



## **TOURS OF DUTY, PAY, AND BENEFITS FOR MEAT ACCEPTANCE SPECIALISTS AND CHICAGO MERCANTILE EXCHANGE LIVESTOCK CLERKS**

### **Purpose**

This instruction defines tours of duty, pay, and benefits for Meat Acceptance Specialists (MAS) and Chicago Mercantile Exchange Livestock Clerks (CMELC).

### **MAS Appointment**

MAS are hired under the Excepted Authority, and their first appointment will not exceed 1 year (1,280-hour limit). Before the first appointment is completed, the Assistant Director (AD) will decide whether to extend or terminate the appointment and notify the Livestock and Seed (LS) Program Administrative Office (AO). If extended, the second appointment will not exceed 1 year (1,280-hour limit). Before the second appointment is completed, the AD will decide to terminate employment, extend appointment with an Intermittent tour of duty not to exceed 1 year (1,039 hours), or convert to an Indefinite tour of duty (1,280 hour/year limit) and in any case, notify the LS Program AO.

**Note:** A service year begins on the original date of the appointment and ends a year later.

### **Mixed Tour Program (MTP)**

AD will review the MTP Fact Sheet (Attachment A) with the employee when hired. The employee must sign the Mixed Tour Work Schedule Certification (Attachment B) and indicate whether they agree to participate. If the employee agrees, hours worked in each pay period will determine the tour of duty. If the employee works only 1 week of a pay period, they will be coded as an Intermittent. Employees who work at least 16 hours in both weeks of a pay period will be coded as part-time. Employees who work 80 hours of base pay will be coded as full-time. If the employee does not agree, the tour of duty will be Intermittent and they may not work a full-time or part-time schedule. Using an employee on an improper tour of duty is a violation of pay regulations.

### **Benefits**

1. Overtime and Holiday Pay. MAS who work a full-time tour of duty receive premium pay on the same basis as other full-time employees.
2. Travel Time and Mileage. MAS receive travel time and mileage the same as other full-time employees.
3. Leave.

- a. MAS on an intermittent tour **do not** earn annual or sick leave.
  - b. MAS on a part-time tour earn leave based on their years of service as follows:
    1. Up to 3 years (6,261 hours), accrue 1 hour annual and sick leave for every 20 hours worked.
    2. More than 3-years (6,262 hours or more) but less than 15 years, accrue 1 hour of annual leave for every 13 hours worked and 1 hour of sick leave for every 20 hours worked.
    3. More than 15 years, accrue 1 hour of annual leave for every 10 hours worked and 1 hour of sick leave for every 20 hours worked.
    4. The T&A computer system will automatically compute the employee's leave. Those hours that are not divisible may be carried to the next pay period providing the employee earns leave that pay period. When the employee returns to an intermittent tour, extra hours are dropped.
  - c. MAS working a full-time tour accrue 4, 6, and 8 hours of annual leave based on years of service and 4 hours of sick leave each pay period. Full-time or part-time status MAS may request and use such leave in the same way as meat graders.
  - d. MAS on an intermittent tour do not earn and can not use leave.
  - e. When converted back to intermittent status, MAS may receive a lump sum payment for their annual leave. Unused sick leave will continue to be credited to the MAS, but it can be used only when the MAS is in a full-time or part-time status.
4. Life/Health Insurance. MAS are entitled to life and health insurance when converted to an indefinite appointment providing they are assured of working at least 6 months of the year. Personnel will make insurance eligibility determinations, and notify the employee when entitled to insurance benefits.
  5. Promotions. GS-7 is the full performance level for a 1981 Series meat acceptance specialist. MAS hired below the GS-7 level may be promoted to the GS-7 level. Because 1981 is a single-interval series, MAS are promoted one grade level at a time. To be eligible for promotion, MAS must complete 2,087 hours (1 year) of work and perform satisfactorily. Only base hours are counted for promotion purposes. The MAS and AD are responsible for tracking of the number of hours worked. When the employee is eligible, the AD should send a letter recommending promotion to the AO.
  6. Within-Grade Increase. MAS that are converted to an indefinite appointment and meet the eligibility requirements are entitled to within-grade increases. Time worked before conversion to an indefinite appointment counts toward the waiting time for a within-grade increase. On conversion to an indefinite appointment, MAS who worked the equivalent of 1-year will be converted to step 2 of their applicable grade. Waiting time between grades is counted in days (260 days = 1 year). The waiting time between steps, 2, 3, and 4 is 260 days. The waiting time between 5, 6, and 7 is 520 days, and 880 days between 8, 9, and 10. The National Finance Center automatically generates a form AD-

658, Within-Grade Increase Record which is sent to the OFO for verification and approval. The OFO must keep track of the number of days worked by each employee to determine the effective date of the within-grade increase. Enter the date on the Form AD-658. Besides working the required number of days, the employee must perform at a satisfactorily level. If the employee is denied a within-grade increase, appropriate steps must be taken to correct the performance or separate the employee.

