

**Forest Service Manual
National Headquarters – Washington Office
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**Forest Service Manual 6100 – Personnel Management
Chapter 6180 – Insurance and Annuities**

Amendment: 6100-1999-2

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Duration: This amendment is effective until superseded or removed.

Approved by: Mike Dombeck, Chief

Last Change: Amendment 6100-1999-1 to FSM 6180 Contents

Superseded Document(s): 6180, Amendment 6100-90-1

Digest: Following is an explanation of the changes throughout the directive by section.

This amendment adds codes for FSM 6184, Insurance, and FSM 6184.1, Professional Liability Insurance. The new direction at FSM 6184.1 adds a cross-reference to the detailed direction in FSH 6109.12, chapter 70, concerning partial reimbursement to eligible employees for the cost of professional liability insurance.

This amendment also updates references to obsolete forms, authorities, and references; makes minor editorial and style changes throughout the chapter; and revises obsolete staff names.

6182.01: Recodes authorities for retirement formerly set out at FSM 6182.06 and adds information on electronic availability of Office of Personnel Management (OPM) documents.

6182.06: Removes references to the obsolete Form SF-105 and obsolete publications.

6183.06: Removes references to obsolete Department of Labor (DOL) publications on unemployment compensation, and adds information on electronic availability of information from DOL.

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6181 – Injury Compensation

6181.01 – Authority

In accordance with the Federal Employees Compensation Act, the Government does not pay benefits if injury or death is caused by the employee's willful misconduct, intoxication, intent to bring about injury to self or others, or deviation from course of travel to conduct personal business.

6181.02 – Objective

To ensure that employees who receive a job-related injury or disease/illness receive information concerning their rights to compensation and assistance in processing claims for compensation.

6181.03 – Policy

1. Aggressively provide medical attention to injured employees and assist them in obtaining compensation.
2. Ensure that each claim undergoes the most expeditious possible handling by the Forest Service.
3. Facilitate rapid claim handling by Office of Workers' Compensation Programs (OWCP) through accurate and complete claim preparation.
4. Provide financial assistance to employees when there is real need and where coverage is not available from the OWCP.

6181.04 – Responsibility

6181.04a – Human Resources Management Officers

Responsibilities of the head of the servicing Human Resources Management Office at each organizational level include:

1. Ensuring that persons responsible for handling cases of injured employees are fully informed on the governing law and regulations.
2. Reviewing the program to ensure compliance with regulations and reporting requirements.
3. Counseling injured employees about election of Office of Workers' Compensation Programs (OWCP) or Civil Service retirement benefits; procedures available for contesting adverse OWCP determinations; availability of vocational rehabilitation; reemployment rights; continuance of insurance coverage; and rights and responsibilities in cases involving liability of a third party.

4. Informing fiscal officers of cases which will require their involvement, either in the case of third-party liability or possibility of Forest Service payment.

6181.04b – Supervisors

Each supervisor is responsible for ensuring that employees are advised of their rights and responsibilities when injured.

6181.1 – Coverage and Procedures

All Forest Service employees, regardless of type or duration of appointment, are covered. Other people may be covered with some restrictions. Guidance on coverage--when and where it is available and what is covered--and the procedures for processing Office of Workers' Compensation Programs claims are in the Employment and Benefits Handbook, FSH 6109.12, chapter 30.

6182 – Retirement

6182.01 – Authority

1. The Office of Personnel Management "CSRS and FERS Handbook for Personnel and Payroll Offices" provides guidances to Federal agencies on retirement benefits administration. This Handbook is maintained by unit human resources management offices, and it also is available electronically from OPM on the World Wide Web/Internet at <http://www.opm.gov/asd/htm/hod.htm>.

2. The Department Personnel Manual (FSH 6109.41-DPM) chapter 830 contains direction needed by employing offices to administer the retirement program.

3. Direction on firefighter/law enforcement retirement and retirement recognition is in the Employment and Benefits Handbook, FSH 6109.12, chapter 40.

6182.03 – Policy

1. Line officers shall incorporate positions in the firefighter/law enforcement retirement system when appropriate, and shall promptly obtain a determination of each employee's coverage.

2. The Forest Service encourages retirement recognition, such as certificates, letters, and identification cards, but such recognition is optional. See FSH 6109.12, chapter 40 for procedures.

6182.04 – Responsibility

1. Firefighter/Law Enforcement Retirement.

- a. Regional Foresters, Station Directors, and the Area Director have the responsibility to determine when an employee served or is serving in a position that has general coverage, and to advise employees when specific periods of service are not creditable.
- b. The Director, Human Resources Management Staff, Washington Office, has the responsibility to recommend to the Office of Personnel Management or USDA positions considered suitable to receive general coverage. The Director also rules on periods of service for which the employee requests credit but for which no official position description is available or for which there is no general coverage (FSH 6109.13, section 41.21), and on exceptions to the maximum entry age (FSH 6109.13, section 42.2).
- c. Employees are responsible for any effort to dispute their official personnel records when they request a ruling on the creditability of their past service.

2. Trial Retirement. Regional Foresters, Station Directors, and the Area Director are delegated the authority to establish trial retirement programs for employees within their appointing authority in accordance with FSH 6109.41-DPM 831.

3. Retirement Recognition. Line officers have the responsibility to determine the form of retirement recognition.

6182.06 – References

In addition to the requirements set out in the authorities cited in FSM 6182.01, information on Federal retirement programs is available electronically from the Office of Personnel Management via the World Wide Web/Internet at <http://www.opm.gov/retire/index.htm>.

6183 – Unemployment Compensation

6183.02 – Objective

To reduce costs of unemployment compensation to the Forest Service through effective management and to ensure that former employees receive legitimate benefits.

6183.03 – Policy

1. Keep unemployment compensation costs to the Forest Service to a minimum.
2. Disaggregate costs for unemployment compensation and assign them to the lowest practical organizational level to be managed at that level.

6183.04 – Responsibility

Line officers have the responsibility to:

1. Ensure that unemployment compensation charges are accurate and initiate actions to reduce costs.
2. Know the impact of work force management decisions and consider unemployment compensation costs versus salary costs when work and labor are available and former employees are receiving unemployment compensation.
3. Gain an awareness of State unemployment compensation laws regarding basic eligibilities and program requirements, especially as they affect seasonal employment, and establish contacts with State officials responsible for processing unemployment compensation claims.

6183.06 – References

U.S. Department of Labor (DOL), "Handbook on Unemployment Compensation for Federal Employees."

6184 – Insurance

6184.1 – Professional Liability Insurance

For direction on the partial reimbursement to eligible employees (certain supervisors, managers, and law enforcement employees) for the cost of professional liability insurance, see FSH 6109.12, chapter 70.