Direct Access Self Service Posted

Thank you to all those who attended our online virtual learning session on Tuesday, 17 October. We discussed several Direct Access Self Service topics

The presentation, transcript of questions and answers, and a recording of the session are all linked below.

- [Presentation \(PowerPoint\)](#)
  - [Questions and Answers \(.PDF\)](#)
  - [Recording \(DHS Connect Video\)](#)
- 

## Direct Access Competency Dictionary Update

The [Direct Access Competency Dictionary](#) (file in MS Excel format) (a spreadsheet which shows all authorized competency codes and descriptions) has been updated by Commandant (CG-1B-1).

# Pay & Personnel Newsletter

## United States Coast Guard Pay & Personnel Center

Changes made since last update (29 September 2017) are hi-lighted in blue text on the spreadsheet.

- 11 Competencies created
- 03 Competencies inactivated
- 00 Competencies modified

### Blended Retirement System Continuation Pay Policy

R 311100 OCT 17  
FM COMDT COGARD WASHINGTON DC//CG-1//  
TO ALCOAST  
UNCLAS//N01000//  
ACN 120/17  
SUBJ: SITREP 7 - HUMAN CAPITAL STRATEGY -  
BLENDED RETIREMENT SYSTEM (BRS) –  
CONTINUATION PAY (CP) POLICY

A. COMDT COGARD WASHINGTON DC 191547  
SEP 17/ALCOAST 278/17

B. Deputy Secretary of Defense Memorandum,  
Implementation of the Blended Retirement  
System, of 27 Jan 17

C. Temporary Separations, COMDTINST  
M1040.6 (series)

1. This ALCOAST announces Continuation Pay (CP) policies supplementing the CP multipliers, timing, and obligated service announced in REF (A).
2. Coast Guard members covered by the Blended Retirement System (BRS) are eligible to receive CP, which is a one-time, mid-career incentive payment for continued service upon reaching 12 Years of Service (YOS), calculated from the member's Pay Entry Base Date (PEBD). To be eligible to receive CP, members must agree to perform four additional years of service. Unless specifically prohibited, the obligated service incurred to receive CP will run concurrently with any other service obligation.

According to REF (A), the CP multiplier for the Active Component (AC) is 2.5 times the member's basic pay. The CP multiplier for a Reserve Component (RC) member is 0.5 times an equivalent base pay as if RC members were on active duty. Reserve Program Administrators will receive the AC multiplier while active reservists will receive the RC multiplier. The CP amount will be based on the over 12 YOS basic pay rate.

3. All members shall receive continuation pay except in the case of members with separation orders or members who have indicated their intent to separate before achieving 12 YOS. Neither Section 356 of Title 37, U.S.C., nor REF (B) authorizes conditions, such as high year tenure, medical or legal issues, which the Coast Guard can cite as a basis to deny CP. Uncertainty of a Coast Guard member's future status does not constitute a members inability to obligate for additional service with respect to CP.

4. AC members will perform obligated service in the AC. An AC member seeking affiliation with the RC during their four year CP obligation will be required to repay a prorated amount of CP. IAW REF (C), members who incur an active duty obligation to receive CP are ineligible to request Temporary Separation (TEMPSEP). Members who opted into BRS are not eligible for CP during TEMPSEP.

5. RC members will perform obligated service in the Selected Reserve. A member who incurs a period of extended absence, such as the Inactive Ready Reserve, subject to the approval of the Coast Guard, which precludes meeting the terms of the obligated service, shall have any CP installments suspended during this period. If subsequently reassigned to the member's previous status, or a new status at the discretion of the Coast Guard, CP installments may resume and the term of service extended accordingly to fulfill the original obligated service

## Pay & Personnel Newsletter

United States Coast Guard Pay & Personnel Center

---

agreement. Failure to meet reinstatement criteria shall result in termination of CP and repayment as appropriate.

6. Approximately 180 days prior to a member's completion of 12 YOS, PPC will notify the member and unit admin of the member's eligibility to receive CP. The member must return the signed CP election form, witnessed by their Commanding Officer or command designee 30 days prior to their CP date. A member's CP date is defined as that date 12 YOS from the member's PEBD, as established by the Coast Guard, and deemed to be the point at which a member has met all eligibility requirements for CP. For example, additional obligated service would commence on the 12th anniversary of the member's PEBD regardless of when the member's election to receive CP is completed. A member may reverse their decision to receive CP, and their obligation to complete four additional years of service, provided such a reversal occurs 30 days before the member's CP date. A member failing to return the CP election form prior to exceeding 12 YOS will no longer be eligible for CP. No waivers will be accepted for failing to make the CP election prior to 12 YOS.