## **CMELC**

CMELC are hired under the Excepted Authority, and can only have an intermittent tour of duty. CMELC are appointed for 1 year, and are limited to working 1,039 hours each year. Appointments may be renewed in increments of 1 year. The AD should contact the LS Program AO before the "not to exceed" date to authorize extension or termination. CMELC are not eligible for the MTP.

## **Benefits**

1. Pay. CMELC do not have a basic tour of duty; therefore, they work any time of the day and day of the week, including holidays, at their base hourly rate. CMELC earn overtime pay only for hours worked in excess of 8 hours each day or 40 hours each week. CME livestock clerks are paid for a holiday only if they work on the holiday.
2. Travel Time and Mileage. CMELC get the same travel time and mileage as full-time employees.
3. Leave. CMELC are not entitled to leave.
4. Health and Life Insurance. CMELC are not entitled to health and life insurance.
5. Promotions. GS-3 CMELC are at the full performance level and are not eligible for promotions or within-grade increases.

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<a href="#">Mixed Tour Program Fact Sheet Attachment A</a>	<a href="#">Mixed Tour Work Schedule Certification Attachment B</a>

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## Attachment A

### MIXED TOUR PROGRAM Fact Sheet

The LS Program, MGC Branch's Mixed Tour Program provides flexibility to change an employee's work schedule to accommodate workload requirements. A mixed tour work schedule is proper when the workload of a position involves alternating periods of full-time, part-time, and/or intermittent work. The mixed tour program will ensure that employees are properly utilized and paid for their work. The following are terms frequently associated with the mixed-tour work schedule:

1. Administrative workweek - A period of 7 consecutive calendar days, Sunday through Saturday.
2. Regularly scheduled work – Work that is scheduled in advance of the administrative workweek.
3. Tour of duty – The hours of the day (daily tour of duty) and the days of an administrative workweek (weekly tour of duty) that constitute a regularly scheduled administrative workweek.
4. Full-time work schedule – The employee works a basic administrative workweek of 40 hours.
5. Part-time work schedule -An employee works at least 16 hours but not more than 32 hours a week. **Exception: Individuals employed on a temporary basis are not subject to this rule.**
6. Intermittent work schedule – A tour used when the work is so sporadic and unpredictable that specific work hours and work days cannot be scheduled in advance of the administrative workweek.
7. Mixed tour work schedule - The employee's work schedule may involve alternating periods of full-time, part-time, and/or intermittent work during the year.

The aforementioned work schedules may apply to permanent career, career conditional, and temporary Schedule A, 1280-hour limit appointments.

## **Mixed Tour Work Schedule Certification**

Employees must certify that they have read the mixed tour program Fact Sheet, have had their questions answered, understand that a mixed tour work schedule may involve alternating periods of full-time, part-time, and/or intermittent work during the year. (See Attachment B.) The certification entitled "Official Personnel Folder" must be completed and returned to the employee's supervisor. The completed certification will be filed in the employees Official Personnel Folder along with SF-50 Notification of Personnel Action that documents the employee's assignment to the mixed tour program.

