



# CPMS EXPRESS

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April 2011

## Surveys Are Coming

This spring, some Department of Defense (DoD) employees will be asked to fill out two major employee attitude surveys: One is a Government-wide survey from the United States Office of Personnel Management (OPM) and the other a DoD-only form administered by the Defense Manpower Data Center (DMDC). These surveys focus on key agency mission objectives, as well as general workplace issues such as agency communication, development opportunities, and satisfaction with the job, supervisors and organization.

### **Why Surveys?**

Why do agency senior leaders go to the trouble and expense to conduct surveys? Survey results have a substantial impact on the organization, so a great deal of effort goes into analysis and interpretation of survey results. Some DoD Components specify certain survey results in their annual plans as measures (metrics) of organizational success. Year-to-year trends in job and organizational satisfaction are carefully watched; and employee engagement is believed to be closely related to employee productivity and longevity. Survey results are shared with Congress and the Office of Management and Budget (OMB).

The issues covered in these surveys are critical to the quality of our work life. So it is important that we get an accurate assessment, which means as many people as possible filling out the survey. Remember, since this is officially part of your job, you can answer the survey on the clock and use government equipment. Also, there is a place for comments, so if there are other issues that you think make a difference, you will have the opportunity to speak up and perhaps add an item for future surveys.

### **Why Some Employees Might Not Answer**

Although some employees may be reluctant to complete the surveys because of concerns that their answers might not be kept confidential, steps are taken to maintain total confidentiality. The Employee Viewpoint Survey from OPM is highly confidential. Once the sample has been selected, names and Social Security Numbers are removed from the data. Even the email addresses are only used to contact employees and not linked with the survey answers.

### **How Surveys Protect Your Privacy**

The Status of Forces of DoD Civilian Employees, conducted by DMDC, is handled slightly differently. There is an identification code attached to each questionnaire, but staff members who analyze the surveys have no access to the identities of employees, and the employees who send out invitations don't see the survey answers. DMDC has pledged to an independent review board that it will protect the privacy of survey responders.

### **What's Next?**

Sometimes it seems that employees get no feedback from surveys and answers appear to sink into a black hole. Communicating survey findings back to employees is important, and steps are being taken to improve that feedback. Results are available at <http://www.cpms.osd.mil/HRBITS/Surveyresults.aspx>

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## Long Term Care Open Season

OPM has announced an open season for the Federal Long Term Care Insurance Program. The open season will run from April 04, 2011, through June 24, 2011.

Same-sex domestic partners of Federal workers for the first time will be able to enroll in the program, which helps pay for the cost of care when participants need help with daily activities, or have a severe cognitive illness.

According to OPM, active Federal employees, their spouses and same-sex domestic partners who currently are not enrolled may apply under *abbreviated underwriting* rules and will have to provide only limited health information. Retirees and other qualified relatives will undergo a longer review of medical and health history in the application process known as full underwriting.

Long term care is care that you need if you can no longer perform everyday tasks (activities of daily living) by yourself due to a chronic illness, injury, disability or the aging process. Long term care includes the supervision you might need due to a severe cognitive impairment such as Alzheimer's disease.

Long term care is not intended to cure you. It is chronic care that you might need for the rest of your life. This care may span years and can be expensive depending on the type of care you need and location where that care is received. Long term care insurance is one way of helping to pay for these expenses. You will find additional information and instructions on how to apply on the long term care web site, [www.ltcfeds.com](http://www.ltcfeds.com).

Coverage will begin on the first day of the month after an application is approved, and premiums will be based on the enrollee's age and option selected, according to the notice.



The **Federal Long Term Care Insurance Program**

**OPEN SEASON**  
**April 4, 2011**  
**Through**  
**June 24, 2011**

## A New Look, More Information for the Hiring Reform Website!

The DoD Hiring Reform web site (<http://www.cpms.osd.mil/hiringreform/>) re-launched in February 2011 with a new, more user-friendly format and updated tools. Changes were made to better meet the needs of Hiring Managers, HR Professionals, and other interested parties.

The web site maintains a significant focus on Hiring Managers and HR Professionals, but a big change was the addition of a new Executives & Leaders section. Here, visitors find high level briefings, official memoranda, and templates for communicating Hiring Reform messages. Examples of documents in this section include the President's Memorandum on Hiring Reform, a Hiring Reform elevator speech, and a sample Hiring Reform executive memo.

