



HRO-03-14
15 March 2014

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[Technician Branch Staff:](#)

Technician Branch Manager
Classification/Manpower

MAJ Edwin Davis	x8414
Deb Burling	x8187
2LT Jessica Pan	x8182
Ms. Denise Anderson	x8177

Recruitment, Staffing & Pay

Benefits & Services	MSgt Jody Kouma	x8190
	SPC Amanda Almanza	x8197
	SGT John Winterfeld	x8173
Technician Training /Travel	Ms. Diane Voichoski	x8184
	Vacant	x8185

HRO website: <http://ne.ng.mil/ArmyGuard/Pages/TechnicianBranch.aspx>

Federal Length of Service Awards (Feb):

Technicians become eligible for recognition when they complete ten (10) years of creditable Federal service. Creditable service includes all service used in establishing the technician's leave service computation date which includes active duty military and temporary federal employment. This award is presented in five (5) year increments.

- 10 Years: Steven M. Smith Jr. (ANG)
Schyler W. Foos (ARNG)
Matthew J. Powell (ARNG)
- 15 Years: David Godoy (ARNG)
Gabriel H. Kelly (ARNG)
Joshua J. Michaelson (ARNG)
- 20 Years: Gregory J. Clement (ARNG)
Deborah A. Burling (ANG)
- 25 Years: Denise L. Anderson (ARNG)
- 30 Years: Dennis J. Holm (ARNG)

Federal Employee Retirements:

David Hayes (ARNG)

Qualifying Life Events:

For benefit purposes you may want to contact us when certain life events occur.

- Marriage - Is there a name change that needs to be submitted on an SF-52?
FEHB, FEGLI, and FEDVIP insurances should be reviewed. Changes input on EBIS. Tax Withholding input on MyPay.
Beneficiary changes for FEGLI, TSP, Unpaid Compensation or FERS?
- Divorce - Same items as Marriage. Also, if the divorce decree grants part of your civilian retirement to the ex-spouse the decree needs to be sent to OPM for review and determination. The spouse may be eligible for FEHB or FEHB temporary continuation of coverage (TCC) under the Spouse Equity Act.

Birth/Adoption of a child - Changes to FEHB and FEGLI?

Child turns 26 and no longer covered under FEHB - They are eligible for FEHB TCC.
www.opm.gov/insure

Loss of Insurance Coverage thru Spouse

Change in FERS Retirement Deductions

The Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013 made another change to the Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS). Beginning January 1st, 2014, new employees will pay the higher contributions, which is 4.4%. Section 8401 of Title 5, USC, has been amended to add the new definition of those who are covered

under the Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS) as Further Revised Annuity Employees (FRAE), FERS-FRAE.

As a reminder, it was only last year, the Federal Employees Retirement System implemented the Revised Annuity Employees (RAE), with deductions being 3.1%.

Employees hired after January 1st, 2014 fall under the FERS-FRAE. However, agency systems such as payroll and retirement coding have not been updated. Until agency systems are updated, the employees are having 3.1% deducted and will have a "debt" to pay. Adjustments to the retirement deductions will be made retroactive to their date of appointment. HR will notify the employees affected along with their supervisors.

Moved Lately?

Everyone needs to review their correspondence address in MyPay. The address in MyPay is critical as it is used for mailing documents pertaining to civilian employment such as proof of military deposits. In addition, TSP uses the address you have indicated to send correspondence regarding various items such as matching and annual reports.

AFSC/MOS & Civilian Descriptions

When applying for a position DoD has a good tool to use it is called Verification of Military Experience (VMET) and Training, This will help in translating your military experience into the civilian workforce i.e. technician employment. You could upload the VMET under other documents however you will still need to submit a resume as it is a required document for all federal positions. VMET can be found at <https://pki.dmdc.osd.mil/tgps/pages/home.xhtml>

Technician Travel & Training

Human Resource Development Staff

Mrs. Diane Voichoski – HRDS – x8184
Vacant- x8185 – Info Systems & HR Development Assistant

SF 182 - Authorization, Agreement and Certification of Training

The SF 182 is the request for training for all technicians. Here is the link:

<http://ne.ng.mil/ArmyGuard/Tech%20Branch%20Documents/SF182.pdf>

We only need the 1st two pages of the SF182 and only ONE supervisor signature on page #2.

