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## HRO Leadership

<b>Human Resources Officer</b>	COL Georgia Kroese	x8170
<b>Deputy HRO</b>	Lt Col Nicole Nuss	x8144
<b>EEO</b>	1LT Kevin Rose	x8111

## Technician Personnel

<b>Staff</b>		
<b>Supv Human Resource Spec</b>	Mrs. Deb Burling	X8187
<b>Classification/Manpower</b>	SGT John Winterfeld	X8186
<b>Recruitment, Staffing &amp; Pay</b>	1LT Jessica Pan	X8182
<b>Benefits &amp; Services</b>	SMSgt Jody Kouma	X8190
	TSgt Devin Alt	X8189
	PFC Jon Sronce	X8173
<b>Management Analyst</b>	SFC Desirae Dockter	X8155
<b>Labor Relations</b>	Mr. Stephen Oppliger	X8185
<b>Technician Training /Travel</b>	Mrs. Diane Voichoski	X8184
<b>Information Systems</b>	Mrs. Denise Anderson	X8177

**Website:** <http://ne.ng.mil/Resource/Pages/Technician-Branch.aspx>

## **1. TITLE 32 TO TITLE 5 CONVERSION.**

The National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) 2017 directed the conversion of all non-dual status Technicians and 20% of dual status technicians from Title 32 status to Title 5 status. Title 5 status is a civilian status that does not require military membership and is governed by 5 U.S.C. National Guard Bureau (NGB) staff are working through which positions will convert, processes for the conversion, and the impact of conversion on employees and the agency. On 1 October, Non-dual Status employees converted to Title 5 National Guard Employees. In addition, 20% of the dual status POSITIONS converted, however, the dual status employees will NOT convert immediately. The NDAA 2018 may change the conversion timeline, percentage of positions for conversion, and which positions convert, so we are waiting at this time for the NDAA to be passed prior to taking any further action. Employees impacted by the conversion will be provided a minimum of 30 day notice and HR will host town halls to provide additional information regarding the conversion once the NDAA 18 is passed and we receive additional guidance from NGB.

## **2. FEDERAL EMPLOYEE GROUP LIFE INSURANCE (FGLI) OPEN SEASON CHANGES EFFECTIVE 1 OCTOBER 2017.**

During the month of 1 September 2016 through 30 September 2016, the FGLI Program conducted an Open Season. If you elected to make a FGLI change during this period, this is a reminder your election becomes effective on or after October 1, 2017. An SF-50 should be available in MyBiz or your electronic Official Personnel Folder (OPF) reflecting the open season election.

If you have any questions about your FGLI Open Season election, or you made an Open Season election while with another Federal agency before transferring to the National Guard, or if you are not sure when your FGLI Open Season becomes effective, please contact ABC-C toll-free at 1-877-276-9287.

## **3. THRIFT SAVINGS PLAN (TSP) PASSWORD FEATURE UPDATE.**

Effective 31 August 2017, retirees, employees and former employees can reset their TSP password online via [www.tsp.gov](http://www.tsp.gov). On the My Account login page, click on "Forgot your Password?" and follow the prompts. You may also call the ThriftLine at 1-877-968-3778, Monday through Friday, 0700-2100 Eastern Standard Time and press option 3 to speak to a customer service representative.

## **4. ANNUAL LEAVE (USE OR LOSE).**

The 2017 leave year began 8 January 2017 and ends 6 January 2018. Technicians may carry over a maximum of 240 hours of accrued annual leave into the next leave year. Employees must "use" their excess annual leave by the end of a leave year or they will "lose" (forfeit) it.

As required in the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) regulations, an employee must schedule annual leave by 25 November 2017, the third pay period prior to the end of the leave year to avoid forfeiture of annual leave.

An agency may consider restoring annual leave that was forfeited if the reason is under one of the following conditions: (1) Exigency of public business. The exigency, or mission demand, must be of such importance as to preclude the use of scheduled leave. The exigency must be approved, normally in advance, through supervisory channels, (2) Sickness, injury or other medical condition for which sick leave is appropriate and (3) Administrative error through no fault of the technician. Regulatory rules require "use or lose" annual leave to be scheduled in writing before the start of the third biweekly pay period prior to the end of the leave year. Military duty is not considered a condition of exigency because annual leave could be used.

