



## UNITED STATES OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

Washington, DC 20415

The Director

Tuesday, January 6, 2004

CPM 2004-02

### MEMORANDUM FOR: Chief Human Capital Officers

FROM: KAY COLES JAMES, Director

Subject: 2003 Annual Review of Special Salary Rates

The Office of Personnel Management (OPM) has completed the 2003 annual review of existing special salary rates authorized under 5 U.S.C. 5305. This annual review, which is conducted in accordance with 5 CFR 530.304, determines the amounts by which special rate schedules will be adjusted in January 2004. Schedule adjustments result in corresponding adjustments in individual employees' special rates, as provided by 5 CFR 530.307.

Effective in January 2004, there will be 401 special rate schedules covering approximately 140,800 employees. This excludes approximately 31,700 law enforcement officers covered by special rate table 491, which is established by law. The draft January 2004 special rate schedules are available on OPM's Web site at [opm.gov/oca/payrates/index.asp](http://opm.gov/oca/payrates/index.asp). Since the schedules generally are based on the 2004 General Schedule, they are considered to be "draft" until the official 2004 General Schedule is issued by the President in his Executive order on the January 2004 pay adjustments.

In conducting the annual review, we rely on the reviews conducted by agencies employing special rate employees. (See [CPM 2003-8](#), July 25, 2003.) Out of a total of 402 special rate schedules covered by the 2003 annual review, 400 schedules will be increased in tandem with the 1.5 percent increase in General Schedule rates. One special rate schedule will be terminated, and one special rate schedule will not receive any increase.

The Department of Defense (DOD) requested that special rate table 505 be terminated. This table, which authorized special rates for DOD firefighters at grades GS-3 through GS-11 in Chicago, Illinois, is being terminated because DOD no longer has firefighters covered by this table.

In the case of special rate table 544, which authorizes special rates for Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) clerical employees at GS-2 and GS-3 in Eastern Massachusetts, VA requested that special rates not be increased. VA has only a few positions at grades GS-2 and GS-3, and employees are readily promoted out of these entry-level grades. The VA medical center has also indicated that special salary rates are no longer needed and has requested that they be phased out. We previously approved VA's request to freeze table 544 special rates in conjunction with the January 1997 through January 2003 pay adjustments. All affected employees will receive a locality rate that exceeds the corresponding special rate.

We also are retaining coverage of the former GS-334 Computer Specialist occupational series on the information technology (IT) special rate tables 999A-999F. In [CPM 2003-8](#), we informed agencies of our plan to delete the GS-334 series designation from the IT special rate tables. We asked agencies to contact us if they were not able to complete their reclassification actions using the job family position classification standard for administrative work in the Information Technology Group, GS-2200, issued in May 2001. Several agencies reported that they have not completed their reclassification actions and continue to have positions classified in the former GS-334 series. Although we are not deleting the GS-334 series from the IT special rate tables at this time, we urge agencies to complete all GS-334 reclassification actions as soon as possible.

OPM has created a new web application to display special salary rate tables on the web. This new application allows users to view all individual active special salary rate tables. In addition, users can use a search tool to find individual special salary rate tables by occupation and agency. This new application is located at: <http://apps.opm.gov/ssr/tables/index.cfm>.

Thank you for your cooperation and assistance in conducting the 2003 annual review of special rates. For further information, please contact OPM's Pay and Leave Administration Group at (202) 606-2858 or by email at [pay-performance-policy@opm.gov](mailto:pay-performance-policy@opm.gov).

cc: Human Resources Directors