

THE FORT
BELVOIR
CIVILIAN
PERSONNEL
ADVISORY
CENTER

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Award Winner

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VOLUME 1, ISSUE 3

JUNE 1, 2008



Ft A.P. Hill Commander Lt. Col. Michael S. Graese (second from left), along with one of the installation's 2007 employees of the year Judy Collins and the installation's longest serving employee James Coleman, accept the first place trophy and \$2 million check from Army Vice Chief of Staff Gen. Richard A. Cody (left) and Maj. Gen. John A. Macdonald, Installation Management Command Deputy Commander as the winner of the Army Chief of Staff, Army Communities of Excellence Award for 2008!

In an acceptance speech rendered by Lt Col Graese, he declared that Ft AP Hill's goal was not only to meet, but to exceed the expectations of the Warrior Units coming to train before going into harm's way.

Excerpts from his speech: "They deserve our best, every day. We want them to leave certain that they are best prepared to go forth and execute their mission. Supporting diverse units from every branch of the Armed Forces, plus many federal and state agencies, requires a creative and professional team, a team that can juggle many critical priorities simultaneously as they work through the complexities associated with being, essentially, the most "purple" training destination on the East Coast.

Every Fort A.P. Hill team member, no matter what he or she does in making this

installation run, takes Warrior success personally. Everyone understands that they have a personal role to play in attaining our vision statement. We were confident this clarity of purpose, this almost single-minded commitment to Warrior success, would shine through to our Army Community of Excellence site visit examiners." . The Human Resource Specialists at the Fort Belvoir CPAC are proud to serve the Fort AP Hill Warrior community and congratulate Lt Col Graese and his team dedicated to excellence in support of the 21st Century Warrior!



TRAINING NEWS YOU CAN USE



New Training Form

The Standard Form (SF) 182 has replaced the DD Form 1556. Please use the SF-182, which is the Request, Authorization, Agreement and Certification for Training Form, for all training previously documented on the DD Form 1556.

Cancellation Policy

If you have to cancel a training class, for any reason, please notify the Human Resources Development (HRD) Office 2 weeks prior to the class start date. Failure to do so will result in billing charges to the respective organization. Substitutions are permitted up to the start of the class. ***PLEASE NOTE: No shows will be billed.***

Training Classes

Need to brush up on your computer skills? Or are you planning for pre retirement? Or would you like to improve your business skills? The HRD Office is here to help! We offer Microsoft Excel, PowerPoint, Access, Project, and Visio classes to help you improve your Microsoft Office computer skills. We offer Pre Retirement Planning seminars for both CSRS and FERS employees. Also, we offer classes to improve your business skills, such as Professional Writing, Team Building, Effective Presentations, Constructive Conflict Resolution, and more. Check out the FY08 Training Schedule online at Fort Belvoir Home Page (<http://www.belvoir.army.mil>) and click on *Civilian Personnel*, then click on *FY08 Schedule of On-Site Training*.

Civilian Education System (CES)

Have you heard about the Army's new leader development program? It is called the Civilian Education System (CES). It includes four courses offered for Army Civilians—Foundation, Basic, Intermediate, and Advanced. A number of CES courses are taught here at Fort Belvoir. If you would like more information about CES courses, please visit the Army Management Staff College (AMSC) web site at (<http://www.amsc.belvoir.army.mil>)

TRAINING OFFERINGS

JUNE 2008						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2	3 Introduction to Access	4 Intermediate Access Trng	5 Advanced Access Trng	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16 Professional Writing \$225	17 Pre-Retirement Planning	18	19 Intro to VISIO	20 Advanced VISIO	21
				CSRS/CSRS Offset \$250		
	CPAC BROWN BAG SESSIONS 11- 1 PM					
22	23	24 TEAM BUILDING \$225	25	26	27	28
		NSPS for employee	NSPS for Supervisors			
29	30					

Class participation dictates whether a class will be conducted. You can confirm scheduling at 703-704-3005.

