

**Forest Service Handbook  
National Headquarters - Washington Office  
Washington, DC**

**Forest Service Handbook 6109.13 – Performance, Training, and Awards Handbook  
Chapter 20 - Employee Development Program**

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**Approved by:** Jacqueline Myers, Associate Deputy Chief

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**Responsible Staff:**

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**Superseded Document(s):** 6109.13,20 Contents, Amendment 6109.13-92-8, July 6, 1992;  
6109.13,20, Amendment 6109.13-92-9, July 6, 1992

**Digest:** Following is an explanation of the changes throughout the directive by section.

**20:** Revises, redesignates, and reorganizes direction throughout chapter to clarify requirements for the Employee Development Program.

**20.1:** Establishes code and caption, "Authorities."

**20.2:** Establishes code and caption, "Objectives."

**20.4 - 20.47:** Establishes codes and captions for responsibilities regarding the employee development program.

**20.5:** Establishes code and caption, "Definitions."

**21 - 21.5:** Moves existing direction on the administration of the employee development program to section 23, training and development process. Revises the caption from "Administration of Employee Development Program" to "Legal Authority General Provisions" and reserves this section for future use.

**22 - 22.3:** Moves existing direction on training records and reports to section 27. Revises the caption from “Training Records and Report” to “Eligibility for Government Funded Training” and establishes direction on this.

**23:** Replaces references to training selection criteria to define the training and development process and procedures.

**24:** Adds new direction to document required training.

**25:** Adds new direction to the management of executive, managerial, and supervisory training and development for first level supervisors.

**26:** Adds new direction to the approval and procurement of training procedures as they relate to established or off-the shelf training.

**27:** Revises the procedures on maintaining training records and reports. Incorporates, with change, the direction previously issued in section 22 - 22.3.

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## 20.1 - Authority

1. Title 5, United States Code of Federal Regulations (U.S.C.), Chapter 41 (5 U.S.C. 41) establishes each agency's general authority for employee training and authorizes the use of non-government training resources to meet identified training needs, which otherwise could not be met with existing governmental programs and facilities.

2. Title 5, U.S.C., Chapter 410 - Training, establishes basic requirements for training in the federal government.

3. Executive Order 11348, issued April 20, 1967, provides agency heads with additional direction on how to develop employees through the establishment and operation of progressive and efficient training programs.

4. Executive Order 11491, issued October 29, 1969, provides agencies with the requirement to train personnel and management officials in labor management relations.

5. Executive Order 13164, issued October 20, 2000, requires federal agencies to establish procedures to facilitate the provision of reasonable accommodation by employees and applicants with disabilities.

6. USDA Departmental Regulation 4300-8, dated March 9, 2000 - Reasonable Accommodations for employees and Applicants with Disabilities provides reasonable accommodation to the known physical or mental limitations of qualified applicants for employment and employees with disabilities, unless such an accommodation would impose an undue hardship on the operation of the Department's activities and/or programs.

7. B-288266, Use of Appropriated Funds to Purchase Light Refreshments at Conferences. See Title 5 U.S.C. section 5720 and <http://www.gao.gov/decisions/appro/288266.htm>.

8. Public Law 106-58, section 625 prohibits the use of appropriated funds for training that is offensive to federal employees and unnecessary in the execution of their official duties. Section 625 does not amend chapter 41 of title 5 U.S.C., Training.

9. Master Agreement [http://fsweb.wo.fs.fed.us/HCM/labor\\_relations/Master%20Agreement%202005/](http://fsweb.wo.fs.fed.us/HCM/labor_relations/Master%20Agreement%202005/) between Forest Service and Union (Labor-Management Agreement executed on May 2, 2005) states that training efforts are to be aimed at improving job performance, providing for career development, encourage employee self-development or meeting Forest Service needs as determined by management.

10. Title 5, U.S.C., PART III, Subpart C, chapter 41, 4102 [http://straylight.law.cornell.edu/uscode/html/uscode05/usc\\_sup\\_01\\_5\\_10\\_III\\_20\\_C\\_30\\_41.html](http://straylight.law.cornell.edu/uscode/html/uscode05/usc_sup_01_5_10_III_20_C_30_41.html) covers training issues for part-time and temporary employees through the Government Employees Training Act (GETA). An individual appointed by the President is not covered unless specifically designated by the President for training.

Guidance documents lack the force and effect of law, unless expressly authorized by statute or incorporated into a contract. USDA may not cite, use, or rely on any guidance that is not available through their guidance portal, except to establish historical facts.

11. Title 5 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Part 550 - Pay Administration, as amended by Federal Workforce Flexibility Act Section 203 (Public Law 108-411, October 30, 2004), (<http://www.opm.gov/fedregis/2005/69-012705-3858-a.htm>) establishes a new form of compensatory time off for time spent by an employee in travel status away from the employee's official duty station, when such time is not otherwise compensable.

12. Title 29 C.F.R. §1630 - Regulations to Implement the Equal Employment Provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act [(ADA)] (1996), (<http://cfr.law.cornell.edu/cfr/cfr.php?title=29&type=part&value=1630>) establishes the regulations related to the Americans with Disabilities Act.

13. Title 29, U.S.C. 668 & 673, Occupational Safety and Health Act, provides basic authority for safety and health standards.

See [http://www4.law.cornell.edu/uscode/html/uscode29/usc\\_sec\\_29\\_00000668----000-.html](http://www4.law.cornell.edu/uscode/html/uscode29/usc_sec_29_00000668----000-.html) and [http://www4.law.cornell.edu/uscode/html/uscode29/usc\\_sec\\_29\\_00000673----000-.html](http://www4.law.cornell.edu/uscode/html/uscode29/usc_sec_29_00000673----000-.html).

14. Occupational Safety and Health Act (Title 29 USC 670) provides for training and education of employers and employees.

See <http://www.washingtonwatchdog.org/documents/usc/ttl29/ch15/sec670.html>.

15. Executive Order 12196, issued February 26, 1980, explains the required occupational safety and health programs for federal employees.

See <http://www.eh.doe.gov/feosh/resource/eo12196.htm>.

## 20.2 - Objectives

The employee training and development program is designed to:

1. Assess the changing needs of the Forest Service and the knowledge, skills, abilities and other competencies required by employees to be competent, productive, and effective.
2. Build and retain a cadre of skilled and efficient government employees well abreast of scientific, professional, technical, and leadership development both in and out of government.
3. Deliver cost effective opportunities for training, growth, and development for all employees.
4. Improve service to the public.
5. Commit sufficient resources, such as, funding, personnel, facilities and training resources, to provide appropriate training and developmental opportunities for employees to support the achievement of the Forest Service's mission and performance goals.

## 20.3 - Policy

The policy for employee development is found in FSM 6141 (<http://fsweb.wo.fs.fed.us/directives/fsm/6100/>).

## **20.4 - Responsibility**

### **20.41 - Deputy Chiefs and Washington Office Director of Law Enforcement and Investigations**

The Deputy Chiefs or the Director of Law Enforcement and Investigations, Washington Office have the responsibility to approve all academic degree training for Washington Office and law enforcement employees (sec. 23.32).

