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Technician Personnel

Technician Branch Staff:

Deputy HRO	Maj Nancy Curtis	x8144
Supv Human Resource Spec	Mrs. Deb Burling	x8187
Classification/Manpower	2LT Jessica Pan	x8182
Recruitment, Staffing & Pay	Mrs. Denise Anderson	x8177
Benefits & Services	MSgt Jody Kouma	x8190
	OC Amanda Almanza	x8197
	SSG John Winterfeld	x8173
Technician Training /Travel	Mrs. Diane Voichoski	x8184
Labor Relations	Mr. Jason Grams	x8185

Website: <https://states.gkoportal.ng.mil/states/NE/Directorates/J1/Technician-Branch/Pages/default.aspx>

Why did I not qualify?

When individuals apply through USAJobs for Nebraska National Guard federal technician vacancy announcements, sometimes they receive the following message from HRO:

“Your experience/education, as described in your application, does not meet the specialized experience qualification requirements for the position. The specialized experience qualifications requirements are shown on the vacancy announcement. If you have any questions, please give me a call.”

HRO take the general and specialized experience in the vacancy announcement and compares it to the resume and supporting documentation uploaded to the vacancy announcement. After review by the HR Specialist a qualification determination is made. If an individual does not meet the minimum qualification requirements and/or the resume does not support the answers provided to the job-specific questions, individual will receive the message stated above.

Common mistakes seen on vacancy announcements are:

- Dates not used (i.e. Mar 2013-Present equals 26 months of experience vs. 2013-2015 equals 18 months of experience). Stating I have 4 years of experience is not the same as Jan 2010-Jan 2014

- Leaving out military experience (Drill time counts month for month.)
- Being very vague on the resume (i.e. I am a Human Resource Specialist vs. I process promotion, demotion orders, requests for personnel actions, review DD214's for accuracy.)
- Cutting and pasting duties from the announcement or the Position Description.

We encourage applicants to call us so we can explain why they did not qualify for the announcement so when they next apply, they can update their information and possibly qualify for an interview. 2LT Jessica Pan and Mrs. Deb Burling can review resumes and advise changes that can be made to assist with qualifications.

Remember, Nebraska National Guard HRO has a document entitled "Secrets to Getting a Technician Job"; you are encouraged to follow the link <http://ne.ng.mil/Resource/Documents/Secrets-Technician-Job.pdf>

Please call Mrs. Denise Anderson at 402-309-8177 or 2LT Jessica Pan at 402-309-8182 if you have questions.

Compatibility

Compatibility for military technicians is when their traditional military assignment (e.g. MTOE, TDA or UMD) is substantially equivalent to the duties and responsibilities of their military technician assignment. Who decides what MOS/AFSC and unit is compatible with their job? The answer is, the Office of Personal Responsibility at National Guard Bureau (NGB) makes the decision.

When an applicant applies, qualifies for, and is selected for a vacant military federal technician position, prior to appointment, they must be moved into a compatible military assignment and MOS/AFSC. They do not have to already hold the MOS/AFSC to be moved into the position, but eventually they will need to attend the military training school.

The same thing happens when current military technicians apply, qualify for, and are selected for a different military technician job. Upon promotion, reassignment, etc., they must be moved into a compatible military unit of assignment and MOS/AFSC.

There are two types of compatibility waivers for individuals who request an exception to compatibility. They are: (1) waiver of AFSC/MOS or unit of assignment or (2) a leadership waiver.

A waiver of AFSC/MOS or unit of assignment is a memorandum request when endorsement from the supervisor to HRO justifying why the MOS/AFSC or unit of assignment the person wants to occupy is directly related to their full time position. HRO will endorse and forward the waiver request to NGB-HR if considered a valid request. NGB-HR reviews the documentation and will forward to the OPR. If the OPR approves the request, it will be valid for the person as long as they hold the PD and military position requested in the waiver.

The second exception for compatibility is when a technician goes on a leadership waiver. A leadership waiver is approved as an exception to accommodate military career development and to meet the mission of the Nebraska National Guard. Leadership waivers are sent through HRO and approved for up to 3 years.

