

Project No. 79580, 2026 Annual Pay Raise Customer Procedures

UPDATE - December 12, 2025

Please note the contents of this document and other pay raise resources can be viewed online at the [Annual Pay Raise Web Site](#).

GENERAL PROJECT INFORMATION

These Customer Procedures are intended to provide guidance to Agencies regarding the implementation of the upcoming Annual Pay Raise, which is signed into law by the President in late December or early January.

IMPORTANT NOTE: Agency-specific pay raise requirements received past the stated deadlines or identified as outside the normal scope of the Annual Pay Raise Project will be forwarded to the NFC GESDREQUEST Mailbox, nfc.gesdrequest@usda.gov, for a new project to be established. In those instances, an Interagency Agreement may be required and the requested implementation date will be dependent upon available resources.

For the 2026 pay raise effort, your Agency should complete and return the following forms to the Annual Pay Raise Mailbox, Annual.PayRaise@usda.gov. All forms must be received by the deadlines indicated below to ensure successful processing in PP01, 2026.

Agency Contact Information Form

UPDATE - DEADLINE: Tuesday, December 16, 2025

- We ask that your Agency review the 2026 Annual Pay Raise – Agency Contacts List to confirm that the individuals identified are Agency approved points of contact (POCs). The POCs must be authorized to submit data to the Annual Pay Raise Mailbox, Annual.PayRaise@usda.gov. The National Finance Center (NFC) will ensure that Agency approved POCs are notified of all meetings, issues, or any project activity changes that may occur. Agency approved POCs will be responsible for submitting your Agency's processing requirements, table updates, and any discrepancies to ensure that annual pay adjustments can be completed to your satisfaction. Agency processing requirements should include any special or unique requirements, specific to your Agency, which must be implemented to ensure proper payments to your employees.
- If your Agency wishes to change the Agency approved POCs, please submit a 2026 Annual Pay Raise – Agency Contact Information Form to the Annual Pay Raise Mailbox, Annual.PayRaise@usda.gov, Subject: Project #79580 – UPDATE-Agency Contact Information for DEPT/AGCY, by the deadline above. This will assist us in communicating with your Agency regarding annual pay raise activities.

Agency Security Access Requests

UPDATE - DEADLINE: Tuesday, December 16, 2025

- If your Agency would like to participate in the testing phase of 2026 Annual Pay Raise, you will be required to use Business Service Management ServiceNow to request security access to the testing environment utilizing the AD 3100-P Form, Payroll Personnel Request for Security

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Access. System access (other than pay raise testing) needs to be addressed BEFORE the January 2026 submission deadline. This includes ancillary systems such as TMGT, ServiceNow, etc.

- To ensure access for pay raise testing, please adhere to the following:
 - Agency Security Officers will need to submit security access requests via ServiceNow, as is the standard NFC Access Management Security Business Process. Please utilize ServiceNow, Employee Self Service (ESS) Request option and from the categories list, select Agency Security Officer/Coordinator when submitting security access requests.
 - “ANNUAL PAY RAISE (IDMS61 DICT02)” should be identified on all submissions via the REMARKS section of the AD 3100-P Form. Make the appropriate application selections and identify all pertinent information associated with each application as outlined on the form instructions.
 - Since pay raise testing is not conducted in the CUAT environment, the AD 3100-P Form was updated to include a checkbox for the Parallel Environment where pay raise testing is normally handled. Please select the Parallel Environment for access to participate in pay raise testing.
 - Once the request has been submitted, please ensure that you submit the ServiceNow ticket number to the Annual Pay Raise Mailbox, Annual.PayRaise@usda.gov, for tracking purposes, Subject: Project #79850 – AGENCY SECURITY ACCESS REQUEST for DEPT/AGCY, by the deadline above.
 - If your request is for Entry, Processing, Inquiry and Correction System (EPIC) System access only (to enter Agency-specific actions for testing), please state this information on your request form.
 - To verify Agency-specific actions loaded into the EPIC System, follow the steps below:
 - ❖ Go to <https://train.nfc.usda.gov/epic>
 - ❖ Select Parallel
 - ❖ Select EPIC Parallel 1
 - If a manual rollback in EPIC is required, NFC will follow our normal procedures for processing rollback documents:
https://help.nfc.usda.gov/publications/epicweb/Rollback_Personnel_Actions.htm
 - Agencies should be aware that, when NFC does a manual rollback in EPIC, other actions processed for that pay period will be rolled back also on the Payroll/Personnel System (PPS) side.
 - Each Agency will be allowed to submit up to 50 Social Security Numbers (SSNs) for testing. If more than 50 SSNs are submitted, only the first 50 SSNs will be uploaded to the test environment.
 - To verify SSNs submitted for testing, follow the steps below:
 - ❖ Log into the Mainframe using ID and Password
 - ❖ At the Main Menu, Press F9
 - ❖ Type S IDMS61 at the cursor, hit enter
 - ❖ Type CLIST DICT02 at the cursor, hit enter

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❖ Type the application required at the cursor, hit enter

- Please note that NFC does not support incoming FESI transactions in the pay raise test environment. No FESI transactions will be loaded for pay raise testing.

