

Ohio National Guard



Technician Handbook

-October 2011-

Technician Handbook
October 2011

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The Human Resources Directorate

Mission: Acquire, Manage & Retain the Full-Time Force

Vision: Right People, Right Place, Right Time

POC: Customer Service
(614) 336-7051, DSN 346-7051

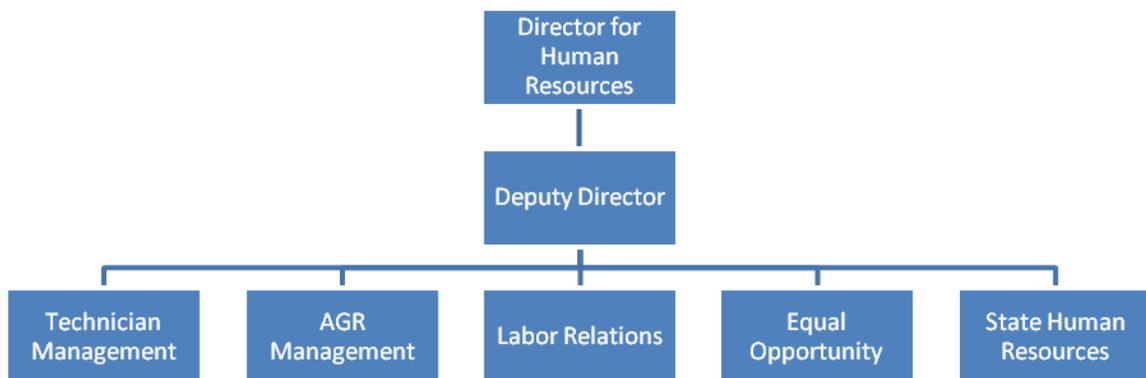
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1. Introduction

The Human Resources Office has prepared this handbook to familiarize technicians with common full-time personnel matters. The information contained within the handbook is considered current as of the date of printing. An AGR Policy & Procedures Handbook is issued as a separate volume. The major topic areas are grouped together so that each chapter can stand on its own as a source of guidance. Each section contains a condensed fact summary that should address most questions supervisors or personnel might have. Those needing further information can contact the applicable Human Resource Office section.

2. Organization of the Human Resources Office (HRO)

The HRO is a joint (Army/Air) staff function reporting to the Adjutant General. The Director for Human Resources and Deputy oversee and administer personnel programs relating to Federal Technician, Active Guard Reserve (AGR), and State employment programs. The HRO is organized as follows:



3. Customer Service

Customer service hours are 0800-1500, Monday-Friday, call (614) 336-7051, DSN 346-7051. To better serve all our customers, we prefer to make appointments when possible. This handbook is available online at http://www.ong.ohio.gov/human_resources/. All technicians can view their personnel history by logging on to the MyBiz portal at

<https://compop.dcpds.cpms.osd.mil/>. You must log in from a government network from a CAC-enabled computer.

4. Authority for Technician Personnel

Public Law 90-486, the National Guard Technicians Act of 1968 (32 U.S.C. 709) established the legal authority for granting federal status to the Ohio National Guard's non-AGR full-time workforce. Prior to the Technician Act, Ohio National Guard employees were covered by state personnel systems, rules and regulations. This Act specifically included technicians under the federal retirement, pay and insurance systems while at the same time recognizing the unique characteristics of being a state military force. National Guard Bureau publishes Technician Personnel Regulations that prescribe the administration of the program. The Adjutant General, who is appointed by the Governor and serves as a member of the Governor's cabinet, is the appointment and separation authority for all technicians as well as the final appeal authority on most technician personnel actions.

5. The Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA)

In addition to current law, the Technician Personnel Regulations (TPR) and the guidance provided in this handbook, supervisors are required to abide by the provisions of the current CBA when managing technicians represented by the union, also known as bargaining unit members. If guidance provided in this handbook conflicts with the CBA (or acknowledged past practice), the CBA (or acknowledged past practice) will have precedence. The CBA can be found on the Human Resources Office website at http://www.ong.ohio.gov/human_resources/Technician_References.htm.

Ethics

POC: Joint Staff Judge Advocate

1. 14 Principles of Ethical Conduct
2. Political Activities
3. Associations
4. Gambling
5. Government Vehicle Usage
6. Government Travel Cards

1. 14 Principles of Ethical Conduct (paraphrased from Ex. Ord. No. 12674, 12 APR 89)

- 1) Public service is a public trust. Technicians are required to place loyalty to the Constitution, the laws and ethical principles above private gain. *Technician loyalties go toward Federal service rather than personal benefits*
- 2) Technicians will not hold financial interests that conflict with the conscientious performance of duty. *Technicians cannot hold investments with businesses they interact with as part of their assigned duties*
- 3) Technicians will not engage in financial transactions using nonpublic Government information or allow the improper use of Government information to further any private interest. *Specific information pertaining to the Federal Government or position will remain confidential– it will not be sold or released without authorization*
- 4) A technician will not solicit or accept any gift or other item of monetary value from any person or entity seeking official action from, doing business with, or conducting activities regulated by the technician's agency, or whose interests may be substantially affected by the performance or nonperformance of the technician's duties. *Gifts do not include: coffee, tea, donuts; discounts available to public or all Government technicians; greeting cards and plaques of minor intrinsic value - 20/50 rule - \$20 per occasion, not to exceed \$50 per year per source - Never inappropriate & frequently prudent to decline gift offered by prohibited source*
- 5) Technicians will put forth honest effort in the performance of their duties. *Receive pay for 8 (or more) hours per day, so one must perform work during those hours*
- 6) Technicians will not knowingly make unauthorized commitments or promises of any kind purporting to bind the Government. *Technicians are prohibited from speaking for or obligating the government for profit for nongovernmental entities*
- 7) Technicians will not use public office for private gain. *Technicians cannot use information received or developed in the course of your official duties to benefit outside financial interests*

8) Technicians will act impartially and not give preferential treatment to any private organization or individual. *No special favors for family, friends, or business associates*

9) Technicians will protect and conserve Federal property and will not use it for other than authorized activities. *Internet, telephones, computers, official time, copy machine, etc. Always get supervisory permission*

10) Technicians will not engage in outside employment or activities (including seeking or negotiating for employment) that conflict with official Government duties and responsibilities. *Technicians cannot receive compensation for performing same work in non-government capacity. Do not discuss potential employment doing similar work with prohibited sources while still a government technician.*

11) Technicians will disclose waste, fraud, abuse, and corruption to appropriate authorities. *We are taxpayers as well as technicians - let's not foot the bill for any abuse of principles*

12) Technicians will satisfy in good faith their obligations as citizens, including all just financial obligations, especially those-such as Federal, State, or local taxes-that are imposed by law. *Failure to pay off debts could be grounds for garnishment of pay and/or disciplinary action*

13) Technicians will adhere to all laws and regulations that provide equal opportunity for all Americans regardless of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, or handicap. *Familiarize yourself with pertinent information regarding your actions. If unfamiliar, check with supervisor, HRO, or designated Ethics Advisor*

14) Technicians will endeavor to avoid any actions creating the appearance that they are violating the law or the ethical standards set forth in this part. Whether particular circumstances create an appearance that the law or these standards have been violated will be determined from the perspective of a reasonable person with knowledge of the relevant facts. *As federal technicians, we must remain above reproach. Do not engage in any actions you would not want posted on the front page of the local newspaper*

2. Political Activities

Technician personnel are encouraged to carry out their responsibilities as citizens, but must also be aware of the following restrictions on their political activities.

Permitted activities:

- Be candidates for public office in nonpartisan elections

- Assist in voter registration drives

- Register and vote as you choose

- Express opinions about candidates and issues

- Contribute money to political organizations

- Hold office in political clubs or parties

- Attend and be active at political rallies and meetings

- Join and be an active member of a political party or club
- Sign nominating petitions
- Campaign for or against candidates in partisan elections
- Make campaign speeches for candidates in partisan elections
- Distribute campaign literature in partisan elections
- Attend political fundraising functions

Prohibited activities:

- Use official authority to interfere with an election
- Collect political contributions unless the one solicited is not a subordinate employee
- Knowingly solicit or discourage the political activity of any person who has business before the agency
- Solicit political contributions from the general public
- Be candidates for public office in partisan elections
- Engage in political activity while on duty
- Engage in political activity in any Government office
- Engage in political activity while in uniform or while using a Government vehicle

3. Associations

Technicians are often encouraged to join and be active in any number of professional associations related to the National Guard. These associations usually are formed for the purpose of lobbying Congress. Technicians may not be required or subjected to undue pressure to join or participate in the activities of these lobbying associations. Except in very limited circumstances, technicians may not use paid work time or work resources to participate in the activities of lobbying associations. Always ensure you have authorization before using government communications equipment for association business.

4. Gambling

Current law prohibits technician personnel from participating in gambling activities while on duty or in National Guard facilities. Gambling with a subordinate may also constitute conduct unbecoming a technician. Gambling activities, lotteries and raffles are prohibited inside Ohio National Guard installations. Private wagers or purchase of lottery tickets off premise or off duty is not prohibited. Questions should be addressed to the Staff Judge Advocate after review of the Charitable Fundraising Policy.

5. Government Vehicle Usage

The Ohio National Guard possesses military and fleet vehicles leased from the General Services Administration. Personnel will occasionally be required to travel for official duty purposes using these vehicles. The Ohio National Guard is a self-insured agency, so negligent use of these vehicles exposes the agency to liability under the Federal Tort Claims Act.

Willful misuse use of these vehicles is considered a serious offense, warranting a minimum 30 day suspension without pay. Misuses of a GOV include declining to return a

vehicle at the end of a duty day, running personal errands while on official duty, taking a vehicle to go to lunch, or carrying family members as passengers. In addition to misuse of vehicles for personal use, abuse of the vehicles (e.g. smoking or texting in vehicle while driving) can result in possible adverse action and/or loss of access to government vehicles. The penalty for willful misuse of a GOV is set by federal law and cannot be waived.

6. Government Travel Cards (GTC)

To facilitate official government travel, technicians are issued credit cards for payment of gas, meals, lodging and other approved expenses. A Government Travel Card (GTC) is not for personal use. Use of a GTC for other than authorized purposes could result in disciplinary action and violates the principal that technicians will satisfy their financial obligations. Technicians using the GTC are responsible for making payments on the card in a timely fashion. Upon completion of travel, the technician must file a travel voucher for reimbursement of all expenses incurred. Failure to do so could be cause for debt collection directly from pay, disciplinary action and negative consequences to the credit rating of the technician. .

Chapter 3: Technician Employment
POC: Classification & Staffing

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1. Dual Status and Non-Dual Status Technicians

Technician is the general term applied to any employee of the Department of the Army or Air Force under control and supervision of the Adjutant General pursuant to 32 U.S.C. 709, National Guard Technician Act. Within the Ohio National Guard there are two distinct classes of technician employees: Dual and Non-Dual Status

Dual Status (Military) Technicians are required to maintain military membership, wear the appropriate military uniform, observe military customs and courtesies, and maintain military rank and unit of assignment compatible with their technician position.

Non-Dual Status Technicians have no military requirement as a condition of employment.