### **20.42 - Staff Directors, Washington Office; Regional Foresters, Station Directors, Institute Director, and Area Director**

The above listed Regional Foresters and Directors (including the Director for Law Enforcement and Investigations) have the responsibility to:

1. Provide subject matter expertise and resources to ensure the quality and effectiveness of training programs.
2. Review and act on employee competency assessments/identified skill gaps and prioritize developmental needs.
3. Coordinate, develop, and administer the unit's training and development program consistent with national training policy.
4. Determine whether to waive or approve, in whole or part, any right to recover non-salary training expenses for which a Continued Service Agreement is in place.
5. Implement the Learning Management System (LMS).
6. Approve meetings and events when costs exceed \$25,000.

In addition, the Station Directors have the responsibility to approve long-term training for Research Scientists.

### **20.43 - Director, Human Capital Management Staff, Washington Office; Directors, Human Capital Management, Regional Offices; and Group Leaders, Human Resource Management, Research Stations**

Director, Human Capital Management Staff, Washington Office; Directors, Human Capital Management, Regional Offices; and Group Leaders, Human Resource Management, Research Stations have the responsibility to:

1. Provide leadership, coordination, and assistance to ensure that the training and development program effectively meets the Forest Service's mission and attainment of management goals.
2. Educate supervisors and managers on employee development rules and regulations.

3. Provide an environment that fosters continual learning.
5. Review annual training plans and individual training requests to assure that regulatory requirements are being met.
6. Establish and maintain a liaison related to employee development and training with the Office of Personnel Management, USDA agencies, other federal agencies, and public and private sector institutions.
7. Evaluate educational activities to determine how well they meet short and long- range program needs by occupation, organizational priorities and other appropriate criteria.
8. Maintain all training and development records in an approved electronic Learning Management System (LMS). Paper copy documents shall be maintained per current National Union agreement. Supervisors may also keep a copy of these documents in their working files. Employees are encouraged to maintain copies of all training documents in their personal records.
9. Provide for reasonable accommodation of training for Employees with Disabilities who attend training in compliance Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act (<http://www.section508.gov/index.cfm?FuseAction=Content&ID=14>).

#### **20.44 - Employee Development Specialists and Training Coordinators**

Employment Development Specialists and Training Coordinators shall:

1. Advise management on the overall training and development needs based on submitted needs assessments.
2. Undertake planned systematic studies on behalf of management (for example needs assessments) to determine the immediate and long-range training needs of employees and the organization.
3. Utilize a variety of learning methods and resources, such as, classroom, On-the-Job training (OJT), and distance learning to include computer based training, correspondence and CD-rom, to ensure the quality and effectiveness of training programs.
4. Certify the completion of employee training and verify invoices for payment.
5. Provide guidance to employees on career planning.
6. Serve as the primary liaison to Corporate Training and Development Staff to coordinate, develop, and administer the unit's training and development program consistent with national training policy.

7. Work with Human Resource Directors and their staffs to see that employees with disabilities that are attending training are accommodated under Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act (<http://www.section508.gov/index.cfm?FuseAction=Content&ID=14>).

8. Utilize the Learning Management System (LMS) to schedule courses, register employees for training, maintain training and development histories, assist employees in the use of the LMS, and prepare reports.

#### **20.45 - Supervisors**

Supervisors have the responsibility to:

1. Ensure employees receive all the required training (Ethics and Conduct, New Employee Orientation, Civil Rights, Computer Security, and Safety and Health) as listed in section 24.

2. Provide for the development of their employees' skills to enable a high level of performance.

3. Encourage continual learning and ensure that employees understand training and career development opportunities.

4. Implement an annual Individual Development Plan (IDP) for each employee and identify present and future organizational training needs, utilizing the agency's LMS.

5. Approve or recommend to higher level, individual training requests entered into LMS, and ensure that training requests are properly authorized before employees enroll in courses.

6. Discuss expectations for learning and how training applies to their jobs, and follow-up with employees upon completion of training to ensure concepts and skills learned are applied on the job.

7. Ensure fair and equitable access to training and development opportunities for all employees and consider any special needs.

8. Document educational activity to meet needs identified in employees' IDPs, utilizing the LMS (<http://www.aglearn.usda.gov/>).

#### **20.46 - Employees**

Employees have the responsibility to:

1. Review the competencies needed for successful performance and assess their current skill or ability level in relation to job requirements.

2. Work with the supervisor to identify training and development opportunities that addresses immediate needs and long-range career goals.

3. Request approval for training through appropriate channels in a timely manner.
4. Successfully complete assigned training, development, and educational opportunities, and if applicable, comply with the Continued Service Agreement requirements.
5. Provide a course evaluation.
6. Apply new skills and concepts in the workplace.
7. Pursue self-development activities beyond those required for their current jobs.
8. Utilize the Learning Management System (LMS) (<http://www.aglearn.usda.gov/>).
  - a. Include all relevant training taken whether at government expense or personal expense.
  - b. Provide a paper copy of documents to verify qualifications (transcripts, licenses, certificates, or other legal document).
9. Cancel scheduled training, if necessary, within the timeframe allowed by the trainer; or reimburse the government for the cost of the training (sec. 23.40).

#### 20.47 - Contracting Officers

The contracting officer or purchasing training vendor shall ensure that training materials meet all requirements of Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act 1973 (29 U.S.C. 794d) as amended by the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (<http://www.section508.gov/index.cfm?FuseAction=Content&ID=12>). All training materials shall be in accessible or alternate format. When purchasing printed materials, the responsibility shall be put on the contractor to ensure universal accessibility.

#### 20.5 - Definitions

**Commercial Off-The-Shelf Training.** These are “ready to go” training packages by a vendor or contractor that contain all the material required to deliver a course, or can be readily adapted to deliver a course. An “off-the-shelf” course is an established, prepackaged training course offered at a fixed cost without significant modification (no more than 10 percent content modifications) to the general public or a specific group. This could include videotape(s) and generally contains a leader’s guide or trainer’s guide.

**Competencies.** Observable, measurable patterns of knowledge, skills, abilities, behaviors, and other characteristics that employees need to successfully perform work-related tasks.

**Continued Service Agreement.** An arrangement in which an employee, who is selected for a training program, agrees to continue working for the agency up to three times the length of the training. It will be generated automatically in the LMS when appropriate, and must be signed

prior to the commencement of the training. (5 CFR § 410.309, Agreements to Continue in Service). Form SF-182 Section G, is available at:

[http://fsweb.wo.fs.fed.us/im/forms/sf\\_forms/sf-182-q.rtf](http://fsweb.wo.fs.fed.us/im/forms/sf_forms/sf-182-q.rtf).

Corporate Training and Development Branch, HCM/Washington Office. A centralized unit assigned to the Human Capital Management Staff, Washington Office, that is responsible for providing general program administration, national leadership, strategic planning, policy direction, coordination, intra-and interagency coordination, and monitoring and evaluation of the agency's training and development programs.

Education. Education is a study of specific bodies of knowledge and their related principles, processes, and theories (for example math, learning theory, or tax law). Education may not result in changed behavior until it is supplemented by skills training.

Electronic Learning - "E-Learning". Electronic or E-learning covers a wide set of applications and processes such as web-based learning, computer-based learning, virtual classrooms, and digital collaboration. It includes the delivery of content via Internet, intranet/extranet (LAN/WAN), audio- and videotape, satellite broadcast, interactive TV, and CD-ROM.

Employee Development Record. Historical documentation of an employee's training and development maintained electronically and in hard copy as necessary. Copies of documents required to verify an employee's qualifications (for example, transcripts, required licenses, or certificates) should be maintained in the employee's Official Personnel Folder (OPF). Employees should enter all other training completed in the "Training History" section of the LMS; employees are encouraged to keep copies of training certificates in a personal file.

