

Technician Personnel

1. Dental and Vision coverage changes for Family Members of Active Duty and Retirees
2. Federal Employees Health Benefits Open Season Information
3. Use or Lose Annual Leave
4. Performance Progress Reviews Mandatory
5. Technician Personnel Management Course October 2018
6. Environmental Differential Pay & Hazardous Duty Pay
7. Professional Education Center (PEC) FY19 Centrally-Funded Courses memo
8. New Employee Orientation
9. Employee Assistant Program (EAP) for Title 5 Employees
10. Telework Training Relocation
11. ANG Technician to AGR Realignment

State Personnel

1. Retirement Seminars
2. Teammate Recognition
3. 2017 Excellence in State Service Recognition
4. Employee Assistance Program (EAP)
5. Military Orders – Copies to HR
6. Nearing Retirement Age? – Medicare Packet Available
7. Dependent Status Change – Terminating Coverage

Active Guard Reserve Personnel

1. Tricare Eligibility and DEERS Enrollment Information
2. Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH)
3. Professionalization of Online Conduct ALARACT 058/2018
4. Leave and Pass Combinations

HRO LEADERSHIP

Human Resources Officer	COL Craig Strong	X8170
Deputy HRO	Lt Col Nicole Nuss	X8144
EEO	Mr. Kevin Rose	X8111
Occupational Health Nurse	Mr. Josiah Unger	X1832

TECHNICIAN PERSONNEL

Staff		
Supv Human Resource Spec	Ms. Deb Burling	X8187
Classification/Manpower	Mr. John Winterfeld	X8186
Recruitment, Staffing & Pay	Ms. Jessica Pan	X8182
Classification/Staffing	SSgt Melanie Petersen	X8324
Benefits & Services	Mrs. Jody Kouma	X8190
	Mr. Devin Alt	X8189
	Mr. Jon Sronce	X8173
Management Analyst	Ms Desirae Dockter	X8155
Labor Relations	Mr. Stephen Oppliger	X8185
Supv HR Spec-HR Development	Ms. Diane Voichoski	X8184
Information Systems	Ms. Denise Anderson	X8177

Website: <https://ne.ng.mil/Resource/Pages/Technician-Title-5-Branch.aspx>

1. DENTAL AND VISION COVERAGE CHANGES FOR FAMILY MEMBERS OF ACTIVE DUTY AND RETIREES.

Effective January 1, 2019, retired members of the uniformed services and their families, and family members of active duty service men and women, will be eligible for the Federal Employees Dental and Vision Insurance Program (FEDVIP). Eligible individuals must enroll during the 2018 Federal Benefits Open Season (November 12, 2018, to December 10, 2018) to have coverage starting January 1, 2019. The current U.S. Department of Defense's TRICARE Retiree Dental Program (TRDP) will sunset on December 31, 2018. For more information about this new opportunity to join FEDVIP, please visit www.tricare.benefeds.com

2. FEDERAL EMPLOYEES HEALTH BENEFITS OPEN SEASON INFORMATION.

The Federal Benefits Open Season begins Monday, November 12, 2018 through Monday, December 10, 2018. During this period, all federal employees have the opportunity to enroll, change plans or cancel enrollment in the Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB) program and the Federal Employees Dental and Vision (FEDVIP) Insurance Programs.

Additionally, you also have the opportunity to re-enroll or newly enroll in the Federal Flexible Spending Account (FSAFEDS) program. The premiums for FEHB and FEDVIP has been published and can be found at www.opm.gov/healthcare-insurance/healthcare

If employees do not want to make changes to their current health, dental and/or vision insurance, their current coverage will automatically continue. To make Open Season elections or changes employees must do so either electronically through Employee Benefit Information System (EBIS) at www.ebis.army.mil or BENEFEDS for dental/vision coverage which is www.benefeds.com

Specific info and guidance for Open Season will be sent to Supervisors and should be pushed down to employees.

Questions or concerns regarding Open Season may be directed the HR Benefits Section X8173, X8189 and X8190.