2. Dress and Appearance

Dual status technicians are required by law to wear the appropriate military uniform. Actual uniform requirements will be determined by the local supervisory chain. Non-dual status technicians wear civilian clothing to work. Attire should be professional and appropriate for the duties to be performed. Cut-offs, t-shirts, clothing with objectionable words or symbols, and clothing with noticeable tears and holes are prohibited. These guidelines are equally applicable to dual status service technicians when participating in authorized dress-down days.

3. Military Customs and Courtesies

Dual status technicians are expected to observe military customs and courtesies while in uniform. Although technician employees are civilians, the Ohio National Guard is a military organization. Courts have consistently held that technicians must observe the traditional military customs and courtesies when wearing the uniform, regardless whether on lunch break, off-duty or at work. The Federal Labor Relations Authority has held that the requirement that civilian technicians observe military customs and courtesies whenever they are wearing the military uniform is so inextricably related to the wearing of the uniform that the observance of these customs and courtesies must be considered part of the uniform wearing requirement. Supervisors are expected to apply this requirement in a reasonable fashion.

4. Violence and Weapons in the Workplace

The Adjutant General has a zero tolerance policy towards violent or threatening acts within the workplace. Any technician who has been assaulted or threatened or made to fear for their or another employee's safety should report the matter immediately through their chain of supervision or command. If appropriate, the matter should also be referred to civilian law enforcement agencies for possible investigation and prosecution as a criminal matter.

The Ohio National Guard is committed to providing a safe and secure work environment for all its employees. To help and ensure that this goal is met, no employee of the Ohio National Guard is permitted to bring a privately owned firearm, weapon or ammunition into their workplace. This includes knives with blades that exceed 3 inches in length. This includes storing any weapon or ammunition in the technician's vehicle while parked on a National Guard facility.

This prohibition does not apply to those personnel whose duties require the possession and use of firearms such as military law enforcement. A limited exception to this policy is available for those personnel who are civilian law enforcement officers. In these limited cases individuals may store weapons and firearms in their vehicles according to Ohio law with the knowledge and consent of the facility commander.

5. Merit Systems Practices

Federal law recognizes Merit System Principles as guidelines for federal personnel management. These principles exist to protect employees against political coercion, discrimination, personal favoritism, and unfair, arbitrary or illegal acts on the part of the agency and its supervisors. As a federally funded agency, the Ohio National Guard is required to adhere to the merit system principles. They are as follows:

Recruitment should be from qualified individuals from appropriate sources, and selection and advancement should be determined solely on the basis of relative ability, knowledge and skills after fair and open competition;

All employees and applicants for employment should receive fair and equitable treatment in all aspects of personnel management without regard to political affiliation, race, color, religion, national origin, marital status and with proper regard for their privacy and constitutional rights;

Equal pay should be provided for work of equal value. Appropriate incentives and recognition should be provided for excellence in performance;

All employees should maintain high standards of integrity, conduct, and concern for the public interest;

The Federal work force should be used efficiently and effectively;

Employees should be retained on the basis of the adequacy of their performance, inadequate performance should be corrected, and employees should be separated who cannot or will not improve their performance to meet required standards;

Employees should be provided effective education and training where it will result in better organizational and individual performance;

Employees should be protected against arbitrary action, personal favoritism, or coercion for partisan political purposes and prohibited from using their official authority or influence for the purpose of interfering with an election; and

Employees should be protected against reprisal for the lawful disclosure of information which the employee reasonably believes shows a violation of any law, rule, regulation or any mismanagement, waste of funds, abuse of authority or a specific danger to the public health and safety.

6. Prohibited Personnel Practices

In addition to merit system principles, federal law also specifies prohibited personnel practices as follows:

Discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, handicapping condition, marital status or political affiliation;

Use of a recommendation for a personnel action if the recommendation is not based upon personal knowledge and does not consist of an evaluation of work related factors;

Coercion to participate in a political activity or action against an individual for refusal to engage in political activity;

Deception or obstruction of an individual's right to compete for employment;

Improving or impairing employment prospects of an individual by granting a preference or advantage not authorized by law, rule, or regulation;

Nepotism (hiring a relative);

Improving or impairing the employment prospects of an individual by influencing another to withdraw from competition for a position;

Reprisal action against bona fide whistleblowers;

Reprisals against individuals who exercise appeal rights, testify for or assist others in covered appeals, those who cooperate with or disclose information to the Inspector General, or who refuse to obey an order that would require them to violate a law; and

Discrimination on the basis of conduct unrelated to work requirements.

7. Classification

Before a hire can be made, the job to be performed must be assigned to an occupational series and pay grade. Classification is the process of evaluating job duties, developing position descriptions, assigning pay grades, and placing positions within an organizational hierarchy. The Classifier in the HRO implements position descriptions authorized by NGB; performs desk audits; processes classification appeals, and manages the organizational hierarchy for the agency.

When classifying positions we do not consider things like personal appearance, overtime or diligence in work, relative efficiency of the worker, financial need, scarcity of employees, personality, unusual qualifications, length of service, volume of work, or military rank.

8. Workforce Management

Workforce management is the process of organizing and assigning work to and among positions to accomplish mission requirements most effectively and economically. This ongoing process is most visible during times of reorganization, realignment, or reduction in force.

Classification plays a vital role in workforce management by advising leadership, ensuring the organizational hierarchy is properly maintained, and making desired changes to positions.

9. Organizational Hierarchy

In simplest terms, the organizational hierarchy is the organizational chart, illustrating supervisor/subordinate relationships. The hierarchy describes each work-center, the positions and people in each work-center, and reporting relationships. Classification is responsible for maintaining this hierarchy and ensuring its accuracy and adherence to

required standards. The organization of My Biz and My Workplace is a direct reflection of the relationships contained in the hierarchy.

10. Position Descriptions (PD's)

Each technician is assigned to a PD which will specify his or her occupational series, pay grade, and a set of certified duties, authorities, and responsibilities for that position. In addition to the primary purpose of classifying positions, supervisors also use PD's as guides for performance management, identifying training opportunities, and effectively using the workforce.

11. Desk Audit

Desk audits are an evaluation of a PD against current job duties to ensure proper occupational series and grade is assigned to the work being performed. Desk audits may be conducted when job grading or classification standards are revised, or upon request by the Office of Primary Responsibility (OPR), supervisor, or technician. Desk audits may result in downgrade, no change, or upgrade to the position. To request a desk audit, send the HRO information on the specific position to include what job duties or responsibilities have changed.

12. Classification Appeals

A technician may appeal the grade, occupational series, pay schedule (GS or FWS), or title of a position he or she currently occupies (if not prescribed by law). A technician cannot appeal the accuracy of their position description, classification, job grading standard, or a position to which they are not officially assigned. A representative designated in writing may help prepare and present the appeal case. The representative cannot be someone with management or classification authority over the position. Contact the HRO Classifier for a documentation checklist or any assistance needed.

13. Federal Wage Survey

A Federal Wage Survey collects wage data every two years to provide benchmarks for updating wage grade pay schedules for various geographical areas. The Classification Section is responsible for collecting and submitting wage data for the Ohio National Guard. The HRO sends out notice of wage survey hearings to the bases or shops in the wage area being surveyed. The labor organization is consulted with and is a key player during the wage survey process.

14. Staffing

The Staffing Section is charged to ensure the agency complies with Merit Systems Principles in hiring and promoting, and in all actions (initial appointments, promotions, changes to lower grade, reassignments, and details) that require movement of personnel and positions. This also includes reorganization, realignment and reduction in force. Staffing specialists ensure individuals have the proper qualifications for their positions and set the pay.

15. Announcing and Filling a Job

Once the classifier has identified the appropriate PD, the hiring manager will request to advertise and fill the position. The processes required to select an applicant for the job are described in detail in the Merit Promotion and Placement Plan, ONG TPP 335. Copies of are available online at http://www.ong.ohio.gov/human_resources/HRO_index.html. Once the selection has been approved by Staffing, a start date will be set for the new employee.

16. Resignation

A technician may voluntarily separate from employment. The technician may set the date upon which the resignation will be effective, and have the reasons for the resignation entered upon their official records. Reasons for the resignation should be documented in order to allow determination of unemployment compensation or other claims. Under no circumstances can management demand the resignation of a federal technician. For resignations related to the disciplinary process, contact the Labor Relations Specialist in HRO.

If a technician wants to resign, the supervisor should obtain the resignation from the technician in writing if possible, with reasons included, then initiate a SF-52 and have the technician complete Part E. If the technician cannot or will not submit a written resignation, the supervisor should submit a memorandum. A supervisor may also attach a memorandum to contradict any statements perceived to be in error within the resignation

A technician may request to withdraw a resignation prior to the effective date. Generally, a withdrawal will be accepted. If withdrawal would cause administrative disruption, or a replacement has already been hired, management may reject the withdrawal. If withdrawal of a resignation is requested, HRO must be contacted immediately.

17. Separation of a Temporary Technician

Appointments to temporary positions are made for up to a 1-year period. If no action is taken to extend the temporary appointment then the technician is automatically separated effective the last day of the appointment. The supervisor may terminate a temporary technician at any time even if the original appointment has not expired. No advance or written notice is required nor is any reason required to separate a temporary technician. A temporary technician may be separated on the same date that he or she is informed of the termination. In the event of misconduct or unsatisfactory performance, an immediate separation is advised as opposed to processing a disciplinary or performance action.

18. Separation during a Probationary Period

All technicians are required to serve a 1- year probationary period. During this period the new technician is to be carefully observed and evaluated to determine if they have the qualities needed for permanent employment with the Ohio National Guard. At the tenth month of employment, supervisors should indicate whether the technician will be retained beyond the probationary period.

If the technician will not be retained during the probationary period, the supervisor must first coordinate the separation with HRO. The technician will be issued a written notice

stating that they will not be retained. The effective date of separation can be the same date the written notice is served on the technician.

It is recommended that technicians serving a probationary period who engage in misconduct be immediately terminated rather than engaging in the adverse actions process. There is no appeal from termination during a probationary period.

19. Reduction-in-Force (RIF)

Requirements and procedures are described in detail in ONG TPP 351, Reorganization, Realignment and Reduction in Force, also available online.

20. Re-employment Rights

A technician entering military duty has re-employment rights within the limitations of the Uniformed Service Employment and Re-employment Rights Act (USERRA). The NGB USERRA Handbook, posted on the HRO website, provides detailed information on restorations due to military duty.

A technician separated or placed in a LWOP status due to an Office of Workers Compensation (OWCP) injury is entitled to restoration within the limits of the program. An OWCP supervisor's handbook is posted to the HRO website.

21. Abandonment of Position

A technician who fails to report for duty for a continuous period of time and who has not requested nor received approved leave, may be terminated from the technician program. The supervisor must allow a reasonable period of time for the technician to report for work. Prior to taking action to terminate, the supervisor should make a good faith attempt to contact the technician and determine the reason for absence. Coordination must be made with HRO Labor Relations for assistance in preparing the termination notice.

Chapter 4: Pay
POC: Staffing

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1. Authorities

The Director for Human Resources is the delegated approving official for the Adjutant General and is responsible for ensuring the accuracy and basis for Ohio's personnel authorities, including pay and bonuses.

