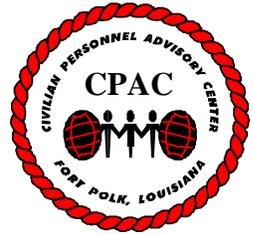




**JOINT READINESS TRAINING CENTER AND FORT POLK
CIVILIAN PERSONNEL ADVISORY CENTER
FORT POLK, LOUISIANA 71459-5341**



“A Return to Prominence – One Satisfied Customer at a Time”

**CPAC INFORMATION BULLETIN
NUMBER 146**

April 2012



Please let us know how we are doing demonstrating the behavior of the month. We are determined to keep working at it until we return to prominence... one satisfied customer at a time, ...every customer, ...every day, ...whatever it takes...LEGALLY!

ICARE

In an effort to improve the quality of services provided to its customers and hardwire customer excellence throughout the organization, the CPAC is participating in the CHRA South Central Region customer service initiative called “ICARE.”.....customer excellence begins with me because...ICARE. It is designed to create a Culture of Excellence where managers, supervisors, and employees “seek-out” HR services and CPAC employees fully invest themselves in their work to deliver HR products and services that exceed customer expectations. To achieve this culture, employees are asked to apply supporting behaviors each month. The five standards of excellence, 12 supporting behaviors and the months of focus are as depicted below.



ARMY CIVILIAN RECORD BRIEF

The Department of the Army has developed a Civilian Record Brief (CRB) for all Civilian Appropriated Fund and NAF employees.

The CRB is a one-page snapshot of an employee's official data pulled from various sources, such as MyBiz, Defense Civilian Personnel Data System (DCPDS), and Training Management Systems. By putting all of this information on a single, easily viewed document, you will have an uncomplicated method for reviewing your data contained in your MyBiz and DCPDS records and taking steps, if necessary, to update or correct the data.

The 10 sections of data reported on the CRB are a concise reflection of your work experience, education, training, awards, professional licenses and certifications, performance ratings, foreign language proficiency, security investigation status, personal and emergency contact information, position description, current and previous assignment history, and other data regarding your federal civilian service.

Five Standards of Excellence	12 Supporting Behaviors	Beginning the 15th of Each Month
1. Integrity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attitude • Professionalism • Commitment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • January • February • March
2. Compassion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Courtesy • Respect • Communication 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • April • May • June
3. Advocacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safety • Privacy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • July • August
4. Resourcefulness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stewardship • Creativity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • September • October
5. Excellence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality • Ownership 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • November • December

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You can review and update your CRB through the CPOL Portal by navigating to www.cpol.army.mil, click on the Employee tab, then “Go!” in the Employee Data portlet. The link to the Civilian Record Brief (CRB) is located in the left pane under Self Service Applications.

Please Note! We are expecting VERY heavy volumes of traffic to this new tool over the coming weeks as you and all of your thousands of Army colleagues log in and try it out. Please be patient and if you experience slow response times or an error, we ask that you simply try again a little later in the day.

Keeping your CRB updated is voluntary on your part, but you are encouraged to review your CRB for accuracy, and update it as necessary following the easy instructions in the **Quick Guide indicated below**. Your supervisor may also view your CRB; however, the CRB does not contain any information that is not already accessible by supervisors. It is merely an additional resource that places pertinent information on a single page making it more accessible, and reviewable, by you and your supervisor.

Army Civilian Record Brief Quick Guide

Updated: January 26, 2012

What is the Army Civilian Record Brief (CRB)?

The Army Civilian Record Brief is a one-page report of your critical human resources (HR) data. It contains information retrieved from the Defense Civilian Personnel Data System (DCPDS), which is the authoritative source of HR data for DoD civilian employees, and from other sources you may update yourself via online self-service applications.

How do I update the information in my CRB? What does the data in each field represent?

Your information may be updated in a number of ways, depending on the section in the CRB. Each section of the CRB is also color coded to designate how the information may be updated. Descriptions of each field, explanations of the information they contain, and detailed update instructions can be found in the full User Guide, located at: <http://cpol.army.mil/library/help/portal/CRB-UserGuide.pdf>

- **Blue shaded** sections are updateable in MyBiz, which is a self-service Portal for all DoD civilian employees. You have ownership of this information, and the ability to correct and change it. A blue link at

the bottom-left of the CRB will take you to MyBiz. The full MyBiz user guide is located at: http://www.cpmos.osd.mil/hrbits/selfservice/selfservice_userguide.aspx

- **Tan shaded** sections are updateable through the “Update My CRB” function in the CRB self-service application in the CPOL Portal. This is your information, input by you alone. A tan link at the bottom-left of the CRB will take you to the “Update My CRB” function.

