



UNITED STATES OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT  
Washington, DC 20415

The Director

Tuesday, August 8, 2017  
CPM 2017-07

**MEMORANDUM FOR: CHIEF HUMAN CAPITAL OFFICERS**

FROM: KATHLEEN M. McGETTIGAN, ACTING DIRECTOR

Subject: 2017 Annual Review of Special Rates (Data Call)

This memorandum announces the U.S. Office of Personnel Management's (OPM's) 2017 annual review of existing special rates authorized under 5 U.S.C. 5305 and 5 CFR part 530, subpart C, for certain General Schedule (GS) employees. OPM authorizes higher rates of pay for specific occupations, grades, and locations to alleviate existing or likely significant recruitment or retention difficulties. Under 5 CFR 530.307(a), OPM conducts periodic reviews of existing special rates to see if they should be terminated, reduced, or increased based on recent staffing considerations. This memorandum provides for a general review of special rates to support possible pay actions to take effect in January 2018. In conducting this review, we rely on agencies to review all special rate tables covering their employees following the attached instructions.

Please note that you do not need to respond to this data call to request the default January 2018 pay adjustment for special rates, which is equal to the percentage adjustment (if any) in [GS base rates](#) in January 2018. However, you must respond to this data call if requesting (1) any January 2018 increase in special rates different from the default adjustment or (2) the reduction or termination of a special rate schedule to take effect in January 2018.

Under 5 U.S.C. 5303(a), the general increase in GS base rates in January 2018 would be 1.9 percent. However, the President is authorized to provide for alternative adjustments in GS base rates under 5 U.S.C. 5303(b). Also, under 5 U.S.C. 5304a, the President may provide for alternative adjustments in locality rates authorized under 5 U.S.C. 5304.

The President's budget for fiscal year 2018 proposes a total pay increase costing 1.9 percent of basic payroll. In other words, any across-the-board general increase in GS base rates combined with any locality pay increases (which could vary by locality pay area) would be limited to a 1.9 percent overall increase in total basic payroll. As of the date of this memorandum, the President has not exercised his alternative adjustment authorities or indicated whether the increase proposed in the budget would be implemented through an across-the-board increase in GS base rates and/or locality pay increases. The President would exercise his alternative plan authority for the GS base rate increase under 5 U.S.C. 5303 by August 31, 2017.

If responding to this data call for either of the two reasons above (i.e., to request a January 2018 increase in special rates different from the default adjustment or to request the reduction or termination of a special rate schedule to take effect in January 2018), please submit all annual review materials requested in the attachment to this memorandum to OPM by **Friday, October 13, 2017**. When questions or problems arise, agency headquarters staff should contact OPM's Special Rates Team, by telephone at (202) 606-2838 or email at [pay-leave-policy@opm.gov](mailto:pay-leave-policy@opm.gov).

Attachment (see 508-compliant PDF below)

cc: Human Resources Directors