



United States Army Dental Command

CIVILIAN HUMAN RESOURCES UPDATE

October 2009

FLEXIBLE SPENDING ACCOUNTS OFFER TAX ADVANTAGES

Flexible Spending Accounts (FSA) are programs that allow employees to pay for eligible out-of-pocket health and dependent care expenses with pre-tax dollars. They can reduce taxes and enable you to get more for your money. Three types of FSAs are available. Health Care Flexible Spending Accounts (HCFSA) can be used to pay for qualified medical costs and health care expenses not paid by your insurance. Limited Expense Health Care Flexible Spending Accounts (LEX HCFSA) are available to employees enrolled in a High Deductible Health Plan (HDHP). Dependent Care Flexible Spending Accounts (DCFSA) can be used to pay for eligible dependent care expenses such as child care. Participation in any FSA is voluntary. For additional information visit: www.fsafeds.com.

TIME-IN-GRADE RULES REMAIN IN EFFECT FOR GS EMPLOYEES

Effective August 11, 2009, the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) withdrew the final rule, titled Time-in-Grade Elimination, published in the Federal Register on November 7, 2008. After carefully considering all of the comments, OPM has determined that it would be more productive to consider the merits of the time-in-grade issue as part of a more comprehensive review of pay, performance, and staffing issues than to regulate this particular issue in piecemeal fashion. This means that the Time-in-Grade rules remain in effect. The OPM notice published in the Federal Register can be found at: <http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/2009/pdf/E9-19174.pdf>

PIPELINE PROGRAM HELPS INJURED CIVILIANS RETURN TO WORK

So far this fiscal year, Army has returned 73 long-term Workers Compensation claimants to productive employment by using DoD's "Pipeline" program. The Pipeline program, administered by DoD's CPMS, pays Army for the salary cost of each claimant's first 365 days back on the job. The Pipeline program also provides over-hire authority. The return of these 73 claimants resulted in future cost avoidance to the Army of more than 52 million dollars in future Workers Compensation costs, compared to what would have been paid if the workers had not gone back to work. For additional information on the pipeline program visit: www.cpms.osd.mil/pipeline/pipeline.aspx

PLANNING TO RETIRE SOON?

The Army Benefits Center-Civilian (ABC-C) recommends that employees submit their retirement application package within 120 days of their intended retirement date. Early submissions help ensure a timely receipt of an employee's first annuity payment. If a retirement packet is submitted with less than 60 days notice, the employee should be financially prepared for a delay in the receipt of the first annuity payment. For more information on retirement, visit the ABC-C website at <https://www.abc.army.mil>.

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