



**WELCOME TO THE
NATIONAL CEMETERY ADMINISTRATION
DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS**



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Forms to Complete

There are various employment and pay-related forms you must complete. Some of these forms are available through the USA Staffing Onboarding module and others are available on this Welcome Portal. Please follow the directions below to complete the forms as indicated.

You will be given further assistance at your New Employee Orientation. If you have questions as you complete the forms, please contact the NCA Human Resources Center (HRC) point of contact at the specific telephone number listed in your offer letter. The general HRC telephone number is (317) 916-3660.

Forms to Complete Before You Can Get a Start Date

There are some employment forms you must complete before your job offer is finalized. These forms should have already been completed through the *USA Staffing Onboarding* site and signed electronically. They are listed below:

| Form Number | Title | Explanation |
|--------------------|-------------------------------------|---|
| OF 306 | Declaration of Federal Employment | You should have already completed it after the tentative offer of employment was made. |
| I 9 | Employment Eligibility Verification | Complete this form to verify your citizenship and eligibility to work in the United States. Bring the required documents identified for proof of U.S. citizenship when you report to work so that we may verify your citizenship. |

Documents to Bring With You on Your First Day of Work

You must provide proof of citizenship on your first day of work. Please bring with you either the one (1) document listed in Column A or two (2) of the documents listed in Column B:

| Column A | Column B |
|------------------------|-------------------------|
| United States Passport | Military I.D. |
| | Driver's License |
| | Birth Certificate |
| | Social Security Card |
| | Voter Registration Card |

Forms to Complete and Bring With You on Your First Day of Work

Complete the following forms using this *Welcome Portal*. Follow the link to access the form. Complete the form, print it, sign and date it, and bring it with you to New Employee Orientation on your first day of work. If additional documentation is required, please bring it with you. If you have questions about any of these forms, please call your HR Assistant at the specific NCA Human Resources Center (HRC) telephone number listed in your offer letter. The general HRC telephone number is (317) 916-3660.

| Form Number | Title | Explanation | Who Must Complete |
|-----------------|---|---|-------------------|
| W-4 (2017) | Employee's Withholding Allowance Certificate | This is the Federal tax withholdings form. | All New Hires |
| State Tax Forms | https://www.bls.gov/jobs/statetax.htm | The link will take you to a list of States where you can obtain the correct State Tax Withholding Form for your Place of Residence. | All New Hires |
| FMS 2231 | Fast Start Direct Deposit Form | This form authorizes the VA to directly deposit your salary in your bank or credit union account. | All New Hires |
| SF 144 | Statement of Prior Federal Service | This form is used to provide information | New Hires who had |

| | | | |
|----------|--|---|---|
| | A DD 214-Member 4 Copy is required to verify military service. You can request copies of DD214s at: www.vetrecs.archives.gov/ Copies will be mailed to your home. | on your prior Federal service for benefits purposes (e.g., credit for leave accrual and reduction-in-force retention). | prior Federal service (both Civilian and Military) |
| SF 181 | Ethnicity and Race Identification | Maintained for statistical purposes | All New Hires |
| SF 256 | Self-Identification of Disability | Maintained for statistical purposes | All New Hires |
| VA 4637 | Employee Educational Data | This form is used to record your current level of education. Maintained for statistical purposes | All New Hires |
| SF 3109 | Federal Employees Retirement System Election | This form is used to elect FERS coverage if you are changing your coverage from CSRS to FERS. | Do not complete unless you are changing your retirement coverage from CSRS to FERS. |
| SF 3110 | Former Spouse's Consent to FERS Election | Requires a notarized signature of former spouse. Use this form only if a qualifying court order, on file with Office of Personnel Management, awards a portion of your annuity or survivor annuity based on your Federal service to a former spouse who has not remarried before reaching age 55. | Career and Career-Conditional Appointees, if applicable |
| RI 20-97 | Estimated Earnings During Military Service | Complete this form to obtain information on your | Career and Career-Conditional |

| | | | |
|--|--|--|---------------------------|
| | | earnings during Military Service. Use a separate form for each branch in which you served. <u>Attach a copy of your DD 214 or equivalent and any available records of pay or promotions.</u> | Appointees, if applicable |
|--|--|--|---------------------------|

Health Insurance, Life Insurance, and Long Term Care – Due in 60 Days From Your Date of Appointment

If you are applying for insurance benefits, please see the deadlines below. You will have 60 days from the date of your appointment to submit the Health and Life Insurance forms to the HRC. You will have 60 days from the date of your appointment to enroll in the Long Term Care Insurance Program (LTCIP).