Documentation required to request restoration or forfeited annual leave is the OPM 71, Request for Leave or Approved Absence with scheduled dates of leave, official approval, statement of reasons for canceling the use of leave, documentation for the beginning and ending dates of the exigency, and calendar dates the canceled leave was rescheduled for use.

## **5. FEDERAL EMPLOYEES HEALTH BENEFITS (FEHB) OPEN SEASON DATES.**

The 2017 Federal Benefits Open Season will begin Monday, 13 November 2017 through Monday, 11 December 2017. During the annual Open Season, employees can enroll, cancel, or change actions in the Flexible Spending Account (FSA), Federal Dental and/or Vision Plan (FEDVIP), and Federal Health Insurance Program. Open Season changes and elections will take in effect in January 2018. Info such as premium rate changes, enrollment, and plan information will be sent later this month.

## **6. ADMINISTRATIVE LEAVE CHANGES COMING**

NDAA 17 required the Officer of Personnel Management (OPM) to develop updated guidance for use of Administrative Leave/Excused Absence due to the perception of abuse and excessive use of administrative leave across the Federal Government. While the OPM guidance has not been published yet, the NDAA established a 10-day limit each leave year and requires two levels of management for approval of administrative leave. An audit also resulted in clarification that administrative leave is not an appropriate leave status for days surrounding holidays (i.e. Day after Thanksgiving), unless approved by the President of the U.S. by an Executive Order.

## **7. PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL PROGRAM AND AWARDS RECOMMENDATIONS**

As a reminder, the appraisal rating period ends 30 September 2017. Annual Assessments must be completed NLT 30 November and must be printed or saved as a .pdf document. Once complete, send to SMSgt Jody Kouma via hard copy or electronically. Do NOT establish a 2018 Performance Plan in DCPDS. Additional information, training, and guidance will be sent on the New Beginning's Performance System which will also include new timelines, rating scale changes, and other minor changes in the process. We recommend that you develop a plan in a word document that you can transfer to the new system once the CNGBI is published.

Recommendations for Performance Awards must be received by 30 December 2017.

## **8. ALTERNATE WORK SCHEDULE (AWS) POLICY UPDATE.**

The Alternate Work Schedule (AWS) Policy was published 15 May 2017 and can be located at the following link: <https://states.gkoportal.ng.mil/states/NE/Command-Group/Policies/Forms/AllItems.aspx?RootFolder=%2Fstates%2FNE%2FCommand%2DGroup%2FPolicies%2FPolicies&FolderCTID=0x012000B48384B72A146A40972482C77B5977AE&View={54CD9695-9786-4E84-90B8-2392757420ED}>.

This policy clarifies the MAXI-FLEX schedule.

“Maxiflex schedule. Established flexible hours for the Military Department will be 0600-1800 hours, Monday-Friday. Core hours will be Tuesday-Thursday from 0930-1430 hours daily, with a 30 minutes lunch period observed and taken at mid-day. Absence during the core hours requires an employee to be in an approved leave status (i.e. absent on a Tuesday a minimum of 4.5 hours of leave must be taken). Saturdays even though outside the normal workdays of Monday-Friday may be worked to support mission needs within the hours of 0600-1800. Saturday work should be minimal and must be approved in advance by the supervisor to ensure all safety standards are met.”

For accountability purposes, employees on maxiflex will utilize the TAG NE Form 127 to record work hours. The TAG 127 must be signed by the employee and the certifier prior to certification in the Time and Attendance system of record. FAQ's on Maxi-Flex and training slides for alternate work schedules and telework can be found at: <https://ne.ng.mil/Resource> under the Leave Tab. HR can provide additional training to work centers upon request.

Questions regarding this policy may be addressed to Ms. Deb Burling at 402-309-8177 or Lt Col Nicole Nuss at 402-309-8144.

