

REVIEWING THE SF 50

Let's take a few minutes to review a document that you have seen many times throughout your Federal career and, if you are like most of us, have never really taken the time to read through and understand it. The document I'm referring to is the SF 50, Notification of Personnel Action (commonly referred to as a "50").

The SF 50 is your copy (you get the original) of the official notice of a personnel action. **You should keep your SF 50s in a safe place because they may be needed to make employment, pay, and qualifications decisions about you in the future.**

Blocks 1 to 3: Contains your name, social security number, and date of birth. You should verify, especially upon transferring to a new agency, that these items are entered correctly.

Block 4: This is the effective date of the personnel action. Personnel actions are generally effective at the beginning of a pay period.

Blocks 5 and 6: Indicates the Nature of Action (NOA) and Legal Authority for the personnel action. For example: Promotion, Within Grade Increase, Pay Adjustment, Resignation, Retirement, etc.)

Blocks 7 to 14: Reflects the "FROM" data. For example: If the NOA on your SF 50 is a Promotion, the FROM data will indicate your previous position title, pay plan, grade, series, step, salary, etc.

Blocks 15 to 22: Reflects the "TO" data. This will be your new position title, pay plan, grade, etc.

Very important, and often overlooked, information is contained in the "EMPLOYEE DATA" section of the SF 50:

Block 23: *Veteran's Preference* - You may have veteran's preference for appointment, RIF, adverse action or performance-based action purposes. If so, the appropriate code will be entered in this block. (NOTE: Not applicable for the National Guard.)

Block 24: *Tenure* - Indicates the nature of your appointment; whether you are permanent, temporary, or your appointment carries a restriction (e.g., subject to a trial/probationary period, indefinite status, etc.).

Block 25: For Agency Use - This is an "open" block that can be used for any purpose that an agency deems necessary.

Block 26: Veterans Preference for RIF - The agency determines this.
(NOTE: Not applicable for the National Guard.)

Block 27: Federal Employees Group Life Insurance (FEGLI) - This is the insurance code relating to the coverage you elected under this program. For example,

J = Basic Life plus Additional Opt w/1 times pay,
Standard Opt and Family Option

This means you are insured for the Basic Life (annual salary rounded up plus two thousand) + Option B-Additional at one times your pay (annual salary rounded up) + Option A-Standard (\$10,000) + Option C-Family (\$5,000 for spouse and \$2,500 each eligible child).

Block 28: Annuitant Indicator - Will be coded "9 (Not Applicable)" unless you are a reemployed annuitant (someone who has already retired from Federal civilian service and has been reemployed) or a retired military service member.

Block 29: Pay Rate Determinant - A code used to describe any special factors used in determining an employee's rate of basic pay. For example, grade or pay retention, special salary rate for engineers, etc.

Block 30: Retirement Plan - Indicates your retirement plan coverage. If you are under the Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS), your code is "1." CSRS-Offset employees (those covered by FICA & CSRS Partial) are coded "C." Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS) employees are code "K" if competitive service or "N" if excepted service.

Block 31: Service Computation Date (Leave) - The key word in this block is "(LEAVE)." This reflects your SCD for leave accrual purposes, NOT retirement purposes, although in some cases they may be the same date. Your leave SCD may contain some additional time, for example certain military service, which is not used in your retirement SCD. In order for military service to be creditable for retirement purposes, it may require a military service deposit.

Block 32: Work Schedule - Full-time, Part-time or Intermittent will be indicated.

Block 33: Part-time Time Hours - If you are part-time, the number of hours that you work bi-weekly will be indicated.