Agency Test Participation (SSN File) Form

UPDATE - DEADLINE: Tuesday, December 16, 2025

- Provide your Agency test SSNs by completing the 2026 Annual Pay Raise – Agency Test Participation (SSN File) Form. Please submit the form to the Annual Pay Raise Mailbox, Annual.PayRaise@usda.gov, Subject: Project #79580 – Agency Test Participation SSN File for DEPT/AGCY, by the deadline above.
- To enable NFC to accommodate all requests, please adhere to the following:
 - Do not include dashes (-) within the SSNs.
 - **Only submit 50 SSNs per Department/Agency Code via separate Microsoft Excel files (.xls) using the Agency Test Participation (SSN File) Form.** Microsoft WORD files will not be accepted because the SSNs cannot be uploaded in the proper format, to the Parallel Environment where pay raise testing is normally handled, without NFC manually recreating the file.
 - Each Microsoft Excel file (.xls) should only include one worksheet with up to 50 SSNs. Please do not submit multiple worksheets in one Microsoft Excel file (.xls). Only Sheet1 of the Microsoft Excel file (.xls) with up to 50 SSNs will be processed. **The Microsoft Excel file (.xls) must include nine digits with leading zeroes, but without dashes.**
 - **The Microsoft Excel file (.xls) must be password-protected for security purposes. NFC will provide the Agency approved POCs with instructions, via separate email, on how to access their Agency's password to encrypt the Excel file with SSNs.**
 - Please be reminded that annual pay raise testing is not conducted in the CUAT Environment, so please do not submit CUAT spreadsheets with SSNs for pay raise testing in the Parallel Environment.

Agency Requirements/TMGT Tables Form

DEADLINE: Monday, January 5, 2026 (by 4:00 p.m. CST)

- Due to the impact of the end-of-year holidays on this project, the processing dates identified on the 2026 Annual Pay Raise Activities TIMELINE must be followed to ensure that the January 2026 pay increase is processed as scheduled. **The “FINAL DEADLINE” for Agencies to submit Annual Pay Raise requirements and Table Management System (TMGT) updates is Monday, January 5, 2026 (by 4:00 p.m. CST).** There will be no extensions, so please ensure that your Agency approved POCs are aware of this critical deadline and plan submissions accordingly.

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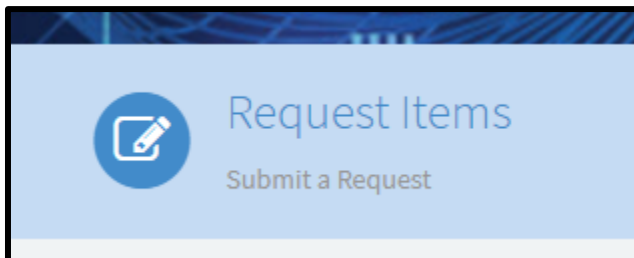
- For requirements that include **Agency-specific** TMGT table updates that should be processed manually for Tables 16, 29, 52, and 98, Agencies are required to submit updates via the ServiceNow procedures for TMGT updates through Agency-authorized personnel only.
 - ServiceNow Request Tickets must be submitted as a Request, and not an Incident, to the PaPB/QCS group for processing, and screen prints are required with each update to ensure accuracy.
 - Agency Requirements/TMGT Tables Forms relating to those manual TMGT table updates MUST be submitted to the Annual Pay Raise Mailbox, Annual.PayRaise@usda.gov, with the ServiceNow ticket number entered on the form for tracking purposes.
- For TMGT table updates that should be processed via batch load, Agencies will be required to submit their Agency Requirements/TMGT Tables Forms to the Annual Pay Raise Mailbox, Annual.PayRaise@usda.gov, along with the associated table update requests.

Instructions for submitting TMGT updates via ServiceNow are as follows to ensure that “manual” updates, with less than 50 entries, would be provided in the proper format:

All TMGT update requests should be submitted via ServiceNow (for non-batch updates with less than 50 entries).

