

U.S. Office of Personnel Management  
Operating Manual Update

# The Guide to Processing Personnel Actions

Update 76

## ***Notice***

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**Distribution:** Operating Manual, The Guide to Processing Personnel Actions

U.S. Office of Personnel Management

**Summary of Changes, Chapter 29 (Update 76)**

Removed Pages	Identification	Insert Page	Explanation of Changes
29-1 thru 29-9	N/A	1 thru 11	Chapter 29, in its' entirety has been updated, to include: (1) reformatted page numbers from 29-1, 29-2, 29-3, etc., to new format of 1,2,3, etc.; (2) added a footnote to each page to reflect Chapter number and title of guide; (3) reformatted text from column to paragraph to meet 508 compliance requirements; (4) distinguished new text changes and/or additions in <b>&gt;dark red font surrounded by angled brackets&lt;</b> ; (5) distinguished deletion/removal of text with <b>*** in green font</b> ; and, (6) removed all symbols annotating historical changes throughout the chapter.

**Listing of Specific Changes to Chapter 29**

Chapter	Page Number(s)	Explanation of Changes
29	1	Incorporated new Nature of Action Codes (NOACs) 822 and 823 into title of chapter.
29	Various	Incorporated or updated regulatory hyperlinks throughout Chapter 29.
29	2	Paragraph 1. Coverage: added description for new NOACs 822 and 823.
29	2	Item 4 All Other Bonuses, Awards and Incentives section, item c., Standard Form 50: Clarified that NOAC 846 and 847 are time off awards granted under Chapter 45.
29	4	Clarified that SF-50's for Time Off Awards (Chapter 45 and Other) may not be filed on the right side of the Official Personnel Folder.

<b>Chapter</b>	<b>Page Number(s)</b>	<b>Explanation of Changes</b>
29	5	Table 29 (Rules 1-9): Separated Table 29 into individual tables to meet 508 compliance requirements.
29	5	Table 29 (Rules 1-9): Rule 4: Clarified that NOAC 847 is to be used to grant time off award to a group of employees under Chapter 45 provisions.
29	5	Table 29 (Rules 1-9): New Rule 5: Added new Rules 5 to Table 29 instructing on the use of new NOAC 822 for Group Time Off Awards granted under provisions other than Chapter 45, and accordingly renumbered rules 6 through 40 of this table.
29	6-9	Table 29, Rules 10-31 (LAC's are required): Separated Table 29 into individual tables to meet 508 compliance requirements.
29	10-11	Table 29, Rules 32-40 (LAC's may be required): Separated Table 29 into individual tables to meet 508 compliance requirements.
29	11	Table 29, Rule 39: Clarified that NOAC 846 is to be used for Individual Time Off Awards granted under Chapter 45 provisions.
29	11	Table 29, New Rule 40: Added new Rule 40 to document new NOAC 823 is to be used to grant an individual time off granted under provisions other than Chapter 45.

# Chapter 29: Bonuses, Awards and Other Incentives (Natures of Action 815, 816, 817, >822, 823<, 825, 827, 840, 841, 842, 843, 844, 845, 846, 847, 848, 849, 878, 879, 885, 886, 887, and 889)

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New text changes and/or additions are distinguished in >dark red font surrounded by angled brackets<. Deletion/removal of text is distinguished with \*\*\* in green font.

## 1. Coverage

a. **Actions covered.** This chapter covers the following time off and cash payment actions that do not affect an employee's rate of basic pay:

- 815/Recruitment Incentive
- 816/Relocation Incentive
- 817/Student Loan Repayment
- >822/Group Time Off Award – Other<
- >823/Individual Time Off Award – Other<
- 825/Separation Incentive
- 827/Retention Incentive
- 840/Individual Cash Award RB
- 841/Group Award – Ch 45
- 842/Individual Suggestion/Invention Award (only those recognized with cash)
- 843/Group Suggestion/Invention Award only those recognized with cash)
- 844/Foreign Language Award (always given to individuals as cash; only approved for law enforcement positions)
- 845/Travel Savings Incentive (always given to individuals as cash; only allowed for agencies that have established travel savings incentive programs)
- 846/Individual Time Off Award >- Ch 45<
- 847/Group Time Off Award >- Ch 45<
- 848/Referral Bonus
- 849/Individual Cash Award NRB
- 878/Presidential Rank Award
- 879/SES Performance Award
- 885/Lump Sum Performance Payment RB-ILPA
- 886/Lump Sum Performance Payment RB-NILPA
- 887/Lump Sum Performance Payment NRB
- 889/Group Award – Other

