



**Internal
Revenue
Service**

Benefits of An IRS Career

**Human Capital Office
Linking Human Achievement with Business Results
May 2009**

INTRODUCTION

This tool provides employees with a readily available reference guide of a consolidated list of all the benefits and programs available to IRS employees. It covers topics from compensation, worklife and family balance, performance and recognition, hiring and placement, learning and skills enhancement, workforce restructuring and employment benefits.

The tool also provides links to detailed information on specific benefits and programs. You can review all of the benefits at a glance, focus on specific benefits, or obtain detailed information on topics that interest you.

Information contained in this tool is general in nature. If you have specific questions and need assistance contact the [Employee Resource Center \(ERC\)](#). In addition, the [Employee Personnel Resource Guide](#) provides comprehensive benefits related guidance.

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Human Capital Office
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BENEFITS OF AN IRS CAREER

COMPENSATION			
Benefit	Description	Target Population	Application / Strategy
<u>Competitive Salary plus Locality Pay</u>	Basic salary with annual raises and geographically determined locality pay.	All Employees	Congress and the President approve salaries and determine annual salary schedules and locality raises. For current salary tables, http://www.opm.gov/ , and select salary and wages.
<u>Annual Leave</u>	Employee may earn and use vacation days.	All employees on an appointment for 90 days or longer	New full time employees earn 4 hours for every pay period up to 3 years which equals 13 days a year. Accruals increase with length of service.
<u>Sick Leave (SL) - Personal and Family Care</u>	Employees may earn and use sick leave in accordance with several entitlements.	All employees on an appointment for 90 days or longer	Employees can request to use their accumulated SL for either personal or family care.
<u>Military Leave</u>	Employees are entitled to time off at full pay for certain types of active or inactive duty in the National Guard or as a Reserve of the Armed Forces.	Any full-time or part-time Federal civilian employee whose appointment is not limited to 1 year is entitled to military leave	Law provides that employees do not have to use their own leave for military purposes.
<u>Family and Medical Leave (FMLA)</u>	Under the Act of 1993, employees are entitled to a total of up to 12 workweeks during any 12 month period for specified purposes (birth, adoption, serious health condition, etc).	All employees who have completed at least 12 months of service	To provide a more family friendly workplace where employees can care for themselves and their family with certain job benefits and protection.
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Benefit	Description	Target Population	Application / Strategy
<u>Court Leave</u>	Employees are entitled to paid time off without charge to leave for service as a juror or witness.	All Employees	May be used on an ad hoc basis.
<u>Holidays</u>	Ten official holidays that are non-work days with pay. <u>List of holidays.</u>	All employees, dependent on work schedule	Employees receive their rate of basic pay for the applicable number of holiday hours.
<u>Senior Executive Service (SES) and Senior Level/Senior Technical (SL/ST) Annual Leave Accrual</u>	Employees in senior level positions will accrue annual leave at the rate of 1 day (8 hours) for each full biweekly pay period beginning with entrance on duty.	New employees in SES and SL/ST positions and pay systems	Section 202(b) of the Act adds a new paragraph (f) to 5 U.S.C. 6303 to provide this information.
<u>Leave Without Pay (LWOP)</u>	Employees may request (LWOP) which is a temporary nonpay status and absence from duty that is granted at the employee's request.	All Employees	Some employees with low or no leave balances may need to be away from the workplace.
<u>Excused Absence</u>	Approved paid absence from work which does not affect pay or leave balances.	All employees, dependent on work schedule	A number of situations may warrant excused absence, i.e., voting, blood donation, office closing due to inclement weather, etc.
<u>Excused Absence- Examination</u> <u>Back to Top</u>	Excused paid absence without charge to leave for specialized professional examination/certification for admission to the Bar, CPA, etc.	All Employees	Employees administratively excused to take professional examinations up to four times, if necessary. Includes travel time on day of examination and required oral interview, if applicable.

