Within-Grade Increases

USDA Pay-Setting Guide

March 2023

This pay-setting guide was developed to provide a comprehensive reference to assist HR Specialists to set pay. This guide provides in-depth coverage of many areas; however, users should refer to applicable laws, regulations, Departmental Regulations, and agency-specific policy when making pay decisions.

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**WITHIN-GRADE INCREASES**

Within-grade increases (WGIs) are synonymous with the term “step increase” and is an increase in an employee's rate of basic pay by advancement from one step of their grade to the next higher step after meeting requirements for length of service and performance. All permanentGS employees are eligible to earn a WGI and an eligible employee's work schedule may be full-time, part-time, or intermittent.

## THREE LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

When it gets overwhelming just go back to the three legal requirements.

**Permanent** employees earn WGIs when they have met the following three legal requirements:

1. The employee’s performance rating is at least “*Fully Successful*”;
2. The employee must have completed the required ***WAITING PERIOD*** for advancement to the next step; and
3. The employee must not have received an ***EQUIVALENT INCREASE*** during the waiting period.

### Eligibility

All permanent GS employees are eligible to earn a WGI.

1. **Permanent Position**.
   1. For the purposes of earning a WGI, permanent position means a position filled by an employee whose appointment is at least 1 year (365 days) or more.
   2. The term does not include a position filled by an employee whose appointment is less than 1 year and subsequently extended so that the total time of the appointment exceeds 1 year.
   3. Permanent position also includes a position to which a permanent employee is temporarily promoted for 1 year or more.
   4. The term does not include a permanent employee who is on a temporary promotion NTE 1-year unless the promotion is extended beyond 1 year. Employees on temporary NTE 1-year promotions are not eligible to earn a WGI while on the temporary promotion; the time is still creditable, they just can’t receive a WGI while on the temporary NTE 1-year promotion, unless it’s extended beyond 1 year.
2. **Temporary Employees**. Employees who serve under a temporary appointment of less than one year are not eligible for WGIs, even if the appointment is extended beyond one year. However, their time is still creditable (because all time is creditable) and if they receive a permanent appointment the time may count (unless they had a break in service of 52 weeks or more or they received an equivalent increase).
3. **Less Than Maximum Step**. The employee’s step must be less than step 10. Employees on pay retention are not eligible for WGIs because their pay is already above step 10.
4. **Work Schedule**. An eligible employee's work schedule may be full-time, part-time, or intermittent.

### Ex. 1: Completes Required Waiting Period in the Middle of a Pay Period

*Effective Date of a WGI*

*When an employee completes the required waiting period in the middle of a pay period they must wait until the next pay period before they receive the WGI because WGI's are always effective at the beginning of a pay period.*

On July 9, 2014, Julianne is appointed to a GS-07 step 1 position (July 9th is the middle of the pay period). She will complete the 52-week waiting period to step 2 on July 8, 2015 (which is also in the middle of the pay period) so she will receive her WGI to step 2 on July 12, 2015 (the first day of the pay period following the completion of her waiting period).

### Ex. 2: Simultaneous Pay Actions

*Effective Date of a WGI*

*If the effective date of a WGI has been reached and the employee has met all the requirements for the WGI, the employee will still receive the benefits from it even if the WGI was not actually processed because another action took place on the same date.*

On July 13, 2014, Cheryl was a GS-12 step 1 and took a voluntary CLG to a GS-11 position (no known promotion potential). Cheryl occupied the GS-12 position for 1 year and was due a WGI to step 2 on the same effective date as her CLG. Therefore, step 2 may be used as her highest previous rate when setting pay in the lower-graded position.

## WAITING PERIODS

A waiting period is the minimum time requirement of creditable service for an employee to become eligible for a WGI.

### When a Waiting Period Begins

A waiting period begins:

1. Upon first appointment as a Federal employee, regardless of tenure;
2. Upon receiving an equivalent increase; or
3. After a period of non-pay status or break in service (alone or in combination) of more than 52 weeks, unless the non-pay status or break in service is creditable service.

| **GS Steps** | **Full-Time and Part-Time** | **Intermittent** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 1, 2, and 3 | 52 weeks of creditable service | 260 days in pay status in not less than 52 weeks |
| 4, 5, and 6 | 104 weeks of creditable service | 520 days in pay status in not less than 104 weeks |
| 7, 8, and 9 | 156 weeks of creditable service | 780 days in pay status in not less than 156 weeks |

For a part-time employee, the workweek is the employee’s scheduled tour of duty. For example, if a part-time employee is scheduled to work 32 hours per week, then you count 32 hours of creditable service as 1 workweek (and not 40 hours like a full-time employee). If the part-time employee’s scheduled tour is 16 hours, then 16 hours of creditable service is counted as 1 workweek, etc.

### Ex. 3: Waiting Periods for Full-Time and Part-Time Employees

*Waiting Periods*

On March 5, 2017, two employees are both appointed to a GS-05 step 1 position; one employee is full-time. and the other employee is part-time.

* Provided that all requirements have been met to advance to the next step, both employees will be due a WGI to step 2 on March 4, 2018.
* It doesn’t matter that one employee is full-time and one is part-time, they are both due a WGI on the same date.

### Creditable Service

Civilian employment in any branch of the Federal Government is creditable service in the computation of a waiting period. This includes service under a temporary or term appointment and periods of paid leave.

*All time is creditable, it just depends on if we can count it or not.*

For example, temporary GS employees are not eligible to receive a WGI but if they move into a position that is eligible to receive WGIs, their time under the temporary appointment may count towards completion of a waiting period.

### Time in Non-Pay Status

Time in non-pay status is creditable when the total non-pay time does not exceed (for FT and PT employees):

1. Two workweeks for steps 1, 2, and 3.
2. Four workweeks for steps 4, 5, and 6.
3. Six workweeks for steps 7, 8, and 9.

*Non-pay time in excess of the amount allowed will extend the waiting period by the excess amount.*

### Ex. 4: Extending the Waiting Period for Non-Pay Status

*Adjusting the WGI SCD*

Maria is a GS-04 step 1, permanent, full-time employee and took 720 hours of LWOP during the waiting period.

1. **Step 1: Determine the amount of excess LWOP.**
   1. She is at step 1 going to step 2 so she is allowed 2 workweeks (80 hours) in non-pay status before it affects her waiting period.
   2. Take the number of hours she was on LWOP and subtract the number of hours she is permitted in non-pay status:

720 hours (LWOP)

– 80 hours (allowed)

640 hours excess LWOP

* 1. She has 640 hours of excess LWOP.
  2. We need to extend her WGI waiting period by 640 hours.

1. **Step 2: Determine the new WGI date.**
   1. Convert the hours of excess LWOP to days.

*640 hours (excess LWOP) / 8 (hours in a day) = 80 workdays*

* 1. Maria’s waiting period is extended by 80 workdays.

### Ex. 5: Extending the Waiting Period for Non-Pay Status for Full-Time Employee

*Adjusting the WGI SCD*

1. **Example A**: Emma is a GS-05 step 1, permanent, full-time employee and took 64 hours of LWOP during the waiting period. She is at step 1 going to step 2 so she can receive 2 workweeks (80 hours) in non-pay status before it affects her waiting period. Since the employee is allowed 80 hours of LWOP and she took 64 hours of LWOP, her waiting period is not affected.
2. **Example B:** Shauna is a GS-07 step 6, permanent, full-time employee and took 10 weeks of LWOP during the waiting period. She is at step 6 going to step 7 so she can receive 4 workweeks in non-pay status before it affects her waiting period. Since 4 weeks of the LWOP is creditable, her WGI due date is extended by 6 weeks:

*10 weeks LWOP – 4 weeks allowable = 6 weeks extended*

1. **Example C:** Rob is a GS-04 step 1, permanent, full-time employee and took 720 hours of LWOP during the waiting period. He is at step 1 going to step 2 so he can receive 2 workweeks (80 hours) in non-pay status before it affects his waiting period.
   1. He has 640 hours of excess LWOP that will extend his waiting period:

*720 hours LWOP – 80 hours allowed = 640 hours excess*

* 1. In order to determine the new date on which the waiting period will end, the hours of LWOP must be converted to days.

*640 hours / 8 hours in a day = 80 workdays*

* 1. Rob’s waiting period is extended by 80 workdays.

### Ex. 6: Extending the Waiting Period for Non-Pay Status for Part-Time Employee

*Adjusting the WGI SCD*

1. **Example A:** Tony is a GS-07 step 1 part-time employee who works 32 hours per week. He was on LWOP for 64 hours during the waiting period. He is at step 1 going to step 2 so he can receive 2 workweeks in non-pay status before it affects his waiting period.
   1. Because his workweek is 32 hours then he can receive 64 hours of LWOP before it affects his waiting period:

*32 hours in workweek x 2 workweeks = 64 hours allowed*

* 1. Therefore, his waiting period is not extended.

1. **Example B:** Drew is a GS-09 step 1 part-time employee who works 32 hours per week. He was on LWOP for 96 hours during the waiting period. He is at step 1 going to step 2 so he can receive 2 workweeks in non-pay status before it affects his waiting period.
   1. Because his workweek is 32 hours then he can receive 64 hours of LWOP before it affects his waiting period (32 x 2 = 64 hours).
   2. Drew took 96 hours of LWOP which equals 3 workweeks of LWOP:

*96 hours LWOP / 32 hours in workweek = 3 workweeks*

* 1. Therefore, his waiting period is extended by 1 week.

### Ex. 7: Intermittent Converted to Full-Time

*Creditable Service*

*Intermittent employees receive 1 day of credit for each day in pay status. They will receive 1 day of service credit for every day they are paid even if they are in a pay status for only 1 hour.*

*If an intermittent employee is converted to full time or part time, the days worked are counted toward completion of the waiting period.*

Peter is on an intermittent schedule and was later converted to a full-time position. Determine his creditable service and when his next step increase is due:

| ***Date*** | ***Action*** |
| --- | --- |
| 10/10/16 | 1. On 10/10/16, the employee was appointed to GS-05 intermittent position. 2. Pay is set at GS-05 step 1. |
| 05/15/16 | 1. On 05/15/16, the employee was converted to full-time position. 2. First, let’s see how many days the employee worked while on the intermittent schedule. 3. He worked 20 days between 10/10/16 to 05/15/16 so he has 20 days of creditable service. We need to adjust his WGI due date by 20 days. 4. Convert the days to weeks:   *20 days / 5 days in a week = 4 weeks*   1. Next, determine how many weeks to adjust his WGI SCD to count his creditable service:   52 week waiting period  - 4 weeks of creditable service  48 weeks until WGI to step 2   1. The employee will be due a WGI to step 2 in 48 weeks, on 04/16/17. |

### Ex. 8: Full-Time, went on LWOP, Came Back to Part-Time Position

*Adjusting the WGI SCD*

*If a part-time employee goes on LWOP and then returns to a full-time position (or FT to PT), the number of workweeks on LWOP to be charged is calculated based upon the tour the employee occupied when the LWOP was taken.*

Sheila is a GS-05 step 1 full-time employee. She took 80 hours of LWOP and returned to duty on a part-time work schedule (24 hours per week). She is allowed 2 workweeks of LWOP toward the completion of her waiting period for step 2. Sheila was a full-time employee before she took LWOP so the full-time schedule is used to determine how many hours of LWOP can be credited toward the completion of her waiting period.

A full-time schedule is 40 hours per week and Sheila was on LWOP for 80 hours; therefore, she had 2 weeks of LWOP. All of the LWOP is creditable and her waiting period will not be extended.