- Supervisor and Supervisor email (Section 4): If your supervisor's name and email address are incorrect or display “Data Update Needed,” please send the following link (or it’s contents) to your immediate supervisor and ask them to follow the simple instructions:

http://cpol.army.mil/docs/SSPH_Quick_Guide.pdf

- Home Address (Section 4): This is your personal home address as reflected in DCPDS. It originates from your payroll record, which is found in the Defense Civilian Payroll System (DCPS). If your mailing address is incorrect, you may update it via self-service at <https://mypay.dfas.mil/mypay.aspx>. Log in, and then select Correspondence Address under the header “Pay Changes” to update your home address. This update will flow to DCPDS and be visible on your CRB within 48 hours.

- **White sections** are only updateable by Army Civilian HR Professionals. Please review the full CRB User’s Guide for instructions on how to submit a Helpdesk Ticket to request data corrections: <http://cpol.army.mil/library/help/portal/CRB-UserGuide.pdf>.



Planning for Retirement

How do I begin planning for retirement?

You should begin planning several years before the date you have set for retirement so that you will know what is required to continue certain benefits into retirement. There are many factors related to retirement planning, and it is literally never too early to begin. The federal annuity is

only one element to consider in today's complex financial scene. You may need to start a Thrift Savings Plan or IRA schedule many years before considering actual retirement. Other considerations, such as Social Security may affect your benefits.

However, the best place to begin is by contacting the Army Benefits Center-Civilian (ABC-C) at 1-877-276-9287. They can provide personalized assistance.

Your health and life insurance coverages are of immediate concern now because you must carry coverage continuously for at least five years before your retirement or you may be ineligible to continue them.

When should I begin planning for retirement?

The five year period before retirement is important because you must have insurance coverage for five years immediately before retirement to keep it after retirement.

You may also need some preliminary information to make decisions about when you can afford to retire and whether to make any necessary payments to receive credit for military or non-contributory service or repay any retirement contribution refunds.

When can I keep my health insurance benefits after I retire?

You may continue your health insurance coverage only if you meet the following conditions:

- Your annuity must begin within 30 days or, if you are retiring under the Minimum Retirement Age (MRA) plus 10 provision of the Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS), health and life insurance coverages are suspended until your annuity begins, even if it is postponed.
- You must be covered for health insurance when you retire.
- You must have been continuously covered by the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program, TRICARE, or the Civilian Health and Medical Program for Uniformed Services (CHAMPUS):
 - for five years immediately before retiring; or,
 - during all of your federal employment since your first opportunity to enroll; or,
 - continuously for full periods of service beginning with the enrollment that started before January 1, 1965, and ending with the date on which you become an annuitant, whichever is shortest.

Retirees must have retired with an immediate annuity (a FERS Minimum Retirement Age plus 10 annuity,

postponed, counts as an immediate annuity). Those in receipt of a deferred annuity are not eligible to enroll in the Federal Employees Dental Vision Program ([FEDVIP](#)).

Can the requirements for continuing health insurance coverage be waived?

OPM has the authority to waive the five-year participation requirement when it is against equity and good conscience not to allow an individual to participate in the health insurance program as a retiree. However, the law says that a person's failure to meet the five-year requirement must be due to exceptional circumstances. When someone is retiring voluntarily, a waiver may not be appropriate because he or she can continue working until the requirement is met. When circumstances under these conditions otherwise warrant a waiver, OPM will notify the individual's employer.

Can the requirements for continuing life insurance be waived?

No. OPM has no authority to waive the requirements for continuing life insurance coverage. If you are not eligible to continue it, you will be given the chance to change it to an individual policy.

\$\$ PAY CORNER \$\$



Control Your Pay With myPay!

Click on MyPay Key above to be linked to the MyPay System

Or

Type into your browser:

<https://mypay.dfas.mil/mypay.aspx>



myPay Goes Mobile!

DFAS has announced that many myPay on-line services can now be accessed from mobile devices with a built in web browser such as Android, BlackBerry, iPhone, or other Smartphone, or iPod touch device.