b. **Enterprise Human Resources Integration.** All actions described in this chapter must be reported to Enterprise Human Resources Integration (EHRI). Use the nature of action codes and, if required, legal authority codes in Table 29 to report these actions to EHRI. Refer to the operating manual, [The Guide to Human Resources Reporting Requirements](#) for specific instructions.

## 2. Separation Incentive

- a. **Effective Date.** Separation Incentives are payments authorized to encourage employees to separate voluntarily to avoid or reduce the need for involuntary separations. These actions are effective on the same date as the employee's separation.
- b. **Standard Form 52.** Use of the Standard Form 52, Request for Personnel Action, to process these actions is not required. Follow your agency's instructions.
- c. **Standard Form 50.** These actions may be documented as the second nature of action on Standard Form 50, Notification of Personnel Action, documenting the separation or may be documented as a separate action. In either case, a Standard Form 50 documenting a Separation Incentive should be prepared and a copy should be filed on the right side of the Official Personnel Folder.

## 3. Presidential Rank Awards

- a. **Standard Form 52.** Use of the Standard Form 52 to process these actions is not required. Follow your agency's instructions.
- b. **Standard Form 50.** A Standard Form 50 should be prepared to document Presidential Rank Awards. A copy of this Standard Form 50 should be filed on the right side of the Official Personnel Folder.

## 4. All Other Bonuses, Awards, and Incentives

- a. **Effective Date.** The agency sets the effective date of awards and bonuses.
- b. **Standard Form 52.** Use of the Standard Form 52 to process these actions is not required. Follow your agency's instructions.
- c. **Standard Form 50.** Use of the Standard Form 50 for all other awards and bonuses is not required. Documentation of awards and bonuses other than Separation Incentives, and Presidential Rank Awards is not authorized for long-term Official Personnel Folder retention. Agencies may not file documentation of the following award and bonus actions on the right side of the Official Personnel Folder:
  - Recruitment Incentive
  - Relocation Incentive
  - Retention Incentive

- Student Loan Repayment
- Individual Cash Award RB
- Individual Cash Award NRB
- Group Award – Ch 45
- Group Award – Other
- Individual Suggestion/Invention Award
- Group Suggestion/Invention Award,
- Foreign Language Award
- Travel Savings Incentive
- Individual Time Off Award >(Ch 45 and Other)<
- Group Time Off Award >(Ch 45 and Other)<
- Referral Bonus
- Senior Executive Service Performance Award
- Lump Sum Performance Payment RB-ILPA
- Lump Sum Performance Payment RB-NILPA
- Lump Sum Performance Payment NRB

d. **Employee Notification.** Agencies must notify employees of awards granted them. To do so, the agency may choose to use the Standard Form 50 or may choose any other method that meets the requirements in Chapter 4 of this Guide. As examples, agencies may choose to use earnings statements or award certificates or agency forms to notify employees of awards. Even if an agency uses a Standard Form 50 to notify employees of awards, no legal authority code is required, and the SF-50 may not be filed on the right side of the Official Personnel Folder.

## Table 29: Bonuses, Awards and Other Incentives

Table 29, Rules 1-9

>Notes column has been added.<

Rules	If Basis for Action is	And	And	Then NOAC is	Nature of Action is	Notes
1	Made to a group of employees	Award is based on group contributions that do not represent suggestions or inventions	Made under <a href="#">Chapter 45</a>	841	Group Award – Ch 45	
2			Other than chapter 45	889	Group Award – Other	
3		Award is based on a group suggestion/invention		843	Group Suggestion/Invention Award	
4		A group of employees will receive time off as a reward for a specific achievement	>Made under <a href="#">Chapter 45</a> <	847	Group Time Off Award >-Ch 45<	
>5<		>A group of employees will receive time off consistent with the provisions of an authority other than Chapter 45<	>Other than chapter 45<	>822<	>Group Time Off Award – Other<	
>6<	To a law enforcement officer whose job responsibilities involve substantial use of foreign language skills in job			844	Foreign Language Award	
>7<	Given to employees who achieve travel savings	Agency has an established travel savings incentive program in place		845	Travel Savings Incentive	
>8<	Given to employees who refer applicant(s) who are hired and successfully employed by the agency	Agency has established criteria in place for granting referral bonuses		848	Referral Bonus	
>9<	Given to employee to repay student loan			817	Student Loan Repayment	