### Ex. 9: Part-Time, went on LWOP, Came Back to Full-time Position

*Adjusting the WGI SCD*

Sharon is a part-time employee, went on LWOP, and came back to a full-time position. Determine how long her waiting period will need to be extended:

| **Date** | **Action** |
| --- | --- |
| 04/03/16 | 1. On 04/03/16, the employee is appointed to a GS-05 part-time position. 2. Pay is set at GS-05 step 1. 3. She is a part-time employee working 20 hours per week. |
| 05/01/16 | 1. On 05/01/16, the employee went on LWOP. 2. 4 weeks of creditable service at GS-05 step 1. |
| 05/15/16 | 1. On 05/15/16, she returned to duty to a full-time position. 2. She had 80 hours of LWOP. 3. We need to determine how long her waiting period will need to be extended by the excess LWOP. 4. Step 1: Determine her work schedule *before* she went on LWOP.    1. Sharon was a part-time employee before she went on LWOP. Take the number of LWOP hours and divide that by her work schedule:   *80 hours (LWOP) / 20 hours (tour of duty) = 4 workweeks*   * 1. Even though she only took 80 hours of LWOP it’s considered to be 4 workweeks *based upon her work schedule before she took the LWOP.*   2. An employee is allowed 2 workweeks of LWOP when moving from step 1 to step 2 before it affects their waiting period.  1. Step 2: Extend the Waiting Period.    1. Sharon’s waiting period is extended 2 workweeks:   *4 weeks (LWOP) – 2 weeks (allowed) = 2 weeks extended*   * 1. Her waiting period is extended 2 weeks and she will be due a WGI to step 2 on April 16, 2017. |

### Ex. 10: LWOP and Break in Service is More than 52 Weeks

*Adjusting the WGI SCD*

Sean was a permanent employee, took LWOP, quit (had a break in service), and then was reinstated to a GS-09 permanent position. Determine his creditable service and the effective date of his next WGI:

| ***Date*** | ***Action*** |
| --- | --- |
| 10/19/14 | 1. Sean is a GS-09 step 1. 2. On 10/19/14, he completes 52 weeks of creditable service and earns a WGI to step 2. 3. Pay is set at GS-09 step 2. |
| 02/07/15 | 1. On 02/07/15, the employee goes on LWOP. 2. *He has 16 weeks of creditable service at GS-09 step 2.* |
| 12/12/15 | 1. *44 weeks of LWOP.* 2. On 12/12/15, the employee resigns. |
| 03/06/16 | 1. *12 weeks break in service.* 2. On 03/06/16, Sean is reinstated to GS-09 permanent position. 3. Pay is set at GS-09 step 2, based upon HPR. 4. Let’s see if we need to adjust his WGI SCD. 5. Add up the LWOP and break in service to determine if the total exceeds 52 weeks:   44 weeks LWOP  + 12 weeks break in service  56 weeks   1. His LWOP and break in service are more than 52 weeks. Sean must begin a new waiting period because the combination of his non-pay time and his break in service exceeds 52 calendar weeks. 2. Sean will be due a WGI to step 3 in 52 weeks, on 03/05/17. |

### Ex. 11: Combination of LWOP and Break in Service is Less than 52 Weeks

*Adjusting the WGI SCD*

Lori was a permanent employee, took LWOP, quit (had a break in service), and then was reinstated to a GS-09 permanent position. Determine her creditable service and the effective date of her next WGI:

| ***Date*** | ***Action*** |
| --- | --- |
| 10/19/14 | 1. Lori is a GS-09 step 1. 2. On 10/19/14, she completes 52 weeks of creditable service and earns a WGI to step 2. 3. Pay is set at GS-09 step 2. |
| 06/27/15 | 1. On 06/27/15, the employee goes on LWOP. 2. *She has 36 weeks of creditable service at GS-09 step 2.* |
| 12/12/15 | 1. *24 weeks of LWOP.* 2. On 12/12/15, the employee resigns. |
| 02/06/16 | 1. *8 weeks break in service.* 2. On 02/06/16, Lori is reinstated to GS-09 permanent position. 3. Pay is set at GS-09 step 2, based upon HPR. 4. Let’s see if we need to adjust her WGI SCD. 5. Add up the LWOP and break in service to determine if the total exceeds 52 weeks:   24 weeks LWOP  + 8 weeks break in service  32 weeks   1. Lori is not required to start a new waiting period because the combination of her non-pay time and her break in service doesn’t exceed 52 calendar weeks. 2. Since she doesn’t begin a new waiting period on the date of her appointment, next we need to add up her creditable service so we can adjust her WGI SCD.    1. Add up the creditable service as GS-09 step 2.    2. She completed 36 weeks of creditable service from 10/19/14 to 06/27/15.   52 weeks *(waiting period)*  – 36 weeks *(creditable service)*  16 weeks until next WGI   * 1. She must complete 16 more weeks of creditable service in the waiting period before advancing to step 3.   2. Lori will be due a WGI to step 3 in 16 weeks, on 06/26/16. |

### Earning One WGI

Creditable service counts towards one WGI and any additional time is dropped.

1. **Military Service**. If, after military service, an employee is reinstated to a civilian position by means other than exercising restoration rights, the military service is creditable for one WGI increase no matter how long it lasted, provided that the employee is reemployed in the Federal Government within 52 weeks after leaving the military. The 52 weeks may be extended for up to one year if the employee was hospitalized following the military service. *(5 CFR 531.406(b))*
2. **Service in Other than GS Positions**. Service in other than GS positions is creditable from the date of the employee’s last equivalent increase.

### Ex. 12: Military Service

*Earning One WGI*

On January 10, 2016, Penny is promoted to a GS-05 step 1 position. Two months later she leaves the agency and enters the military for 18 months. She does not have restoration rights following her military service, but she does find another GS-05 position with BLM 3 months after leaving the military. Normally, Penny would be reinstated as a GS-05 step 1; however, her military time counts and is *creditable for one WGI*. Pay is set at GS-05 step 2. The excess military time over 52 weeks is dropped and her WGI to step 3 will be due in 52 weeks.

### Earning More than One WGI

Under certain circumstances all time in non-pay status can be counted (*all time counts and none is dropped off*); however, the employee must usually return to duty within specific time limits. The following types of service are creditable for multiple step increases:

1. **Military Service**. When the employee returns through the exercise of restoration rights. The entire period from when the employee leaves the Federal agency to the time they are restored is creditable.
2. **OWCP***.* Time during which the employee is receiving injury compensation under 5 U.S.C. Chapter 81.
3. **Temporarily Employed.** The employee is temporarily employed in another Federal agency which is covered under the General Schedule.
4. **IPA**. An assignment to a nonfederal entity under the Intergovernmental Personnel Act.
5. **Volunteer Service**. Service described in 5 U.S.C. 8332(b)(5) and (7) (Peace Corps and VISTA and their successor organizations).

### Ex. 13: OWCP Claim: All Time Counts and None is Dropped

*Earning More than One WGI*

*When an employee is out on OWCP all time counts, even when they’ve reached enough time for one WGI, the additional time counts towards their next WGI.*

Olivia is a GS-11 step 1 and incurs a job-related injury. Determine how to set her pay when she returns to work:

| ***Date*** | ***Action*** |
| --- | --- |
| 02/08/15 | 1. On 02/08/15, the employee is a GS-09 and is promoted to GS-11 position. 2. Pay is set at GS-11 step 1. 3. The employee received an equivalent increase upon promotion and begins a new waiting period from GS-11 step 1 to step 2. |
| 04/21/15 | 1. On 04/21/15, the employee incurs a job-related injury. 2. On 04/22/15, she is placed on 45-days continuation of pay. 3. *She has 11 weeks of creditable service at GS-11 step 1.* |
| 05/21/15 | 1. On 05/21/15, the employee's claim for injury compensation is approved. 2. *She now has 15 weeks of creditable service at GS-11 step 1.* |
| 06/23/15 | 1. On 06/23/15, the employee’s 45-days continuation of pay terminates. 2. On 06/24/15, she is placed on LWOP. 3. *She now has 20 weeks of creditable service at GS-11 step 1.* |
| 02/07/16 | 1. *She now has 52 weeks of creditable service at GS-11 step 1.* 2. The employee would have received her WGI to step 2 had she not been receiving injury compensation. 3. Completed waiting period to step 2, new waiting period to step 3 begins. |
| 06/12/16 | 1. On 06/21/16, her doctor tells her she is expected to fully recuperate within a short period. 2. Her LWOP is extended until 12/10/16. |
| 07/23/16 | 1. On 07/23/16, the employee is found to be fully recovered from her injury and injury compensation is terminated. 2. *She has 18 weeks of creditable service at GS-11 step 2.* |
| 07/24/16 | 1. On 07/24/16, Olivia is returned to pay status. Since she was out on OWCP (a situation which allows all the creditable time to be counted and none is dropped off), she is entitled to have the excess period from the date she would have received her last WGI (02/07/16) through the termination date of injury compensation (07/23/16) credited toward completion of the required waiting period to step 3. 2. WGI to step 2 is processed effective 02/07/16 and the additional time (18 weeks) will count towards completion to step 3. 3. The employee will be due a WGI to step 3 in 34 weeks, on 02/05/17. |

### Ex. 14: Military Service and Exercised Restoration Rights: All Time Counts and None is Dropped

*Earning More than One WGI*

*When an employee exercises their restoration rights all time counts, even when they’ve reached enough time for one WGI, the additional time counts towards their next WGI.*

Chandra is a GS-11 step 1 who left the agency and entered into the military service. She served in the military and then came back to the agency and exercised her restoration rights. Follow the timeline to determine how to set her pay when she returns to the agency and how to determine her next WGI due date:

| ***Date*** | ***Action*** |
| --- | --- |
| 01/13/13 | 1. On 01/13/13, the employee is a GS-09 and is promoted to a GS-11 position. 2. Pay is set at GS-11 step 1. 3. The employee received an equivalent increase upon promotion and begins a new waiting period from GS-11 step 1 to step 2. |
| 02/23/13 | On 02/23/13, the employee quits. |
| 03/10/13 | On 03/10/13, Chandra enters into the military service. |
| 06/10/17 | On 06/10/17, Chandra leaves the military service. |
| 07/09/17 | On 07/09/17, she returns to a GS-11 position exercising her restoration rights.   1. Chandra is a GS-11 step 1 and her waiting period began on 01/13/13. 2. On 02/23/13, she left the agency and enters into the military service on 03/10/13. 3. She serves in the military until 06/10/17 and returns to the agency exercising her restoration rights on 07/09/17. 4. The period between 02/23/13 to 07/09/17 (the date she quit to the date she returns), is fully creditable for her WGIs even though there were brief periods when she was not actually in the military (02/23/13 to 03/10/13; and 06/10/17 to 07/09/17). 5. Because the service is fully creditable, she would have completed her waiting period:    1. To step 2 on 01/12/14;    2. To step 3 on 01/11/15; and    3. To step 4 on 01/08/17. 6. When Chandra returns on 07/09/17, her pay will be set at GS-11 step 4. 7. The additional time from 01/08/17 to 07/09/17 (26 weeks), will count toward her waiting period to step 5. 8. She will be due a WGI to step 5 on 01/07/18. |

### Ex. 15: Peace Corps: All Time Counts and None is Dropped

*Earning More than One WGI*

*When an employee leaves the agency to join the Peace Corps all time counts, even when they’ve reached enough time for one WGI, the additional time counts towards their next WGI.*

Paul is a GS-05 step 2 and leaves the agency to join the Peace Corps. Determine how to set his pay when he returns to pay status:

| ***Date*** | ***Action*** |
| --- | --- |
| 03/09/14 | 1. Paul is a GS-05 step 1. 2. On 03/09/14, he receives his WGI to GS-05 step 2 and begins a new waiting period to step 3. |
| 04/20/14 | On 04/20/14, Paul enters the Peace Corps and is placed on LWOP. |
| 03/08/15 | On 03/08/15, he would have received his WGI to step 3 if he were not serving in the Peace Corps. |
| 03/05/17 | On 03/05/17, he would have received his WGI to step 4 if he were not serving in the Peace Corps. |
| 04/01/17 | On 04/01/17, Paul separates from the Peace Corps. |
| 04/02/17 | 1. The period between 04/20/14 to 04/02/17 (the date he went on LWOP to the date he returned to duty), is fully creditable for his WGIs. 2. Because the service is fully creditable, he would have completed his waiting period:    1. To step 3 on 03/08/15; and    2. To step 4 on 03/05/17. 3. The additional time from 03/05/17 to 04/02/17 will count toward his waiting period to step 5. He will be due a WGI to step 5 on 03/03/19.   However, if Paul did not return back to the agency immediately after separation from the Peace Corps, he would have been separated from Federal employment and none of the time spent in the Peace Corps would have been considered creditable service. In that case, the employee could be reinstated at step 2, based upon HPR. |

## EQUIVALENT INCREASE

A GS employee must begin a new waiting period whenever they receive an equivalent increase.

**Promotions and WGIs are the most common equivalent increases.**

1. An equivalent increase for GS employees is considered to occur at the time of any of the following:
   1. A within-grade increase.
   2. A promotion, permanent or temporary (including a retained rate promotion that doesn't result in a pay increase), but excluding:
2. A temporary promotion if the employee is returned to the grade from which promoted; or
3. A promotion to a supervisory or managerial position when the employee doesn't satisfactorily complete the probationary period.
   1. Use of the maximum payable rate rule when it results in a higher step (except in the case of a demotion).
   2. Application of the superior qualification and special needs authority that results in a higher step.
4. A pay increase resulting from a change in pay systems does not count as an equivalent increase (e.g., FWS to GS, or pay banding to GS, etc.).
5. A reassignment from a regular rate to a special rate position at the same grade and step does not count as an equivalent increase.

