

**Second Set of Qs and As on Transition**  
**Pay, Leave and Time/Attendance Administration**  
**Revised as of August 1, 2003**

**Pay**

1. What changes, if any, will occur in an employee's pay as a result of the transition?

There may be small differences in pay as a result of differences in tax calculation routines. More information will be provided once the parallel testing is completed.

The first parallel test is complete and the results are as follows:

**RETENTION ALLOWANCE** - There are four employees whose retention allowance is being reduced by DCPS due to the projected pay exceeding the Executive Level I annual pay limitation.

**OASDI and Medicare Deductions and Government Additives:** *Approximately 6000 employees will experience (plus or minus) \$.01 to \$.05 differences in OASDI and/or Medicare deduction the first pay cycle under DCPS. These differences are due to the "Self-Adjusting" technique utilized by DCSP for OASDI/Medicare.*

**STATE INCOME TAX DEDUCTIONS** - *The following list those states where differences of more than \$.05 are occurring.*

***MASSACHUSETTES:*** *18 employees – differences (plus or minus) \$.40 to \$13.90. Differences in computation (DOE does not factor retirement offsets).*

***MISSOURI:*** *22 employees – differences (plus or minus) \$1.00 to \$15.00 (tax routine differences in marital status handling).*

***ARIZONA:*** *24 employees – differences plus \$1.00 to \$51.00. Arizona taxes are base on a percentage of Federal Tax withholding. DOE does not take a percentage of Federal Tax Additional Withholdings.*

***NEW MEXICO*** – *164 employees (plus or minus) \$1.00 to \$55.00. DCPS uses Federal Exemptions claimed, DOE uses state exemptions claimed. Those employees whose state exemptions in DOE Pays are different from the Federal exemptions have differences.*

***UTAH*** – *6 employees (plus or minus) \$1.00 to \$6.00. DCPS uses Federal Exemptions claimed, DOE uses state exemptions claimed. Those employees whose*

*state exemptions in DOE Pays are different from the Federal exemptions have differences.*

***NORTH DAKOTA*** – 29 employees (plus or minus) \$1.00 to \$35.00. DCPS uses Federal Exemptions claimed, DOE uses state exemptions claimed. Those employees whose state exemptions in DOE Pays are different from the Federal exemptions have differences.

***NEW YORK*** – 15 employees (plus or minus) \$1.00 - \$16.00. Tax routine differences in marital status handling.

***OKLAHOMA*** – 36 employees (plus or minus) \$1.00 to \$15.00. DCPS uses Federal Exemptions claimed, DOE uses state exemptions claimed. Those employees whose state exemptions in DOE Pays are different from the Federal exemptions have differences.

***KENTUCKY*** – 11 employees (plus or minus) \$1.00 to \$8.00. Difference in withholding routines.

***COLORADO*** – 15 employees (plus or minus) \$1.00 to \$3.00. DCPS uses Federal Exemptions claimed, DOE uses state exemptions claimed. Those employees whose state exemptions in DOE Pays are different from the Federal exemptions have differences.

***INDIANNA*** – 13 employees (plus or minus) \$1.00 to \$4.00. Difference in withholding routines.

***ALABAMA*** – 4 employees (plus or minus) \$1.00 to \$24.00. Difference in withholding routines.

***ARKANSAS*** – 2 employees plus (\$10.00 to \$24.00). Difference in withholding routines.

***OREGON*** – 1 employee minus \$1.50. Oregon permits use of Federal or State exemptions to be used.

### **LOCAL TAXES TAX DEDUCTIONS**

***MCCRACKEN COUNTY, KENTUCKY*** - 12 employees plus \$.75 to \$2.00. DOE reduces wages by pre-tax Health Benefits, DCPS doe not.

***PHILADEPHIA, PA*** – 10 employees plus \$1.00 to \$9.00.

2. Will the payday change? If so, to what day of the week?

No, DOE's payday will not change. The payday will continue to be the second Thursday after the end of the pay period.

3. At the present time, there is a limit of 80 hours of compensatory time that may be carried forward per pay period. Will there be any change in that?

Yes, DOE's 80-hour limit on carryover of compensatory time is being rescinded. The revised policy will be reflected in the upcoming revision to the DOE directive on pay and leave administration (DOE O 322.1).

4. How long may employees keep compensatory time in their account before the compensatory time must be forfeited?

DOE is rescinding its current policy requiring that employees who are exempt from the Fair Labor Standards Act must forfeit compensatory time not used within 26 pay periods. The revised policy will be reflected in the upcoming revision to the DOE directive on pay and leave administration (DOE O 322.1). Employees who are unable to use compensatory time within 26 pay periods will be paid at the employees' overtime rate on the date the compensatory time was earned.

5. Will an administrative fee be charged for commercial garnishments? If so, what is the administrative fee and how is it determined?

Yes, 5 CFR 582.305(k) allows DFAS to assess an administrative fee against the employee to offset the administrative cost of executing a garnishment. In accordance with the statute, an analysis by DFAS determined that the administrative cost directly related to the processing of an order was determined to be \$77.76. This amount was rounded to \$75.00

6. DFAS will pay interest on back pay (when requested by the customer agency) on actions that are deliberately harmful or unwarranted against the employee. DFAS will not pay interest on administrative errors. What is considered an administrative error?