The submissions to ServiceNow for TMGT updates should adhere to the following requirements:

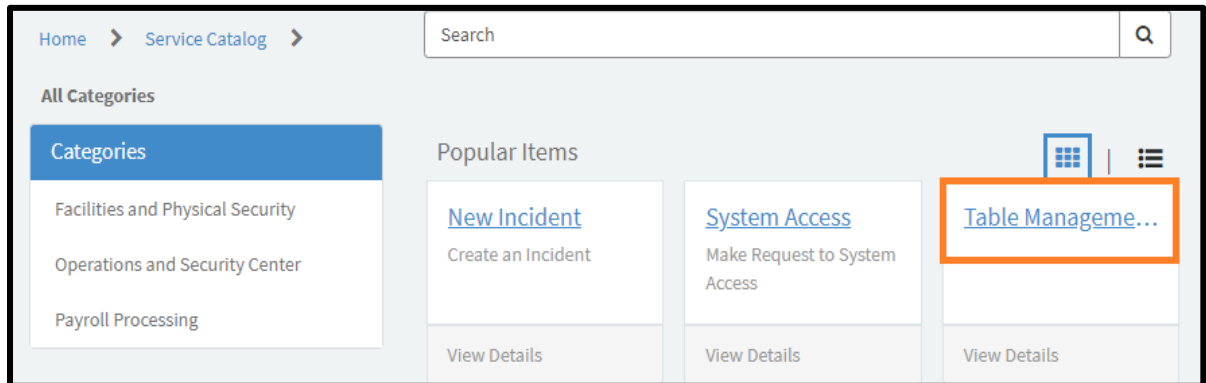
- Requests should only be submitted to NFC by authorized Agency representatives whose names appear on TMGT Table 063, Department/Agency/Bureau/POI, Contact Type 03. Requests from a non-authorized representative will not be processed.



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- Select “Table Management” under Categories.



- Complete fields on Request.
- Select TMGT Table to be updated.
- Provide instructions to TMGT personnel.
- Attach WORD document.

The screenshot shows the 'Table Management Process' form. The breadcrumb trail is: Home > Service Catalog > Payroll Processing > Table Management Process. The form title is 'Table Management Process'. Below the title, there is a section 'About the Submitter' with the following fields:

- Name: [Redacted]
- Title: [Redacted]
- Organization: [Redacted]
- Agency: [Redacted]
- Email Address: [Redacted]
- Phone Number: [Redacted]

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Pick the table to be updated ?

If the table you are looking for is not listed, please click the link to be directed to the TMGT Knowledge Base ✖

[TMGT Knowledge Base](#)

029 PAY TABLE RATES
✖ ▼

*Additional Information

(Instructions to TMGT personnel)

Add attachments

- TMGT update requests must be legible and contain all data necessary for a successful table update. NFC requires a screen print attachment, via a **WORD** document, of the relevant table with the applicable data filled in for each table entry to ensure accuracy. Please include the beginning effective date. Do not submit a PDF document.
- Do not password-protect attachments.
- TMGT update requests must include the applicable Department/Agency name and Agency code, along with the Personnel Office Identifier (POI) and the authorized sender's name, email address and number.
- Requests for updates to TMGT 029 in ServiceNow must not exceed 49 changes, or the request will not be processed. Requests of 50 or more changes should be submitted to annual.payraise@usda.gov following the instructions and format prescribed in the pay raise Customer Procedures.
- Do not submit duplicate requests to ServiceNow and to annual.payraise@usda.gov.

Examples of Blank Screen Prints for Tables 029 and 098 (with less than 50 entries)

Table 029			
TM02910	TABLE MANAGEMENT INQUIRY TABLE 029 PAY TABLE RATES		07/12/22 PAGE: 000000
ENTER PARTIAL OR COMPLETE KEY:		USER-ID:	
DATE-CHANGED:			
*OPM-PAY-TABLE-NUMBER:	*PAY-PLAN:	*GRADE: 00	
BEG-EFF-DATE:		LAST-EFF-DATE:	
TABLE ANNUAL AND HOURLY RATE BY STEPS			
STEP	ANNUAL	HRLY	STEP ANNUAL HRLY
01	02	03	04
05	06	07	08
09	10	11	12
13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20

Table 098			
TM09810	TABLE MANAGEMENT INQUIRY TABLE 098 SALARY RANGES		07/12/22 PAGE: 000000
ENTER PARTIAL OR COMPLETE KEY:		USER-ID:	
DATE-CHANGED:			
*OPM-PAY-TABLE-NUMBER:	*PAY-PLAN:	*GRADE:	
BEG-EFF-DATE:		LAST-EFF-DATE:	
SALARY RANGES ANNUAL AND HOURLY RATE BY RANGES/STEPS			
STEP ANNUAL HRLY	STEP ANNUAL HRLY	STEP ANNUAL HRLY	STEP ANNUAL HRLY
-----LOW RANGE-----			
01	02	03	04
05	06	07	08
09	10		
-----HIGH RANGE-----			
01	02	03	04
05	06	07	08
09	10		

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Do not submit Agency Requirements/TMGT Tables Forms for Pay Plans listed under the heading “Federal Pay Increases Processed Automatically”, or for Pay Plans to be bypassed listed under the heading “Federal Pay Increases Not Processed” (as stated below from the “2025” Pay Raise Bulletin dated January 10, 2025). NFC will perform these desired actions by default. Forms received with Pay Plans identified in either of those groups will be rejected.

