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15 May 2012

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Technician Personnel

Technician Branch Staff:

Technician Branch Manager

MAJ Paul Borzekofski x7116

Classification/Manpower

SMSgt Deb Burling x7125

Recruitment, Staffing & Pay

Ms. Denise Anderson x7109

Benefits & Services

Ms. Deb Tankesley x7118

Training / Career Development	MSgt Jody Schmidt	x7127
	SSG Christine Braun	x7110
	Ms. Diane Voichoski	x7126
	SSG Tonya Wagner	x7129

“NEW” - Information Site (HRO website): <http://ne.ng.mil/ArmyGuard/Pages/TechnicianBranch.aspx>

Federal Length of Service Awards (MAY):

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:	William George Todd Schneider Debbie Barnett William Kiffin
15 Years:	Gail Amend
30 Years:	Michael Akin

Federal Employee Retirements: None

Federal Holidays (2012):

Federal law establishes the following public holidays for Federal employees.
Holidays on OPM: http://www.opm.gov/Operating_Status_Schedules/fedhol/2012.asp

2012

28 May – Memorial Day	4 Jul – Independence Day
3 Sep – Labor Day	8 Oct – Columbus Day
* 11 Nov – Veterans Day (Sunday)	22 Nov – Thanksgiving Day
25 Dec – Christmas	1 Jan 13 - New Years Day

* 11 Nov 12 falls on Sunday. Sunday rule below applies for ILO holiday.

When a holiday falls on a non-workday for an employee covered by a compressed work schedule and the actual holiday date is not a Sunday, the last regularly scheduled workday preceding the holiday is the employee’s in lieu of holiday.

If an actual holiday date falls on Sunday Employees whose basic workweek is Monday through Friday, the Monday immediately after is the legal holiday. For employees covered by a compressed work schedule (i.e. Tuesday – Friday), the holiday is the first regularly scheduled workday following the Sunday holiday as the in lieu of holiday off.

Actual date holidays are 4 Jul, 11 Nov, 25 Dec and 1 Jan each year.

Implementation of Roth TSP Feature on hold

As stated in Federal Times, “DFAS efforts to roll out a new Roth option for the Thrift Savings Plan are complicated by the balkanized, multiple pay and personnel systems its customer agencies use.” DFAS has to ensure the pre-tax and post-tax investments are kept separate as it works with the various computers systems throughout DOD. The Roth TSP option will be phased in for civilian and military personnel beginning in June and continuing through October 2012. Notification will be made to all employees when the TSP Roth option is available through EBIS. Watch for updates on the EBIS website. www.abc.army.mil

DTS Authorization vs DTS Voucher:

Have you ever traveled and some of your expenses were more or less than you thought after you came home. Please make those changes on your voucher and not on your Authorization (order). Your authorization usually shouldn't change when you come home unless you are changing the number of days you were gone. Think of an authorization like an order with estimated costs and a voucher like a payment of actual costs shown on receipts.

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Human Resources Information Systems (HRIS)

HRIS Staff

SMSgt Mike Courtney – HRIS Manager - x7122

****New DCPDS Self Service User Guide****

A new My Biz/My Workplace Self Service User Guide has been posted to the following URL:

<http://ne.ng.mil/ArmyGuard/Pages/MyBiz.aspx>

Please take the time to review this new updated guide for instructions to access and update your information in My Biz and to access your employees' information in My Workplace.

Current Self Service log in statistics:

As of 15 May 2012 – a total of 85% of all Technicians have logged into either/both My Biz/My Workplace.

This percentage needs to be at 100% so the Performance Appraisal Application will function properly.

If you have not logged in, do so today @ <https://compo.dcpds.cpms.osd.mil/>

Performance Appraisal Application (PAA)

Many of you have now logged into either My Biz or My Workplace, and are working in the PAA part. One reminder to all of us, in order for PAA to work properly, every Technician **must have their work email address entered in their account so the notification process will work as designed**. If you are not receiving an email informing you that an action requires your attention or something is being completed with your PAA Plan or Appraisal, then you need to verify that your email address is entered into your account.