3. USE OR LOSE ANNUAL LEAVE.

The 2018 leave year began January 7, 2018 and will end on January 5, 2019. Federal employees may carry over into the next leave year a maximum of 240 hours of accrued annual leave. Employees must "use" their excess annual leave by the end of a leave year or they will "lose" (forfeit) it.

As required by Office of Personnel Management (OPM) regulations, an employee must schedule his or her excess annual leave by November 25, 2018 which is the third pay period prior to the end of the leave year to avoid forfeiture of annual leave.

4. PERFORMANCE PROGRESS REVIEWS MANDATORY.

Supervisors/Managers, this is your friendly reminder for the employees who have established Performance Plans in the DoD Performance New Beginnings program a Progress Review SHOULD be completed by November 30, 2018. If employees do not own their plan, you will need to begin the process to send the plan to the employee to allow them to do their self-assessment. However, in accordance with regulation employees do NOT have to provide info for you to complete a progress review and an annual appraisal. By regulation, three documented performance discussions are REQUIRED.

Questions or concerns please contact Ms. Jody Kouma, X8190 or Ms. Deb Burling, X8187.

5. TECHNICIAN PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT COURSE OCTOBER 2018.

The next Technician Personnel Management Course is scheduled for 23-25 October 2018. New National Guard (NG) employee and technician supervisors will get an e-mail invitation. Supervisors who wish to attend the course again as a refresher may send an e-mail to diane.s.voichoski.civ@mail.mil to request a seat.

6. ENVIRONMENTAL DIFFERENTIAL PAY & HAZARDOUS DUTY PAY.

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 Bioenvironmental 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.

EDP/HDP Committee: Every year the agency gathers committee members to review the submitted TAG-NE Forms 550-1 and certify EDP/HDP for the year. Supervisors and employees who have work in conditions they believe meet the above criteria, please submit a TAG-NE Form 550-1 in accordance with NE TPR 550 for certification no later than 30 October 2018.

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
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, Ms. Jessica Pan at (402) 309-8182 or Jessica.k.pan.civ@mail.mil.

7. PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION CENTER (PEC) FY19 CENTRALLY-FUNDED COURSES MEMO.

The PEC centrally-funded courses memo is located at:
https://ne.ng.mil/Resource/Documents/Memo_for_%20Centrally_%20Funded_Courses.pdf

8. NEW EMPLOYEE ORIENTATION.

Human Resources will conduct a New Employee Orientation on 6 November 2018 for ARNG students and 7 November 2018 for ANG students. Both sessions will be in the ANG Logistics Readiness Squadron (LRS) classroom. This Orientation is for Title 32 technicians and Title 5 employees who were appointed to a permanent or indefinite status position between December 2017 and 9 June 2018 and who have not yet attended an orientation. Employees in that group will receive an e-mail invitation to attend; supervisors will be cc'd. Others who would like to attend should contact the POC at diane.s.voichoski.civ@mail.mil to ensure enough handouts are available.

9. EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (EAP) for TITLE 5 EMPLOYEES.

FOH4You provides valuable information, educational materials, resources, and self-assessments on key behavioral health topics, including depression, anxiety, relationship issues, alcohol abuse, and health and wellness, to help you live healthy and work well.

If you have questions or would like to speak with a counselor you may contact the 24/7/365 EAP line by dialing 1-800-222-0364. The website is www.foh4you.com.

10. TELEWORK TRAINING RELOCATION.

Telework training is being relocated from HRU to telework.gov.

The transition and availability of the telework courses on Telework.gov are expected to be completed by today (September 14). Once the transition has been completed, trainings will be available on Telework.gov at the following link:

<https://www.telework.gov/training-resources/>
<https://www.telework.gov/training-resources/>

OPM will continue to make the telework training available for download on Telework.gov and the OPM Training Wiki page on OPM.gov.