- **Federal Pay Increases *Not Processed* for PP 01 of the Current Pay Raise Year**

- NFC will not process Federal pay increases for the following types of employees:
 - Executives and Foreign Executives (e.g., employees in Pay Plans ES, FE, and SW).
 - Experts and consultants (e.g., employees in Pay Plans CG, EC, ED, EE, EF, EG, EH, EI, and IC).
 - Employees paid at statutory rates (e.g., employees in Pay Plan SR).
 - Employees in Pay Plans AE, DB, FN, HA, IE, IM, IT, IH, OC, OF, PJ, PL, RA, RG, RS, RW, SB, SQ, SS, UT, VG, VH, YV, YW, ZA, ZP, ZS, ZT, and ZZ.
 - Employees who are being paid under Pay Rate Determinate (PRD) D, R, S, T, U, V, 2, 3, and 4.
 - Employees in Pay Plans GG, GS, GM, and GH who are being paid under cooperative agreements, and for whom the Federal Government does not pay all of the salary (the cooperator pays a portion or all of the salary).
 - Employees in Pay Plans DC and DL will be bypassed in the Annual Pay Raise process.
 - Employees with the PRD T will be bypassed in the Annual Pay Raise process.

Note: It is the Agency's responsibility to determine PRD T entitlement and usage of the PRD code. The guidance can be found within Continued Pay Freeze for Certain Senior Political Officials.

- NFC will not process Federal pay increases for the following employees with the exception of employees in Agencies notifying NFC to automatically process the pay increase:
 - Employees in Pay Plans AD, SL, and ST (pay adjustments for these pay plans are made at the discretion of the Department/Agency).

Note: Employees who are AmeriCorps members (Special Employment Programs Code V8) are not eligible to receive the 2 percent Federal pay increase.

- **Federal Pay Increases *Processed Automatically* for PP 01 of the Current Pay Raise Year**

- NFC will automatically process Federal pay increases for the following types of employees:
 - Employees in Pay Plans including but not limited to AA, AL, CA, CO, CP, DN, EX, FC, FO, FP, FS, GG, GH, GI, GL, GM, GS, GT, IG, IJ, IS, LE, LP, NF, NX, NY, NZ, PD, PG, PQ, PU, PZ, SP, SV, and TR.
 - Reemployed annuitants. The system will automatically generate pay adjustments for all reemployed annuitants. For any reemployed annuitant whose salary is offset by an annuity from the Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS) or the Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS) (Annuitant Indicator Codes A, C, E, 1, 4, and 5), personnel offices must also prepare a 917 Nature of Action Code (NOAC) personnel

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action when OPM authorizes a cost-of-living allowance (COLA) for CSRS and FERS retirement annuities. If COLA is authorized, the increased amount of the employee's annuity must be recorded in the Annuitant Share Amount field.

- Employees who are being paid under PRD code E, F, J, K, 5, or 6.

Note: Compensation for employees under PRD J and K will be calculated using the 50 percent increase computation (except those Agencies with their own computations) until their salary maxes out at the step 10 rate. In the case where the new computation falls in between steps, the Agency must process the action removing the PRD and entering the correct step.

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- Provide your Agency-specific requirements and table updates by completing the Agency Requirements/TMGT Tables Form. Please have your Agency approved POC submit the completed forms to the Annual Pay Raise Mailbox, Annual.PayRaise@usda.gov, Subject: Project #79580 – Agency Requirements/TMGT Tables Form for DEPT/AGCY by the deadline above. Agency “special” requirements and/or “special” instructions, entered in Section J, Special Requirements, will not be used for deriving any Agency requests.
 - Since requirements may differ by Pay Plan, please submit a separate Agency Requirements/TMGT Tables Form for each Pay Plan (i.e., only one Pay Plan and only one Agency per Agency Requirements/TMGT Tables Form is allowed). This information must be received as early as possible, but no later than the deadline above. **Please note that late submissions may result in the need for NFC to establish an Interagency Agreement with your Agency before processing can begin.**
 - For tracking purposes, an NFC Control Number will be issued upon receipt of Agency Requirements/TMGT Tables Forms, as well as emails from Agency approved POCs indicating no changes for 2026 pay raise. Once issued, this unique number must be included on all future Agency communications to the Annual Pay Raise Mailbox, Annual.PayRaise@usda.gov.
 - Ensure that Agency-specific requirements and table updates are only submitted by the Agency approved POCs. Submissions received from non-POCs will not be processed and will be rejected (no exceptions). Please be reminded that special requirements should only identify how NFC should generate the actions. Any other kind of special requests must be submitted to the NFC GESDREQUEST Mailbox NFC.GESDREQUEST@usda.gov, for a Software Change Request (SCR) to be set up as a separate project.
 - If you need to submit a revised Agency Requirements/TMGT Tables Form, please include the original NFC Control Number assigned to the initial Agency Requirements/TMGT Tables Form, and resubmit to the Annual Pay Raise Mailbox, Annual.PayRaise@usda.gov, SUBJECT: Project #79580 – REVISED Agency Requirements/TMGT Tables Form for DEPT/AGCY (NFC Control Number), by the deadline above.
 - On the revised Agency Requirements/TMGT Tables Form, you should enter the original NFC Control Number of the form it replaces, select the type of revision, and explain in detail what revisions are being included.

