

PART 315—CAREER AND CAREER-CONDITIONAL EMPLOYMENT

■ 1. The authority citation for part 315 continues to read as follows:

Authority: 5 U.S.C. 1302, 3301, and 3302; E.O. 10577, 3 CFR, 1954–1958 Comp. p. 218, unless otherwise noted; and E.O. 13162. Secs. 315.601 and 315.609 also issued under 22 U.S.C. 3651 and 3652. Secs. 315.602 and 315.604 also issued under 5 U.S.C. 1104. Sec. 315.603 also issued under 5 U.S.C. 8151. Sec. 315.605 also issued under E.O. 12034, 3 CFR, 1978 Comp. p. 111. Sec. 315.606 also issued under E.O. 11219, 3 CFR, 1964–1965 Comp. p. 303. Sec. 315.607 also issued under 22 U.S.C. 2560. Sec. 315.608 also issued under E.O. 12721, 3 CFR, 1990 Comp. p. 293. Sec. 315.610 also issued under 5 U.S.C. 3304(c). Sec. 315.611 also issued under 5 U.S.C. 3304(f). Sec. 315.612 also issued under E.O. 13473. Sec. 315.708 also issued under E.O. 13318, 3 CFR, 2004 Comp. p. 265. Sec. 315.710 also issued under E.O. 12596, 3 CFR, 1987 Comp. p. 229. Subpart I also issued under 5 U.S.C. 3321, E.O. 12107, 3 CFR, 1978 Comp. p. 264.

■ 2. In § 315.608, paragraph (e)(1) is revised and paragraphs (e)(6) and (7) are added to read as follows:

§ 315.608 Noncompetitive appointment of certain former overseas employees.

(e) * * *

(1) *Family member.* An unmarried child under age 23, a spouse, or a domestic partner. An individual must have been a family member at the time he or she met the overseas service requirement and other conditions but does not need to be a family member at the time of noncompetitive appointment in the United States.

* * * * *

(6) *Domestic partner.* A person in a domestic partnership with a sponsor of the same sex.

(7) *Domestic partnership.* A committed relationship between two adults, of the same sex, in which the partners:

(i) Are each other's sole domestic partner and intend to remain so indefinitely;

(ii) Maintain a common residence, and intend to continue to do so (or would maintain a common residence but for an assignment abroad or other employment-related, financial, or similar obstacle);

(iii) Are at least 18 years of age and mentally competent to consent to contract;

(iv) Share responsibility for a significant measure of each other's financial obligations;

(v) Are not married or joined in a civil union to anyone else;

(vi) Are not the domestic partner of anyone else;

(vii) Are not related in a way that, if they were of opposite sex, would prohibit legal marriage in the U.S. jurisdiction in which the domestic partnership was formed;

(viii) Are willing to certify, if required by the agency, that they understand that willful falsification of any documentation required to establish that an individual is in a domestic partnership may lead to disciplinary action and the recovery of the cost of benefits received related to such falsification, as well as constitute a criminal violation under 18 U.S.C. 1001, and that the method for securing such certification, if required, shall be determined by the agency; and

(ix) Are willing promptly to disclose, if required by the agency, any dissolution or material change in the status of the domestic partnership.

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[FR Doc. 2012–17536 Filed 7–19–12; 8:45 am]

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OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT**5 CFR Parts 550 and 591**

RIN 3206–AM31

Change in Definitions; Evacuation Pay and the Separate Maintenance Allowance at Johnston Island

AGENCY: U.S. Office of Personnel Management.

ACTION: Final rule.

SUMMARY: The U.S. Office of Personnel Management is revising its regulations on evacuation pay and the separate maintenance allowance for duty at Johnston Island to ensure that same-sex domestic partners of Federal employees and the children of such domestic partners have access to these benefits to the same extent as spouses of Federal employees and their children. These changes fulfill the Administration policy expressed in the President's June 2, 2010, memorandum on the "Extension of Benefits to Same-Sex Domestic Partners of Federal Employees."