The Hiring Manager section also received a significant overhaul. Updates include a simplified step-by-step structure and content aligned to the Hiring Manager's Toolkit, a set of products noted by OPM as a Government-wide best practice.

Other updates include:

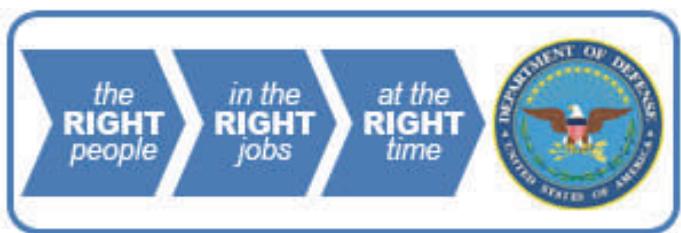
The HR Professionals section with guides on flexibilities, authorities, training, and certifications.

The Hiring Reform Overview section with a brief history of Hiring Reform, a news archive for DoD Hiring Reform updates, and crosslinks to Hiring Reform efforts both within DoD and the entire Federal Government.

New web site navigation with collapsible content sections and a sitemap for more direct access to all pages within the site in one place.

Emphasis throughout the web site on the importance of Hiring Manager and HR Professional involvement in the hiring process

We are proud to release the new DoD Hiring Reform web site (<http://www.cpms.osd.mil/hiringreform/>) to the public, and look forward to providing additional content and resources to serve the DoD Hiring community.





## Human Resources Practitioners and Equal Employment Opportunity Investigations

A DoD supervisor fails to articulate a reasonably specific explanation for his selection of an employee for promotion. Panel members for a selection cannot recall what specific instructions they were provided or by whom. The selection decision was based primarily on the interview, but no one developed any criteria to score the responses of the candidates or kept a copy of the interview notes. These are the types of situations which cause DoD management officials problems in Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) investigations regarding non-selection actions.

The Investigations and Resolutions Division (IRD) has the responsibility for investigating complaints of EEO discrimination for all of DoD's Components and Agencies. IRD processes approximately 3,000 requests for investigation per year. One of the fundamental lessons learned from conducting these investigations is the critical importance of the role played by HR practitioners in taking the personnel actions that are generally the primary issues in those complaints.

DoD managers and supervisors are very focused on their core missions. Sometimes they take for granted the steps necessary to promote and otherwise manage their employees. Who is the principal staff member for ensuring that managers take the day-to-day steps necessary to fulfill their EEO obligations in working with their employees? Is it the EEO practitioner? No, it is the HR practitioner. Too often investigators are finding situations in which the HR Staffing Specialist did not provide sufficient guidance to supervisors as they work through the sophisticated process of selecting among candidates for promotion. Management officials need help in identifying job-related evaluation factors, in developing criteria to assess an employee's background or performance in terms of those factors, in developing job-related interview questions, and in developing a set of criteria to evaluate and score the responses of candidates to those questions. The HR Staffing Specialist who provides technical support to management is generally interviewed in any EEO complaint involving non-selection. Some of the questions you may be asked include: What guidance (especially written) did you provide to management? Did you recommend that evaluation criteria be developed? Did you offer your assistance in developing the criteria? Did the process used in the promotion action at issue differ from others in the past? Be prepared to explain what first-hand knowledge you

have regarding the promotion or placement action.

When it comes to promoting employees, a proactive HR practitioner is a DoD manager's most valuable resource.

## Suitability and Security Reform

This article provides an update and situational awareness for the Human Resources community on the Security and Suitability Process Reform Strategic Framework document dated February 10, 2010. The Framework document was prepared in response to the Government Accountability Office (GAO) with recommendations by OMB, OPM, DoD, and Director of National Intelligence (DNI). The Strategic Framework document includes the goals that inform the efforts currently underway in DoD to fulfill the requirements set forth in Executive Order 13467.

As the owner of Suitability policy and procedures, the HR community will play a very important role in supporting this Joint Reform Effort. CPMS and Civilian Personnel Policy (CPP) are working closely with the DoD Security community to meet the seven goals identified in the Strategic Framework. The seven goals are (1) Reciprocity, (2) Security Clearance and Suitability Database, (3) Information Technology/End-to-End Automation, (4) Timeliness, (5) Security and Suitability Alignment, (6) Continuous Evaluation/Periodic Reinvestigation, and (7) Quality. There have been, and will continue to be, a flurry of activities to achieve these goals.