Benefit	Description	Target Population	Application / Strategy
Alternative Work Schedules (AWS)-5/4/9, 4/10, Flexitour with Credit Hours	Work schedule options in addition to traditional fixed work schedule.	All Employees	Flexitour with credit hours: employees and manager establish tour of duty, with ability to earn up to three credit hours per regularly scheduled workday; full-time employees may carry over maximum 24 credit hours per pay period. Compressed work schedules of 5/4-9 and 4/10 also available.
Part-Time Work Schedule	Regularly work schedule between 16 and 32 hours per week.	All employees, subject to approval	Pay, deductions, leave, and benefits are pro-rated based upon hours worked. Eligible for health benefits, with premiums based on hours worked.
Job Sharing	Part-time employment where two or more employees share a single full-time permanent job.	All employees, subject to approval	Job sharers normally perform the same duties. Work schedules may include split days or split weeks. Rules governing part-time employment apply.
40 Hour Work Week	Basic workweek and normal tour of duty within administrative workweek is five, eight hour workdays.	All Employees	Work in excess of 8 hours in a day or 40 hours in a week that is ordered and approved by management is compensated.
Seasonal Work Schedule	Annually recurring periods of work less than 12 months each year.	Designated positions as determined by management	Management determines the length of the season, subject to the nature of the work, which is recurring, at least six months during calendar year. Seasonal employees receive full benefits as defined by employment agreement.
Law Enforcement Availability Pay (LEAP) Back to Top	Compensation for unscheduled duty in excess of 40 hour workweek.	Criminal Investigators	LEAP applies to full-time Criminal Investigators who are certified as performing or available to perform law enforcement work to meet the needs of the Service for a specified number of hours of overtime annually may earn an additional 25% of his or her adjusted annual salary. Part-time Criminal Investigators do not receive LEAP.

Benefit	Description	Target Population	Application / Strategy
<u>Recruitment, Relocation, and Retention Bonuses</u>	For difficult/hard to fill positions, flexibility to pay bonuses for recruiting new employees; relocating current employees; and retaining current employees.	Designated positions as determined by management	As per Deputy Commissioner approval, any amount up to 25% of basic pay. For retention bonus, employee must have unique or critical skills; loss would impact mission-critical objectives; employee would leave without incentive.
<u>Compensatory Time Off for Travel</u>	Compensatory time for travel ordered outside regularly scheduled workweek.	All Employees	Employees may be entitled to earn compensatory time off for travel outside duty hours when ordered and approved by management in advance of travel.
<u>Annual Leave Enhancements</u>	Employees may receive higher accruals for non-federal or uniformed service experience if they meet certain criteria.	New Employees	Section 202(a) of the FWFA of 2004 (Public Law 108-411) established the authority to credit non-federal work or uniformed service experience in determining the annual leave accrual rate for newly appointed or reappointed employees.
<u>Critical Pay Authority</u>	Additional compensation for certain critical positions.	Select positions classified above GS-15	Allows higher rate of pay for positions that require a very high level of expertise in a scientific, technical, professional or administrative field that are critical to the IRS mission.
<u>Special Salary Rates (SSR)</u>	Higher rates of pay for specific categories of employees.	GS and GM employees in specific occupations and GL-3 through 10 Law Enforcement Officers	May be established for any occupation, series or class of positions where OPM determines there is a significant difficulty in recruiting or retaining well-qualified employees.
<u>Within Grade Increase (WGI)</u>	Periodic increase in rate of basic pay.	GS, GL and GM employees	Periodic increase in an employee's rate of basic pay from one step to the next higher step or for a GM employee, the value of a step increase.
<u>Paybands and Performance-Based Increase (PBI)</u> <u>Back to Top</u>	IRS Broadband System	Managerial Positions	Compensates employees consistent with their performance.