National Guard Technicians are paid under the General Schedule (GS) or Federal Wage (WS, WL or WG) pay systems. The Human Resources Office (HRO) establishes minimum and maximum rates of pay. Supervisors must not quote or offer rates of pay to any technician without first consulting with the Staffing specialist in the Human Resources Office.

2. General Schedule (GS) Pay

The General Schedule is a pay system for "white collar" administrative and clerical positions. Special salary rates exist in certain areas and will be applied if appropriate. New appointments in the GS system are made at step one.

Promotion from one grade to a higher grade entitles the technician to a rate of pay that is no less than the equivalent of a two step increase from which promoted or the maximum rate of the higher grade.

A within-grade increase (WGI) is a movement to the next higher step of technician's current grade. It is normally granted if the technician has completed the required waiting period (52 weeks for steps 2, 3 and 4; 104 weeks for steps 5, 6, and 7; and 156 weeks for steps 8, 9, and 10). Personal LWOP is not creditable service for WGI waiting periods if it exceeds 80 hours for steps 2, 3, and 4; 160 hours for steps 5, 6, and 7; or 240 hours for steps 8, 9, and 10. A WGI may be withheld if the performance appraisal on file is marginal or unacceptable in one or more critical elements.

Night Shift Differential is paid for regularly scheduled work between 6 p.m. and 6 am. GS technicians are entitled to pay for night work at the rate of basic pay plus night shift differential amounting to 10% of that basic pay. Technicians are not entitled to night pay

for periods of non- regularly scheduled work; compensatory time is applicable in those situations.

Pay Adjustments for GS supervisors are made if they supervise WG technicians whose rates of pay exceed that of the GS supervisor. Requests for pay adjustments must be fully justified to HRO prior to approval.

3. Prevailing Rate Pay (WS, WL, WG)

The prevailing rate is a pay system for “blue collar-type” positions including skilled and unskilled trades such as mechanics, welders, electronics technicians, etc. New appointments to prevailing rate positions are made at step one.

Promotion entitles the technician to at least a 4% increase in pay.

A within-grade increase (WGI) is a movement to the next higher step of technician’s current grade. It is normally granted if the technician has completed the required waiting period (26 weeks for step 2, 78 weeks for step 3, 104 weeks for step 4, and 104 weeks for step 5). Personal LWOP is not creditable service for a waiting period if it exceeds 40 hours for Step 2, 120 hours for Step 3, 160 hours for Step 4, or 160 hours for Step 5. A within-grade increase may be withheld if the performance appraisal on file is marginal or unacceptable in one or more critical elements.

Night shift differential is authorized for a prevailing rate technician when a majority of work hours occur between 1500 and 0800.

4. Advanced in-hire rate and Recruitment, Retention and Relocation Incentives.

In rare circumstances, and with justification, the HRO may approve for a technician an advanced in-hire rate. This authority allows the agency to bring on a technician at a rate exceeding step 1 of the applicable grade/series. Recruitment, relocation or retention incentives allow for a bonus to be paid to recruit, retain, or relocate a technician. For information on how to request these authorities contact HRO.

5. Grade Retention

A GS or WG technician who is placed in a lower graded position may be entitled to grade retention for a period of two years if the action is a result of reclassification, or reduction-in-force and the technician has served for 52 consecutive weeks or more in a higher graded position. The benefit will be lost in the following circumstances: there has been a break in service of one or more workdays; the technician is demoted for cause or by request; the technician is placed in a grade equal to or higher than the retained grade; or the technician elects in writing to have the benefits of grade retention terminated.

6. Pay Retention

When the two-year period of grade retention ends without re-promotion or loss of the benefit, the technician is entitled to pay retention. While in pay retention, the technician is entitled to 50% of future pay adjustments until his or her pay equals or is below the

maximum step of his or her grade. Pay retention may be granted for filling certain positions as authorized by NGB.

7. Highest Previous Rate (HPR) Rule

Technicians with previous federal employment may have their pay set at a rate commensurate with the rate earned during their previous employment. HPR is not an entitlement. It is authorized at the discretion of the HRO.

8. Severance Pay

Technicians employed for a continuous period of at least 12 months and separated involuntarily (not for cause), may be entitled to severance pay unless they are entitled to an immediate annuity. As a general rule involuntary military separation would permit receipt of severance pay; whereas, loss of military membership because of failure to meet physical fitness, weight control or positive drug test results have been determined to be voluntary separations and would bar receipt of severance pay.

Severance Pay is calculated as follows:

1 week of basic pay for each full year of creditable technician service through the first 10 years; plus

2 weeks of basic pay for each full year of creditable technician service beyond 10 years; plus

25% of the applicable amount for each full 3 months of creditable technician service beyond final full year; plus

2.5% of the basic severance pay allowance for each full month of age over 40 years.

The lifetime limitation of the severance pay is equal to 52 weeks of pay.

9. Environmental Differential Pay (EDP) and Hazardous Duty Pay (HDP)

EDP is an entitlement of prevailing rate technicians when duty is performed involving exposure to a hazard, a physical hardship or working condition of an unusually severe nature.

HDP is a General Schedule entitlement for additional pay when duty is performed involving unusual physical hardships or hazards.

The ONG statewide EDP/HDP Committee is tasked to authorize and publish situations where entitlements are authorized in the Ohio EDP and HDP Plan.

10. Compensatory Time

Current law provides that National Guard technicians will be granted compensatory time off equal to the amount of time spent in irregular or overtime work. National Guard

Bureau regulations require that overtime work be approved in advance and in writing on the NGB Form 46-14. Technicians are not entitled to overtime pay and are specifically excluded from the overtime provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act.

Supervisors are responsible to anticipate peak workloads and schedule work to minimize the requirement for overtime to the degree possible. When irregular or overtime work is necessary, first level supervisors will obtain the approval of the next level supervisor and then order the performance of the overtime work. First level supervision must document the overtime work per the requirements of the Comptrollers of the Army and Air National Guard as supplemented by the Financial Managers of each Air Base and the USPFO.

In situations where it is not possible to obtain prior approval, approval must be obtained after the fact and made a matter of record. Failure to secure approval of the second line supervisor when it could have been obtained may be a disciplinary matter. Likewise, compensatory time for technicians who fail to secure prior approval should not be authorized.

Compensatory time must be scheduled and taken within one year following the pay period in which it was earned. Failure to do so will result in forfeiture of unused compensatory time.

Call Backs. When technicians are called back to work, any unscheduled irregular or overtime work they perform will be considered to be at least two hours in duration for compensatory time accrual purposes. Any additional hours will be credited on an hour for hour basis.

Overtime Work on Holidays. Work performed in excess of regularly scheduled hours on a holiday is considered overtime work and compensatory time is earned. Work performed on a holiday which falls outside of a technician's regularly scheduled workweek is not entitled to the holiday premium rate and is considered overtime work.

11. Compensatory Time off for Travel

Subject to limitations, compensatory time off is authorized for time spent in travel status away from the employee's official duty station. This applies to military and non-dual status, General Schedule (GS) and Federal Wage System (FWS) technicians alike.

This provision authorizes technicians to be compensated for time spent in officially authorized travel during non-duty hours, if they are not otherwise eligible for compensation as regular hours of work. Travel must be required in performance of official technician duties. Required military travel in a military status is not an authorized form of travel eligible to receive this entitlement.

"Travel status" does not include travel time that is otherwise compensable as hours of work.

Time in “travel status” includes: time spent traveling between the official duty station and a temporary duty station; time spent traveling between two TDY stations; and the ‘usual waiting time’ that precedes or interrupts travel, up to 90 minutes at a terminal for transportation to CONUS destination, and up to 120 minutes at a terminal for transportation to an OCONUS destination.

Exclusions and adjustments in creditable “travel status” include:

Extended wait periods – any unusually long wait during which the technician is free to rest, sleep, or otherwise use the time for the technician’s own purposes is not considered time in “travel status.” See usual waiting time limits above.

Travel time outside of regular hours to a TDY location or transportation terminal beyond duty station limits (50 miles) must be adjusted for normal home-to-work commuting time in order to be creditable travel time.

Travel outside of regular working hours between a worksite and a transportation terminal is creditable travel time and no commuting offset applies.

Travel outside of regular working hours to or from a transportation terminal within the limits of the employee’s official duty station is considered equivalent to commuting time and is not creditable travel time.

Credible “travel status” time for travel will be based on elapsed time using the time from point of departure when crossing time zones.

You can find examples at www.opm.gov/oca/compmemo/2005/2005-03-att2.asp which may assist you in applying these guidelines.

12. Holiday and Premium Pay

A technician is entitled to holiday pay for designated Federal holidays. A technician that is required to perform work on a designated Federal holiday is entitled to pay at the rate of basic pay plus premium pay at a rate equal to the rate of basic pay not to exceed regularly scheduled hours. Work performed beyond regularly scheduled hours entitles the technician to compensatory time for those additional hours. See the Matrix on the following page.

Holiday and Premium Pay Matrix			
Type of day	Pay Entitlement (Normal 8 hour workday)		
	Off Work	Required to work up to 8 hours	Required to work beyond 8 hours
Designated Holiday within your normal work schedule	Paid Holiday	Premium pay (Minimum 2 hours)	Compensatory time
Holiday, but not Federally designated day off within your normal work schedule	No pay	Compensatory time (Minimum 2 hours)	Compensatory time
Sunday day off as part of your normal work schedule	No pay	Compensatory time (Minimum 2 hours)	Compensatory time

Chapter 5: Hours of Duty
POC: Benefits

1. Standard and Alternative Work Schedules
2. Flextime and Core Hours
3. Documentation of Schedule and Flexible Work Hours
4. Lunch and Rest Periods
5. Holidays
6. Telework

1. Standard and Alternative Work Schedules

The standard work schedule for technician work sites is 5 days a week, 8 hours a day, Monday through Friday. Standard daily work hours are 0730 to 1630 hours with a lunch period from 1130 to 1230. All technicians will work the standard work schedule unless otherwise approved by local supervision according to the procedures outlined below.

Alternative Work Schedules (AWS) are fixed work schedules that allow technicians to complete the basic 80-hour pay period in less than 10 workdays. Once established, the days and hours of AWS are fixed in a predictable schedule. The only AWS currently authorized at ONG worksites are the 4-10 and the 5-4-9 work schedules.

Local AWS will be consistent with core hours and workweek requirements. In accordance with the labor contract, local partnership committees should develop the guidelines for establishing work schedules at local worksites. These work schedules will be consistent with core hours and workweek requirements. The local partnership committee can adopt variations or restrictions if appropriate. Once recommended and approved by HRO, AWS are equally applicable to all full-time personnel. HRO Labor Relations will maintain copies of approved AWS.

All recommended AWS other than those described in (b) above must be reviewed and approved by the Director of Human Resources. Submissions should include a brief explanation of the proposed changes and any other significant changes. All proposed work schedules will be endorsed through the chain of command. Upon review, the Human Resource Officer will issue a letter back to the submitting organization approving or disapproving the request. If approved, AWS are equally applicable to all full-time personnel.