Simply visit <https://myPay.dfas.mil> and start accessing your account anytime, anywhere!



Before You Go on Active Duty

You have a lot to think about as you prepare to go on active duty. Whether you are a Federal or non-Federal civilian employee, if you take the actions described here, you can minimize problems that may arise regarding your TSP account(s).

Federal Civilian Employees

Be sure to immediately inform your Federal civilian agency that you have been called to perform active military service.

Payroll Contributions

Be aware that your payroll contributions to your civilian TSP account (and Agency Contributions, if you are FERS) will stop once you go into a [nonpay status](#).

However, you can still contribute to your uniformed services account. It is a good idea to contribute a percentage of your basic pay, which entitles you to contribute a percentage of any incentive pay, special pay, or bonus pay.

TSP Uniformed Services Account

If you do not yet have a uniformed services account, you may want to establish one by submitting [Form TSP-U-1](#) , Election Form, to your service, or by using your service's electronic version of the form.

Read the Fact Sheet [TSP Benefits That Apply to Members of the Military Who Return to Federal Civilian Service](#) .

TSP Loans

Be aware that, if you have a TSP loan from your civilian TSP account, your loan payments will stop, because they come from payroll deductions. Also, you cannot make payments on that loan from your uniformed services pay. However, you can continue to make loan payments by sending a personal check or money order to the TSP along with a [TSP Loan Payment Coupon](#).

Ask your Federal civilian agency to submit [Form TSP-41](#) , Notification to TSP of Nonpay Status. Submission

of this form will suspend your loan payments until you return to your Federal civilian job. However, there are [other acceptable forms of documentation to notify the TSP](#) .

Non-Federal Employees

Confirm how much you have contributed to your employer's defined contribution plan (e.g., 401(k), 403(a), 403(b), etc.) for the current tax year. If you intend to contribute from your uniformed services pay, this will help you determine the amount (in tax-deferred contributions) that you will be eligible to contribute to your uniformed services TSP account while on active duty.

All Employees (Federal and Non-Federal)

Remember the Basics

- Make sure the TSP has your current mailing address. If necessary, ask your agency and/or your service to correct or change your mailing address for your TSP account.
- Be sure you have your TSP account number (or user ID), your Web password, and ThriftLine PIN. If you have lost or forgotten these numbers, you can [request your account number be mailed to you](#), which you can then use to create a new user ID.
- Acquaint yourself with TSP contribution limits.

Decide Whether to Designate a Power of Attorney

You can designate a power of attorney — an individual to serve as your agent in any business with the TSP. Your agent can be given very specific powers or unlimited power to act on your behalf. You can use the [Special Power of Attorney](#)  form to designate a power of attorney.

Review Beneficiaries

Review any [beneficiary designations](#) you have on file with the TSP. Update or change information, if necessary. No other types of designations (such as wills) are accepted by the TSP.

If you have no beneficiary designation on file with the TSP, be aware that your TSP account(s) would be distributed according to the [standard order of precedence](#) in the event of your death.

Employee Contributions — There are no longer any percentage limits on employee contributions to the TSP.

TSP contributions are limited only by the restrictions imposed by the [Internal Revenue Code](#).

Elective Deferral Limit (I.R.C. Section 402(g)) — The elective deferral limit for 2012 is \$17,000. For 2011 it was \$16,500. See the Fact Sheet "[Annual Limit on Elective Deferrals](#)."

I.R.C. Section 415(c) Limit — The limit for 2012 is \$50,000. For 2011 it was \$49,000.

Catch-up Contributions — The limit on catch-up contributions for 2012 is \$5,500. If you are at least age 50 (or will become age 50 during the calendar year) and if you have made or will make the maximum amount of employee contributions for the calendar year (e.g., \$17,000 in 2012), you may also make catch-up contributions to your TSP account. See the Fact Sheet "[Catch-up Contributions](#)."

Participant statements are on-line in [Account Access](#) on this Web site. Click on [Your TSP Participant Statement](#) for more information.

Loan interest rate for new loans is 1.875%.

Annuity interest rate index: 2.125% for annuities purchased in March 2012 and 2.125% for annuities purchased in April 2012. [Click here](#) for historical annuity interest rates.

Your account balance is updated each business day. To access your account balance on this Web site, you will need your TSP 13-character account number and your 8-character [Web Password](#). To obtain your account balance from the [ThriftLine](#), you will need your TSP account number and 4-digit TSP Personal Identification Number (PIN).

