Federal Prevailing Rate Advisory Committee

Annual Summary of Recommendations and Discussions

Calendar Year 2020



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ANNUAL REPORT

2020

FEDERAL PREVAILING RATE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Part I

Introduction

The Federal Prevailing Rate Advisory Committee (FPRAC), the national labor-management committee responsible for advising the U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) on matters concerning the pay of Federal Wage System (FWS) employees, completed 48 years of operation in 2020. FPRAC is established under section 5347 of title 5, United States Code, and is composed of five representatives from agency management, five representatives from Federal employee labor organizations, and a chair appointed by the Director of OPM.

The Committee membership was changed in 2020 to conform to the practice of rotating the military department representation on the Committee among Army, Navy, and Air Force. The Department of the Air Force representative was replaced by the representative from the Department of the Navy.

FPRAC meets on a monthly basis. Advance notice of the Committee meeting schedule is published in the *Federal Register*. In addition, future Committee meeting dates are posted on OPM's website at www.opm.gov/fprac.

All Committee meetings held in calendar year 2020 were open to the public. The January and February meetings were held in the Director's Executive Conference Room, U.S. Office of Personnel Management, 1900 E Street NW, Washington, DC 20415. The March, July, August, September, and November were virtual meetings by teleconference. The remainder of the meetings were canceled as no new business was submitted nor action on old business scheduled.

All Committee meetings are recorded. FPRAC meeting transcripts starting with the January 20, 2011, meetings are available at the above website. Archived transcripts of earlier meetings can be obtained by sending an email message to pay-leave-policy@opm.gov.

Annually, the Office of the Chair compiles a report of pay issues discussed and recommendations made to OPM. Beginning with the 2008-2009 summary, FPRAC's annual summaries are also available on OPM's website at the above link. Archived annual summaries for earlier years can be obtained by sending an email message to pay-leave-policy@opm.gov.

Part II

Federal Prevailing Rate Advisory Committee

Summary of 2020 Recommendations

Issues Resolved by Consensus

(1) 630-OPM-2¹. Department of the Interior's Special Vessel Schedules

The Department of the Interior (DOI) requested that OPM update the name of one of their setaside special vessel schedules listed in Appendix V of the FWS Operating Manual.

The OPM representative at FPRAC introduced the issue at the 630th meeting on January 16, 2020, in FPRAC document 630-OPM-2, *Department of the Interior's Special Vessel Schedules*. Initially, DOI's U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) had one vessel based in the State of Michigan and managed out of the Jordan River National Fish Hatchery in Elmira, MI. The Service has now acquired a second vessel to conduct work in the Great Lakes. Although the two vessels are based in the State of Michigan and operate in Great Lakes waters, managing the two vessels out of one field station was no longer feasible. Since both vessels provide services to several Regional Fisheries field offices in the area, the Service created a new organization unit called "Region 3 Vessel Program." DOI requested that the special schedule in Appendix V be changed from "Jordan River National Fish Hatchery, Elmira, Michigan" to "Region 3 Vessel Program."

All other aspects of this set-aside special schedule remain unchanged. Rates for these vessel employees are identical to the FWS regular schedule for the Detroit, MI, wage area. These vessel positions are not subject to the FWS job-grading standards; instead, they are subject to the Department of the Army Manual of Evaluation Standards and the Auxiliary Standard for Evaluation of Nonsupervisory Wage Board Jobs.

The Committee recommended by consensus to make the change in Appendix V of OPM's FWS Operating Manual.

(2) 633-MGT-1. Abolishment of the Special Wage Schedules for Ship Surveyors in Puerto Rico

The Department of Defense (DOD) requested approval to abolish the special wage schedule for

¹ Document numbers listed in this report refer to official documents of FPRAC. The first 3-digit number is the meeting number where the document was first introduced. The alpha characters indicate which committee member(s) submitted the documents. "OPM" indicates a document submitted by the U.S. Office of Personnel Management. "MGT" indicates that the document was submitted jointly by all the management members. "DOD" indicates a document submitted by the Department of Defense. "LBR" indicates a joint labor document. The number following the alpha characters indicates the chronological order of the document(s) submitted by the organization for that meeting.

nonsupervisory ship surveyors and supervisory ship surveyors in Puerto Rico.