In order to do that, log into the DCPDS Portal @ <https://compo.dcpds.cpms.osd.mil/>

Open the My Biz or My Workplace application and look for "Update my Information" link. The block to enter your work email address is right on that screen. Be sure to save your update. I would then go back in and ensure the update was applied to your account by navigating back to that update screen and verifying your email address is there.

As you complete your appraisals, be sure to print a copy and send it to HRO/Benefits and Services section for filing. Whether you are a Technician supervisor or Technician employee, you can view/print any completed Performance plan or Appraisal within PAA at the bottom of the main PAA screen.

Information regarding the PAA in DCPDS along with instructions on how to navigate the Appraisal application is located at this URL under the Performance Management Section.

<http://www.neguard.com/HRO/Technician%20Branch/index.html>

Please be sure to check with HRO if you have any questions regarding PAA.

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State Personnel

HRO-SP Staff

HR Manager	Ms. Kari Foote	x7130
HR Assistant/Benefits	Mr. Tim Diedrichsen	x7131
HR Assistant/Payroll	Ms. Jessie Bockelman	x7132

Open Enrollment

Open Enrollment is scheduled to begin on May 25, 2012 and end on June 8, 2012 (5pm central). This year open enrollment will be completed on a new website. The new website is referred to as LINK. Once you are at the LINK website, you will log into the Employee Work Center to complete the open enrollment process. Look for emails that will notify you of training opportunities and information you will need to know for completing open enrollment.

Plan on reviewing the websites and information as soon as they are available so you can familiarize yourself with the plans and how to complete open enrollment on the new system. **Everyone must log into the Employee Work Center (in LINK) and complete the open enrollment process** even if they don't want any of the State's insurance plans or do not want to change any of the plans they currently have with the State.

Health Assessments

Don't forget !! – Employees, and their spouses (if applicable), that are currently enrolled in any of the four State medical plans need to complete their health assessment(s), **by May 31, 2012.**

If you are signing up for the Wellness Plan for the first time (because you are a new employee from November 2, 2011 through May 1, 2012 or are not in any of the State's medical plans for the current plan year), after open enrollment you would need to watch for letters that will arrive at your home address that give you, and your spouse (if applicable), information on how and when to complete your health assessments. This is one of the requirements that allow employees to have the Wellness plan coverage in the new plan year.

For employees and spouses (if applicable) that are currently enrolled in any of the four State medical plans, you would have **also** have needed to **complete one of the fitness programs** (signed up for Walk this Way and logged your points on the Health Fitness website or participated in one of the coaching programs or completed the Feel Like a Million program) **and have completed a biometric screening** by the appropriate deadline. Programs need to be completed by March 31 of each year to continue in the Wellness Plan for the upcoming plan year.

To review all the details on the requirements and to access your wellness programs provided by Health Fitness go to www.wellnessoptions.nebraska.gov. Check your completion status checklist on the website to see what steps have been recorded as complete and what steps you need to work on.

Note: The Military Department's biometric screening event was held the morning of April 2, 2012 at the Joint Force Headquarters Conference Room. If you were not able to attend the screening and still need to complete the **biometric screening requirement** there are other screening **events through May 30, 2012** (the last one is at the State Office Building, 301 Centennial Mall, Lower Level Room C 7-11am and 12-4pm)

Employee and Supervisor / Manager of the Year Nominations

1. The agency is providing the opportunity to nominate employees and supervisors for recognition. Each year we recognize one deserving state employee and one deserving state supervisor/manager with the annual Employee and Supervisor/Manager of the Year Awards as described in the Military Department Policy Memorandum ST 02-040-09, Employee Recognition Programs. You are encouraged to nominate one person from each category.

2. Any permanent state employee or supervisor/manager is eligible to receive this recognition, with three exceptions. Employees on original or disciplinary probation, members of the selection committee, and the past year's honorees are not eligible for nomination.