Civilian TSP participants who are members of the Ready Reserve — If you are a civilian TSP participant with an outstanding TSP loan and are placed in non-pay status to perform military service, make sure your agency provides the TSP with documentation to certify your status and suspend loan payments. The Internal Revenue Code allows the TSP to suspend loan payments for all participants placed in non-pay status for up to one year of non-pay. However, participants placed in non-pay status to perform military service for more than one year are authorized suspension of loan payments for the entire period of military service. For more information, see the Fact Sheet [Effect of Nonpay Status on TSP Participation](#).

TSP RATES OF RETURN

Rates of Return were updated on April 1, 2012

(Figures in parenthesis indicate a negative return)

	G Fund	F Fund	C Fund	S Fund	I Fund
Mar 2012	0.14%	(0.61%)	3.30%	2.30%	0.13%
Last 12 Months	2.11%	7.75%	8.60%	2.40%	(5.45%)

(04/01/2011 - 03/31/2012)

*The G, F, C, S, and I Fund returns for the last 12 months assume unchanging balances (time-weighting) from month to month, and assume that earnings are compounded on a monthly basis.

	L Income	L 2020	L 2030	L 2040	L 2050
Mar 2012	0.54%	1.23%	1.49%	1.68%	1.86%
Last 12 Months	3.24%	3.74%	3.92%	3.95%	3.62%

(04/01/2011 - 03/31/2012)

*The monthly G, F, C, S, and I fund returns represent the change in their respective share prices for the month. The changes in share prices reflect net earnings after accrued TSP administrative expenses have been deducted. The F, C, S, and I fund share prices also reflect the deduction of trading costs and accrued investment management fees.

The TSP is a retirement savings plan for civilian federal employees. The monthly G, F, C, S, and I Fund returns represent the actual total rates used to allocate monthly earnings to participant accounts. Allocations are usually completed by the fourth business day of the month. The returns are shown after deduction of accrued TSP administrative expenses. The F, C, S, and I Fund returns also reflect the deduction of trading costs and accrued investment management fees.

The TSP performance history for the past 12 months can be accessed through the following link:

http://www.tsp.gov/curinfo/annuity_history.html



ATTENTION!!!! Employees
 Transferring to Fort Polk from
 another Agency or Whose Payroll
 Office Changes

None of the programs listed below are administered by Office of Personnel Management (OPM) or Army Benefits

Center-Civilian (ABC-C). OPM has contracted with private companies to administer these programs. What that means is that there are no data fields in Defense Civilian Personnel Data System (DCPDS) that allows us to 'transfer in' your FEDVIP, FLTC, and/or FSA. **It is your responsibility to contact the contracting agency for transferring over your FEDVIP, FLTC, and FSA so it continues.** Below are the phone numbers that you **must** call to ensure your FEDVIP, FLTC, and/or FSA continues:

1) If you have **DENTAL** or **VISION** coverage under FEDVIP you **must** contact BENEFEDS by calling 1-877-888-FEDS (1-877-888-3337). Hearing impaired employees should contact BENEFEDS by calling TTY 1-877-889-5680. The website address, if you should want further information, is www.benefeds.com.

2) If you have **Federal Long Term Care (FLTC)** you **must** contact the provider by calling 1-800-LTC-FEDS (1-800-582-3337). Hearing impaired employees should contact the provider by calling TTY: 1-800-843-3557. The website address, if you should want further information, is www.ltcfeds.com.

3) If you should have **Flexible Spending Account (FSA)** you **must** contact them by calling 1-877-372-3337. Hearing impaired employees should contact FSA by calling TTY 1-800-952-0450. The website address, if you should want further information, is www.fsafeds.com.

HOLIDAY/LIBERAL LEAVE SCHEDULE FOR FY 2012

DAY/DATE	HOLIDAY	Training/Liberal Leave Day
Monday, 10 October 11	Columbus Day	Friday, 7 Oct *
Friday, 11 November 11	Veterans Day	Monday, 14 Nov*
Thursday, 24 November 11	Thanksgiving Day	Friday, 25 Nov *
Monday, 26 December 11	Christmas	Friday, 23 Dec*
Monday, January 2, 2012	New Year's Day	Friday, 30 Dec*
Monday, January 16, 2012	Birthday of Martin Luther King, Jr.	Friday, 13 Jan*
Monday, February 20, 2012	Washington's Birthday	Friday, 17 Feb*
Monday, May 28, 2012	Memorial Day	Friday, 25 May*
Wednesday, July 4, 2012	Independence Day	NONE DESIGNATED
Monday, September 3, 2012	Labor Day	Friday, 31 Aug*
		*DESIGNATES TRAINING HOLIDAY FOR MEDDAC

BRAIN TEASER

What do you throw out when you want to use it but take in when you don't want to use it?