The management members of FPRAC introduced the issue at the 633rd meeting on July 16, 2020, in FPRAC document 633-MGT-1, *Abolishment of the Special Wage Schedules for Ship Surveyors in Puerto Rico*. This special wage schedule only applies to Department of the Navy nonsupervisory and supervisory ship surveyors in Puerto Rico. The Department of the Navy has not had FWS employees in ship surveyor positions since 2001, and it does not have plans to reestablish the ship surveyor position in the future.

The Committee recommended by consensus to abolish the Puerto Rico special wage schedule for nonsupervisory ship surveyors and supervisory ship surveyors.

Issues Resolved by Formal Recommendation

(1) 635-MGT-1. Revised Amendments to 5 CFR 532.201, 532.207, 532.235, and 532.247

DOD requested approval to amend the regulatory provisions in part 532 of title 5, Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), which require in-person visits by data collectors to private industrial establishments for Federal Wage System (FWS) full-scale wage surveys. The management members of FPRAC introduced the issue at the 633rd meeting on July 16, 2020, in FPRAC document 633-MGT-2, *Amendments to sections 532.201, 532.207, 532.235, and 532.247 of title 5, Code of Federal Regulations.*

The overall objective of FWS wage surveys is to obtain the most accurate information possible to measure prevailing wage levels in each wage area and establish wage schedules in accordance with prevailing rate systems law. The preferred method for collecting wage data from private sector establishments during full-scale wage surveys is by personal visit to such establishments. Even though the preferred method continues to be personal visits, technological advances now provide new tools for data collection that were not available when the FWS pay system was established. There are now electronic tools, systems, devices, and resources that assist in gathering information in cost effective and reliable ways.

Labor participation at all levels is a requirement within the FWS, including for the collection and the analysis of the survey data. In all wage areas, local labor-management teams participate in the collection of data from private sector establishments. This will not change. As the lead agency for all wage areas, DOD will continue to work together with labor organizations during the data collection process even when in-person visits cannot be conducted. Labor participation will be facilitated through alternative data collection processes to include telephone, mail, and electronic means.

At FPRAC's 634th meeting on August 20, 2020, the labor members requested that the CFR sections be revised to clarify that the new tools would be used only in emergency situations. The Chair suggested that the new tools be used only with the unanimous consent of the Local Wage Survey Committee (LWSC).

At FPRAC's 635th meeting on September 17, 2020, the OPM representative introduced FPRAC document 635-MGT-1, *Suggested Changes to Sections 5 CFR 532.201, 5 CFR 532.207, 5 CFR 532.235, and 5 CFR 532.247to Include Version 1 and Version 2.* Version 1 provides that, "with the unanimous consent of the members of a Local Wage Survey Committee, data may also be obtained from a private sector establishment or establishments during a full-scale wage survey by telephone, mail, or electronic means." Version 2 provides that, "in emergency situations, with the unanimous consent of the members of a Local Wage Survey Committee, data may also be obtained from a private sector establishment or establishments during a full-scale wage survey by telephone, mail, or electronic means."

After further discussion, the management members moved that Version 1, as specified in FPRAC document 635-MGT-1, be adopted as FPRAC's recommendation.

The Committee adopted Version 1 by a 5-4 vote, with all management members voting in favor, all labor members voting against, and the Chair voting in favor.

Additional Matters Discussed

- Fiscal Year 2020 Prevailing Rate Pay Adjustments, 630-OPM-1
- Charter for the Federal Prevailing Rate Advisory Committee, 631-OC-1
- Prevailing Rate Advisory Committee Annual Summary, 2019, 632-OC-1