### Ex. 16: Permanent Appointments to Different Grades

*Equivalent Increase*

Lincoln was a GS-04, quits; is reinstated to a GS-05, quits; and then is reinstated to a GS-04 position. Determine how to set his pay upon reinstatement and when his WGIs are due:

| ***Date*** | ***Action*** |
| --- | --- |
| 10/05/14 | 1. Lincoln is a GS-03 and on 10/05/14, is promoted to GS-04 permanent position. 2. Pay is set at GS-04 step 1. 3. New waiting period begins. |
| 04/15/15 | 1. On 04/15/15, the employee resigns. 2. He has 28 weeks of creditable service at GS-04 step 1. |
| 07/12/15 | 1. 11 weeks break in service. 2. On 07/12/15, the employee is reinstated to a GS-05 position. 3. Pay is set at GS-05 step 1. 4. The employee received an equivalent increase when we set his pay at the GS-05 step 1 so his 28 weeks of creditable service at the GS-04 step 1 position doesn’t count. 5. He begins a new waiting period. |
| 07/10/16 | 1. On 07/10/16 (52 weeks), the employee earns his WGI to step 2. 2. Pay is set at GS-05 step 2. 3. New waiting period begins. |
| 08/30/16 | 1. On 08/30/16, Lincoln resigns. 2. *He has 8 weeks of creditable service at GS-05 step 2.* |
| 11/13/16 | 1. *10 week break in service.* 2. On 11/13/16, Lincoln is reinstated to a GS-04 position. 3. Pay is set at GS-04 step 6 based upon HPR. 4. Let’s see if we can give him credit for any of his previous time and if we need to adjust his WGI SCD. 5. First, let’s see if there was a break in service. 6. If he had a break in service of more than 52 weeks, then none of his time under the previous appointment would count and the employee begins a new waiting period on the date of his new appointment. END. 7. If he didn’t have a break in service of more than 52 weeks his time under the previous appointment may count towards completion of his waiting period from step 6 to step 7 (because if he didn’t have a break of more than 52 weeks and if he didn’t receive an equivalent increase, then the time will count). 8. He had 10-weeks break in service. Go to the next step. 9. Second, let’s see if the employee received an equivalent increase. 10. If he received an equivalent increase, then none of his time under the previous appointment would count and the employee begins a new waiting period on the date of his new appointment. END. 11. If the employee didn’t receive an equivalent increase, then his time under the previous appointment may count towards completion of his waiting period from step 6 to step 7. 12. The employee was a GS-05 step 2 before and we are setting pay at GS-04 step 6, so Lincoln did not receive an equivalent increase because the employee’s pay was set at the lowest step that exceeded his rate of basic pay before demotion. Go to the next step. 13. Third, add up his creditable service. 14. He has 8 weeks of creditable service at GS-05 step 2 that count towards completion of moving from GS-04 step 6 to step 7. 15. Be sure to annotate to the processor with remarks code “TMP” (note to processor) on the SF-52 that “The employee’s WGI SCD must be adjusted to give him credit for his 8 weeks of creditable service at GS-05 step 2 (there wasn’t a break in service of more than 52 weeks and he didn’t receive an equivalent increase). Please adjust WGI SCD to 09/18/16”. |

### Ex. 17: Pay Set in Lower Grade Based Upon HPR: Is That an Equivalent Increase?

*Equivalent Increase*

Kristi is a GS-12 step 6 with BLM and takes a voluntary CLG to a GS-11 position to work for your agency. Pay is set at GS-11 step 10 based upon HPR. Even though the employee received a pay increase when we set her pay at GS-11 step 10, it is not considered an equivalent increase because when we set pay in the lower grade, the pay was set at the lowest step that didn’t exceed her rate of basic pay immediately before the demotion. Later, the employee is promoted to a GS-12 position and pay is set at GS-12 step 6. Determine is we can count the time she previously spent as a GS-12 step 6 when she was at BLM:

| ***Date*** | ***Action*** |
| --- | --- |
| 01/10/16 | 1. Kristi is a GS-12 step 6 with BLM. 2. On 01/10/16, she transferred to the agency taking a voluntary CLG to a GS-11 position. Pay is set at GS-11 step 10 based upon HPR. 3. Kristi’s last equivalent increase is when she received a step increase to GS-12 step 6 with BLM on 07/26/15. Adjust WGI SCD to 07/26/15. 4. Her time at the GS-12 grade is creditable for her WGIs in the GS-11 grade because she didn’t receive an equivalent increase (the employee is already at step 10, but the time is still creditable). |
| 09/30/18 | 1. On 09/30/18, Kristi is promoted to a GS-12 position. Pay is set at GS-12 step 6. 2. Since she was a GS-12 step 6 before she transferred to the agency and since we are promoting her into a GS-12 position, can we count the time she previously spent as a GS-12 step 6 towards her next WGI to GS-12 step 7? 3. Unfortunately, no. Upon promotion to the GS-12 grade, the employee received an equivalent increase and must begin a new waiting period. |

### Ex. 18: Pay Set in Same Grade Based Upon HPR: Is That an Equivalent Increase?

*Equivalent Increase*

Annie is a GS-2210-11 step 4, $68,875, paid from Special Rate Table 999B, who was reassigned to a GS-0201-11 position as the result of a management action. Pay is set at GS-0201-11 step 5, $69,381 (RUS).

The employee moved from a GS-11 step 4, SSR ($68,875) to a GS-11 step 5, RUS ($69,381). The move is considered an equivalent increase (step increase within the same grade) and the employee must begin a new waiting period.

### Ex. 19: Change to Lower Grade and then Re-Promoted

Anna is a GS-11 step 6 in North Dakota who is paid from a Special Rate Table, takes a change to lower grade to a GS-09 position, and then is re-promoted back to the GS-11 grade. Determine how to set her pay and if she received an equivalent increase:

| ***Date*** | ***Action*** |
| --- | --- |
| 05/13/15 | 1. A new Special Rate Table is authorized for certain positions in the Bakken Region. 2. Anna is placed on a Special Rate Table; pay is set at GS-11 step 6, $80,795. |
| 06/26/16 | 1. On 06/26/16, the employee receives a step increase to GS-11 step 7. 2. The employee received an equivalent increase and new waiting period begins. |
| 01/07/18 | 1. The Special Rate Table is terminated. The employee is entitled to pay retention. 2. Pay is set at GS-11, step 00, $85,958 (RUS). |
| 11/25/18 | 1. On 11/25/16, the employee left the agency and went to a different USDA agency to a GS-09 position. The CLG was at the employee’s request and thus a terminating event for pay retention. 2. Pay retention ends. Pay is set at GS-09, step 10, $65,778 (RUS) and the employee does not begin a new waiting period. The time in the GS-11 position is creditable for a WGI in the GS-09 grade (the employee is already at step 10, but the time is still creditable). |
| 06/23/19 | 1. On 06/23/19, the employee applied for and was selected for a GS-11 position with the agency. 2. Pay is set at GS-11 step 7, $74,687 (RUS), based upon HPR. (We can’t use the retained rate as HPR ($85,958) because a retained rate may not be used as the HPR, so we use the grade and step (GS-11 step 7)). 3. The employee received an equivalent increase when promoted from the GS-09 position to the GS-11 position. 4. New waiting period begins. |

### Ex. 20: Failure to Complete the Supervisory Probationary Period

*Equivalent Increase*

Kent is a GS-11 step 4 and is promoted to a GS-12 supervisory position. Unfortunately, he didn’t complete the supervisory probationary period and is returned to his lower grade. Determine how to set his pay when he is returned to his lower grade:

| ***Date*** | ***Action*** |
| --- | --- |
| 11/15/15 | 1. Kent is a GS-11 step 3. 2. On 11/15/15, he earns his WGI to step 4. 3. Pay is set at GS-11 step 4 and new waiting period begins. |
| 02/07/16 | 1. On 02/07/16, he is promoted to a GS-12 supervisory position. 2. Pay is set at GS-12 step 1. 3. The employee received an equivalent increase upon promotion and begins a new waiting period. |
| 12/09/16 | Kent is not performing satisfactorily in the supervisory position. |
| 12/11/16 | 1. On 12/11/16, it was decided that Kent was not performing satisfactorily in the supervisory position and he was returned to the GS-11 grade. 2. Kent is returned to his previous grade as though he had never left the position. 3. Pay is set at GS-11 step 4. 4. When the employee was promoted to the GS-12 step 1 position, the promotion action was not considered an equivalent increase because he didn’t satisfactorily complete the supervisory probation period and he was returned to his previous grade. 5. Therefore, the time spent in the GS-12 grade is creditable for his WGI to GS-11 step 5. 6. Kent is due a WGI to step 5 on 11/12/17. |

### Ex. 21: Change to Lower Grade: The Step They go to Determines the Waiting Period

*Waiting Periods*

*If an employee takes a CLG, their time before the action still counts toward their next WGI, but the step they are going to determines which waiting period (one, two, or three years) they will be in.*

Molly is a GS-12 step 2 who took a voluntary change to lower grade to a GS-11 step 9 position. Determine when her WGI will be due:

GS-201-12 step 2 position:

| **2016** | **Grade** | **STEP 1** | **STEP 2** | **STEP 3** | **STEP 4** | **STEP 5** | **STEP 6** | **STEP 7** | **STEP 8** | **STEP 9** | **STEP 10** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **ABQ** | 12 | 71,025 | 73,392 | 75,760 | 78,127 | 80,495 | 82,862 | 85,230 | 87,597 | 89,965 | 92,332 |

GS-201-11 step 9 position:

| **2016** | **Grade** | **STEP 1** | **STEP 2** | **STEP 3** | **STEP 4** | **STEP 5** | **STEP 6** | **STEP 7** | **STEP 8** | **STEP 9** | **STEP 10** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **ABQ** | 11 | 59,256 | 61,231 | 63,207 | 65,182 | 67,157 | 69,132 | 71,107 | 73,082 | 75,058 | 77,033 |

Actions:

| ***Date*** | ***Action*** |
| --- | --- |
| 04/17/16 | 1. Molly is a GS-201-12 step 1 supervisor. 2. On 04/17/16, she received her WGI to step 2. 3. Pay is set at GS-12 step 2 ($73,392) and the employee begins a new waiting period. |
| 07/10/16 | 1. On 07/10/16, she takes a voluntary CLG to a GS-201-11 non-supervisory position. 2. Pay is set at GS-11 step 9, $75,058 based upon HPR. 3. Even though Molly received an increase in pay when she moved from the GS-12 position to the GS-11 position, it is not considered an equivalent increase because the employee’s pay was set at the lowest step that exceeded her rate of basic pay before demotion *(see OPM’s rules regarding equivalent increases).* 4. Molly’s last equivalent increase was on 04/17/16 when she was a GS-12 step 2. 5. She took a CLG to a GS-11 step 9 position; therefore, she is now in a 156-week waiting period to move from step 9 to step 10. 6. Molly will be due a WGI to step 10 on 04/14/19. |

### Ex. 22: Reassigned from Locality Table to Special Rate Position

*Equivalent Increase*

Vicky is a GS-201-11 step 2 ($61,231) HR Specialist in Albuquerque.

| **2016** | **Grade** | **STEP 1** | **STEP 2** | **STEP 3** | **STEP 4** | **STEP 5** | **STEP 6** | **STEP 7** | **STEP 8** | **STEP 9** | **STEP 10** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **ABQ** | 11 | 59,256 | 61,231 | 63,207 | 65,182 | 67,157 | 69,132 | 71,107 | 73,082 | 75,058 | 77,033 |

She is reassigned to a special rate position.

| **2016** | **Grade** | **STEP 1** | **STEP 2** | **STEP 3** | **STEP 4** | **STEP 5** | **STEP 6** | **STEP 7** | **STEP 8** | **STEP 9** | **STEP 10** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **999B** | 11 | 61,137 | 63,175 | 65,213 | 67,251 | 69,288 | 71,326 | 73,364 | 75,402 | 77,440 | 79,478 |

Determine if she received an equivalent increase and when her WGI is due:

| ***Date*** | ***Action*** |
| --- | --- |
| 02/07/16 | 1. Vicky is a GS-201-11 step 2. 2. On 02/07/16, she received her WGI to step 2. 3. Pay is set at GS-11 step 2 ($61,231) and the employee begins a new waiting period. |
| 07/10/16 | 1. On 07/10/16, she is reassigned to a GS-2210-11 step 2 position paid from Special Rate Table 999B ($63,175). 2. Even though she received an increase in pay, she has not received an equivalent increase. 3. She will be due a WGI to step 3 on 07/09/17. |

### Ex. 23: Change to Lower Grade w/Known Promotion Potential

*Equivalent Increase*

Janet is a GS-11 step 4 in Washington, DC ($73,160).

| **2017** | **Gr** | **STEP 1** | **STEP 2** | **STEP 3** | **STEP 4** | **STEP 5** | **STEP 6** | **STEP 7** | **STEP 8** | **STEP 9** | **STEP 10** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **DCB** | 11 | 66,510 | 68,727 | 70,943 | 73,160 | 75,377 | 77,593 | 79,810 | 82,027 | 84,243 | 86,460 |

She took a competitive CLG to a GS-09/11/12 position.

| **2017** | **Gr** | **STEP 1** | **STEP 2** | **STEP 3** | **STEP 4** | **STEP 5** | **STEP 6** | **STEP 7** | **STEP 8** | **STEP 9** | **STEP 10** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **DCB** | 09 | 54,972 | 56,805 | 56,638 | 60,470 | 62,303 | 64,136 | 65,969 | 67,801 | 69,634 | 71,467 |

Determine how to set her pay in the lower grade and when her WGI is due:

| *Date* | *Action* |
| --- | --- |
| 02/07/16 | 1. Janet is a GS-11 step 3. 2. On 03/08/15 she received her WGI to step 4. 3. Pay is set at GS-11 step 4, $73,160. 4. She should receive her WGI to step 5 in two years (on 03/05/17). |
| 01/09/17 | 1. On 01/09/17 (a couple of months before her WGI to GS-11 step 5), she takes a competitive change to lower grade to a position with known promotion potential (GS-09/11/12). 2. How is her pay set in the lower grade? Their agency-specific HPR policy requires that the windfall provision must be taken into account when an employee takes a voluntary CLG to a position with known promotion potential. 3. How to account for the windfall - The employee will likely be promoted in 1 year. Forecast what the employee’s pay would be in their current position, one year from now, as if they never left their current position. Look at any WGIs the employee would have received during the year (the time of demotion and re-promotion). If the employee remained in their current position (before the CLG), what would their pay be set at in 1 year? 4. Janet is currently a GS-11 step 4 and she would have received her WGI to step 5 during the time of demotion and re-promotion, so GS-11 step 5 is the grade and step we want to end up at when the employee is re-promoted to her previous grade. We’ll set her pay in the GS-09 grade so when she’s re-promoted her pay will end up at GS-11 step 5. |
|  | CLG to GS-09.  Pay is set at GS-09 step 10, $71,467 based upon HPR.   1. $71,467 (step 10) - $69,634 (step 9) = $1,833 (amount of WGI) 2. $1,833 x 2 = $3,666 (two-step promotion rule) 3. $3,666 + $71,467 = $75,133 (promotion entitlement) 4. Slot $75,133 into GS-11 grade and falls between step 4 and step 5. 5. If we set pay at GS-09 step 10, and when applying the two-step promotion rule in one year, pay would be set at GS-11 step 5 (the step the employee would be at had they remained in their current position and didn’t take the CLG). |
|  | When is her next WGI due?   1. Her last WGI to GS-11 step 4 was on 03/08/15 and she would be due a WGI to GS-11 step 5 on 03/05/17, but she took a voluntary CLG. 2. All time she earned in the GS-11 grade still counts when she took the voluntary CLG to the GS-09 position (because she did not receive an equivalent increase when she moved from the GS-11 step 4 to the GS-9 step 10 positions. Pay is set at step 10 (the employee is already at step 10, but the time is still creditable). 3. The employee will likely be promoted from the GS-09 grade to the GS-11 grade in one year on 01/10/18, to a GS-11 step 5. When she is promoted to the GS-11 position (going from GS-9 step 10 ($71,467) to GS-11 step 5 ($75,377)) she will receive an equivalent increase and must begin a new waiting period.    1. New WGI waiting period begins on 01/10/18.    2. WGI to GS-11 step 6 due on 01/08/20. |