Individual Development Plan. An annual written development plan and identification of activities planned to meet those needs. The Individual Development Plan is generated from the Learning Management System or use of the Form FS-6100-2, Individual Development Plan [http://fsweb.wo.fs.fed.us/im/forms/fs\\_forms/fs-6100-2.doc](http://fsweb.wo.fs.fed.us/im/forms/fs_forms/fs-6100-2.doc).

Information Sharing. The conveyance of facts, procedures, or other information to employees. Common examples of information sharing include satellite broadcast, email, memoranda, newsletters, or employee meetings.

Leadership Development Program. The leadership development program provides overall direction for developing leaders in the Forest Service; identifies leadership competencies for development; and teaches/educates or coaches new leaders throughout the Forest Service. In addition, it identifies and selects employees with high potential (for example, those who have the capability for development and the ability to move through learning experiences at an accelerated pace). Supervisors and managers must demonstrate the five Executive Core Qualifications (ECQs) appropriate to their level of leadership: Leading People, Leading Change, Results Driven, Business Acumen, and Building Coalitions/Communications. These ECQs are required for entry into the Senior Executive Service (SES) and are used by the Forest Service to prepare leaders at various levels to assume greater responsibilities.

Learning Management System (LMS). An electronic learning management system that allows employees and their supervisors access to an online database to assess competencies needing development, produce individual development plans, view course offerings, register for training, record training history, and complete training evaluations. As of this printing, the current LMS is AgLearn, which has been adopted by all agencies within the Department of Agriculture. AgLearn is a web-based LMS accessible to all employees from any computer having access to the Internet and World Wide Web (<http://www.aglearn.usda.gov>).

Long-term Training. Long-term training is full-time training of more than 120 consecutive workdays for which the government pays a participant's salary and/or other training costs.

On-the-job Training (OJT). A structured program designed to provide practice of job duties under the supervision of an on-the-job instructor, usually following formal classroom training in a specific discipline.

Performance Analysis. Performance analysis is the process of defining on-the-job performance requirements, assessing the current performance level to identify any gaps, and identifying and implementing appropriate methods to eliminate the performance gaps. Performance gaps may be caused by such factors as inadequate communication, faulty work processes, or lack of needed equipment, funds, and staffing.

Self-Directed Learning. A process in which individual employees take the initiative to identify their individual learning needs, develop their own learning goals, identify resources and methods to meet those goals, and acquire the specified knowledge and skills.

Supervisor. “An individual employed by an agency having authority in the interest of the agency to hire, direct, assign, promote, reward, transfer, furlough, layoff, recall, suspend, discipline, or remove employees, to adjust their grievances, or to effectively recommend such action, if the exercise of the authority is not merely routine or clerical in nature but requires the consistent exercise of independent judgment, except that, with respect to any unit which includes firefighters or nurses, the term “supervisor” includes only those individuals who devote a preponderance of their employment time to exercising such authority.” Also see, [http://www4.law.cornell.edu/uscode/html/uscode05/usc\\_sec\\_05\\_00007103----000-.html](http://www4.law.cornell.edu/uscode/html/uscode05/usc_sec_05_00007103----000-.html).

Training. The process of providing employees the programs, courses, or other instruction they need to improve their individual job performance. Effective training results in observable changed employee behavior (for example, new skill in conducting interview audits or enhanced skill in managing work projects). Formal training courses should all be built on a base of measurable instructional objectives.

## **21 - Legal Authority General Provisions [Reserved]**

## **22 - Eligibility for Government Funded Training**

### **22.1 - Contract Employees**

Contractors are selected for their expertise in a subject-area and may only be trained in skills they are not required to bring to the job. They may be trained in rules, practices, procedures and/or systems that are unique to the employing agency and essential to the performance of the contractor's assigned duties, such as agency computer security procedures. The authority for training of contractors is not in training law. It is in the authority to administer contracts. Training of contractors is subject to the decision of the chief contracting official.

### **22.2 - Intergovernmental Personnel Act Assignees**

Participants in Intergovernmental Personnel Program (IPP) 2002 mobility assignments may receive training if that training is in the interest of the government. It is in the authority for the agency to determine the value and interest of the government. See Title 42 U.S.C. 62, sec. 4741 - 4746), and [http://straylight.law.cornell.edu/uscode/html/uscode42/usc\\_sup\\_01\\_42\\_10\\_62\\_20\\_III.html](http://straylight.law.cornell.edu/uscode/html/uscode42/usc_sup_01_42_10_62_20_III.html).

### **22.3 - State or Local Government Employees on Detail to a Federal Agency**

1. A State or local government employee, on an IPP appointment in a federal agency, is deemed an employee of the federal agency and is eligible for training at agency expense.
2. The Intergovernmental Personal Agreement authorizes the federal government to admit employees of state and local governments to its training programs.

### **22.4 - Presidential Appointees**

Presidential Appointees are not covered by the Government Employee Training Act. The Office of Personnel Management (OPM) delegates to the head of each agency authority to authorize training for officials appointed by the President. In exercising this authority, the head of an agency must ensure that the training is in compliance with Title 5, Chapter 41, United States Code (5 U.S.C. 41). This authority may not be delegated to a subordinate (5 CFR Chapter 1, Part 410, Subpart C, §410.302 (b) (1)).

## **23 - Training and Development Process**

### **23.1 - Needs Assessment**

1. Mid-fiscal year (March, April), the supervisor and employee meet to discuss the employee's performance. The supervisor evaluates the employee's progress on the current fiscal year individual development plan (IDP) located in the Learning Management System (LMS).

2. During the mid-year review, the supervisor and employee jointly develop a training needs assessment for the following fiscal year which is entered into the employee's IDP.

3. The employee's training unit then reviews the overall unit needs assessment and searches for learning solutions to be offered the following fiscal year.

4. When the training solutions are advertised, the employee registers for the training solution through the LMS with the supervisor's approval.

### 23.11 - Procedures for Requesting Training

All training must be approved in advance through the LMS. See "Training Request" process, <http://www.aglearn.usda.gov>. Once the training has been approved by the supervisor, manager, or other delegated official, procurement can be made for individual training and/or group training using the following methods.

1. Purchase Card. The Purchase Card is used to pay for training less than \$2,500.00 in conjunction with the form SF-182 ([http://fsweb.wo.fs.fed.us/im/forms/sf\\_forms/sf-182.rtf](http://fsweb.wo.fs.fed.us/im/forms/sf_forms/sf-182.rtf)) process. All purchases made with the purchase card are subject to the Purchase Card Procedures set forth in the Federal Acquisition Regulations (FAR) Part 13.106-1. The form SF-182 must be used to document any training that will require the completion of a Continued Service Agreement.

2. Request, Authorization, Agreement and Certification of Training (SF-182). The electronic version of the form SF-182 is available in the LMS. Employees registering for a training event must fill out this form in the LMS and forward it to their supervisor for approval. The electronic form SF-182 in the LMS can be printed off and used as a document obligating funds for multiple participants at a training event. This form is authorized for use to contract for training and to certify payment of approved training expenses under the following conditions:

- a. The cost is of a fixed nature. The price is standardized per student, course, program or service.
- b. The program, course or instructional service is off-the shelf and there is no modification or development resulting in increased cost to the government.
- c. The cost of the program, course, or instructional service does not exceed the simplified acquisition threshold or process dollar limit of \$100,000.