Answer on page 10



EMPLOYEE WELLNESS

CATCH THE STRESS - BREAK THE PATTERN

Health Promotion Program
Bayne-Jones Army Community Hospital

How do you feel when you are stressed? Tensed, Nervous, Angry, Tearful, Tired, Confused, Helpless.... Stress is a normal condition of physical and mental arousal. It is necessary for health. It alerts us to dangers and stimulates us to react to situations. Most stress responses are good. However, severe and prolonged stress can be harmful. Prolonged stress can lead to ulcers, heart disease, diabetes, high blood pressure, stroke, mental disorders, cancer There are many sources of stress. However, the workplace has been identified as a major source of stress. In a telephone poll conducted by the Marlin Company, North Haven, Connecticut in 2001, 35% of Americans in the workplace said their jobs were harming their physical or emotional health and 42% said job pressures were interfering with their personal relationships. Fifty percent of those surveyed said they had a more demanding workload that year than the previous year. In a survey conducted in 2008/09 by the National Health Services (NHS), United Kingdom, people reported work-related stress at a level they believed was making them ill. The key to managing stress is catching it before you lose control. This can be particularly true in the workplace and critical to overall health. Do you know when you have reached a level of stress that you are no longer able to cope with day to day situations effectively? To determine your level of stress, take the workplace stress scale quiz by the © Marlin Company:

Thinking about your current job, how often does each of the following statements describe how you feel?

	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very Often
A. Conditions at work are unpleasant or sometimes even unsafe.	1	2	3	4	5
B. I feel that my job is negatively affecting my physical or emotional well being.	1	2	3	4	5
C. I have too much work to do and/or too many unreasonable deadlines.	1	2	3	4	5
D. I find it difficult to express my opinions or feelings about my job conditions to my superiors.	1	2	3	4	5
E. I feel that job pressures interfere with my family or personal life.	1	2	3	4	5
F. I have adequate control or input over my work duties.	5	4	3	2	1
G. I receive appropriate recognition or rewards for good performance.	5	4	3	2	1
H. I am able to utilize my skills and talents to the fullest extent at work.	5	4	3	2	1

To get your score, add the numbers you answered to all of the eight questions and see how you compare.

Interpreting Workplace Stress Scale™ Scores

Total score of 15 or lower (33% of us are in this category): Chilled out and relatively calm. Stress isn't much of an issue.

Total score 16 to 20 (35%): Fairly low. Coping should be a breeze, but you probably have a tough day now and then. Still, count your blessings.

Total score 21-25 (21%): Moderate stress. Some things about your job are likely to be pretty stressful, but probably not much more than most people experience and are able to cope with. Concentrate on seeing what can be done to reduce items with the worst scores.

Total score 26-30 (9%): Severe. You may still be able to cope, but life at work can sometimes be miserable. Several of your scores are probably extreme. You could be in the wrong job, or even in the right job but at the wrong time, and might benefit from counseling.

Total score 31- 40 (2%): Stress level is potentially dangerous – the more so the higher your score. You should seek professional assistance, especially if you feel your

health is affected, or you might need to consider a job change.

The Family Advocacy Program at Fort Polk offers Stress Management and Anger Management classes for beneficiaries on alternating months. You may contact them at (337) 531-1938/0636. For treatment of stress and anger issues, call (337) 531-3272.

If you are a civilian employee at Fort Polk, the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) Coordinator is available to assist with workplace stress or other issues that may be of concern to you on an individual basis. She is also available to assist retired military, family members of retired military, and family of active duty military. Contact the EAP coordinator at (337) 531-1964 to schedule an appointment.



Top 10 Spring Cleaning Safety Tips

Spring cleaning safety is not normally on people's minds when they begin to haul out all those cleaning supplies and equipment, but it should be.

