



U.S. AIR FORCE

Civilian Personnel Office Quarterly Newsletter

October–December 2016



United Kingdom

Greetings from the CPO

Greetings,

This is the first issue of the newly re-vamped CPO Quarterly Newsletter. My goal is to provide you with the customer service you have come to expect from the Civilian Personnel Office, and to also provide up-to-date, relevant information with regards to HR matters, for both U.S. and Local National employees.

Now that the colder weather seems to be moving in with a bite, it comes with the Holidays, leave, and student travel. For the cold weather please remember to check the fuel and order top ups in a timely manner so you are not left with a higher bill for a last minute delivery, and don't forget to take note of the weather phone line for your base so that you can call in for morning updates. If you're planning on travelling, we advise you plan early and review the Foreign Clearance Guide to ensure all leave requirements are met prior to obligating any monies. Finally, if you have a student who will be travelling on Student Education Travel (SET), please ensure you have contacted our Resources Team at 238-4995 for specific requirements and instructions.

As 2016 slowly comes to a close we here at CPO wish you and yours a Happy and Safe Holiday Season and we look forward to servicing you in 2017. If you have an idea that you think should be addressed in the next CPO Quarterly Newsletter, please contact our office at 238-3540 or Kerry Smith at 100FSS.FSMC.EIC@us.af.mil.

Kind Regards,
Nicole Nisperos, CPO

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*Remember clocks fall back
1 hour on the last Sunday
in October.
30 October 2016.*

- 10 Oct 16—US Holiday—Columbus Day
- 11 Nov 16—US Holiday—Veterans Day
- 24 Nov 16—US Holiday— Thanksgiving
- 25 Nov 16—Family Day—USAFE
- 23 Dec 16—Family Day—USAFE
- 26 Dec 16—US Holiday—Christmas observed

- 27 Dec 16—UK Holiday—Boxing Day
- 30 Dec 16—Family Day—USAFE
- 02 Jan 17—US/UK Holiday—New Years Day Observed
- 16 Jan 17—US Holiday—Martin Luther King Jr. Day
- 20 Feb 17—US Holiday—President's Day

Use or Lose Annual Leave

Now is the time to plan to take any use-or-lose annual leave you may have by the end of the leave year (12 Nov 2016 for LNDH employees paid from non-appropriated funds; 09 Jan 2017 for LNDH employees paid from appropriated funds; and 09 Jan 2017 for US employees). Check your balance on your pay advice slip/leave and earning statements and work with your supervisor to get any use-or-lose scheduled.

Annual leave exceeding the an-

nual entitlement (45 days for firefighters, 360 hours for US employees on their own transportation agreement, 240 hours for all other US employees, and one year's leave accrual amount for individual LNDH staff) at the end of the leave year will be forfeited. Any earned, unused annual leave not exceeding the annual entitlement, which remains at the end of the current leave year, may be carried forward to the next year.

For US employees an agency may

consider restoring annual leave that was forfeited due to an exigency of the public business or sickness of the employee only if the annual leave was scheduled in writing before the start of the third biweekly pay period prior to the end of the leave year (November 26, 2016).

Please call EMR for further information:

Comm: 01638 544975

DSN:238-4975

**LEARN
LEAD
GROW
SUCCEED**

All new supervisors of LNDH employees are required to be trained within 90 days of appointment. Training classes are held monthly, please contact this office to be scheduled to attend.

Commercial: 01638 543540

DSN 238-3540

Mid-Year Review

The General Schedule (GS) and Appropriated Fund (APF) Local National Direct Hire (LNDH) performance appraisal cycle runs annually from 1 April through 31 March. This means that we have hit the cycle's midpoint, and supervisors should consider scheduling their employees for a mid-term progress review.

AFI 36-1001, "Managing the Civilian Performance program", requires at least one progress review per cycle, and stipulates that this review should normally occur at the midpoint of the cycle. This midterm gives supervisors an opportunity to provide

their employees feedback relating to their job performance, to advise on areas where they may be excelling, and to reaffirm their expectations in areas where improvement may be necessary. It also gives employees a valuable opportunity to inform supervisors of any issues, special needs, or training requirements that may have arisen during the first part of the cycle. The process is intended for employee development and to help the individual. The employee should be made aware the progress review is meant to provide feedback on performance that may impact

the rating of record at the end of the appraisal period.

This is also an excellent opportunity for supervisors to engage with their EMR Specialist for advice and assistance in addressing any anticipated ongoing performance problems.

New Beginnings!! Defense Management & Appraisal Program (DPMAP)

The new DoD performance management program will be implemented for Air Force GS/FWS employees on 1 April 2017, the beginning of the next rating cycle. All GS/FWS employees and their supervisors must complete both the web-based and instructor-led training. Training includes two introductory web-based sessions that must be completed prior to participation in the instructor-led course, see links below. Please don't forget to send in your certificates to the 100 FSS/FSMC (EMR) group box.