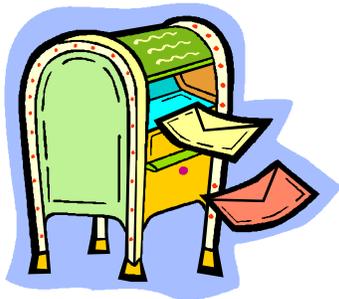
Man's mind, once stretched by a new idea, never regains its original dimensions.
~Oliver Wendell Holmes

Violence in the Workplace Prevention

Larry Chavez, founder of **Critical Incident Associates** in Sacramento, Calif., and a former hostage negotiator, says there are 10 things employers can do to prevent workplace violence:

1. **Place a high value on human dignity** and emphasize, by example, respect for all people without regard to rank or position.
2. **Initiate a zero-tolerance policy** for all acts or threats of violence.
3. **Promote violence prevention through formal training**, acknowledging that awareness and prevention are the most ethical, humane and effective means of addressing violence.
4. **Establish procedures for the timely reporting** of violent acts or threats.
5. **Thoroughly investigate and document all violent acts** and take immediate and appropriate action.
6. **Establish a representative team for assessing threats & making recommendations** for future violence-prevention efforts.

ABC-C New Mailing Address



The ABC-C has a new mailing address. No, they are not moving, but rather have found a better and quicker way to provide quality service to you.

Effective immediately they will receive your correspondence directly in their office, 303 Marshall Avenue, Fort Riley, KS 66442-5004, instead of at a consolidated mail room. Don't worry if you have mailed something to their old address because they will still receive it. This is just another example of ABC's efforts to improve customer service!

7. **Employ thorough hiring practices** as the first line of defense against internal violence.
8. **Offer & provide professional assistance** to employees in need of counseling.
9. **Attain the highest practical level of physical security.**
10. **Constantly evaluate violence-prevention efforts**, retaining aspects that were successful and eliminating those that were not.

For more information on the Violence in the Workplace Prevention Program contact Ardine Marie at 703-704-3011.

CRONE CORNER *SPECIAL EDITION*

The Family and Medical Leave Act

The Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) is an important benefit available to federal employees when they or certain family members become seriously ill. The rules and regulations governing FMLA can be confusing. This article will hopefully cut through some of that confusion so managers and employees can both understand their respective rights and obligations when it comes to FMLA.

Under FMLA most employees who have at least one year of federal service are entitled to a total of 12 administrative workweeks of leave in a given 12 month period. Employees may use annual leave, sick leave, leave without pay, or a combination of the three for leave taken under the FMLA. Upon return from FMLA leave, an employee must be returned to the same or equivalent position with the same benefits, pay status, and other terms and conditions of employment. The 12 weeks of leave under FMLA can be used for the following purposes:

- the birth of a son or daughter of the employee and the care of such son or daughter;
- the placement of a son or daughter with the employee for adoption or foster care;
- the care of the employee's spouse, son, daughter, or parent of the employee (does not include in-laws) who has a serious health condition; or
- for a serious health condition of the employee that makes the employee unable to perform the essential functions of his or her position.

Employees and managers should also be aware that FMLA leave may also be used intermittently. For example, an employee who is receiving chemotherapy treatments on a weekly basis may invoke FMLA leave to cover the time spent for treatment and for recovery from treatment.

FMLA leave is for serious health conditions. It is not for routine medical appointments or routine illnesses. "Serious health condition" is defined as an illness, injury, impairment, or physical or mental condition that involves inpatient care in a hospital, hospice, or residential medical care facility, including any period of incapacity or any subsequent treatment in connection with such inpatient care; or continuing treatment by a health care provider that includes but is not limited to examinations to determine if there is a serious health condition and evaluations of such conditions if the examinations or evaluations determine that a serious health condition exists.

Employees must give notice of their intent to take leave under the FMLA. This notice must be provided no sooner than 30 days from the date leave is to begin, or in emergency situations, notice should be given to the employee's supervisor as soon as practicable. Employees generally should give notice of their intent to take leave under the FMLA by marking the appropriate block in section 5 of OPF Form 71, Request for Leave or Approved Absence. Once an employee gives notice of their intent to take FMLA leave, supervisors are entitled to, and should request, medical certification to support an employee's request for leave under FMLA for a serious health condition of the employee or covered family member of the employee. Employees can use Form WH-380, Certification of Health Care Provider, to support the request. Form WH-380 can be found at the following <http://www.dol.gov/esa/regs/compliance/whd/fmla/wh380.pdf>.