The activities underway in DoD to support Joint Reform involve policy, procedures, training, and information technology systems that implement requirements identified by OPM, the Suitability Executive Agent. Recently, OPM issued several proposed changes to 5 CFR 731 and 5 CFR 732 for comment on the Federal register. In addition, OPM has issued proposed changes to Federal investigative standards and forms for pre-decisional input as well. Comments from DoD are being coordinated through a single point of contact and provided to OPM. As final regulations and guidance are issued, DoD will continue to make the corresponding changes to policy, procedures, training and information technology systems supporting suitability. CPMS and CPP will be reaching out to the DoD HR community in support of Joint Reform.



## Accountability is the Next Big Thing in Federal Human Capital Management

The Accountability and Evaluation Division (AED) has established a collaboration space for HR practitioners addressing issues of Accountability within the Human Capital framework. A community of practice is a network of people interacting on an on-going basis to further develop knowledge and skill in a given area of practice. The AED site is titled “Human Capital Accountability Resource Community” or HC-ARC for short. The HC-ARC is intended to provide resources, guides, worksheets, best practices and contacts with colleagues throughout the DoD. The HC-ARC offers an opportunity to establish relationships with colleagues who understand each other’s perspectives and challenges. It also serves as a forum for sharing concepts and ideas with colleagues. Everyone will have the chance to contribute to the identification of best practices and resolutions to the challenges and needs of DoD as we build our world-class civilian workforce. The HC-ARC resides on the MAX collaboration homepage,

maintained by OMB.

A MAX account is available to anyone with a DoD Common Access Card and an email ending in .mil. To register for a MAX account, go to <https://max.omb.gov/maxportal>, complete registration, and then email [tawanah.edmondson@cpms.osd.mil](mailto:tawanah.edmondson@cpms.osd.mil) requesting access to the HC-ARC. While you’re on the MAX site, it’s worthwhile to take a look around. Have you ever wondered where to go to review the results of the Chief Human Capital Officers Manager Satisfaction Survey? OPM posts them quarterly on MAX. Do you know where to go for the latest on Federal Hiring Reform? Or even what the latest word is on Open Government? These are but a fraction of the topics that reside on the MAX Homepage. For assistance, contact [tawanah.edmondson@cpms.osd.mil](mailto:tawanah.edmondson@cpms.osd.mil) or phone (703) 696-5733.

### HR Personnel Excited About the HRPCF

Did you miss the brown bag session on the HR Professional Career Framework (HRPCF) web site?

DoD HR professionals from all over the US participated to learn about how the HRPCF can benefit them, including:

**Identifying current skills** through the automated [self assessment](#), which enables you to determine where you are and how to progress in your career. Answer 20 questions about your entire HR experience to identify your strengths and areas for development.

**Identifying educational opportunities** through the searchable [course database](#) for both DoD and non-DoD courses. Over 200 courses are available to DoD HR personnel. Courses are classroom-based, as well as online which provides the opportunity for you to develop your competencies even though there may not be available funding to attend a course in person.

**Identifying onsite certificate programs** through [DoD Certificate Programs](#) for HR-topics such as Compensation, Performance Management, and HRD Strategic Advisor. Details regarding requirements, registration, and more are all located on the web site.

Don't miss out! Check out the [HRPCF web site](#) and start progressing in your HR Career today!

### Self-Identification of Disability, Standard Form 256

Executive Order 13548 issued on July 26, 2010, directs Executive departments and agencies to improve their recruitment and hiring efforts to employ Federal workers with disabilities. In July 2010, OPM revised the definitions on Standard Form 256, The Self-Identification of Disability. Applicants and employees use the SF-256 to voluntarily identify their individual disability (previously called handicap) for data collection purposes only. The information collected will help agencies to develop retention strategies and measure how successful they have been with recruiting individuals under the hiring authorities for people with disabilities.

New employees are provided the opportunity to self identify their disability on the SF-256 and the information is updated into the Defense Civilian Personnel Data System (DCPDS).

Current employees are able to securely access and update their disability information thru DCPDS Self Service (My Biz) under “Update My Information”.

Any information that is captured on disability is protected from improper disclosure under the Privacy Act.

Below is a link to Self-Identification of Disability, Standard Form 256 Revised July 2010.

[Standard Form 256: Self-Identification of Disability](#)

# 2011 Worldwide Human Resources Conference

*Department of Defense*

Executive Management Training Center

*Southbridge, Massachusetts*

*Save the Date*  
July 18-21, 2011