The link to the JKO Web Based DPMAP Training Links can be found on the 100th Force Support Squadron Training Class site as well as sign up for instructor-led training dates and locations below:

<https://portal.usafe.af.mil/sites/100MSG/FSS/FSM/CivilianPersonnel/FSSClassSignup/default.aspx>



Overseas Post Allowance Fluctuation

The post allowance is an overseas allowance, granted to full time employees, designed to permit employees to spend the same portion of their basic compensation for current living as they would in Washington, D.C., without incurring a reduction in their standard of living because of higher costs of goods and services at the post. The post allowance payment tables (Section 229 of the Department of State Standardized Regulations (DSSR) represent a percentage increase over Washington cost-of-living, applied to "spendable income", i.e., that portion of basic compensation available for disbursement after deduction for taxes, gifts and contributions, savings (including insurance and retirement) and U.S. shelter and household utility expenses. In addition to local prices, the comparative cost of living considers the normal expenses of the average Government employee at the post (including imports and commissary purchases paid for in United States dollars) and additional costs resulting from local climatic and health conditions and customs, as related to costs for the same or similar items and conditions affecting Government employees in the Washington, D.C. area. Education and other costs peculiar to one segment of personnel at a post are not considered. The amount paid is a flat rate varying only by basic salary, size of family, and post, regardless of individual expenses. Post allowance rates, as you may have noticed, are subject to change every pay period. These changes are a result of exchange rate fluctuations and reports of spending patterns submitted by agencies.

For any questions please contact the Resources and Overseas Allowances branch at DSN 238-3540.

Website Update

Our Website has been updated!!

We have revamped our website to include information that we regularly get questions about. We have added additional contact information for services that we cannot assist you with and have hopefully made it just a bit more user friendly. As always you can find our vacancies for our Local National Direct Hires (LNDH) on this page in the center under *Current Vacancies* for Non-US and on that page you will also find the electronic application. Please remember when viewing our *Vacancy page* you will need to refresh or hit F5 while on this page to view the most current information. This is a temporary condition that is being looked into.

Our new web address: <http://www.mildenhall.af.mil/Info/100th-Force-Support-Squadron/Civilian-Personnel>

Vacancies web address: <http://www.mildenhall.af.mil/About-Us/Fact-Sheets/Display/Article/759969/civilian-personnel-start-your-job-search-here>

Inclement Weather

Although local weather conditions rarely result in a change of work schedule, it is important to know in advance how adverse weather procedures may affect you as an employee. When weather conditions become hazardous, the Installation Commander makes a decision based on advice from appropriate base offices. If warranted, the commander may make one of several decisions related primarily to when the conditions occur:

Delayed Reporting: Weather conditions such as snow, ice, or severe fog can certainly increase the danger of an employee's normal drive to and from work. When warranted, the Commander may order delayed reporting for employees. Under the delayed reporting concept, the base is open and employees proceed to work using due caution. Those delayed by difficult driving conditions or traffic disruptions may be excused for short periods of tardiness (usually up to two hours) without charge to leave. Those employees required to perform mission essential duties are expected to report for duty as scheduled.

Liberal Leave: Sometimes conditions allow opening of base facilities, but are severe enough to create personal hardships for some employees. When that occurs, a liberal leave policy may be placed in effect as an alternative to late reporting. Liberal leave allows non-essential personnel, and employees who were not previously scheduled to be in a leave status, to be granted appropriate leave. Employees must request leave from their supervisor if they plan to take leave. Mission essential employees are expected to report to work on time.

Base Closure: In rare instances, weather conditions may be severe enough to cause the Commander to order base closure. When that occurs, all non-essential personnel are excused without charge to leave. This includes those on approved annual or sick leave, but does not include those in a non-pay status on the days immediately before and after the base closure. Those employees required to perform mission essential duties are expected to report for duty as scheduled.

Early Release: Unfortunately, not all weather hazards occur prior to the beginning of the workday. The Commander can order early dismissal of employees when weather conditions become hazardous during the course of the duty day. The purpose of early dismissal is to allow employees to depart the base in a safe and orderly manner. Typically, those non-essential personnel who live furthest from the base are released first so as to minimize traffic congestion on area roadways. Information related to the early release of employees is communicated through the normal chain-of-command.

Unit recall rosters and local media are used to share information about delayed reporting, liberal leave or base closure, as these decisions normally occur prior to the beginning of the duty day. Individual organizations will make other necessary notifications to account for employees on uncommon duty hours and shift schedules.

Contact your office or supervisor if you are in doubt about your work status.

Base Inclement Weather Lines:

Mildenhall 01638 543541

Lakenheath 01638 523541

Due to the extensive network of bases and limited personnel, the 501st do not currently maintain an Inclement Weather Hotline. They are utilizing the 501st Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/501stCSW>) and a network of supervisors to relay those types of messages.

UK State Pension

From April 2016, there will be only a single-tier state pension. This will be a flat rate paid currently at £155.65 per week.

In October 2012, the UK government introduced new rules to encourage more people to save for retirement. This process is called auto-enrollment. It means that you will be automatically placed into the USAF's Legal and General Stakeholder Pension Scheme.