If you have question regarding the compatibility process, please call Mrs. Denise Anderson at 402-309-8177 or 2LT Jessica Pan at 402-309-8182

Military Grade Inversion

For federal military technician positions, the military grade of the full time supervisor must equal or exceed the military grade of the personnel supervised.

It is the position description that drives the grade inversion. An enlisted supervisor cannot supervise an officer or warrant officer OR an enlisted supervisor cannot supervise another enlisted member of higher rank.

For example, grade inversion occurs when an enlisted member is required to supervise an officer. Some position descriptions have a compatibility of officer/enlisted. If an enlisted member is the supervisor, his or her employees must be the same or lower rank.

If HRO discovers a grade inversion has occurred, the employee will need to request a reduction in rank or be terminated from their position due to grade inversion with a 30 day notice.

Individuals who are trying to get promoted in their military career, need to be aware of their supervisor's military grade. When HRO is asked for compatibility on an individual, HRO will provide current grade of employee, current grade of supervisor, and the compatible MOS/AFSC for the employee's current position description.

If individual still decides to become incompatible due to grade inversion, they will be counseled by HRO and their military personnel office and will receive a 30 day notice.

[Human Resources Information Systems \(HRIS\)](#)

HRIS Staff

CMSgt Mike Courtney – HRIS Manager – x8189

TSgt Carson Pollard – Info Systems Assistant (Temp Tech) – x8266

My Biz+ Additions

There have been many additions to the My Biz+ website in the last month and I just want to inform the Managers and Supervisors of Technicians what is available to help you do your job. Starting in June, you should see a new Icon called **MyTeam**, which will replace My Workplace. This has a new look and feel to it that I think you will find easy to navigate. If you access MyTeam and you don't see the employees you did under My Workplace, please contact Chief Courtney for assistance or utilize the Update MyTeam link found in the Customer Support drop down menu on the MyBiz+ main page.

There are three new User Guides added to the Help drop down menu on the My Biz+ main page:

User Guide for Managers and Supervisors

User Guide for External and Military Supervisors – Those supervisors who are not Technicians but who supervise Technicians ie AGRs.

User Guide to Request Hierarchy Assistance – Used when a Supervisor does not see an employee in their My Team or when they have additional employees in My Team that should appear elsewhere.

The Help drop down menu on the MyBiz+ main page has a lot of useful information for all MyBiz+ users, so please utilize this if you have questions. You can always contact CMSgt Courtney for any of your MyBiz+ needs.

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State Personnel

HRO-SP Staff

HR Manager	Ms. Polly Putney	x8172
HR Assistant / Benefits	Mr. Tim Diedrichsen	x8180
HR Assistant / Payroll	Ms. Bonnie Shipley	x8178

Common Access Card (CAC) Expiring – Notify HR

Please notify Bonnie Shipley that your CAC card is expiring **6 to 8 weeks in advance of the expiration date.**

Retirement Account Beneficiary Designations

It's a good idea to check every so often that you have the correct beneficiaries on file with the Nebraska Public Employees Retirement System (NPERS) office. Employees want to make certain that, in the event of their death, the money in their retirement account is going to the correct person. If no beneficiaries are chosen there could be an extra cost for children or spouses because account balances may need to go through the probate process. If you're not sure if you have correct beneficiaries or any beneficiaries on file with NPERS, give them a call at 402-471-2053 (toll free at 1-800-245-5712).

In order to establish or change beneficiaries employees need to complete a form. You can get the Beneficiary Designation form from the NPERS website: www.npers.ne.gov (look under Forms – Under Member Info – along the left side), request one from the Retirement office or Human Resources could print one out for you. Complete the form and then go to a notary and sign the form in their presence. Once the form is completed and notarized, mail it to the NPERS address at the top of the form. You could also drop the form off in person at their office. If you mail the form you should call them seven to ten days after mailing it to confirm they have the form on file.

Absences From Work - Notify HR

Please include all HR staff in any Leave of Absence e-mail notifications.

Every available type of authorized leave is established for State employees by Nebraska Classified System Personnel Rules, Chapter 10, or the NAPE Labor Contract, Article 14.