Part III

Federal Prevailing Rate Advisory Committee

Summary of Discussions at 2020 Meetings

Meeting 630 - January 16, 2020

- Letter from the American Federation of Government Employees, Dated September 6, 2018, Requesting FPRAC Review a Proposal to Not Allow Federal Wage System Wage Area Boundaries to Split General Schedule Locality Pay Areas and a Proposal to Redefine Monroe County, PA, from the Scranton-Wilkes-Barre, PA, Wage Area to the New York, NY, Wage Area
 - o Estimated 5-Year Cost Projection of Application of FPRAC Request
 - o Paper Pay Disparity at Tobyhanna Army Depot by Joseph P. Lynott Sr.
 - Email Message from Steven R. Kester in Support of the Proposal to Move Monroe County, PA, to the New York, NY, Wage Area
 - Letter from Steven R. Kester Regarding the Pay Disparity Between FWS and GS Employees at Tobyhanna Army Depot
- Letter from the American Federation of Government Employees, Dated September 3, 2019, Requesting FPRAC Recommend Redefining San Joaquin County, CA, from the Stockton, CA, Wage Area to the San Francisco, CA, Wage Area
 - o Review of San Joaquin County, California
- Letter from the National Association of Government Employees, Dated September 25, 2019, Requesting FPRAC Reexamine the Placement of Wage Grade Employees Working in the Salinas-Monterey, CA, Wage Area
 - o Review of the Salinas-Monterey, California, Federal Wage System Wage Area
- Letter from the Association of Civilian Technicians, Dated November 9, 2019, Requesting FPRAC Consider Moving the Puerto Rico Wage Area into the Special Appropriated Fund Schedule for U.S. Insular Area
 - 2016 Study by NOAA Describing the Ocean Economies of the U.S. Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico
- Department of the Interior's Special Vessel Schedules

Meeting 631 – February 20, 2020

- Letter from the American Federation of Government Employees, Dated September 6, 2018, Requesting FPRAC Review a Proposal to Not Allow Federal Wage System Wage Area Boundaries to Split General Schedule Locality Pay Areas and a Proposal to Redefine Monroe County, PA, from the Scranton-Wilkes-Barre, PA, Wage Area to the New York, NY, Wage Area
 - Estimated 5-Year Cost Projection of Application of FPRAC Request
 - O Paper Pay Disparity at Tobyhanna Army Depot by Joseph P. Lynott Sr.

- Email Message from Steven R. Kester in Support of the Proposal to Move Monroe County, PA, to the New York, NY, Wage Area
- Letter from Steven R. Kester Regarding the Pay Disparity Between FWS and GS Employees at Tobyhanna Army Depot
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 - o Review of the Salinas-Monterey, California, Federal Wage System Wage Area
- Letter from the Association of Civilian Technicians, Dated November 9, 2019, Requesting FPRAC Consider Moving the Puerto Rico Wage Area into the Special Appropriated Fund Schedule for U.S. Insular Area
 - 2016 Study by NOAA Describing the Ocean Economies of the U.S. Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico
 - o Review of the Puerto Rico Federal Wage System Wage Area
 - Remarks on ACT's Proposal to Move the Puerto Rico Wage Area into the Special Appropriated Fund Schedule for U.S. Insular Areas by guest speakers Mr. Roberto Hernandez, PR ACT Los Tainos Chapter President and Mr. Luis Cruz, PR ACT Los Tainos Chapter Vice President
- Draft, Prevailing Rate Advisory Committee Annual Summary, 2019

Meeting 632 – March 19, 2020

- Letter from the American Federation of Government Employees, Dated September 6, 2018, Requesting FPRAC Review a Proposal to Not Allow Federal Wage System Wage Area Boundaries to Split General Schedule Locality Pay Areas and a Proposal to Redefine Monroe County, PA, from the Scranton-Wilkes-Barre, PA, Wage Area to the New York, NY, Wage Area
 - o Estimated 5-Year Cost Projection of Application of FPRAC Request
 - o Paper Pay Disparity at Tobyhanna Army Depot by Joseph P. Lynott Sr.
 - o Email Message from Steven R. Kester in Support of the Proposal to Move Monroe County, PA, to the New York, NY, Wage Area
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 - o Review of San Joaquin County, California
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 - o Review of the Salinas-Monterey, California, Federal Wage System Wage Area