### 23.12 - Tracking Training Expenses

All Forest Service Officials who obligate the use of funds for training must complete a form SF-182 to track the costs of such training, including tuition, related expenses, travel and per diem. For On-The-Job-Training (OJT) complete a form SF-182 ([http://fsweb.wo.fs.fed.us/im/forms/sf\\_forms/sf-182.rtf](http://fsweb.wo.fs.fed.us/im/forms/sf_forms/sf-182.rtf)) using only those blocks which are applicable.

### 23.2 - Training Priority

Training should be reviewed and approved based on the following criteria:

1. Training is needed to assure the safety and health of the workforce.
2. Regulatory and certification training is required for the current position.
3. Training addresses the competency needs of the current position.
4. Optional training that includes health and wellness workshops and training to prepare an employee for his/her identified career goals.

### **23.21 - Retraining**

The Forest Service shall retrain employees who are displaced, who must update skills due to changing conditions, who must work with new or different technology, or for other reasons advantageous to the agency.

### **23.22 - Accommodation for Employees' Religious Beliefs**

An employee has the right to object to participating in a training program if the content, techniques, or exercises used may conflict with the employee's religious beliefs. When an employee objects, the supervisor shall take reasonable action to accommodate the employee. See 29 C.F.R. § 1605 - Guidelines on Discrimination because of Religion and [http://www.access.gpo.gov/nara/cfr/waisidx\\_00/29cfr1605\\_00.html](http://www.access.gpo.gov/nara/cfr/waisidx_00/29cfr1605_00.html). Accommodations include the following:

1. The supervisor and employee may seek alternative training solutions.
2. The supervisor may excuse an employee from a portion of the training event, if that particular part of the program conflicts with the employee's beliefs and the supervisor maintain documentation of the agreement reached to accommodate the employee.

### **23.23 - Accommodation for Employees with Disabilities**

Those persons in the positions listed in section 20.41 shall ensure that an individual who has a disability has equal access to the agency's programs and activities, including the following.

1. Making available auxiliary aids such as computer text readers, Braille materials, audio recordings, amplified telephones, telecommunication devices for the hearing impaired, and other aids as stated in Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 are appropriate and reasonable.
2. Ensuring that training materials meet all requirements of Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act. All training materials should be in accessible or alternate format.
3. Making available an alternative format to accommodate persons with disabilities, if training is provided in other than electronic format. Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 specifies guidelines for software, hardware, and other electronic devices purchased or used by the government. The Federal Acquisition Regulations prevent the government from acquiring technology that does not meet Section 508.

4. When purchasing printed materials, the contractor shall ensure universal accessibility. Forest Service personnel should not purchase "inaccessible" training and then have to retrofit it to meet employees' needs.

### **23.24 - Requirements When Training Affects a Promotion or Reassignment**

Follow agency merit promotion procedures when selecting employees for training to prepare trainees for advancement that is not directly related to improving performance in their current positions (FSM 6132 and FSH 6109.12). For example, merit promotion procedures apply to training, where the purpose is to allow an employee to meet, in whole or in substantial part, minimum educational requirements set by the U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM), or other training required for assignment to a different position with higher promotion potential. The other required training can include college courses, but not a degree.

### **23.25 - Union-sponsored Training**

Use of appropriated funds to pay for employee expenses to attend union-sponsored training may be authorized in accordance with provisions found in applicable unit collective bargaining agreements at all levels.

### **23.26 - Long-term Training (More Than 120 Continuous Days)**

1. Long-term training opportunities must be announced according to merit promotion procedures.
2. Employees must compete and be selected to attend.
3. Research scientists are exempt from competing service-wide for long-term training related to research.
4. Required documentation for long-term training should be submitted to the Corporate Training and Development Branch as specified in each announcement. Documentation includes:
  - a. Request, Authorization, Agreement and Certification of Training form SF-182.  
See [http://fswweb.wo.fs.fed.us/im/forms/sf\\_forms/](http://fswweb.wo.fs.fed.us/im/forms/sf_forms/).
  - b. Continued Service Agreement, form SF-182G.  
See [http://fswweb.wo.fs.fed.us/im/forms/sf\\_forms/](http://fswweb.wo.fs.fed.us/im/forms/sf_forms/).
  - c. College transcript.
  - d. A list of training completed in the last 3 years.
  - e. Current Resume or Form OF-612, Optional Application for Federal Employment ([http://fswweb.wo.fs.fed.us/im/forms/of\\_forms/](http://fswweb.wo.fs.fed.us/im/forms/of_forms/)).
  - f. Current Form FS-6100-37, Performance Plan and Appraisal ([http://fswweb.wo.fs.fed.us/im/forms/fs\\_forms/index.htm](http://fswweb.wo.fs.fed.us/im/forms/fs_forms/index.htm)).

Guidance documents lack the force and effect of law, unless expressly authorized by statute or incorporated into a contract. USDA may not cite, use, or rely on any guidance that is not available through their guidance portal, except to establish historical facts.

- g. A statement from the employee describing how the training will benefit the agency and the relevance of the training to career goals.
- h. A statement from the nominating official assessing the nominee's potential and need for the training, as well as how the organization plans to reinforce the employee's newly acquired skills.
- i. Corporate Training shall notify the employee's Regional Training Officer or Training Coordinator (for Washington Office employees) of the employee's selection.

### **23.27 - Nomination and Supporting Documentation Submission Process for Leadership Courses**

When Leadership Development Opportunities are announced Service-wide, Deputy Chiefs, Washington Office Staff Directors, Regional Foresters, Area Director, Institute Director, and Station Directors shall use objective candidate criteria, solicit nominations, and submit nominations in order of priority and all related documentation to the Washington Office, Human Capital Management, Corporate Training and Development Branch.

### **23.28 - Placement Process for Long-term Training**

Deputy Chiefs, Washington Office Staff Directors, Regional Foresters, Station Directors, Area Director, and Institute Director, who are nominating an employee for national long-term training that includes a placement component, shall take the following action prior to submitting a nomination:

1. Prepare a placement proposal that identifies the general target grade, series, proposed office location (for example, Regional Office, National Forest, and Station), and an official responsible for placement. Placement could involve either a lateral reassignment or a promotion. If promotion or reassignment to a job with promotion potential is involved, follow the competitive processes consistent with the merit principles identified in FSM 6132 and FSH 6109.12.
2. Agree to or confirm the nominating unit's proposed placement.
3. Provide a list of selected candidates and their placement plans to the applicable Deputy Chief for review and recommendation. Final approval shall be made by the National Leadership Team.
4. Notify the employee 90 days prior to the start of training; the employee is notified of selection/non-selection and placement decision.

### **23.29 - Non-Government Training of More Than 80 Hours**

1. An employee shall sign Form SF-182G, Continued Service Agreement, to remain in federal service up to three times the period of the non-government training, when selected for more than 80 hours of non-government training. For example, an employee, who attends a

Guidance documents lack the force and effect of law, unless expressly authorized by statute or incorporated into a contract. USDA may not cite, use, or rely on any guidance that is not available through their guidance portal, except to establish historical facts.

Harvard School of Government course for 4 weeks, must stay in federal employment at least 12 weeks after completion of the training.

A notice shall be placed in the employee's Official Personnel Folder that states a service obligation exists until a specified date.

2. Form SF-182G, Continued Service Agreement, is not required for training by a manufacturer incidental to purchase or lease of equipment or for training when there is no expense to the government except for salary.