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- NFC will only process pay adjustments for employees who are active as of the end of PP26-2025. New hires would not be in this population because their accession will automatically process using the correct 2026 salary amount.
- Pay increase activities for wage grade employees will be accepted on the Agency Requirements/TMGT Tables Form. Please follow your normal Agency process regarding agency-specific wage grades, along with the SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS on page 10 of these Customer Procedures. **See the SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS-Federal Wage System Adjustments (Wage Grades) on page 10 for complete instructions to submit wage grades for processing in PP01-2026.**
- The following guidelines should be used if your Agency requires special TMGT updates. All TMGT table updates must be submitted by completing the Agency Requirements/TMGT Tables Form, by the deadline above.
 - For Table 029 updates, with less than 50 entries (an entry equals one screenshot), provide screen prints with the updates clearly marked, via the ServiceNow instructions for TMGT updates through Agency-authorized personnel only.
 - For Table 029 updates with 50 or more entries:
 - Follow the instructions on the Agency Requirements/TMGT Tables Form, in Section I, TMGT Table Updates. Submit your batch table updates using the Microsoft Excel file (.xls) layout provided by NFC. Table updates not received in this format will not be processed, but will be returned to the submitter for correction and resubmission.
 - Submit TMGT Table 029 updates for ALL steps and for each grade of each Pay Plan that is changing. All batch Table 029 updates must be combined and sent as one Microsoft Excel file (.xls) using the file layout provided by NFC.
 - If you have updates for TMGT tables other than Table 029 (e.g., Table 098, Salary Ranges (Pay Bands)), please indicate this information on the Agency Requirements/TMGT Tables Form in Section I, TMGT Table Updates, and provide each table update in a separate Microsoft Excel file (.xls) using the file layout provided by NFC.
 - Please ensure that Table 029 and Table 098 updates are formatted correctly using the file layouts provided by NFC, and that each file is saved as a Microsoft Excel file (.xls).
 - Due to the short timeframe for pay raise processing in PP01-2026, NFC does not have available resources to reformat data for any agencies. Improperly formatted data will not be processed and will be returned to the submitter for correction and resubmission.
 - If NFC is generating your pay raise actions, then the deadline above is a *mandatory deadline* for all TMGT table updates. Please remember that you should allow at least one week for the TMGT table updates and verification process to be completed.
 - After the Agency-requested TMGT table updates have been loaded by NFC, Agency approved POCs will be notified via email (with the batch load report for TMGT Table 029 and/or Table 098) once the table entries have been updated and that the table verification process can begin. A one-day turnaround will be allowed for approvals and

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Agencies must submit approvals to the Annual Pay Raise Mailbox, Annual.PayRaise@usda.gov, Subject: Project #79580 – TMGT Verification for DEPT/AGCY. If corrections are required, agencies must notify NFC using the 2026 Annual Pay Raise – Agency Status Report identified in the instructions below.

NOTE: Agency-specific requirements and table updates received after Monday, January 5, 2026 (by 4:00 p.m. CST) may be processed retroactively in a later pay period, as a separate project based on an Interagency Agreement with your Agency. If the President signs the Executive Order late, the deadline will be adjusted accordingly.

