

Pay & Personnel Newsletter

United States Coast Guard Pay & Personnel Center

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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:the.Procedures.&Development.branch.e-mail.address@PPC-PF-PD).

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PPC P&D's Brand New "On Demand Virtual Road Shows"

PPC is excited to present you with our brand new "On Demand" Road Show page. We designed this section to allow you to select topics from an "a la carte" menu to develop your own personal or divisional training programs. These are the same presentations we use when we deliver on-site training. If you need assistance regarding a particular topic or you wish for us to include a topic, you may contact us at: PPC-PF-PD@uscg.mil. I highly encourage you to utilize them to build your unit training curriculum. Please note that there are some sections that are "under construction". Once we finish, I will send out another notification letting you know when the new road shows are available. We value your input, so please feel free to let us know if you need anything or see an area that needs further information. Please share this shamelessly with anyone you feel may utilize this page. Thank you for all you do and keep checking back with us as we roll out new and exciting products for all of you.

Here is the Link:

<http://www.dcms.uscg.mil/ppc/pd/training/>

CGHR: On the Radar Screen, 5 December

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/12-5-17-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
- Defender Newsletter, October 2017
- Infographic

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

Defense Travel Management Office Allowances and Regulations Update

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

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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).

Changes made since last update (31 October 2017) are hi-lighted in blue text on the spreadsheet.

- 01 Competencies created
- 08 Competencies inactivated

The OSC tab has been updated with the OSC hyperlinked to the OPM-3 portal website.

Blended Retirement System (BRS): Answering the “How Do I Opt-In?” Question

Written by Chief Petty Officer Timothy Hoagland, Blended Retirement Integrated Project Team member

After months of preparation, the Blended Retirement System (BRS) Opt-In Period is about to make its year-long debut! Beginning on Jan. 1, 2018, over 30,000 active duty and Reserve members will have the choice to opt-in to the BRS. Prior to choosing to opt-in in Direct Access, eligible members should complete the [BRS Opt-in course](#) (available on Joint Knowledge Online) and then self-certify their completion in the Coast Guard’s [Learning Management System](#).

After completing the Opt-in course and consulting other resources such as the [BRS Comparison Calculator](#), follow the steps below to opt-in to the BRS. Keep in mind that the decision to opt-in to the BRS is irrevocable, meaning it cannot be changed, once made. While the Coast Guard has no preference in member retirement system elections, it is vitally

important for individuals to make the decision that is right for them and their families.

Note: The “My BRS Elections” page will not be visible in Direct Access until Jan. 1, 2018.

How to Opt-In to the BRS:

- 1) Login to Direct Access.
- 2) Click on “Employee Tasks.”
- 3) Click on “My BRS Elections.”
- 4) Read and answer all three questions using the “yes / no” drop-down boxes. You must answer “yes” to all three questions for your opt-in enrollment to proceed.
- 5) Once all questions are answered, click “Submit.”
- 6) You will be sent to a confirmation screen. Click “Ok.”
- 7) PPC will verify your eligibility to opt-in and send you an email confirming your enrollment in the BRS.

A Coast Guard-specific [How to Opt-In to BRS Using Direct Access Video](#), a [PPC Opt-In User Guide](#), and many more great resources and materials can be found on the Coast Guard’s BRS [website](#).

For members opting-in to the BRS, government automatic and matching contributions will begin the pay period after opting-in to the BRS, which may not be your next paycheck. Because military pay periods are monthly, if a member elects the BRS on Jan. 1, 2018, the enrollee can expect to see Government automatic and matching contributions to reflect on their mid-month Leave and Earnings Statement in February 2018 (the next pay period).

Even though the Opt-In Period covers all of calendar year 2018, if the BRS is the right retirement system for you, consider opting in sooner rather than later to take full advantage of the government automatic and matching contributions. A member who decides to enroll

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in the BRS in July rather than January would miss up to six months of government-matching contributions.