DATES: This rule is effective August 20, 2012.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Kurt Springmann, by telephone at (202) 606–2858 or by email at *pay-leave-policy@opm.gov*.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) is issuing final regulations on evacuation pay at 5 CFR part 550, subpart D, and the separate maintenance

allowance for duty at Johnston Island at 5 CFR part 591, subpart D. These regulations ensure that same-sex domestic partners of Federal employees and the children of such domestic partners have the same access to these benefits as opposite-sex spouses of Federal employees and their children.

Background

On June 17, 2009, President Obama issued a memorandum regarding Federal benefits and non-discrimination that requested the Secretary of State and the Director of OPM, in consultation with the Department of Justice, to extend previously identified statutorily based benefits that those agencies believed could be extended to qualified same-sex domestic partners of Federal employees, consistent with underlying law. This memorandum also directed the heads of executive departments and agencies, in consultation with OPM, to conduct a review of the benefits offered by their respective departments and agencies to determine whether they had the authority to extend such benefits to the same-sex domestic partners of Federal employees. The memorandum further requested that OPM, in consultation with the Department of Justice, make recommendations regarding any additional measures that could be taken to provide benefits to the same-sex domestic partners of Federal Government employees, consistent with existing law.

On June 2, 2010, the President issued another memorandum, entitled "Extension of Benefits to Same-Sex Domestic Partners of Federal Employees," that published the results of the review and identified the benefits that could be extended to same-sex domestic partners and their families. These regulations respond to two portions of the President's memorandum, which identified additional benefits OPM had concluded it could offer and requested OPM to (1) "clarify that under appropriate circumstances, employees' same-sex domestic partners and their children qualify as dependents for purposes of evacuation payments made under 5 U.S.C. 5522–5523"; and (2) "clarify that employees' same-sex domestic partners qualify as dependents for purposes of calculating the extra allowance payable under 5 U.S.C. 5942a to assist employees stationed on Johnston Island, subject to any limitations applicable to spouses."

Also on June 2, 2010, OPM issued a Memorandum for the Heads of Executive Departments and Agencies, entitled "Implementation of the President's Memorandum Regarding

Extension of Benefits to Same-Sex Domestic Partners of Federal Employees” to help fulfill the Administration’s policy. The memorandum provides definitions to help ensure its consistent application across the Federal Government. To ensure consistent application of the definition of domestic partnership found in this memorandum, OPM wants to clarify paragraph (4) of the definition that states that domestic partners “share responsibility for a significant measure of each other’s financial obligations.” This provision provides only for the financial interdependence between partners and should not be interpreted to exclude partnerships in which one partner stays at home while the other is the primary financial breadwinner.

We are also clarifying paragraph (7) of the domestic partner definition that states that the domestic partners “Are not related in a way that, if they were of opposite sex, would prohibit legal marriage in the U.S. jurisdiction in which the domestic partnership was formed.” The intent of this language is to prohibit recognition of domestic partnerships between individuals who are related in a manner that would preclude them from marrying were they of opposite sexes. We are maintaining this criterion, but clarifying that the determination is to be made at the time the domestic partnership is formed. It should not be re-examined if the couple relocates to a different jurisdiction. This approach is consistent with treatment of opposite-sex marriages.

For the reasons outlined in the President’s June 17, 2009, and June 2, 2010, memoranda, these regulations extend domestic partnership benefits only to same-sex couples, who are currently unable to obtain spousal benefits by entering a Federally-recognized marriage.

Executive Order 13563, *Improving Regulation and Regulatory Review*, sets out a series of requirements that must be followed, to the extent permitted by law, in issuing regulations. That Executive Order states that “[w]here appropriate and permitted by law, each agency may consider (and discuss qualitatively) values that are difficult or impossible to quantify, including equity, human dignity, fairness, and distributive impacts.” Such values are relevant here. In particular, this regulation would protect human dignity, and promote equity and fairness by ensuring equal access to these benefits for LGBT Federal employees.

OPM published proposed regulations for public comment on July 28, 2011, at 76 FR 45205. The 60-day comment period for the proposed regulations

ended on September 26, 2011. We received no comments in response the proposed regulations. As a result, we are adopting the proposed regulations as final.

Executive Order 13563 and Executive Order 12866

The Office of Management and Budget has reviewed this rule in accordance with E.O. 13563 and 12866.