IMPORTANT ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- **Agency Status Report**

- The 2026 Annual Pay Raise – Agency Status Report must be used to provide Agency approval/comments relating to TMGT and Production data verification, and to provide feedback to NFC regarding issues throughout the Annual Pay Raise process.
- All Agency verifications will begin by 8:00am CST on the verification dates as identified on the 2026 Annual Pay Raise Activities TIMELINE. If NFC is not ready for verification to begin, a Customer Notification will be issued with an alternate start time.
- The following sections of the Agency Status Report must be completed:
 - *General Information* – Each block of this section must be completed by the Agency approved POC for the 2026 Annual Pay Raise Project.
 - *Approvals* – Each block of this section requires a check of yes or no (If no, the reason must be stated in detail in the “Detailed Description” section). A signature is not required on this form because the email from the Agency Approved POC will serve as official approval for your Agency.
 - *Detailed Description* – This block is included for additional information if needed.
 - This block may be used to provide Agency approval/findings relating to data verification and/or specific feedback regarding any issues encountered throughout the pay raise process.
 - To assist development staff with research, Agencies must provide a detailed description of the issues, along with screen prints, error messages, and examples or the name of at least one employee (with no PII data). Any other supporting documentation should be attached to this report.
- A one-day turnaround will be allowed for approvals. The completed Agency Status Report should be submitted to the Annual Pay Raise Mailbox, Annual.PayRaise@usda.gov, upon completion of data verification activities, Subject: Project #79580 – Agency Status Report for DEPT/AGCY (NFC Control Number).
- **The Agency Status Report may also be used to report ANY discrepancies or issues discovered during the course of the project.** Issues reported to the Annual Pay Raise Mailbox, Annual.PayRaise@usda.gov, must be submitted by the Agency approved POC

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via an Agency Status Report, and should include any supporting information in detail. Issues provided in the body of an email will not be considered as official notification of problems that need to be researched by NFC.

- **Nature of Action Codes and Legal Authority Codes on the Agency Requirements/TMGT Tables Form**

Regarding 1st and 2nd Legal Authority Alpha information entered on the Agency Requirements/TMGT Tables Form, please be reminded that the field is limited in the system to only accept 20 characters. *NFC will only process the first 20 characters entered on the form.*

NOTE: NFC will follow the same process below for 2026, as completed in 2025. Please provide the appropriate forms for 2026.

Personnel Action Processing Information from “2025” (as stated in the 2025 Pay Raise Bulletin dated January 10, 2025)

OPM does not require a separate personnel action for those employees who receive a locality payment or SSR supplement increase along with the Federal pay increase authorized under 5 U.S.C. 5303. Therefore, NFC will automatically generate one personnel action for both the Federal pay increase and locality-based comparability payment/SSR-supplement increase.

In addition to the standard items required for a salary change, the personnel action must include the following data for a salary change personnel action:

- The effective date of the new rate (i.e., January 12, 2025)
- The current pay raise year scheduled salary rate (Do not include the locality-based comparability payment. The Payroll/Personnel System (PPS) will automatically increase the salary amount for employees who are entitled to receive locality pay.)
- NOAC 894, QWM, ZLM, Reg 531.207, and Executive Order Number 14061 for GS employees (e.g., GS, GL, GM, etc.)
- NOAC 894, ZLM, QUB, Executive Order Number 14061; and Reg 530.303(d) for a GS/GL employee whose locality rate exceeds his/her special salary rate (The employee's PRD code will be changed to **0**, and the SSR pay table code will be removed from the PMSO record.)

Note: For employees in the GL pay plan, the SSR pay table code in PMSO will be replaced with the Law Enforcement Officer pay table code of LEO.

- NOAC 894, ZLM, Reg 534.504; and Executive Order Number 14061 for Pay Plans SL and ST, if requested by the Agency
 - NOAC 894, ZLM, and the authority cited by the Agency for Pay Plan AD, if requested by the Agency
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Note: Agencies with special authorities must use the authority specific to their Agency. For detailed instructions, refer to OPM's Guide to Processing Personnel Actions (GPPA), Chapter 17.

