

Calendar

Nov. 4 – Deadline to certify time and attendance before Veterans Day holiday.

Nov. 5 – Arc of Greater Prince William Circle of Support at Hylton High School in Woodbridge.

Nov. 5 – Operation Home Cooking at Walter E. Washington Convention Center, Washington, D.C.

Nov. 11 – Veterans Day holiday.

Nov. 12 – Marine Corps Birthday Ball, Renaissance Hotel, Washington, D.C.

Nov. 15 – SYSCOM Summit from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. at 2210 Williams Street, PEO LS conference room

Nov. 19 – Deadline to schedule use-or-lose annual leave.

Dec. 7 – MCSC Town Hall at Quantico's Little Hall.

The Point

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The Point is an authorized publication for the employees and U.S. military service personnel attached to the Command. Contents are not necessarily the official views of, or endorsed by, the U.S. Government, the Department of Defense, the U.S. Marine Corps, Marine Corps Systems Command or Program Executive Officer Land Systems.

'The Point' submissions

Each month, *The Point* brings Marines, Civilian Marines and families the latest news in Marine Corps Systems Command (MCSC) and Program Executive Officer Land Systems (PEO LS). Topics include security, safety and features from product groups, off-site program managers, deputy commanders, assistant commanders and Strategic Plan Objective Teams. There are also articles about spouses and families. To submit an article for this newsletter, send it to mcscpao@usmc.mil. Submission deadlines are the third Thursday of the month. *The Point* is distributed the first Tuesday of the month. Photographs are not published. Also, be sure to read *Families On Point* attached separately.

Schedule use-or-lose annual leave

By Mary Jane Holland
MCSC Payroll Lead and Management Analyst

It's that time again to ensure that all employees are using up their use-or-lose annual leave before the end of the 2011 leave year.

The following message is from Human Resources and Organizational Management. Note that the maximum amount of annual leave to carry over is 240. If you have any questions, contact me via email or at (703) 432-3135.

This is a reminder that "use-or-lose" annual leave must be scheduled on or before Nov. 19 to avoid automatic forfeiture. For most employees, the maximum amount of annual leave that can be carried forward into the next leave year is 240 hours or 30 days. With very few exceptions, federal regulations require forfeiture of annual leave in excess of 240 hours after the last day of the current leave year, which is Dec. 31.

Forfeited annual leave may be restored for the following reasons:

- * Administrative error: The employing agency determines what constitutes an administrative error.
- * Exigency of the public business: The employing agency determines that an exigency – i.e., an urgent need for the employee to be at work – is of major importance and that excess annual leave cannot be used. An employee's use of earned compensatory time off or credit hours does not constitute an exigency of the public business. If the use of earned compensatory time off or credit hours that are about to expire results in the forfeiture of excess annual leave, the forfeited leave cannot be restored.
- * Sickness: The employing agency determines that the annual leave was forfeited because of a period of absence due to an employee's sickness or injury that occurred late in the leave year or was of such duration that the excess annual leave could not be rescheduled for use before the end of the leave year.

Leave forfeited as a result of an exigency of the public business or sickness may be restored only if the use of leave was scheduled in writing and approved on or before Nov. 19 with subsequent cancellation or disapproval by the supervisor.

To determine if you have "use-or-lose" annual leave, refer to the "use-or-lose" block on your current Leave and Earnings Statement. If the block shows any amount of leave, you should submit an OPM-71, Request for Leave or Approved Absence, for the amount shown as soon as possible, but not later than Nov. 19. Depending on workload requirements, your supervisor will determine whether your leave request can be approved or you may be offered an alternative time when your leave can be taken.

Requests for restoration of forfeited leave should be submitted to the Employee Management Advisory Services Section as soon as possible after Dec. 31. Requests for restoration must include:

- (1) A copy of the OPM-71 showing that leave was scheduled and approved on or before Nov. 19;
- (2) A statement of the business exigency, medical emergency or administrative error involved;
- (3) An explanation as to why subsequent workdays would not allow for use of this leave; and,
- (4) The endorsement of the Staff Agency or Commanding Officer or his or her designee.

More information about the restoration of annual leave can be found at:
<http://www.opm.gov/oca/leave/HTML/RESTORE.asp>.

If you have any questions regarding leave forfeiture and restoration of annual leave, contact Lauren Lafaye at (571) 256-9535 or Nikki Davis at (571) 256-8205.

Accelerated pay schedule for Veteran's Day

The federal government has an accelerated pay date approaching for Veteran's Day. All time and attendance must be certified by close of business Friday Nov. 4. If you would like to approve time and attendance before Nov. 4, you may do so by following the instructions on the SLDCADA News Bulletin.

