



UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS

HEADQUARTERS MARINE CORPS AIR STATION MIRAMAR  
PO BOX 462000  
SAN DIEGO CA 92145-2000

StaO 12431.1

08 SEP 1998

STATION ORDER 12431.1

From: Commanding Officer  
To: Distribution List

Subj: WITHIN-GRADE SALARY INCREASES FOR CIVIL SERVICE EMPLOYEES

Ref: (a) 5 CFR 531 (NOTAL)  
(b) Master Labor Agreement between U.S. Marine Corps and  
AFGE (NOTAL)  
(c) Negotiated Agreement between National Association of  
Fire Fighters (NAFF) and Marine Corps Air Station  
Miramar (NOTAL)

1. Purpose. To publish principles and procedures for the administration of within-grade salary increases (step increases) for Federal Wage Salary (FWS) employees and permanent General Schedule (GS) employees per references (a) through (c).

2. Policy. The following policy will apply when considering employees for within-grade increases:

a. Within-grade increases will be used to motivate employees to perform continuously at their full capacity.

b. Within-grade increases will be granted only to employees who at the time of meeting the other procedural requirements for a within-grade increase, have a current performance rating of Fully Successful or better.

c. Authority to approve or withhold within-grade increases is delegated to immediate supervisors. Supervisors must assure that within-grade increases are not granted on a purely automatic basis.

d. Within-grade increases for employees whose current performance rating is Minimally Successful or lower, or whose performance has fallen below Fully Successful, will be withheld until such time as performance reaches the Fully Successful Level. Supervisors will keep their employees advised of their level of performance and will assist employees whose work falls below the Fully Successful level.

3. Waiting Periods. An employee, to be entitled to a within-grade increase, must have served the required waiting period for advancement to the next higher rate.

a. Waiting periods for GS employees are as follows:

Steps 2, 3, and 4 - 52 calendar weeks of creditable service.  
Steps 5, 6, and 7 - 104 calendar weeks of creditable service.  
Steps 8, 9, and 10 - 156 calendar weeks of creditable service.

b. Waiting periods for full-time FWS employees are as follows:

Step 2 - 26 calendar weeks of creditable service.  
Step 3 - 78 calendar weeks of creditable service.  
Steps 4 and 5 - 104 calendar weeks of creditable service.

c. A waiting period commences (1) upon a new appointment in the Federal Service, (2) after a break in service or a nonpay status in excess of 52 calendar weeks, or (3) upon receiving an equivalent increase.

4. Approval of Within-Grade Increases for GS Employees.

Approximately 65-70 calendar days before the within-grade increase is due, the Human Resources Office (HRO) will notify the supervisor by sending out a computer printout. The supervisor must review the printout and must inform the employee of the tentative decision to grant the within-grade increase, at least 60 days prior to the due date of the within-grade increase.

5. Effective Date. A within-grade increase will be effective at the beginning of the next pay period following completion of the required waiting period, providing the employee's rating of record is at the Fully Successful Level or better. When the increase is delayed beyond its proper effective date through administrative oversight, error, or delay, it will be made effective as of the date it was due.

6. Withholding of Within-Grade Increases

a. If the employee's performance becomes less than Fully Successful on any element, the supervisor must take the following actions:

(1) Notify the Labor and Employee Relations Division in the HRO; and

(2) Hold a special progress review to advise the employee of the element(s) in which performance has fallen below the Fully Successful Level, and to identify the action which will be taken to improve the employee's performance. The reviewer's signature on the rating form is required. This interim appraisal and rating should normally be conducted and communicated to the employees 60 days before the within-grade's due date. It is essential, however, that the employee be informed at least 60 days prior to the due date, of the tentative decision to withhold the within-grade increase. The employee should be informed that the within-grade increase will be withheld until another review is performed and a rating of Fully Successful is given on all elements.

b. If the last rating of record is below Fully Successful, the supervisor cannot grant the within-grade increase without first performing a progress review and giving an interim appraisal in which all elements are rated Fully Successful or better. The reviewer's signature on the rating form is required. This new rating becomes the employees Rating of Record.

c. A deficiency in conduct for "attitude" which is not covered by the employee's performance elements and standards may not be the basis for withholding a within-grade increase. Denial of a within-grade increase may not be used as a substitute for disciplinary action.

d. No later than 30 days after the within-grade due date, the employee whose increase is withheld must receive in writing the reasons for the negative determination and the areas in which performance improvement is required. This information is normally provided by means of or by reference to the most recent performance appraisal, on which the withholding is based. The employee must be given written notification of the right to request reconsideration within 15 days after receipt of the notification of withholding, and the name of the official to whom the request for reconsideration is to be submitted. The Labor and Employee Relations Division will prepare this letter for the supervisor's signature.