See the Pay and Benefits section below for more information about each of these benefits and links to resources to learn more about them. You may access the enrollment forms from this *Welcome Portal*. Once you have decided which benefits you wish to apply for, complete the forms, print, sign and date them, and return them to the HRC by the established deadlines. If you have questions, please call the HRC for assistance. You will also be able to ask questions at your New Employee Orientation where you will receive additional fact sheets about these benefits.

Note: If you are transferring from another Federal Agency or being reassigned or promoted from within the VA, your current benefits will continue. If you are enrolled in the Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB) program and covered by a Health Maintenance Organization (HMO), you may make certain changes if you moved out of the geographic area from which the FEHB carrier accepts enrollments, or, if already outside the area, you move further from this area.

| Form Number | Title | Explanation | Who Must Complete |
|-------------|---|--|---|
| SF 2809 | Health Benefits Election Form | Due to HRC within 60 Days from Date of Appointment; complete this form to indicate if you are enrolling in the | Career and Career-Conditional Appointees; Temporary appointees, those |

| | | | |
|---------------------|--|---|--|
| | | <p>Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB) program or if you have elected not to enroll.</p> <p>The form can be emailed or faxed. Fax number for HRC: (317) 822-8039</p> | <p>on a seasonal or intermittent schedule and who are expected to work 130 hours per month</p> |
| SF 2817 | Life Insurance Election Form | <p>Due to HRC within 60 Days from Date of Appointment</p> <p>The form can be emailed or faxed. Fax number for HRC: (317) 822-8039</p> | <p>Career and Career-Conditional Appointees; Interns under Pathways Programs under Schedule D or under OPM-approved career-related work-study program lasting at least 1 year and expected to be in pay status for at least one-third of the time from first appointment to completion</p> |
| Application Package | <p>Federal Long Term Care Insurance Program (FLTCIP) https://www.ltcfeds.com/apply/index.html 1-800-LTC-FEDS (1-800-582-3337)</p> | <p>If you do not enroll for FLTCIP within 60 days, you will have to go through FLTCIP underwriting procedures to enroll. There is no annual open season for enrollment in this benefit. You can enroll online or request an application package. You can speak to a consultant.</p> | <p>Employees in positions that are eligible for Federal Employees Health Benefits Program, whether or not actually enrolled</p> |

Forms To Be Provided to You at Your New Employee Orientation:

| Form Number | Title | Explanation |
|-------------|--|--|
| SF 61 | Appointment Affidavit | You will be sworn in and your signature on this form will be signed by a witness. |
| N/A | Acknowledgement of Benefits | This document summarizes the benefits you are eligible for and your deadlines to apply for them. |
| DG 60 | Federal Employees Health Benefits Program (FEHB) Premium Conversion Waiver/Election Form | This form is used to elect or waive pre-tax treatment of employee premium contributions to the FEHB. Do not complete it unless you elect not to have your FEHB premium contributions deducted on a pre-tax basis, or you previously waived this benefit and now elect to participate. |
| SF 1152 | Unpaid Compensation of Deceased Civilian Employee Designation of Beneficiary | This form is used to designate a beneficiary or beneficiaries for any unpaid compensation (money due to an employee) at the time of death. You must have a witness to your signature. |
| SF 3102 | Designation of Beneficiary (Federal Employees Retirement System) | This is the Designation of Beneficiary form you should complete if you are covered by FERS to indicate who you want to receive any lump-sum benefit payable based on amounts contributed to FERS (and the Civil Service Retirement System before you became covered by FERS). You must have a witness to your signature. |
| SF 2808 | Civil Service Retirement System Designation of Beneficiary | This is the Designation of Beneficiary form you should complete if you are covered by CSRS to indicate who you want to receive any |

| | | |
|---------|---|--|
| | | lump-sum benefit payable based on amounts contributed to CSRS. You must have a witness to your signature. |
| TSP 1 | Thrift Savings Plan Election Form | This is the form you use to enroll in the Thrift Savings Plan, if you are covered by FERS or CSRS. TSP is a long-term retirement savings and investment plan similar to 401(k) plans offered in the private sector. The TSP consists of several investment funds from which to choose. |
| TSP 3 | Designation of Beneficiary (TSP) | Use this form to designate a beneficiary or beneficiaries to receive your TSP account after your death. |
| SF 2823 | Federal Employees Group Life Insurance Designation of Beneficiary | Use this form to designate a beneficiary or beneficiaries to receive the life insurance benefit. Two people must witness the signature. |

Pay, Leave and Benefits

Pay

You will be paid every two weeks (bi-weekly). Your salary will be deposited into your bank or credit union account. During New Employee Orientation on your first day of work, you will submit the necessary form FMS 2231, "Fast Start Direct Deposit Form" to authorize direct deposit of your salary and you will submit the required forms to ensure that the correct tax deductions are withheld. Use the Form W-4, "Employee's Withholding Allowance Certificate," to authorize withholdings for Federal taxes. Many states accept the Federal Form W-4 for withholding purposes, but some have specific state forms. You can access the State Withholding forms at: <https://www.bls.gov/jobs/statetax.htm>

You can print the appropriate form for your place of residence, complete it, and sign and date it. Bring it with you to your New Employee Orientation.