Regulatory Flexibility Act

I certify that these regulations will not have a significant economic impact on a substantial number of small entities because they will apply only to Federal agencies and employees.

List of Subjects

5 CFR Part 550

Administrative practice and procedure, Claims, Government employees, Wages.

5 CFR Part 591

Government employees, Travel and transportation expenses, Wages.

U.S. Office of Personnel Management.

John Berry,

Director.

Accordingly, OPM is amending 5 CFR parts 550 and 591 as follows:

PART 550—PAY ADMINISTRATION (GENERAL)

Subpart D—Payments and Flexibilities During an Evacuation

■ 1. The authority citation for subpart D of part 550 continues to read as follows:

Authority: 5 U.S.C. 5527; E.O. 10982, 3 CFR 1959–1963, p. 502.

■ 2. In § 550.402, the definition of “dependent” is revised and the definitions of “domestic partner”, “domestic partnership”, and “family member” are added to read as follows:

§ 550.402 Definitions.

* * * * *

Dependent means a family member of the employee residing with the employee and dependent on the employee for support.

* * * * *

Domestic partner means a person in a domestic partnership with an employee or annuitant of the same sex.

Domestic partnership means a committed relationship between two adults of the same sex in which the partners—

- (1) Are each other’s sole domestic partner and intend to remain so indefinitely;

(2) Maintain a common residence, and intend to continue to do so (or would maintain a common residence but for an assignment abroad or other employment-related, financial, or similar obstacle);

(3) Are at least 18 years of age and mentally competent to consent to contract;

(4) Share responsibility for a significant measure of each other’s financial obligations;

(5) Are not married or joined in a civil union to anyone else;

(6) Are not the domestic partner of anyone else;

(7) Are not related in a way that, if they were of opposite sex, would prohibit legal marriage in the U.S. jurisdiction in which the domestic partnership was formed;

(8) Are willing to certify, if required by the agency, that they understand that willful falsification of any documentation required to establish that an individual is in a domestic partnership may lead to disciplinary action and the recovery of the cost of benefits received related to such falsification, as well as constitute a criminal violation under 18 U.S.C. 1001, and that the method for securing such certification, if required, will be determined by the agency; and

(9) Are willing promptly to disclose, if required by the agency, any dissolution or material change in the status of the domestic partnership.

* * * * *

Family member means an individual with any of the following relationships to the employee:

- (1) Spouse, and parents thereof;
- (2) Sons and daughters, and spouses thereof;

(3) Parents, and spouses thereof;

(4) Brothers and sisters, and spouses thereof;

(5) Grandparents and grandchildren, and spouses thereof;

(6) Domestic partner, and children and parents thereof, including a domestic partner of any individual in paragraphs (2)–(5) of this definition; and

(7) Any individual related by blood or affinity whose close association with the employee is the equivalent of a family relationship.

* * * * *

PART 591—ALLOWANCES AND DIFFERENTIALS

Subpart D—Separate Maintenance Allowance for Duty at Johnston Island

■ 3. The authority citation for subpart D of part 591 continues to read as follows:

Authority: 5 U.S.C. 5942a(b); E.O. 12822, 3 CFR, 1992 Comp., p. 325.

■ 4. In § 591.402, the definitions of “domestic partner” and “domestic partnership” are added, and the definition of “family member” is revised to read as follows:

§ 591.402 Definitions.

* * * * *

Domestic partner means a person in a domestic partnership with an employee or annuitant of the same sex.

Domestic partnership means a committed relationship between two adults of the same sex in which the partners—

(1) Are each other’s sole domestic partner and intend to remain so indefinitely;

(2) Maintain a common residence, and intend to continue to do so (or would maintain a common residence but for an assignment abroad or other employment-related, financial, or similar obstacle);

(3) Are at least 18 years of age and mentally competent to consent to contract;

(4) Share responsibility for a significant measure of each other’s financial obligations;

(5) Are not married or joined in a civil union to anyone else;

(6) Are not the domestic partner of anyone else;

(7) Are not related in a way that, if they were of opposite sex, would prohibit legal marriage in the U.S. jurisdiction in which the domestic partnership was formed;

(8) Are willing to certify, if required by the agency, that they understand that willful falsification of any documentation required to establish that an individual is in a domestic partnership may lead to disciplinary action and the recovery of the cost of benefits received related to such falsification, as well as constitute a criminal violation under 18 U.S.C. 1001, and that the method for securing such certification, if required, will be determined by the agency; and

(9) Are willing promptly to disclose, if required by the agency, any dissolution or material change in the status of the domestic partnership.