Every day we need to be careful when going about our household chores, but when you really start tearing the house apart and moving things around during spring cleaning, especially with all those cleaning supplies and equipment out, it is doubly important to keep safety in mind.

1. Do not rush because you are tired or in a hurry.

This is really the most basic spring cleaning safety tip, and all the other ones, at least to a certain degree, stem from this one.

Spring cleaning can be tiring work. Do not forget safety even if you have worked hard all day and want to get done.

The better thing to do when you are exhausted is to stop and take a break, drink a glass of water, sit under a nice cool fan, and rest instead of being unsafe.

2. Be careful moving large pieces of furniture and appliances.

Use proper lifting technique, keeping you back straight and lifting with your legs.

Also, wear shoes when moving heavy items so you don't hurt your toes.

Finally, if you feel it is just too heavy and you can't [find someone](#) else to do it for you, just don't move it. It won't be the end of the world to just clean around it.

Always have spring cleaning safety in mind.

3. Be safe while on ladders and step stools.

When doing a task, such as [washing](#) windows, where you need to be on a ladder, use extreme caution.

Do not lean too far to either side. A good rule of thumb is that your belly button should not go beyond the sides of the ladder.

Also, have someone available to hold the ladder steady for you if possible, and make sure before you step on them that the rungs are not wet, and you are wearing non skid shoes.

4. Be careful when walking on wet surfaces.

This spring cleaning safety tip is really important every time you clean.

Everyone knows how easy it is to slip on a wet floor. Make sure you take the proper precautions to keep from falling.

Also, make sure others in your family, including children, are also warned of the wet floor to keep them safe.

You may need to block small children's access to wet floors because they just don't understand not to run and slide on them.

5. Keep stairs, landings, and walkways clear of boxes, bags, and other clutter.

Spring cleaning is a great time to de-clutter your home, but you need to make sure all the boxes and bags of stuff you are getting rid of don't cause a safety concern.

Make sure you place them outside walkways and especially away from steps and stairs where someone may trip on them.

6. Don't carry too much stuff at once, especially on stairs.

During spring cleaning you will also probably go up and down your stairs a lot carrying things if you live in a home with stairs.

Make sure you keep a hand free to hold onto the stair [railing](#).

Also, whether you have stairs or not, always make sure you can see over the load you are carrying so you do not trip.

7. Always follow cleaning product label safety instructions and recommendations.

Cleaning supplies can create nasty fumes, so make sure you get some fresh air by opening windows, turning on the exhaust fan, or placing a fan in [the room](#).

In addition, do not mix ammonia and bleach together, both of which are common household cleaners, because they create toxic fumes when combined.

When it doubt don't mix, just use one product to get the job done.

You should also wear rubber gloves to keep your hands from getting dry and cracked from the hot water and chemicals.

8. Wear a mask when cleaning dusty areas.

This may seem like overkill to some, but if you are at all allergic to dust this tip is very important.

9. Do not leave buckets filled with water around your home.

Even if you need to take a quick break make sure you empty that cleaning bucket, or at least put it in an inaccessible area.

Even small amounts of water are a drowning hazard for small children.

10. Put away all your cleaning supplies when you are done.

When you finally finish your spring cleaning tasks for the day it is easy to say to yourself, "I'll put these away later," or "I am just going to use these again tomorrow, so I'm keeping them out."

Cleaning supplies are an attractive nuisance for our children and pets, something inviting that they should definitely not be getting into.

Put the cleaning products away in a childproof cabinet for your children's safety and well-being as soon as you are done with them.

Follow these spring cleaning safety tips to have a safe and productive spring cleaning!



APRIL 8th IS EASTER SUNDAY!

'T WAS THE DAY BEFORE EASTER

'Twas the day before Easter..and all through the woods,
The bunnies were busy packing their goods.
The eggs were all colored so pretty and bright,
All things were "go" for the big, special night.

The baskets were waiting, all decorated with care,
In hopes that the Bunny soon would be there.
My little brother Sam was asleep in his bed,
While visions of Easter eggs rolled round his head.

And I in my pajamas with the cat on my lap,
I had just settled down for a quick little nap.
When outside the window I heard a great noise,
I sprang from my chair and jumped over some toys.

As quick as a flash to the window I flew,

I pulled up the shade and, OH, what a view.
The moon on the meadow cast a bright golden glow
And the wind blew the flowers to and then fro.

Then all of a sudden from out of nowhere,
Came some lively bunnies, hopping here, hopping there!