## **9. ENVIRONMENTAL DIFFERENTIAL PAY (EDP) AND HAZARDOUS DUTY PAY (HDP) YEARLY REVIEW.**

It is that time again for our agency to conduct a yearly review of Environmental Differential Pay (EDP) and Hazardous Duty Pay (HDP). Supervisors and employees who perform work in conditions they believe meet the following criteria must submit a TAG-NE Form 550-1 in accordance with NE TPR 550 for certification not later than 30 October 2017. HRO will schedule a committee meeting in the first week of December 2017.

### **What is EDP/HDP:**

Environmental Differential Pay (EDP) for Federal Wage System employees and Hazardous Duty Pay (HDP) for General Schedule employees is additional pay for exposure to hazards, physical hardships, or working conditions of an unusually severe nature which cannot be eliminated or significantly reduced by preventive measures.

### **What EDP/HDP is not:**

It is not a substitute for safe practices, nor is it paid for the customary hazards of a trade or craft. EDP/HDP is not authorized in situations where an employee refuses to apply the safety measures provided by management.

**Next steps:**

When an unsafe or unhealthy working condition is identified, the first course of action must be the attempt to eliminate the problem or conditions. Safety and Bio-Environmental Engineering personnel are available to help eliminate or reduce threats caused by such situations. If efforts to reduce or eliminate a hazard are not successful, supervisors should request a review on the TAG-NE Form 550-1.

**Review of Requests:**

Requests will be reviewed by Safety personnel to ensure that the work situation meets the criteria, preventive measures do not adequately protect the employee’s health and safety, and that EDP/HDP compensation is warranted prior to approval by the organizational senior manager.

Upon receipt of a request to establish/terminate and EDP/HDP situation, the HR Specialist will ensure that the TAG-NE Form 550-1 and appropriate documentation is complete. EDP/HDP request packages will be forwarded to committee members with the meeting date and time.

**For Further Reading:**

Read the Code of Federal Regulations on Environmental Differential Pay at:

[https://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?SID=83a46a8217af5aa7c5a77f350e8e49ef&mc=true&node=pt5.1.532&rgn=div5#se5.1.532\\_1511](https://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?SID=83a46a8217af5aa7c5a77f350e8e49ef&mc=true&node=pt5.1.532&rgn=div5#se5.1.532_1511)

Read the Code of Federal Regulations on Hazardous Duty Pay at:

<https://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?SID=83a46a8217af5aa7c5a77f350e8e49ef&mc=true&node=pt5.1.550&rgn=div5#sp5.1.550.i>

**Questions and Forms:**

For questions regarding EDP/HDP or to request electronic copies of the TAG-NE Form 550-1 please contact HR Specialist, 1LT Jessica Pan at 402-309-8182 or [Jessica.k.pan.mil@mail.mil](mailto:Jessica.k.pan.mil@mail.mil) .

**10. NATIONAL HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH.**

The Nebraska National Guard would like to acknowledge National Hispanic Heritage Month (SEP 15 - OCT 15) by recognizing the countless contributions to the defense of our State and Nation by Hispanic Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, Marines, and civilian personnel.

**11. TECHNICIAN PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT COURSE OCTOBER 2017.**

The next Technician Personnel Management Course is scheduled for 24-26 October 2017 at JFHQ.

POC is Diane Voichoski X8184.

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**State Personnel**

Staff		
HR Manager	Ms. Polly Putney	X8172
HR Assistant / Benefits	Mr. Tim Diedrichsen	X8180
HR Assistant / Payroll	Ms. Bonnie Shipley	X8178

**1. RETIREMENT SEMINARS.**

The Nebraska Public Employee Retirement Systems (NPERS) has started its 2017 seminar season. There are two types of seminars for employees to attend: (1) Eligible plan members under 50 can attend a Financial Management seminar and (2) Eligible plan members over 50 can attend a Retirement Planning seminar. Those members who wish to attend are encouraged to mail in a registration form as soon as possible. Forms and information are available on the NPERS website at <http://npers.ne.gov/SelfService/>

The fee to attend is \$25.00 per plan member. Plan members can bring a spouse or a guest for an additional \$25.00.