If you desire to remain in the legacy “High-3” retirement system, you do not have to take any action in Direct Access or elsewhere. No opt-in eligible members will be automatically moved to the BRS unless they physically opt-in via Direct Access (instructions above).

Career Sea Pay Premium, Known Issues

If you receive an error when trying to start retro Career Sea Pay Premium: First, verify that Career Sea Pay is running; then, the SPO should be able to enter and approve the CSP PREM on a date in the current open calendar. After starting CSP PREM, the SPO must then submit a Pay Corrections Action Request to change the begin date to the correct date.

Example: A member reported onto a cutter with an effective date of 11/28. The member is entitled to CSP PREM. When trying to start the CSP PREM with the proper effective date of 11/28, the system will not accept it (since it is retroactive). So, start CSP PREM for a date within the current open calendar. Then submit and approve a Pay Corrections Action Request to change CSP PREM to 11/28.

Blended Retirement System (BRS) - Opt-In Period

[ALCOAST 357/17](#) announces the BRS opt-in period for Active Component (AC) service members who will have less than 12 years of service (YOS) on or before 31 December 2017, based on their Pay Entry Base Date (PEBD), or Reserve Component (RC) members with less than 4,320 retirement points on or before 31 December 2017.

2018 Coast Guard Meal Rates

R 141402Z DEC 17
FM COMDT COGARD WASHINGTON DC //CG-83/CG-1111//
TO ALCGFINANCE
BT UNCLAS //N04061//
ALCGFINANCE 044/17
SUBJ: CALENDAR YEAR 2018 FOOD SERVICE MEAL RATES

- A. COMDT COGARD WASHINGTON DC 291933Z APR 15/ ALCOAST 172/15
- B. Coast Guard Food Service Manual, COMDTINST M4061.5 (series)
- C. 37 U.S.C. 1011(d), Mess Operation: Reimbursement of Expenses
- D. DOD Financial Management Regulation, Volume 12, DOD 7000.14 (series)
- E. Coast Guard Pay Manual, COMDTINST M7220.29 (series)

- 1. IAW REFS A through E, this message establishes Food Service Meal Rates for CY18.
- 2. Food Service Meal Rates will not change with the new calendar year. Effective 01 JAN 2018, units shall continue to use the established meal rates and patron categories from REF A, as follows:

Meal	CG Standard Meal Rate	CG Full Meal Rate
Breakfast	2.55	4.10
Lunch	4.65	7.70
Dinner	4.65	7.70
Midnight rations/snacks	2.55	4.10

- 3. Food Service Program Policy changes stated in REF A will continue through Calendar Year 2018. These and additional changes will be reflected in an upcoming revision to REF B.
- 4. Commanding Officers/Officers-in-Charge shall ensure all Food Service Officers and Food Service Contracting Officer

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Representatives receive a copy of this message.

5. POCs are COMDT (CG-1111), Mr. Chad Adams (202) 475-5149, Chad.A.Adams@uscg.mil or COMDT (CG-832), Mr. Monty Holcombe at (202) 372-3593, Monty.D.Holcombe@uscg.mil. Questions may also be directed to CulinaryProgram@uscg.mil.
 6. T. A. Wade, Office of Resource Management sends.
 7. Internet release authorized.
-

HR Workshop is now live!

PPC is excited to present you with our brand new "On Demand" Road Show page, construction is now complete on our HR and SELRES Workshops. We designed this section to allow you to select topics from an "a la carte" menu to develop your own personal or divisional training programs. These are the same presentations we use when we deliver on-site training. If you need assistance regarding a particular topic or you wish for us to include a topic, you may contact us at: PPC-PF-PD@uscg.mil. We value your input, so please feel free to let us know what you think. Please share this shamelessly with anyone you feel may utilize this page. Thank you for all you do and keep checking back with us as we roll out new and exciting products for all of you.