3. Below are criteria which you may use when nominating a Supervisor/Manager. These criteria are only suggested for use in your selection. However, they should be taken into consideration so that the nomination is based on solid evidence of performance.

The supervisor/manager must have documented examples of achievement in:

- (a) Effective management.
- (b) Staff development.
- (c) Professional skills.
- (d) Other job related activities.

4. Below are criteria which you may use when nominating an Employee of the Year. These criteria are only suggested for use in your selection. However, they should be taken into consideration so that the nomination is based on solid evidence of performance. Include special contributions the employee is noted for, during the past year.

Some examples are:

- (a) Has the employee completed a task or project of substantial importance to the agency and/or state government as a whole? If so, provide an example(s).
- (b) Has the employee continually interacted with co-workers and the public in a positive manner? Cite examples.
- (c) Has the employee found ways to improve job functions? Cite examples.

5. A nominee should not be chosen for Employee or Supervisor/Manager of the Year based primarily on length of service. Length of service awards are presented under a separate program. However, if length of service is coupled with specific performance actions this may be considered. Appropriate examples should be provided to document this.

6. Nominations for Employee of the Year and Supervisor/Manager of the Year are to be sent to Kari Foote in State Human Resources, 1300 Military Road, Lincoln, NE 68508-1090. Please submit your nomination in writing along with a summary of why the person was selected, no later than COB 6 June 2012.. Thank you for your participation. **Be sure to be detailed and cite specific examples in your nomination(s).**

Dependent Status Change – Terminating Coverage

Please be sure to notify the State Human Resources Office (in the TAG Building) as soon as you know of a status change event for a dependent that may need to be dropped from your state insurance plans. Paperwork can be completed up to 30 days in advance of the date of the event. Paperwork should be completed **within 30 days** after the status change event. If the 30-day period covers parts of two months, you'll want to get the proper forms and have them completed before the end of the first partial month in order to have insurance coverage, and the premium, end at the end of that month.

As an example, if a dependent was attending college and then graduated, quit school or dropped below full-time status on May 24, paperwork could be submitted anytime from April 24th to May 31st, or up to 4 weeks in advance of the status change, to drop the dependent off of your coverage as of May 31st (June 1st would be the first day the dependent would no longer have coverage; the premium would then go down for the month of June if the coverage level was changing - from Family to 2-Party, as one example). If paperwork was received in June the coverage would end (and premium reduced, if applicable) at the end of June. Paperwork, in this case, should be turned in no later than June 22nd to be **within the 30-day window**.

If a dependent is no longer eligible (for example, dependent turns age 26), coverage officially terminates at the end of the month in which a status change event occurs, but premiums will continue to be deducted until the end of the month in which completed paperwork has been received by the State HR Office in the TAG building. It's best to turn in the paperwork in person so you know when the paperwork has been received by the HR Office.

Even if there won't be a change in the premium amount for the insurance, Human Resources should be notified so **COBRA** coverage can be offered. There is only a small window of time to take advantage of COBRA coverage so it is important to notify Human Resources soon after a status change, if not before.

Various factors may change what you can do in certain situations, so it's best to always to **check with the HR office to see what paperwork is required and what deadlines there are as soon as you know that a status change event is near.**

Beginning very soon, if employees have any status changes for benefits they will be making elections to change their insurance in our new system called Employee Work Center.

Again, please notify the Human Resources Office as soon as you know of any **status changes** so, if you have any problems entering elections for a status change, the HR office can help you complete everything before the **deadline (30 days from the status change event).**

Nearing Retirement Age? – Medicare Packet Available

If you are nearing retirement and have questions about signing up for Medicare, the State Human Resources office can get a packet for you that will help you understand your options. Employees should try to contact the HR office 4 to 6 months ahead of their eligibility for Medicare.