Learning Opportunity for Technicians and Technician Supervisors

MyBiz/MyWorkplace, and Performance Appraisal Application (PAA) 101 Training

Dates: 20 March 2014 (Thursday)
Time: 1:00 - 2:00 pm
Location: JFHQ 4th Floor Conference Room

OR join us on DCO:

<https://connectcol.dco.dod.mil/r3g2osbhy9u/>

Slides can be found through GKO:

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

1. Click on PAA-Performance Appraisal Application Training for Supervisors and Self Service-My Workplace-My Biz-Mar 2014

In addition, we welcome ANY and all feedback comments regarding this training. Survey link:

<https://states.gkoportal.ng.mil/states/NE/Directorates/J1/Lists/Survey/overview.aspx>

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Human Resources Information Systems (HRIS)

HRIS Staff

SMSgt Mike Courtney – HRIS Manager – x8189
Vacant – x8185

My Workplace and PAA

If you are a new Supervisor of Technicians and don't see a My Workplace link on the DCPDS Portal page, please contact SMSgt Courtney. I will check to ensure you are coded correctly in the system. This new responsibility takes a couple of days to appear once you are coded as a supervisor in DCPDS, so your patience is appreciated.

PAA – (Performance Appraisal Application): if you are a new supervisor of Technicians, please check to ensure you can see all of the Technician employees you supervise within My Workplace. If you don't see those you need or see other Technicians, please contact me and I will help sort it out for you.

DCPDS Employee - Manager (EM) Portal DCO Invite

Each Friday morning there will be a DCO event to provide an "at-a-glance" interactive and dynamic EM Portal features and functionality of the new Employee-Manager (EM) portal.

When: Every Friday

Time: 7:00-7:30 CST or 12:00-12:30 CST

DCO Title: Employee - Manager Portal

DCO Link: <https://connectcol.dco.dod.mil/r7z4nfv0s0u/>

Sessions will be held until March 30, 2014

Please view this DCO event as this new DCPDS tool will help all Technicians.

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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

WELLNESS PLAN – NEW HIRES

The Wellness Health Plan criteria has changed !!!

Attention: New hires and new Wellness Health Plan participants!
Employees hired November 4, 2013 and after.

(Insurance effective dates of January 1, 2014 – April 1, 2014)

ACTION IS REQUIRED to retain 2013–2014 and qualify for 2014–2015 and 2015-2016.

To retain the Wellness Health Plan for the current year (2013-2014) AND to be eligible to enroll in the Wellness Health Plan during the upcoming Open Enrollment period (2014-2015), participants must:

1. Complete the annual online health assessment located on the wellnessoptions website between April 1 and May 31, 2014. www.wellnessoptions.nebraska.gov

In addition to completing the online health assessment, to qualify for and re-elect the Wellness Health Plan for the 2015-2016 health plan year, participants must also:

2. Complete one of the biometric health screening options between April 1 and May 31, 2014.
 - a. Onsite screening option
 - b. Alternative Means Screening (AMS form) option
 - c. Home Kit option

*** See wellnessoptions website for more information on the screening options
3. Enroll in their choice of a wellness program, beginning April 1, 2014 through November 20, 2014 and complete the wellness program criteria by March 31, 2015.

Important: Failure to complete the online Health Assessment by the May 31, 2014 deadline for those that have recently elected the Wellness Health Plan will result in defaulting to the regular Health Plan at the appropriate tier, based on the original insurance effective date, which will result in an adjustment in premium.

NEW WELLNESS WEBSITE / ADMINISTRATION

A new wellness options website will go live on April 1, 2014. **All employees and spouses will need to re-register when logging in.** Current employee numbers will be part of the registration process. Employees will be able to set up the email they prefer to have wellness communications sent to and it will stay in the system until the employee changes it.

Employees should watch their mail for communications on the new wellness website, wellness plan requirements and changes to the wellness program administration.