Benefit	Description	Target Population	Application / Strategy
<u>Lump Sum Annual Leave</u>	Employees will receive a lump-sum payment for accumulated and accrued annual leave when he or she separates from Federal service or enters on active duty in the armed forces and elects to receive a lump-sum payment.	All separating employees	Upon separation from IRS service, compensates employees for earned annual leave.
<u>Public Transportation Subsidy Program (PTSP)</u>	Employees will receive an employer-provided fare subsidy to apply toward their monthly transit costs paid from appropriated funding, using stipulated guidelines.	All Employees	Government-wide and Treasury guidelines apply. Such subsidies improve air quality, reduce traffic congestion, and conserve energy by reducing the number of single occupancy vehicles on the road. <u>FAQs</u>
<u>Travel Gainsharing</u>	Incentive Award	All employees experiencing foreign and domestic TDY travel	Allows employees, who save the government money while traveling, to receive a portion of that money earned as an award.
<u>Overtime Pay and Compensatory Time</u>	Compensation for work in excess of 8 hours in a day or 40 hours in an administrative workweek.	All employees, excluding those receiving LEAP	Provides compensation to employees ordered, approved and who work overtime duty and on holidays.
WORKLIFE AND FAMILY BALANCE			
<u>Telework (Flexiplace, Telecommuting)</u> <u>Back to Top</u>	Voluntary program to work at an approved, flexible location such as home or satellite office sites with permission of management.	All employees (excluding Executives)	Management option. Does not change the terms and conditions of appointment and employees must enter into an annual <u>Flexiplace Work Agreement</u> .

Benefit	Description	Target Population	Application / Strategy
<u>Leave Share (Leave Bank and Leave Transfer)</u>	Assistance to those facing financial difficulties due to a severe, unforeseen personal/family medical emergency.	All employees	Employees contribute unused accrued annual leave (sick leave donations prohibited) to join the Leave Bank. Donations used by employees who are approved Leave Transfer recipients.
<u>Employee Assistance and Worklife Referral Services Program (EAP)</u>	Services to help families overcome stressful life issues and personal concerns.	All employees	Confidential and cost-free to employees. Components include EAP, FamilySource®, LegalConnect®, FinancialConnect SM and Guidance Resources Online SM
<u>Health Services (includes Automated External Defibrillator (AED) and Medical Review Officer Services (MRO))</u>	Variety of health services including Basic Occupational Health, Health Risk Appraisal, Smoking Cessation, Flu Vaccines, AED and MRO Background Investigations services.	All employees	Under a national interagency agreement with Federal Occupational Health, a division of the Public Health Service, access to some form of health services is available to all employees by visiting a FOH health unit.
<u>Drug Free Workplace</u>	Program to provide a drug free workplace through policy, education, treatment & testing.	All employees	Established to meet requirements of Executive Order 12564 .
<u>Child Care Centers</u>	Licensed centers providing day care.	All employees	Centers located in many IRS Federal Buildings.
<u>Fitness Centers</u>	Centers providing fitness equipment and services.	All employees	Centers disbursed nationwide. Employees pay no membership fee.
<u>Employee Suggestion Program</u>	Program providing an opportunity to present constructive proposals that are believed to directly contribute to the economy, efficiency, or effectiveness of IRS operations.	All employees	Employees are encouraged to submit ideas and management agrees to consider granting an appropriate award for those adopted.
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PERFORMANCE AND RECOGNITION			
Benefit	Description	Target Population	Application / Strategy
<u>Performance Awards/Bonuses</u>	Monetary awards granted to qualifying employees based on performance appraisal ratings.	All employees	Eligibility and amounts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bargaining unit employees - governed by negotiated procedures. • IR pay system employees – determined by Service-wide policy. • Other employees – determined by business unit policy.
<u>Special Act Awards</u>	Monetary awards granted to recognize superior employee accomplishments.	All employees	May be granted at management discretion in accordance with business unit policy.
<u>Time-Off Awards</u>	Any monetary award may be granted as cash, time-off, or a combination.	All employees	May be granted at management discretion. Provides an option for the form of the award.
<u>Quality Step Increase (QSI)</u>	Faster than normal within grade pay increases.	GS employees, Steps 1-9	Employees who are rated outstanding and who meet all of the criteria will be granted a QSI, or at the employee's option, 3% of salary award in lieu of QSI.
<u>Percentage of Salary Awards in Lieu of QSI</u>	Monetary award alternative to a QSI.	GS employees	Employees who elect 3% of salary awards may request that those awards be processed entirely as time-off awards.
<u>Bilingual Awards</u>	Recognize employees' use of bilingual skills on a regular basis.	All employees	One award may be granted annually if use of bilingual skills is not otherwise compensated through another award.
<u>Annual Employee Performance Appraisals</u>	Regularly scheduled mandatory annual performance appraisals.	All employees	Required by the IRS Performance Management System. Provides employees regularly scheduled performance feedback providing them critical information to improve their job performance. Supports employees' career ladder promotions and merit promotion.

