

Internal Controls for New Employee Orientation Information

The Federal Public Defender and all of the staff of the Defender Organization would like to welcome you to the staff. The Northern District of Texas Covers 100 counties with over 96,778 total square miles. The Federal Public Defender Organization (FPDO) for the Northern District of Texas is located in four offices, Dallas (headquarters), Fort Worth, Lubbock, and Amarillo; other court locations which are served by the FPDO are Abilene, San Angelo, and Wichita Falls. The different office locations and attorney and support staff names are listed on our external website, <http://txn.fd.org>. Other resource names and locations (AUSA, FBI, Judges for your office) will be provided to you once you start your first day of work and as applicable to your position.

A personnel manual, internal controls (only on internal human resource drive due to sensitive nature), leave and time and attendance system (ELMR) is located on the FPD external website. If you have any questions, please contact the administrative officer located in the Dallas Office. Our internal human resource drive will also offer information and site links to all the benefits programs, including our own J-Net site which is administered by the HR Division of the Administrative Office of the US Courts.

For attorney positions: The current fee for practicing before the United States District Court is \$201.00 and a applications to practice before the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Texas can be accessed at <http://www.txnd.uscourts.gov/> along with other pertinent information regarding court rules and other information. The current fee for practicing before the United States Court of Appeals for the 5th Circuit is \$226.00 (see waiver information from the site or Defender), and applications to practice before the 5th Circuit can be accessed at <http://www.ca5.uscourts.gov/>. The administrative officer or paralegal of the Dallas Office can also help in getting the applications to the attorney. Attorneys are responsible for paying the fees (if required) and filing the applicable applications.

Personnel Forms and Informational Items: The following are personnel forms that must be completed, with some exceptions depending on eligibility as noted. Most of the items are located on our external website: <http://txn.fd.org>, or **Administrative Officer will issue directly via e-mail to new staff person. Also, websites are included in reference to forms and information.**

When completing any forms, please do not have any mark outs or scratch outs.

- 1) Application for Judicial Branch Federal Employment & United States Courts Appointment, needs to be completed before or on first day of work. Please complete the self-id form also. Ignore attachment D New Appointment Applicants & Interviewees Worksheet. A notary public will need to verify your oath. {Forms AO78, AO78A, AO78B}
- 2) Employment Eligibility Verification (Form I-9), needs to be completed before or on the first

day of work, also will need items listed in section A, B, or C or as directed by the form.

3) W-4, needs to be completed before or on first day of work.

4) Direct Deposit Sign-Up Form, needs to be completed as soon as possible. {Form 1199a}

5) Life Insurance Election Form (FEGLI), needs to be completed within 60 days of entry on duty (for newly appointed staff who have not transferred in from another federal government position), ADP has instructions on enrolling into the program (see <https://judiciary.adp.com>) Federal employees are automatically enrolled in BASIC coverage. Also, a non-federal life insurance is offered by Federal First, see information on external website or www.federalfirst.com

6) Health Benefits Form (FEHB) needs to be completed within 60 days of entry on duty. Every year there is an open season in November through December by which an employee can choose to select another health care provider. **Coverage doesn't begin until 2nd pay period if submitted on time to ADP. ADP has instructions on enrolling into the FEHB (<https://judiciary.adp.com>) and www.opm.gov/insure has all the health brochures and other information on plans.**

7) Long Term Disability packet and forms offered through private insurance carrier with group rates to judiciary employees. Federal First has expanded disability program to allow all employees to enroll at any time on a guarantee acceptance basis, also participants are allowed to change plan options at any time, however contact Federal First if you have pre-existing condition(s) www.federalfirst.com or (800) 233-0438).

8) Long Term Care Insurance (vendor is CNA) is a new program and is offered through a private insurance carrier with group rates to judiciary employees. This program offers coverage for nursing home care and hospice care-please see information in reference to website below.

OPM (Office of Personnel Management) also offers Long Term Care for federal employees through Hartford and Metlife, although apparently a new employee must answer health questions for the OPM Long Term Care Policy. There is a 60 day enrollment policy for both Long Term Care Insurance carriers.

See external webpage (for CNA only) for details or visit their websites at www.ltcbenefits.com ([password: judiciaryltc](#)) or www.ltcfeds.com. {Forms on external webpage for CNA, visit website for OPM Info, have website info printed only with list of forms for OPM sponsored}. If you are interested in the OPM Long Term Care program, let the administrative officer know and can send forms or visit the website, www.ltcfeds.com

9) The Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) is one arm of the FERS (Federal Employees Retirement System) which includes an employee's FERS contribution, TSP, and social security. CSRS (Civil Service Retirement System) and FERS employees have different percentages by which to partake in the Thrift Savings Plan. In CY 2013, there will be no limits for contributions, except

that you are limited to IRS threshold of \$17,500 per that year. The Thrift Savings Summary Plan Booklet for Federal Employees explains the details of the plan and the various options that can be chosen. New employees with the May 2001 open season are now eligible to contribute to the TSP as soon as enrolled in the TSP, in fact the match also starts upon enrollment. If an employee has prior federal government service or is transferring from another federal government agency, the employee will be eligible to make contributions to their Thrift Savings Plan as soon as the employee's entrance on duty date and will receive the government matching contribution.

FERS: Get the full agency match — If you were hired or rehired on or after August 1, 2010 of this year, you were automatically enrolled in the TSP and are contributing 3% of your basic pay in the G (Government Fund) (unless you made another contribution election). Your agency matches your contribution dollar for dollar. To get the full agency match you must contribute 5% of your pay.