BIOMETRIC SCREENING

Health Fitness will be providing a biometric screening event for employees enrolled in ANY of the State of Nebraska medical plans. This event will be required for covered employees AND their spouses *currently* in the Wellness plan and other medical plans that wish to continue in or qualify for the Wellness Plan in the 2014/2015 plan year. Covered employees and spouses will also need to complete the Health Assessment – starting April 1, 2014.

At this time the screening event for the Military Department will be held on the morning of **May 5, 2014** (7:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.). Components of the screening event include taking the participant's blood pressure and getting height and weight (Body Mass Index (BMI) calculation) measurements. There will also be a finger-stick blood screening that will measure levels of total cholesterol, LDL, HDL, TC:HDL Ratio, triglycerides and glucose.

NEW! Employees and spouses, if applicable, will be able to do the Health Assessment at the onsite biometric screening. It will be one of the stations in the screening process.

HEALTH ASSESSMENT

Beginning on or shortly after April 1st, participants (employee and covered spouses enrolled in any of the State's medical plans) can begin to complete their online Health Assessment. Again as stated above, employees and spouses, if applicable, will be able to complete the Health Assessment during the biometric screening process.

Employees and spouses not currently enrolled in any State of Nebraska medical plan, that want to qualify for enrollment in the Wellness Plan for the coming plan year (2014-15), will need to complete the Health Assessment (questionnaire) by July 31, 2014. Watch your mail for instructions and reminders on required actions for you, and your spouse, if applicable.

To get to the Health Assessment and for further information visit www.wellnessoptions.nebraska.gov .

The following items are allowed for participation on company time: Open Enrollment, Health Assessment, onsite biometric screenings, sending and receiving e-mails to/from Health Fitness to/from your work e-mail. Submitting activities are allowed on a State computer, but is to be done on personal time (lunch time or break). Participation is in no way to be considered part of or arising out of employment for the purposes of workers compensation or for any other purpose.

By completing the biometric screening and health assessment by May 31, 2014, employees, and spouses, if applicable, are qualifying and will be able to re-elect the Wellness Plan for the 2015-2016 plan year.

FAMILY MEDICAL LEAVE ACT (FMLA)

FMLA is implemented in the Nebraska Classified System Personnel Rules and in the NAPE labor contract. Provisions to implement this Federal law are not the same for people covered by the Rules as for people covered by the Contract. However, the federal law establishes some specifics:

- a. Family leave is granted for any of the following reasons:
 - to care for the employee's child after birth, or placement for adoption or foster care;
 - to care for the employee's spouse, son or daughter or parent, who has a serious health condition;
 - or for a serious health condition that makes the employee unable to perform the employee's job.
- b. The employee may be required to provide advance leave notice (when the leave is foreseeable) and medical certification.
- c. Benefits are protected: The employer must maintain the employee's health coverage under the group health plan. Use of Family Leave cannot result in the loss of any employment benefit that accrued prior to the start of an employee's leave
- d. Upon return from Family Leave, most employees must be restored to their original or equivalent positions with equivalent pay, benefits, and other employment terms.

FMLA requires that the State provide up to 12 weeks of Family Leave. Check the Classified System Personnel Rules or the NAPE Labor Contract, whichever applies to you, for the specific provisions which apply to you. You can also look at the other types of leave, along with corresponding rules, that are available to State employees. The NAPE/AFSCME Labor Contract and Classified System Personnel Rules & Regulations (Oct., 2006) are available at: <http://www.das.state.ne.us/emprel/publications.htm>

NON-PAY STATUS -- WORKER'S COMPENSATION & FAMILY MEDICAL LEAVE

Employees, who are continuing their insurance benefits while on approved family medical leave or worker's compensation and in an unpaid status, are required to remit the employee contribution, by personal check, to their Agency HR office for processing. Premiums are due by the **first of the month** for the month of coverage. If premiums are not remitted by the first calendar day of the month, all coverage will be suspended until payment is received.

Payment must be received by the last calendar day of the month or, coverage will be terminated **permanently** until the employee returns to work. At that time, employees have 30 days to show their intent to reenroll; coverage becomes effective the first of the month following their return to work; this aligns with the policy that is in place regarding payments from those individuals who are enrolled in the COBRA or Retiree plans.

