

**FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE  
EMPLOYEE DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING**

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**Overview**

**4.1 What is the purpose of this chapter?** This chapter establishes a uniform set of guidelines for the selection, approval, and completion of training.

**4.2 What are the objectives of this chapter?** Our objectives are to:

- A. Establish requirements for the selection of employees for training programs,
- B. Describe the types of Government-sponsored training available for employees and when they should take it,
- C. Describe how training requests are approved and who must approve them,
- D. Establish the guidelines for allocating time for training, and
- E. Describe the steps to take when an employee completes or fails to complete training.

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**4.3 What is the scope of this chapter?** This chapter applies to:

- A. Permanent employees in the competitive or excepted service,
- B. Temporary appointments when their appointment is for 180 days or longer,
- C. Intergovernmental Personnel Act assignees (see [223 FW 11](#)),
- D. Students hired under programs such as Pathways, and
- E. People from other Federal agencies serving on a detail of 180 days or longer.

**4.4 What are the authorities for this chapter?**

- A. Employee Performance, Training ([5 U.S.C. 41](#)).
- B. Civil Service Regulations; Training and Supervisory, Management, and Executive Development ([5 CFR 410 and 412](#)).
- C. [U.S Office of Personnel Management, Training and Development Policy](#).
- D. [370 DM 410, Human Capital Training and Development](#).

**4.5 Who is responsible for the selection, approval, and completion of training?** Table 4-1 describes the selection, approval, and completion of training responsibilities of Service employees.

<b>Table 4-1: Responsibilities for Selection, Approval, and Completion of Training</b>	
<b>These employees.....</b>	<b>Are responsible for....</b>
<b>A. The Director</b>	<p>(1) Ensuring the Service develops and implements an effective training program, and</p> <p>(2) Approving training policy.</p>
<b>B. Directorate members</b>	<p>(1) Authorizing employees to take training that amounts to 120 training days or more, or</p> <p>(2) Delegating this approval authority to Assistant Regional Directors or Division or Branch Chiefs in Headquarters (HQ).</p>
<b>C. Deputy Directorate members</b>	<p>(1) Overseeing training and developmental needs for their Regions and programs, and</p> <p>(2) Establishing contact with the National Conservation Training Center (NCTC) to communicate and coordinate training needs and resources.</p>
<b>D. Assistant Regional Directors and Division/Office Chiefs</b>	<p>(1) Providing the Deputies Group with information about training needs for their Regions and programs,</p> <p>(2) Ensuring training efforts align with the Service's strategic goals, and</p> <p>(3) Understanding the competencies and skills required for assignments in their Regions and programs.</p>

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<b>Table 4-1: Responsibilities for Selection, Approval, and Completion of Training</b>	
<b>These employees.....</b>	<b>Are responsible for....</b>
<b>E. Director, NCTC</b>	<p>(1) Providing strategic direction for training and development activities in the Service,</p> <p>(2) Leading and providing the resources for the Service’s training center, and</p> <p>(3) Creating partnerships with other organizations to leverage capability and ensure that training is current and valid through research and needs assessment.</p>
<b>F. Regional/HQ Training Coordinators</b>	<p>(1) Serving as their Region’s/HQ point of contact for training issues and needs;</p> <p>(2) Maintaining contact with NCTC to communicate Regional/HQ training needs;</p> <p>(3) Communicating training opportunities to Regional/HQ employees;</p> <p>(4) Interpreting, advising, and assisting in the communication of training policy and law; and</p> <p>(5) Informing Regional/HQ leadership of the current process and procedures for the selection, approval, and completion of training requirements.</p>
<b>G. Chief of Training, NCTC</b>	<p>(1) Implementing the direction for the Service’s training and development;</p> <p>(2) Developing learning strategies that align with Service and Departmental strategic goals and ensuring skill gaps are addressed;</p> <p>(3) Advising senior management about training program goals, issues, and trends;</p> <p>(4) Working with Service senior leaders to enhance organizational performance for their areas of responsibility; and</p> <p>(5) Providing information to employees to ensure they understand the selection, approval, and completion of training.</p>
<b>H. Supervisors</b>	<p>(1) Engaging employees in developmental conversations for current and future assignments,</p> <p>(2) Documenting training and developmental needs and learning opportunities on employees’ Individual Development Plans (IDP) (see <a href="#">231 FW 2</a>),</p> <p>(3) Providing all permanent, full-time employees training opportunities consistent with the Service’s Continuous Learning policy (see <a href="#">231 FW 1</a>),</p> <p>(4) Approving, within the limits of resources, training and other learning experiences for employees (up to 120 training days),</p>