2. Flextime and Core Hours

Flexible hours are also authorized for use at Ohio National Guard technician worksites. Flexible hours allow employees and supervisors to choose workday start and stop times other than 0730-1630. Flexible hours are scheduled and predictable, and must cover work center core hours of 0900-1500. For example, a technician working a 5/8 standard schedule may be authorized flexible hours from 0800-1700 rather than 0730-1630. Or a technician may work 0730-1630 every day except Wednesday, when he works 0630-1530. Flexible hours are set on a fixed schedule, however, and must not be confused with

a gliding schedule, in which a technician may vary the time of arrival and departure from the work site on a daily basis.

Approval for flexible work hours is delegated to the technician's local supervisory chain. Technician requests for flexible work hours must be endorsed by first level supervision and approved by second level supervision. If approved, the technician is notified and the schedule forwarded to the timekeeper for action.

3. Documentation of Schedule and Flexible Work Hours

Approved technician AWS or flexible work hour requests should be documented and maintained by supervision in the supervisor work folder.

Once approved, AWS or Flexible hours are fixed until another schedule is established. Work schedules are required to be scheduled at least one pay period in advance of being put in effect. A supervisor may restrict or curtail a flextime schedule if a technician is abusing the privilege. A technician may be returned to the standard work schedule if mission or duties require.

4. Lunch and Rest Periods

Short rest periods during the daily tour of duty may be permitted when determined to be beneficial or necessary. Such rest periods are duty time. Rest periods may not exceed 15 minutes during each 4 hours of continuous work. Typically, a rest period would not be granted if the time from the beginning of the daily tour to the lunch period is less than 4 hours.

All established work schedules will include a lunch period. Lunch periods are unpaid time. Lunch periods are not considered duty time and do not count towards the hours established as the daily tour of duty. With supervisory approval, the lunch period may be 30 minutes, 45 minutes, or 1 hour in duration.

A lunch period of 20 minutes or less may be allowed in certain extraordinarily rare situations when a technician cannot be excused from the work station to eat. This is the only time when lunch is counted as duty time for which pay is allowed.

5. Holidays

Federal law (5 U.S.C. 6103) establishes the following public holidays for Federal employees:

New Year's Day	January 1 st
Birthday of Martin Luther King, Jr.,	3 rd Monday in January
Washington's Birthday	3 rd Monday in February
Memorial Day	the last Monday in May
Independence Day	July 4 th
Labor Day	the first Monday in September
Columbus Day	the second Monday in October
Veteran's Day	November 11 th

Thanksgiving Day
Christmas Day

the fourth Thursday in November
December 25th

Most Federal employees work on a Monday through Friday schedule. For these employees, when a holiday falls on a non-workday (Saturday or Sunday), an alternative observed day is specified by the Office of Personnel Management (OPM). If the actual holiday falls on Sunday, it is normally observed on Monday. If the holiday falls on Saturday, it is normally observed on Friday.

When the holiday falls on a non-workday for technicians on AWS, and OPM has not designated an AWS observed day, the individual Air Wing/GSU Commanders, MSC AOs or Directors will select a workday for the holiday that is in the same biweekly pay period as the date of the actual holiday, or in the biweekly pay period immediately preceding or following that pay period.

Information on pay for holidays is contained in Chapter 4.

6. Telework

Telework may be authorized on a case by case basis to accommodate employees who experience temporary personal or family health problems. This includes partial recovery from work-related injuries when the job can be accomplished effectively from an offsite location.

Telework is a management option, not a technician entitlement. Technician participation is voluntary and is subject to management approval. All requests for telework must be submitted for approval by the HRO through the Labor Relations Specialist.

Chapter 6: Leave
POC: Benefits

1. Annual Leave
2. Restoration of Forfeited Annual Leave
3. Uniformed Service A. Absent-US (AUS) Personnel Action B. Payroll Actions, including Leave Without Pay-Military, 120 Hours Paid Military Leave, 22 Days Differential Pay Leave, 44 Days OCONUS Leave, Incapacitation Pay, and State Active Duty
4. Sick Leave
5. Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA)
6. Leave Without Pay-Personal (LWOP)
7. Funeral Leave
8. Voluntary Leave Transfer Program
9. Administrative Dismissals, AKA “Admin Leave, Excused Absence”

1. Annual Leave

Accrual. Full-time technicians accrue leave as follows:

Less than 3 years of creditable service = 4 hours per pay period;

3 -15 years of creditable service = 6 hours per pay period;

15+ years of creditable service = 8 hours per pay period

Temporary employees may not use accrued annual leave until they have been employed for 90 days or more.

Request for Leave. Technicians are encouraged to plan the use of their leave in accordance with the operating requirements of their organization. Requests for leave shall be approved or disapproved based on current and anticipated workloads and regard for the welfare and preference of individual technicians. All periods of annual leave should be submitted in advance and approved in writing. Request for annual leave will be submitted on OPM Form 71. When extenuating circumstances exist, supervisors may grant oral approval of annual leave; however, approval will be confirmed at the earliest possible time using OPM Form71.

Granting Annual Leave. Leave should be planned and requested in advance. In the event of a scheduling conflict, local labor-management groups should establish a process for

determining which technician shall receive preference. This may be done using seniority or some other accepted differentiator. In an emergency situation, technicians must notify their supervisor as soon as possible to explain the circumstances and request approval for the absence.

Advance Annual Leave. A supervisor may request advance annual leave for a technician by forwarding a memorandum to NGOH-HRO-TB with the specified number of hours desired annotated. The amount of annual leave that may be advanced is limited to the amount of annual leave an employee would accrue in the remainder of the leave year. Technicians do not have an entitlement to advance annual leave. HRO will approve or disapprove, and coordinate with the applicable finance customer service representative. A technician who is indebted for advance annual leave that separates or retires from Federal service is required to refund the amount of the advanced leave for which he or she is indebted.

Charging Leave. The minimum amount that can be charged to leave for absence is fifteen (15) minutes. Unavoidable or necessary absence from duty of less than 1 hour may be made up later in the day or excused without charge to leave when the reason is justifiable to the supervisor. When justifiable, the absence may be charged to compensatory time, annual leave, or leave without pay (LWOP). When not justifiable, the absence should be charged as absence without leave (AWOL). Only absences charged as AWOL may become the basis for disciplinary action. If a charge is made against leave for tardiness or unauthorized absence from duty, the technician shall not be required to perform work during the period of time for which leave is charged against the technician's leave account.

2. Restoration of Forfeited Annual Leave

Technicians may carry a maximum of 240 hours annual leave to a new leave year. Annual leave hours in excess of 240 are forfeited (lost) by the employee. Annual leave that is forfeit may be restored if the loss is due to:

Exigencies of the public business when annual leave was requested prior to the third bi-weekly pay period to the end of the leave year, where operational demands would not permit the leave to be used, and no other reasonable alternative existed; or

Sickness of the employee when annual leave was requested prior to the third bi-weekly pay period to the end of the leave year; or

Administrative errors, when annual leave was requested prior to the third bi-weekly pay period to the end of the leave year.

The authority to approve restoration of forfeited leave for exigencies of the public business lies with the Assistant Adjutant General (Army or Air). The Director for Human Resources is the approval authority for sickness and administrative errors. Requests for restoration are made on the Request for Restoration of Forfeited Annual Leave form (see

Appendix). Supervisors must route requests through Army Director/Air Command channels to HRO, including the OPM 71 documenting a timely request to take leave and supervisory denial.

Scheduling Restored Leave. Restored annual leave is placed in a separate leave account. It must be used no later than the end of the leave year two years after the date of the restoration, the date the exigency terminates, or the date the employee recovered from the sickness.

3. Uniformed Service

Absences from technician duty for periods of uniformed military service are an ongoing part of dual-status technician employment. Technicians that are prepared will more successfully navigate the issues. To help, we have broken this area up to differentiate the personnel action from the payroll action when it comes to periods of uniformed service.

A. Absent-US (AUS) Personnel Action

AUS is a personnel action which places a technician on a period of approved, unpaid leave of absence from technician employment to perform uniformed service in excess of 30 days. Technicians serving under permanent, indefinite, or term (in excess of one year) appointments who are members of the National Guard are entitled to AUS. Breaks in AUS for a single period of active duty are not authorized. When performing military duty, technicians must be in either a non-pay or approved leave status relative to their civilian position. Failure to request an AUS action when it is indicated could delay a periodic WGI and prevent the proper accrual of annual leave.

Prior to entering uniformed service, technicians are responsible for informing the supervisory chain and completing the benefits election form. The supervisor is responsible for submitting the Absent-US SF52, Request for Personnel Action, with a copy of the military orders to HRO.

Prior to returning to technician duty from uniformed service, technicians are responsible for informing the supervisory chain and completing the benefits election form. The supervisor is responsible for submitting the Return to Duty SF52, Request for Personnel Action, with a copy of the DD214 and/or applicable orders to HRO.

B. Payroll Actions

Leave Without Pay-Military (LWOP-Mil) is a nonpaid status entered by the timekeeper for payroll purposes to ensure a technician does not receive pay while absent for uniformed service. Also known as dual compensation, concurrent pay for both military duty and technician duty is prohibited by the Comptroller General. LWOP-Mil is the normal pay status for a technician performing uniformed service during what would otherwise be technician duty hours, regardless of the length of the uniformed service.

120 Hours Paid Military Leave: Paid military leave accrues at the rate of 120 hours per fiscal year (1 Oct-30 Sep) for permanent and indefinite technicians. Military leave may be used during one or more periods of uniformed service (not including State Active

Duty). Military leave is chargeable in one-hour increments (minimum one hour). Technicians will be charged leave only for hours during which they otherwise would have worked. Technicians are not charged military leave for non-workdays or holidays. A total of 120 hours of unused military leave may be carried over into a new fiscal year for a potential total of 240 hours of military leave. Military leave may be requested by a technician on the OPM Form 71 and submitted to the local time keeper.

22 Days Leave: Permanent and indefinite technicians who are called to State or Federal active duty by the President, the Secretary of Defense, or the Governor are entitled to 22 days of leave in a calendar year. This active duty may be performed CONUS or OCONUS. Eligible technicians may receive differential pay if technician pay is greater than military pay. Military pay means pay received other than travel, transportation, or per diem allowances. This is not to be confused with the Reservist Differential pay, which is calculated and paid automatically for eligible technicians.

44 Days OCONUS Leave provides military technicians an additional 44 days military leave in a calendar year for participation in operations outside the United States, its territories and possessions. Technicians must be on military active duty without pay under section 12301(b) or 12301(d), or 12315 of Title 10 USC. Militarily, the technician must be in a Title 10, non-paid status, accruing one retirement point per duty day. While in this status, the technician continues to receive technician pay and benefits. The 44 days are converted into hours and charged on the same basis as annual leave.

Incapacitation Pay: Technicians who are injured during military duty and are receiving incapacitation pay must be placed in AUS status and may not use paid leave (military leave, annual leave, comp time or sick leave) while receiving incapacitation pay.

