



UNITED STATES OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT  
Washington, DC 20415

The Director

Friday, October 12, 2018  
CPM 2018-17

**MEMORANDUM FOR: CHIEF HUMAN CAPITAL OFFICERS**

FROM: MARGARET M. WEICHERT, ACTING DIRECTOR

Subject: 2018 Annual Review of Special Rates (Data Call)

This memorandum announces the U.S. Office of Personnel Management's (OPM's) 2018 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 2019. In conducting this review, we rely on agencies to review all special rate tables covering their employees following the attached instructions.

Historically, the default January adjustment for special rates has been equal to the January across-the-board adjustment for GS base rates (as permitted by 5 CFR 530.307). I have determined that the default January 2019 adjustment for special rates will be equal to the January 2019 across-the-board adjustment for GS base rates. Under 5 U.S.C. 5303(a), GS base rates would be increased by 2.1 percent in January 2019. However, the President has set the January 2019 adjustment for GS base rates at zero by exercising his authority under 5 U.S.C. 5303(b) to provide for alternative adjustments in GS base rates. His alternative pay plan is posted at [whitehouse.gov/briefings-statements/text-letter-president-speaker-house-representatives-president-senate-32/](http://whitehouse.gov/briefings-statements/text-letter-president-speaker-house-representatives-president-senate-32/). Thus, absent enactment of legislation providing for an adjustment to GS base rates different from zero, the default January 2019 adjustment for special rates will be zero. Should future legislation provide for an increase in GS rates, the default January 2019 adjustment for special rates will be equal to any January 2019 across-the-board increase in GS base rates.

You must respond to this data call if requesting (1) any January 2019 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 2019. If responding to this data call for either of those two reasons, please submit all annual review materials requested in the attachment to this memorandum to OPM by Friday, October 26, 2018. Please note, however, that the October 26 deadline applies only for adjustments agencies would like to take effect in January 2019. Agencies can submit special rate requests at any time throughout a calendar year.

Agency headquarters staff having questions regarding special rates 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-conformant PDF below)

cc: Human Resources Directors