- Letter from the Association of Civilian Technicians, Dated November 9, 2019, Requesting FPRAC Consider Moving the Puerto Rico Wage Area into the Special Appropriated Fund Schedule for U.S. Insular Area
 - 2016 Study by NOAA Describing the Ocean Economies of the U.S. Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico
 - o Review of the Puerto Rico Federal Wage System Wage Area
 - o Puerto Rico Wage Grade Adjustment 2020

Meeting 633 – July 16, 2020

- Letter from the American Federation of Government Employees, Dated September 6, 2018, Requesting FPRAC Review a Proposal to Not Allow Federal Wage System Wage Area Boundaries to Split General Schedule Locality Pay Areas and a Proposal to Redefine Monroe County, PA, from the Scranton-Wilkes-Barre, PA, Wage Area to the New York, NY, Wage Area
 - Estimated 5-Year Cost Projection of Application of FPRAC Request
 - o Paper Pay Disparity at Tobyhanna Army Depot by Joseph P. Lynott Sr.
 - Email Message from Steven R. Kester in Support of the Proposal to Move Monroe County, PA, to the New York, NY, Wage Area
 - Letters from Steven R. Kester Regarding the Pay Disparity Between FWS and GS Employees at Tobyhanna Army Depot
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 - o Review of the Salinas-Monterey, California, Federal Wage System Wage Area
- Letter from the Association of Civilian Technicians, Dated November 9, 2019, Requesting FPRAC Consider Moving the Puerto Rico Wage Area into the Special Appropriated Fund Schedule for U.S. Insular Area
 - 2016 Study by NOAA Describing the Ocean Economies of the U.S. Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico
 - o Review of the Puerto Rico Federal Wage System Wage Area
 - o Puerto Rico Wage Grade Adjustment 2020
- Abolishment of the Special Wage Schedules for Ship Surveyors in Puerto Rico
- Amendments to 5 CFR 532.201, 532.207, 532.235, and 532.247

Meeting 634 – August 20, 2020

 Letter from the American Federation of Government Employees, Dated September 6, 2018, Requesting FPRAC Review a Proposal to Not Allow Federal Wage System Wage Area Boundaries to Split General Schedule Locality Pay Areas and a Proposal to Redefine Monroe County, PA, from the Scranton-Wilkes-Barre, PA, Wage Area to the New York, NY, Wage Area

- Estimated 5-Year Cost Projection of Application of FPRAC Request
- o Paper Pay Disparity at Tobyhanna Army Depot by Joseph P. Lynott Sr.
- Email Message from Steven R. Kester in Support of the Proposal to Move Monroe County, PA, to the New York, NY, Wage Area
- Letters from Steven R. Kester Regarding the Pay Disparity Between FWS and GS Employees at Tobyhanna Army Depot
- o Employment Distribution at Tobyhanna Army Depot
- Market Rates vs Schedule Rates for Electronics Mechanics (Series 2604)
 Tobyhanna Army Depot
- Letter from the American Federation of Government Employees, Dated September 3, 2019, Requesting FPRAC Recommend Redefining San Joaquin County, CA, from the Stockton, CA, Wage Area to the San Francisco, CA, Wage Area
 - o Review of San Joaquin County, California
- Letter from the National Association of Government Employees, Dated September 25, 2019, Requesting FPRAC Reexamine the Placement of Wage Grade Employees Working in the Salinas-Monterey, CA, Wage Area
 - o Review of the Salinas-Monterey, California, Federal Wage System Wage Area
- Letter from the Association of Civilian Technicians, Dated November 9, 2019, Requesting FPRAC Consider Moving the Puerto Rico Wage Area into the Special Appropriated Fund Schedule for U.S. Insular Area
 - 2016 Study by NOAA Describing the Ocean Economies of the U.S. Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico
 - o Review of the Puerto Rico Federal Wage System Wage Area
 - o Puerto Rico Wage Grade Adjustment 2020
- Amendments to 5 CFR 532.201, 532.207, 532.235, and 532.247