Eligible plan members can attend either the Financial Management seminar or the Retirement Planning seminar and they are entitled to receive paid leave for the time they are at the seminar. Record the time at a seminar as regular work time once you receive supervisor approval.

If you have any questions you can contact the retirement office at 402-471-2053 or Toll free at 1-800-245-5712.

**2. ON SITE FLU CLINIC – STATE EMPLOYEES.**

The Military Department will hold an On Site Flu Clinic in the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor conference room of the Joint Force Headquarters Building, 2433 NW 24<sup>th</sup> Street, Lincoln on Friday, October 20, 2017 from 8:00 am to 10:00 am.

As in the past, only employees, spouses, COBRA, and retirees enrolled on the State’s employee health plans will be eligible to participate in the free onsite clinics.

An appointment scheduler is on the wellNEssoptions website [www.wellnessoptions.nebraska.gov](http://www.wellnessoptions.nebraska.gov).

After logging into your account, you will be directed to the online scheduler to select your desired clinic location, date, and appointment time. You will be asked to complete a consent form, print it, and bring it to your appointment with a valid photo ID. Walk-ins will be accepted, but must bring their current United Healthcare insurance card with a photo ID. Those who are not able to attend, may visit their personal physician, pharmacy, quick care clinic, or other contracted flu shot provider.

**3. TEAMMATE RECOGNITION.**

October is Teammate Recognition Month. This month provides us with an opportunity to recognize teammates for their loyalty, hard work and dedicated service to the citizens of the State of Nebraska.

**4. 2017 EXCELLENCE IN STATE SERVICE RECOGNITION AND SCHEDULE.**

The following State Employees are receiving recognition for Excellence in State Service (years of service) in the Military Department.

Donald Schauer	10
William Ernest	10
Earl Imler	10
Nitha Beeck	15
James Iron Thunder	15
Patrick Perez	15
Harry Holcomb	20
Harold DeCoste	20
Terry Klahn	20
Patrick Rooney	20
Timothy Greiner	30
Sandy Cunning	30
Cindy York	45

**Awards Recognition Ceremonies**

<u>Monday, October 16, 2017</u> Grand Island, 1:30 PM College Park, Auditorium 3180 West Highway 34	<u>Wednesday, October 18, 2017</u> Scottsbluff, 10:30 AM (MT) Panhandle Research and Extension Center, Auditorium 4502 Avenue I
<u>Thursday, October 19, 2017</u> North Platte, 10:30 AM Mid-Plains Community College, Little Theater 601 West State Farm Road	<u>Friday, October 20, 2017</u> Norfolk, 1:30 PM Norfolk Veterans Home 600 East Benjamin Avenue
<u>Tuesday, October 24, 2017</u> Omaha, 1:30 PM Omaha State Office Building Conference Center Auditorium (Room #102) 1313 Farnam	<u>Wednesday, October 25, 2017</u> Beatrice, 10:30 AM Beatrice State Developmental Carstens Center 3000 Lincoln Blvd.

Thursday, October 26, 2017  
 Lincoln  
 Warner Legislative Chambers  
 9:00 a.m. - 10 Years of Service  
 10: 00 a.m. - 15 Years of Service  
 11: 00 a.m. - 20 Years of Service  
 1:30 p.m. - 30, 35, 40, 45, 50, 55 Years of Service  
 3:30 p.m. - 25 Years of Service

**5. EXCELLENCE IN LEADERSHIP AWARDS.**

The Excellence in Leadership Awards is scheduled for Wednesday, November 1, 2017 at 2:00 PM at the Capitol Rotunda, 15th and J Streets, Lincoln. Reception following at the Governor’s Residence.

**6. Office of the Chief Information Officer (ICIO) Mandatory On-Line Training – EDC.**

The OCIO Security Awareness training became available August 1, 2017 in the Employee Development Center (EDC).

This interactive training lasts between 10 and 15 minutes and covers relevant and timely topics concerning Cyber Security. Training modules will be released on the first of each month and all employees are REQUIRED to take this training EACH MONTH.