### Ex. 24: Equivalent Increase for an Employee on Pay Retention

*Equivalent Increase*

*When an employee on pay retention is promoted that is considered an equivalent increase, even if they didn’t receive an increase in pay. (The promotion entitlement for a retained rate employee is either step 10 of their current grade plus 2 WGIs; or their current pay; whichever is higher).*

On January 10, 2016, Ed is a GS-11 step 00 on pay retention with a retained rate of $82,132 and is promoted to a GS-12 position. Both positions are located in Portland, OR. Determine how to set his pay and the date for his next WGI:

**Standard Method**

1. **Apply the Two-Step Promotion Rule.**
2. Use the GS base table and increase the GS-11 step 10 by two within-grade increases. The value of a step increase at the GS-11 grade level is $1,727:

*67,354 + (2 x $1,727) = $70,808*

| **2016** | **Gr** | **STEP 1** | **STEP 2** | **STEP 3** | **STEP 4** | **STEP 5** | **STEP 6** | **STEP 7** | **STEP 8** | **STEP 9** | **STEP 10** | **SUPP.** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **BASE** | 11 | 51,811 | 53,538 | 55,265 | 56,992 | 58,719 | 60,446 | 62,173 | 63,900 | 65,627 | 67,354 | 1,727 |

1. To find Ed’s highest payable rate of pay, multiply $70,808 by the Portland locality. The locality pay supplement for Portland, OR is 20.69%. (Put a 1 in front of the number and it will give you the payable rate (1.2069)):

SALARY TABLE 2016-POR

INCORPORATING THE 1% GENERAL SCHEDULE INCREASE AND A LOCALITY PAYMENT OF 20.69%

FOR THE LOCALITY PAY AREA OF PORTLAND-VANCOUVER-SALEM, OR-WA

TOTAL INCREASE: 1.29%

EFFECTIVE JANUARY 2016

1. $70,808 x 1.2069 = $85,458
2. **Promotion Entitlement.** When an employee on a retained rate is promoted, they are entitled to step 10 or their retained grade plus two within-grade increases or their current retained rate; whichever is higher.
3. GS-11 step 10 plus two WGIs = $85,458
4. Current retained rate = $82,132
5. $85,458 is higher and is Ed’s promotion entitlement.
6. **Slot the Pay.** Slot the resulting rate ($85,458) into the highest pay table for his new position. $85,458 falls between step 5 and step 6.

| **2016** | **Gr** | **STEP 1** | **STEP 2** | **STEP 3** | **STEP 4** | **STEP 5** | **STEP 6** | **STEP 7** | **STEP 8** | **STEP 9** | **STEP 10** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **POR** | 12 | 74,950 | 77,448 | 79,946 | 82,445 | 84,943 | 87,441 | 89,939 | 92,438 | 94,936 | 97,434 |

1. **Set the Pay and Determine Date for Next WGI.** Pay is set at GS-12 step 6, $87,441, Portland locality and pay retention ends. He has begun a new waiting period and will be due a WGI to step 7 in 156 weeks, on January 7, 2019.

## TEMPORARY EMPLOYEES

### Q: Can temporary employees receive a WGI?

**A: No.** Employees who serve under a temporary appointment of less than one year are not eligible for WGIs, even if the appointment is extended beyond one year.

However, a temporary employee will receive credit for their time when they receive a permanent appointment, unless they had a break in service of 52 weeks or more or they received an equivalent increase.

### Q: What about a term appointment?

**A:** Term employees are eligible for WGIs upon satisfying the required waiting period. Employees who serve under an appointment of one year or more are eligible for WGIs.

This is different from an NTE-one year appointment that has been extended beyond one year, which are not eligible for WGIs.

### Ex. 25: Earning a WGI while on a Term Appointment

*Creditable Service*

On 02/07/16, Marsha was appointed to a GS-11 step 1 Term appointment (NTE 2 years). While under the Term appointment, the employee is eligible to receive WGIs. Marsha’s waiting period to step 2 will be completed 52 weeks later, on 02/05/17.

### Ex. 26: Earning a WGI while on a Temp Appt that was Extended Beyond One Year

*Temporary Employees Are Not Eligible for a WGI but their Time May Count*

Jan is currently a GS-11 step 1 serving on a temporary NTE 1 year appointment. Jan is not eligible to receive a WGI while under a temporary appointment.

The appointment is extended beyond one year. The employee is still not eligible for a WGI, even when the temp appointment was extended beyond one year. Even though she is working more than 1 year, her actual appointment is still NTE 1 year.

However, if Jan receives a permanent appointment and if she doesn’t have a break in service of 52 weeks or more or if she doesn’t receive an equivalent increase, then her service under the temporary appointment counts.

### Ex. 27: Temporary Service Credited to Permanent Position

*Temporary Employees*

Cliff is a GS-05 step 1 temporary employee who separates and then receives a permanent appointment. Determine how to provide credit for his temporary service:

| ***Date*** | ***Action*** |
| --- | --- |
| 05/15/16 | 1. On 05/15/16, the employee receives a temporary appointment to GS-05 position, NTE 07/24/16. 2. Pay is set at GS-05 step 1. |
| 07/23/16 | 1. On 07/23/16, the temporary appointment terminates, and the employee is separated. 2. The employee has *10 weeks of creditable service* at GS-05 step 1. 3. Remember, the time is still creditable, it just depends if we’re able to count it or not. While serving under a temporary appointment he’s not eligible to receive a WGI, but if he’s converted then the time may count. |
| 09/04/16 | 1. *12 weeks break in service.* 2. On 09/04/16, Cliff received a career-conditional appointment. 3. He is now permanent and eligible to receive WGIs. 4. Cliff was appointed to a permanent position so the waiting period for his WGI will begin on 09/04/16; however, since he didn’t have a break in service of more than 52 weeks and he didn’t receive an equivalent increase, we need to determine the amount of creditable service he had to his credit prior to separation in order to determine when he will be due his next WGI. 5. The employee completed 10 weeks of the required 52-week waiting period. 6. Cliff will be due a WGI to step 2 on 06/11/17 and not 09/03/17. |

### Ex. 28: Temp Appt Extended then Converted

*Temporary Employees*

Deric is a GS-0462-05 step 1 temporary employee who received a career-conditional appointment. Determine how to set his pay upon conversion:

| ***Date*** | ***Action*** |
| --- | --- |
| 01/12/14 | 1. On 01/12/14, the employee is appointed to a GS-0462-5 temporary appointment NTE 07/13/14. 2. Pay is set at GS-05 step 1. |
| 07/13/14 | 1. On 07/13/14, the temporary appointment is extended to NTE 01/11/15. 2. *26 weeks creditable service*. Although the employee is under a temporary appointment and not eligible to receive WGIs, their time is still creditable. |
| 01/11/15 | 1. On 01/11/15, the temporary appointment is extended again to NTE 10/04/15. 2. Pay continues as GS-05 step 1 and the employee now has *52 weeks of creditable service at GS-05 step 1.* |
| 10/04/15 | 1. On 10/04/15, the temporary appointment is extended again to NTE 02/07/16. 2. Pay continues as GS-05 step 1 and the employee now has *90 weeks of creditable service at GS-05 step 1.* |
| 02/07/16 | 1. On 02/07/16, the employee is converted to a career-conditional appointment. He is now permanent and now eligible to receive WGIs. 2. The employee now has *108 weeks of creditable service at GS-05 step 1*. 3. Let’s see if we can count any of his creditable service under the temporary appointments and apply it towards his WGI from step 1 to step 2. 4. First, let’s see if there was a break in service.    1. If he had a break in service of more than 52 weeks, then none of his time under the temporary appointments would count and the employee begins a new waiting period on the date of his new appointment. END.    2. If he didn’t have a break in service of more than 52 weeks, and even though we are setting his pay at step 1, his time under the temporary appointments may count towards completion of his waiting period from step 1 to step 2 (because if he didn’t have a break of more than 52 weeks and if he didn’t receive an equivalent increase, then the time will count).    3. He didn’t have a break in service. Go to the next step. 5. Second, let’s see if the employee received an equivalent increase upon the career conditional appointment.    1. If he received an equivalent increase, then none of his time under the temporary appointments would count and the employee begins a new waiting period on the date of his new appointment. END.    2. If the employee didn’t receive an equivalent increase, then his time under the temporary appointments may count towards completion of his waiting period from step 1 to step 2.    3. The employee was a GS-05 step 1 under the temporary appointments and the permanent position is a GS-05 step 1, so he did not receive an equivalent increase. Go to the next step. 6. Third, add up his creditable service.    1. He has 108 weeks of creditable service at GS-05 step 1.    2. To move from step 1 to step 2 an employee needs 52 weeks of creditable service (so he actually earned enough time for 2 WGIs, but remember, we can only count the time for one WGI and any additional time is dropped).    3. The employee earns a WGI to step 2 effective the same date as the career conditional appointment. Pay is set at GS-05 step 2.    4. The additional time is dropped, and the employee begins a new waiting period to step 3.    5. The employee will be due a WGI to step 3 in 52 weeks, on 02/05/17. |

### Ex. 29: Temporary Converted to a Term Appointment

*Temporary Employees*

Halle is a temporary employee who was converted to a Term appointment based upon VRA eligibility. Determine how to set her pay upon conversion:

| ***Date*** | ***Action*** |
| --- | --- |
| 07/13/14 | 1. On 07/13/14, the employee receives a temporary appointment to a GS-04 position, NTE 07/12/15. 2. Pay is set at GS-04 step 1. |
| 07/12/15 | 1. On 07/12/15, the temporary appointment is extended, NTE 07/10/16. 2. The employee has *52 weeks of creditable service* at GS-04 step 1. 3. Remember, the time is still creditable, it just depends if we’re able to count it or not. |
| 07/10/16 | 1. On 07/10/16, the employee is converted to a Term appointment, NTE 08/06/17. While under the temporary appointment she was not eligible to receive WGIs, but she was converted to a Term appointment, NTE 13 months, and is now eligible to receive WGIs *(because Term appointment over 1 year).* 2. Her time from 07/13/14 to 07/09/16 is creditable (104 weeks). An employee needs 52 weeks to move from step 1 to step 2 so we count 52 weeks, set her pay at step 2, and the additional time is dropped. 3. Halle will be due a WGI to step 3 in 52 weeks, on 07/09/17. |

### Ex. 30: Earned Enough Time for One WGI

*Temporary Employees*

Chris is a GS-0462-05 step 1 temporary employee who received multiple temporary appointments and then was converted to a career-conditional appointment. Determine how to set her pay upon conversion:

| ***Date*** | ***Action*** |
| --- | --- |
| 09/07/14 | 1. On 09/07/14, the employee receives a temporary appointment to a GS-0462-05, NTE 04/05/15. 2. Pay is set at GS-05 step 1. |
| 04/04/15 | 1. On 04/04/15, the temporary appointment terminates, and the employee is separated. 2. The employee has *30 weeks of creditable service* at GS-05 step 1. |
| 06/28/15 | 1. On 06/28/15 *(12 weeks break in service)*, the employee receives another temporary appointment to a GS-0462-05 position, NTE 11/01/15. 2. Pay is set at GS-05 step 1. |
| 10/31/15 | 1. On 10/31/15, the temporary appointment terminates, and the employee is separated. 2. An additional *18 weeks of creditable service* at GS-05 step 1. |
| 05/15/16 | 1. On 05/15/15 *(28 weeks break in service)*, the employee receives another temporary appointment to GS-05 step 1, NTE 07/24/16. 2. Pay is set at GS-05 step 1. |
| 07/23/16 | 1. On 07/23/16, the temporary appointment terminates, and the employee is separated. 2. An additional *10 weeks of creditable service*. |
| 08/21/16 | 1. On 08/21/16 (*10 weeks break in service*), the employee receives a career conditional appointment to a GS-0462-05 position. She is now permanent and now eligible to receive WGIs. 2. Let’s see if we can count any of her creditable service under the temporary appointments and apply it towards her WGI from step 1 to step 2. 3. First, let’s see if there was a break in service.    1. If she had a break in service of more than 52 weeks, then none of her time under the temporary appointments would count and the employee begins a new waiting period on the date of her new appointment. END.    2. If she didn’t have a break in service that totaled more than 52 weeks, and even though we are setting her pay at step 1, her time under the temporary appointments may count towards completion of her waiting period from step 1 to step 2 (because if she didn’t have a break of more than 52 weeks and if she didn’t receive an equivalent increase, then the time will count).    3. Count all the weeks of the breaks in service:   12 weeks  28 weeks  + 10 weeks  50 weeks   * 1. She didn’t have a break in service of more than 52 weeks. Her service from 09/07/14 to 08/21/16 is creditable. Go to the next step.  1. Second, let’s see if the employee received an equivalent increase upon the career conditional appointment.    1. If she received an equivalent increase, then none of her time under the temporary appointments would count and the employee begins a new waiting period on the date of her new appointment. END.    2. If the employee didn’t receive an equivalent increase, then her time under the temporary appointments may count towards completion of her waiting period from step 1 to step 2.    3. The employee was a GS-05 step 1 under the temporary appointments and the permanent position is a GS-05 step 1, so she did not receive an equivalent increase. Go to the next step. 2. Third, add up her creditable service:   30 weeks  18 weeks  + 10 weeks  58 weeks   * 1. She has 58 weeks creditable service.   2. To move from step 1 to step 2 an employee needs 52 weeks of creditable service.  1. The employee earns a WGI to step 2 effective the same date as the career conditional appointment. Pay is set at GS-05 step 2. 2. The additional time is dropped, and the employee begins a new waiting period to step 3. |