State Active Duty (SAD): technicians required to perform SAD must elect one of the following types of leave to cover their absence: LWOP-Personal, annual leave, compensatory time, or 22 days differential pay leave. *Military leave, sick leave, or excused absence may not be used while on SAD.*

Leave Matrix for Technician & Military Status Before, During & After Uniformed Service								
Mil or Tech Status	Activity	Technician Work, Drill & AT Cycle			Mobilization Cycle			
	Status Areas	Technician Workweek	Drill Weekend	Drill or AT During the Tech Workweek	Mobilization	Demobilization-PDMRA	Demobilization-Terminal Leave	Return To Tech Duty During Terminal Leave
Military Status	Military Pay/Leave	N/A	Drill Pay	Drill Pay or Basic Pay + Entitlements	Basic Pay + Entitlements	PDMRA	Term Leave	Term Leave
	A1/G1	Traditional	Traditional	Traditional	Active Duty	Active Duty	Active Duty	Active Duty
	Military Chain of Command	Off Duty	Military Duties	Military Duties	Military Full Time	Off-Duty	Off-Duty	Off-Duty
Technician Status	Technician Pay/Leave	80 hour pay period, normal paid & unpaid statuses apply	N/A	Unpaid or LA / LS* / LM	Unpaid or LA / LS* / LM	Cannot be in any paid status due to PDMRA rules	Unpaid or LA / LS* / LM	Pres Leave, then 80 hour pay period, normal paid & unpaid statuses apply
	Civilian Personnel (HRO)	Technician	Technician	Technician	LWOP-US	LWOP-US	LWOP-US	RTD-Technician
	Technician Supervision	Technician Duties	Off-Duty	Released to Military Unit	Released to Military Unit	Released to Military Unit	Released to Military Unit	Technician Duties
* LS (Sick Leave) during uniformed service may be authorized when a qualifying condition is properly documented								
Step 1) Identify the "Activity" along the top of chart.								
Step 2) Follow the column down through the duty status areas to see the applicability and actions allowed within each duty status and by which department.								

4. Sick Leave (incorporating Family Friendly Leave)

Accrual. Technicians accrue sick leave at the rate of 4 hours per pay period.

Request for Sick Leave. Technicians shall request advance approval for sick leave whenever possible. At a minimum, a technician who must be absent from duty because of illness will notify the first line supervisor of their illness at or near the beginning of the work shift, except in emergency cases in which notification will be made as soon as possible.

Usage. A technician is entitled to use sick leave when he or she:

- Receives medical, dental, or optical examination or treatment; is incapacitated for performance of duties by physical or mental illness, injury, pregnancy, or childbirth; would, as determined by health authorities having jurisdiction or by a health care provider, jeopardize the health of others by his or her presence on the job because of exposure to communicable disease; must be absent for purposes relating to the adoption of a child, including appointments with adoption agencies, social workers, and attorneys, court proceedings, required travel, and other activities necessary to allow the adoption to proceed (no annual maximum).

- Provides care for a family member incapacitated by a medical or mental condition or attends to a family member receiving medical, dental, or optical examination or treatment; provides care for a family member who would, as determined by health authorities having jurisdiction or by a health care provider, jeopardize the health of others because of exposure to a communicable disease; makes arrangements

necessitated by the death of a family member or attends the funeral of a family member (maximum 104 hours annually).

Provides care for a family member with a serious health condition (maximum 480 hours annually).

Family Member. For sick leave purposes, “family member” includes the technician’s: spouse and his or her parents; parents and their spouses or domestic partners; children, including adopted children, and their spouses or domestic partners; brothers and sisters and their spouses or domestic partners; grandparents and grandchildren, and their spouses or domestic partners; and any individual related by blood or affinity whose close association with the technician is the equivalent of a family relationship.

Limits per leave year. There are no limits on the usage of accrued sick leave for a technician’s own personal medical needs. If an employee has used some of the allotted 104 hours for a family member, the 480 hours available is reduced by that amount of time. Technicians who use the full 480 hours to care for a family member may not use further sick leave for family care or bereavement.

Medical Certification. The purpose of medical certification is to validate both the entitlement to take sick leave and to ensure the technician is medically cleared to return to work. Technicians may be asked to provide an administratively acceptable medical certification within a reasonable time to supervision to support any sick leave request in excess of three consecutive days.

Advance Sick Leave. A maximum of 240 hours sick leave per leave year may be advanced to a technician who is incapacitated for the performance of his or her duties by physical or mental illness, injury, pregnancy, or childbirth; for a serious health condition of the employee or a family member; when the employee would, as determined by the health authorities having jurisdiction or by a health care provider, jeopardize the health of others by his or her presence on the job because of exposure to a communicable disease; for purposes relating to the adoption of a child; or for the care of a covered service member with a serious injury or illness, provided the employee is exercising his or her entitlement under 5 U.S.C. 6382(a)(3). Up to 104 hours of sick leave per year may be advanced to a technician when he or she receives medical, dental or optical examination or treatment; to provide care for a family member who is incapacitated by a medical or mental condition or to attend to a family member receiving medical, dental, or optical examination or treatment; to provide care for a family member who would, as determined by the health authorities having jurisdiction or by a health care provider, jeopardize the health of others by that family member's presence in the community because of exposure to a communicable disease; or to make arrangements necessitated by the death of a family member or to attend the funeral of a family member.

Request for Advance Sick Leave. Request for advancement of sick leave will be submitted, in advance, through the technician’s supervisory chain of command to the Human Resources Office for approval. The request for advance sick leave will be

supported by a medical certification signed by a licensed medical practitioner certifying to the incapacitation and progress of the technician and the date the technician may be expected to return to work. The physician's statement may be a DOL WH-380 form, an OPM form 71, office letterhead, or on other stationary identifying the physician. The first level supervisor must notify the civilian pay customer service representative in writing of the approval and maintain documentation of such approval.

Denial of Advance Sick Leave. A technician may not be advanced sick leave if he or she has a past record of sick leave abuse or there is sufficient reason to believe the technician will not return to duty, or the advanced leave will not be paid back prior to separation or retirement. A technician does not have a vested right to advance sick leave regardless of the circumstances.

5. Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA)

Eligibility. The FMLA entitles eligible technicians to a total of 12 administrative workweeks of unpaid leave (appropriate paid leave may be substituted) during any 12-month period. To be eligible, technicians must have worked in the civil service for 12 months. The 12 months does not have to be continuous. Time served outside the civil service (such as in the Postal Service), or as an intermittent or temporary NTE 1 year does not count toward the 12 months.

Entitlement. The FMLA defines family members only to include parent, spouse, son and daughter. This definition does not include parents-in-law. Eligible technicians are entitled to FMLA for one or more of the following reasons:

During the recovery period or incapacitation period after the birth of a son or daughter of the technician and the care of such son or daughter or birth mother;

The placement of a son or daughter with the technician for adoption or foster care (court appointments, required travel, medical care appointments);

The care of a spouse, son, daughter or parent of the technician, who have a serious health condition;

A serious health condition of the technician that makes the technician unable to perform the essential functions of the technician's position, but does not have the required sick leave balance on record required to cover the medical absence; otherwise; an incapacitated technician may use unlimited sick leave per leave year.

A qualifying exigency arising out of the fact that the technician's spouse, son, daughter, or parent is a covered military member on covered active duty (or has been notified of an impending call or order to covered active duty) in the Armed Forces.

Covered Servicemember. Technicians who are family members of a service member with a serious injury or illness incurred in the line of duty while on active duty, and who are providing care for that service member, are entitled to 26 weeks of FMLA during a single 12 month period to care for the service member. During the 12 month period, the technician is entitled to a combined total of 26 weeks of FMLA leave for both civilian and military family reasons.

Request FMLA. A technician must invoke the entitlement to FMLA prior to the date requested for utilizing the entitlement, within reasonable limits. If the technician is incapacitated, the entitlement may be made for him by a personal representative. Requests to invoke FMLA entitlements must be accompanied by adequate documentation, preferably a Department of Labor form [WH-380](#) signed by the health care provider. All requests for leave under this entitlement shall include a memorandum stating circumstances that prompted the need for leave and medical certification from the health care provider to include the date the serious health condition commenced; the probable duration of the condition; and the appropriate health facts as to the technician's condition or the need for the technician to be with the technician's family. A technician shall take only the amount of family and medical leave necessary to manage the circumstance that prompted the need for leave.

Substitution of Paid Leave. Technicians may substitute appropriate paid leave for any or all of the period of time taken for the above purposes. In the event the technician elects to do so, the technician must notify the first level supervisor, in writing, at least 2 weeks prior to the date such paid time off commences. The technician will then be placed in the appropriate leave status consistent with the current governing law and regulations.

Authority to grant leave for the above purposes is delegated to the first level supervisor. The supervisor is responsible for maintaining documentation on approved leave using the [OPM-71](#).

6. Leave Without Pay-Personal (LWOP)

Leave without pay is an approved absence from duty in a nonpay status. Leave without pay may be taken only for those hours of duty comprising an employee's basic workweek. The first level supervisor may approve LWOP for periods up to 30 calendar days. Requests for periods of more than 30 days, or extensions beyond 30 days must be forwarded to HRO through the Chief of Staff for Army technicians and Base Commanders for Air Guard technicians. Contact HRO for use of LWOP due to a Worker's Compensation claim.

The technician must submit a request for LWOP of more than 30 days in writing, accompanied by a [SF-52](#). Part I C, SF-52, "Personnel Action Requested" will be completed to indicate the period of LWOP requested; e.g. "LWOP 01-01-08 through 02-18-08". If the return to duty date is unknown the technician will provide an anticipated date. Upon the technician's return to duty from LWOP, the supervisor will submit a SF-52 to the Human Resources Office to return the technician to a pay status. Part I D will indicate the date the technician returned to duty.

Periods of LWOP impact employee cost of health care coverage, within-grade-increases, seniority, and retirement credits. LWOP is an approved absence and should not be confused with Absence Without Leave (AWOL). AWOL occurs when a technician is absent from duty without approval. Disciplinary action may be initiated for AWOL periods.

7. Funeral Leave

For an immediate relative who died as the result of a wound, disease, or injury incurred while serving as a member of the armed forces in a combat zone, funeral leave not to exceed 3 days will be granted upon request to technicians to make arrangements for, or to attend, the funeral or memorial service.

8. Voluntary Leave Transfer Program

The Voluntary Leave Transfer Program provides that the unused accrued annual leave of one or more National Guard technicians may be transferred for use by another technician needing leave due to a medical emergency.

Technicians requesting leave under the leave transfer program must submit an [OF 630](#) to the first level supervisor, available at the OPM Forms website. Requests may be made by a personal representative if the technician is not capable of doing so on their own behalf. Requests will include the name, position title, and grade or pay level of the potential leave recipient; the reasons transferred leave is required (brief description of nature, severity and expected duration of the medical emergency, and if it will be a recurring situation), certification from physician or other health professional with respect to the medical emergency, and any additional information that may be required by the agency.

In order to be approved, requests must be submitted in a timely fashion with adequate documentation. It must be determined that the medical emergency will (or is expected to) result in an absence from duty without available paid leave of at least 24 working hours. A determination of the approval or disapproval of the request for transferred annual leave will be made within 10 calendar days (excluding non-work days and public holidays) from the time the request and medical certification are submitted by the employee. Requests must be routed through the employee's first and second level supervisory channels to the Human Resource Office. The authority to approve leave recipient requests lies with the Human Resources Office. The HRO will notify requestors of approval/disapproval, and, if disapproved, the reasons why.

