

GUIDE TO UNDERSTANDING YOUR NOTIFICATION OF PERSONNEL ACTION FORM, SF-50

The SF-50, Notification of Personnel Action Form is a very important document. It is your written documentation of a personnel action that affects your position or pay. Keep it with your records because it could be used to make employment, pay, and qualifications decisions about you in the future. It is your responsibility to read all the information on the front of your SF-50 and notify the Human Capital Team immediately if you notice an error.

This guide does not provide instructions for reviewing every block on your SF-50; the primary purpose of this guide is to assist you in reviewing those blocks that contain data that have a significant impact on your pay, position, employment benefits, and tenure. When reviewing your SF-50s, please review the data in the blocks described below as well as the instructions on the back of your SF-50. If you have further questions, please contact your servicing Human Capital Team.

- Blocks 1-3: Name/Social Security Number/Date of Birth - Verify the accuracy of this information.
- Block 4: Effective Date - This block indicates the effective date of the specific action described in block#5B.
- Block 5B: Nature of Action - This block indicates the type of action being taken, such as appointment, reassignment, promotion, within-grade increase, separation, award, etc.
- Block 15: Position Title & Number - This block indicates your position title - verify the accuracy of this information by comparing it with the title on your position description (a written description of your major duties and responsibilities). The two titles should match.
- Block 16: Pay Plan - Most employees are covered by the general schedule, (GS) pay system, which covers white collar positions.
- Block 17: Occupational Code - This code corresponds to the series for your position as

developed by the Office of Personnel Management. Verify the accuracy of this information by comparing it to the series code shown on your position description.

Block 18-20: Grade/Level/Step/Rate/Total Salary Award - Verify the accuracy of this information by comparing it to your job offer letter or other documentation you have received. Refer to the back of your SF-50 for further explanation.

Block 23: Veterans Preference- If you are a veteran, verify the accuracy of this information. If you are a veteran and your SF-50 does not reflect the appropriate code, provide the Human Resources staff with a DD-214 as proof of service.

Block 24: Tenure- This block indicates the tenure of your position. Codes are defined as follows:

Competitive service-Tenure 1: includes employees serving under career appointments who either have completed initial appointment probation or are not required to serve initial appointment probation.

Excepted service-Tenure 1: includes permanent employees whose appointments carry no restriction or condition such as conditional, indefinite, specific time limitation, or trial period.

Competitive service-Tenure 2: includes employees serving under career-conditional appointments, and under career appointments who are serving initial appointment probation.

Excepted service-Tenure 2: includes employees who are serving trial periods, or whose tenure is equivalent to career-conditional tenure in the competitive service in agencies that have that type of appointment (for example, excepted appointment-conditional).

Competitive service-Tenure 3: includes indefinite employees, employees under temporary appointments pending establishment of registers, employees under term appointments, employees in status quo, and employees under any other non-status non-temporary appointments.

Excepted service--Tenure group 3: includes employees whose tenure is indefinite; that is, without specific time limitation but not actually or potentially permanent, or with a specific time limitation of more than one year; also,

employees who, though currently under appointments limited to one year or less, complete one year of current continuous employment.

Block 27 FEGLI - This block indicates your life insurance coverage. If you have elected life insurance, verify the accuracy of the coverage shown.

Block 30 If your initial Federal employment was before 12/31/83, and you DID NOT elect to switch to the FERS retirement system, the code CSRS-1 should appear here. Employees on temporary appointments of one year or less are not eligible for retirement coverage and will have a remark indicating FICA-2 in this block. If you are a civil service retirement system offset employee, this block will have the code CSRS-Offset C.

Temporary limited employees are employees hired under a temporary limited appointment not to exceed 1 year. Unless the employee otherwise meets the requirements for coverage, the appointment is not covered by CSRS or FERS.

Civilian Retirement Prior to 1984 - Prior to 1984, the Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS) was the civilian retirement system for most Federal employees. The type of appointment generally determined if an employee had coverage under CSRS. CSRS coverage is documented on SF 50 with codes 1 and 6.

CSRS Interim - Pending the establishment of a new retirement system, Public Law 98-168 required CSRS employees subject to the 1983 amendments to begin making reduced contributions (1.3 percent of basic pay for most employees) to CSRS in conjunction with Social Security taxes. Individuals covered under CSRS and Social Security during these interim years (January 1, 1984, through December 31, 1986) are called CSRS Interim employees. Their retirement coverage is documented on SF 50 with codes C or E.

Block 31 Service Computation Date- This block either indicates when your Federal service began or is a date calculated to include all years, months, and days of prior creditable civilian and military service as if it was all served without a break. This date is used to determine your leave category.

Block 34 **Competitive service 1:** positions are positions subject to the civil service laws passed by Congress to ensure that applicants and employees receive fair and equal treatment in the hiring process. In the competitive service, individuals must go through a competitive hiring process (i.e., competitive examining) before being appointed which is open to all applicants. This process may consist of a written test, an

evaluation of the individual's education and experience, and/or an evaluation of other attributes necessary for successful performance in the position to be filled.

Excepted service 2: positions are any federal or civil service positions which are not in the competitive service or the Senior Executive service. Excepted service agencies set their own qualification requirements and are not subject to the appointment, pay, and classification rules in title 5, United States Code. However, they are subject to [veterans' preference](#).

There are a number of ways to be appointed into the excepted service such as appointed under an authority defined by the U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) as excepted (e.g., Veterans Recruitment Appointment) or being appointed to a position defined by OPM as excepted (e.g., Attorneys). More information can be found about excepted service in 5 U.S.C. 2103 and parts 213 and 302 of title 5 of the Code of Federal Regulations.

- Block 35 FLSA - This block indicates whether or not your position is covered under the Fair Labor Standards Act. Exempt employees are not covered by the minimum wage and overtime law. Nonexempt employees ARE covered and are entitled to overtime pay protections. Generally, managers, professionals, and most administrative personnel above GS-7 are exempt from coverage.
- Block 37 Bargaining Unit Status - If your position is not covered by a Bargaining Unit, the correct code is "8888". If your position is eligible for coverage but no unit currently exists, the correct code is "7777". If your position is both eligible and a bargaining unit exists, you will have a different numeric code. If you have questions regarding your bargaining unit code, please contact your Human Capital Team.
- Block 38 Duty Station (City, County, State or Overseas Location) – please verify the accuracy of the duty station listed for your position. For example, if your official duty station is Washington, D.C, this block should state Washington, D.C.