### Ex. 31: Time Counts but Doesn’t Have Enough Time for a WGI

*Temporary Employees*

Cindy is a GS-06 step 1 temporary employee who received a career-conditional appointment. Determine how to set her pay upon conversion:

| ***Date*** | ***Action*** |
| --- | --- |
| 08/06/17 | 1. On 08/06/17, the employee is appointed to a GS-0462-6 temporary appointment, NTE 11/26/17. 2. Pay is set at GS-06 step 1. |
| 11/25/17 | 1. On 11/25/17, the temporary appointment terminates, and the employee is separated. 2. The employee has *16 weeks of creditable service* at GS-06 step 1. 3. Remember, the time is still creditable, it just depends if we’re able to count it or not. While serving under a temporary appointment she’s not eligible to receive a WGI but if she’s converted then the time may count. |
| 02/18/18 | 1. On 02/18/18 *(10 weeks break in service)*, the employee receives another temporary appointment to a GS-0462-6 position, NTE 11/11/18. 2. Pay is set at GS-06 step 1. 3. *48 weeks of creditable service at GS-06 step 1 (16 weeks from first appt. + 32 weeks from this appt.).* |
| 09/30/18 | 1. On 09/30/18, the employee receives a career conditional appointment to a GS-0462-06 position. 2. Pay is set at GS-06 step 1. 3. Let’s see if we can count any of her creditable service under the temporary appointments and apply it towards her WGI from step 1 to step 2. 4. First, let’s see if there was a break in service.    1. If she had a break in service of more than 52 weeks, then none of her time under the temporary appointments would count and the employee begins a new waiting period on the date of her new appointment (09/30/18). END.    2. If she didn’t have a break in service of more than 52 weeks, and even though we are setting her pay at step 1, her time under the temporary appointments may count towards completion of her waiting period from step 1 to step 2 (because if she didn’t have a break of more than 52 weeks and if she didn’t receive an equivalent increase, then the time will count).    3. The employee had a 10-week break in service. Go to the next step. 5. Second, let’s see if the employee received an equivalent increase upon the career conditional appointment.    1. If she received an equivalent increase, then none of her time under the temporary appointments would count and the employee begins a new waiting period on the date of her new appointment (09/30/18). END.    2. If the employee didn’t receive an equivalent increase, then her time under the temporary appointments may count towards completion of her waiting period from step 1 to step 2.    3. The employee was a GS-06 step 1 under the temporary appointments and the permanent position is a GS-06 step 1, so she did not receive an equivalent increase. Go to the next step. 6. Third, add up her creditable service.    1. The employee has 48 weeks of creditable service at GS-06 step 1 that counts towards completion of moving to step 2.    2. Cindy is due a WGI to GS-06 step 2 in just a few weeks, on 10/28/18. 7. Be sure to annotate to the processor with remarks code “TMP” (note to processor) on the SF-52 that “The employee’s WGI SCD must be adjusted by 48 weeks for her creditable service while under temporary appointments (there wasn’t a break in service of more than 52 weeks, and she didn’t receive an equivalent increase). Please adjust WGI SCD to 10/29/17”. |

### Ex. 32: Temp Appts at Different Grades

*Temporary Employees*

Billy received multiple temporary appointments at different grades and then received a career-conditional appointment. Determine how to set his pay upon conversion:

| ***Date*** | ***Action*** |
| --- | --- |
| 08/06/17 | 1. On 08/06/17, the employee is appointed to a GS-0462-05 temporary appointment, NTE 11/26/17. 2. Pay is set at GS-05 step 1. |
| 11/25/17 | 1. On 11/25/17, the temporary appointment terminates, and the employee is separated. 2. The employee has *16 weeks of creditable service at GS-05 step 1.* |
| 02/18/18 | 1. On 02/18/18 *(10 weeks break in service)*, the employee receives another temporary appointment to a GS-0462-05 position, NTE 11/11/18. 2. Pay is set at GS-05 step 1. 3. *32 weeks of creditable service at GS-05 step 1.* |
| 09/30/18 | 1. On 09/30/18, the employee receives a career conditional appointment to a GS-0462-06 position. 2. Let’s see if we can count any of his creditable service under the temporary appointments and apply it towards his WGI from step 1 to step 2. 3. First, let’s see if there was a break in service. The employee had a 10-week break in service. Go to the next step. 4. Second, let’s see if the employee received an equivalent increase upon the career conditional appointment.    1. If he received an equivalent increase, then none of his time under the temporary appointments would count and the employee begins a new waiting period on the date of his new appointment. END.    2. If the employee didn’t receive an equivalent increase, then his time under the temporary appointments may count towards completion of his waiting period from step 1 to step 2.    3. The employee was a GS-05 step 1 under the temporary appointments and the permanent position is a GS-06 step 1. The employee received an equivalent increase and begins a new waiting period. 5. Pay is set at GS-06 step 1 and the employee will receive a WGI to step 2 in 52 weeks. |

### Ex. 33: Breaks More than 52 Weeks: No Time Counts

*Temporary Employees*

Marie is a GS-0462-05 step 1 temporary employee who received multiple temporary appointments and then was converted to a career-conditional appointment. Determine how to set her pay upon conversion:

| ***Date*** | ***Action*** |
| --- | --- |
| 09/07/14 | 1. On 09/07/14, the employee receives a temporary appointment to a GS-0462-05, NTE 04/05/15. 2. Pay is set at GS-05 step 1. |
| 04/04/15 | 1. On 04/04/15, the temporary appointment terminates, and the employee is separated. 2. The employee has *30 weeks of creditable service at GS-05 step 1*. |
| 06/28/15 | 1. On 06/28/15 *(12 weeks break in service)*, the employee receives another temporary appointment to a GS-0462-05 position, NTE 11/01/15. 2. Pay is set at GS-05 step 1. |
| 10/31/15 | 1. On 10/31/15, the temporary appointment terminates, and the employee is separated. 2. An additional *18 weeks of creditable service at GS-05 step 1.* |
| 05/14/17 | 1. On 05/14/17 *(79 weeks break in service)*, the employee receives a career conditional appointment to a GS-0462-05 position. She is now permanent and now eligible to receive WGIs. 2. Let’s see if we can count any of her creditable service under the temporary appointments and apply it towards her WGI from step 1 to step 2. 3. First, let’s see if there was a break in service.    1. If she had a break in service of more than 52 weeks, then none of her time under the temporary appointments would count and the employee begins a new waiting period on the date of her new appointment. END.    2. If she didn’t have a break in service of more than 52 weeks, and even though we are setting her pay at step 1, her time under the temporary appointments may count towards completion of her waiting period from step 1 to step 2 (because if she didn’t have a break of more than 52 weeks and if she didn’t receive an equivalent increase, then the time will count).    3. Count all the weeks of the breaks in service. She had 79 weeks break in service, so she begins a new waiting period upon appointment. 4. Pay is set at GS-05 step 1. 5. The employee will earn a WGI to step 2 in 52 weeks. |

### Ex. 34: Breaks More than 52 Weeks: Time before 52 Week Cut-Off Counts

*Temporary Employees*

Mike is a GS-0462-05 step 1 temporary employee who received multiple temporary appointments and then was converted to a career-conditional appointment. Determine how to set his pay upon conversion:

| ***Date*** | ***Action*** |
| --- | --- |
| 09/22/13 | 1. On 09/22/13, the employee receives a temporary appointment to a GS-0462-05 position, NTE 12/30/13. 2. Pay is set at GS-05 step 1. |
| 12/29/13 | 1. On 12/29/13, the temporary appointment terminates, and the employee is separated. 2. *14 weeks of creditable service at GS-05 step 1*. |
| 04/06/14 | 1. On 04/16/14 *(14 weeks break in service)*, the employee receives another temporary appointment to a GS-05 position, NTE 06/29/14. 2. Pay is set at GS-05 step 1. |
| 06/28/14 | 1. On 06/28/14, the temporary appointment terminates, and the employee is separated. 2. *An additional 13 weeks of creditable service at GS-05 step1*. |
| 09/07/14 | 1. On 09/07/14 *(10 weeks break in service)*, the employee receives another temporary appointment to a GS-05 position, NTE 04/05/15. 2. Pay is set at GS-05 step 1. |
| 04/04/15 | 1. On 04/04/15, the temporary appointment terminates, and the employee is separated. 2. *An additional 30 weeks of creditable service at GS-05 step1***.** |
| 06/28/15 | 1. On 06/28/15 *(12 weeks break in service),* the employee receives another temporary appointment to GS-05 position, NTE 11/01/15. 2. Pay is set at GS-05 step 1. |
| 10/31/15 | 1. On 10/31/15, the temporary appointment terminates, and the employee is separated. 2. *An additional 18 weeks of creditable service at GS-05 step 1.* |
| 05/15/16 | 1. On 05/15/16 *(28 weeks break in service),* the employee receives another temporary appointment to GS-05 position, NTE 07/24/16. 2. Pay is set at GS-05 step 1. |
| 07/23/16 | 1. On 07/23/16, the temporary appointment terminates, and the employee is separated. 2. *An additional 10 weeks of creditable service at GS-05 step 1.* |
| 08/21/16 | 1. On 08/21/16 (*10 weeks break in service*), the employee receives a career conditional appointment to a GS-0462-05 position. He is now permanent and now eligible to receive WGIs. 2. Let’s see if we can count any of his creditable service under the temporary appointments and apply it towards his WGI from step 1 to step 2. 3. First, let’s see if there was a break in service.    1. If he had a break in service of more than 52 weeks, then none of his time under the temporary appointments would count and the employee begins a new waiting period on the date of his new appointment. END.    2. If he didn’t have a break in service that totaled more than 52 weeks, and even though we are setting his pay at step 1, his time under the temporary appointments may count towards completion of his waiting period from step 1 to step 2 (because if he didn’t have a break of more than 52 weeks and if he didn’t receive an equivalent increase, then the time will count).    3. Count all the weeks of the breaks in service:   Date………… Breaks in Service  04/06/14…….14 weeks  09/07/14…….10 weeks  06/28/15…….12 weeks  05/15/16…….28 weeks  + 08/21/16…….10 weeks  74 weeks of breaks in service   * 1. His breaks in service are more than 52 weeks. Since there are multiple appointments, we need to count the creditable time before we reach the 52-week cutoff date of combined breaks in service. Determine the cutoff date (go backwards and add up all the breaks in service until they total 52 weeks): 10 weeks + 28 weeks + 12 weeks + 10 weeks = 60 weeks   Date………… Breaks in Service  04/06/14…….14 weeks  09/07/14…….10 weeks  06/28/15…….12 weeks  05/15/16…….28 weeks  + 08/21/16…….10 weeks  60 weeks of breaks in service   * 1. He reached 52 weeks of a break in service on the 09/07/14 appointment; therefore, we will not count any time before his 09/07/14 appointment. Starting with the 09/07/14 appointment, we will count his time on the temporary appointments. His service from 09/07/14 to 08/21/16 is creditable. Go to the next step.  1. Second, let’s see if the employee received an equivalent increase upon the career conditional appointment.    1. If he received an equivalent increase, then none of his time under the temporary appointments would count and the employee begins a new waiting period on the date of his new appointment. END.    2. If the employee didn’t receive an equivalent increase, then his time under the temporary appointments may count towards completion of his waiting period from step 1 to step 2.    3. The employee was a GS-05 step 1 under the temporary appointments and the permanent position is a GS-05 step 1, so he did not receive an equivalent increase. Go to the next step. 2. Third, add up his creditable service:   Date………… Creditable Service  04/04/15…….30 weeks  10/31/15…….18 weeks  + 07/23/16…….10 weeks  58 weeks of creditable service   1. Mike completed 58 weeks of creditable service. He is entitled to have the 58 weeks spent on the temporary appointments credited towards the completion of one waiting period.    1. To move from step 1 to step 2 an employee needs 52 weeks of creditable service.    2. The employee earns a WGI to step 2 effective the same date as the career conditional appointment.    3. Pay is set at GS-05 step 2.    4. Any creditable service in excess of the 52 weeks is dropped. Mike is due a WGI to step 3 in 52 weeks, on August 20, 2017.   NOTE: If he had been given a permanent appointment to a GS-06 position instead of the GS-05 grade, then that would have been considered an equivalent increase and none of his time would count. |

## TEMPORARY PROMOTIONS

### Q: Can a permanent employee on a time-limited promotion receive a WGI?

**A: Yes**, when a permanent employee is promoted on a temporary or term basis for one year or longer, they are eligible to earn a WGI.