### **23.30 - Continued Service Agreements**

Employees must complete Form SF-182G, Continued Service Agreement, for training of long duration as stated in the definitions. A notice shall be placed in the employee's Official Personnel Folder that states a service obligation exists until a specified date. To protect the agency's investment and secure a period of service from the employee once they have completed the training, the following procedures should be followed.

1. Sign an agreement to continue in service after completion of training, prior to starting the training.
2. If the employee transfers to another federal agency, or other organization in any branch of the government before fulfilling the terms of the Continued Service Agreement (form SF-182G), transfer the service obligation to the other agency or organization. The employee does not need to reimburse the government for the cost of training provided the employee will be continuing to work for the federal government.
3. Recover training costs, except for pay or other compensation, incurred as a result of the training; if the employee voluntarily separates from government service before fulfilling the terms of the agreement.

The employee may request, in writing, reconsideration of the recovery amount or appeal to the Forest Service for a waiver of the amount. See Title 5 CFR, Part 410.309 - Agreements to continue in service. Also, see [http://www.access.gpo.gov/nara/cfr/waisidx\\_01/5cfr410\\_01.html](http://www.access.gpo.gov/nara/cfr/waisidx_01/5cfr410_01.html).

### **23.31 - Computing Time in Training**

For purposes of computing time in training for Continued Service Agreements:

1. If an employee is on an 8-hour work schedule, the employee is considered on duty for the period of the training and no charge is made to leave.
2. If an employee is on an alternative work schedule, the supervisor is responsible for determining the number of hours the employee is in pay status during the training assignment. For example: an employee on an 8-hour or an alternative work schedule is counted as being in training for the number of hours he or she is in pay status during the training assignment.
3. If an employee is not in pay status during the training, the employee is counted as being in training for the number of hours he or she is granted leave without pay for the purpose of the training, or the number of hours not in pay status for the purpose of the training. See Title 5 CFR 410.310 - Computing time in training.

### **23.32 - Training To Obtain an Academic Degree**

The Agency may select and assign an employee to academic degree training if it meets the conditions contained in Title 5 U.S.C. 4107 - Restrictions on degree training as amended 2002. See Title 5 CFR 410.308 - Training to obtain an academic degree; Title 5 CFR, Chapter I, Part 410, Subpart C, § 410.308; and [http://www.access.gpo.gov/nara/cfr/waisidx\\_01/5cfr410\\_01.html](http://www.access.gpo.gov/nara/cfr/waisidx_01/5cfr410_01.html).

### **23.33 - Training Curriculum and Learning Management**

The Corporate Training and Development Branch uses a Learning Management System (LMS), (currently AgLearn), for reporting and to aggregate the training needs identified in the individual development plan for each employee on every organizational unit. The Agriculture Learning (AgLearn) System is USDA's department-wide system for managing training records and activity at USDA. AgLearn is one of the USDA eGovernment strategic initiatives, and directly supports the Presidential eGovernment initiative for eTraining. Forest Service employees and designated partners will use AgLearn to search, access, enroll in, and record all training opportunities through the web. Training opportunities on AgLearn will include both online courses as well as instructor-led training. Forest Service employees will have a record of their training on AgLearn and also can plan their future career development in the system. Forest Service employees will have access 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. See <http://www.aglearn.usda.gov>.

### **23.34 - Course and Learning Resource Identification Conventions**

The naming convention for learning components or items in the LMS, including courses, workshops, seminars, and online content is displayed in exhibits 01-04.

**23.34 - Exhibit 01**

Each scheduled or listed course, workshop, seminar, or other learning opportunity in this system is given a training code. A training code is created by looking at the course content, type of training, and skill level.

**Base Course Content Code** (4 digits) - Use the Forest Service file designations found in FSH 6209.11, Records Management Handbook, chapter 40. For example, a course coded 2450 (the first 4 digits) indicates Timber Sale Contract Administration training.

**Type of Training & Skill Level Code** (3 digits) - has two parts.

**1. Type of Training** is identified by the **first digit** of this 3-digit code, as follows.

- a. “0” indicates “Foundation Development” training.
- b. “1, 2, 3, or 4” indicate “Technical Development” training.
- c. “5” indicates “Leadership Development” training.

**2. Skill Level** is identified in the **last two digits** of this 3-digit code, as follows.

**a. Foundation Development**

**(1) Levels - 001-099**

Basic subject matter about an agency and the federal government needed by all employees.  
Examples: New Employee Orientation, Civil Rights Training, etc.

**b. Technical Development Levels**

**(1) Basic Level - 100-199**

Exposure to components.  
No need to evaluate or analyze opportunities or needs.  
Not required for performance or development, information only.  
Applicable to all employees.

**(2) Recognition Level - 200-299**

Recognition of components.  
Identifies opportunities and needs.  
Refers to appropriate specialists.  
Improves performance, knowledge, skills, and abilities.

**(3) Working Level - 300-399**

Evaluation of components.  
Independently identifies and analyzes opportunities and needs.

**23.34 - Exhibit 01--Continued**

Frequently develops solutions with appropriate specialists.

Training critical to performance or development of knowledge, skills, and abilities.

***(4) Expert Level - 400-499***

Evaluation of components.

Fully and independently identifies and analyzes complex opportunities and needs.

Develops solutions with appropriate specialists.

Trains other personnel in subject area.

Training critical to performance or development of knowledge, skills, and abilities.

**c. Leadership Development Levels**

***(1) Aspiring Leader Level - 500-520***

Lead from where you are.

Self examination - Are you a leader?

Develop skills and expertise.

***(2) New Leader Level - 521-540***

Implements programs and is responsive to policies and strategic plans.

Training appropriate for First Line Supervisors, Project Leaders, Team Leaders, and Non-Supervisory Resource & Administrative Specialists.

***(3) Middle Leader Level - 521-540***

Develops strategic plans and policies on a district, forest, regional, station, or area level.

Training appropriate for those District Rangers, Forest Supervisors/Deputies, Station and Area Directors, and those in Regional/National leadership positions.

***(4) Senior Leader Level - 521-540***

Develops strategic plans and policies on a forest, regional, station, area, or national level.

Training appropriate for those district rangers, deputy forest supervisors, station scientists and staff officers, area staff directors and team leaders, and those in regional/national staff leadership positions.

***(5) Executive Leader Level - 521-540***

Develops strategic plans and policies on a regional or national level.

Training appropriate for those forest supervisors/deputies, station and area directors, and those in regional/national leadership positions.

Forest Service Handbook 6109.13 – Performance, Training, and Awards Handbook  
Chapter 20 - Employee Development Program  
Amendment: 6109.13-2006-1  
Effective date: July 05, 2006  
**23.34 - Exhibit 02**

**Learning Components or Items:**

**Component or Item ID:** Consist of **FS-Host-File Code-Skill Level** (limited to 30 characters)

**Title:** Consists of **File Code (Space) Host (Region/Station/Area) (Space) Course Name or Description** (limited to 99 characters)

Skills Levels consist of the following (last two digits actually indicate the number of courses in the system).

| <b><u>Foundation</u></b> | <b><u>Technical</u></b> | <b><u>Leadership</u></b> |         |
|--------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|---------|
| 000-099                  | 100-199                 | Aspiring Leader          | 500-520 |
|                          | 200-299                 | New Leader               | 521-540 |
|                          | 300-399                 | Middle Leader            | 541-560 |
|                          | 400-499                 | Senior Leader            | 561-580 |
|                          |                         | Executive Leader         | 580-599 |

**Example 1: Component ID:** FS-R1-6310-101 (01 indicates the number of courses)

**Title:** 6310 R1 Purchase Card Training

**Example 2: Component ID:** FS-R5-6140-501

**Title:** 6140 R5 Practical Leadership Skills for New Managers

The naming convention for training catalogs in the LMS is displayed in exhibit 03.