#### 7. Reconsideration

a. Department heads are designated as reconsideration officials. If the department head is the immediate supervisor or reviewer of the employee who is requesting reconsideration, the

Chief of Staff will serve as Reconsideration Official for MCAS Miramar. If the Commanding General or Commanding Officer withholds a within-grade increase, they will also serve as the Reconsideration Official.

b. Employees may request reconsideration of the decision by the supervisor to withhold a step increase, and have the right to representation in the reconsideration process. The employee and the representative may review all material used to support the negative determination and will be granted a reasonable amount of official time for the review and for preparation of a response.

c. The request for reconsideration must be submitted in writing to the Reconsideration Official, via the employee's immediate supervisor, with a copy to the HRO within 15 calendar days of the written notification that the increase has been denied, and must include a statement of the reasons the employee disagrees with the denial of the increase, and a statement as to whether the employee wishes an opportunity to make an oral presentation to the reconsideration official.

d. The reconsideration official may conduct an investigation to discover relevant facts: appoint a fact-finder to conduct an inquiry and report the findings of fact in writing in cases where such an inquiry is considered desirable or necessary; and hear any oral presentation which the employee or the employee's representative may wish to make.

e. The reconsideration official may not conduct a hearing as part of the reconsideration process.

f. The reconsideration official will provide the employee a final written decision no later than 30 calendar days after receipt of the request for reconsideration.

g. When an employee files a request for reconsideration, the HRO will establish an employee reconsideration file which will contain all pertinent documents relating to the negative determination and the request for reconsideration. This will include copies of the written negative determination and its basis; the employee's written request for reconsideration; the report of investigation when an investigation was made; the written summary or transcript of any personal presentation made; and the reconsideration official's decision on the request for reconsideration.

The official to whom the oral presentation is addressed is responsible for having the summary or transcript made. The file will not contain any document that has not been made available to the employee or the employee's representative. The employee will be given the opportunity to review the written summary or transcript of any oral presentation which is made a part of the file and to submit a written exception for inclusion in the file. The file will be maintained by the HRO until (1) the employee's performance has improved to Fully Successful level and the step increase has been granted, or (2) until any grievance or appeal of the denial of the step increase has reached final adjudication, whichever occurs first.

8. Appeal and Grievance Rights. If the negative determination is sustained by the reconsideration official, the employee will be informed of the decision in writing and of the applicable appeal or grievance rights as follows:

a. Employees in the American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE) bargaining unit may either grieve the decision through the negotiated grievance procedures described in reference (c) or appeal the decision to the Merit Systems Protection Board, but not both.

b. General Schedule employees and FWS employees who are not part of the AFGE bargaining unit, and GS employees who are part of the NAFF bargaining unit may appeal the decision to the Merit Systems Protection Board. Such appeals must be submitted in writing by the employee not later than 20 calendar days following receipt of the decision.

9. Change of Negative Determination. When a negative determination is changed as a result of reconsideration, the grievance process, or appeal to the Merit Systems Protection Board, the change supersedes the negative determination and the effective date of the within-grade increase is the date on which the increase originally was due.

10. Subsequent Determination. When a negative determination is made, and this determination is final, the supervisor concerned will make a new determination at any time the employee demonstrates acceptable performance, but not later than 52 calendar weeks from the end of the waiting period to which the negative determination applied.

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If the new determination is favorable to the employee, the effective date of the within-grade increase is the first day of the first pay period that begins on or after the date of the new determination. If the new determination is again negative, the employee is entitled to the notice, the right to reconsideration, and appropriate right to appeal or grieve.

  
T. A. O'RIORDAN

Distribution: MCAS: A



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StaO 12431.1 Ch 1

HRC

20 OCT 2000

STATION ORDER 12431.1 CH 1

From: Commanding General  
To: Distribution List

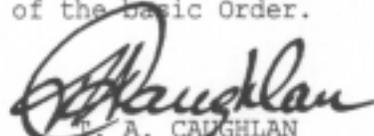
Subj: WITHIN-GRADE SALARY INCREASES FOR CIVIL SERVICE EMPLOYEES

1. Purpose. To direct a pen change to the basic Order.

2. Action

a. On the letterhead page, change reference (c) to read  
"Negotiated Agreement between International Association of Fire  
Fighters (IAFF) and Marine Corps Air Station Miramar (NOTAL)."

3. Filing Instructions. File this Change transmittal directly  
behind the signature page of the basic Order.

  
T. A. CAUGHLAN  
Chief of Staff

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