Employees on temporary NTE 1-year promotions are not eligible to earn a WGI while on the temporary promotion; the time is still creditable, they just can’t receive a WGI while on the temporary NTE 1-year promotion, *unless it’s extended beyond 1 year.*

For example, on 01/07/18, GS-09 step 7 receives a temp. NTE 1-year promotion to a GS-11 step 1 position. The employee is not eligible for a WGI because the TLP is less than one year. However, if the TLP was extended beyond one year then the employee would be eligible for WGIs. In our example, if the TLP was extended beyond one year the employee would receive a WGI to GS-11 step 2 on 01/06/19.

### Q: If an employee is on a competitive TLP and then permanently promoted into that grade, does the time spent on the TLP count towards the employee’s next WGI?

**A: Yes**. If a temporary promotion is made permanent immediately after the temporary promotion ends, the time spent on the temporary promotion counts towards creditable service for the employee’s next WGI.

The regulations state that if a temporary promotion is made permanent immediately after the temporary promotion ends, the agency may not return the employee to the lower grade; instead, the agency must convert the employee’s temporary promotion to a permanent promotion without a change in pay. *(5 CFR 531.214(e))*

### Q: What about an employee on a non-competitive 120-day TLP who is permanently promoted into that grade, does the time spent on the TLP count for the employee’s next WGI?

**A: Yes**. It is the same for an employee on a competitive TLP or a non-competitive TLP. If an employee is on a non-competitive 120-day TLP and then permanently promoted into that grade without a break, the time spent on the TLP counts towards creditable service for the employee’s next WGI.

### Q: But NFC requires us to process a CLG before we can permanently promote them into the same grade. Does the time still count?

**A: Yes.** Even though NFC requires a CLG action before you can permanently promote them, the time still counts. *(NFC requires a CLG after a competitive TLP due to internal system issues (we need to close the loop on the permanent position in the lower grade before we can permanently promote them in the higher grade)).*

* **No Break**. If you permanently promote someone into the same grade they held during the competitive temporary promotion (no break between temp promo and permanent promotion), then yes, the time counts:
* The employee is returned to the lower grade first (because NFC requires us to due to their internal system issues);
* The employee is brought back to the higher grade at the same step;
* The time spend on the TLP counts towards creditable service in the higher grade for the employee’s next WGI (it counts in the higher grade, but it doesn’t count in the lower grade); and
* A new WGI waiting period does not begin upon the date of the permanent promotion (it began on the date of the temporary promotion).
* **Break.** However, if the employee was on a temporary promotion, the employee was returned to their permanent position, and then next pay period they were promoted to the position they held during the temporary promotion (there was a break between the temp promo and the permanent promo), then the time does not count:
* The employee is returned to the lower grade (pay is set as if they had not been temporarily promoted and time during the TLP counts towards creditable service for the employee’s next WGI in the lower grade);
* The employee receives an equivalent increase when promoted into the higher grade;
* The time on the TLP does not count towards creditable service in the higher grade (it counts in the lower grade, but it doesn’t count in the higher grade); and
* A new waiting period begins on the date of the permanent promotion.

### Ex. 35: Temp Promotion made Permanent

*Temporary Promotions*

Louise is a GS-12 and receives a temporary promotion NTE 1-year into a GS-13 position. The promotion was later converted to permanent. Follow the progression of her actions and determine how to set her pay upon conversion:

| ***Date*** | ***Action*** |
| --- | --- |
| 10/04/15 | 1. Louise is a GS-12 step 4. 2. On 10/04/15, she receives a WGI to step 5. 3. Pay is set at GS-12 step 5 and the employee begins a new waiting period. |
| 03/06/16 | 1. On 03/06/16, the employee receives a temporary promotion to a GS-13 position; NTE 1 year. 2. Pay is set at GS-13 step 2. |
| 07/24/16 | 1. *18 weeks of creditable service at GS-13 step 2.* 2. On 07/24/16, the temporary promotion was converted to permanent. 3. Her promotion was converted to permanent. There wasn’t a break between the temp promotion and the permanent promotion.    1. The employee is returned to her GS-12 permanent position *because the NFC system requires a CLG to clear the permanent position in the lower grade before we can promote them.*    2. The employee is brought back to the GS-13 step 2;    3. The 18 weeks on the TLP counts towards her next WGI; and    4. A new WGI waiting period does not begin upon the date of the permanent promotion. 4. Louse will be due a WGI to GS-13 step 3 on 03/05/17. 5. Be sure to adjust the WGI SCD. |

### Ex. 36: 120-Day Non-Competitive TLP then Permanently Promoted

*Temporary Promotions*

Linda is a GS-09 and receives a non-competitive 120-day TLP to a GS-11 position. The employee applied to and was selected for the permanent GS-11 position. No break between the end of the 120-day TLP and being selected for the permanent position. Follow the progression of her actions and determine how to set her pay upon permanent promotion:

| ***Date*** | ***Action*** |
| --- | --- |
| 01/20/19 | 1. Linda is a GS-09 step 6. 2. On 01/20/19, she receives a WGI to step 7. 3. Pay is set at GS-09 step 7 and the employee begins a new waiting period. |
| 03/03/19 | 1. On 03/03/19, the employee receives a non-competitive 120-day TLP to a GS-11 position. 2. Pay is set at GS-11 step 3. |
| 04/28/19 | 1. *12 weeks of creditable service at GS-11 step 3.* 2. On 04/28/19, the temporary promotion ends. 3. Linda was selected for the permanent position. There wasn’t a break between the end of the temp promotion and being selected for the permanent position.    1. The employee is returned to her GS-09 permanent position *because the NFC system requires a CLG to clear the permanent position in the lower grade before we can promote them.*    2. The employee is brought back to the GS-11 step 3;    3. The 12 weeks on the 120-day non-competitive TLP counts towards her next WGI; and    4. A new WGI waiting period does not begin upon the date of the permanent promotion. 4. Linda will be due a WGI to GS-11 step 4 in two years from the date of her temp promotion and not the date of her permanent promotion. 5. Be sure to adjust the WGI SCD to 03/03/19. |

### Ex. 37: Temp Promotion, Break, and then Permanent Promotion

*Temporary Promotions*

Jessica is a GS-12 step 5 and receives a temporary promotion NTE 1-year into a GS-13 position. The temporary promotion ends, she is returned to her permanent position, and a few months later, she is selected for a permanent GS-13 position. Follow the progression of her actions and determine how to set her pay upon the permanent promotion:

| ***Date*** | ***Action*** |
| --- | --- |
| 10/04/15 | 1. Jessica is a GS-12 step 4. 2. On 10/04/15, she receives a WGI to step 5. 3. Pay is set at GS-12 step 5 and the employee begins a new waiting period. |
| 03/06/16 | 1. On 03/06/16, the employee receives a temporary promotion to a GS-13 position, NTE 03/05/17. 2. Pay is set at GS-13 step 2. |
| 03/04/17 | 1. On 03/04/17, the temporary promotion is terminated, and the employee is returned to her lower-graded GS-12 permanent position. 2. Pay is set at GS-12 step 5 and time spent on the TLP at the GS-13 grade counts towards her WGI in the GS-12 grade. *(Pay is set as though they had never left their permanent position and the time spent on the temp promotion counts towards a WGI in the lower grade).* |
| 08/07/16 | 1. On 08/07/16, she receives a permanent promotion to a GS-13 position. 2. Since there was a break between the temp promotion and the permanent promotion:    1. Jessica was returned to her GS-12 permanent position.    2. Pay was set at GS-12 step 5;    3. Jessica was promoted to a permanent GS-13 position;    4. She received an equivalent increase when she was promoted into the GS-13 grade;    5. The time on the temp promotion does not count towards creditable service in the higher grade;    6. A new waiting period begins on the date of the permanent promotion. 3. Pay is set at GS-13 step 5. 4. The employee received an equivalent increase upon promotion to the GS-13 grade and begins a new waiting period. 5. Jessica will be due a WGI to step 3 in 52 weeks, on 08/06/17. |

### Ex. 38: Temp Promotion and then Permanently Promoted, but Promoted to a Different Position

*Temporary Promotions*

Erika is a GS-06 who was temporarily promoted and then received a permanent promotion to a different position, but at the same grade.

Does the time on the temp promotion count even though she’s now in a different position?

Yes, because she was promoted to the same *grade.*

| ***Date*** | ***Action*** |
| --- | --- |
| 09/21/14 | 1. Erika is a GS-06 step 4. 2. On 09/21/14, she receives a WGI to step 5. 3. Pay is set at GS-06 step 5 and the employee begins a new waiting period. |
| 07/24/16 | 1. On 07/24/16, the employee receives a temporary promotion to a GS-07 position; NTE 1 year, based on a competitive temporary promotion with promotion potential to the GS-09. 2. Pay is set at GS-07 step 4. |
| 10/16/16 | 1. On 10/16/16, Erika was selected for a different temporary promotion to a GS-09 position, NTE 1-year, because of the competitive temp promotion. 2. Pay is set at GS-09 step 1. |
| 10/15/17 | 1. On 10/15/17, her temp promotion at the GS-09 position was extended another year with a NTE of 10/13/18. 2. Erika earns a WGI to step 2. 3. Pay is set at GS-09 step 2 and the employee begins a new waiting period. |
| 09/18/18 | 1. Erica is still on the temporary promotion to the GS-09 position; however, a different GS-09 permanent position was advertised and on 09/18/18, she was competitively selected for that position. 2. *She has 48 weeks of creditable service at the GS-09 step 2.* 3. There is no break between the temp promotion and the permanent promotion.    1. Erica is returned to her GS-06 permanent position *because the NFC system requires a CLG to clear the permanent position in the lower grade before we can promote them.*    2. The employee is brought back to the GS-09 step 2;    3. The 48 weeks on the TLP counts towards her next WGI; and    4. A new WGI waiting period does not begin upon the date of the permanent promotion. 4. Erika will be due a WGI to GS-09 step 3 on 10/14/18. 5. Be sure to adjust the WGI SCD. |

### Ex. 39: TLP, then Permanently Promoted to a Different Position, but WGI Due in the Lower Grade

*Temporary Promotions*

Natalie is a GS-13 who was temporarily promoted to a GS-14 position. The employee was later permanently promoted to a different GS-14 position; however, a WGI would have been due in the lower GS-13 grade during the time of the temporary promotion and when she was selected for the different GS-14 position. Should we process a conversion from the temp GS-14 position into a different GS-14 position or can we process a CLG so the employee can receive the WGI?

| ***Date*** | ***Action*** |
| --- | --- |
| 04/30/17 | 1. Natalie is a GS-13 step 5. 2. On 04/30/17 she receives a WGI to step 6. 3. Pay is set at GS-13 step 6 and the employee begins a new waiting period. 4. WGI to GS-13 step 7 due on 04/28/19. |
| 02/17/19 | 1. On 02/17/19, the employee receives a temporary promotion to a GS-14 position (NTE 120 days). 2. Pay is set at GS-14 step 3. |
| 05/12/19 | 1. Natalie is still on the temporary promotion, NTE-120 days, to the GS-14 position; however, a different GS-14 permanent position was advertised, and she was competitively selected for that position. 2. The hiring manager wants to delay the promotion because had the employee remained in the GS-13 position she would have been due a WGI to GS-13 step 7 on 04/28/19, which would affect her promotion entitlement producing a higher step in the GS-14 grade. 3. Should we process a conversion action, or can we process a CLG so the employee can receive the WGI? 4. In this case, since the employee was competitively selected for a different GS-14 position we can process a CLG action and delay the promotion action.    1. Natalie is returned to her GS-13 permanent position because it would be more advantageous to the employee to process a CLG because of the timing of the WGI.    2. WGI to GS-13 step 7 is processed. |
| 05/26/19 | 1. Natalie is a GS-13 step 7. 2. The promotion action to the different permanent GS-14 position is processed. 3. Pay is set at GS-14 step 4. 4. New waiting period begins and WGI to GS-14 step 5 is due 05/23/21. |

### Ex. 40: Completed WGI Waiting Period While on a Temp Promotion

*Waiting Periods*

**Example A**: Max is a GS-11 step 1 and has been at the step 1 for 40 weeks (he is due a WGI to step 2 in 12 weeks). He receives a temporary NTE 6-month promotion to a GS-12 position. Max is not eligible for a WGI while on the temporary NTE 1-year promotion, but his time is still creditable. After the temporary promotion ends, he is returned to his lower grade and his pay will be set at GS-11 step 2 because he completed the final 12 weeks of his waiting period when he was on the temporary promotion.