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<b>Table 4-1: Responsibilities for Selection, Approval, and Completion of Training</b>	
<b>These employees.....</b>	<b>Are responsible for....</b>
	<p><b>(5)</b> Approving training requests employees enter in DOI Learn,</p> <p><b>(6)</b> Ensuring a Standard Form (SF) 182, Authorization, Agreement and Certification of Training, is processed for training that is not in DOI Learn,</p> <p><b>(7)</b> Ensuring employees enter the information in DOI Learn about any training they take externally,</p> <p><b>(8)</b> Discussing with each employee the learning objectives as they relate to employee performance,</p> <p><b>(9)</b> Discussing with each employee what they learned and how they will apply it on the job, and</p> <p><b>(10)</b> Completing any learning evaluation surveys requested after completion of training.</p>
<b>I. Employees</b>	<p><b>(1)</b> Understanding the purpose of the IDP and working with their supervisors to develop them,</p> <p><b>(2)</b> Proactively seeking and requesting relevant training and developmental activities,</p> <p><b>(3)</b> Ensuring their DOI Learn account accurately reflects their personal and supervisor information,</p> <p><b>(4)</b> Following the current DOI Learn process for requesting training,</p> <p><b>(5)</b> Using an SF 182 to request training outside DOI Learn and including the course in their online transcript,</p> <p><b>(6)</b> Fully participating in learning opportunities,</p> <p><b>(7)</b> Providing feedback on their learning experiences to their supervisors,</p> <p><b>(8)</b> Validating and certifying their completion of training in DOI Learn,</p> <p><b>(9)</b> Filling out training evaluation surveys requested when they complete training, and</p> <p><b>(10)</b> Applying learning experiences to improve on-the-job performance.</p>

**Determining Training Needs**

**4.6 What is an IDP, and how do employees develop them?** Your IDP is a roadmap that documents your training and developmental goals and objectives and the activities you would like to do to achieve them. You

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create your IDP based on what you know about yourself, your duties, and your supervisor's feedback. Develop your IDP following the requirements in [231 FW 2](#) and consider taking the online IDP training course NCTC offers: [Career Planning and the IDP](#).

**4.7 How do employees learn about developmental opportunities?**

**A.** Your developmental needs should be a topic of discussion between you and your supervisor. As you become clearer about your goals and objectives, you will begin to discover training and developmental activities that will help you achieve them.

**B.** A good first place to look is the Service's [NCTC Web site](#). Here you will find training developed and designed by Service employees to meet Service training needs.

**C.** Announcements about training programs sponsored by the Service and the Department go to employees and supervisors via email.

**4.8 What training is required for supervisory development?** See [230 FW 4](#), Supervisory Development, for information about the required training for supervisors.

**4.9 May employees take academic degree training?**

**A.** There are specific requirements for academic degree training. See [370 DM 410](#) and the [OPM Training and Development Policy Q & A](#) for policy and guidance.

**B.** Usually, academic training on Government time or using Government funds is prohibited when its sole purpose is to obtain an academic degree. Agencies may make exceptions to aid in the recruitment and retention of employees in occupations that are difficult to fill. (See [370 DM 410](#) and the [OPM Training and Development Policy Q & A](#) for procedures.)

**C.** Your supervisor may authorize college courses that satisfy training needs to meet mission requirements and the Service's strategic goals. It is acceptable for such training to result in an academic degree as an incidental byproduct. If an employee is using non-Government funds and non-Government time to pursue an academic degree, it is acceptable to apply such training, as an incidental byproduct, towards that academic degree.

**D.** Your supervisor has discretion for determining whether or not to pay for all or parts of the costs for academic training courses based on staffing, funding, and mission requirements.

**4.10 May employees take training for professional credentials?** Yes. At the supervisor's discretion, the Service may pay for license and certification examinations (see [5 CFR 5757](#)).

**4.11 May volunteers and partners take training?** Yes. The Service may allow and pay for volunteers and partners to take training. See [370 DM 410](#), Human Capital Training and Development, for more information.

**Selection**

**4.12 What training may employees select?** With supervisory approval, you may select:

**A.** Training to enhance or improve performance, such as:

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- (1) Employee orientation,
- (2) Training to guide new employees during their probationary period, and
- (3) Training to provide knowledge and skills to improve job performance.

**B.** Training to equip you with the knowledge and skills needed to perform new duties or responsibilities required in your current position, such as:

- (1) Training to provide continuing professional and technical expertise so that your knowledge and skills don't become obsolete, and
- (2) Training to implement reorganizations, changing missions, and administrative initiatives.

**C.** Other authorized training initiatives, including:

- (1) Supervisory and managerial training focusing on competencies essential for effective performance at supervisory, managerial, and executive levels;
- (2) Training to provide education leading to an academic degree if it is necessary to help us recruit or retain you in an occupation where the Service has identified an existing or anticipated shortage of qualified personnel, especially in those areas requiring critical skills (see sections 4.9A and B); and
- (3) Training to provide for career transition, career training, or retraining if you're displaced by downsizing and restructuring.