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HIRING AND PLACEMENT			
Benefit	Description	Target Population	Application / Strategy
<u>Superior Qualifications Appointment</u>	<u>Ability to hire a new employee and set pay at greater than minimum rate of the grade/payband.</u>	New hires	Use of this authority is based upon the superior qualifications/specialized skills of an applicant <u>and</u> critical need of the BOD. Recruitment incentives must first be considered.
LEARNING AND SKILLS ENHANCEMENT			
<u>New Recruit Curricula</u>	Comprehensive curricula have been developed for key recruit job occupations; examples include Revenue Agent, Revenue Officer, and Tax Compliance Officer. Curricula include series of classroom, on-line, and on-the-job training.	New recruits in specified job occupations	Required training as part of selection for key positions.
<u>Career Development</u>	Commitment to upward mobility and career development; resources available to assist employees in career self-assessment, career research, and development of plans to accomplish career goals.	All employees	Employees have access to managerial assistance and self-instructional materials and courseware which provide career planning assistance. Opportunities for web-based distance learning; special courses taught by contract instructors; <u>Continuing Professional (CPE) and other career development activities are also available.</u>
<u>Managerial Development</u>	The leadership curriculum (managerial development program) is essential in developing effective leaders at all levels and supports succession planning.	All managers	Addresses core managerial competencies to train and develop new managers and assist existing managers in acquiring critical skills to manage effectively. In addition to formal classroom training, includes Readiness Programs; formal coaching and mentoring; and cross-functional leadership opportunities.
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Benefit	Description	Target Population	Application / Strategy
<u>Readiness Programs</u>	Readiness Programs identify critical leader requirements, identify current leaders as “ready now” with a high profile for leading the organization, and identify those with leader aspirations and interests.	Non-managers and managers with aspirations to higher levels of management and leadership	Programs include: Frontline Leader Readiness Program (FLRP), Department Manager Readiness Program (DMRP), Senior Manager Readiness Program (SMRP), and Executive Readiness Program (XR). Participants are typically selected competitively. Individuals are provided with developmental challenges and opportunities that increase their skills and knowledge to prepare for the next step in their careers.
<u>Tuition Assistance Program</u>	Tuition assistance to learn or enhance existing skills as related to current job duties or to assist in furthering IRS career. Replaces the former Human Resources Investment Fund (HRIF).	Non-probationary employees rated Fully Successful or higher, who have worked for the IRS for one full year	Employees may apply for reimbursement for up to four qualifying college/university courses per fiscal year. While there is no dollar limit for the total cost of these courses, there may be tax implications.
WORKFORCE RESTRUCTURING AND OPERATIONS			
<u>Severance Pay</u>	Compensation provided to displaced employees involuntarily separated for reasons other than cause.	Employees impacted by downsizing or restructuring	Mandatory for employees being separated involuntarily, not for cause, and not qualifying for an annuity.
<u>IRS Priority Placement Program (IRSPPP)</u>	Priority placement for career, career- conditional employees involuntarily reduced in grade and/or pay.	Employees impacted by downsizing or restructuring	Must register. Referral for positions at the same (or intervening) grade/pay as that from which demoted for 2 years.
<u>Voluntary Early Retirement Authority (VERA)</u>	May allow employees in specified organizational units and geographic locations lacking age and service for optional retirement to retire early.	Employees impacted by downsizing or restructuring	Authority approved by OPM. Used to encourage employees in impacted orgs and specified positions to leave IRS voluntarily, reducing impact of downsizing.
<u>Voluntary Separation Incentive Pay (VSIP)</u>	Allows employees to separate and receive an incentive payment.	Employees impacted by downsizing or restructuring	Authority approved by OPM. Maximum of \$25,000. Used to encourage employees in impacted orgs and specified positions to leave IRS voluntarily, reducing impact of downsizing.
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Benefit	Description	Target Population	Application / Strategy
<u>Career Transition Assistance Plan (CTAP)</u>	Career Transition Assistance Plan. Selection priority for agency vacancies. (Treasury)	Employees impacted by downsizing or restructuring	Selection priority for surplus or displaced employees with performance ratings of at least fully successful or equivalent for vacancies at or below the grade level from which being separated. Must apply for vacancies and be found well qualified.
<u>Interagency Career Transition Assistance Plan (ICTAP)</u>	Interagency Career Transition Assistance Plan. Selection priority for Federal government vacancies outside of the agency.	Employees impacted by downsizing or restructuring	Selection priority for employees in tenure groups 1 and 2 in receipt of Reduction in Force (RIF) separation notices or notices of proposed removal. Must apply for vacancies and be found well qualified. Eligibility for 1 year after separation.
<u>Reemployment Priority List (RPL)</u>	Priority selection for former agency employees separated by RIF or fully recovered from a compensable injury after more than 1 year. (Treasury)	Employees impacted by downsizing or restructuring	Register within 30 calendar days after RIF separation date or after leaving workers' compensation rolls. Offered the same rep. rate and work schedule as position at separation or held when went on compensation.
<u>Reassignment Preference Notice (RPN)</u>	Reassignment Preference Notice. Selection priority for IRS vacancies.	Employees impacted by downsizing or restructuring	Employees receive selection priority for permanent vacancies at or below permanent position of record, at the same work schedule within or outside the local commuting area.
<u>Grade or Pay Retention</u>	Benefit for employees who meet regulatory criteria and are directly impacted by a downsizing or restructuring initiative.	Employees impacted by downsizing or restructuring	Grade retention for 2 years. Those ineligible for grade retention may receive pay retention. <u>HCO Policy Number 74</u> covers grade and pay retention as a mitigation strategy. Must apply and be selected for a change to lower-graded position no lower than 3 grade levels or intervals below position of record.
<u>Job Swaps – Article 19</u>	Mitigation Strategy as identified in Article 19, Section 5 C, of the National Agreement between the IRS and NTEU.	Employees impacted by Reduction in Force (RIF)	If OPM authority is granted for VSIP, job swaps will be an available mitigation strategy for RIF impacted employees.
<u>Job Swaps – Article 15</u> <u>Back to Top</u>	This is a benefit for employees as identified in Article 15, Section 7, of the National Agreement between the IRS and NTEU.	All employees	These job swaps are employee initiated and are solely for the benefit of the employees involved.