If you have any questions, contact Mary Jane Holland via e-mail or at (703) 432-3135.

Marine Corps birthday message 2011

*By General James F. Amos
Commandant of the Marine Corps*

For 10 years now, our Corps has been engaged in continuous combat operations against those who threaten the security of America and our allies. We turned the tide in the Anbar province of Iraq and continue to see success today in Southwest Afghanistan. While it has come at a cost... we have much to be proud of.

This past year in operations around the world including humanitarian disaster relief, counter-piracy, theater security cooperation, special operations, counter-insurgency and many more, you continued to solidify our place as America's expeditionary force in readiness. Since the Continental Congress created two battalions of Marines 236 years ago, our legacy as an ever-ready, ever-capable, victory-producing organization remains intact.

Our rich heritage of selfless service and fidelity to nation and to one another lives on in all who currently wear the eagle, globe and anchor – those who have answered the clarion call to duty with remarkable courage, dedication and unshakable resolve that Marines are so well known for. To all Marines – past and present – and especially to our families... I extend my deep gratitude for all you have done and all you continue to do.

As we celebrate our 236th birthday, let us look forward to future challenges – whatever they may be – and reaffirm our pledge to be America's premier crisis response force; to be the first to fight... always ready for the toughest and most challenging assignments.

Happy birthday, Marines, and semper fidelis.

Chairman's Corner: Military retirement

*By Army Gen. Martin E. Dempsey
Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff*

WASHINGTON, Oct. 18, 2011 – In my first blog entry, I discussed the four themes that are important to me as I start my tenure as the 18th Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Among them I mention keeping faith with our Military Family. I was recently reminded of the importance of this when I testified before the House Armed Services Committee with Secretary of Defense Panetta last week.

During that testimony I was asked by several Representatives to comment on the recent recommendations of the Defense Business Board regarding changing the military retirement system to something more like what is available to civilians in the commercial sector.

What I told them and what I want to reiterate here is that I reject the comparison of military to civilian retirement and that I am adamantly opposed to changing the retirement benefits for those who are currently on active duty. We will undoubtedly have to change our retirement system in the future to make it affordable, but we have made a commitment to those currently serving, and I aim to keep it.

Quantico officials review winter weather procedures

Several times each winter, Quantico receives enough snow and ice accumulation to negatively impact on the normal operations of the base. At these times, the base status (weather code) is modified to ensure the safety of personnel and allow for snow clearing to be conducted to return the base to normal operations as quickly as possible.

Whenever conditions warrant, a weather call will be made by the Base Commander based on the current and projected conditions. Mission requirements, condition of the base and local roads, status of the federal government and other factors are all considered in this decision.

During duty hours, weather advisories will be provided to the commands and tenant activities, and the decision whether or not to release personnel early will be made accordingly. After duty hours, when inclement weather will impact operations for the following day, every effort will be made to make the weather call before 4 a.m.

There are four possible weather calls:

Code Green: The base is open, and employees are expected to report to work on time.

Code Yellow: The base is open on time. Reasonable delays for reporting to work are excused. Unscheduled leave is authorized.

Code Blue, xx a.m.: The base is open at a specific time (xx). Unscheduled leave is authorized.

Code Red: Weather conditions are severe and the base is closed for normal operation. Only emergency and essential personnel are expected to report to work.

The weather code will be disseminated as follows:

- MCBQ Hotline: (703) 784-3638
- MCBQ Web site: (www.quantico.usmc.mil)
- Local television and radio stations
- Mass Notification System e-mail

As a reminder and in accordance with MCBO 11210.1C, tenant commands and activities are responsible for clearing their building entrances, walkways and sidewalks. De-icer, salt and shovels can be obtained through ServMart.

Personnel must not park on designated snow emergency routes until snow clearing operations are complete.

No near-term changes to DOD tuition assistance policy

Although no changes to the tuition assistance policy will be made in the near term, defense officials stated the tuition assistance program will be considered as part of the holistic review of the military compensation package.

Department reminds troops of member-designated benefits

In their ongoing review of military benefits in connection with the repeal of “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell,” Defense Department officials have now identified a total of 14 benefits where members may designate beneficiaries of their choosing, regardless of sexual orientation.

Campaign wants ‘Veteran’ put back in Veterans Day

A new campaign is working to put the “veteran” back into Veterans Day and to rally public awareness of the sacrifices made by injured veterans and their caregivers.