

# Pay & Personnel Newsletter

United States Coast Guard Pay & Personnel Center

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Visit PPC's New Travel Web Page - <https://www.uscg.mil/ppc/tvl.asp>

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**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"](#).

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## Top 10 Tuesday Recording and Q and A Posted

### Top 10 Things You Should Know About TPAX.

Thank you to all those who attended our online virtual session! We provided an overview of the WEB-TPAX travel authorization and claims system, we revealed our new [PPC Travel Branch web page](#) and held a question and answer session with PPC's travel experts.

A recording of the session is available at <https://www.uscg.mil/ppc/training/2017Tuesdays/Top10Feb.asp>.

A transcript of the questions and answers that came up during the session is online at <https://www.uscg.mil/ppc/training/2017Tuesdays/FebruaryQandA.pdf>.

We had several questions about use of the Travel Management Center (ADVTRAV) for airfare and lodging so we included a list of FAQs on the *Required Use of ADVTRAV* which we obtained from [PSC's web site](#). The FAQs help to explain why it may seem using the TMC is more expensive than procuring travel directly from an airline or lodging from a hotel.

The below process defines how you can provide feedback directly to the Coast Guard's Contracting Officer's Technical Representative for the ADTRAV Contract. Before providing your feedback, please consider the following:

1. All official travel (e.g. airline, bus, ship, Alaska Marine Highway System (AMHS), rental vehicle) must be arranged through a Government Contracted TMC in accordance with the JTR/FTR, even if a non-contract fare is being purchased. The contracted TMC for the Coast Guard is ADTRAV Travel Management.
2. If you are considering comparing the ADTRAV ticket costs which are generally GSA contracted fully-refundable fares with a non-refundable fare from Orbitz, Travelocity, etc. is not a fair comparison. If you want to use a non-refundable fare to save money, please ensure your orders authorize it.

Please include the following information with your feedback:

- a. Feedback Type: [Positive/Negative]
- b. Traveler's First Name
- c. Traveler's Last Name
- d. Traveler's EMPLID
- e. Travel Record Locator Number
- f. Date ADTRAV Service Provided
- g. Date of Travel
- h. Traveler's Business Phone
- i. Booking Method (Full/Self-Service)
- j. Traveler Feedback

Please send the above information to [ArI-PF-CGPSC-JPMC-GTCC](mailto:ArI-PF-CGPSC-JPMC-GTCC).

## Known Issue - DD-214 Formatting

The extra space after the last name has been fixed. Blocks 13, 14, and 18 are now left-aligned. Blocks 4a and b now reflect W2, W3, W4 vice specialty. Word-wrapping may still be an issue in blocks 13, 14, and 18. We have a system change request in to get this fixed. In the meantime, you may need to add extra spaces to ensure words do not get split up.

## Resolved Known Issue with Sea Time Calculation on Personnel Data Extracts

Corrected Personnel Data Extracts (PDEs) have been posted to Direct Access. If command/members previously downloaded or printed the PDE, you should discard them and re-download/print to get corrected copy.

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## Enlisted Advancements

### *Reserve Supplemental Advancement Lists Updated*

The advancement eligibility lists for [reserve supplemental advancements](#) have been updated to reflect requests processed prior to 28 February 2017.

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

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### *November 2016 Servicewide Exam Revised Cutoffs Announced*

[ALCGENL message 020/17](#) announces revised cutoffs for participants of the November 2016 Servicewide Exam.

The Advancement Eligibility List from the November 2016 Servicewide Exam is available on the PPC (adv) [CG Portal Page](#).

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### *May 2016 Servicewide Exam Revised Cutoffs Announced*

[ALCGENL message 019/17](#) announces new cutoffs for participants of the May 2016 Servicewide Exam.

The Advancement Eligibility List from the May 2016 Servicewide Exam is available on the PPC (adv) [CG Portal Page](#).

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### *March 2017 Enlisted Personnel Advancement Announcement*

[ALCGENL message 017/17](#) lists enlisted advancements authorized on 1 March 2017. In addition to the message, a spreadsheet is available which also shows the member's unit:

-  [EPAA0317.xls](#)

## Defense Travel Management Office Allowances and Regulations Update


The Defense Travel Management Office has updated the following information for 01 March 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 \(Available 3/1/2017\)](#)

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

## Known Issue - Combat Tax Exclusion and PCS Departure

Combat Tax Exclusion, Auto-stop upon PCS: The system isn't shutting down Combat Tax Exclusion (CTE) upon PCS departure. CTE entitlement ends on the day of PCS departure from a combat zone. SPOs must manually stop CTE when processing PCS transfers for members from combat zones until this programming discrepancy is corrected.

Refer to the [Combat Tax Exclusion SPO User Guide](#)  for the procedure to stop CTE.

NOTE: All retroactive start or stop CTE entries in a finalized pay calendar must be followed up with a Customer Care Ticket requesting manual adjustments to the member's tax balances.