Here is the Link:

<http://www.dcms.uscg.mil/ppc/pd/training/>

2017 Tax Forms - Get Them Online, Save Time, Government Funds, and Protect Your Privacy

In an effort to deliver end of year tax documents to our personnel in the most efficient and cost effective manner possible, members can view and print their tax forms

online. **Use this guide to view/print your tax forms.**

Users can also opt out of paper delivery of IRS Forms W2/W2C/1095-C by consenting to receive electronic forms (on step 5 of the guide, check the box to give your consent to only receive electronic forms). Here are a few reasons why you may choose to opt out of a mailed version:

1. Tax forms are posted to DA weeks before you would get them in the mail (we will notify everyone when they are available).
2. If your address is incorrect in DA or the form is lost in the mail - it will take even longer to get your tax forms (due to having to request a duplicate, which PPC will not process until after Feb 15).
3. You can print your tax forms from DA at work or home, whichever you prefer vice waiting for it in the mail.
4. It saves money, especially in our resource challenged environment.

In 2016 approximately 25% of AD/RES/NOAA/PHS members chose to receive their tax forms electronically and forego the mailed version. This year, that percentage has increased to 36%, but we can do better, especially knowing that personnel may not know that this is possible.

Please help in spreading the word to your crews at all hands, staff meetings, training, POWs, emails, etc. Please remind your folks that if they must have a paper copy for any reason at all, they simply press "print".

We realize that some personnel will still need their documents sent for any host of logistical reasons, but the majority of the workforce has easy access to DA and a printer.

Thanks all for your continued prudent stewardship and pursuit of efficiency.

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DoD Releases 2018 Basic Allowance for Housing Rates

The Department of Defense released today the 2018 Basic Allowance for Housing rates. Basic Allowance for Housing rates will increase an average of 0.7 percent when the new rates take effect on January 1, 2018. An estimated \$21 billion will be paid to approximately one million Service members.

Continuing to balance the growth in compensation costs, the 2018 Basic Allowance for Housing program expands the member cost-sharing element (out-of-pocket expense). Based on the authority provided in the FY 2016 National Defense Authorization Act, the cost-sharing element has increased to four percent for 2018 which means a typical member will absorb four percent of the national average housing cost by pay grade. Even with the increase in cost sharing, on average, BAH rates will increase approximately \$10 per month. A typical mid-grade enlisted member with dependents, for example, will find his/her BAH about \$19 per month higher than last year, while a typical junior officer without dependents will find his/her BAH about \$16 higher than last year.

Housing cost data are collected annually for over 300 Military Housing Areas in the United States, including Alaska and Hawaii. An important part of the Basic Allowance for Housing process is the cooperation from the Services and local military housing offices in the data collection effort. Input from local commands is used to determine in what neighborhoods data is collected and to direct the data collection effort towards adequate apartment complexes and individual housing units.

Median current market rent and average utilities (including electricity, heat, and water/sewer) comprise the total housing cost

for each military housing area and are included in the Basic Allowance for Housing computation. Total housing costs are developed for six housing profiles (based on dwelling type and number of bedrooms) in each military housing area. Basic Allowance for Housing rates are then calculated for each pay grade, both with and without dependents.

An integral part of the Basic Allowance for Housing program is the provision of individual rate protection to all members. No matter what happens to measured housing costs – including the out-of-pocket cost-sharing adjustment, an individual member who maintains uninterrupted Basic Allowance for Housing eligibility in a given location will not see his/her Basic Allowance for Housing rate decrease. This ensures that members who have made long-term commitments in the form of a lease or contract are not penalized if the area's housing costs decrease.

The Department is committed to the preservation of a compensation and benefit structure that provides members with a suitable and secure standard of living to sustain a trained, experienced, and ready force now and in the future.

For more information on Basic Allowance for Housing, including the 2018 Basic Allowance for Housing rates and 2018 Basic Allowance for Housing rate component breakdown, visit www.defensetravel.dod.mil/site/bah.cfm. Service members can calculate their BAH payment by using the Basic Allowance for Housing calculator at: www.defensetravel.dod.mil/site/bahCalc.cfm.