The Department of Veterans Affairs uses *myPay*, an automated self-service system that allows you to initiate the processing of certain personnel/payroll transactions electronically. Such transactions include changes to pay, benefits, and other personal information. You can access *myPay* via the Internet, 24 hours a day, seven days a week, at www.dfas.mil. You will need a *myPay* password or your Social Security Number (SSN) to access your personal information. You will be notified of your ability to access *myPay* about 1 – 2 pay periods (two to four weeks) after you begin work.

Your salary is based on the grade level of your position. “Locality pay” is added to your basic pay in some metropolitan areas/regions of the country. The amount of locality pay is based on where your duty site is located.

Positions are either in the General Schedule (GS) or Wage Grade (WG) pay schedules.

Most white-collar positions are covered by the General Schedule and include civilian Federal employees in professional, technical, administrative, and clerical positions. You can review the General Schedule (GS) pay tables at: <https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/pay-leave/salaries-wages/>

Employees in blue-collar positions include those in the trade, craft, and laboring positions. They are covered by the Wage Grade (WG) pay schedules. The Department of Defense conducts wage surveys to determine these pay schedules for the various geographic areas. You can see more information on these pay tables at: <https://www.cpms.osd.mil/Subpage/AFWageSchedules>

If you have any questions about your salary, you may call the Human Resources Center (HRC) at (317) 916-3660.

Leave

You are eligible to earn both “Annual Leave” and “Sick Leave” each bi-weekly pay period as long as you are in a pay status. The amount of Annual Leave that you earn is based on how many years of creditable Federal Service you have worked. The amount of Sick Leave earned by a Full-Time employee is always 4 hours each pay period, regardless of the years of creditable service.

“Creditable service” includes civilian service that is *potentially* creditable for the Civil Service Retirement Service (CSRS) or for the Federal Employee Retirement Service (FERS). This is service that could be credited if you made deposits to that Retirement fund. (Such deposits are not required before you get credit for leave accrual purposes.) Uniformed service may be creditable if it ended honorably and consisted of active duty in a uniformed service. There are some restrictions on the amount of a military retiree’s service that may be creditable towards leave. Additional information about creditable service is available on the Office of Personnel Management’s website at: <https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/pay-leave/leave-administration/factsheets/annual-leave/>

“Annual Leave” is a paid absence from duty. You may use Annual Leave for vacations, rest and relaxation, personal business or emergencies. You have a right to take your

Annual Leave, subject to your supervisor’s right to schedule the time at which it may be taken. You can carry over 240 hours of Annual Leave from one leave year to the next. Leave hours in excess of 240 hours will normally be lost. (Restoration of lost Annual Leave may be made in limited circumstances.)

“Sick Leave” is a paid absence from duty for personal medical needs, family care or bereavement, care of a family member with a serious health condition, and adoption-related purposes. There is no limit to how much Sick Leave you can accrue. There are limits to how much Sick Leave that can be used each year for general family care and bereavement and to care for a family member with a serious health condition.

All leave requests should be made to your supervisor who can answer any questions you may have.

See the chart below which shows you how much Annual and Sick Leave a Full-Time employee earns:

| CREDITABLE SERVICE YEARS | ANNUAL LEAVE (Full-Time Employee) | SICK LEAVE (Full-Time Employee) |
|---|---|--|
| Less than 3 Years of Service | 4 hours (13 days) | 4 hours |
| More than 3 Years but less than 15 Years of Service | 6 hours (10 hours in last pay period) (20 days) | 4 hours |
| 15 or More Years of Service | 8 hours (26 days) | 4 hours |

Leave accrual is pro-rated for Part-Time Employees:

| CREDITABLE SERVICE YEARS | ANNUAL LEAVE (Part-Time Employee) | SICK LEAVE (Part-Time Employee) |
|---|--|--|
| Less than 3 Years of Service | 1 hour for each 20 hours in a pay status | 1 hour for each 20 hours in a pay status |
| More than 3 Years but less than 15 Years of Service | 1 hour for each 13 hours in a pay status | 1 hour for each 20 hours in a pay status |
| 15 or More Years of Service | 1 hour for each 10 hours in a pay status | 1 hour for each 20 hours in a pay status |

Benefits

All Federal employees on Career-Conditional and Career permanent appointments are eligible for Health Insurance and Life Insurance, Dental and Vision Insurance, and to participate in Flexible Spending Accounts. They may be eligible to enroll in Long Term Care Insurance. They are covered under the Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS) and the Thrift Savings Plan (TSP). (Some transferees may be covered under the Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS), the predecessor to FERS.)