An administrative error refers to a mistake on the part of someone who is responsible for initiating, processing, or approving personnel actions or failure to act on a timely basis. One example of an administrative error is a delay in initiating a within-grade increase in a timely manner. Another example is an incorrect calculation of pay. An administrative error is different from an unwarranted action, which is an inappropriate decision that has been processed as a personnel action and resulted in the withdrawal or reduction of all or part of the employee's pay, allowances or differentials. An example of an unwarranted action would be a suspension that is overturned by court or other third-party action based on the merits of the case.

## Leave and Time/Attendance

1. Will annual leave still be “available” at the beginning of a leave year? How will it be shown on a leave and earning statement?

Yes, DOE will maintain the current policy of allowing employees to use annual leave that has not yet been accrued within the leave year. However, the DFAS leave and earnings statements (which will be used by DOE) would not reflect “available” leave balances but would reflect “negative” leave balances if unaccrued leave were used. Also see Q and A number 10 below.

2. Does that mean that a leave-approving official can deny a leave request if an employee has not “accrued” the annual leave requested?

No. Leave approving officials are expected to continue the current practice that bases leave approval on workplace needs and agency mission—not on an employee’s leave accrual. They are reminded that advancing sick leave may require a multi-step process, subject to local rules, and that availability of annual leave is limited by what may be accrued in the current leave year.

3. How will the leave transfer program be administered under DFAS?

DFAS will accommodate DOE requirements for the donated leave program.

4. Will there be any changes in time and attendance codes? If so, what are they?

Yes, training will be provided on the new codes for recording time and attendance. Additional plans include posting a crosswalk for the codes on the payroll transition web site.

5. In this new system, will employees be expected to record their own time and attendance? How will they be trained?

Only those employees in DOE organizations that currently provide for employees to record their time will be expected to record their own time in the new time and attendance system initially. DOE will continue to utilize timekeepers for all other employees.

Training will be provided for Payroll Liaisons and Energy Time and Attendance Coordinators at the following sites: DOE Headquarters (Germantown and Forrestal locations); NETL, Pittsburgh, PA; WAPA, Lakewood, CO; and Albuquerque, NM. In addition, the option of recording a training sessions is being explored. See section on web site, “New Time & Attendance System - Automated Time, Attendance and Production System

(ATAAPS)” for more information. Timekeepers will train employees that will be expected to record their own time.

6. In this new system, will employees be requesting leave electronically? How would that work?

No, the procedures for requesting leave remain the same.

7. How can/will union “official time” be recorded?

Union time for regular or premium hours is recorded with the following new codes: BA – Negotiations; BD – Labor Management Relations; BK – Grievance and Appeals.

8. Will ATAAPS differentiate/record Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) and other family-friendly type leave?

Yes. DFAS does have new codes that are specific for FMLA and other family-friendly types of leave. Timekeepers will receive special instructions on applying the new codes.

Please remember that when an employee invokes the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), the employee may use either annual leave, sick leave or leave without pay depending on the situation and the preferences of the employee. Other family-friendly leave situations only involve sick leave. More information on these types of absence and leave may be found in the DOE Handbook on Leave and Absence at <http://www.ma.mbe.doe.gov/pers/handbook.pdf>

9. Who has access to changing hours reported in ATAAPS?

Only timekeepers, the database administrator, and an employee who records his/her own time can change time in ATAAPS. Certifying officials may not change hours but they can request that timekeepers change hours, just as they can do now.

10. Will I still be able to use advanced annual leave? Advanced sick leave?

Advanced leave may be used at the discretion of the Department of Energy.

11. I took leave on the last day of the pay period and did not report it until after the pay period closed. Now my leave balances are wrong. How do I take care of this?

Your Customer Service Representative will notify Defense Finance and Accounting Service who will adjust the leave balance(s) accordingly.

12. Upon transfer to Defense Finance and Accounting Service for payroll services, what will happen to my Thrift Savings Plan (TSP)? Will I need to submit a new election form?

No, your TSP information will transfer.

13. Regarding the automatic payroll deductions for my TSP Loan, will I have to notify the TSP Service Office of the change in payroll providers?

No.

14. What will happen with my leave balances upon transfer to Defense Finance and Accounting Service for payroll services? Can I carryover my available leave to Defense Finance and Accounting Service?

Leave balances will transfer, however year to date earnings and usage will not.

15. Will my Leave and Earnings Statement from Defense Finance and Accounting Service reflect my current annual leave balance plus the annual leave available for me to accrue through the end of the leave year?

No but your Use-or-Lose annual leave balance will reflect the amount of annual leave available for remainder of the year.

16. Who will produce my 2003 W-2 and/or 1099, and whom do I call if I have questions regarding these documents?

Department of Energy will produce a W-2 for the earnings prior to conversion to the new system in August 2003. Earnings for the remainder of the year will be reflected on the W-2 produced by the Defense Finance and Accounting Service. Any questions will be referred to your Customer Service Representative.

17. Who will produce my 2004 W-2 and/or 1099, and whom do I call with questions?

The Defense Finance and Accounting Service will produce the 2004 W-2. Any questions should be referred to your Customer Service Representative.