[Click here to view the 2018 Basic Allowance for Housing Rates.](#)

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Learning Opportunity: Enlisted Evaluation System (EES)

18 DEC 17

BT

UNCLAS //N01616//

ALCGPSC 153/17

SUBJ: SITREP 1-HUMAN CAPITAL STRATEGY-
REVISION TO THE ENLISTED EVALUATION
SYSTEM

- A. [Enlisted Accessions, Evaluations, and Advancements, COMDTINST M1000.2A](#)
 - B. [CG Flag Voice 478 of 02 OCT 17](#)
 - C. [ALCGPSC 131/17 RELEASE OF NEW ENLISTED EVALUATION PERFORMANCE STANDARDS](#)
1. Reference (a) announced the release of the new standards and major changes to the Enlisted Evaluation System (EES), which will go into effect 01MAR2018. This message announces the availability of outreach opportunities to support field units as they implement the new EES.
 2. From 15JAN2018-30MAR2018, all Coast Guard units will have the opportunity to receive training on the new EES. To ensure all personnel are provided the opportunity to become familiar with the new EES, PSC-EPM will make available multiple opportunities to accommodate demands for both formal and informal briefings. Units will have two options for outreach:
 - A. Unit led training. A comprehensive briefing packet and materials will be provided to units to conduct EES training at their discretion. Briefing materials will be posted to the EES Portal and Internet sites NLT 15JAN2018.
 - B. Designated staff from PSC-EPM will conduct individual unit briefings via webinar, teleconference, or video teleconference to discuss the new EES policies and procedures

and address specific command concerns and questions. A schedule listing available time slots is posted on the EES portal. Unit POCs contact PSC-EPM at ARL-SMB-CGPSC-EPM-Evaluations@uscg.mil to reserve a time slot. Units deployed during this time period are encouraged to contact PSC-EPM as soon as possible to coordinate a briefing outside of the published windows.

3. The new competencies and FAQs are available for all members to view at the following websites:
EES Portal: <http://cglink.uscg.mil/bdf9a38f>
EES Internet: <http://cglink.uscg.mil/7abcb082>
 4. For general questions or concerns regarding the new EES, please forward all inquiries to the following email Portal address: ARL-SMB-CGPSC-EPM-Evaluations@uscg.mil. All personnel with inquiries are highly encouraged to review the FAQ guidance posted on both the Internet and Intranet sites prior to submitting their inquiries.
 5. Released by: CAPT M. W. Sibley, Acting, Commander, Personnel Service Center. The Service Center for Our Most Important Resource - Our People.
 6. Internet release authorized.
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2017 IRS W-2 & 1095 Forms Update

19 DEC 17

BT

UNCLASS //N07401//

ALCGPSC 154/17

SUBJ: 2017 IRS FORMS W-2 AND 1095-C INFORMATION

A. PERSONNEL AND PAY PROCEDURES MANUAL (PPPM), PPCINST M1000.2 (SERIES)

1. IRS Form W-2 and 1095-C - The required 2017 IRS tax forms W-2 (Wage and Tax Statement) and 1095-C (Employer-Provided Health Insurance Offer and Coverage) will be mailed no later than 31 Jan 2018 to the member's mailing address listed in Direct Access

<https://portal.direct-access.us/>. Members who have selected to opt out of receiving the paper forms will be able to download their tax forms from Direct Access and will not receive a paper copy in the mail. Members who have not opted out of receiving the paper forms are highly encouraged to do so as this reduces fraud and identity theft risks, and also reduces postage/material costs for the Coast Guard. All members with access to Direct Access, regardless of whether they opted out or not, will be able to download and print their individual tax forms starting in late January 2018. Tax documents will be available by going to: Employee, View and View/Print My Year End Forms.

2. In order to facilitate timely delivery of required tax forms, members must ensure their address is correct in Direct Access no later than 6 January. To view and update your mailing address in Direct Access, go to the Main Menu and select Self-Service, Employee, Tasks, and Home and Mailing Address. Use ref (a), section 8.B.6, for address format examples for single members living in barracks or shipboard berthing. Members must ensure forwarding of

mail through the U.S. Postal Service if there has been a recent change in mailing address.