This training focuses on real-world scenarios and feature the most up-to-date security content to provide you with the most relevant security training. The core topics you will receive over the next 6 months are: (1) Phishing, (2) Social Networking, (3) Mobile Security, (4) Public Wi-Fi, (5) Information Protection and (6) Incident Reporting.

DAS has prepared a user guide to show you how to access the training. The user guide may be found at [http://das.nebraska.gov/personnel/user\\_guides/edc/SecurityMentor.pdf](http://das.nebraska.gov/personnel/user_guides/edc/SecurityMentor.pdf) or you can contact the LINK Help Desk at [as.linkhelp@nebraska.gov](mailto:as.linkhelp@nebraska.gov) or at 402-471-6234 if you have any questions or issues with the training.

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**Active Guard Reserve Personnel**

STAFF		
HRO XO	CW4 Jeffrey Thomas	x8171
AGR Branch SGM	SGM Daniel Mitchell	x8175
SR HR NCO	SFC Eric Martin	x8183
HR NCO	SSG Rosalba Amezcua	x8181
HR NCO	SSG Sara Bowie	x8167

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

**1. BLENDED RETIREMENT SYSTEM (BRS).**

The Blended Retirement System (BRS) begins on 1 January 2018 and service members may have a choice to opting into this new system (1 year). Service members are encouraged to take a look at their retirement plans and educate themselves on their options to stay with the current retirement system or opting into the BRS.

Options for Retirement:

- Before January 1, 2006 or earned 4,320 retirement or more points will stay in current retirement system.
- Between 2006 and 2017 or earned less than 4,320 points have the choice in BRS or current retirement system. (\*You have to elect to opt in or will remain in the current system)
- 2018 or later you will be in the BRS.

Visit Joint Knowledge Online, Military One Source and at <http://militarypay.defense.gov/BlendedRetirement/> for the Opt-In video and also for the Blended Retirement System Leaders Course.

## **2. TRICARE.**

The Military Health System is modernizing Tricare starting on 1 January 2018. Tricare Standard and Extra will become Tricare Select, cost for benefits will change to calendar year and the start of enrollment seasons in 2019. Nebraska will remain in the West Region with regional changes.

For more information go to <https://tricare.mil/changes>

## **3. NEW DENTAL FORM DD Form 2813.**

When going to the dentist for a regular exam, remember to take the new dental form DD Form 2813, dated March 2017.

Department of Defense (DOD) forms are available on the Army Publishing Directorate at <http://armypubs.army.mil/>

## **4. ANNUAL RECERTIFICATION OF BASIC ALLOWANCE FOR HOUSING (BAH).**

Every soldier will annually recertify their entitlement for Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH) by completing a new DA Form 5960 and ensuring all key supporting documents are in IPERMS. Failure to do so will result in loss of BAH at the "with dependent" rate and current rate lock.

Contact your unit for assistance with recertification and completing a new DA Form 5960 for recertification.

## **5. SERVICEMEMBERS' GROUP LIFE INSURANCE ON-LINE ENROLLMENT SYSTEM (SOES).**

Active, National Guard, and Reserve Soldiers will update/make changes/certify current coverage to SGLI using the SOES. Access SOES through MILCONNECT using your Common Access Card (CAC) or DS LOGON at <https://www.dmdc.osd.mil/milconnect>

This change is effective 1 October 2017 per MILPER Message 17-289

## **6. AGR SUPERVISOR TRAINING NOVEMBER 2017.**

AGR supervisor training for the Air National Guard will be conducted on 29 November 2017, from 0800-1200. This training will be in the 155<sup>th</sup> Operations Auditorium and is for all members of the ANG who supervise AGR personnel. POC is CW4 Jeff Thomas at (402) 309-8171 or [jeffrey.r.thomas20.mil@mail.mil](mailto:jeffrey.r.thomas20.mil@mail.mil).

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NATIONAL  
HISPANIC  
HERITAGE  
MONTH

15 SEPT - 15 OCT  
2017

# SHAPING THE BRIGHT FUTURE OF AMERICA



DEOMI News Releases



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