Meeting 635 –September 17, 2020

- Letter from the American Federation of Government Employees, Dated September 6, 2018, Requesting FPRAC Review a Proposal to Not Allow Federal Wage System Wage Area Boundaries to Split General Schedule Locality Pay Areas and a Proposal to Redefine Monroe County, PA, from the Scranton-Wilkes-Barre, PA, Wage Area to the New York, NY, Wage Area
 - Estimated 5-Year Cost Projection of Application of FPRAC Request
 - o Paper Pay Disparity at Tobyhanna Army Depot by Joseph P. Lynott Sr.
 - Email Message from Steven R. Kester in Support of the Proposal to Move Monroe County, PA, to the New York, NY, Wage Area
 - Letters from Steven R. Kester Regarding the Pay Disparity Between FWS and GS Employees at Tobyhanna Army Depot
 - o Employment Distribution at Tobyhanna Army Depot
 - Market Rates vs Schedule Rates for Electronics Mechanics (Series 2604)
 Tobyhanna Army Depot
- Letter from the American Federation of Government Employees, Dated September 3, 2019, Requesting FPRAC Recommend Redefining San Joaquin County, CA, from the Stockton, CA, Wage Area to the San Francisco, CA, Wage Area
 - o Review of San Joaquin County, California

- Letter from the National Association of Government Employees, Dated September 25, 2019, Requesting FPRAC Reexamine the Placement of Wage Grade Employees Working in the Salinas-Monterey, CA, Wage Area
 - o Review of the Salinas-Monterey, California, Federal Wage System Wage Area
- Letter from the Association of Civilian Technicians, Dated November 9, 2019, Requesting FPRAC Consider Moving the Puerto Rico Wage Area into the Special Appropriated Fund Schedule for U.S. Insular Area
 - 2016 Study by NOAA Describing the Ocean Economies of the U.S. Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico
 - o Review of the Puerto Rico Federal Wage System Wage Area
 - Puerto Rico Wage Grade Adjustment 2020
- Amendments to 5 CFR 532.201, 532.207, 532.235, and 532.247
 - o Revised Amendments to 5 CFR 532.201, 532.207, 532.235, and 532.247 to Include Version 1 and Version 2

Meeting 636 – November 19, 2020

- Letter from the American Federation of Government Employees, Dated September 6, 2018, Requesting FPRAC Review a Proposal to Not Allow Federal Wage System Wage Area Boundaries to Split General Schedule Locality Pay Areas and a Proposal to Redefine Monroe County, PA, from the Scranton-Wilkes-Barre, PA, Wage Area to the New York, NY, Wage Area
- Estimated 5-Year Cost Projection of Application of FPRAC Request
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- o Employment Distribution at Tobyhanna Army Depot
- Market Rates vs Schedule Rates for Electronics Mechanics (Series 2604)
 Tobyhanna Army Depot
- Letter from the American Federation of Government Employees, Dated September 3, 2019, Requesting FPRAC Recommend Redefining San Joaquin County, CA, from the Stockton, CA, Wage Area to the San Francisco, CA, Wage Area
 - o Review of San Joaquin County, California
- Letter from the National Association of Government Employees, Dated September 25, 2019, Requesting FPRAC Reexamine the Placement of Wage Grade Employees Working in the Salinas-Monterey, CA, Wage Area
 - o Review of the Salinas-Monterey, California, Federal Wage System Wage Area
 - o Request for the abolishment of the Monterey/Salinas wage survey area
- Letter from the Association of Civilian Technicians, Dated November 9, 2019, Requesting FPRAC Consider Moving the Puerto Rico Wage Area into the Special Appropriated Fund Schedule for U.S. Insular Area
 - 2016 Study by NOAA Describing the Ocean Economies of the U.S. Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico
 - o Review of the Puerto Rico Federal Wage System Wage Area
 - o Puerto Rico Wage Grade Adjustment 2020

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 Letter from the Association of Civilian Technicians Requesting FPRAC Delay the Vote on the ACT Puerto Rico Proposal until April/May 2021