### **23.34 - Exhibit 03**

#### **Catalogs:**

**Catalog Id:** Consists of FS-Region/Station/Area

**Description:** Short description

**Example 1: Catalog ID:** FS-R1

**Description:** Region 1 Course Catalog

**Example 2: Catalog ID:** FS-R2

**Description:** Region 2 Development or R2 Course catalog

The naming convention for training resources such as computer labs or training rooms is displayed in exhibit 04.

### **23.34 - Exhibit 04**

#### **Resources:**

**ID:** Consists of FS-Region, Station, or Area designator (R2, RMRS, NE, etc.) Resource Name

**Description:** Short description of resource

**Example 1: ID:** FS-R2 Auditorium

**Description:** R2 RO Auditorium

**Example 2: ID:** FS-R4 Computer Training Rm.

**Description:** R4 Computer Training Room

### **23.35 - Notification of Selection for Forest Service Courses**

The employee and supervisor will be notified within 24 hours, through the LMS, when an employee registers on-line. A supervisor shall approve the training to obligate the unit to pay the tuition. Selection of courses must include training schedule, complete with time and location.

### **23.36 - Approval for Non-Forest Service Courses**

1. Employees shall request training through the LMS.
2. Supervisors shall review and approve training requests in the LMS.
3. Employees and supervisors shall follow the training approval process in the LMS.

### **23.37 - Course Delivery [Reserved]**

### **23.38 - Course Evaluation**

1. Trainees/employees shall complete evaluations for all training attended to provide data on the extent to which knowledge, and/or skills (competencies) changed, improved, and/or increased as a result of attending the course. Training officers and managers can assess the strengths and weaknesses of all training programs, by systematically collecting, analyzing and interpreting these evaluations.

2. Trainees/employees should follow the evaluation process in the LMS.

### **23.39 - Completion of Training**

1. Supervisors shall certify in the LMS that the employee has satisfactorily completed Forest Service and/or non-Forest Service training. Follow these procedures:

- a. The approving officer shall certify completion of training in the LMS and verify invoices and/or purchase card statement, once training has been procured and completed.
  - b. Supervisors shall ensure all courses completed by an employee are entered into the “Training History” section of the LMS within 30 days of course completion, whether the training was completed on government time and/or at government expense.
2. Employees should include any previous supervisory/leadership training and training that results in new credentials. Employees are encouraged to maintain a personal file with training certificates.

3. Any training paid for using government funds must be completed successfully and a transcript must be submitted. When completing individual training, a grade of “C” or better is considered successful completion for all college courses. Any employee who fails to complete a course successfully is personally responsible for reimbursement to the government of all training costs associated with training (except salary). Reimbursement of training costs shall be paid within 60 days.

#### **23.40 - Cancellation or Failure to Complete Training**

The employee may be held liable for any tuition and related costs, if they fail to cancel training within the approved time frame, or fail to begin or complete an approved training course for personal reasons.

If the reasons for failure to attend or complete training are work related, or related to documented illness or emergency, the nominating unit shall pay the costs.

#### **23.41 - Adjustment of Work Schedules**

See Forest Service Handbook 6109.11, chapter 10 and <http://fsweb.wo.fs.fed.us/directives/fsh/6109.11/>, for direction on adjusting work schedules.

#### **23.42 - Approval of Authorized Training Expenses**

The approval of authorized training expenses will be made by the supervisor or the approving official through the LMS at the same time the supervisor or approving official approves the request for training as directed in section 23.11.

1. Once the approval has been documented in the LMS, payment for authorized training expenses can be made with a purchase card or form SF-182.

2. Authorized expenses include tuition, books, materials, supplies, and registration fees (5 CFR 410.401).

3. The government may not pay or reimburse an employee for the cost of examinations, licenses, or certifications, even if required by the state where the federal employee works.

a. For bargaining unit employees, per applicable collective bargaining agreement, management may need to consider reimbursement of expenses incurred by an employee in attendance at officially approved work-related courses on his/her own time.

b. The following expenses shall not be authorized for payment for any employee:

(1) Costs imposed by an educational institution for the sole purpose of granting a degree.

(2) Membership fees that are not a condition of enrolling or participating in training.

(3) Premium pay for employees while in training, unless the employee normally receives premium pay or the payment of premium pay reduces the overall cost of the training (<http://fsweb.wo.fs.fed.us/directives/fsh/6109.11/>).

(4) Costs of fees required for any employee to take professional certification/ accreditation or license examinations, unless they are required by the government as a condition of employment, except when:

(a) The examination serves as a diagnostic tool to determine deficiencies in knowledge and skills needed by an employee in the performance of official duties; or

(b) The cost of the examination is a part of the cost of a training program.

### **23.43 - Employee Using Personal Funds or Sharing Costs**

Occasionally an employee may be interested in training that would benefit the government only indirectly or partially. Depending on the training and its relevance to the employee's job, it may be appropriate for the employee to pay tuition, books and other materials, or to share the cost with the government.

### **23.44 - Use of Equipment**

Management agrees that all employees enrolled in approved training courses may use government-owned equipment and academic aids, such as desk calculators or personal computers, if available on the premises of the activity and at mutually agreeable times during the employee's on duty and off duty hours.

## **24 - Training Required for All Employees**

All Forest Service employees shall complete and document in the LMS the following required training. See the Corporate Training Website (<http://fsweb.wo.fs.fed.us/HCM/ct/index.htm>) for additional information.

### **24.1 - Ethics and Conduct Training**

1. Within 30 days of commencing Forest Service duty, supervisors shall provide each new employee with a copy of the Standards of Ethical Conduct for Employees of the Executive Branch and the name and phone number of the employee's local Ethics Advisor. See Title 5 CFR § 2638.703 - Initial agency ethics orientation for all employees. Employees will be given 1 hour to review materials. Ethics information can be obtained on the Corporate Training New Employee Orientation website [http://fsweb.wo.fs.fed.us/HCM/ct/neo\\_home.html](http://fsweb.wo.fs.fed.us/HCM/ct/neo_home.html).

2. Employees, who are required to file the Public Financial Disclosure Report, form SF-278 and the Confidential Financial Disclosure Report form OGE-450, have an annual training obligation. See Title 5 CFR § 2638.704 - Annual ethics training for public filers. Training is available on USDA web site at <http://usda-ethics.net/rules/>. For 2 out of 3 years,

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confidential filers may be provided training through written material, with 1 hour of verbal training every 3rd year. Verbal training can include in-person presentations, videotape via teleconferencing, satellite broadcasts, computer-based training or other recorded means. See Title 5 CFR 2638.704 - Annual ethics training for public filers.

## **24.2 - New Employee Orientation (NEO)**

All new employees to the Forest Service shall receive new employee orientation (NEO) to their specific working situations and, if needed, to the federal civil service. The NEO is a structured, employee development process designed to provide new employees with a comprehensive, standardized orientation to the Forest Service. The NEO program is broken down into three time-lined phases:

1. Phase I - Pre-reporting.
2. Phase II - First 30 days.
3. Phase III - 2nd month to 12 months.

The NEO program is web-based (see [http://fsweb.wo.fs.fed.us/HCM/ct/neo\\_home](http://fsweb.wo.fs.fed.us/HCM/ct/neo_home)) and contains checklists and supporting information to help the supervisor and employee jointly complete the process.