EMPLOYMENT BENEFITS			
Benefit	Description	Target Population	Application / Strategy
<u>Retirement</u>	The Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS), CSRS-Offset Plan, and the Federal Employees' Retirement System (FERS) are retirement plans which provide eligible Federal employees with a retirement annuity, paid at certain intervals for life, upon reaching the required age and service eligibility dates.	All employees eligible for a retirement plan	<u>This is a Federal Employment Benefit administered by the Office of Personnel Management under laws/regulations set forth by Congress.</u>
<u>Retirement (Social Security)</u>	Social Security Retirement Benefit is a Monthly Annuity.	All employees who contribute to Social Security (typically CSRS-Offset and FERS employees)	This is a Federal employment Benefit administered by the Social Security Administration under laws/regulations set forth by Congress. For specific information: <u>http://www.ssa.gov/</u>
<u>Retirement (Medicare)</u>	Federal medical insurance to cover hospital costs, doctor costs, and drug costs.	All employees	Medicare coverage begins at age 65 to 67 based on the year of birth. Medicare Part A (hospital costs) available to all employees who pay 1.45% Medicare deduction. Employees may sign up for Part B (medical) on SSA web site. Each employee receives an Annual Statement of Benefits reflecting Medicare benefits from National Finance Center.
<u>Premium Conversion</u>	Reduces the amount of taxable income by amount of the employee's health insurance premium providing savings to employee.	All employees	This is a Federal Employment Benefit administered by the Office of Personnel Management under laws/regulations set forth by Congress. Premium conversion benefits became effective Oct. 8, 2000, for all employees unless they waive the benefit during FEHB Open Season.
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Benefit	Description	Target Population	Application / Strategy
<u>Thrift Savings Plan (TSP)</u>	A retirement savings and investment plan for Federal Employees similar to a 401(k) plan.	All employees, who are eligible for a retirement plan	This is a Federal Employment Benefit administered by the Federal Employees Retirement Thrift Board under laws/regulations set forth by Congress. TSP is the most important part of a FERS employee's retirement. <u>Specific TSP information.</u>
<u>Health Insurance (FEHB)</u>	The Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB) Program is the largest employer-sponsored group health insurance program in the world.	All eligible employees (Perm, Part-time, Temp appointments exceeding a year, seasonals certified to work 6 months or more each year)	This is a Federal Benefit administered by the Office of Personnel Management under laws/regulations set forth by Congress. Employees must sign up for health insurance during Open Season or within 60 days of becoming eligible or experiencing a qualifying life event. Employees must use Employee Express to make changes unless new to the Service. <u>Eligibility for FEHB</u>
<u>Dental and Vision (FEDVIP)</u>	The Federal Employees Dental and Vision Insurance Program (FEDVIP) allows eligible employees to purchase supplemental dental and vision insurance on a group basis.	All eligible employees (Permanent, Part-time, Temporary appointments exceeding a year, seasonals certified to work 6 months or more each year)	This is a Federal Employment Benefit administered by the Office of Personnel Management under laws/regulations set forth by Congress. http://www.opm.gov/insure/dental/ http://www.opm.gov/insure/vision/index.asp
<u>Flexible Spending Account (FSA)</u> <u>Back to Top</u>	A Flexible Spending Account (FSA) is a tax-favored program that allows employees to pay for eligible out-of-pocket health care and dependent care expenses with pre-tax dollars. By using pre-tax dollars to pay for eligible health care and dependent care expenses, an FSA gives you an immediate discount on these expenses that equals the taxes you would otherwise pay on that money.	All employees	This is a Federal Employment Benefit administered by the Office of Personnel Management under laws/regulations set forth by Congress. FSAFEDS offers three types of accounts. A <u>Health Care FSA (HCFSA)</u> A <u>Dependent Care FSA (DCFSA)</u> and <u>Limited Expense Health Care FSA (LEX HCFSA)</u>