Once a supervisor has requested medical certification from an employee, the employee has 15 days to provide the documentation to the supervisor. That time period can be extended up to 30 days by the supervisor when the employee provides reasonable justification for an extension.

If you have questions regarding FMLA entitlements, please contact your servicing CPAC Specialist. To find out more information regarding FMLA or other leave entitlements, go to <https://www.opm.gov/oca/>



THE EAGLE

Here's a scenario with which you might be familiar. You're traveling for the government and take a flight to your destination. You pick up a rental car at the airport and hit the road to arrive at your hotel in time to check in and register for a conference. You go to dinner with other conference attendees, and while your car is parked on the street during dinner, someone has side-swiped it and caused minor damage to the left rear quarter panel and bumper. When you turn the car in, the rental car company wants you to pay for the damage. What do you do?

This Legal Eagle is to inform you, the government traveler, how to limit personal and governmental liability should rental vehicle damage occur.

First, choose a rental company that has signed a U.S Government Car Rental Agreement with the Surface Deployment & Distribution Command (SDDC). A list of participating rental companies can be found at <http://www.sddc.army.mil/sddc/Content/Pub/660//cbcn660.pdf>. Also check to verify that the location you are renting from is a participating location to the Agreement.

Next, be sure to authenticate your official travel status with the rental company by presenting travel orders or by using a Government credit card. In addition, note any other authorized users on the rental agreement. While this is not required by the SDDC Agreement, it will help to notify the rental company that the SDDC Agreement applies to the rental.

Regardless of whether the rental is covered under a SDDC Agreement, always rent your TDY vehicle using your government credit card. Under the credit card agreement between the Government and Bank of America (and any future contractor), insurance coverage may exist to protect the government traveler. This coverage is available in the United States and most foreign countries, although vehicles rented in Israel, Jamaica, or Ireland are not covered. The term of the rental can be for no longer than 31 days and coverage does not apply to vehicles that hold more than eight passengers. Call 1-800-VISA-9111 (1-800-847-2911) before travel to determine whether the VISA Auto Rental Collision Damage Waiver Program

will apply. Under most circumstances, you should decline insurance coverage offered by the rental company when using a government travel card.

If damage to your TDY rental vehicle occurs and the rental is under a SDDC Agreement, contact the rental company. Rental companies that have signed an agreement with SDDC have contracted to bear the **entire** risk of damage or loss to a rental vehicle used for official business by government travelers. Determine what documentation the rental company requires and do your best to comply. If the damage is the result of an accident, the government traveler should also notify the police and obtain a police report. Government travelers should be mindful that this liability is (of course) subject to certain exclusions. Damage that occurs to rental vehicles due to illegal activity, willful misconduct of the driver, operation of the vehicle off-road or across international boundaries without authorization, or pushing/towing another vehicle is not covered.

If damage to your TDY rental vehicle occurs and the rental is covered under the Government's agreement with Bank of America (regardless of whether a SDDC Agreement applies), notify Bank of America. Notification must be given within 20 days. Then, follow the requirements for filing a claim set forth in Bank of America's "Your Guide to Benefits Package."

If damage to your TDY rental vehicle occurs and the rental is not covered under either a SDDC Agreement or a government credit card, report the damage to your supervisor. For damage occurring within the scope of your employment, the bill may be paid from organizational TDY funds. Your supervisor should prepare a statement documenting your scope of employment at the time of the incident. When funds are available for reimbursement, your organization may then forward the claim and all documents to the Claims Office for adjudication. For damage occurring outside the scope of your employment (e.g., personal use of the rental vehicle), the Government is not liable and you should contact your personal insurance carrier.

Compliments of the Ft Belvoir SJA Office



FECA Does Not Afford "Blanket" Coverage for Every Injury or Illness Occurring During Travel or TDY Status.