**4.13 What are some of the factors supervisors should consider when working with employees to select or assign training?** When determining what training you should take, your supervisor should consider:

**A.** Current and continuing operational needs such as:

- (1) The degree to which the Service expects to benefit from your improved knowledge, skill, attitude, and performance;
- (2) The financial capability of the approving office to provide training beyond that which is necessary to ensure you have at least the basic skills training you need to adequately perform your job; and
- (3) Your ability to pass the training benefits on to others.

**B.** Your immediate training needs and career potential, such as:

- (1) The degree to which you need the training for your present position;
- (2) The extent to which your knowledge, skills, attitudes, and performance are likely to improve;
- (3) Your interest and effort to improve your work; and
- (4) Your potential for advancement.

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**4.14 What are the requirements the Service must follow when selecting employees to take training that is mandatory for a promotion or change of position into a competed job?**

A. Supervisors must use merit promotion procedures when selecting an employee for training that is:

- (1) Part of an authorized training agreement,
- (2) Part of a promotion program,
- (3) Given primarily to prepare an employee for advancement, and
- (4) Required in order for an employee to be eligible for promotion.

B. In these circumstances, supervisors must base their selection procedures:

- (1) Solely on merit after fair and open competition, and
- (2) Without regard to political, religious, or labor organization affiliation or non-affiliation, marital status, race, color, sex, national origin, non-disqualifying disability, sexual orientation, status as a parent, or age.

**4.15 In addition to regular training classes, what other types of training may supervisors and employees select to achieve their developmental goals?**

A. In addition to classroom and online training classes, you can meet your developmental goals through:

- (1) Planned work experience, details, and developmental assignments;
- (2) On-the-job-learning and supervised practice;
- (3) Coaching and mentoring; and
- (4) Self-study.

B. Supervisors also may approve a meeting or conference as a developmental activity if the content is pertinent to your official functions and activities, and it is evident that you will derive developmental benefits by attending.

C. To determine what type of training is best, it is important to determine the most economical means available to satisfy the training need.

**4.16 Does training have to be applicable to an employee's present job?** No. We may use training to prepare you for anticipated future assignments or to accomplish special Service initiatives.

## **Requests and Approvals**

**4.17 How do employees request training?**

A. Log on to the [NCTC site](#) and locate the DOI Learn link. Follow the procedure for requesting training.

B. For training that is not in DOI Learn, you must request training using [SF 182](#).

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**4.18 Who approves training?** Your supervisor is the approval authority for training. If a training program takes 120 training days or more, the supervisor must seek the approval of the appropriate Directorate member (or his/her designee) (see Table 4-1, section B).

## **Taking Training**

### **4.19 How does the Service pay for training?**

**A.** The Service may pay or reimburse you for all or part of the necessary expenses for training. The Service may also share costs of training with you if the training is related to your official duties.

**B.** To pay for training:

**(1)** For DOI Learn courses, follow the payment procedure in DOI Learn, and

**(2)** For training outside DOI Learn, the SF 182 is the obligating document. Depending on the dollar amount, payment may be made using simplified acquisition procedures or another appropriate method following the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR).

### **4.20 How do supervisors and employees allot for training time?**

**A.** Training time may be full- or part-time, during work hours, evenings, after hours, by correspondence, or online.

**B.** Your supervisor may adjust your work schedule to take training not sponsored or paid for by the Service if completing the course will better equip you for work and there will not be an appreciable interruption of work.

**C.** Supervisors calculate training as follows:

**(1)** Compute full-time training the same as you would work hours up to a maximum of 8 hours a day or 40 hours a week.

**(2)** Generally the law prohibits paying overtime to exempt employees who are in training or while they are traveling to or from training, except in a few circumstances noted in [225 FW 7, Exhibit 3, Paying Overtime when Attending Training](#).

**(3)** Compute part-time training based on the hours spent in class.

**(4)** Compute correspondence, online, and after-hours training only for the time an employee spends during duty hours on the training.

**4.21 What is an employee's pay status while in training?** Normally you are in full pay status while participating in training.

### **4.22 Do employees have grievance rights if they feel unjustly denied permission to attend training?**

Yes. You may use the Department's grievance procedures if you cannot resolve the matter with your supervisor (see [370 DM 770 and 771, Conflict Resolution Program and Administrative Grievance Procedures](#)).

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**4.23 What has to happen after an employee completes training?**

- A. For training taken outside DOI Learn, your supervisor processes the SF 182 for payment. See [231 FW 5](#).
- B. Records showing completion of training are kept in DOI Learn. For DOI Learn courses, completion is recorded for you. For those training courses outside of DOI Learn, the employee must submit the information in the system. After you have completed your training, log on to DOI Learn and follow the instructions to enter the information from your SF 182. OPM requires that we track and report all training.
- C. For training taken through DOI Learn, you must complete any training evaluations or surveys.

**4.24 What happens if an employee fails to complete training?** You must notify your supervisor in writing of the circumstances and reason(s) you failed to complete the training. Your supervisor may hold you responsible for all or part of the costs of the training. See [231 FW 5](#).

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