Technicians approved for receipt of annual leave under this program must use the leave only for the purpose of the medical emergency for which it was approved, and must use accrued sick leave and annual leave before using transferred annual leave. Transferred annual leave may be substituted retroactively for any period of leave without pay or used to liquidate indebtedness for any period of advance leave that began on or after the beginning of the medical emergency.

Technicians may contribute annual leave under this program to other National Guard technicians using Optional Form [630-A](#), or to employees of other Federal agencies using Optional Form [630-B](#). These forms are available on the OPM website and are to be submitted to HRO through supervisory channels. A technician who wants to contribute annual leave must specify the number of hours of accrued annual leave to be transferred. Technicians may not transfer annual leave to the account of their own immediate supervisor. Technicians may contribute no more than one-half the amount of annual leave he or she would be entitled to accrue during the leave year in which the donation is made. Technicians in a “use-or-lose” annual leave status may not transfer more than the number of annual leave hours remaining in the leave year.

9. Administrative Dismissals, AKA “Admin Leave, Excused Absence”

The authority to grant excused absence to technicians is within the administrative discretion of the Adjutant General or delegated official. First line supervisors can grant up to 59 minutes and base or facility commanders can grant up to 2 workdays of excused absence. Requests for periods greater than 2 days must be routed through HRO for approval by the Adjutant General.

Excused absence is an absence from duty, administratively authorized, without loss of pay and without charge to leave (often referred to as administrative leave). Excused absence may be granted in limited circumstances which should be directly related to the mission of the National Guard, enhance the professional development or skills of the employee in the technician’s current position, or for activities officially sponsored and/or sanctioned by the National Guard. This authority may not be used in situations of extensive duration, or for periods of interrupted or suspended operations such as ordinarily would be covered by scheduling leave, furlough, or the assignment of other work. The Adjutant General may also use this authority to establish Continuity of Operations Plans for handling adverse weather or other emergency situations. Some common situations relating to excused absence are described below.

Community activities. Technicians may be granted excused absence for short periods of time to participate in community activities that are determined to be in the best interest of the Federal government and the Ohio National Guard. These periods will be limited to no more than a combined total of three workdays during a calendar year.

Conferences and Conventions. Technicians may be granted excused absence to attend conferences or conventions when attendance will serve the best interests of the Federal Service. Excused absence may be restricted to those situations in which the technician is an official representative of the agency or is a contributor on the agenda. Excused status will be permitted only when such attendance will serve the best interest of the Federal Service. All requests for this leave will be submitted in writing, in advance, to the first level supervisor for approval. Excused absence will not be granted to attend National Guard Association Conferences unless the technician is an official delegate or an official of the organization.

Absences due to Permanent Change of Station, where arrangements cannot be made outside normal working hours.

In cases where a technician is pending an adverse action and it has been determined the technician's presence may result in potential harm or danger to the organization.

Blood Donation. A technician who makes a blood donation may be excused for a reasonable period of time (not to exceed four hours) at the discretion of the supervisor.

Registration and Voting. A technician may be excused to vote or register in any elections or in referendums on a civic matter in their community when doing so will not seriously interfere with operations,. Generally, a technician is excused from duty as to permit the technician to report for work three hours after the polls open or to leave work three hours before the polls close, whichever results in the lesser amount of time off.

Tardiness and Brief Periods of Absence. Under ordinary circumstances, tardiness of less than 1 hour may be excused without charge to leave when the reasons are justifiable to the supervisor. When justifiable, the absences may be charged to compensatory time, annual leave, or leave without pay. When not justifiable, the absences should be charged as absence without leave (AWOL). Only absences charged as AWOL may be a basis for disciplinary action. If a charge is made against leave for tardiness or unauthorized absence from duty, the technician shall not be required to perform work during the period of time for which leave is charged against the technician's account.

Required Medical Examinations. Technicians taking examinations required as a condition of technician employment, including reexaminations, may be granted excused absence. Technicians not on military orders who take medical examinations required for military membership may be excused without charge to leave. This includes dental examinations required for military duty. This authority extends to required examinations only, not to treatment. It may also be limited by supervision to a reasonable time for the technician to go to and return from an examination appointment (not to exceed 4 hours).

Continuation of Pay, Federal Employees Compensation Act. When a technician sustains a traumatic job-related injury and files a Workers' Compensation claim, the agency is required to continue the technician's pay for the period of the disability, not to exceed 45 days. In all COP situations contact HRO and the timekeeper to ensure proper documentation is kept.

Bone Marrow or Organ Donor. A technician is entitled to excused absence for the time needed to serve as a bone marrow or organ donor. The excused absence may not exceed seven days each calendar year for bone marrow donation, and 30 days each calendar year for organ donation.

Job Interviews. A technician will be excused for a job interview when competition is for a position in the Ohio National Guard or the individual is under notice of separation or change to lower grade for any reason except for personal cause.

Court Leave: Court leave is authorized absence (without loss of pay or leave) for jury duty or for attending judicial proceedings in a non-official capacity as a witness on behalf of a State or local government. Court leave is not authorized for court appearances as a witness or party to a private matter. Whenever a technician receives a summons to appear in court, it should be presented to the supervisor. Technicians under proper summons from a court to serve on a jury should be granted court leave of absence with pay for the entire period, from the time the technician is required to report until discharged or excused. If excused from jury duty for a substantial part of a day or more, a technician may be required to return to duty or be charged annual leave, provided the return to duty does not place a hardship on the technician. Upon return to duty, the technician must submit written evidence from the court reflecting the dates and hours of court attendance. Time and attendance cards should reflect the period of court leave granted. A copy of the summons, evidence of attendance, and any fees collected during technician duty days must be forwarded to the payroll office.

Presidential Leave: Technicians who spend at least 42 consecutive days on active duty in support of Operation Noble Eagle, Operation Enduring Freedom, operation Iraqi Freedom, or any other operations subsequently established under Executive Order 13223, are entitled to five (5) days of excused absence. The five days must be scheduled immediately upon Return to Duty (RTD), prior to the actual resumption of technician duties. The technician must spend at least 42 consecutive days at the deployment site. Technicians are entitled to 5 days of excused absence only once in a 12-month period.

Honor Guard for Military Funerals. Technicians who volunteer and are selected for military funeral honor details will perform such duties in an excused absence status.

Chapter 7: Benefits
POC: Benefits

1. Federal Employees Health Benefits Program (FEHB)
2. Federal Employees Dental and Vision Plan (FEDVIP)
3. Federal Employee's Group Life Insurance (FEGLI)
4. Federal Long Term Care Insurance Program (FLTCIP)
5. Retirement and Thrift Savings Plan (TSP)
6. Employee Assistance Program (EAP)
7. Worker's Compensation (OWCP)
8. Unemployment Compensation

1. Federal Employees Health Benefits Program (FEHB)

Under the federal Employees' Health Benefits Program (FEHB), you may protect yourself and your family against the costs of illnesses and accidents. Enrollment in the program is voluntary, and can only be cancelled due to a qualifying life event or during Open Season. FEHB changes for both Army and Air technicians are made through the Army Benefits Center website, <https://www.abc.army.mil/>.

You have a choice of several health plans, with various benefits and premiums through the FEHB program. All premiums are tax deferred under the Premium Conversion Plan, unless you voluntarily waive the Premium Conversion Option. All of the plans offer better rates and protection than you are likely to get as an individual, and there are no medical examinations, age limits, or waiting periods. In addition, the government pays between 60% and 75% of the total premium for any plan, and the remaining payments are made through payroll deductions.

You have 60 days from the date of your appointment, or from the date you become eligible to enroll in a health benefits plan. If you do not enroll during that time, you must wait until the open season or an event in your life that permits an enrollment change. These events are explained in the back of the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program booklet that is provided to you at new employee orientation.

In recent years FEHB has added plan options with additional tax savings or the capability to accumulate savings which may be accessed in the future. Flexible Savings Accounts (FSA's) allow you to set aside pre-tax dollars for qualifying medical expenses that are not covered under your health plan, including co-pays and over the counter medicines. You can enroll in a FSA during Open Season through the BENEFEDS website, <https://www.benefeds.com/>. Health Savings Accounts (HSA's) are a feature of some health plans that allow you to save money and build a savings account if you do not use your health insurance. For more information on FSA's and HSA's, contact HRO or go to the OPM website.

FEHB Special Concerns. You will continue to be enrolled and covered under FEHB if / when you:

Transfer to another Federal agency without a break in service of more than three calendar days.

Go on LWOP-personal—for up to one year unless you cancel it. You are responsible to contact Finance and make arrangements to pay premiums during LWOP.

Go on LWOP-US for Military Service—unless you terminate it. Since 9/11, the entitlements for continued FEHB enrollment during uniformed service have become numerous and too complex for detailed discussion here. Prior to going on LWOP-US, you will receive a detailed explanation of your options. If you elect to cancel coverage during military duty it will automatically be reinstated upon return to duty.

Are LWOP due to a Worker's Compensation claim—enrollment continues while you are receiving compensation from the Office of Worker's Compensation if it is determined you are unable to return to duty.

Enter retirement, as long as you have been enrolled under an FEHB plan for the five years immediately preceding retirement

In the event of your death—if you are enrolled for self and family, the enrollment will continue for eligible survivor annuitants and other eligible family members with no change in benefits or cost. If there is only one survivor annuitant and they are the sole eligible family member, the enrollment will be changed automatically to self only with a corresponding reduction in cost.

Dual Enrollment in FEHB. An individual cannot be enrolled in more than one FEHB policy at any given time. Instances of dual enrollment must be reported to the HRO immediately for correction.

Other Health Insurance. Because many people covered by FEHB plans have other health care protection, all FEHB plans have a coordination of benefits (COB), or double coverage, provision. The provision applies when a person covered by an FEHB plan is entitled to benefits under any other kind of group health insurance, Medicare or no-fault automobile insurance. For example, if a technician is eligible for health coverage under TRICARE, the FEHB plan is the primary payer of benefits, and TRICARE/CHAMPUS is the secondary payer.

Disputed Health Benefits Claims. The technician should read the plan brochure to become familiar with the plan's benefits and claims procedures. Questions concerning benefit claim payments and claim processing must be addressed to the plan. The Office of Personnel Management (OPM) or HRO does not pay or process claims. If the plan denies a claim for payment or for service, it will reconsider the denial upon receipt of a

written request within one year of denial. Each plan will also detail a disputed claims resolution process.

The Office of Personnel Management (OPM) negotiates plan benefits and premiums with each health plan carrier. Enrolled technicians are provided annually a description of their health plan and any changes. Current plan information and forms are posted to OPM's website at <http://www.opm.gov/insure/>. Questions or requests for assistance in coverage or enrollment should be directed to HRO for Army technicians and to the Remote HRO Designee for Air technicians. Technicians should direct their claims for benefits to their health plan carrier.

2. Federal Employee Dental and Vision Plan (FEDVIP)

Most FEHB plans offer a dental and vision option. However, if the FEHB plan of your choice doesn't carry coverage that fully meets your needs, you can purchase additional dental and vision coverage through the Federal Employees Dental and Vision Plan (FEDVIP). Plan details change every year, so for current information go to the OPM website at <http://www.opm.gov/insure/>. Enrollment for these plans must be done online through the BENEFEDS website.