Family member means one or more of the following relatives of an employee who would normally reside with the employee except for circumstances warranting the granting of a separate maintenance allowance, but who does not receive from the Government an allowance similar to that granted to the employee and who is not deemed to be a family member of another employee for the purpose of determining the amount of a separate maintenance allowance or similar allowance:

(1) Children who are unmarried and under 21 years of age or who, regardless of age, are incapable of self-support, including natural children, step and adopted children, and those under legal guardianship or custody of the employee, or of the employee’s spouse or domestic partner, when they are expected to be under such legal guardianship or custody at least until they reach 21 years of age and when dependent upon and normally residing with the guardian;

(2) Parents (including step and legally adoptive parents) of the employee, or of the employee’s spouse or domestic partner, when such parents are at least 51 percent dependent on the employee for support;

(3) Sisters and brothers (including step or adoptive sisters and brothers) of the employee, or of the employee’s spouse or domestic partner, when such sisters and brothers are at least 51 percent dependent on the employee for support, unmarried and under 21 years of age, or regardless of age, are incapable of self-support;

(4) Spouse, excluding a spouse independently entitled to and receiving a similar allowance; or

(5) Domestic partner, excluding a domestic partner independently entitled to and receiving a similar allowance.

* * * * *

■ 5. In § 591.403, revise paragraph (a) to read as follows:

§ 591.403 Amount of payment.

(a) The annual rate of the separate maintenance allowance paid to an employee is determined by the number of individuals, including a spouse, a domestic partner, and/or one or more other family members, who are maintained at a location other than Johnston Island.

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**OFFICE OF PERSONNEL
MANAGEMENT**

5 CFR Part 792

RIN 3206–AL36

**Agency Use of Appropriated Funds for
Child Care Costs for Lower Income
Employees**

AGENCY: U.S. Office of Personnel Management.

ACTION: Final rule.

SUMMARY: The U.S. Office of Personnel Management is adopting as final changes to its regulations concerning

alcohol and drug abuse counseling programs for employees and changes to its regulations concerning agencies’ use of appropriated funds to provide child care subsidies for lower-income civilian employees. The changes would clarify the scope of regulations for alcohol and drug abuse programs for Federal civilian employees; change the definition of “child”; expand regulations to extend coverage to child care services for children of same-sex domestic partners of Federal employees; make certain technical corrections; and make other changes designed to render the regulations clearer and more concise.

DATES: Effective July 20, 2012.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Ingrid Burford, (202) 606–0416 or email Ingrid.burford@opm.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: On July 28, 2011, the U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) published proposed regulations (76 FR 45208) revising part 792 of title 5, Code of Federal Regulations. This final rule makes changes in both subparts of that part, concerning employee assistance programs and child care subsidies for low-income employees, respectively, in response to the President’s direction in Presidential Memoranda dated June 17, 2009 (Dailey Comp. Pres. Docs., 2010 DCPD No. 00450, p. 1.), and June 2, 2010, that agencies consider extending benefits, where possible, to same-sex domestic partners, and OPM’s determination to make benefits available to same-sex domestic partners, to the extent feasible, in this context. The changes to subpart A also remove obsolete references to title 42 of the United States Code.

During the comment period, we received six comments in response to the proposed rule. Most of the comments supported the proposed changes. However, two commenters—an agency and an advocacy group—recommended that, for the purposes of the child care subsidy program, OPM revise the definition of “domestic partner” to include opposite-sex domestic partners as well as same-sex. The agency commented that the distinction OPM had drawn “will limit agencies from providing an equitable policy to opposite-sex couples having legal documentation of their status as a domestic partner in a legal domestic partnership. It is [the agency’s] position that employees in same-sex and opposite-sex domestic partnerships should be treated equally.” The agency then provided examples of States and cities that recognize both kinds of partnerships.