Leaves must be requested and approved in advance. See the Labor Contract:
<http://nlcs1.nlc.state.ne.us/epubs/P2000/T002-201517.pdf>

Article 14.6 Vacation leave should be applied for in advance by the employee and may be used only when approved...

Article 14.12 Sick leave shall be requested in advance when possible. ... In the case of illness, injury, emergency or any other absence not approved in advance, the employee should inform the first level of supervision ... as soon as possible.

Article 14.16.4 A minimum of 30 days notice to the Agency must be provided by the employee before he or she may use Family and Medical Leave. Where 30 days notice is not foreseeable, notice must be given as early as possible.

Leave should be preauthorized through an employee's supervisor. Any substantiating evidence required for leaves such as sick leave, family and medical leave, and other types of leave, should be submitted to the supervisor for approval with the TAG-NE Form 10. Under unusual or unforeseen circumstances, leave may be requested and approved verbally either in person or by telephone; in such cases the Form 10 should be submitted as soon as possible but no later than the first work day when the employee returns to work.

Leave of Absence (leave without pay), and Advancement of Sick or Vacation Leave require the approval of the Agency Head or his/her Designee. These cannot be approved by the immediate supervisor. They must be requested sufficiently in advance so that approval can be received prior to the beginning of the leave. **Forward a memo, (this can be an email) with the dates and reason why the leave is needed, to the Human Resources Office** to get the signature of the Agency Head or Designee.

Use of vacation leave and compensatory time off may not be unreasonably denied or deferred. However, request and approval in advance may be required to provide sufficient time for work planning and scheduling. Proper request, approval and documentation of authorized leave are serious issues. Please call one of the staff at the Human Resources office if you have any questions or need any assistance on how to submit leave requests. **It is especially important for employees to contact human resources before a period of leave without pay so insurance premiums can be adjusted or necessary computer entries (into EWC) can be completed.**

Review Leave Balances

Employees should review their leave balances to be sure they are not using more than their available balance and look at the publications noted below to be familiar with what leave earnings are to be per service year and per pay period. Leave earnings per service year (in hours) are available at:

<http://nlcs1.nlc.state.ne.us/epubs/P2000/T002-201517.pdf> (section 14.5 of the Labor Contract for union employees) or at: http://www.das.state.ne.us/personnel/nerules/rules_final_with_cover.pdf (Chapter 10 of the Classified System Personnel Rules for supervisors, management level and other employees)

Annual leave earnings totals (in hours) are divided by 26 and rounded up to the next hundredth (even if decimal amount is less than .xx5) to arrive at the earnings rate for each pay period. On the last paycheck of the calendar year, the earnings amount for that pay period could be less than what it was for all the other pay periods in a **full calendar year**. Employees will generally see this in their first five calendar years and when they have hit the maximum earnings rate. Earnings rates change, if applicable, in the pay period where the month and day of the employee's continuous service date fall.

Employees can view their leave balances by clicking the leave balances link in the screen where timecards are entered or by going into the LINK website (www.link.nebraska.gov) and clicking on the Review Leave Balances link in the lower left-hand corner. Employees can also check their pay stubs for vacation and sick balances. If you don't have access to a computer and you need a printed check stub please call the Human Resources office and we can help you.

Please note that you will not see a comp balance on check stubs. The number that appears on check stubs, in the YTD Amount column, out to the right of the word COMP is **not** a Comp balance. Also remember that there is a ten (10) day lag between the last day of the pay period (Sunday) and the check date (Wednesday).

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[Occupational Health](#)

1LT Josiah Unger, Occupational Health Nurse, (402) 309-1832

"Drowning Doesn't Look Like Drowning"
By USCG Rescue Swimmer Mario Vittone

"The new captain jumped from the cockpit, fully dressed, and sprinted through the water. A former lifeguard, he kept his eyes on his victim as he headed straight for the owners who were swimming between their anchored sport fisher and the beach. "I think he thinks you're drowning," the husband said to his wife. They had been splashing each other and she had screamed but now they were just standing, neck-deep on the sand bar. "We're fine, what is he doing?" she asked, a little annoyed. "We're fine!" the husband yelled, waving him off, but his captain kept swimming hard. "Move!" he barked as he sprinted between the stunned owners. Directly behind them, not ten feet away, their nine-year-old daughter was drowning. Safely above the surface in the arms of the captain, she burst into tears, "Daddy!"

