

Technician Personnel

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HRO Leadership

Human Resources Officer	Lt Col Nicole Nuss (Acting)	x8144
Deputy HRO	Lt Col Nicole Nuss	x8144
EEO	1LT Kevin Rose	x8111

Technician Personnel

Staff		
Supv Human Resource Spec	Mrs. Deb Burling	X8187
Classification/Manpower	SGT John Winterfeld	X8186
Recruitment, Staffing & Pay	1LT Jessica Pan	X8182
Benefits & Services	SMSgt Jody Kouma	X8190
	TSgt Devin Alt	X8189
	PFC Jon Sronce	X8173
Management Analyst	SFC Desirae Dockter	X8155
Labor Relations	Mr. Stephen Oppliger	X8185
Technician Training /Travel	Mrs. Diane Voichoski	X8184
Information Systems	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) 2018 modified the percentage of dual status technicians who will convert from Title 32 status to Title 5 status from 20% to 12.6%. Title 5 status is a civilian status that does not require military membership and is governed by 5 U.S.C. The conversion of the 12.6% dual status technicians will occur in two phases. Phase 1 will consist of 4.8% of the dual status technicians and Phase 2 will be the remaining 7.8%. All employees impacted will receive a 30 day notice prior to conversion. HR will host town halls for impacted employees and their Supervisors.

2. 2018 THRIFT SAVINGS PLAN (TSP) LIMITS.

For the tax year of 2018, the contribution limits for Traditional and Roth is \$18,500. The catch-up contribution is \$6,000. These limits also apply if you participate in Military TSP as well.

As a reminder, the contribution limit for 2017 is \$18,000 for Traditional and Roth. If you exceed the limit, the Thrift Savings Plan will process a taxable distribution for the amount exceeded.

3. 2018 FEDERAL HOLIDAYS.

Federal Holidays for 2018 are listed below to include when the holiday is officially observed.

New Year's Day	Monday, January 1
Birthday of Martin Luther King	Monday, January 15
Washington's Birthday*	Monday, February 19
Memorial Day	Monday, May 28
Independence Day	Wednesday, July 4
Labor Day	Monday, September 3
Columbus Day	Monday, October 8
Veterans Day	Monday, November 12*
Thanksgiving Day	Thursday, November 22
Christmas Day	Tuesday, December 25

4. TECHNICIAN PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT COURSE APRIL 2018.

The next Technician Personnel Management Course is scheduled for 24-26 April 2018. New National Guard (NG) employee supervisors will get an email invitation. Supervisors who wish to attend the course again as a refresher may send an email to diane.s.voichoski.civ@mail.mil to request a seat.

5. NEARNG DTS MANDATORY STATEMENTS.

Inputters of DTS authorizations are required to include two mandatory statements on their authorizations. On the first page of the DTS authorization click "other auths" on the 2nd ribbon at the top of the page. Click "add additional authorizations for this trip." Add a check mark in the "other" block which is halfway down the page.

In the "Remarks" block, type in the two mandatory statements: "Objective cannot be satisfactorily accomplished less expensively by correspondence, teleconferencing, web-based communications or other appropriate means. Maximum GovCC cash advance is \$_____. " (MUST FILL IN THE BLANK WITH DOLLAR AMOUNT.)

The wording in the two statements does not need to be exact. If the traveler does not have a government travel card, the second statement is not necessary. The maximum GovCC cash withdrawal is computed by taking the meals and incidental expense (M&IE) total on the preview page by 80% (local NE ARNG rules). If in doubt about whether the traveler has a GovCC, put the maximum withdrawal message in there—it will do no harm.

DTS Reviewers: If you don't see the above statements on the DTS authorization you are reviewing you have two options: (1) add the statements yourself or (2) return the authorization to the inputter for correction.

6. NEW TECHNICIAN EMPLOYEE ORIENTATION TRAINING.

The HRO will be conducting a New Employee Orientation course. This course is for technicians who were appointed between 1 January 2017 and 5 August 2017. ARNG technician training will be on 23 January and ANG technician training will be on 24 January 2018. Employees will be getting an email invitation in early January 2018.

POC is Ms. Diane Voichoski at 309-8184 or diane.s.voichoski.civ@mail.mil

8. 2018 GENERAL SCHEDULE PAY ADJUSTMENT.

The General Schedule Federal Employees received a pay adjustment on 7 January 2018. The pay tables are located at <https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/pay-leave/salaries-wages/>

State Personnel

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

1. W-4 FORMS.

Do you need to change your exemptions or withholding so more or less taxes are withheld from your check? If so, please complete a new W-4 form (with signature and date), and return it to the State Human Resources Office (2nd floor of the Joint Forces Headquarters Building). You can obtain a blank W-4 form from the IRS website <http://www.irs.gov> or by contacting HR personnel at 309-8180/8178.

Employees can review their current W-4 information on the LINK website <http://www.link.nebraska.gov> by clicking on the 'View W-4' link in the lower left-hand corner. You will be asked to log into the Payroll and Financial Center (PFC). If you're already in PFC you can go to the Review W-4' menu selection under Self Service. In the 'Review W-4' screen, the marital status (M or S) under Tax Marital Status (in PFC) is what the **payroll system uses to calculate taxes**. This may be different than what employees have entered in the Employee Work Center (EWC). Please carefully review the **actual** marital status and the **tax** marital status on the 'Review W-4' screen, in PFC.