The Federal Employees' Compensation Act (FECA) covers an employee 24 hours a day while he/she is on travel status, a temporary duty assignment (TDY), or a special mission. However, the compensability of any specific injury or illness claim depends on whether the employee was engaged in activities essential, or incidental to, the official employment duties at the time of occurrence. A traveling employee is not covered when he/she deviates from the normal affairs of the trip. Injuries occurring during the course of personal errands and recreational activities are generally not compensable. Some

examples: lifting weights at the hotel gym, jogging, sightseeing, shopping, and visiting family members. Conversely, activities reasonably incidental to the official employment duties are generally compensable. Some examples: injuries that arise out of the necessity of sleeping in hotels or eating in restaurants. All claims filed for injury or illness that occur during travel or TDY status must be supported by a copy of the employee's official orders. For more information on Worker's Compensation Program, please contact Cisy Newman at 703-704-3023.



Obverse



Reverse and Lapel Button

****NEW**** *Medal for the Global War on Terrorism*

The Secretary of Defense Medal for the Global War on Terrorism (GWOT), was created to recognize and honor the contributions of the civilian workforce in direct support of military members engaged in operations to combat terrorism. Fourteen DoD civilians who had deployed in support of Operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom became the first to receive the medal during the unveiling ceremony. An estimated **16,000 civilians** are eligible for the medal.

The criteria for the medal is aligned as closely as practicable with that of the GWOT Expeditionary Medal awarded to military members. The medal is an entitlement that may be awarded to civilian employees of DoD who on or after September 11, 2001, participated abroad in direct support of a US military GWOT operation in a location designated as an area of

eligibility for that operation.

Employees must be engaged in direct support for 30 consecutive days, 60 nonconsecutive days, or regardless of time, be killed or medically evacuated from the area of eligibility while providing direct support in the designated operation and location. The employee must actually be deployed to the area of eligibility to qualify for the medal.

Authority has been delegated to the Component Heads to approve and administer the medal for their respective employees. The medals are available through the Defense Supply System, MSN 8455-01-545-7149. Questions regarding eligibility for the medal should be referred to the CPAC Labor and Employee Relations Division by contacting Ardine Marie 703-704-3011 or ardine.marie@us.army.mil.

Reference Checks

Managers and potential job applicants almost unanimously agree that the federal hiring process takes too long. In the 21st Century Global Hiring Market top candidates will no longer wait months to hear if they have been selected. To help our serviced organizations remain competitive in this very fluid hiring environment we thought it would be a great idea to give you a snap shot of the hiring process and offer some hiring tips that may be useful to the manager or supervisor attempting to fill a position. Although the clock starts ticking as soon as a job vacancy closes. There is a lot going on behind the scenes to make the announcement possible and even more after a candidate has been selected. Over the next several months we will attempt to define those process for you and hopefully make the hiring process a little less painful and help to ensure you are able to hire qualified candidates while honoring the merit systems principles and all applicable laws, rules and regulations governing federal hiring process.

Reference checking is an objective evaluation of an applicant's past job performance based on information collected from key individuals (e.g., supervisors, peers, subordinates) who have known and worked with the applicant. Reference checking is primarily used to:

- Verify the accuracy of information given by job applicants through other selection processes (e.g., résumés, occupational questionnaires, interviews)
- Predict the success of job applicants by comparing their experience to the competencies required by the job
- Uncover background information on applicants that may not have been identified by other selection procedures

Job applicants may attempt to enhance their chances of obtaining a job offer by distorting their training and work history information. While resumes summarize what applicants claim to have accomplished, reference checking is meant to assess how well those claims are backed up by others. Verifying critical employment information can significantly cut down on selection errors. Information provided by former peers, direct reports, and supervisors can also be used to forecast how applicants will perform in the job being filled.

As a practical matter, reference checking is usually conducted near the end of the selection process after the field of applicants has been narrowed to only a few competitors. Most reference checks are conducted by phone. Compared to written requests, phone interviews allow the checker to collect reference data immediately and to probe for more detailed information when clarification is needed. Phone interviews also require less time and effort on the part of the contact person and allow for more candid responses about applicants.

