

Office of Personnel Management

§ 532.249

local wage area, showing the rates of pay for all grades and steps.

(2) The wage schedules shall have a single effective date for all employees in the wage area, determined by the lead agency in accordance with 5 U.S.C. 5344.

(d) The head of each agency having employees in the local wage area to whom the regular wage schedules apply shall authorize the application of the wage schedules issued under paragraph (c) of this section to those employees, effective on the date specified by the lead agency.

[46 FR 21344, Apr. 10, 1981. Redesignated at 55 FR 46141, Nov. 1, 1990]

§ 532.247 Wage change surveys.

(a) Wage change surveys shall be conducted in each wage area in years during which full-scale wage surveys are not conducted.

(b) Data shall be collected in wage change surveys only from establishments which participated in the preceding full-scale survey. Information concerning pay adjustments of general application in effect for jobs matched in each establishment which participated in the preceding full-scale survey shall be obtained.

(c) Data may be obtained in wage change surveys by telephone, mail, or personal visit. The chairperson of the local wage survey committee shall determine the manner in which establishments will be contacted for collection of data. Data may be collected by the local wage survey committee members or by data collectors appointed and assigned to two member teams in accordance with § 532.233(e) of this subpart.

(d) Wage change survey data may not be collected before the date ordered by the lead agency.

(e) The local wage survey committee shall review all wage change survey data collected and forward the data to the lead agency. Where appropriate, the committee shall also forward to the lead agency a report of unusual circumstances surrounding the survey.

(f) The lead agency shall review the wage change survey data and, if applicable, the report filed by the local wage survey committee.

(g)(1) The lead agency shall recompute the line selected under § 532.245(a)

of this subpart in the preceding full-scale survey using the wage change survey data and shall construct wage schedules therefrom in accordance with § 532.203 and, if appropriate, § 532.205 of this subpart.

(2) The lead agency shall consult with the agency wage committee in accordance with § 532.243 of this subpart.

(3) Records of this process shall be maintained in accordance with § 532.245(b) of this subpart.

(h) The wage schedules shall be issued and authorized in accordance with § 532.245 (c) and (d) of this subpart.

[46 FR 21344, Apr. 10, 1981. Redesignated at 55 FR 46141, Nov. 1, 1990; 58 FR 32274, June 9, 1993]

§ 532.249 Minimum rates for hard-to-fill positions.

(a) The lead agency for a wage area may establish the rate of the second, third, fourth, or fifth step of one or more grades of an occupation as the mandatory minimum rate or rates payable by any agency for the occupation at one or more locations within a wage area based on findings that:

(1) The hiring rates prevailing for an occupation in private sector establishments in the wage area are higher than the rate of the first step of the grade or grades of the occupation; and

(2) Federal installations and activities in the wage area are unable to recruit qualified employees at the rate of the first step of the grade or grades of the occupation.

(b) Any authorizations made under paragraph (a) of this section shall be indicated on the regular wage schedule for the wage area.

(c) Any authorizations made under paragraph (a) of this section shall be terminated with the issuance of a new regular wage schedule unless the conditions that warrant the authorizations continue and the new regular wage schedule continues that authorization.

(d) The lead agency, prior to terminating any authorization made under paragraph (a) of this section, shall require the appropriate official or officials at all installations or activities to which the authorization applies to

§ 532.251

5 CFR Ch. I (1-1-11 Edition)

discuss the termination with the appropriate official or officials of exclusively recognized employee organizations representing employees in the affected occupation. The agency officials shall report the results of these discussions to the lead agency.

(e) No employee shall have his/her pay reduced because of cancellation of an authorization made under paragraph (a) of this section.

[46 FR 21344, Apr. 10, 1981. Redesignated at 55 FR 46141, Nov. 1, 1990]

§ 532.251 Special rates.

(a) A lead agency, with the approval of OPM, may establish special rates for use within all or part of a wage area for a designated occupation or occupational specialization and grade, in lieu of rates on the regular schedule. OPM may authorize special rates to the extent it considers necessary to overcome existing or likely significant handicaps in the recruitment or retention of well-qualified personnel when these handicaps are due to any of the following circumstances:

(1) Rates of pay offered by private sector employers for an occupation or occupational specialization and grade are significantly higher than those paid by the Federal Government within the competitive labor market;

(2) The remoteness of the area or location involved; and

(3) Any other circumstances that OPM considers appropriate.

(b) In authorizing special rates, OPM shall consider—

(1) The number of existing or likely vacant positions and the length of time they have been vacant, including evidence to support the likelihood that a recruitment problem will develop if one does not already exist;

(2) The number of employees who have or are likely to quit, including the number quitting for higher pay positions and evidence to support the likelihood that employees will quit;

(3) The number of vacancies employing agencies tried to fill and the number of hires and offers made;

(4) The nature of the existing labor market;

(5) The degree to which employing agencies have considered or used in-

creased minimum rates for hard-to-fill positions;

(6) The degree to which employing agencies have considered relevant non-pay solutions to the staffing problem, such as conducting an aggressive recruiting program, using appropriate appointment authorities, redesigning jobs, establishing training programs, and improving working conditions;

(7) The impact of the staffing problem on employers' missions;

(8) The level of private sector rates paid for comparable positions; and

(9) As appropriate, the extent to which the use of unrestricted rates authorized under § 532.801 of this part was considered.

(c) In determining at what level to set special rates, OPM shall consider—

(1) The level of rates it believes necessary to recruit or retain an adequate number of well-qualified persons;

(2) The offsetting costs that will be incurred if special rates are not authorized; and

(3) The level of private sector rates paid for comparable positions.

(d) No one factor or combination of factors specified in paragraphs (b) or (c) of this section requires special rates to be established or to be adjusted to any given level. Each request to establish special rates shall be judged on its own merits, based on the extent to which it meets these factors. Increased minimum rates are not a prerequisite to the establishment of special rates under this section.

(e) Special rates shall be based on private sector wage data, or a percentage thereof, as specified by OPM at the time the special rates are authorized. The private sector data shall be calculated as a weighted average or payline, as appropriate. A single rate shall be used when this represents private sector practice, and five rates shall be used when rate ranges are used by the private sector. When a five-step rate range is used, the differentials between steps shall be set in accordance with § 532.203(f) of this subpart.

(f) Once approved by OPM, special rates may be adjusted by the lead agency on the same cycle as the applicable regular schedule to the extent deemed