- NOAC 894, for PRD 7, with the PRD changed to 0
- NOAC 894, VGR, including spaces for the second code, not the standard NOAC 894, QWM, ZLM (The authority is the same E.O. 14061 with Authorization Date of December 22, 2021)
- Authentication date of the Executive Order (i.e., December 22, 2021)
- **Remark Codes on the Agency Requirements/TMGT Tables Form**
 - NFC will not make any assumptions regarding remark codes. New remark codes can be requested and existing remark codes can be modified if needed. For new, modified, or “customized” remark codes, the suggested literal must be included in Section H, Non-standard Remark Codes, of the Agency Requirements/TMGT Tables Form.
 - Remark Code 499 cannot be used to generate remarks on the Pay Raise documents because it is an Agency fill-in remark, which cannot be programmed. Agencies are to either use an existing remark code and modify the literal, or request to create a new remark code and provide the suggested literal.
 - Agencies should check an option in Section H, Non-standard Remark Codes, of the Agency Requirements/TMGT Tables Form even if NFC is to use the “standard” remark 778, or other special instructions.
 - Additionally, if your Agency submits a special remark literal, the corresponding TMGT remark code should be included (if it exists), and if this is to be updated to a new value, the appropriate instructions should be included for that as well. If no remark code is yet established, then a note should be included in Section H, Non-standard Remark Codes, stating that the code must be established.
 - Failure to submit complete information will result in the Agency Requirements/TMGT Tables Form being rejected.
 - During the process to generate these actions, any special rules will be applied as indicated by the Agency. If no special rules are noted, NFC will follow standard procedure for all other actions.
- **SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS - Federal Wage System Adjustments (Wage Grades)**
 - Federal Wage System (FWS) pay schedules effective in Fiscal Year 2026 (PP20 – PP01) are delayed until determination of the Fiscal Year 2026 pay limitation. When issued, FWS schedules will be retroactive to their normal effective date. NFC will upload FWS pay schedules once available by the Department of Defense (DOD) in Pay PP01, 2026. FWS pay schedules are processed by NFC separately and affected agencies will be notified by separate cover once these salaries have been updated. **NOTE:** Intervening

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actions processed between PP20 and PP01 will result in the FWS pay adjustment falling into suspense. It will be your Agency's responsibility to make the appropriate corrections.

- If there is an Executive Order signed for a 2026 pay raise, then DOD will post the FWS pay scales on their website for Fiscal Year 2026, which begins in October 2025. However, NFC will not automatically process those payments until after December 31, 2025. Payments will be processed during the same pay period as the Annual Pay Raise project's pay adjustments (i.e., PP01, 2026, with an effective date of Wednesday, January 1, 2026). If DOD FWS pay scales do not have an increase for October 2025 through December 2025, then the FWS employees will not get an increase for that timeframe. NFC will have to wait until the FWS pay scales are posted on the DOD website after an Executive Order is signed by the President.
- **Agency-specific wage grade submissions for the FWS process will be handled in conjunction with the 2026 Annual Pay Raise Project. However, Project No. 79579, Annual Agencies FWS Project, must be included on all submissions regarding Agency-specific wage grades.**
 - For Agency-specific wage grade submissions, please follow your normal Agency process for submitting TMGT updates to NFC, along with the procedures below.
 - Pay increase activities for wage grade employees will be accepted on the Agency Requirements/TMGT Tables Form. All Agency requirements relating to Agency-specific wage grades should be documented in detail on the Agency Requirements/TMGT Tables Form, and submitted directly to the Annual Pay Raise Mailbox, Annual.PayRaise@usda.gov for processing. This will allow the Requirements Team the opportunity to review all forms regarding Agency-specific wage grade requirements to be implemented in PP01-2026.
 - For wage grade table updates with less than 50 entries, provide screen prints (via ServiceNow) with the updates clearly marked.
 - For wage grade table updates with 50 or more entries, provide updates as a separate attachment (via the Annual Pay Raise Mailbox, Annual.PayRaise@usda.gov) in the Microsoft Excel file (.xls) layout provided by NFC, and each file should be saved as a Microsoft Excel file (.xls).
 - Agency table updates for wage grade pay schedules W*, H*, K*, and X* (handled internally) should be submitted directly to the Annual Pay Raise Mailbox, Annual.PayRaise@usda.gov.
 - Agencies will receive an email confirmation from the Annual Pay Raise Mailbox, Annual.PayRaise@usda.gov, as acknowledgement of the submission.
 - Once the manual updates are entered by NFC, a second email (with the batch load report for TMGT Table 029 and/or Table 098) will be sent back to the submitter for verification of the table entries.
 - Regarding Agency-specific wage grades, Agencies should be reminded of the following:
 - For verification purposes, wage grade tables can only be verified on the actual TMGT tables in the production environment. There is no test environment set up for Agencies to verify Agency-specific wage grades.