Reference checking has been shown to be a useful predictor of job performance (as measured by supervisory ratings), training success, promotion potential, and employee turnover. As with employment interviews, adding structure to the reference checking process can greatly enhance its validity and usefulness as an employee selection procedure. Strategies for structuring reference checking include asking applicants the same set of questions, and providing interviewers with standardized data collection and rating procedures.

Conducting reference checks can reduce the risk of lawsuits for negligent hiring – the failure to exercise reasonable care when selecting new employees. Providing accurate information when called as a reference for a former employee is equally important, but many employers refuse to give negative information about former employees, fearing a lawsuit for defamation. This is generally not deemed a serious problem for Federal reference providers and reference checkers because of legal protections provided under the Federal Tort Claims Act.

Considerations:

- **Validity**—Reference checks are useful for predicting applicant job performance, better than years of education or job experience.
- **Administration Method** – Reference checks are typically collected by phone using a structured interview format. Written requests for work histories typically result in low response rates and less useful information.
- **Subgroup Differences** – Generally little or no score differences are found between men and women or applicants of different races. Employers should be especially careful to avoid asking questions not directly related to the job.
- **Development Costs** – Costs are generally low and depend on the complexity of the job, the number of questions needed, competencies measured, and development and administration of checker/ interviewer training.
- **Administration Costs** – Generally inexpensive, structured telephone reference checks take about 20 minutes to conduct per contact, a minimum of three contacts is recommended.
- **Utility/Return On Investment** – Used properly, reference checks can reduce selection errors and enhance the quality of new hires at a minimal cost to the agency.

Sources of Additional Guidance

- **Testing and Assessment: An Employer's Guide to Good Practices.** The U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) developed this document to assist managers and human resource professionals in making assessment-related decisions. This resource is available at www.onetcenter.org/guides.html
- **Uniform Guidelines on Employee Selection Procedures (29 CFR Part 1607).** The Guidelines provide a set of principles for determining proper test use and selection procedures, covering topics such as test fairness and adverse impact. You can find the Guidelines (and other Government documents related to the Guidelines) at www.uniformguidelines.com/

There is no one template for checking references. The reference checking process in each hiring decision should be guided by the information needed. This begins with an understanding of which competencies are needed for the job, and how information about the applicant's abilities will be gathered using different assessments.

Reference checking has an important role to play in the Federal hiring process. It can be more than a formality conducted by administrative staff. It can be more than a casual, unstructured phone conversation between supervisors. It should certainly not be an illegal and inappropriate exchange of gossip about unsuspecting applicants. Reference checking can improve the quality of the Federal workforce by reducing the number of unqualified, unscrupulous, and otherwise unsuitable applicants whose liabilities escaped detection during the earlier phases of the hiring process. If reference checking is to reach this potential, it will require cooperation among Federal hiring officials, applicants for Federal employment, and reference providers. The MSPB recommends that agency policy makers, human resources professionals, hiring officials, job applicants, and former supervisors of these applicants all play their roles to make reference checking work.

"Brown Bag" Lunch Sessions



JUNE 16-20, 2008

1100-1300 HRS

Issues that will be addressed:

- ◆ Monday
 - Leave Administration
- ◆ Tuesday
 - Conduct & Discipline
- ◆ Wednesday
 - Union Issues
- ◆ Thursday
 - Performance Issues
- ◆ Friday
 - Workers' Compensation

The Ft Belvoir, CPAC is pleased to offer this opportunity for Appropriated Funded (AF) employees to, at their leisure, visit the CPAC to speak directly with a subject matter expert on certain Human Resource topics. You are encouraged to stop by anytime during the lunch hour to engage a HR Specialist on topic specific personnel issues, network, or just build on the knowledge you already have. This event is open to Commanders, managers, supervisors, and non-supervisory personnel that want advice on personnel issues or clarification on current policies and regulations. So, come with your questions and bring your lunch! We are eager to assist you in any way we can. We hope to offer this program bi-monthly, participation permitting.

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