Leading the group with ears long and funny
Was a plump, all-white rabbit...
That's right...the EASTER BUNNY!

The bunnies hopped past, one, two, three, four,
The rabbit called out and then there were more.
"Come, Peter!, Come, Flopsy!, Come, Benny!, Come, Joe!
Now hop along! Hop along! Hop along! GO!"

So up on each doorstep the bunnies did hop,
With baskets of eggs. (Let's hope they don't drop!)
Just at that moment, on the porch down below,
Came the stomping of feet
'Twas the rabbit, I know!

As I stepped from my window I heard a loud sound.
Through the door came the rabbit with a leap and a bound.
He was furry and soft from his head to his feet.
To see him so close was really quite neat.

He was surrounded by eggs that had been carefully dyed.
Easter eggs galore he soon would hide.
His eyes were all twinkles,
His nose was so pink,
And I can't be too sure, but I think he did wink.

He had a kind face and a big fluffy tail
That bobbed up and down like a boat with a sail.
A twitch of his nose and a flick of his ear
Was his way of saying, "You've nothing to fear."

He uttered no sound as he hopped all about
Hiding the eggs and leaving no doubt,
That the Easter bunny had come like he does every year...
Bringing baskets of happiness to children so dear.

from John Paul of Homespun



The Federal Long Term Care Insurance Program

You received important information on the Federal Long Term Care Insurance Program (FLTCIP) during last spring's FLTCIP open season. You don't have to wait until the next open season to apply for the FLTCIP. Federal family members can apply for FLTCIP coverage anytime using the full underwriting application.

Because premiums are based on your age at the time of application, this is a good time to learn more. With the FLTCIP's educational website and knowledgeable program consultants, you can easily find the information you need to get started today.

LEARN MORE

The **Online Consultant Tool** (http://tx.info.ltcfeds.com/track.aspx?1146206.381647.5036446799.9348.285776_1732_H) uses video and interactive features to help you learn about long term care and design a FLTCIP plan that suits your needs.

Our online webinars (http://tx.info.ltcfeds.com/track.aspx?1146206.381647.5036446799.9348.295417_1733_H) demonstrate how the FLTCIP can help secure a comfortable retirement and highlight the FLTCIP's comprehensive benefits and features.

APPLY TODAY!

If you're ready to take the next step, you can apply online (http://tx.info.ltcfeds.com/track.aspx?1146206.381647.5036446799.9348.457020_1734_H) or download an application (http://tx.info.ltcfeds.com/track.aspx?1146206.381647.5036446799.9348.457021_1735_H) today.

For personalized assistance, call 1-800-LTC-FEDS (1-800-582-3337) TTY 1-800-843-3557 to speak with a program consultant.

Note: Certain medical conditions, or combinations of conditions, will prevent some people from being approved for coverage. You need to apply to find out if you qualify for coverage under this program.

Did You Know?

When taking a bite into a chocolate bunny, 76% of Americans prefer to bite off the ears first. 5% eat the feet first and 4% eat the tail first.

Solid chocolate bunnies are favored, followed closely by hollow chocolate bunnies, marshmallow filled bunnies, and other Easter bunny candy.

During the Easter season, Americans buy more than 700 million Peeps - making Peeps the most popular non-chocolate Easter candy.

Adults prefer milk chocolate (65%) over dark chocolate (27%).

16 billion jelly beans are made specifically for Easter which is enough to fill a plastic egg the size of a 9-story building.

Kids prefer red jelly beans and 75% are willing to do extra chores for more Easter candy.

BRAIN TEASER ANSWER

An anchor.



Equal Employment Opportunity

Discrimination Based on Sexual Orientation, Status as a Parent, Marital Status and Political Affiliation

The U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) does not enforce laws that prohibit discrimination and harassment based on sexual

orientation, status as a parent, marital status and political affiliation. However, other federal agencies and many states and municipalities do. The relevant federal agencies are listed below.

In the federal government the Civil Service Reform Act of 1978 (CSRA), as amended, prohibits federal employees who have authority to take, direct others to take, recommend or approve any personnel action from discriminating against applicants and employees on the bases of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, disability, marital status or political affiliation and from discriminating against an applicant or employee on the basis of conduct which does not adversely affect the performance of the applicant or employee. The Office of Personnel Management (OPM) has interpreted the prohibition of discrimination based on "conduct" to include discrimination based on sexual orientation. See Addressing Sexual Orientation Discrimination in Federal Civilian Employment at <http://www.opm.gov/er/address2/guide01.htm>.