FAMILY MILITARY LEAVE ACT

LB 497 was passed by the Legislature and went into effect on April 5, 2007. Family Military leave is requested by an employee who is the spouse or parent of a person called to military service lasting 179 days or longer.

To be eligible an employee must have been employed by the same employer for at least 12 months and have been employed for at least 1250 hours during that 12 month period immediately preceding the commencement of leave. The employee should give at least 14 calendar days of notice.

The employee may continue benefits, during leave, at the employee's expense and there are employee rights when the leave ends.

Please notify the Human Resources office – State Personnel, in the JFHQ building as soon as you become aware that you may need to take Family Military Leave.

You can review information on the Family Military Leave act at:
<http://www.das.state.ne.us/emprel/FamilyMilitaryLeave.htm>

Contact Polly Putney (402) 309-8172 or Tim Diedrichsen 309-8180 if you have questions.

AGR Personnel

Army and Air:

The AGR Office Staff:

MAJ Ed Davis, AGR Manager (402) 309-8171

SFC Jacob Widhalm, Human Resources Assistant, (402) 309-8186

- Army Staffing- vacancy announcements, SF 52
- Mob Aug/ADOS packet review
- Initial Tour Continuation Boards
- Air Vacancy Announcements, SF 52

- FTSMCS Leave Administrator

SFC Roger Ramos, Personnel Sergeant, (402) 309-8183

- Army Separations and Retirements
- AGR Travel (DTS)
- AGR Mobilizations
- AGR PCS Manager
- Career Status Bonus Manager

SSG Amber Engelman, Personnel Services Sergeant, (402) 309-8181

- Air staffing and AROWS Orders
- FTE Orders and Tracking
- Army Appointment and Reassignments
- AGR Pay and Entitlement Issues
- Air AGR Appointments and Reassignments
- Good Conduct Medals
- Air Occasional AGRs

UnitedHealthcare: Effective 1 April 2013, health coverage switched from Triwest to UnitedHealthcare. To see a list of available PCM's, go to <https://www.uhcmilitarywest.com/>. To qualify for Tricare benefits, service members must ensure DEERS is up to date (dependents and active duty tours). Maintaining current CAC keeps DEERS enrollment and ensures medical and dental benefits are not interrupted. POC is SSG Garrett, (402) 309-1541.

Active Duty Dental Program: Effective 1 August 2009, the Active Duty Dental Program insurance is United Concordia. United Concordia was awarded the contract to oversee ALL Active Duty Dental Services. Your care no longer goes through MMSO, but rather, DIRECTLY through UCCI Dental. The website: www.addp-ucci.com further explains how to utilize the program. POC is SSG Garrett, (402) 309-1541.

TriCare Dental Program: MetLife's contract to administer the TDP began 1 May 2012. Until that time claims should be processed through United Concordia as they have in the past. Providers should be sent information, by MetLife, as to what will they will need to do to file claims during the transition. As with United Concordia, the filing of claims is the network provider's responsibility, not the SMs.

The transition to MetLife will only affect Traditional SMs, family members and AGR family members enrolled in the TRICARE Dental Program. SMs (AGRs) in the Active Duty Dental Program (ADDP) will not be affected as United Concordia will continue to administer the ADDP.

The State Medical Benefits Officer is SSG Travis Garrett and can be reached at 402-309-1541 or travis.s.garrett.mil@mail.mil for further questions and information.

Transition Assistance Advisor: If you are planning to retire or resign from the AGR program, contact Bonnie Bessler at (402) 309-1543, bonnie.bessler@us.army.mil. Bonnie serves as our Transition Assistance Advisor and provides vital assistance and guidance on future VA benefits, programs and medical claims you may qualify for. This service is open to ALL military personnel regardless of branch of service, active or reserve.