7. While BRS eligible Coast Guard members who reach their 12th YOS in calendar year 2018 have all of calendar year 2018 to opt in to the BRS, they will only have until the anniversary date of their 12th YOS from their PEBD to elect to receive CP (e.g. a member with a PEBD of 6 February 2006 who reaches their 12th YOS from their PEBD on 5 February 2018 will only have from 1 January 2018 to 5 February 2018 to elect to receive CP, but will have until 31 December 2018 to opt into the BRS). If a member wishes to elect CP, they must first opt in to BRS. Actual payment of CP may occur after the member's 12th YOS from their PEBD, but the CP agreement must be submitted

no later than the anniversary of a member's 12th YOS determined by PEBD.

8. A member who qualifies for CP may choose to receive CP in a single payment or elect a series of equal installments, not to exceed four equal annual payments over four consecutive years.

9. CP is subject to applicable taxes, however, the CG shall apply Combat Zone Tax Exclusion (CZTE) withholding rules to those members whose gross incentive payment qualifies for CZTE. CZTE withholding rules will apply to all payment proceeding from a CP agreement based upon the member's qualification for CZTE at his/her date. For example, a member who reaches 12 YOS from PEBD in a qualified combat zone and elects four equal CP installment payments across four years would be eligible for CZTE for all of those payments.

10. PSC will retain a copy of the CP Election Form in the EIPDR.

11. A member who received CP but who fails to complete the required period of obligated service is subject to full or partial repayment IAW Section 373 of Title 37, U.S.C., and the DoD FMR, Volume 7A, Chapter 2. The Coast Guard will pursue repayment of unearned CP to the maximum extent possible. Waiver requests shall be submitted to COMDT (CG-133) via the member's chain of command and shall be adjudicated in accordance with all existing authorities and policies. Repayment may be waived in whole or in part if COMDT (CG-133) determines that recovery would be against equity and good conscience or contrary to the best interests of the United States. Repayment may not be waived if the member's separation is due to misconduct. Repayment must be waived, and any remaining payments will be included in the final settlement of unpaid pay and

# Pay & Personnel Newsletter

## United States Coast Guard Pay & Personnel Center

allowances if the member:

A. Dies (does not apply if death is the result of member’s misconduct);

B. Is separated or retired due to a physical disability which qualifies the member for Disability Severance Pay or Disability Retired Pay from the Coast Guard (does not apply if disability is the result of the member’s misconduct); or,

C. If a member is separated under a mandatory early retirement or separation program.

12. This policy will be included in the forthcoming Retirement Manual, which will be released within the next year.

13. Questions regarding the BRS or related items should be directed to COMDT (CG-1331) at HQS-PolicyandStandards@uscg.mil. For more info visit the BRS website at <http://www.dcms.uscg.mil/brs>.

14. Released by RDML William G. Kelly, Assistant Commandant for Human Resources.

15. Internet release is authorized.

### 20178 Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) Contribution Limits

The Internal Revenue Code (IRC) places limits on the dollar amount of contributions you can make to the TSP. The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) calculates them every year and they can change annually. The TSP announces the limits on the TSP website and the [ThriftLine](#) as well as through its various publications when the limits become available.

Contribution Limits for 2018		
Elective Deferral Limit	\$18,500	IRC §402(g) Applies to combined total of traditional and Roth contributions. For members of the uniformed services, it includes all traditional and Roth contributions from taxable <a href="#">basic pay</a> , <a href="#">incentive pay</a> , <a href="#">special pay</a> , and <a href="#">bonus pay</a> , but does not apply to traditional contributions made from tax-exempt pay earned in a combat zone.
Annual Addition Limit	\$55,000	IRC §415(c) An additional limit imposed on the total amount of all contributions made on behalf of an employee in a calendar year. This limit is per employer and includes employee contributions (tax-deferred, after-tax, and <a href="#">tax-exempt</a> ), Agency Automatic (1%) Contributions, and <a href="#">Matching Contributions</a> . For 415(c) purposes, working for multiple Federal agencies or services in the same year is considered having one employer.
Catch-up Contribution Limit	\$6,000	IRC §414(v) The maximum amount of <a href="#">catch-up contributions</a> that can be contributed in a given year by participants age 50 and older. It is separate from the elective deferral and annual addition limit imposed on regular employee contributions.

**If you are a member of the uniformed services**, you should know that Roth contributions are subject to the elective deferral limit (\$18,500 for 2018) even if they are contributed from tax-exempt pay. If you want to contribute tax-exempt pay toward the annual additions limit, you will have to elect traditional contributions for any amount over the elective deferral limit.

In addition, if you are eligible to make catch-up contributions and you are deployed to a designated combat zone, you will not be able to make any traditional catch-up contributions from your tax-exempt pay. However, Roth catch-up contributions from tax-exempt pay are allowed.

## Pay & Personnel Newsletter

United States Coast Guard Pay & Personnel Center


---

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

If you are called to active duty and make tax-exempt contributions to the TSP while deployed in a designated combat zone, the sum of the employee and agency contributions to your civilian account as well as the tax-exempt contributions made to your uniformed services account cannot exceed the annual addition limit.