Update, once enrolled, there are no longer any open seasons, employees can change contributions up to the IRS limit for the year when needed, see www.tsp.gov for more information. The Thrift Savings Plan also has a program for catch-up contributions for employees 50 and over (form is TSP-1-C, current catch-up limit for 2013 is \$5,500). The Administrative Officer will provide the forms for both the regular Thrift Savings Plan enrollment and the Thrift Saving Plan Catch-Up Contribution Plan (now located on <http://txn.fd.org>). As of May 2012, a **Roth Savings Plan** will be offered also, refer to website for more information. Refer to the Thrift Savings website for additional informational items and forms, www.tsp.gov.

10) Flexible Benefit Program has three components 1) a premium payment plan, which allows enrollees to deduct the cost of their health insurance premiums from their gross salary before taxes are withheld; 2) a medical flexible spending account which allows payment of certain medical expenses not covered by a health insurance plan; and 3) a dependent care flexible spending account to pay for qualified dependent care expenses. The advantage of these flexible spending accounts is that all deductions up to maximum amount are taken from gross salary before federal, state (in most cases) and FICA taxes are computed. Website is <https://judiciary.adp.com>.

11) Designation of Beneficiary, **several different forms, for most will not need to complete if normal line of succession (for example if married and employee dies in position, benefit would go to spouse, then to children, etc.). All designation of beneficiary forms will be included so that you can examine. {All on external webpage, except Trust, will print if need}**

Here is a list of the beneficiary forms included: Life Insurance Beneficiary Form, SF 1152 Designation of Beneficiary Unpaid Compensation of Deceased Employee, SF 3102 Designation of Beneficiary for Federal Employee Retirement System (FERS), Designation of Beneficiary of Trusts for Life Insurance and or lump sum benefits payable upon the employees death under Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS) or Civil Service Retirement System(CSRS, an employee of the Federal Government before 1984). If new employee is eligible for Civil Service Retirement System, please inform the administrative officer, and beneficiary forms for the CSRS will be sent. A TSP-3 form (Thrift Savings Beneficiary Form is also enclosed), if you don't have a normal line of succession, you will need to complete and send to the address on the

instructions, also send a copy for your local personnel file (send to Administrative Officer in Dallas Office).

12) As of January 1, 2001, a **commuter benefit program** is being offered through the ADP administrator. The program is set up to cover costs of commuting to work specifically for public transportation costs and parking at work costs, on a pre-tax basis. This program is flexible and can be entered into or dropped at any time during a calendar year. You can also enroll at <https://judiciary.adp.com>.

13) As of Open Season 2007, employees are eligible to enroll in the Federal Employee Dental and Vision Insurance Program (**FEDVIP**). The Act directed the U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) to make supplemental dental and vision benefits available to Federal employees, annuitants, and their eligible family members. The Administrator will distribute literature on how to enroll by phone or website. Eligible individuals can enroll within 60 days after first becoming eligible as a new employee, a previously ineligible employee who transferred to a covered position, or a survivor annuitant, if not already covered under FEDVIP. Enrollment is also allowed within 60 days after returning to service following a break in service of at least 31 days; or within 60 days after a Qualifying Life Event (QLE) that allows enrollment. {Enrollment information is on the external webpage- to include on-line enrollment information, or visit www.benefeds.com for enrollment information} New employees are included as federal judicial employees.

14) Informational Guides included on the external website (<http://txn.fd.org>) unless given website or issued directly by administrative officer:

Health Benefit Brochures ([visit www.opm.gov](http://www.opm.gov))

Handout on FERS, Federal Employees Retirement System-if eligible for CSRS Retirement, please inform Administrative Officer

Handbook on FEGLI, Federal Employees Group Life Insurance ([visit www.opm.gov](http://www.opm.gov))

Summary of Thrift Savings Plan & Guide to TSP Investments (www.tsp.gov)

Code of Conduct for Federal Public Defender Employees

Personnel Manual of Federal Public Defender, Northern District of Texas

Position Description (in DOCs manual and issued by administrative officer)

Internet Use Policy-please read and sign, return to administrative officer (issued to new employee by administrative officer)

Guide to Federal Benefits Programs for New Federal Employees (also [visit https://judiciary.adp.com](https://judiciary.adp.com) for forms, online enrollment and information)

Appointment Information-Federal Public Defender Organization (issued by adm. officer)

Military Service Credit for Retirement Purposes (will be issued by Adm. Officer if prior service in military, will need DD 214)

Employee Assistance Program

Calendar Year Pay Adjustments (issued by AO US Courts)

Bi-weekly pay periods (includes list of Holidays)

Information on Federal Employee Dental and Vision Insurance Program (FEDVIP) ([visit www.benefeds.com](http://www.benefeds.com))

Timekeeper and Case Management Requirements for Attorneys, Investigators, Research and Writing Specialists, and Paralegals. Since October 1, 1994, Federal Defender Organizations have been required to keep records of, and render reports of time spent on case-related and non-case related activities. (See 18 U.S.C. §3006A(g)(2)(A). Timekeeping entry and reporting are facilitated by an internal defender-developed computer program, called Defenderdata timekeeper. Attorneys, Investigators, Research and Writing Specialists, and Paralegals will be given a webinar and online training in reference to case management and timekeeper. Attorneys, Investigators, Research and Writing Specialists, and Paralegals will be responsible for accurately reporting their time within the Defenderdata timekeeper computer data base (the computer program is window-based driven and it is easy to enter data). Other training in reference to case file folders, the FPD's case numbering system will be provided to attorneys from their assigned legal assistant and/or paralegal.