**Example B**: Kristen is a GS-05 step 4 who was temporarily promoted to a GS-07, NTE 120 days. While on the temporary promotion she completed the waiting period for a WGI to step 5 in the GS-05 position.

| ***Date*** | ***Action*** |
| --- | --- |
| 02/05/17 | 1. Kristen is a GS-05 step 3. 2. On 02/05/17, she receives a WGI to step 4. 3. Pay is set at GS-05 step 3 and the employee begins a new waiting period. |
| 01/21/18 | 1. On 01/21/18, the employee receives a temporary promotion to a GS-07 position; NTE 120 days. 2. Pay is set at GS-07 step 1. 3. While on the temporary promotion, she completed the waiting period to GS-05 step 5. |
| 05/20/18 | 1. On 05/20/18, the temporary promotion is terminated, and the employee is returned to her lower-graded GS-05 official position of record. 2. While on the temporary promotion, Kristen completed the waiting period from GS-05 step 4 to step 5. 3. Pay is set at GS-05 step 5 *(pay is set as though they had never left their permanent position).* 4. The employee begins a new waiting period. The waiting period for the step 6 WGI begins on the date Kristen would have received the WGI had she not been temporarily promoted. 5. Be sure to communicate to the processor to adjust the WGI SCD to 02/05/17. |

### Ex. 41: TLP NTE 1 Year then Extended Beyond 1 Year

*Temporary Promotions*

*Permanent employees on temporary NTE 1-year promotions are not eligible to receive a WGI, unless the temporary promotion is extended beyond 1 year.*

Patrick is a GS-11 step 3 and is placed on a temporary promotion, NTE 1-year into a GS-12 position. The temporary promotion was extended beyond 1 year. Determine how to set his pay upon return to the lower grade:

| ***Date*** | ***Action*** |
| --- | --- |
| 01/11/15 | 1. Patrick is a GS-11 step 1. 2. On 01/11/15, he earns a WGI to GS-11 step 2. |
| 05/03/15 | 1. On 05/03/15, he receives a temporary promotion to a GS-12 position, NTE 1 year. 2. Pay is set at GS-12 step 1. 3. While on the NTE 1-year promotion, he is not eligible to receive a WGI. |
| 05/01/16 | 1. On 05/01/16, the temporary promotion was extended beyond one year to 06/12/16. 2. The employee may now receive WGIs while on the temp promotion because the TLP was extended beyond one year. 3. He has 52 weeks at GS-12 step 1 and earns his WGI to step 2. 4. Pay is set at GS-12 step 2 and new WGI waiting period begins. |
| 06/11/16 | 1. On 06/11/16, the temporary promotion ends, and the employee is returned to the GS-11 position. 2. It was not considered an equivalent increase when we set his pay at the GS-12 grade for the temp promotion because after the temp promo ended, we returned him to his lower-graded official position of record. Therefore, all the time he spent while on the temporary promotion counts for his WGI in the GS-11 grade. 3. The employee was a GS-11 step 2 and would have completed the waiting period to GS-11 step 3 while he was on the temp promo (on 01/10/16). 4. Pay is set at GS-11 step 3 and the additional time is dropped. 5. A new waiting period begins 06/11/16 and he will be due a WGI to step 4 in 102 weeks, on 06/10/18. |

### Ex. 42: Hybrid Ranges

*LEO Moving Between Pay Tables*

Claudia is a GL-09 step 7 Law Enforcement Officer in Portland, OR. Both the LEO Locality tables and Special Rate Table 980B apply to her position. She is paid from the LEO Portland locality table because the Portland locality table is the highest applicable rate range for step 7. However, SSR 980B and the LEO Portland locality table are hybrid ranges. When she receives her WGI to step 8 she will be moved from the Portland LEO Locality table to SSR 980B, because the special rate table is the highest applicable rate range for steps 8-10.

| **2016** | **Gr** | **STEP 1** | **STEP 2** | **STEP 3** | **STEP 4** | **STEP 5** | **STEP 6** | **STEP 7** | **STEP 8** | **STEP 9** | **STEP 10** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **POR** | 09 | 53,405 | 55,128 | 56,850 | 58,572 | 60,294 | 62,017 | 63,739 | 65,461 | 67,183 | 68,906 |
| **980B** | 09 | 53,101 | 54,870 | 56,639 | 58,409 | 60,178 | 61,948 | 63,717 | 65,487 | 67,256 | 69,026 |

## QUALITY STEP INCREASES

The purpose of quality step increases (QSI) is to provide appropriate incentives and recognition for excellence in performance by granting faster than normal step increases. A QSI is not an equivalent increase, and it doesn’t affect the waiting period for an employee's next WGI (unless at step 4 or step 7). A QSI should be effective as soon as practical after it is approved.

**Eligibility**. A QSI is not an entitlement.

1. Only GS employees are eligible for a QSI, and they must be below step 10 of their grade.
2. The employee must have received a performance rating of “Outstanding”.
3. A QSI may not be granted more than once in a 52-week period.

**QSI during a Temporary Promotion**. A QSI must be applied for the position on which the rating of record was based.

1. If the QSI was based on the employee’s performance in the temporary promotion, then the QSI must be applied to the temporary promotion. Which means, when the temporary promotion ends, the employee will lose the benefit of the QSI because pay is set in the lower grade as if the employee had not been temporarily promoted (unless the employee meets the eligibility requirements for HPR when returned to the lower grade).
2. If the QSI was based on the employee’s performance in the lower grade (their permanent position), then process the QSI after the temporary promotion ends. Do not return them to their lower grade just so you can process the QSI. OPM requires that the temporary promotion terminates first, then return the employee to the lower grade, and then process the QSI.

### Ex. 43: QSI Does Not Affect Waiting Period

*Quality Step Increase*

*A QSI is a faster-than-normal WGI used to reward GS employees and any grade level who display a high-quality performance. A QSI is not an equivalent increase, and it does not affect the waiting period for an employee's next WGI. If an employee receives a QSI, their time before the action still counts toward their next WGI, but the step they are going to determines which waiting period (one, two, or three years) they will be in.*

| ***Date*** | ***Action*** |
| --- | --- |
| 03/06/16 | 1. Gretchen is a GS-09 step 4. 2. On March 6, 2016, she receives a WGI to step 5. 3. At step 5 she is serving a 104-week waiting period and her WGI to step 6 will be due March 4, 2018. |
| 04/17/16 | 1. On April 17, 2016, she was given a QSI to step 6. 2. The QSI does not affect her waiting period and her next QSI to step 7 will be due March 4, 2018. |

### Ex. 44: QSI at While Moving to Step 4 or Step 7

*Quality Step Increase*

*A QSI does not affect the timing of an employee’s next regular WGI unless the QSI places the employee in step 4 or step 7. A QSI should be effective as soon as practical after it is approved; however, for employees scheduled to move to steps 4 or 7 in the near future, a QSI would push them into a longer waiting period, and in most cases, it would be advantageous to the employee for the supervisor to delay the QSI for a few weeks and let the WGI take effect first.*

| ***Date*** | ***Action*** |
| --- | --- |
| 04/05/15 | 1. Lucinda is a GS-13 step 2. 2. On 04/05/15 she receives a WGI to step 3. 3. At step 3 she is serving a 52-week waiting period and her WGI to step 4 will be due 04/03/16. |
| 02/07/16 | 1. On 02/07/16 she was given a QSI to step 4. 2. Although the QSI does not affect her waiting period for her next WGI, the QSI to step 4 has now placed her into a 104-week waiting period so her next WGI to step 5 will be due on 04/02/17. 3. However, if the WGI to step 4 is allowed to take place first and then the QSI processed, Lucinda would receive her WGI to step 4 on 04/03/16 and then she can be given a QSI to step 5 the pay period after that instead of waiting another year before she was eligible for step 5. |

## **WGI DENIALS**

Essentially, WGI denial procedures provide for a notice to the employee, an opportunity for the employee to request reconsideration at a higher level, and a right to appeal to the MSPB or file a grievance under a collective bargaining agreement. The basis for the denial will be a less than acceptable performance rating. *Employee relations or labor relations must be consulted if a denial case arises.*

After a WGI is denied, the WGI can be granted at any time the agency determines the employee's performance has improved to an acceptable level and a rating of record has been issued. *The WGI may not be made retroactive*. The agency must reevaluate the employee's performance at least every 52 weeks for as long as the WGI is denied.

### Ex. 45: Non-GS to GS

*Equivalent Increase*

Frank is a postal employee, ES-9 earning $55,415 and is selected for a GS-09 non-special rate position on 05/05/18. Both positions are in Boise, ID (RUS). His last equivalent increase was on 01/31/16.

| **2018** | **Grade** | **STEP 1** | **STEP 2** | **STEP 3** | **STEP 4** | **STEP 5** | **STEP 6** | **STEP 7** | **STEP 8** | **STEP 9** | **STEP 10** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **RUS** | 09 | 48,968 | 50,600 | 52,232 | 53,863 | 55,495 | 57,127 | 58,759 | 60,391 | 62,022 | 63,654 |

1. **Step 1: Set the Pay**. His pay is set at GS-09 step 4 based upon HPR.
2. **Step 2: Date of Last Equivalent Increase Determination.** 
   1. Frank was earning $55,415 at the Postal Service and he’s earning more with the agency ($53,863). Even though Frank received an increase in pay, the movement into the GS system from the postal system is not considered an equivalent increase because a pay increase resulting from a change in pay systems does not count as an equivalent increase.
   2. When did the employee receive their last equivalent increase?

*The employee’s last equivalent increase was on 08/09/15.*

* 1. What is the waiting period for the step you just set the employee’s pay at?

*We are planning on setting his pay at step 4 and it is a 104-week waiting period to move to step 5.*

* 1. If the employee was continuously employed during that waiting period before moving to the GS pay system and if they did not receive an equivalent increase within the waiting period, then we need to give them credit for their creditable service and pay would be set at a step higher. Remember, HPR is discretionary but WGI waiting periods are not.

1. Frank received an equivalent increase in the non-GS pay system on 01/31/16.
2. We hired him 2 years later on 05/05/18 and are planning on setting his pay at step 4.
3. The waiting period to move from step 4 to step 5 is 104 weeks.
4. Frank met the 104-week waiting period between receiving his last equivalent increase under the non-GS system and the date we hired him.
5. Therefore, pay is set at step 4 and then we process a WGI to step 5 effective the same date.

### Ex. 46: FWS to GS

*Equivalent Increase*

Holly is a WG-05 step 3 in Albuquerque. On July 10, 2016, she receives a step increase to step 4:

| **2016** | **WG** | **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** | **5** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **ABQ** | 5 | 15.45 | 16.10 | 16.75 | 17.39 | 18.03 |

1. **Step 1: Set the Pay**. On August 21, 2016, she is moved into a GS-05 position and her salary is set at GS-05 step 5, $36,633 Albuquerque:
   1. Annualize salary: $17.39 x 2087 = $36,293
   2. $36,293 falls between step 4 and step 5.
   3. Pay is set at GS-05 step 5, based upon HPR.
   4. NOA is a promotion because she received a pay increase.

| **2016** | **GR** | **STEP 1** | **STEP 2** | **STEP 3** | **STEP 4** | **STEP 5** | **STEP 6** | **STEP 7** | **STEP 8** | **STEP 9** | **STEP 10** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **ABQ** | 05 | 32,323 | 33,401 | 34,478 | 35,555 | 36,633 | 37,710 | 38,787 | 39,865 | 40,942 | 42,020 |

1. **Step 2: Date of Last Equivalent Increase**. A pay increase resulting from a change in pay systems does not count as an equivalent increase. The personnel action must have occurred within the same pay system, which means, even if the employee receives an increase in pay when they move from FWS to GS, the pay increase is not considered an equivalent increase.
   1. Holly’s last equivalent increase is when she received her step increase from WG-05 step 3 to step 4 on 07/10/16.
   2. 07/10/16 is the employee’s WGI SCD.
   3. She will be due a WGI from GS-05 step 5 to GS-05 step 6, 102 weeks after 07/10/16.
   4. Be sure to annotate to the processor with remarks code “TMP” (note to processor) on the SF-52 that “The employee moved from FWS to GS so last equivalent increase is under FWS. Please adjust WGI SCD to 07/10/16”.

### Ex. 47: FWS to GS to FWS

*Equivalent Increase*

Valencia is a WG-3502-6 temporary employee who received multiple temporary appointments between FWS position and GS positions.