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## Travel Authorizing /Approving Official (AO) Course

The Travel AO Course is available in the [Coast Guard Learning Management System \(LMS\) \(CAC logon required\)](#).

AOs play a critical role in managing travel. They contribute to mission readiness by ensuring travel is necessary to meet the organization’s mission requirements. AOs oversee the obligation of travel funds, authorize travel, ensure travelers abide by all travel regulations, and approve reimbursements for authorizing travel expenses. In this role, AOs function as Certifying Officers (COs) when approving most TPAX documents and are expected to safeguard taxpayer funds from misuse. Any approved payment found to be erroneous, may result in an AO being held personally liable for reimbursing the Government for the amount of the erroneous payment. This financial responsibility is called “pecuniary liability.” To better prepare AOs and protect them from the consequences of erroneous payments, the Coast Guard developed a specialized training course for Authorizing /Approving Officials (AOs).



- The Course will teach new AOs to review, authorize, and sign T-PAX transactions and manually submitted travel documents.
- The estimated length is four hours.
- The Course can be found in the **Human Resources** catalog.
- The Course number is 100102.



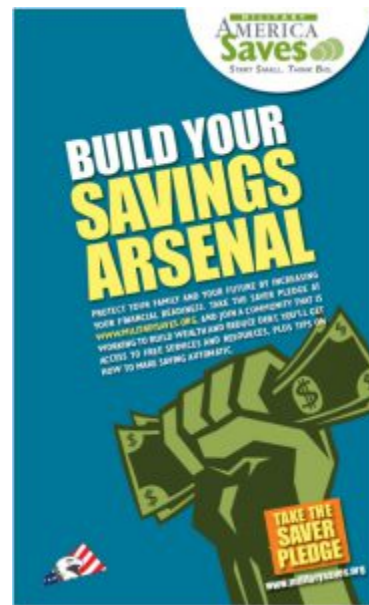
If you are currently logged on with a CAC, [you can enroll in the course now](#).

## Military Saves Week

*Written by Lisa J. Johnson, Family Support Services Program Manager*

Military services around the globe are providing engaging ways for individuals to save and enhance their financial readiness in celebration of Military Saves Week 2017, which runs from February 27 to March 4.

Military Saves Week is an opportunity for you to assess your finance goals and learn more about how you can save for the things you want in life. This week we will be challenging you to learn more about finance through the resources on <https://militarysaves.org/>.



We will also highlight educational resources available to Coast Guard families, such as [CGSUPRT](#), and encourage individuals to [Take the Military Saves Pledge](#). The pledge can be for the financial goal of your choice and helps bring your goal to life. You could choose to save for a car, a house, a boat, or a houseboat. Each pledge goes towards the Coast Guard total, so represent your service!

The Military Saves organizational motto is: Set a Goal. Make a Plan. Save Automatically. The Military Saves Week guidance is timely as the whole workforce is learning more about the new Blended Retirement System (BRS). To learn more about the BRS, visit the [Coast Guard’s Blended Retirement](#)

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[website](#) and if you are eligible to opt-in, be sure to take your Opt-In training.

Additionally, there are many resources available to Coast Guard members, civilians and families to reach their financial goals, all of which can be found [Office of Work-Life Programs, Personal Financial Management](#) website. Read below for more information.

### **Services and Resources Available**

**Personal Financial Management Coordinator (PFMC):** PFMC's are a part of the [Work-Life Staff](#) at each Health Safety and Work-Life Regional Practice (HSWL-RP), and can assist you obtain resources to help with your financial needs.

**Command Financial Specialist (CFS):** Member of the military appointed by the commanding officer to provide financial education and training and information referral at the command level. The CFS should be the first stop for the military member who has questions or issues about financial readiness. CFS's are located at many centralized units throughout the Coast Guard.

**CG SUPRT** – [www.CGSUPRT.com](http://www.CGSUPRT.com) or **1-855-CG SUPRT** (247-8778)

- CG SUPRT offers all eligible Coast Guard Personnel enhanced personal financial management services. The program provides one-on-one money coaching, a personalized website with helpful tools and calculators, twice-a-month webinars, and more!
- Please visit [www.CGSUPRT.com](http://www.CGSUPRT.com) and click "Personal Financial Management" under Quick Links for more information.
  - [CG SUPRT PFMP Basic Overview Flyer](#)
  - [CG SUPRT PFMP FAQs](#)

For more detailed information about the Personal Financial Management Program, please view [Commandant Instruction 1740.8](#).

## Blended Retirement System Opt-In Training: Are you required?

The [Blended Retirement System](#) Opt-In training has launched and if you are eligible to join the BRS, now is the time to learn all about this retirement option!

The Opt-In Training is mandatory for all eligible active duty and reserve members and is designed to educate YOU. Coast Guard leadership is extremely interested in making sure you have knowledge of the new system and the financial literacy to assess your own unique situation to see if this system is for you.