---

### Revised Annual Verification Process (E-Mail ALSPO B/17)

[E-Mail ALSPO message B/17](#)  announces changes to the process for the annual validation of dependency and emergency data. This ALSPO message removes the requirement to validate the CG-2020D during the months of Oct-Nov. Revisions to the Personnel and Pay Procedures Manual (3PM) on the SGLI/FSGLI, BAH/Dependency Data (old 4170), Emergency Contacts, and Qualification to Possess Firearms or Ammunition are included.

We would like to thank YN1 Jaimee Baker, YN1 Armaris Narvaez, YN1 Angela Medina, YN1 Karina Serrano, YN1 Tyler Pepin, YN2 Tyler Bennett, YN2 Melissa Lakotish, YN2 Alec Gaudin, and YN3 Erik Reyes-Principe. They put a lot of work into this and they will continue to make improvements to the process, to include updating various checklists and CG forms. Analysis shows that this change will save over 17,700 labor hours (estimated \$1.2M) annually across the Coast Guard.

---

### TSP in Blended Retirement System Webinar, 7 November

[Military OneSource](#) is hosting a webinar on the Thrift Savings Program in the Blended Retirement System on **Tuesday, 7 November 2017 at 0900 (Eastern Time)**.

The training will provide an overview of the Thrift Savings Plan's role in the Blended Retirement System, Thrift Savings Plan contribution rules under the Blended Retirement System, Blended Retirement System opt-in eligibility, traditional vs. Roth contributions, Department of Defense/Department of Homeland Security contributions, auto-enrollment and auto-reenrollment, Thrift Savings Plan lifecycle funds and using the Thrift Savings Plan financial calculators to project potential growth of Thrift Savings Plan savings.

**Register for the webinar online** at <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/7926654588548397313>

*If you cannot access the webinar registration page or platform, please email Military OneSource at [MOSwebinars@militaryonesource.com](mailto:MOSwebinars@militaryonesource.com) with your name, email address and the title, date and time of the webinar you wish to attend. We will send you a PDF version of the webinar so that you will be able to participate by phone. **To receive dial-in information, you must register for this event.***

If you are unable to attend one of Military OneSource's webinars, please look for the archived version at <http://www.militaryonesource.mil/webinars>. Most of their webinars, with a few exceptions, are made available on the archive page for viewing later. Please note that the archived version can take up to three weeks to post after the originally scheduled webinar

## Pay & Personnel Newsletter

United States Coast Guard Pay & Personnel Center

---

### TSP Investment Funds Webinar 8 November at 1300

[Military OneSource](#) is hosting a webinar on Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) Investment Funds and Managing TSP Account on Wednesday, 8 November 2017 at 1300 (Eastern Time).

The training will discuss the principles of long-term investing and how that's built into the design of the Thrift Savings Plan's core investment funds and life cycle funds. We will discuss each fund's composition, risks, historical returns, how each fund fits into the whole menu of investment choices and why Thrift Savings Plan is an outstanding plan for accumulating retirement savings.

**Register for the webinar online** at <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/7528749027037031427>

*If you cannot access the webinar registration page or platform, please email Military Onesource at [MOSwebinars@militaryonesource.com](mailto:MOSwebinars@militaryonesource.com) with your name, email address and the title, date and time of the webinar you wish to attend. We will send you a PDF version of the webinar so that you will be able to participate by phone. **To receive dial-in information, you must register for this event.***

If you are unable to attend one of Military OneSource's webinars, please look for the archived version at <http://www.militaryonesource.mil/webinars>. Most of their webinars, with a few exceptions, are made available on the archive page for viewing later. Please note that the archived version can take up to three weeks to post after the originally scheduled webinar

### End-Month October Military Payroll Processing Complete

"Payslips" for the **1 November 2017** pay day are available in Direct Access. Report any discrepancies through the P&A Office (Admin) to the SPO. If SPOs cannot address or need assistance, the SPO will submit a trouble ticket. Payslips can be accessed via the [Self-Service "View" menu](#). Refer to [this guide](#) for an overview of the new payslip.

**Note:** Please see this [Frequently Asked Question \(FAQ\) entry](#) if you have any difficulty opening your payslip or other files in Adobe Acrobat (PDF) file format from within Direct Access.

**The End-Month November pay date is Wednesday, 1 November 2017.** Paydays are the 1st (end-month) and the 15th (mid-month) of each month, or the business day preceding the 1st or the 15th if either should fall on a federal holiday, Saturday or Sunday. Members should not set up automated payments or assume funds will be available prior to published paydays. Members should verify with their financial institutions as to the actual time funds are available to their account. See [When is Payday?](#) for more information.

Payslips more than one year old to January 2015 can be accessed by following [this guide](#). Payslips/LEs issued prior to January 2015 are not available via Direct Access. It is strongly recommended that you download/print your payslips every payday

---