Our staging date began in January 2014 with automatic entry from 01 April 2014. We are now coming up to our 3rd year anniversary of auto enrollment. Re-enrollment has been introduced, this applies to those who opted out. What this will mean for you is that if you opted out of the above scheme in 2014, you will be automatically re-enrolled in January 2017 if you meet all the eligibility requirements; age 22 and above, earn over £10,000 per annum and are currently under state pension age. (State Pension Age depends on your date of birth which can range from 65 through to 68 years). You will not be re-enrolled if you do not meet this criteria.

Following your re-enrollment (which is compulsory), you will receive a letter from Legal & General - (the provider), if you do not wish to remain a member of the scheme, you will need to "opt-out" directly with them, the details will be found in the letter. Legal & General will then in turn let us know to cease contributions from your pay. The UK Governments requirement of re-enrollment and "opt-out" every three years will continue in the future with Auto Enrollment.

The benefits of joining the pension scheme, is that the employer will pay contributions towards your pension fund in addition, being a member entitles you to be considered for membership for life assurance coverage. If you are a member of the pension scheme and, if eligible, under state pension age, you will be covered by two times your annual salary, life assurance protection. You will be provided with all the necessary documentation to complete; Request and Authority to Join and two designation of beneficiary forms to keep current, one for the contributions you have in your pension fund and the other for Expression of Wish (Death in Service).

If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact either; Michele Hortenstine (238-4994) or Karen Robson (238-4526).

UK National Minimum Wage & National Living Wage

The minimum wage for workers over the age of 25 increased to £7.20 (National Living Wage) in April 2016, the increase is part of a move toward a national living wage of £9 per hour by 2020. On 01 October 2016 the National Minimum Wage for under 25's has increased and is currently being processed. From April 2017 the National Minimum wage and National Living Wage will be uprated at the same

Outside Our Office Contact Information

LNDH Civilian Payroll Office

All LNDH payroll concerns will be addressed by the payroll office on RAF Mildenhall at:

Commercial 01638 543019 DSN: 238-3019.

Ministry of Defense (MOD) Business Support Team (BST) Offices

BASE	DSN	COMMERCIAL
ALCONBURY	268-3966	01480 843966
CROUGHTON	236-8036	01280 708036
FAIRFORD	247-4965	01285 714965
LAKENHEATH	226-2415	01638 522415
MENWITH HILL	262-7740	01423 777740
MILDENHALL	238-5353	01638 545353

Benefits Open Season

On 17 October 2016, OPM issued Benefits Administration Letter (BAL) 16-404, 2016 Federal Benefits Open Season: FSAFEDS, FEDVIP and FEHB Program Significant Plan Changes. This BAL provides information on significant plan changes for FSAFEDS, FEDVIP, and the FEHB Program for 2017.



This year's Federal Benefits Open Season will run from Monday, 14 November through Monday, 12 December 2016.

Elections made during the Open Season will be effective the first day of the pay period beginning on or after 1 January 2017; for AF employees this will be Sunday, 8 January 2017. Enrollees will remain covered and receive the 2016 benefits of the old plan or option until coverage under the new plan becomes effective.

Highlights include the following:

FSAFEDS - There is a new contractor for the Federal Flexible Spending Account Program (FSAFEDS). Effective September 1, 2016, Wage Works assumed the administrative responsibility for the FSAFEDS Program.

FEDVIP - There are no 2017 FEDVIP significant changes.

FEHB PROGRAM - There have been significant changes affecting certain plans in the FEHB Program for the upcoming Open Season. 2016 Federal Benefits Open Season: FSAFEDS, FEDVIP and FEHB Program Significant Plan Changes Number 16-404, identifies the FEHB plans and their corresponding significant changes. Some of these events will require action on the part of agencies and enrollees. We also have a Federal Benefits Fast Facts: What to do When Your Health Plan is Terminating Coverage in Your Area or Leaving the Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB) Program available for your reference.

All reference documents are available on our SharePoint site under the Employee Relations Tab. <https://portal.usafe.af.mil/sites/100MSG/FSS/FSM/CivilianPersonnel/default.aspx>

If you have any questions please contact our EMR team at 100 FSS/FSMC, 238-3670.

Civilian Personnel Office RAF Mildenhall

Hours of Operations
Monday–Friday
0800-1500
After 1500 by appointment
only.

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APO, AE 09459

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Building 435
RAF Mildenhall
Bury St Edmunds
Suffolk
IP28 8NF

Commercial Phone: 01638 543540
DSN Phone: 238-3540
Commercial Fax: 01638 542771
DSN Fax: 238-2771

LNDH Time Card submission for the periods covering Veterans Day, Thanksgiving, Christmas and the New Year

For PP17 Veterans Day timecards will be due on 10 November 2016
For PP18 Thanksgiving timecards will be due on 23 November 2016
For PP20 Christmas timecards will be due on 22 December 2016
For PP21 as normal no later than Friday 6 January 2017