Leave Carryover: The 75 Day Leave Carryover is extended to 30 September 2015. Visit the following web site for more information: https://ngnec2-moss1/Directorates/J1/AGR%20Branch/Leave/ALARACT_022_2013_ANNOUNCEMENT%20OF%20EXTENSION%20OF%20THE%2075%20DAY%20LEAVE%20CARRY%20OVER%20THROUGH%2030%20SEPTEMBER%202015.pdf

Paternity Leave: The policy concerning Paternity Leave is: <http://ngne-j6noc-nma7/Directorates/J1/AGR%20Branch/Leave/Paternity%20Leave%20Policy.pdf>

Child Care Fee Assistance: The Childcare Subsidy Benefit Program: Used to assist any active duty personnel with childcare costs by providing payments directly to federal childcare centers

located throughout the United States. Direct questions on eligibility and application for the subsidy should be addressed to the GSA Heartland Finance Center at (816) 823-4578 or via email: army.childcare@gsa.gov. Childcare providers should contact GSA's External Services Division for a complete application package and information regarding participation in The Air Childcare Subsidy Benefit Program.

Extending Benefits to Same-Sex Spouses: On 13 August 2013, Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel made the announcement of extending benefits to same-sex spouses of military members. Entitlements such as TRICARE enrollment, basic allowance for housing (BAH) and family separation allowance are retroactive to the date of the Supreme Court's decision. Any claims to entitlements before that date will not be granted. For those members married after June 26, 2013, entitlements begin at the date of marriage. Commanders may grant non-chargeable leave to Service members who are in same-sex relationships and are assigned to duty stations located more than 100 miles from a U.S. state that allows same-sex couples to marry, for travel to a state jurisdiction that allows same-sex couples to be married. Eligible Service members assigned CONUS may be granted non-chargeable leave for a period of up to 7 days; eligible Service members assigned OCONUS may be granted non-chargeable leave for a period of up to 10 days. Marriage leave may be granted only once during the career of a Service member. For additional information, please see the Nebraska's HRO page on GKO.

Army:

Leave Tracking System – When you move duty positions to another organization, please log into the leave tracking system and go to my account. Once there, scroll down and select the drop down next to change user group to update your organization. This will change your approving officials for your leave requests.

Reassignments: - AGR's need to complete DA 5960's when reassigned to a new duty location. This will and does affect BAH Rates and Soldiers will incur debts from BAH changes.

DTS – All Soldiers need to upload the MOI/LOI into their DTS Authorization request. This includes in-state conferences and training events. Also AGR's need to submit travel requests in a timely manner. Do not wait until the last minute to submit when there are multiple levels of review/approval to include CTO. It is the Soldiers responsibility to make contact with Carlson Travel and ensure their flights/entitlements are reserved and contracted. Battalions and MSC's need to ensure GSA/NTV's are utilized.

Pay and Entitlement Documents – The following documents are required to be sent thru HRO for processing on all AGRs: Promotion orders, special pay orders, allotments, CSB Redux, DA Form 5960 (BAH), SF 1199, W4, DA 4187 (Selling leave, meal collection, confinement and sick-in-hospital for more than one day), DA Form 4836 Extensions.

ADOS/Mob Augmentee – All Soldiers coming on ADOS tours greater than 30 days need to in-process with SSG Engelman. Call to set up an appointment. Females need to have a pregnancy test completed with Med Det no sooner than 15 days prior to the start date of orders.

Meal collection via 4187 – If you are attending a School or Annual Training where meals are available, you need to complete a DD 1475 collecting your BAS for the period that meals were available. The DD 1475 needs to be sent to HRO and we will send to pay for processing.

OCONUS – If you are going OCONUS, please let HRO know ASAP so we complete the OCONUS orders process. We need to know about your travel OCONUS NLT two weeks before traveling.

PCS – If you are completing a PCS move, you will need to coordinate with HRO and the Offutt TMO to complete this process.

DD 214 – These need to be electronically signed. You must coordinate with HRO to complete this with SFC Ramos.

BAH for Deployed Soldiers: Effective 3 April 2013, when an AGR is mobilized for active duty other than AGR duty without a break in service, the member's BAH/OHA is based on the PDS and rate protected. The change requires Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH) to remain at the Permanent Duty

Station (PDS) rate when a Soldier transitions from Active Guard Reserve (AGR) to active duty, without a break in service. AGR Soldiers mobilized prior to 3 April 2013 and receiving BAH/OHA based on primary residence will continue to receive this rate until they transition back to AGR duty.

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[Equal Employment Office/Diversity/Organizational Development](#)

(Point of contact for the following information is LaVonne Rosenthal, 309-8111.)

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