Some employees on Temporary appointments may be eligible for Health Insurance. If you are an employee on a temporary appointment (limited to one year or less), an employee on a season schedule (working less than six months per year), or an employee on an intermittent schedule, and you are expected to work 130 hours per month or more for at least 90 days, you are eligible to enroll in the Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB) program with a full Government contribution, provided you are not covered under the Part-time Career Act.

Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB) Program

The Federal Government provides an outstanding choice of health insurance plans under the Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB) Program. You may choose one plan and each year, during a designated open season, you may change your plan for the following year if you desire. You can also make changes to your health plan if you experience a Qualifying Life Event (QLE) such as a divorce, childbirth, marriage, adoption, etc. Within each plan, there are three types from which to choose: Self Only, Self Plus One, and Self and Family. You also have two options within the plans: One level that is basic in coverage and has a lower premium but will require you to pay more of the costs of medical care; a second, higher level that has a higher premium but provides greater insurance coverage.

Federal Employees Dental and Vision Insurance (FEDVIP)

Federal employees may choose supplemental Dental Insurance and Vision Insurance whether or not they enroll in a health plan. As long as you are eligible for coverage under the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program (FEHB), you are eligible to enroll in the supplemental Dental and Vision insurance plans. Several plans are available from which to choose.

Federal Employees' Group Life Insurance (FEGLI) Program

The Federal Employees' Group Life Insurance (FEGLI) program is the largest group life insurance program in the world. It provides group term life insurance. It does not build up any cash value or paid-up value. It consists of Basic life insurance coverage and three options. You will be automatically covered by Basic life insurance and the premiums deducted from your pay unless you waive coverage. You must have Basic coverage to be eligible to select any of the options. Optional insurance is not automatic. You must select the options you wish to have.

Federal Flexible Spending Account Program (FSAFEDS)

The Federal Flexible Spending Account Program (FSAFEDS) allows you to save money for health care expenses with a Health Care or Limited Expense Health Care FSA. Think of it as a savings account that helps you pay for items that typically aren't covered by your FEHB Plan, the Federal Employees Dental and Vision Insurance Program, or other health insurance coverage. FSAFEDS also offers an account for families with young children or elder care expenses and is known as the Dependent Care FSA. The Dependent Care FSA allows you to set aside money to pay for your day care expenses. The money you contribute to your FSAFEDS account is set aside before taxes are deducted. In most cases, you save about 30% on your Federal taxes.

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 have severe cognitive impairment. Most employees must be eligible for the FEHB program, whether or not they actually apply for FEHB, in order to apply under the FLTCIP. 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.

Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS)

Congress created the Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS) in 1986, and it became effective on January 1, 1987. New Federal civilian employees who have been hired since that time and are eligible for retirement coverage are covered by FERS.

FERS is a retirement plan that provides benefits from three different sources: a Basic Benefit Plan, Social Security and the Thrift Savings Plan (TSP). Two of the three parts of FERS (Social Security and the TSP) can go with you to your next job if you leave the Federal Government before retirement. The Basic Benefit and Social Security parts of FERS require you to pay your share each pay period. The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) withholds the cost of the Basic Benefit and Social Security from your pay as payroll deductions. The VA pays its part, too. After you retire, you will receive annuity payments each month for the rest of your life. (See the information below on the Thrift Savings Plan.)

Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS)

The Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS) was replaced by the Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS), but Federal employees who were covered under CSRS and did not change to FERS continue to be covered under CSRS. If you are transferring from another Federal Agency or from another part of VA and you were covered by CSRS, your coverage under CSRS will continue. The CSRS is a defined benefit, contributory retirement system. Employees covered under CSRS contribute a percentage of pay to CSRS. They generally do not pay into Social Security, although they pay the Medicare tax. The VA will match the employee's CSRS contributions. Employees covered by CSRS may also contribute to the Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) but do not have their contributions matched by their Agencies.