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AGR Personnel

Army and Air:

The AGR Office Staff:

LTC Craig Strong, AGR Manager (402)309-7117

SFC Jacob Widhalm, Human Resources Assistant, (402)309-7115

- Army Staffing- vacancy announcements, SF 52
- Mob Aug/ADOS packet review
- Initial Tour Continuation Boards
- Good Conduct Medals
- Air Vacancy Announcements, SF 52
- Air Occasional AGRs
- FTSMCS Leave Administrator

SFC Roger Ramos, Personnel Sergeant, (402)309-7172

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

SSG Amber Engelman, Personnel Services Sergeant, (402)309-7123

- Air staffing and AROWS Orders
- FTE Orders and Tracking
- Army Appointment and Reassignments
- AGR Pay and Entitlement Issues
- Air AGR Appointments and Reassignments

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 DA5960'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.

TRICARE Dental Program – Changes are coming to the TRICARE Dental Program. MetLife will begin administering the TRICARE Dental Program effective 1 May 2012. Claims should still be processed through United Concordia. Service Members and family members should begin to receive information from MetLife in the near future. The transition to MetLife will only affect traditional Service Members and their family members and the AGR family members enrolled in the TRICARE Dental Program. AGRs enrolled in the Active Duty Dental Program (ADDP) will not be affected, United Concordia will continue to administer the ADDP.

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, TSP forms, CSB Redux, DA Form 5960 (BAH), SF 1199, W4, DA 4187 (Selling leave, meal collection and confinement and sick-in-hospital for more than one day, DA Form 4836 Extensions,

Mob Augmentee – Mob Augmentees who are continuing on orders in FY 12 need to submit the following documents to the AGR Branch: 350-11, MEDPROS printout, completed DA Form 1058-R, APFT and Height/Weight within 6 months, updated DA Form 5960. Females must have a pregnancy test within 15 days of the start of a tour renewal. Mob Augmentees can register themselves in the AGR leave tracking system. This is the preferred method for the AGR Branch to track leave. The DA Form 31 is still required to be printed and forwarded to Mil Pay.

Meal collection via 4187 – If you are attending a School or Annual Training where meals are available, you need to complete a 4187 collecting your BAS for the period that meals were available. This 4187 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.

Air:

TRIWEST Online Referral / Authorization Submission: All registered providers on the secure provider portal at www.triwest.com now have the ability to submit referrals / authorizations online. In most cases, the online requests, complete with a status available to the referring provider, the servicing provider, and the TRICARE beneficiary occur immediately. To take advantage of this and other benefits, you must become a registered user of the secure provider portal. Just go to the "Register Now" section

on the www.triwest.com/provider to sign up to enjoy the following benefits. **Temporary AGR** employees must keep their CAC and all dependents ID cards current. Maintaining current CAC keeps DEERS enrollment and ensures medical / dental benefits are not interrupted. POC is SFC Effle, (402) 309-1572.

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 SFC Effle, (402) 309-1572.

TriCare Dental Program: MetLife's contract to administer the TDP begins 01May2012. 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.

SMs and family members should begin to receive information from MetLife in the near future, but I can't give you more because I don't even have a contact with MetLife at this time.

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 2LT Nicholas Curto and can be reached at 402-309-1738 or Nicholas.curto@us.army.mil for further questions and information.

AGR Dental Updates in DDS Web: Message from Cynthia M. Anderson Adams, MSgt, USAF, Individual Medical Readiness Program Manager, NGB/SGPR Office of the Air Surgeon. POC is LtCol Mary Mild, (402) 309-1496.

I have been getting several phone calls and e-mails in regards to the AGR's civilian exams being updated into DDS Web. The AGR's at remote bases (ANG members living outside of the 50 mile catchment area of an AD MTF/DTF) should be bringing in an SF 603 from their civilian dentist (AFI 47-101, 5.4.1.2) and this is considered a military exam through their ADDP (Active Duty Dental Plan) provider. So, even though they are seeing a civilian dentist, it is considered their Military Dental Exam.

AGR's are entitled to benefits that include care and treatment that we should be monitoring and have a complete medical and dental chart on all AGR members ensuring that they are deployable. Also, I know the AFI states to give a member the SF 603 prior to them going to see their civilian dentist, but we know that our members go directly to see their providers and let us know once they return. Please have your members get a copy of the dental treatment for each visit from their providers and either fax, e-mail, or hand walk into your clinics. This way, your dental clinic will have a complete dental record on all of your AGR members.