## **Temporary Appointment (Schedule A, 1280 hour limit) Benefits**

1. Retirement Employees working under the mixed tour program are ineligible for CSRS/FERS retirement coverage regardless of work schedule. Exception: Mixed tour employees are eligible for retirement coverage if the employment follows employment from a covered position and the employee's time off an agency's role did not exceed 3 days.
2. Social Security Coverage Employees are eligible for coverage regardless of the work schedule.
3. Health Benefits Coverage Temporary employees on a full-time or part-time schedule who have completed 1 year of continuous employment, with no more than 5-days break in service, are eligible for health benefits. The employees must pay the full premium amount with no Government/Agency contributions. Temporary employees on an intermittent work schedule are not eligible for health benefits coverage.
4. Life Insurance Employees are not eligible for life insurance coverage. Exception: If the temporary appointment follows employment from a covered position and the time off the Agency's roles did not exceed 3 days, coverage may continue, if the employee is expected to return to his/her covered position.
5. Annual and Sick Leave Employees assigned to a full-time or part-time work schedule can earn annual and sick leave. When the employee returns to an intermittent status and is not expected to return to full-time or part-time status, resigns, or is terminated, he/she may get a lump sum for unused annual leave. To get the lump sum the employee must submit an AD-581, Lump-Sum Leave or Compensatory Time Payment form. Unused sick leave is held in abeyance until the employee returns to a regularly scheduled tour, or separates and forfeits the leave after a 3-year break in service.

## **Permanent Competitive Appointment (career/career-conditional) Benefits**

1. Retirement Employees are eligible for retirement coverage regardless of work schedule.
2. Health and Life Insurance Employees are eligible for health and life insurance coverage, if he/she works six months or more during each calendar year. At the end of the year, the employee's work schedule will be reviewed and if he/she has worked six months during the year and if he/she is expected to work at least six months each year the employee will be provided with appropriate enrollment forms. Employees on an intermittent tour of duty are ineligible for health and life insurance coverage, unless the

intermittent employment follows employment from a covered position and the time off an agency's roll did not exceed 3 days. For life insurance coverage, the employee will be eligible only if expected to return to his/her covered position on a full-time or part-time basis.

3. Annual and Sick Leave Employees on a full-time or part-time work schedule are eligible for annual and sick leave. But, employees on an intermittent work schedule are not eligible for annual or sick leave.
4. Premium Pay
  - a. Employees in full-time, part-time and intermittent work schedules earn overtime pay for work ordered or approved in excess of 8 hours a day or 40 hours a week.
  - b. Intermittent employees who work on a holiday earn the basic rate of pay in lieu of holiday premium pay.
  - c. Part-time and intermittent employees are not entitled to Sunday premium pay.
  - d. Intermittent employees are not entitled to night pay differential.

## **Work Schedules**

Workload increases and decreases determine the appropriate work schedule. Supervisors will notify employees in advance of the administrative workweek when it is necessary to change their work schedule.

If an employee's work schedule changes, their tour of duty will be changed by changing the coding of their Time and Attendance Report. The new coding will automatically generate a SF-50 to document the change in work schedule and a copy will be provided to the affected employee.

## **Inquiries**

Questions about mixed tour work schedule benefits entitlement, and condition of employment, etc., should be referred through established administrative channels to the APHIS, Personnel Division, Employment Policy Branch.

Attachment B

\* Employee Copy

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
AGRICULTURAL MARKETING SERVICE

Mixed Tour Work Schedule Certification

Name of Employee (Last, First, Middle) \_\_\_\_\_

Organization (Program, Branch, Area) \_\_\_\_\_

Duty Location (City and State) \_\_\_\_\_

I have received a copy of the Mixed Tour Program Fact Sheet, have read the information and my questions have been answered: YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_

I understand that under the mixed tour program I may be required to work on alternating periods of full-time, part-time and/or intermittent work schedules: YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ I agree to the conditions of the mixed tour program and wish to be assigned to it.

\_\_\_\_\_ I do not agree to the conditions of the mixed tour program and do not wish to be assigned to it. I fully understand that this means I will be without a regularly scheduled tour of duty and will work solely on an as-needed basis.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Employee's Signature

Date of this Certification

\* The employee should retain this copy.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
AGRICULTURAL MARKETING SERVICE

Mixed Tour Work Schedule Certification

Name of Employee (Last, First, Middle) \_\_\_\_\_

Organization (Program, Branch, Area) \_\_\_\_\_

Duty Location (City and State) \_\_\_\_\_

I have received a copy of the Mixed Tour Program Fact Sheet, have read the information and my questions have been answered: YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_

I understand that under the mixed tour program I may be required to work on alternating periods of full-time, part-time and/or intermittent work schedules: YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ I agree to the conditions of the mixed tour program and wish to be assigned to it.

\_\_\_\_\_ I do not agree to the conditions of the mixed tour program and do not wish to be assigned to it. I fully understand that this means I will be without a regularly scheduled tour of duty and will work solely on an as-needed basis.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Employee's Signature

Date of this Certification