3. Federal Employee's Group Life Insurance (FEGLI)

Under the Federal Employees' Group Life Insurance Program (FEGLI), you have the opportunity to elect coverage at reasonable rates through payroll deduction. The government pays one-third of the cost of your basic life insurance. In addition to the basic life insurance, you may select one or more of three optional insurance coverage levels as well as Accidental Death and Dismemberment (AD & D) coverage. FEGLI changes for both Army and Air technicians are made through the Army Benefits Center website <https://www.abc.army.mil/>.

You have 31 days from the date of your appointment, or from the date you become eligible to enroll in a life insurance plan. You are automatically covered by basic life insurance unless you sign a waiver stating that you do not want it.

You have an opportunity to sign a waiver during orientation. There is no annual open season for life insurance. If you do not enroll within the 31 days, you must wait until a special open season is declared (a very rare occurrence), or until an event occurs in your life that permits an enrollment change. These events are explained in the back of the Federal Employees Group Life Insurance booklet that is provided to you at new employee orientation.

Complete a SF 2823, Designation of Beneficiary Form with the HRO to specify beneficiaries outside the order of precedence provided by state law (spouse, children, parents, executor, and next of kin).

Supervisors must be familiar with the benefits and responsibilities of the plan so they can help technicians get answers from HRO when questions arise, or when a technician may

need to change coverage. Supervisors should forward all FEGLI forms received from technicians to HRO immediately since many of the requested changes are time sensitive.

HRO administers the FEGLI program for the Ohio National Guard. Army technicians should contact HRO with questions or requests for assistance in coverage or enrollment. Air technicians should initially contact their Remote HRO Designee. Upon the death or serious accident of an eligible family member, contact HRO immediately to obtain the needed forms and advisement for submitting claims.

Details regarding these and other aspects of FEGLI, including living benefits, assignment of a policy, and what happens if you have a worker's compensation claim can all be found in booklet FE 76-21 and at OPM's web site, www.opm.gov/insure/life.

4. Federal Long Term Care Insurance Program (FLTCIP)

The Federal Long Term Care Insurance Program (FLTCIP) provides long term care insurance to help pay for costs of care when enrollees need help with activities they perform every day, or you have a severe cognitive impairment, such as Alzheimer's disease.

Most employees must be eligible for the FEHB Program in order to apply for coverage under the FLTCIP. It does not matter if they are actually enrolled in FEHB - eligibility is the key. Annuitants do not have to be eligible or enrolled in the FEHB Program. Certain medical conditions, or combinations of conditions, will prevent some people from being approved for coverage. You must apply to find out if you are eligible to enroll. For more information about the FLTCIP, please contact Long Term Care Partners at 1(800)582-3337, or visit the website at www.ltcfeds.com.

5. Retirement and Thrift Savings Plan

As a new permanent or indefinite Federal technician, you will participate in the Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS). The three components of FERS are the Basic Annuity Benefit Plan, the Thrift Savings Plan (TSP), and Social Security Benefits. Throughout your career you will pay full Social Security taxes; you will make contributions to the Basic Annuity Benefit Plan; and, at your election, you will be able to make tax-deferred contributions to the TSP.

The Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS) is a retirement plan which was phased out in 1984. It consisted of an annuity without a Social Security component, and TSP without government matching. CSRS technicians should contact the HRO if they have questions about their retirement annuity.

HRO sponsors periodic retirement seminars for both midcareer and near-retirement technicians. If you have the opportunity, attending one of these seminars is highly recommended.

Thrift Savings Plan (TSP). The TSP is a tax-deferred retirement savings and investment plan that is similar to a private employer's 401(k) plan. It offers a variety of funds so that

you may tailor your investment strategy. You can also take loans from your established TSP accounts. The retirement income you receive from your TSP account depends on how much you and the government contribute into your account during your working years and the earnings on your contributions. If you wish to make the most of your Federal retirement, you must make the decision to contribute to the TSP. As a FERS employee, the government will immediately match 1% of your salary into the TSP. The government will also match your contributions up to 5% of your salary.

TSP changes for both Army and Air technicians are made through the Army Benefits Center website, <https://www.abc.army.mil/>. For more information you may also go to the TSP website, <http://www.tsp.gov/>.

6. Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

The Employee Assistance Program provides confidential, professional assistance to help employees and their families resolve personal problems that may affect their well-being and/or job performance. The program addresses human problems such as marital difficulties, domestic violence, financial or legal problems, emotional difficulties, or problems caused by alcohol or other drug abuse.

For assistance, technicians can utilize Ohio Cares, located on the Web at <http://www.ohiocares.ohio.gov/>, or by phone at (800) 761-0868. This organization is sponsored by the state of Ohio and pools both Military One Source and community and behavioral counseling in Ohio.

7. Worker's Compensation

The Federal Employees Compensation Act (FECA) provides workers' compensation benefits to technicians who sustain job-related injuries or illnesses, ultimately seeking return to full employment for the technician. The Office of Personnel Management (OPM) administers the restoration rights provision of the law, while the Department of Labor's Office of Worker's Compensation Programs (OWCP) administers all other aspects.

FECA provides pay (including drill pay) and medical benefits to technicians for disability due to job-related injury or illness. It also provides for dependents to be paid benefits if a work-related injury or disease causes a technician's death. Benefits cannot be paid if the injury or death is caused by the willful misconduct of the technician or by the technician's intention to bring about his or her injury or death, or that of another, or if intoxication (by alcohol or drugs) is the proximate cause of the injury or death.

A technician who sustains a job-related injury must be allowed to seek treatment from the physician of his or her choice without agency interference. The ONG can require a technician to undergo a medical examination by its own doctors for the purpose of determining employability. An agency-required examination has no effect on the payment of compensation benefits by OWCP.

The technician has an obligation to cooperate with the ONG, to keep the supervisor informed of his or her medical status, and to seek restoration as soon as the medical condition permits.

When an on-the-job injury occurs, the supervisor must first ensure the technician receives treatment. Then, contact HRO and report the injuries or illnesses through the web-based Electronic Data Interchange (EDI) at <http://www.cpms.osd.mil/icuc/EDI.aspx>.

A supervisor who believes an injury or illness claim is not job-related must submit the claim electronically and document the reasons for disputing (controverting) the claim. Supervisors must also advise the military chain of command when an on-the-job injury or illness occurs which limits the capabilities of the technician, so the military chain will not require duties of the technician while he or she is in military status that could aggravate the injury or illness. Lastly, supervisors must inform HRO of any work time lost due to work-related injuries or illness, and consult with HRO on light-duty arrangements.

HRO provides detailed information for reporting and managing claims in our training aid, "OWCP for Supervisors". Detailed information on OWCP is also available in OWCP Handbook CA-810, Injury Compensation for Federal Employees, or at <http://www.dol.gov/esa/owcp/dfec/>.

8. Unemployment Compensation

If you lose your full-time employment with the Ohio National Guard, you are entitled to apply for state unemployment compensation through the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services, Office of Unemployment Compensation (ODJFS).

The quickest way to get information on this program is through the ODJFS website at http://unemployment.ohio.gov/unemployed_workers.html. Benefits are payable under the guidelines established by Ohio Revised Code Chapter 4141. Technician personnel who are terminated due to misconduct or unsatisfactory performance may not be eligible for payment of these benefits. Personnel who resign or voluntarily quit their position are, as a general rule, ineligible for benefits under Ohio law.

Time limits for applying for unemployment benefits are very short and strictly enforced. If your application is initially denied, you are entitled to request that ODJFS re-determine your benefit eligibility within 30 days after issuance of the benefits determination. If you are denied benefits after re-determination you then have additional appellate rights. Time limits on filing an appeal are also very short. The Appeal procedures for unemployment compensation are independent and separate from any appeal rights available through the Ohio National Guard for the loss of your position.

Chapter 8: Awards
POC: Benefits

1. Incentive Awards Program
2. Quality Step Increases (QSI)
3. Sustained Superior Performance (SSP)
4. On-The-Spot Cash Awards
5. Special Act or Service Awards
6. Time Off Awards
7. Suggestion Awards
8. Honorary Awards

1. Incentive Awards Program

Purpose. The awards program is designed to motivate employees to increase productivity and creativity and to achieve greater efficiency, economy, and improvement in operations. It provides a method for rewarding those whose job performance and ideas are substantially above normal job requirements and performance standards. Depending on the type of award, job performance may be measured in terms of a single act, a period of service, improved productivity, creative problem solving, or greater efficiency and economy of operations. Awards should not be used to recognize work done in a military status or to provide additional compensation for its own sake. The Incentive Awards Program is to be vigorously supported by all levels of management, and will be administered entirely on the basis of merit without regard to age, sex, race, color, religion, national origin, marital status, or physical or mental handicap. The awards program was not designed to provide a monetary transition into retirement. Monetary awards should be scrutinized during the last 12 months of tenure with the agency when employees are eligible for an immediate annuity. Awards other than honorary will not be processed for technicians whose retirement has already been finalized.

Awards Program Manager. The Incentive Awards Program is administered within the HRO by the Awards Program Manager. The Employee Relations Specialist or designee acts as the Program Manager. The Program Manager ensures award nominations comply with the procedural and administrative requirements of the awards program, acts as advisor to the Awards Committee on substantive matters, processes award determinations in the personnel system, and notifies nominating officials if an award has been denied.

Award Program Committees. Award determinations are made by Incentive Award Program Committees that are established at JFHQ for the Army National Guard and locally at the 121 ARW, 178 FW, 179 AW, and 180 FW for each Air Wing and its respective GSUs.

At a minimum, awards committees will be comprised of a Chair (not the unit or organization commander), a member who will serve as an alternate in the absence of the Chair, the Program Manager and/or Air HRO Remote Designee, and other members as deemed locally necessary or desirable.

The Committee's responsibilities include:

Reviewing and making determinations on nominations for awards following the administrative review of each nomination by the Program Manager. This may include adjustments in the type or amount of award requested (e.g., awarding a QSI where an SSP was nominated, or changing the amount of a cash or time off award). Committees should establish substantive criteria for evaluating nominations based on the criteria for the award in question, budget, and other considerations.

Ensuring that all award determinations and presentations are conducted in a timely manner. This includes the establishment of local time limits for submission of awards if desired. Incentive Awards Program Committees will prepare and forward to HRO an annual list of committee meeting dates and committee members.

Assisting the Program Manager in planning Incentive Awards Program activities, implementing new program features, and promoting and publicizing the program to create and maintain interest in the Incentive Awards Program.

Assisting the Program Manager to review suggestions and requests for reconsideration of disapproved nominations.

Reviewing program results to assure that all awards are granted equitably and on the basis of merit.

Supervisors who nominate technicians for incentive awards must clearly describe the actions that led to the nomination, as per the requirements of the award. Supervisors should not inform technicians they have been nominated for an award until notified of the Awards Committee determination by the Program Manager.