Are you eligible? Take a look at [ACN 013/17](#) to determine if you meet the criteria for opting in. Generally, active duty members who have 12 or fewer years of service as of Dec. 31, 2017, and reservists with 4,320 or fewer retirement points by Dec. 31, 2017, are eligible. However there are other populations mentioned in the ACN so check to see!

If you are eligible, the Opt-In training is mandatory and will be tracked by [FORCECOM](#) to ensure that you are receiving the information you need to make an informed decision for your financial future.

Whereas the training is mandatory for eligible servicemembers, the Coast Guard encourages spouses of eligible members to also take the training to make an informed decision.

The Opt-In training is available on the [Joint Knowledge Online \(JKO\) portal](#) on both CAC and non-CAC enabled computers and takes approximately 90 minutes to complete. For directions on how to take the course and log completion, see the job aid created by FORCECOM (on the next page).



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## Taking and Recording BRS Opt-In Course Completion

The Blended Retirement System (BRS) course for the Opt-In population is now available on Joint Knowledge Online (JKO). Active Duty personnel with <12 YOS and Reserve personnel with <4,320 points on December 31, 2017 will be required to complete this 2-hour training module. Once you have completed the BRS Opt-In Training course you will need to record your completion through self-certification in the CG LMS.

### Directions for accessing the course:

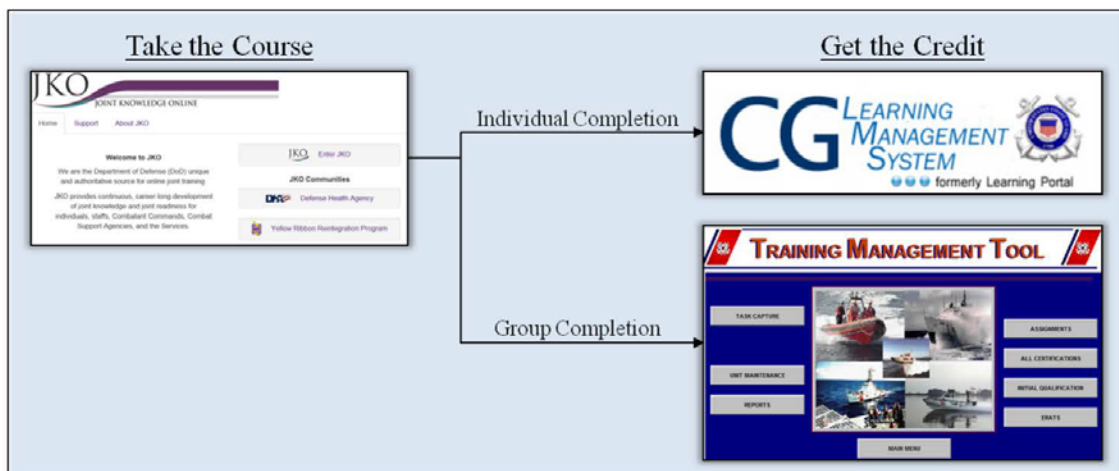
1. Access JKO course at [https://jkosupport.jten.mil/html/COI.xhtml?course\\_prefix=J3O&course\\_number=P-US1332](https://jkosupport.jten.mil/html/COI.xhtml?course_prefix=J3O&course_number=P-US1332)  
*(enroll in JKO if you do not already have an account)*
2. Enroll in course J3OP-US1332: Blended Retirement System OPT-IN Course
3. Complete the entire course and make note of resources and downloadable content intended for future use

### Directions for Recording Completion via LMS (for recording individual completions):

1. Access CG LMS at <https://elearning.uscg.mil>
2. Select the "Course Catalog" navigation tab and search for course 100149 (BRS Opt-In Course)
3. Select the hyperlinked "BRS Opt-In Course" text
4. Enroll in course 100149
5. Launch the course from "My Account" and select "Go"
6. Select the appropriate tab to record your completion in the LMS

### Directions for Recording Completion via TMT (for recording group completions):

1. Unit Training Officers/Petty Officers access TMT/AOPS application at <http://aops.osc.uscg.mil>
2. Verify the competency "BRS OPT-IN COURSE" is assigned to your unit (assign it if not)
3. Verify the competency "BRS OPT-IN COURSE" is assigned to the proper people at your unit (assign if not)
4. Record completions as appropriate



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This course will be available for through calendar year 2017 to provide members ample time to take it before they will need to make their decision to opt-in or stay in the current system in calendar year 2018.

Congress implemented the Blended Retirement System not as a money-saving move but rather, due to the fact that, historically, approximately 80 percent of service members leave their respective service without any retirement benefit.

For additional information on the new BRS, please refer to the [Coast Guard's BRS website](#). Additional questions may be directed to the Coast Guard Military BRS Integrated Project Team [via email](#).