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Approved for Release
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10/8/14
Date

Director for Human Resources Management and
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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
OFFICE OF HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

HUMAN RESOURCES (HR) BULLETIN #193, FY15

SUBJECT: Pathways Program Participants' Eligibility for Performance Pay Increases and Rating Based Individual Cash Awards under the Department of Commerce (Department) Alternative Personnel System (CAPS)

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon release of this HR Bulletin

SUPERSEDES: This bulletin supersedes the policy contained under the Pay Administration Section II.9.b(1)(2) of the CAPS Operating Procedures Manual.

EXPIRATION DATE: Upon cancellation or expiration of this bulletin

PURPOSE: This HR Bulletin supplements the CAPS Operating Procedures Manual, dated May 28, 2010, by providing policy guidance on the eligibility requirements for performance pay increases and rating based cash awards¹ for employees occupying CAPS-covered positions under the Pathways Program.

BACKGROUND: The CAPS Operating Procedures Manual addresses performance pay increases and performance bonuses for individuals hired under the former Student Temporary Employment Program (STEP) and the Student Career Experience Program (SCEP). With the abolishment of the STEP and SCEP programs and the establishment of the Pathways Program (i.e., the Internship Program, the Recent Graduates Program, and the Presidential Management Fellows (PMF) Program), the CAPS Board has established the following policy to clarify the eligibility requirements for performance pay increases and/or rating based cash awards.

COVERAGE: This HR Bulletin applies to employees in the Pathways Program who occupy CAPS positions and meet the criteria to receive performance ratings.

POLICY: To be eligible for performance pay increases and/or rating based cash awards, employees must receive an Eligible rating of record at the end of the appraisal cycle.

¹ The Office of Personnel Management's "Guide to Processing Personnel Actions" refers to awards based on ratings of record or contribution as an "Individual Cash Award RB." The CAPS Operating Procedures Manual references these awards as performance bonuses. For purposes of this HR Bulletin, they are identical in meaning.

Employees are eligible to be rated, as of September 30, 2014, if they occupied a CAPS-covered position on the last day of the performance cycle, and have worked at least 120 days in one or more CAPS-covered position(s) during the appraisal cycle.

An employee who is unratable at the end of the annual performance cycle may be eligible to receive a rating based cash award if they have a CAPS or Department performance rating of record at least Fully Successful or equivalent that was effective within 13 months prior to the rating cycle's conclusion.

As illustrated in the below chart, Interns, Recent Graduates, and PMFs serving on appointments for an initial period expected to last more than 1 year (without a not-to-exceed date) are placed in tenure² group 2. Tenure group 2 employees are eligible to receive performance pay increases and/or rating based cash awards.

Interns serving on appointments with specific time limitations of more than 1 year, or under appointments limited to 1 year or less and have completed 1 year of current continuous service, are placed in tenure group 3. Tenure group 3 Interns are not eligible for performance pay increases; however, they are eligible for rating based cash awards.

Interns serving on appointments limited to 1 year or less, and who have not completed 1 year of current continuous service are placed in tenure group 0. Tenure group 0 Interns are not eligible for performance pay increases; however, they are eligible for rating based cash awards.

Pathways Appointment Types	Length of Appointment	Tenure Group	Eligibility for Performance Pay Increases	Eligibility for Rating Based Cash Awards
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interns • Recent Graduates • PMFs 	Initial period expected to last more than 1 year and appointment does not have a not-to-exceed date	2	Yes	Yes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interns 	Time limited appointment of more than 1 year, or under appointment limited to 1 year or less and have completed 1 year of current continuous service	3	No	Yes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interns 	Time limited appointment of 1 year or less, and have not completed 1 year of current continuous service	0	No	Yes

REFERENCES: “CAPS Operating Procedures Manual,” Section II.9.b(1)(2), page 77; the Office of Personnel Management’s (OPM) “Pathways Transition and Implementation Guidance”; and OPM’s “Guide to Processing Personnel Actions,” Chapter 29, page 29-9

OFFICE OF POLICY AND BENEFITS: OPBservices@doc.gov

² Tenure group identifies the retention group of an employee based on the type of appointment occupied.