Telework POC for the Nebraska Military Title 32 and Title 5 employees is Deb Burling extension 8187 or e-mail Deborah.a.burling.civ@mail.mil

11. ANG TECHNICIAN TO AGR REALIGNMENT.

Due to changes in the FY19 National Defense Authorization Act, the overall authorization for technicians in the Air National Guard has been decreased by 3,183 and the overall authorization for AGRs has been increased by the same. For the NEANG, 34 Technician positions will be realigned to AGR positions in FY19. At this juncture, there is no intent or belief by Nebraska National Guard leadership that such changes will result in a reduction in force (RIF) in FY19, however, if such belief changes, proper notification of such will be made and required actions will be taken. The overall goal is a five year decrease in Technician positions and equal increase in AGR positions for a nationwide composition of 65% AGR, 35% Technician and Title 5. A Supervisor Town Hall is scheduled for Oct 23rd at 0800 in the LRS classroom and Employee Town Halls are scheduled for Oct 30th at 0900 and Nov 8th at 1400 in the LRS classroom.

STATE PERSONNEL

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

Website: <https://gko.portal.ng.mil/states/NE/Directorates/J1/Pages/State-HR.aspx>

1. RETIREMENT SEMINARS.

The Nebraska Public Employee Retirement Systems (NPERS) has started its 2018 seminar season, but there are still some times left in October and November.

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.

2. 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.

3. 2017 EXCELLENCE IN STATE SERVICE RECOGNITION.

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

Jodie Fawl	10
Karen Kreider	10
Logan Lueking	10
Hieu Nguyen	10
Edward Raftery	10
Chad Boshart	15
Terrence Hamm	15
Robert Jones	15

Dianna Simms	15
Tige Hauschild	20
James Perkins	20
Kirk Sommerfeld	25
Jerome Brewster	30
Mark Britton	40
Brian Benes	45

4. EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (EAP).

The Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is providing an on-line seminar, "A Personal Guide to Building Resiliency and Coping with Change" beginning October 16, 2018. It's not what happens to us, but how we respond to what is happening. This seminar will empower you to become more resilient.

Online seminars can be found on the Deer Oaks website: www.deeroakseap.com

WEBSITE: USERNAME: SON

PASSWORD: SON

TOLL-FREE: 866-792-3616

Deer Oaks, your EAP, is always available to you and your household members. Life can be hectic. The EAP can help you find balance. Struggling with children, finances or want some practical advice on health? It is a free confidential program to help you balance your work, family, and personal life.

Contact Deer Oaks by calling the Help line toll-free at 866-972-3616. Counselors are available 24/7 to provide you with immediate care.

5. MILITARY ORDERS – COPIES TO HR

Any employee who takes leave from work due to military orders, regular scheduled drill (RSD), unit training assembly (UTA), battle assembly (BA) annual training plan (ATP) training, or any other military duty must provide copies of orders or other documents that state the dates of service to State Human Resources **prior to the departure date**. If military orders are amended, please provide the final copy of orders to the State Human Resources Office.

6. 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 obtain a packet for you that will help you understand your Medicare options.

It is helpful if you contact the State HR Office 4 to 6 months ahead of your eligibility for Medicare.

7. DEPENDENT STATUS CHANGE – TERMINATING COVERAGE

Employees must notify the State Human Resources Office (State HRO, 2433 NW 24th Street, 2nd Floor) as soon as they know of a qualifying status change event for a dependent which may require the dependent to be added or dropped from one or more of their State insurance plans. Employees will need to initiate changes in the Employee Work Center (EWC), except when the dependent is turning 26. The process to drop or add a dependent must be completed **within 30 days** after the status change event. The date of the status change event is the date when a dependent loses insurance coverage (last day of coverage) or gains insurance coverage because they are newly eligible for insurance elsewhere (first day of coverage).

If a dependent is no longer eligible (for example, dependent turns age 26), coverage officially terminates at the end of the month in which the status change event occurs. This event is coordinated through the Benefits Office. Employees should receive a notice (an email or letter) from the Benefits Office that lets you know that a dependent is nearing age 26. There are continuation options available. ASI COBRA, a company that works with the State, sends a packet with additional information regarding COBRA or the LB551 option.