EEOC has jurisdiction over the prohibitions against employment discrimination codified in Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Equal Pay Act of 1963, the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967, Sections 501 and 505 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Titles I and V of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, the Civil Rights Act of 1991, and the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2008. These laws prohibit discrimination based on race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, disability, and genetic information.

The Office of Special Counsel (OSC) and the Merit Systems Protection Board (MSPB) enforce the prohibitions against federal employment discrimination codified in the CSRA. The OSC will defer those bases of discrimination under EEOC's jurisdiction to the respective federal agency and its EEO process. This law also prohibits employment discrimination in the federal government based on marital status, political affiliation and conduct which does not adversely affect the performance of the employee, none of which are within the EEOC's jurisdiction. Moreover, the law defines ten other prohibited personnel practices in the federal government, all of which fall under the jurisdiction of the OSC and the MSPB. See Prohibited Personnel Practices at <http://www.osc.gov/ppp.htm>.

Executive Order 13087, amending Executive Order 11478, was signed on May 28, 1998, to provide a uniform policy for the federal government to prohibit discrimination based on sexual orientation. Executive Order 11478 section 1 reads:

It is the policy of the government of the United States to provide equal opportunity in federal employment for all persons, to prohibit discrimination in employment because of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, handicap, age, or sexual orientation and to promote the full realization of equal employment opportunity through a continuing affirmative program in each executive department and agency. This policy of equal opportunity applies to and must be an integral part of every aspect of personnel policy and practice in the employment, development, advancement, and treatment of civilian employees of the federal government, to the extent permitted by law.

Executive Order 13152, also amending Executive Order 11478, was signed on May 2, 2000, to provide for a uniform policy for the federal government to prohibit discrimination based on an individual's status as a parent.

Executive Order 11478 section 1 now reads:

It is the policy of the government of the United States to provide equal opportunity in federal employment for all persons, to prohibit discrimination in employment because of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, handicap, age, sexual orientation or status as a parent, and to promote the full realization of equal employment opportunity through a continuing affirmative program in each executive department and agency. This policy of equal opportunity applies to and must be an integral part of every aspect of personnel policy and practice in the employment, development, advancement, and treatment of civilian employees of the federal government, to the extent permitted by law.

Executive Order 13152 states that "status as a parent" refers to the status of an individual who, with respect to an individual who is under the age of 18 or who is 18 or older but is incapable of self-care because of a physical or mental disability, is:

- a biological parent;
- an adoptive parent;
- a foster parent;
- a stepparent;
- a custodian of a legal ward;
- in loco parentis over such an individual; or
- actively seeking legal custody or adoption of such an individual.

The Executive Order authorized the OPM to develop guidance on the provisions of this Order.

For complaints of discrimination based on sexual orientation or status as a parent, Executive Order 13087, Executive Order 13152 and the Civil Service Reform Act provide protection. The Cabinet level agencies also have issued policy settlements prohibiting discrimination based on sexual orientation. In addition, some agencies have developed parallel EEO complaint procedures allowing employees to file EEO complaints based on sexual orientation within their agencies. Employees should check with their agency to see if such a process exists. In addition, employees should check their respective collective bargaining agreements and their agency's negotiated grievance procedures to determine whether grievance procedures can be invoked to address the issue. Whether or not an agency has internal procedures to address allegations of discrimination based on sexual orientation, employees should consult the OPM's publication, Addressing Sexual Orientation Discrimination in Federal Civilian Employment, OWR-2S (June 1999). Employees should also contact the OSC at (202) 653-7188 or at <http://www.osc.gov> and or the MSPB at (202) 653-6772 or <http://www.mspb.gov> to determine whether they have a prohibited personnel practice complaint under 5 U.S.C. §2302(b)(10).

For more information, contact the EEO office at 337-531-1802.

**DO YOUR PART TO KEEP OUR EARTH
CLEAN!
EARTH DAY – APRIL 22ND**



ARTICLES FOR BULLETIN

If you have any suggestions on topics or issues that you would like addressed in future bulletins, please call **531-1847**.

Suggestions will be reviewed and addressed if at all possible.

// original signed//
DONALD R. MALLETT
Director, Civilian Personnel
Advisory Center