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- An Agency-specific wage grade with an **hourly** rate greater than \$99.99 cannot be batch updated in TMGT Table 029. Specific instructions will be provided separately to impacted Agencies.
 - The update request will need to be submitted to the Annual Pay Raise Mailbox, Annual.PayRaise@usda.gov, along with a screenshot of TMGT Table 029 for manual processing. The **annual** salary amount must be included on the screenshot of TMGT Table 029.
 - For Example, for Pay Table 4445 - Pay Plan WE - Grade 13, NFC cannot batch load the hourly amount of \$104.03 since it is greater than \$99.99. Manual processing will be required, so the annual salary amount of 21711061 (i.e., \$217,110.61) will have to be included in the screenshot of TMGT Table 029.
- **TMGT Table 030 and Table 055 Updates Needed from Agencies**
 - NFC's Pay Raise Team located in Washington, D.C. will send an email request (during the month of December) to Agencies with special instructions regarding Dept/Agency specific table updates for TMGT Table 030 and Table 055. The email will be sent from our D.C. Policy Staff.
 - All Agency personnel who receive these special instructions must respond back to the D.C. Policy Staff by the deadline identified in the email request. Your Agency response should only include the requested information in the body of the email with "NO" attachments.
 - Agency Requirements/TMGT Tables Forms regarding TMGT Table 030 and Table 055 should not be included with your Agency's email response back to the D.C. Policy Staff. All Agency Requirements/TMGT Tables Forms must be submitted by your Agency approved POCs to the Annual Pay Raise Mailbox, Annual.PayRaise@usda.gov, for processing in PP01-2026.
 - The deadline for submitting Agency Requirements/TMGT Tables Forms to the Annual Pay Raise Mailbox, Annual.PayRaise@usda.gov, is identified on the 2026 Annual Pay Raise Activities TIMELINE. If any forms are attached to your Agency's email response back to the D.C. Policy Staff, the forms will not be reviewed to identify your Agency's table requirements.
 - **Please be reminded that all table updates for TMGT Table 030 and Table 055 are not entered by NFC until AFTER the BEAR process completes on pay raise processing weekend (which is the first Saturday in PP01 of the upcoming year). Verification of test data can be done at that time for those Agencies that routinely provide updates for these tables.**
 - **NOTE:** Pay adjustment activities for PP01-2026 may be delayed for your Agency if these instructions for TMGT Table 030 and Table 055 updates are not followed.

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- **OPM Certified Performance Appraisal Systems**

- Agencies should update TMGT Table 005 **as needed**, prior to PP01-2026 on the current OPM certification of performance appraisal systems for SES and ST/SL members. This has a direct impact on the pay caps for SES/SL/ST members (pay cap EX-II if employee is covered by an appraisal system certified under 5 USC 5307(d) or EX-III if not covered).
- TMGT Table 005 controls the coding for OPM Certified Performance Appraisal Systems. It is your Agency's responsibility to update this table via your normal Agency process.

- **Non-Foreign Areas under Non-Foreign Area Retirement Equity Assurance (NAREA) Act**

- *Cost of Living Allowance (COLA)*
 - Agencies that have employees in the non-foreign areas will be paid from COLA percentages shown in TMGT 027. ES/SL/ST employees whose salaries are subject to either the EX-II or EX-III pay cap will have **individual** COLA percentages (published in CPM 2009-27 dated December 30, 2009). In this case, COLA should not be coded on T&As for payment, but should be submitted by the agencies for payment via NFCs Special Payroll Processing System.
- *New Hires to Non-Foreign Areas*
 - Newly assigned ES/ST/SL in the non-foreign areas after 01/02/2010 do not receive locality pay. They can receive the reduced COLA percentage in TMGT 027. This also applies when an employee has changed pay systems and was not an incumbent in an ES/ST/SL position on the date of enactment (on or before 01/02/2010). However, if the employee did not change his/her ES/SL/ST position on or before 01/02/2010 and the function and position are moved to another non-foreign location, e.g., Alaska to Hawaii, the incumbent continues to receive locality pay and the COLA percentage for that position subject to any pay cap.
 - For any ES/ST/SL employee located in the non-foreign areas on or before January 2, 2010, and entitled to receive locality pay, the special employment program code (SEPC) of WL (with locality) is applicable.

- **Standard Form 50s (SF-50s)**

- **Due to the involvement of Personally Identifiable Information (PII) data, SF-50s are no longer being printed by NFC.** It is the policy of the United States Department of Agriculture to protect personal, financial, and employment information from unauthorized disclosure. Our customers have the right to expect that NFC will collect, maintain, use, and disseminate PII and other data only as authorized by law and as necessary to carry out official business.
- **SF-50s (Notification of Personnel Action) will not be printed and mailed to Agencies.** If you need assistance with online viewing via Official Personnel File (eOPF) or the Remote Forms Queuing System (RFQS), please submit your request along with contact information to the Annual Pay Raise Mailbox, Annual.PayRaise@usda.gov.

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- **NFC will only run one pass in PP01, 2026 for SF-50s.** Data for producing SF-50s will be available at the end of PP01, 2026 processing.

All correspondence/questions pertaining to the 2026 Annual Pay Raise should be submitted to the Annual Pay Raise Mailbox, Annual.PayRaise@usda.gov, Subject: Project #79580 – 2026 Annual Pay Raise (Project Documents/Questions).

Also, if you need assistance completing any pay raise forms, please submit your requests and contact information to the Annual Pay Raise Mailbox, Annual.PayRaise@usda.gov, Project #79580 – 2026 Annual Pay Raise (Assistance Needed).