2. Quality Step Increases (QSI)

A Quality Step Increase (QSI) is a faster than normal within-grade increase used to reward technicians at all General Schedule grade levels who display outstanding performance on a continuing basis, as reflected in a technician's most recent rating of record.

Eligibility

The technician must have documented performance appraisal(s) covering the period of performance identified in the nomination with an overall rating of Outstanding (5). Supervision must certify that performance is expected to continue at the same level of effectiveness.

The appraisal(s) must cover a minimum period of 52 weeks of continuous performance in the same position and grade.

Periods of excused absence in excess of thirty days due to LWOP-US, FMLA, or OWCP claims cannot be counted as part of the time supporting the award. In these situations, the 52 weeks of consecutive service must be computed based upon the 52 weeks of work before and/or after the absence. Supervision is responsible to identify the time frame the award is based on and to ensure performance is properly documented.

A reassignment occurring after the nominated period of performance does not affect eligibility. However, a technician may not receive a QSI if he or she has been promoted during the performance period or since the end of the performance period. In these situations, the Program Manager will return the nomination to the appropriate supervisor for consideration of another award type. For these reasons, supervisors should submit QSI nominations as soon as possible after the end of the rating period.

A technician is not eligible to receive a QSI if he/she has received a Sustained Superior Performance (SSP), a QSI, a Special Act or Service Award of \$1000 or more, or Time-Off Award(s) totaling 40 hours or more for accomplishments during the performance period.

Nominations:

Time Limits: Nominations for performance based awards may be submitted at any during the year time provided the most recent rating of record supports the award requested.

QSI nominations are submitted on the NGB Form 32. Attach a copy of the current Performance Plan and Performance Appraisal. The NGB Form 32 must be annotated and signed off with the following statement:

"I certify that, based on past experience, it is believed that this technician's high quality of performance is likely to continue."

Review and Approval Process

ARNG. The NGB Form 32 and attachments must be approved by two levels of supervision and the MSC AO/Director and forwarded to the HRO Technician Benefits section (NGOH-HRO-TB). HRO will submit the award nomination to the ARNG Incentive Awards Program Committee. HRO will complete any administrative requirements of processing awards.

ANG. The NGB Form 32 and attachments must be approved by two levels of supervision and forwarded to the Wing HRO Remote. If approved by the Wing Incentive Awards Program Committee, final approval will be requested of the

Wing/GSU Commander. The Wing HRO Remote will complete any administrative requirements of processing awards.

Documentation is maintained in the Employee Performance File (EPF) by HRO.

3. Sustained Superior Performance (SSP)

The SSP is a monetary award based on performance as reflected in a technician's most recent rating of record.

Eligibility:

The technician must have documented performance appraisal(s) covering the period of performance identified in the nomination with an overall summary rating of Excellent (4) or higher.

The appraisal(s) must cover a minimum period of 52 weeks of continuous performance in the same position and grade.

Periods of excused absence in excess of thirty days due to LWOP-US, FMLA, or OWCP claims cannot be counted as part of the time supporting the award. In these situations, the 52 weeks of consecutive service must be computed based upon the 52 weeks of work before and/or after the absence. Supervision is responsible to identify the time frame the award is based on and to ensure performance is properly documented.

Position changes occurring after the nominated period of performance do not affect eligibility. Supervisors may submit SSP nominations if a technician is about to receive or has recently received a promotion, but Award Committees should consider whether the promotion constitutes adequate recognition for performance, and whether another award is more appropriate.

A technician is not eligible to receive a SSP if he or she has received a Sustained Superior Performance (SSP), Quality Step Increase (QSI), Special Act or Service Award of \$1000 or more, or Time-Off Award(s) totaling 40 hours or more for accomplishments during the performance period.

Nominations:

Time Limits: Nominations for performance based awards may be submitted at any time provided the rating of record documenting the performance is, a) the most recent rating, and b) still current (i.e., technicians will be ineligible for performance based awards if their appraisal is overdue). Awards-only appraisals are no longer accepted: the award must be based on the rating of record.

The monetary level of the Sustained Superior Performance Award is determined by the documented performance level. Excellent performance may substantiate

any dollar amount from \$250.00 to \$1500.00. Outstanding performance may substantiate any dollar amount from \$1500.00 to \$2000.00.

SSP nominations are submitted on the NGB Form 32. Attach a copy of the current Performance Plan and Performance Appraisal.

Review and Approval Process

ARNG. The NGB Form 32 and attachments must be approved by two levels of supervision and the MSC AO/Director and forwarded to the HRO Technician Benefits section (NGOH-HRO-TB). HRO will submit the award nomination to the ARNG Incentive Awards Program Committee. HRO will complete any administrative requirements of processing awards.

ANG. The NGB Form 32 and attachments must be approved by two levels of supervision and forwarded to the Wing HRO Remote. If approved by the Wing Incentive Awards Program Committee, final approval will be requested of the Wing/GSU Commander. The Wing HRO Remote will complete any administrative requirements of processing awards.

Documentation is maintained by HRO in the Employee Performance File (EPF).

4. On-the-Spot Cash Awards

On-the-spot awards are cash awards of \$100.00-\$250.00 for an employee act or service that goes above and beyond the norm.

On-the-spot awards are often given for producing exceptionally high quality work under tight deadlines; performing emergency assignments in addition to regular duties; demonstrating exceptional courtesy, responsiveness, or initiative in dealing with clients or colleagues; or exercising extraordinary initiative or creativity in addressing a critical need or difficult problem.

Supervisors should evaluate whether the situation merits an on-the-spot award, or a larger cash or time off award as described in this chapter.

All Permanent/Indefinite/Temporary technicians are eligible. A technician may receive no more than four on-the-spot cash awards in one calendar year.

To submit nominations for on-the-spot awards, the first line supervisor must prepare NGB Form 32 in original and one copy. Attach a short narrative (normally, no more than one paragraph) on the achievement being recognized and identify the date of the act or service. The second line supervision must sign the NGB Form 32 and forward it to AGOH-HRO-B or to the Air Wing Remote HRO as soon as possible. A SF 50 for payment of the award will be generated.

5. Special Act or Service Awards

Definition. The Special Act or Service award is a monetary award in recognition of an act of heroism, or similar one-time special act, service or scientific achievement that contributes to the efficiency, economy or other improvement of government operations or promotes the public interest. The award may be given to recognize a meritorious personal effort, act, service, or scientific or other achievement accomplished within or outside assigned job responsibilities. The act, service or achievement by the nominee must result in tangible or intangible benefits to the Government and may involve more than one technician. Most often, this award has been determined to be appropriate for key staff members of Air Wings, units or the Joint Force Headquarters who contribute significantly to maintaining mission effectiveness capability in periods of extraordinary OPTEMPO. This award is particularly appropriate for recognizing accomplishments during short-term assignments or to recognize performance that has exceeded job requirements as a one-time occurrence, (e.g., overcoming unusual difficulties on a particular project or assignment or exemplary or courageous handling of an emergency situation related to official employment).

Eligibility. All technicians are eligible for this award. Nominations for this award must be endorsed by the Army MSC AO or Director, or the Air Wing/GSU Commander. This award should not be used in lieu of a Sustained Superior Performance or Quality Step increase award. Submissions must be made within 90 days of the act to be recognized.

Assessment of Monetary Level. The monetary level of the award should be determined on the basis of an evaluation of the value of the intangible benefit to the organization and public and the scope of impact of the one-time act or special service. A high value award for special service may be requested for amounts between \$500 and \$5000 with approval authority residing with the Assistant Adjutants' General for Air or Army, as appropriate. Award requests for more than \$5000, up to a maximum of \$10,000, must be approved by The Adjutant General.

Submission for this award will require a completed NGB Form 32 and a memorandum describing the one-time act or service the award is based upon. The memorandum of justification should be addressed to the approving official (ATAG Air, ATAG Army, or TAG, as appropriate).

Review and Approval Process:

ARNG. The NGB Form 32 and attachments must be forwarded to the HRO Technician Benefits section (NGOH-HRO-TB). The award will be submitted to the ARNG Incentive Awards Program Committee for review. For awards up to \$5000, final approval authority will reside with the ATAG-Army. For awards greater than \$5000, final approval authority will reside with The Adjutant General.

ANG. The NGB Form 32 and attachments must be forwarded to the Wing HRO Remote. The award will be submitted to the Wing Incentive Awards Program

Committee for review, and then to the HRO Technician Benefits section (NGOH-HRO-TB). For awards up to \$5000, final approval authority will reside with the ATAG-Air. For awards greater than \$5000, final approval authority will reside with The Adjutant General.

5. Time Off Awards

Definition and Authority. Supervisors can grant time off from duty as an incentive award without loss of pay or charge to leave. It is recognition of superior accomplishment or other personal effort that contributes to quality efficiency or economy of government operations. The award must be based solely on efforts in a technician status. Temporary technicians are eligible to receive time off awards if the temporary appointment exceeds 90 calendar days in a consecutive 12-month period.

Submissions criteria. The employee must make a high quality contribution involving a difficult or important project or assignment, display special initiative and skill in completing an assignment or project before the deadline, use special initiative and skill in making improvements in a product, activity, program, or service, or ensure the mission of the organization is accomplished during a difficult period by successfully completing additional work or a project assignment while maintaining the employee's own work load.

Amount of Award. An employee may be granted a maximum of 40 hours of time off from duty as an incentive award for a single contribution. The total amount of time a technician may be awarded during any one leave year is 80 hours. Time off awards of 40 hours or more in any given year will disqualify a technician for an SSP or QSI in that rating period.

To submit nominations for time off awards, the first line supervisor should prepare NGB Form 32 in original and one copy. Attach a short narrative (normally, no more than one paragraph) on the achievement being recognized and identify the date of the act or service. The second line supervision must sign the NGB Form 32 and forward it to NGOH-HRO-TB as soon as possible. Awards Committees may require a substantive review of time off awards of 40 hours or more prior to processing by HRO.

Usage. A time off award must be scheduled and used within one (1) year from approval date. There are no provisions to reinstate time off awards. Scheduling is subject to supervisor's approval. Time off is recorded on Time and Attendance Report as an excused absence (administrative leave) and annotated in the appropriate remarks section as "Number (Nr.) hours Time off Award approved (date)". A time off award does not convert to cash under any circumstances (including deployments).

6. Suggestion or Invention Awards

The Suggestion/Invention program rewards technicians for their ideas to improve economy, efficiency, or effectiveness of Federal government operations. Army technicians may submit their ideas online through AKO to the Army Suggestion Program (ASP). For more information on the Army program, go to

<http://www.osc.army.mil/rm/rmc/ASP/index.htm> or contact Brenda Corbin, COMM (703) 607-7763, DSN 327. Air technicians may submit their ideas through the HRO Awards Program Manager to the USAF Idea Program on AF IMT1000. For more information on the Air program, go to the AF IDEA program website at <https://wwd.my.af.mil/afknprod/ASPs/CoP/OpenCoP.asp?Filter=AF-DP-00-06> or contact Brenda Asher at COMM (865) 985-4004, DSN 266.

7. Honorary Awards

These are awards that do not involve cash payment or time-off. The award is of an honorific value, such as a letter, certificate, medal, plaque, or item of nominal value. They may be granted as determined by the local awards board without further coordination at state level.