



HRO News

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and we will give you all the
HR news you need to know*

December 04, 2012
Volume 3 Issue 12

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<http://www.29palms.marines.mil/Offices/CivilianHumanResources.aspx>



IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR EBIS USERS

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

P1 Important EBIS Info

Effective 1 October 2012, EBIS was placed behind a “.mil” web site to enhance the protection of Personally Identifiable Information. This means you must now use your Department of Defense (DoD) Common Access Card (CAC) to make your benefit elections. EBIS regrets the inconvenience this change causes; however, they are working to make EBIS CAC enabled, which will eliminate the requirement to enter a username and password.

P1 Changes Outside
Open Season

P2 Holiday Rules to
Remember

EBIS is an automated, secure, self-service Web application that allows employees to make health insurance, life insurance, and Thrift Savings Plan contribution elections, review general and personal benefits information, and calculate retirement estimates. You can access EBIS 24 hours a day, 7 days a week only from a DOD computer.

P3 How to Apply for
Voluntary Retirement

P3 Happy Holidays

Your EBIS password expires every 60 days (due to DoD security regulations) so you may need to reset it before you can make your election. If you separate from your position, your access to EBIS is discontinued.

Department of the Navy policy requires all civilian employees to make benefits elections electronically or by phone. Paper forms are not accepted for these transactions. If you need assistance with a transaction contact the [Benefits Line](#) (888-320-2917)



CHANGES OUTSIDE OPEN SEASON 2012



Benefits Open Season Ends December 10, 2012

Although open season ends in less than one week, if you experience a Qualifying Life Event (QLE) you may make changes to your benefits at any time of the year. A QLE can be a marriage, birth of a baby or loss of another coverage (i.e. losing coverage under a spouse’s plan). You can make changes to your plans 30 days prior to the event occurring and 60 days after the event occurs. The effective date of your new coverage will be the beginning of the next pay period after you make your changes.

If you are not sure if your QLE is covered, call the Benefits Line at 888-320-2917 and press option 4 to speak with a counselor.

HOLIDAY RULES TO REMEMBER

The holiday season is traditionally a time of parties, receptions, and exchanging gifts. However, even during the holiday season, the Standards of Conduct apply. To ensure you do not unwittingly violate the standards, a brief summary of the applicable rules is set out below. If you have any questions, please contact your local ethics counselor at SJA.



General Gift Rule:

DoD personnel may not accept gifts offered because of their official positions or offered by a “prohibited source,” unless an exception applies.

A prohibited source is anyone who:

- Seeks official action by DoD;
- Does business or seeks to do business with DoD;
- Has interests that may be substantially affected by the employee’s performance of duty; or
- Is an organization composed of members described above.

1. During holidays, which occur on an occasional basis, supervisors may accept gifts (other than cash) of \$10 or less from a subordinate.
2. Supervisors may accept food and refreshments shared in the office and may share in the expenses of an office party.
3. If a subordinate is invited to a social event at the supervisor’s residence, the subordinate may give the supervisor a hospitality gift of the type and value customarily given on such an occasion. Please note, there are no legal restrictions on gifts given to peers or subordinates, however, common sense (and good taste) should apply.

PARTIES, OPEN-HOUSES, AND RECEPTIONS:

DoD personnel may attend events where an exclusion or exceptions applies (see below).

Exceptions & Exclusions:

Gifts from Prohibited Source including DoD Contractors: DoD personnel may *not* accept gifts, including attendance at parties, open-houses, and receptions, from contractors and contractor personnel, event *unless* one of the following applies:

1. **Deminimus Gift:** DoD personnel may accept gifts (other than cash) not exceeding \$20, as long as the total amount of gifts that the personnel accepts from that source does not exceed \$50 for the year.
2. **Personal Gift:** DoD personnel may accept gifts, even from a contractor employee that are based on a bona fide personal relationship. (Such personal gifts are actually paid for by the contractor employee rather than the contractor.)
3. **Widely-Attended Gathering:** DoD personnel may generally attend an open-house or reception, and accept any gift of refreshments if it is a widely-attended gathering, and the employee’s supervisor determines that it is in the agency’s interest that the employee attend.
4. **Open to the Public:** DoD personnel may accept invitations (even from contractors) that are open to the public, all Government employees, or all military personnel.
5. **Gifts unrelated to DoD employment:** DoD personnel may accept invitations offered to a group or class that is not related to Government employment (For example, if the building owner where your office is located throws a reception for all of the tenants of the building).
6. **Modest Items of Food and Refreshments:** DoD personnel may food items consisting of soft drinks, coffee, pastries, or similar refreshments not constituting a meal may be accepted since they are not considered to be a gift.
7. **Gifts based on Outside Business or employment relationships:** DoD personnel may accept attendance at events which are solely based on outside business or other employment relationships. For example, a DoD employee’s spouse works at a Defense contractor. The DoD employee may accompany the spouse to the contractor’s holiday party since the invitation is to the spouse as an employee, and not to the DoD employee because of his or her position.



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HOW TO APPLY FOR VOLUNTARY RETIREMENT

If you want to apply for voluntary retirement the following information sheets will provide all the information that you need to get started:

- [How to Apply for CSRS Voluntary Retirement](#)
- [How to Apply for FERS Voluntary Retirement](#)

Contact the [Benefits Line](#) if you have any questions about retirement.

HAPPY HOLIDAYS FROM HRO!