Cynthia M. Anderson Adams, MSgt, USAF, Individual Medical Readiness Program Manager
NGB/SGPR Office of the Air Surgeon
3500 Fetchet Ave Andrews AFB, MD. 20762
DSN: 278-8567, COMM: 301 836-8567, cynthia.adams@ang.af.mil

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 2013. Visit the following web site for more information: <http://ngne-j6noc-nma7/Directorates/J1/AGR%20Branch/Leave/75%20day%20Leave%20Accrual%20Carryover%20extended%20to%20September%2030,%202013.pdf>

Paternity Leave: The policy concerning Paternity Permissive 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.

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Equal Employment Office/Diversity/Organizational Development

(Point of contact for the following information is LaVonne Rosenthal, 309-7108.)

Training Materials

The EEO office has a number of training videos available for Nebraska Military Department offices and units to utilize.

One of the newest videos we have is called "Ouch, That Stereotype Hurts." The objective of this video is to understand the impact of stereotypes and biased statements, even when casually said, and to enhance skills for speaking up against stereotypes without blame or guilt.

If you wish to check out this video or find out about other training materials, please contact Ms. Rosenthal at 402-309-7108 or lavonne.rosenthal@us.army.mil.

EEO Counselors Needed

IAW NGR (AR) 690-600/NGR (AF) 40-1614 (National Guard Civilian Discrimination Complaint System), in order to ensure easy and ready access to pre-complaint counseling and ensure that counseling is initiated within regulatory time limits, sufficient numbers of collateral duty EEO counselors will be appointed. They are an early point of contact for a complainant who wants to file an EEO complaint.

EEO Counselor Responsibilities:

- Advise complainants of provisions of the law governing EEO complaints of discrimination, Federal and National Guard regulations regarding the complaint process and procedures.
 - Conduct fact-finding inquiries into alleged complaints of discrimination.
 - Provide counseling; advise complainants of rights and responsibilities and the proper forum to pursue complaint.
 - Attempt to resolve complaints at the lowest level possible; maintain a thorough record of counseling and interviews between parties.
 - Assist complainants in identifying a clear and concise claim.
 - Serve as a liaison between an employee and supervisor and/or management in order to informally resolve EEO related issues
-
- Inform employees of their rights to file a formal complaint when attempts to resolve an informal complaint fails
 - Do NOT participate in the formal complaint process

EEO Counselor Requirements:

- Technician status
- Serve on a volunteer basis
- Serve for at least two (2) years
- Supervisor approval
- Requires less than 20% of an individual's work time
- Participate in a "Basic EEO Counselor Training" course (Online or classroom course, length: 32 hours, location varies) within six (6) months of appointment.
- Participate in annual informal training sessions.
- Be a member of the Special Emphasis Program (SEP) Group.
- Supervisors should NOT be an EEO Counselor due to their possible involvement in the complaint process.

Preferred characteristics:

- Ability to conduct thorough interviews (listening skills, questioning techniques).
- Ability to communicate with individuals at all levels of the organization.
- After completion of training, be able to apply regulations to ensure compliance.
- Take on a role of neutrality, to provide prompt, efficient service to the complainant in the processing of the complaint.

An employee selected as an EEO Counselor should be readily available to perform their counseling duties. If the employee's supervisor has legitimate objections to the employee serving as an EEO Counselor, that employee's name should not be forwarded to the EEO Office. Once selected and appointed, EEO Counselors should be provided full support from their supervisors in the performance of their counseling duties, to include initial and annual training requirements.

Steps to be selected:

- 1) Letter of interest from individual with supervisor's support (via e-mail) to Ms. Rosenthal
- 2) Interview with Ms. Rosenthal
- 3) Selection/appointment

Please direct any questions to Ms. Rosenthal at 402-309-7108 (lavonne.rosenthal@us.army.mil).

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