## **24.3 - Civil Rights Training**

Supervisors shall ensure that all employees receive the following required training:

1. USDA Civil Rights Overview within the first 30 days of employment (this training is provided by the Agency's Civil Rights Office).
2. Prevention of Sexual Harassment within the first 30 days of employment (self-study guide).
3. Dispute Resolution Process Training within the first 6 months of employment.

## **24.4 - Computer Security Training**

All employees who are involved with the management, use, or operation of each federal computer system within or under the supervision of the USDA Forest Service are required to complete annual training in computer security awareness. Such training may vary from informal to formal. See Title 5 CFR § 930.301 - 305 Computer Security Act of 1987 ([http://www.access.gpo.gov/nara/cfr/waisidx\\_03/5cfr930\\_03.html](http://www.access.gpo.gov/nara/cfr/waisidx_03/5cfr930_03.html)).

## 24.5 - Safety and Health Training

The required Health and Safety Training is outlined in FSH 6709.11- Health and Safety Code Handbook; (<http://fsweb.wo.fs.fed.us/directives/fsh/6709.11/>) and FSH 6709.12 - Safety and Health Program Handbook; (<http://fsweb.wo.fs.fed.us/directives/fsh/6709.12/>).

## 25 - Executive, Managerial, and Supervisory Training and Development

Executive Core Qualifications (ECQs) are required for entry into the Senior Executive Service (SES) and are used by the Forest Service to prepare leaders at various levels to assume greater responsibilities. Continuous learning, self-improvement, and performance feedback are critical for all team leaders, supervisors, managers, and executives in order to ensure that the Forest Service is able to grow, prosper, and accomplish its mission effectively. Leadership development efforts are based on core leadership competencies developed by the Office of Personnel Management (OPM), as listed in section 25.3, exhibit 01.

### 25.1 - Basic Supervisory Training

Newly appointed or selected first-level supervisors must complete formal training in supervision within the 12-month probationary period. This training should include merit systems principles, performance management, Human Capital Management, safety and health, civil rights for supervisors, ethics, and leadership competencies.

1. The basic supervisory training requirement can be met through the “HCM for Managers” course available through AgLearn.
2. Training shall be documented in the Learning Management System (LMS). Supervisory training received in the 24 months prior to the supervisory appointment may be credited on a case-by-case basis if it is documented in the LMS.
3. Employees who are assigned supervisory duties but do not meet the definition of supervisor shall receive supervisory training appropriate to their positions as determined by their immediate supervisors. For the definition of a "Supervisor" see section 20.5.

### 25.2 - Advanced Supervisory Training

Learning experiences, both short- and long-term, should continue throughout an individual's career in order for the individual to achieve a mastery level of proficiency for his or her current supervisory and/or managerial level position. These optional courses are:

1. “Practical Leadership Skills for New Supervisors” (available through AgLearn).
2. “Leadership Skills for Experienced Managers and Supervisors” (available through AgLearn).
3. L-380 - Fireline Leadership (FSH 5109.17 - Fire and Aviation Management Qualifications and Certification Handbook; <http://fsweb.wo.fs.fed.us/directives/fsh/5109.17/>).

4. L-381 - Incident Leadership (FSH 5109.17 - Fire and Aviation Management Qualifications and Certification Handbook; <http://fsweb.wo.fs.fed.us/directives/fsh/5109.17/>).

### 25.3 - Leadership Development Training

All executive, managerial, and supervisory development opportunities offered by the USDA Forest Service shall be based on competency to integrate employee career development with organizational succession planning. For definition of supervisory competencies, see exhibit 01.

**25.3 - Exhibit 01**

**Leadership Competencies**

**A. LEADING CHANGE**

**1. Vision -**

- a. Takes a long-term view and acts as a catalyst for organizational change.
- b. Builds a shared vision with others.
- c. Influences others to translate vision into action.

**2. External Awareness -**

- a. Identifies and keeps up to date on key national and international policies and economic, political, and social trends that affect the organization.
- b. Understands near-term and long-range plans and determines how best to be positioned to achieve a competitive business advantage in a global economy.

**3. Creativity and Innovation -**

- a. Develops new insights into situations and applies innovative solutions to make organizational improvements.
- b. Creates a work environment that encourages creative thinking and innovation; designs and implements new or cutting-edge programs/processes.

**4. Strategic Thinking -**

- a. Formulates effective strategies consistent with the business and competitive strategy of the organization in a global economy.
- b. Examines policy issues and strategic planning with a long-term perspective.
- c. Determines objectives and sets priorities; anticipates potential threats or opportunities.

**5. Continual Learning -**

- a. Grasps the essence of new information.
- b. Masters new technical and business knowledge.

**25.3 - Exhibit 01--Continued**

**Leadership Competencies**

- c. Recognizes own strengths and weaknesses.
- d. Pursues self-development; seeks feedback from others and opportunities to master new knowledge.

**6. Resilience -**

- a. Deals effectively with pressure.
- b. Maintains focus and intensity.
- c. Remains optimistic and persistent even under adversity.
- d. Recovers quickly from setbacks.
- e. Effectively balances personal life and work.

**7. Flexibility -**

- a. Is open to changes and new information.
- b. Adapts behavior and work methods in response to new information, changing conditions, or unexpected obstacles.
- c. Adjusts rapidly to new situations warranting attention and resolution.

**8. Service Motivation -**

- a. Creates and sustains an organizational culture which encourages others to provide the quality of service essential to high performance.
- b. Enables others to acquire the tools and support they need to perform well.
- c. Shows a commitment to public service.
- d. Influences others toward a spirit of service and meaningful contributions to mission accomplishment.

**25.3 - Exhibit 01--Continued**

**Leadership Competencies**

**B. LEADING PEOPLE**

**1. Conflict Management -**

- a. Identifies and takes steps to prevent potential situations that could result in unpleasant confrontations.
- b. Manages and resolves conflicts and disagreements in a positive and constructive manner to minimize negative impact.

**2. Leveraging Diversity -**

- a. Values cultural diversity and other differences.
- b. Fosters an environment in which people, who are culturally diverse, can work together cooperatively and effectively in achieving organizational goals.

**3. Team Building -**

- a. Inspires, motivates, and guides others toward goal accomplishments.
- b. Consistently develops and sustains cooperative working relationships.
- c. Encourages and facilitates cooperation within the organization and with customer groups.
- d. Fosters commitment, team spirit, pride, trust.
- e. Develops leadership in others through coaching, mentoring, rewarding, and guiding employees.

**4. Integrity/Honesty -**

- a. Instills mutual trust and confidence.
- b. Creates a culture that fosters high standards of ethics.
- c. Behaves in a fair and ethical manner toward others.
- d. Demonstrates a sense of corporate responsibility and commitment to public service.

**25.3 - Exhibit 01--Continued**

**Leadership Competencies**

**C. RESULTS DRIVEN**

**1. Accountability -**

- a. Assures that effective controls are developed and maintained to ensure the integrity of the organization.
- b. Holds self and others accountable for rules and responsibilities.
- c. Can be relied upon to ensure that projects within areas of specific responsibility are completed in a timely manner and within budget.
- d. Monitors and evaluates plans; focuses on results and measuring attainment of outcomes.