**Table 29, Rules 10-31 (LAC's are required)**

&gt;Notes column has been added.&lt;

<b>Rule</b>	<b>If Basis for Action is</b>	<b>And</b>	<b>Then NOAC is</b>	<b>Nature of Action is</b>	<b>Authority Code is</b>	<b>And Authority is</b>	<b>Notes</b>
>10<	Presidential Rank Award (Meritorious)	Employee is a member of the SES	878	Presidential Rank Award	V7G	<a href="#">5 U.S.C. 4507(e)(1)</a>	
>11<		Employee holds a career appointment in an OPM-allocated SL or ST position; is paid under 5 U.S.C. 5376; and have at least 3 years of (continuous or non-continuous) career or career-type Federal civilian service above GS-15.			V9N	<a href="#">5 U.S.C. 4507a(c)</a>	
>12<	Presidential Rank Award (Distinguished)	Employee is a member of the SES	878	Presidential Rank Award	V8G	<a href="#">5 U.S.C. 4507(e)(1)</a>	
>13<		Employee holds a career appointment in an OPM-allocated SL or ST position; is paid under 5 U.S.C. 5376; and have at least 3 years of (continuous or non-continuous) career or career-type Federal civilian service above GS-15.			V9P	<a href="#">5 U.S.C. 4507a(c)</a>	
>14<	A cash award based on employee's performance rating of record	Employee is in the Senior Executive Service or a Senior Executive Service-type system where awards can be paid consistent with 5 U.S.C. 5384 on the last day of the current performance appraisal period (i.e., on the last day of the period for which the rating of record was issued)	879	SES Performance Award	VWK	<a href="#">5 U.S.C. 5384</a>	

<b>Rule</b>	<b>If Basis for Action is</b>	<b>And</b>	<b>Then NOAC is</b>	<b>Nature of Action is</b>	<b>Authority Code is</b>	<b>And Authority is</b>	<b>Notes</b>
>15<	A recruitment incentive	Payment is 25% or less	815	Recruitment Incentive	VPF	<a href="#">5 U.S.C. 5753</a>	
>16<		Payment is above 25% (critical agency need)			VPO	<a href="#">5 U.S.C. 5753(e)</a>	
>17<		Payment is terminated			VPT	(Enter Law, Executive Order or Regulation that authorizes the action)	
>18<	A relocation incentive	Payment is 25% or less	816	Relocation Incentive	VPF	<a href="#">5 U.S.C. 5753</a>	
>19<		Payment is above 25% (critical agency need)			VPO	<a href="#">5 U.S.C. 5753(e)</a>	
>20<		Payment is terminated			VPW	(Enter Law, Executive Order or Regulation that authorizes the action)	
>21<	Establishment or change of retention incentive where employee or member receives biweekly payments in equal percentage and no service agreement is required	Payment is 25% or less for an individual or 10% or less for a group	827	Retention Incentive	VPN	<a href="#">5 U.S.C. 5754(d)(3)(A)</a>	
>22<		Payment is terminated			VPX	<a href="#">Reg. 575.311</a>	
>23<	Establishment of retention incentive when a service agreement is required, and employee is likely to leave Federal service	Payment is 25% or less for an individual or 10% or less for a group	827	Retention Incentive	VPR	<a href="#">5 U.S.C. 5754(e)</a>	
>24<		Payment is above 25% for an individual or above 10% for a group (critical agency need)			VPS	<a href="#">5 U.S.C. 5754(f)</a>	
>25<		Payment is terminated			VPY	<a href="#">Reg. 575.311</a>	