Employees can change their own marital status in Employee Work Center (EWC). This does not automatically change the marital status that is used in Payroll and Financial Center (PFC). **Employees who have a marital status change, and make the change in EWC, should submit a W-4 form to the State Human Resources office** so the marital status is updated and a new W-4 can be completed. The tax marital status in PFC is updated by the Human Resources Office.

2. COMPENSATORY BALANCES AND PAY OUTS.

Employees can check their compensatory (comp) balances by going to the LINK website www.link.nebraska.gov and clicking on 'Review Leave Balances' in the lower left-hand corner.

You can also log into the Payroll and Financial Center (PFC) and review leave balances by clicking on 'Navigator' in the menu bar in the upper left-hand corner and then clicking on State of Nebraska Self Service Leave Balance Inquiry.

There is also a 'Leave Balance Review' link in the top part of the screen where employees enter timecards (the Employee Daily Time Entry screen). **Comp balances are NOT displayed on the check stub (also viewed in PFC).**

3. UNUSED COMPENSATORY PAYOUT REQUEST.

Per Section 12.11 of the NAPE/AFSCME labor contract **"Between December 25 and December 31 of each year, an employee may elect by notifying the Agency in writing, to receive payment for unused compensatory time . . . "**

Not all comp time can be paid out to an employee, especially if it has been earned since the beginning of the new fiscal year. Calculations will be made by the Human Resources Office as to how much comp can be paid out. Employees can state in their comp time payout request that they “would like to receive payment for all eligible unused comp time” or they can request a certain number of hours.

4. EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (EAP).

Employees can obtain assistance with many work/life issues or services through the Employee Assistance Program (EAP). To review information and services available, go to www.deeroakseap.com and click on the Member Login toward the upper right-hand corner. Enter the letters son in the User Name and the Password fields and click on Login. Employees can also call the number for Deer Oaks EAP Services at 1-866-792-3616.

5. LEAVE AND OVERTIME IN SAME WEEK – 40 HOURS WORK WEEKS.

When an employee takes leave, such as vacation, sick or comp time, in the same week that they work more than a 40 hour work week, the leave time is to be reduced until the total hours for the week equals 40 or the leave is eliminated. If total hours WORKED for a work week are 40 hours or less then no time should be recorded to an overtime pay code (such as pay code 70 or 91).

Each work week is calculated separately based on a 40 hour work week. Work time cannot be flexed from one work week in the pay period to another. As an example, employees cannot work 45 hours in one work week and then work 35 hours in the other. Employees who work over 40 hours in a work week, should enter overtime pay codes to the hours over 40. Note: Most employees will count Holiday leave hours as hours worked when calculating hours that should be coded as overtime hours. Those employees that are E-Bargaining Unit member under the NAPE contract do not count Holiday leave hours as hours worked.

Contact Human Resources if you have questions on calculating overtime hours at 309-8180/8178.

6. CHANGES TO ADDRESSES, PHONE NUMBERS, DIRECT DEPOSIT AND EMERGENCY CONTACTS.

Employees can change their addresses, update phone numbers change direct deposit information and update Emergency Contact information in the Employee Work Center (EWC). Go to the LINK website – <http://www.link.nebraska.gov> to get to the EWC. Once you are logged in click on the appropriate icon (Pay – for direct deposit changes or Personal Information – for address or phone number changes).

7. 30-DAY WINDOWS – INSURANCE STATUS CHANGES.

Employees or spouses that have a qualifying status change have **30 DAYS** to change benefits. All changes must be consistent with a qualifying event. All requests will be made through the Employee Work Center (EWC) and the necessary documentation must be attached in the benefits change process. **WHEN COUNTING THE 30 DAYS, THE DATE OF THE EVENT MUST BE COUNTED AS DAY ONE.**

As an example, if an employee got married on August 15, 2017 -- August 15th would be day one and September 13, 2017 would be day 30 of the **30-day window** for making benefit changes. The process would need to be completed by September 13th. When the employee is changing benefits in the EWC they need to attach an electronic copy of the marriage license/certificate BEFORE they complete the process. Verify that the attachment is attached BEFORE leaving the last page of the process.

DON'T WAIT UNTIL THE LAST DAY, especially when the last day falls on a weekend.

If you are not sure of when the 30-day window ends or if you have questions, contact Human Resources at 309-8178/8180 as soon as you know about a possible status change.

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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 TRICARE NCO	MSG Cecilio T. Roman	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 opt 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.

MSG Cecilio Roman is the new Tricare NCO, you may contact MSG Roman at (402) 309-8167, or cecilio.t.roman.mil@mial.mil

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. ACTIVE GUARD RESERVE (AGR) CONTINUATION BOARD.

Active Guard Reserve (AGR) Continuation Board for the Air National Guard will be conducted in 2018 for members in the following two categories: ANG members whose initial tour orders end during CY19 and ANG members whose current order ends in CY 19 and will have 20 or more years of TAFMS as of their order end date.

Point of contact is CW4 Jeff Thomas at (402) 309-8171 or jeffrey.r.thomas20.mil@mail.mil

4. NEW ACTIVE GUARD RESERVE (AGR) EMPLOYEE ORIENTATION TRAINING.

The HRO will be conducting a New Employee Orientation course. This course is for AGRs who were appointed between 1 January 2017 and 5 August 2017. ARNG AGR training will be on 23 January 2018 and ANG AGR training will be on 24 January 2018. Members Selectees will be getting an email invitation in early January 2018.

Point of contact is CW4 Jeff Thomas at (402) 309-8171 or jeffrey.r.thomas20.mil@mail.mil

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