Benefit	Description	Target Population	Application / Strategy
<u>Long Term Care Insurance (FLTCIP)</u>	The Federal Long Term Care Insurance Program (FLTCIP) is a voluntary program, administered by the Long Term Care Partners.	All employees	Long term care is care that you need if you can no longer perform everyday tasks by yourself due to a chronic illness, injury, disability or the aging process. Long term care includes the supervision you might need due to a severe cognitive impairment.
<u>Life Insurance (FEGLI)</u>	The Federal Employees' Group Life Insurance (FEGLI) Program is the largest group life insurance program in the world.	All eligible employees (Perm, Part-time, temp appointments exceeding a year, seasonal certified to work 6 months or more each year)	FEGLI provides group term life insurance, which does not build up cash value or paid-up value. FEGLI has four components: Basic Life Insurance and three Optional Insurances: Standard, Additional, and Family coverage. You must have Basic coverage in order to elect any of the options. Federal employees are automatically covered by Basic life insurance at the time of employment, unless their position excludes coverage by law or regulation.
<u>Designations of Beneficiary</u>	Agency provides designation forms to employees upon request for unpaid compensation, Thrift Savings Plan, Life Insurance, and Retirement.	All employees	Designating beneficiaries is the act of specifying to which person(s) any money payable to you is to be paid when you die. If you do not file a designation, the benefits are paid under the <u>Federal Order of Precedence</u> . The money that you can designate from your Federal benefits is your unpaid salary and lump sum annual leave, Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) account, Federal Employees' Group Life Insurance (FEGLI), and Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS) or Federal Employees' Retirement System (FERS) accounts. http://www.opm.gov/insure/life/beneficiary/designate.asp
<u>Workers' Compensation</u> <u>Back to Top</u>	Workers' Compensation is a combination of medical and/or monetary benefits you receive when you sustain a work-related injury or disease (specifically defined as either a traumatic injury or an occupational disease or a recurrence of either of these).	All Employees	The Workers' Compensation Program is based on the Federal Employees' Compensation Act (FECA). The goal of the program is to ensure that all employees who sustain temporary or permanent disabilities from a work-related injury or disease receive appropriate workers' compensation benefits and opportunities to return to full or limited duty employment.