**2. Problem Solving -**

- a. Identifies and analyzes problems.
- b. Distinguishes between relevant and irrelevant information to make logical decisions.
- c. Provides solutions to individual and organizational problems.

**3. Decisiveness -**

- a. Exercises good judgment by making sound and well-informed decisions.
- b. Perceives the impact and implications of decisions.
- c. Makes effective and timely decisions, even when data is limited or solutions produce unpleasant consequences.
- d. Is proactive and achievement oriented.

**4. Customer Service -**

- a. Balances interests of a variety of clients.
- b. Readily readjusts priorities to respond to pressing and changing client demands.
- c. Anticipates and meets the need of clients.

**25.3 - Exhibit 01--Continued**

**Leadership Competencies**

- d. Achieves quality end products.
- e. Is committed to continuous improvement of services.

**5. Entrepreneurship -**

- a. Identifies opportunities to develop and market new products and services within or outside of the organization.
- b. Is willing to take risks.
- c. Initiates actions that involve a deliberate risk to achieve a recognized benefit or advantage.

**6. Technical Credibility -**

- a. Understands and appropriately applies procedures, requirements, regulations, and policies related to specialized expertise.
- b. Is able to make sound hiring and capital resource decisions and address training and development needs.
- c. Understands linkages between administrative competencies and mission needs.

**D. BUSINESS ACUMEN**

**1. Financial Management –**

- a. Demonstrates broad understanding of the principles of financial management and marketing expertise necessary to ensure appropriate funding levels.
- b. Prepares, justifies, and/or administers the budget for the program area.
- c. Uses cost-benefit thinking to set priorities.
- d. Monitors expenditures in support of programs and policies.
- e. Identifies cost-effective approaches.
- f. Manages procurement and contracting.

**25.3 - Exhibit 01--Continued**

**Leadership Competencies**

**2. Human Capital Management -**

- a. Assesses current and future staffing needs based on organizational goals and budget realities.
- b. Uses merit principles to ensure staff is appropriately selected, developed, utilized, appraised, and rewarded.
- c. Takes corrective action.

**3. Technology Management -**

- a. Uses efficient and cost effective approaches to integrate technology into the workplace and improve program effectiveness.
- b. Develops strategies using new technology to enhance decision-making.
- c. Understands the impact of technological changes on the organization.

**E. BUILDING COALITIONS/COMMUNICATION**

**1. Oral Communication -**

- a. Makes clear and convincing oral presentations to individuals or groups.
- b. Listens effectively and clarifies information as needed.
- c. Facilitates an open exchange of ideas and fosters an atmosphere of open communication.

**2. Written Communication -**

- a. Expresses facts and ideas in writing in a clear, convincing, and organized manner.

**3. Influencing/Negotiating -**

- a. Persuades others.
- b. Builds consensus through give and take.

**25.3 - Exhibit 01--Continued**

**Leadership Competencies**

- c. Gains cooperation from others to obtain information and accomplish goals.
- d. Facilitates “win-win” situations.

**4. Partnering -**

- a. Develops networks and builds alliances.
- b. Engages in cross-functional activities.
- c. Collaborates across boundaries and finds common ground with a widening range of stakeholders.
- d. Utilizes contacts to build and strengthen internal support bases.

**5. Political Savvy -**

- a. Identifies the internal and external politics that impact the work of the organization.
- b. Approaches each problem situation with a clear perception of organizational and political reality.
- c. Recognizes the impact of alternative courses of action.

**6. Interpersonal Skills -**

- a. Considers and responds appropriately to the needs, feelings, and capabilities of different people in different situations.
- b. Is tactful, compassionate and sensitive, and treats others with respect.

## 26 - Approval and Procurement of Training

### 26.1 - Established or Commercial Off-the-shelf Training

Form SF-182 - Request for Authorization Agreement and Certification of Training, shall be used to:

1. Contract to procure and register for training.
  - a. The training cost of a single training event, program, or instructional service does not exceed the simplified acquisition process dollar limit established by U.S. General Services Administration (<http://www.opm.gov/hrd/lead/pubs/handbook/lrbsa12.asp>).

The simplified acquisition threshold or process dollar limit is \$100,000 ([http://205.130.237.11/far/current/html/Subpart%202\\_1.html#wp1145507](http://205.130.237.11/far/current/html/Subpart%202_1.html#wp1145507)).

  - b. The cost is of a fixed nature, such as price per student or price per course, program, or service.
  - c. The program, course, or instructional service is off-the-shelf and no modification or development resulting in increased cost to the government is needed to meet the organization's needs.
  - d. The cost of tuition can be paid by credit card within the single purchase up to \$2,500.
2. Obligate funds for training.
3. Certify payment of approved training expenses and recommend payment.

### 26.2 - Training Sessions and Meeting Approval

For training sessions and meetings exceeding \$25,000 sponsored by the Forest Service, the following procedures must be followed:

1. Proposals must include specific justification for the function; location; expected number of attendees; and an estimate of costs, including travel and subsistence costs for attendees.
2. Proposals to hold training sessions or meetings must be submitted to the appropriate Line Officer by the 15th of each month. Allow at least 30 days prior to the beginning of the month, in which the proposed event is scheduled to occur, or 30 days prior to any required date for deposits to reserve facilities, whichever comes first (see FSM 1360).
3. Field Units must submit required information to their local unit for approval of all training requests of \$25,000 or more.

### **26.3 - Course Development Contract Approval**

Training available commercially that is tailored or developed to meet specific needs identified by the Forest Service for a group of attendees should be requested through the Acquisition Management Staff to ensure any commitment is properly authorized and a contract is properly negotiated (FSH 6309.32 and <http://fsweb.wo.fs.fed.us/directives/fsh/6309.32/>).

### **26.4 - Federal Supply Schedule**

Management, Organizational and Business Improvement Services (MOBIS) is a Federal Supply Schedule offered to federal agencies by GSA to provide a streamlined procurement method to procure management, consulting, facilitation, survey and quality-related training services. There is no need to seek further competition beyond the list of schedule contractors, synopsis requirements, or make determinations of fair and reasonable pricing. Acquisition Management requires that procurement requests, using the Federal Supply Schedule, be coordinated with a Forest Service Contracting Officer. See <http://www.gsa.gov/> and then search for MOBIS.

## **27 - Training Records and Reports**

### **27.1 - Employee Training and Development Record**

Each employee shall have a training and development record maintained in the electronic Learning Management System (LMS). The employee, first line supervisor or designee, training officer/coordinator, and corporate training representative shall have access to this record.

#### **27.11 - Record Types and Related Documentation [Reserved]**

### **27.2 - Documentation of Training in Shortage Occupations**

An employee identified to receive training in a category, in which the government has declared a shortage of qualified personnel, shall have the following documentation maintained as a separate record from that in the LMS:

1. Nature and justification for the shortage determination.
2. Kind of training (career experience program, continuing professional technical education, retraining for occupational change), a description of the field of study; and the nature of any degree pursued under the training program.
3. A signed and dated form SF-182G, Continued Service Agreement.

### **27.21 - College/University Credits**

The employee shall submit a transcript to the supervisor after completion of a university or college course that the agency sponsors and for which credits are awarded, to verify that the course was completed successfully. A copy of the transcript should be maintained in the employee's Official Personnel Folder.

Guidance documents lack the force and effect of law, unless expressly authorized by statute or incorporated into a contract. USDA may not cite, use, or rely on any guidance that is not available through their guidance portal, except to establish historical facts.