If you have questions on the LB 551 option you can call Tim Diedrichsen in the State HR Office at 402-309-8180 or the Benefits Office at 402-471-4443. Any decision on continuing coverage with the LB551 option must be made in writing **BEFORE** any current insurance ends.

ACTIVE GUARD RESERVE PERSONNEL

STAFF		
HRO XO	CW4 Jeffrey Thomas	x8171
AGR Branch SGM	SGM Lucas Poppe	x8175
AGR Branch	MSG Daniel Mitchell	
SR HR NCO	SFC Eric Martin	x8183
HR NCO	SSG Rosalba Amezcua	x8181
HR TRICARE NCO	MSG Cecilio T. Roman	x8167
HR SPC	SPC Richard Piper	X8199

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

1. TRICARE ELIGIBILITY AND DEERS ENROLLMENT INFORMATION.

To remain eligible for Tricare coverage remember to keep your DEERS information updated and current.

Qualifying Life Events (QLE) can change your coverage options. QLEs can consist of moving, retiring, changes in marital status, birth or adoption of a child, and children becoming an adult.

Primary point of contact for Tricare is MSG Cecilio Roman at (402) 309-8167 or cecilio.t.roman.mil@mail.mil.

2. BASIC ALLOWANCE FOR HOUSING (BAH).

Your BAH must be annually recertified at your unit of assignment by completing a DA Form 5960.

ANG AGR members with changes need to submit their DA Form 5960 to 155 CPTF.

ARNG AGR members with changes need to submit their DA Form 5960 to SSG Rosalba Amezcua in the AGR Branch for processing to finance. Please ensure all supporting documents are in your IPERMS.

Point of contact is SSG Rosalba Amezcua at (402) 309-8181 or rosalba.amezcua.mil@mail.mil

3. PROFESSIONALIZATION OF ONLINE CONDUCT ALARACT 058/2018.

ARNG Commanders and supervisors are to reinforce a climate where Soldiers and civilians, understand online misconduct is inconsistent with the Army Values. Apply "Think, Type, Post", "Think" about the message being communicated. "Type" a communication that is consistent with Army Values. "Post" only messages that demonstrate dignity and respect for self and others.

For more information review ALARACT 058/2018.

4. LEAVE AND PASS COMBINATIONS.

These references will assist supervisors with leave and pass combinations, MILPERS Message 18-317 Clarification of Military Leave in Combination with Pass, AR 600-8-10 and AFI 36-3003.

Army National Guard members use Leave Log <https://ftsmcs.ngb.army.mil/protected/LeaveLog/>
Air National Guard members use Leave Web <https://leaveweb.sso.cce.af.mil/login>



On behalf of the MG Dahlman and the Special Emphasis Group, the Nebraska National Guard would like to recognize Hispanic Americans for their contributions to the successful defense of our Nation and their service to our great State. September 15th through October 15th is National Hispanic Heritage Month where our nation celebrates the histories, cultures, and contributions of American citizens whose ancestors came from Spain, Mexico, the Caribbean, as well as Central and South America. Hispanic Americans have performed admirably in the defense of our nation. Their hard work and dedication to the American way of life add to the diversity of our society. Hispanic culture is a rich and colorful addition to the American melting pot.

For additional Resources about the Hispanic Culture please visit the websites below:

Los Borinqueneers - The 65th Infantry Regiment of the Puerto Rico National Guard

<http://www.borinqueneers.org/the-borinqueneers-and-their-congressional-gold-medal.html>

Cesar Chavez – Hispanic Civil Rights Leader

<https://www.history.com/topics/mexico/cesar-chavez>

Hispanic Americans in the U.S. Army

<https://history.army.mil/html/topics/hispam/index.html>

Hispanic Culture in the United States

<https://www.interexchange.org/articles/visit-the-usa/latino-hispanic-culture-in-us>

Hispanic Food and Cooking

<http://www.hispanicfoodnetwork.com>

Hispanic Demographic Information

<http://www.census.gov/newsroom/facts-for-features/2015/cb15-ff18.html>