Thrift Savings Plan (TSP)

The Thrift Savings Plan is a retirement savings and investment plan for Federal employees and members of the uniformed services, including the Ready Reserve. It was established by Congress in 1986 and offers the same types of savings and tax benefits that many private corporations offer to employees under 401(k) plans. It is a defined contribution plan. The retirement income you receive from your TSP account will depend on how much is invested in your account and the earnings accumulated over that time. You have several types of investments in which you can allocate your contributions. If you are covered under FERS, you will automatically have 3% of your salary deducted and invested in your age-appropriate Lifecycle (L) Fund. The VA will

make an automatic 1% contribution and will match your contributions up to 5%, but you must contribute 5% of your salary to receive the full match. You may contribute more, but only your first 5% is matched by the VA. See the table below:

Agency Contributions to Your Account (FERS Only)

| Your Contribution | Agency's Automatic (1%) Contribution | Agency's Matching Contribution | Total Contribution |
|--------------------------|---|---------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 0% | 1% | 0% | 1% |
| 1% | 1% | 1% | 3% |
| 2% | 1% | 2% | 5% |
| 3% | 1% | 3% | 7% |
| 4% | 1% | 3.5% | 8.5% |
| 5% | 1% | 4% | 10% |
| More than 5% | 1% | 4% | Your contribution + 5% |

If you are covered under CSRS, you do not receive any matching contributions.

You can choose between two tax treatments for your TSP contributions: Traditional and Roth. The Traditional option allows you to defer paying taxes on your contributions and their earnings until you withdraw them. The Roth option allows you to pay taxes on your contributions as you make them and your earnings are tax-free at withdrawal as long as you meet certain IRS requirements. You can make both Traditional and Roth contributions if you want.

The maximum amount of your salary that you may contribute annually to TSP is established by the Internal Revenue Code each year. Refer to www.tsp.gov for more information.

Resources About Your Benefits

The Office of Personnel Management (OPM) has produced a [video](#) that provides an overview of each of the insurance programs available to eligible Federal employees. There are additional tools available on OPM's website to help you decide which plans are best for you.

The following links provide you with additional information and resources for each of these benefits:

Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB)

- [OPM Web Site: Healthcare](#)
- [OPM Health Insurance Overview](#);
- Complete cost and coverage information for each plan available at www.opm.gov/health
- Online plan comparison tools at www.opm.gov/FEHBcompare
- [OPM Video on Insurance Benefits for New/Prospective Employees](#) – see Overview video and Health tab for Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs);

Federal Employees Dental and Vision Insurance (FEDVIP)

- [OPM Dental Insurance Overview](#)
- Complete cost and coverage information for each plan available at www.opm.gov/dental
- Online plan comparison tools available at www.opm.gov/FEDVIPcompare
- [OPM Vision Insurance Overview](#) ;
- Complete cost and coverage information for each plan available at www.opm.gov/vision
- Online plan comparison tools available at www.opm.gov/FEDVIPcompare
- Enrollment information at: www.benefeds.com or 1-877-888-3337
- [OPM Video on Insurance Benefits for New/Prospective Employees](#) – see Overview video and Dental and Vision tabs for FAQs;

Federal Employees Group Life Insurance (FGLI)

- [OPM Life Insurance Overview](#)
- More information is available at: www.opm.gov/life
- [Federal Employees' Group Life Insurance \(FGLI\) Program Handbook](#)
- [OPM Video on Insurance Benefits for New/Prospective Employees](#) – see Overview video and Life Insurance tab for FAQs;

Federal Flexible Spending Account Program (FSAFEDS)

- [OPM Web Site: Flexible Spending Accounts](#)
- [OPM FSAFEDS Overview](#)
- More information is available at: www.FSAFEDS.com or 1-877-372-3337
- [OPM Video on Insurance Benefits for New/Prospective Employees](#) – see Overview video and Flexible Spending Accounts tab for FAQs;

Federal Long Term Care Insurance Program (FLTCIP)

- [OPM Web Site: Long Term Care](#)
- [OPM Long Term Care Overview](#)
- [OPM Video on Insurance Benefits for New/Prospective Employees](#) – see Overview video and Long Term Care tab for FAQs;

- [The Federal Long Term Care Insurance Program web site](#)

Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS)

- [OPM Web Site: Federal Employees Retirement System \(FERS\)](#)
- [The Social Security Administration \(SSA\) Web Site](#)

Thrift Savings Plan (TSP)

- [OPM Web Site: My Annuity and Benefits, Thrift Savings Plan](#)
- [The Official TSP Web Site](#)
- [“Hello, my name is TSP” – An introduction to TSP](#)
- [“Welcome to the TSP! Here’s What You Need to Know” – a video](#)

If you have a question about your benefits, please contact the NCA HR Center at (317) 916-3660.