<b>Rule</b>	<b>If Basis for Action is</b>	<b>And</b>	<b>Then NOAC is</b>	<b>Nature of Action is</b>	<b>Authority Code is</b>	<b>And Authority is</b>	<b>Notes</b>
>26<	Establishment of retention incentive when a service agreement is required, and employee is likely to leave for a different position in the Federal service	Payment is 25% or less for an individual or 10% or less for a group	827	Retention Incentive	VPA	<a href="#">Reg. 575.314</a>	
>27<		Payment is above 25% for an individual or above 10% for a group (critical agency need)			VPB	<a href="#">Reg. 575.314</a> (Higher Cap)	
>28<		Payment is terminated			VPC	<a href="#">Reg. 575.314(g)</a>	
>29<	A separation incentive for an employee who resigns or retires (see Note 1)	Employee is in the Department of Defense	825	Separation Incentive	VWN	(Cite authority specific to DoD)	1. If documenting the Separation Incentive on the same Standard Form 50 as the separation, use blocks 6A-F and 20 of the resignation or retirement Standard Form 50 to document the 825/Separation Incentive action; document the amount of the Separation Incentive in block 20.
>30<		Employee is not in the Department of Defense and incentive was granted prior to 3/1/95 with approval for a delayed separation			Z2R	<a href="#">P.L. 103-226</a>	

<b>Rule</b>	<b>If Basis for Action is</b>	<b>And</b>	<b>Then NOAC is</b>	<b>Nature of Action is</b>	<b>Authority Code is</b>	<b>And Authority is</b>	<b>Notes</b>
>31<	A separation incentive for an employee who resigns or retires (see Note 1)	Not Rule 26 or 27	825	Separation Incentive	ZAA	(Enter Agency Authority) (See Note 2)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. If documenting the Separation Incentive on the same Standard Form 50 as the separation, use blocks 6A-F and 20 of the resignation or retirement Standard Form 50 to document the 825/Separation Incentive action; document the amount of the Separation Incentive in block 20.</li> <li>2. P.L. 104-208 may not be cited as the authority for a separation incentive when an agency-specific authority was granted.</li> </ol>

**Table 29, Rules 32-40 (LAC's may be required)**

&gt;Notes column has been added.&lt;

<b>Rule</b>	<b>If Basis for Action is</b>	<b>And</b>	<b>And</b>	<b>And</b>	<b>And</b>	<b>Then NOAC is</b>	<b>Nature of Action is</b>	<b>Authority Code is</b>	<b>And Authority is</b>	<b>Notes</b>	
>32<	Made to an individual employee	Payment is based on rating of record or contribution	Made under <a href="#">chapter 45</a>	Is rating-based		840	Individual Cash Award RB <b>(See Note 3)</b>			3. The following are translations for the abbreviations shown in rules 28-33 above: "RB" means Rating Based; "NRB" means Not Rating Based; "RB-ILPA" means Rating Based - in Lieu of Pay Adjustment; and "RB-NILPA" means Rating Based - Not in Lieu of Pay Adjustment.	
>33<				Is not rating-based		849	Individual Cash Award NRB <b>(See Note 3)</b>				
>34<			Other than chapter 45	Is a rating-based lump-sum payment	In lieu of pay adjustment due to range maximum or control point	885	Lump Sum Performance Payment RB-ILPA <b>(See Note 3)</b>	V3A	(Cite law, E.O., or regulation that authorizes the action)		
>35<					In lieu of pay adjustment - other reason			V3B	(Cite law, E.O., or regulation that authorizes the action)		
>36<						Not in lieu of pay adjustment; separately administered	886	Lump Sum Performance Payment RB-NILPA <b>(See Note 3)</b>			
>37<			Other than chapter 45	Is performance-related lump-sum payment that is not rating-based			887	Lump Sum Performance Payment NRB <b>(See Note 3)</b>			

<b>Rule</b>	<b>If Basis for Action is</b>	<b>And</b>	<b>And</b>	<b>And</b>	<b>And</b>	<b>Then NOAC is</b>	<b>Nature of Action is</b>	<b>Authority Code is</b>	<b>And Authority is</b>	<b>Notes</b>
>38<	Made to an individual employee	Cash award is based on suggestion/invention				842	Individual Suggestion/Invention Award			
>39<	Employee will receive time off as a reward for a specific achievement		> Made under Chapter 45<			846	Individual Time Off Award >-Ch 45<			
>40<			> Other than Chapter 45<			>823<	Individual Time Off Award >-Other<			