



DEFENSE HEALTH AGENCY
NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION MEDICAL DIRECTORATE (J-11)
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BETHESDA, MARYLAND 20889-5628

DEC 20 2017

MEMORANDUM FOR DIRECTOR, WALTER REED NATIONAL MILITARY MEDICAL
CENTER
DIRECTOR, FORT BELVOIR COMMUNITY HOSPITAL
DIRECTOR, JOINT PATHOLOGY CENTER

SUBJECT: Quality Step Increase

References: (a) 5 U.S.C. 5336
(b) 5 CFR part 531, subpart E

In accordance with references (a) and (b), the Directors of Walter Reed National Military Medical Center, Fort Belvoir Community Hospital and the Joint Pathology Center (MTF/Center Directors) are hereby delegated authority to approve a Quality Step Increase (QSI) in accordance with the attached guidance. This authority can be further delegated by the MTF/Center Directors to their subordinate Directors.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ronald J. Place", is written over the typed name.

Ronald J. Place
Major General, MC, USA
Director

Attachment:

1. NCR MD QSI Guidance
2. NCR MD Award Nomination Form

**National Capital Region Medical Directorate
Guidance for
Quality Step Increase**

The National Capital Region Medical Directorate (NCR MD) provides incentives and recognition for excellence in individual employee performance. The NCR MD Quality Step Increase (QSI) guidance supports human capital initiatives to make NCR MD the best place to work in government, provides consistency and transparency in implementation, and reduces management burden.

Description: A Quality Step Increase is a faster than normal within-grade pay increase from one step of an employee's grade to the next higher step of that grade. Employees whose current performance rating of record is "Outstanding" and who meet all of the NCR MD, and regulatory criteria as described below are eligible to be granted a QSI. The final authority can be further delegated by the MTF/Center Directors to their subordinate Directors. MTF/Center Directors or designee retains the discretion to either grant or deny a QSI. The nominating official must complete the NCR MD Award Nomination Form to process a QSI.

Eligibility: The purpose of a QSI is to recognize excellence in performance by granting an accelerated step increase. A QSI is a permanent salary increase for General Schedule employees only, and careful consideration should be given before granting a QSI. QSIs must be limited to those cases where exceptional performance has extended over a significant period of time and is expected to continue into the future. To be eligible for a QSI, an employee must:

- Be below step 10 of their grade level;
- Receive the highest rating of record available under their performance management program Level 5 – (Exceptional this includes meeting additional agency-established criteria used to identify an exceptional level of performance);
- Have demonstrated sustained level of performance of exceptional quality beyond the performance appraisal period;
- Not have received a QSI within the preceding 52 consecutive calendar weeks;
- Occupy a "permanent position" and;
- Not be on a temporary promotion.

Important: Temporary Appointments

An employee on a temporary appointment is not eligible for a QSI. The law describes a QSI as "an additional step increase." An employee is eligible for a QSI only if he or she is eligible for a Within Grade Increase (WGI). WGIs apply only to GS employees occupying permanent positions.

"Permanent position" means a position filled by an employee whose appointment is not designated as temporary and does not have a definite time limitation of 1 year or less.

Effective Date of a QSI: Generally, the QSI should be made effective as soon as practicable after it is approved, usually at the beginning of the next pay period.

Timing Matters: A QSI does not affect the timing of an employee's next regular within-grade increase, unless the QSI places the employee in step 4 or step 7 of his or her grade. In these cases, the employee must complete the full waiting period for the new step, 104 weeks for steps 4-6 or 156 weeks for steps 7-9. However, the time an employee has already waited is not lost; it continues to count towards the waiting period for the next step increase. The QSI provides the employee the benefit of receiving an additional step increase at an earlier date than he or she originally would have without losing any time creditable towards his or her next WGI.

Example: An employee received her last WGI to step 3 in January 2017. In September 2017, the employee receives a QSI to step 4, which places her in a 104-week waiting period before she is eligible to receive a WGI to step 5, assuming satisfactory performance. The employee will advance to step 5 in January 2019, which completes the waiting period of 104 weeks from the employee's last WGI (January 2017). Without the benefit of the QSI, she would have gotten a WGI taking her to step 4 in January 2018, and she would have had to wait until January 2020 to reach step 5.

EMPLOYEE AWARD NOMINATION AND APPROVAL FORM

EMPLOYEE NAME <i>(For group awards attach all group members showing name, SSN, & award amount of each employee)</i>		Last four SSN	
		Pay Plan & Grade	
DEPARTMENT NAME		UIC/ ORG Code	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Quality Step Increase	From Grade/ Step:	To Grade/ Step:
<input type="checkbox"/>	Civilian of the Quarter/Year Award	Start:	End: Amount: \$
<input type="checkbox"/>	Special Act/ Service Award	Period of Special Achievement Start:	End: Amount: \$
A. TANGIBLE BENEFITS. Approximate tangible value of benefit or savings: \$ B. INTANGIBLE BENEFITS/VALUE OF CONTRIBUTION: (1) Value <input type="checkbox"/> Moderate <input type="checkbox"/> Substantial <input type="checkbox"/> High (2) Extent of Application <input type="checkbox"/> Limited <input type="checkbox"/> Extended <input type="checkbox"/> Broad <input type="checkbox"/> General			
<input type="checkbox"/>	On- the- Spot Award <i>(Special Act or Service)</i>	Amount: \$	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Time Off Award	Number of hours:	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Non-Monetary Award/Innovative Award	NCR MD CERTIFICATE OF APPRECIATION (MTF or	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other Type Award (Suggestion/Invention)		

JUSTIFICATION STATEMENT (1500 characters or less):

(1) RECOMMENDING OFFICIAL (Name and Title)	Signature:
(2) BUDGET ANALYST/COMPTROLLER <input type="checkbox"/> Approved <input type="checkbox"/> Disapproved	Signature
(3) DIRECTOR FOR DEPARTMENT <input type="checkbox"/> Approved <input type="checkbox"/> Disapproved	Signature
(4) CHIEF OF STAFF <input type="checkbox"/> Approved <input type="checkbox"/> Disapproved	Signature
(5) NCR MD CHIEF FOR PERSONNEL <input type="checkbox"/> Approved <input type="checkbox"/> Disapproved	Signature

Additional Comments:

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