3. Corrected IRS Forms – Members who require corrections to their IRS forms shall refer to ref (a), section 8.B.7 and the following guidance:

- a. Corrected W-2: Report all W-2 discrepancies to PPC (SEP) via your responsible Personnel and Administration (P&A) Office. The P&A Office must notify PPC (SEP) via Customer Care trouble ticket of the suspected error(s) and include applicable supporting documentation and calculations. P&As should refer to the [State Tax Withholding Exceptions](#) prior to submitting a request for a corrected W-2 as Direct Access collects Federal and State tax based on member election. PPC Customer Care tickets can be submitted using the form at <http://cglink.uscg.mil/PPcticket> or sent via e-mail to [PPC-DG-CustomerCare\(at\)uscg.mil](mailto:PPC-DG-CustomerCare(at)uscg.mil).
- b. Corrected 1095-C: Corrections to the IRS Form 1095-C can only be made by the Defense Manpower Data Center (DMDC) through the Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System (DEERS). Members must go to an ID card facility to have information updated in DEERS. Corrected IRS Form 1095-C will be loaded into Direct Access for members to view/print once DMDC has transmitted the updated files to the Coast Guard. DMDC files are typically updated weekly.
- c. Corrected W-2 and 1095-C forms will be available to download and print from Direct Access. Members unable to print or who cannot access Direct Access should follow the guidance of paragraph 4 below to request a paper copy of their tax form(s).

4. Lost or Undeliverable IRS Forms – Requests for undeliverable/replacement IRS Form W-2 and/or 1095-C will not be processed until after 15 February 2018. Members with access to Direct Access can download and print their tax forms at any time after they are posted in late

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January. PPC will only process undeliverable/replacement requests for members who cannot access their forms from Direct Access. Note: Separated members have access to Direct Access for 18 months following separation.

- a. Members unable to access or print their W-2 from Direct Access can request a duplicate/replacement by completing form CG-2016 by going to: http://www.dcms.uscg.mil/Portals/10/CG-1/PPC/forms/CG_2016.pdf. Attach the signed form (digital signatures are preferred) to a PPC Customer Care trouble ticket. Faxed forms cannot be accepted and will not be processed. PPC will send the requested form to the taxpayer only, at the e-mail address (if one is provided) or the mailing address listed on the form. The form will be mailed within 10 business days.
- b. Members unable to access or print their 1095-C from Direct Access shall submit an online trouble ticket directly to PPC Customer Care with the following information: First and last name, employee ID, complete home address, and e-mail address. PPC will send the requested form to the taxpayer only, at the e-mail address (preferred) or mailing address provided. The form will be mailed within 10 business days.

5. Direct questions regarding the content of this message to PPC Customer Care at: (866) 772-8724/(785) 339-2200 or via the Online Trouble Ticket/Inquiry Form at <http://cglink.uscg.mil/PPCticket> or by e-mail to [PPC-DG-CustomerCare\(at\)uscg.mil](mailto:PPC-DG-CustomerCare(at)uscg.mil).

6. Released by: CAPT C. E. Fosse, Acting Commander, CG Personnel Service Center. The Service Center for Our Most Important Resource - Our People.

7. Internet release authorized.

Direct Access Guides Updated

- 21 December 2017: The **State Tax Withholding Exceptions user guide** has been updated.
 - 14 December 2017: The **SPO User Guide for Starting OUTCONUS COLA** has been updated. 12 December 2017:
 - 14 December 2017: The **Career Sea Pay Premium SPO User Guide** has been updated.
 - 08 December 2017: New guide added. The **Correcting Paid IDT Drills guide** provides the procedures for Commands and SPOs to correct IDT drills that have already been paid. Corrections can be made to the drill type, start/end times, duty purpose codes, pay codes, meal eligibility codes, SDAP, FLP codes or FLP Proficiency.
 - 04 December 2017: The **SPO User Guide for Entering Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance (SGLI) Coverage Elections** has been updated
-