"How did this captain know, from fifty feet away, what the father couldn't recognize from just ten? Drowning is not the violent, splashing, call for help that most people expect. The captain was trained to recognize drowning by experts and years of experience. The father, on the other hand, had learned what drowning looks like by watching television. If you spend time on or near the water (hint: that's all of us) then you should make sure that you and your crew knows what to look for whenever people enter the water. Until she cried a tearful, "Daddy," she hadn't made a sound. As a former Coast Guard rescue swimmer, I wasn't surprised at all by this story. Drowning is almost always a deceptively quiet event. The waving, splashing, and yelling that dramatic conditioning (television) prepares us to look for, is rarely seen in real life.

"The Instinctive Drowning Response – so named by Francesco A. Pia, Ph.D., is what people do to avoid actual or perceived suffocation in the water. And it does not look like most people expect. There is very little splashing, no waving, and no yelling or calls for help of any kind.

To get an idea of just how quiet and undramatic from the surface drowning can be, consider this: It is the number two cause of accidental death in children, age 15 and under (just behind vehicle accidents) – of the approximately 750 children who will drown next year, about 375 of them will do so within 25 yards of a parent or other adult. In ten percent of those drownings, the adult will actually watch them do it, having no idea it is happening (source: CDC). Drowning does not look like drowning – Dr. Pia, in an article in the Coast Guard's On Scene Magazine, described the instinctive drowning response like this:

1. Except in rare circumstances, drowning people are physiologically unable to call out for help. The respiratory system was designed for breathing. Speech is the secondary or overlaid function. Breathing must be fulfilled, before speech occurs.

2. Drowning people's mouths alternately sink below and reappear above the surface of the water. The mouths of drowning people are not above the surface of the water long enough for them to exhale, inhale, and call out for help. When the drowning people's mouths are above the surface, they exhale and inhale quickly as their mouths start to sink below the surface of the water.

3. Drowning people cannot wave for help. Nature instinctively forces them to extend their arms laterally and press down on the water's surface. Pressing down on the surface of the water, permits drowning people to leverage their bodies so they can lift their mouths out of the water to breathe.

4. Throughout the Instinctive Drowning Response, drowning people cannot voluntarily control their arm movements. Physiologically, drowning people who are struggling on the surface of the water cannot stop drowning and perform voluntary movements such as waving for help, moving toward a rescuer, or reaching out for a piece of rescue equipment.

5. From beginning to end of the Instinctive Drowning Response people's bodies remain upright in the water, with no evidence of a supporting kick. Unless rescued by a trained lifeguard, these drowning people can only struggle on the surface of the water from 20 to 60 seconds before submersion occurs. (Source: On Scene Magazine: Fall 2006)

6. This doesn't mean that a person that is yelling for help and thrashing isn't in real trouble – they are experiencing aquatic distress. Not always present before the instinctive drowning response, aquatic distress doesn't last long – but unlike true drowning, these victims can still assist in their own rescue. They can grab lifelines, throw rings, etc.

Look for these other signs of drowning when persons are in the water:

- Head low in the water, mouth at water level
- Head tilted back with mouth open
- Eyes glassy and empty, unable to focus
- Eyes closed
- Hair over forehead or eyes

- Not using legs – Vertical
- Hyperventilating or gasping
- Trying to swim in a particular direction but not making headway
- Trying to roll over on the back
- "Ladder climb" leg motions, rarely out of the water

"So if a crew member falls overboard and every looks O.K. – don't be too sure. Sometimes the most common indication that someone is drowning is that they don't look like they're drowning. They may just look like they are treading water and looking up at the deck. One way to be sure? Ask them: "Are you alright?" If they can answer at all – they probably are.

If they return a blank stare – you may have less than 30 seconds to get to them. And parents: children playing in the water make noise. When they get quiet, you get to them and find out why."

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Source - <http://gcaptain.com/drowning/>

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