Part IV

Compliance With Statutory Provisions

Charter for the Federal Prevailing Rate Advisory Committee

- 1. OFFICIAL DESIGNATION: Federal Prevailing Rate Advisory Committee.
- 2. AUTHORITY: The Federal Prevailing Rate Advisory Committee is established under section 5347 of title 5, United States Code, in accordance with the provisions of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA), as amended, 5 U.S.C., App. 2.
- 3. OBJECTIVES AND SCOPE OF ACTIVITIES: The Committee studies the prevailing rate system and other matters pertinent to the establishment of prevailing rates under 5 U.S.C. Chapter 53, Subchapter IV, as amended.
- 4. DESCRIPTION OF DUTIES: The Committee makes recommendations to the Director of the U.S. Office of Personnel Management on the prevailing rate system for Federal blue-collar workers, including:
 - (1) Definitions of local wage areas;
 - (2) Coverage of local wage surveys, including the occupations, establishment sizes, and industries to be surveyed and how surveys are conducted; and
 - (3) Policies on basic and premium pay administration.
- 5. AGENCY OR OFFICIAL TO WHOM THE COMMITTEE REPORTS: The Chairman of the Committee reports to the Director of the U.S. Office of Personnel Management.
- 6. SUPPORT: As provided by 5 U.S.C. 5347, the U.S. Office of Personnel Management provides such clerical and professional personnel as the Chairman of the Committee considers appropriate and necessary to carry out the functions of the Committee.
- 7. ESTIMATED ANNUAL OPERATING COSTS IN DOLLARS AND STAFF YEARS: The estimated annual operating expenses of the Committee are \$280,860. Its estimated staff years are 1.7 full-time equivalents (FTEs).
- 8. DESIGNATED FEDERAL OFFICER: The Deputy Associate Director, Pay and Leave, Employee Services, U.S. Office of Personnel Management, serves as the Designated Federal Officer (DFO) to the Committee. The Committee will meet at the call of the Chairman, Federal Prevailing Rate Advisory Committee, in consultation with the DFO or his/her designee. The Chairman, in consultation with the DFO or his/her designee, will prepare and approve all meeting agendas. The DFO or his/her designee will attend all meetings and adjourn any meeting when he/she determines adjournment to be in the public interest.

- 9. ESTIMATED NUMBER AND FREQUENCY OF MEETINGS: The meeting schedule contemplated for the Committee is one meeting per month throughout a calendar year; more frequent meetings will be scheduled when deemed necessary.
- 10. DURATION: There is no statutory termination date. The mandate of the Committee is one of a continuing nature until amended or revoked by act of Congress.
- 11. TERMINATION: The Federal Prevailing Rate Advisory Committee is permanently established by Public Law 92-392, and its charter is renewed every 2 years under the Federal Advisory Committee Act (Public Law 92-463).
- 12. MEMBERSHIP AND DESIGNATION: The Federal Prevailing Rate Advisory Committee has five Regular Government Employee (management) members, five Representative (labor) members, and one Chairman appointed by the Director of the U.S. Office of Personnel Management. The Chairman of the Committee serves for a 4-year term, as set forth in 5 U.S.C. 5347(a)(1). Labor members of the Committee serve at the pleasure of the Director of the U.S. Office of Personnel Management. Labor membership is reviewed every 2 years to assure entitlement under the criteria set forth in 5 U.S.C. 5347(b).
- 13. SUBCOMMITTEES: The Chairman of the Committee may, with U.S. Office of Personnel Management approval, form Working Groups to study specific technical issues and report back to the full Committee. Working Groups do not provide advice or work products directly to the Director of the U.S. Office of Personnel Management.
- 14. RECORDKEEPING: The records of the Committee, formally and informally established subcommittees, or other subgroups of the Committee, will be handled in accordance with General Records Schedule 6.2 and policies and procedures of the U.S. Office of Personnel Management. The Committee's records are available for public inspection and copying at the U.S. Office of Personnel Management, subject to the Freedom of Information Act of 1966, (5 U.S.C. § 552, as amended).

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APPROVED: OPM Committee #: 105

Dale Cabaniss

Director

U.S. Office of Personnel Management

15 January 2020

Date

2020 Annual Report to the General Services Administration

As required by section 7(a) of Public Law 92-463, the Federal Advisory Committee Act, an Internet report was submitted to the designated Advisory Committee Management Officer of the U.S. Office of Personnel Management for transmission to the General Services Administration.



U.S. Office of Personnel Management

Federal Prevailing Rate Advisory Committee 1900 E Street, NW, Washington, DC 20415

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