WG-6 step 1:

| **2016** | **WG** | **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** | **5** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **LA** | 6 | 20.16 | 21.00 | 21.81 | 22.69 | 23.50 |

GS-0462-06 step 1:

| **2017** | **Grade** | **STEP 1** | **STEP 2** | **STEP 3** | **STEP 4** | **STEP 5** | **STEP 6** | **STEP 7** | **STEP 8** | **STEP 9** | **Step 10** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **RUS** | 06 | 36,611 | 37,832 | 39,053 | 40,273 | 41,494 | 42,715 | 43,936 | 45,156 | 46,377 | 47,598 |

Determine how to set her pay and if/when she’s eligible for WGIs.

| ***Date*** | ***Action*** |
| --- | --- |
| 05/15/2016 | 1. On 05/15/2016 the employee receives a temporary appointment, NTE 11/13/2016 to a WG-6 position. 2. Pay is set at WG-6 step 1. |
| 11/06/2016 | 1. On 11/06/2016, the employee has 26 weeks of creditable service at step 1 and earns a WGI to step 2. 2. Pay is set at WG-6 step 2. 3. New WGI waiting period begins. |
| 11/12/2016 | 1. On 11/12/2016, the temporary appointment terminates, and the employee is separated. 2. 1 week creditable service at WG-6 step 2. |
| 05/28/2017 | 1. 28 weeks break in service. 2. On 05/28/2017, the employee receives a temporary appointment to a GS-0462-06 position, NTE 12/24/17. 3. Pay is set at GS-06 step 1. 4. While under the temporary GS position, the employee is no longer eligible to receive WGIs. The time is still creditable (because all time is creditable) but they can’t receive a WGI. 5. Even though the employee is not eligible for WGIs, we still need to adjust the WGI SCD. Add up the weeks of her break in service.    1. She had 28 weeks break in service.    2. Since her break in service was less than 52 weeks we need to count her time at step 2 and extend her waiting period.    3. When moving from step 2 to step 3, an employee is allowed to have 3 workweeks of non-pay time before it extends their waiting period.   *28 weeks break in service – 3 weeks allowed = 25 weeks extended*   * 1. The employee has 25 weeks in excess of what is allowed so her waiting period will be extended by 25 weeks:   11/06/16 *(WGI SCD under the FWS)*  + 25 weeks  04/23/17 *(Adjusted WGI SCD)*   * 1. Be sure to annotate to the processor with remarks code “TMP” (note to processor) on the SF-52 that “Even though the employee is under a position where they’re no longer eligible to receive WGIs, the employee did receive their last equivalent increase under the FWS system on 11/06/16 and their WGI SCD must be extended by 25 weeks to 04/23/17 to account for her 28 week break in service minus 3 weeks allowed in non-pay status”, so they know to adjust the WGI SCD. |
| 12/23/2017 | 1. On 12/23/2017, the temporary appointment terminates and the employee is separated. 2. 30 weeks creditable service at GS-462-06 step 1. |
| 03/04/2018 | 1. 10 weeks break in service. 2. On 03/04/2018, the employee receives a temporary appointment, NTE 06/10/2018 to a WG-6 position. 3. The employee was previously a WG-6 step 2 and moved from a position that was eligible to receive WGIs (FWS temp position) to a position that was not eligible to receive WGIs (GS temp position) back to a position that is eligible to receive WGIs. If the time spent in the GS position is creditable, then how do we set her pay in the FWS position? 4. Let’s see if we can set her pay at step 2 or if we need to set her pay at step 1. First, let’s see if there was a break in service.    1. If she had a break in service of more than 52 weeks then none of her previous time counts, pay is set at step 1 *(we can’t use HPR and set her pay higher because our policy states HPR can’t be based upon a temp position),* and a new waiting period begins on the date of her new appointment. END.    2. If she didn’t have a break in service of more than 52 weeks then pay is set at WG-6 step 2 and her time in the temp GS position will count towards her WGI from WG-6 step 2 to step 3. She had 10 weeks break in service.    3. Pay is set at WG-6 step 2. 5. Next, see if she received an equivalent increase. She didn’t receive an equivalent increase when moving from GS to WG. 6. Since her break in service was less than 52 weeks and she did not receive an equivalent increase we need to count her time in the GS position and adjust her WGI SCD. She had a 10 week break in service (she already received her allowed 3 weeks in non-pay status when moving from step 2 to step 3). Therefore, we extend her waiting period by 10 weeks.   04/23/17 *(WGI SCD under the FWS)*  + 10 weeks  07/02/17 *(Adjusted WGI SCD)*  Be sure to annotate to the processor with remarks code “TMP” (note to processor) on the SF-52 that “The employee’s WGI SCD must be extended by 10 weeks to 07/02/17 to account for her 10 week break in service”, so they know to adjust the WGI SCD. |

### Ex. 48: FWS Converted to GS Position under LMWFA

*Creditable Service*

Gayle is a WG-3502-6 temporary employee who received multiple temporary appointments and on March 4, 2018, she received a career-conditional appointment to a GS-0462-07 position under the Land Management Workforce Flexibility Act. Both positions are in Los Angeles. Gayle earned her WGI to WG-6 step 2 on May 28, 2017.

| ***Date*** | ***Action*** |
| --- | --- |
| 05/15/2016 | 1. On 05/15/2016 the employee receives a temporary appointment, NTE 10/15/2016 to a WG-6 position. 2. Pay is set at WG-6 step 1. |
| 10/15/2016 | 1. On 10/15/2016, the temporary appointment terminates, and the employee is separated. 2. 24 weeks creditable service at WG-6 step 1. |
| 05/14/2017 | 1. 30 weeks break in service. 2. On 05/14/2017, the employee receives another temporary appointment to a WG-6 position, NTE 11-12-17. 3. Pay is set at WG-6 step 1. |
| 05/28/2017 | 1. On 05/28/17, 26 weeks creditable service at WG-6 step 1. 2. Earns WGI to step 2. 3. Pay is set at WG-6 step 2. 4. New WGI waiting period begins. |
| 11/11/2017 | 1. On 11/11/2017, the temporary appointment terminates, and the employee is separated. 2. 24 weeks creditable service at WG-6 step 2. |
| 03/04/2018 | 1. 16 weeks break in service. 2. On 03/04/2018, the employee receives a career conditional appointment to a GS-0462-07 position under LMWFA. 3. Pay is set at GS-0462-07 step 1. 4. The 24 weeks of creditable service counts towards completion of WGI to step 3 (because there wasn’t a break in service of more than 52 weeks and because they didn’t receive an equivalent increase). |

Determine how to set her pay to the GS position upon conversion.

1. **Step 1: Geographic Conversion**. *None.*
2. **Step 2: Provide the GS Position you are Filling**. List the series and grade level of the position you’re filling: *GS-0462-07*
3. **Step 3: Annualize the Hourly Rate**. Multiply the hourly rate by 2087 to determine the annual rate: *$21.00 x 2087 = $43,827*

| **2016** | **WG** | **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** | **5** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **LA** | 6 | 20.16 | 21.00 | 21.81 | 22.69 | 23.50 |

1. **Step 4: Set the Pay**.
2. Find the locality table and the special rate table (if applicable) that apply to the position you’re filling, at the new location (if applicable).

*The Los Angeles locality table and Special Rate Table 0256 apply to a GS-0462-07 position in Los Angeles.*

| **2017** | **Gr** | **STEP 1** | **STEP 2** | **STEP 3** | **STEP 4** | **STEP 5** | **STEP 6** | **STEP 7** | **STEP 8** | **STEP 9** | **STEP 10** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **LA** | 07 | 45,843 | 47,372 | 48,900 | 50,429 | 51,957 | 53,486 | 55,014 | 56,543 | 58,072 | 59,600 |
| **0256** | 07 | 45,970 | 47,149 | 48,328 | 49,507 | 50,686 | 51,865 | 53,044 | 54,223 | 55,402 | 56,581 |

1. Take $43,827 (the annualized hourly rate) and slot the pay into the highest applicable rate range.

*$43,827 falls below step 1 so we use the special rate table.*

1. Pay is set at GS-0462-07 step 1 Special Rate Table 0256.

| **2017** | **Gr** | **STEP 1** | **STEP 2** | **STEP 3** | **STEP 4** | **STEP 5** | **STEP 6** | **STEP 7** | **STEP 8** | **STEP 9** | **STEP 10** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **0256** | 07 | 45,970 | 47,149 | 48,328 | 49,507 | 50,686 | 51,865 | 53,044 | 54,223 | 55,402 | 56,581 |

1. **Step 5: Identify the NOA that is Taking Place.** Compare the employee’s old rate to her new rate.
2. The FWS annualized rate is $43,827.
3. The GS rate is $45,970.
4. Since the move resulted in an increase in pay, the NOA is a promotion.
5. **Step 6: Date of Last Equivalent Increase Determination**. A pay increase resulting from a change in pay systems does not count as an equivalent increase. The personnel action must have occurred within the same pay system, which means, even if the employee receives an increase in pay when they move from FWS to GS, the pay increase is not considered an equivalent increase.
6. Gayle’s last equivalent increase is when she received her step increase from WG-6 step 1 to step 2 on May 28, 2017. Let’s see if we need to adjust her WGI SCD.
7. Add up the weeks of her break in service.
8. She had 16 weeks break in service.
9. Since her break in service was less than 52 weeks, we need to count her time at step 2 and extend her waiting period to step 3, if necessary.
10. When moving from step 2 to step 3, an employee is allowed to have 3 workweeks of non-pay time before it extends their waiting period.

16 weeks break in service

– 3 weeks allowed

13 weeks extended

1. The employee has 13 weeks in excess of what is allowed so her waiting period will be extended by 13 weeks:

05/28/17 *(WGI SCD)*

+ 13 weeks

08/20/17 *(Adjusted WGI SCD)*

1. Be sure to annotate to the processor with remarks code “TMP” (note to processor) on the SF-52 that “The employee’s WGI SCD must be extended by 13 weeks to 08/20/17 to account for her 16 week break in service minus 3 weeks allowed in non-pay status”, so they know to adjust the WGI SCD.

## OPM FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

See the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) Fact Sheet: [Within-Grade Increases](https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/pay-leave/pay-administration/fact-sheets/within-grade-increases/)

### Q. What are within-grade increases or step increases?

**A.** Within-grade increases (WGIs) or step increases are periodic increases in a General Schedule (GS) employee's rate of basic pay from one step of the grade of his or her position to the next higher step of that grade. For WGI purposes, an employee's rate of basic pay is the rate of pay fixed by law or administrative action for the position held by the employee before any deductions and exclusive of additional pay of any kind.

(Note: Employees designated as "GM" whose rate of basic pay is less than the maximum rate of their grade also may receive WGIs. See 5 CFR part 531, subpart D, for additional information.)

### Q. What are the required waiting periods for WGIs, and when do the WGI waiting periods begin?

**A.** See the fact sheet on General Schedule Within-Grade Increases for the required waiting periods for advancement to the next higher step of a GS grade for employees with a scheduled tour of duty. (See 5 CFR 531.405(a)(2) for the required waiting periods for employees without a scheduled tour of duty.)

A WGI waiting period begins upon (1) first appointment in the Federal service, (2) receiving an "equivalent increase," or (3) after a period of non-pay status and/or a break in service in excess of 52 calendar weeks.

### Q. What is the effective date of a WGI?

**A.** A WGI is effective on the first day of the first pay period beginning on or after the completion of the required waiting period. (5 U.S.C. 5335 and 5 CFR 531.412).

### Q. What type of Federal service is considered creditable service for the purpose of fulfilling a WGI waiting period?

**A.** Civilian employment in any branch of the Federal Government (executive, legislative, or judicial) or with a Government corporation is creditable service in the computation of a waiting period. Service credit is given for periods of annual, sick, and other leave with pay and service under a temporary or term appointment. See 5 CFR 531.406 for special rules regarding the crediting of military service, time in a non-pay status, time during which an employee receives injury compensation, and certain other periods of service.

### Q. What is considered an “equivalent increase” for GS employees?

**A.** An "equivalent increase" is considered to occur at the time of any of the following personnel actions:

* A within-grade increase, excluding (1) a quality step increase granted under 5 CFR part 531, subpart E, or (2) an interim WGI if that increase is later terminated under 5 CFR 531.414;
* A promotion (permanent or temporary) to a higher grade, including the promotion of an employee receiving a retained rate under 5 CFR 359.705 or 5 CFR part 536 that does not result in a pay increase, but excluding (1) a temporary promotion if, at the end of that temporary promotion, the employee is returned to the grade from which promoted, or (2) a promotion to a higher-graded supervisory or managerial position when the employee does not satisfactorily complete a probationary period established under 5 U.S.C. 3321(a)(2) and is returned to a position at the lower grade held before promotion;
* Application of the maximum payable rate rule in 5 CFR 531.221 that results in a higher step rate within the employee's GS grade (or an increase for a GM employee to the next higher rate within the grade), except for application of that rule in a demotion to the extent that the employee's rate of basic pay after demotion does not exceed the lowest step rate that equals or exceeds the employee's rate of basic pay immediately before the demotion ([see the Note below for an example](http://www.opm.gov/oca/pay/HTML/wgiQA.asp#note));
* Application of the superior qualifications and special needs pay-setting authority in 5 CFR 531.212 that results in a higher step rate within the employee's GS grade (or an increase for a GM employee to the next higher rate within the grade); or
* Application of the qualifications pay authority in 5 U.S.C. 9814 to an employee of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, when the employee fulfills the 1-year service requirement in the position for which qualifications pay was received or in a successor position.

**Note:** For example, in 2009 a GS-13, step 3, employee ($75,323 GS rate) accepts a voluntary demotion to a GS-12 position. The agency sets her pay using the maximum payable rate rule at GS-12, step 10 ($77,194 GS rate). The increase in pay is not an equivalent increase because the employee's pay was set at the lowest step that exceeded her rate of basic pay before promotion.

For information on equivalent increases for non-GS employees who move to the GS pay system, see Q10, which includes an example for an employee moving to the GS pay system from the Department of Defense (DOD) National Security Personnel System (NSPS).

### Q. Are employees in temporary and permanent positions eligible to receive WGIs?

**A.** WGIs apply only to GS employees occupying permanent positions. "Permanent position" is defined in 5 CFR 531.403 as a position filled by an employee whose appointment is not designated as temporary and does not have a definite time limitation of 1 year or less. "Permanent position" includes a position to which an employee is promoted on a temporary or term basis for at least 1 year. The term does not include a position filled by an employee whose appointment is limited to 1 year or less and subsequently extended so that the total time of the appointment exceeds 1 year.

### Q. A GS employee is temporarily promoted and is later permanently promoted to the same grade held during the temporary promotion without first being returned to the employee’s lower graded position of record. Does the time spent in the temporary promotion count towards creditable service for the employee’s next WGI?

**A.** Yes. As long as the employee is converted to a permanent position without returning to the lower grade, the time spent on a temporary promotion is considered creditable service in the calculation of the employee's next WGI. The employee received an "equivalent increase" upon the temporary promotion. Processing a permanent promotion without moving the employee back to the lower graded position does not change the date of the "equivalent increase." Therefore, the waiting period starts on the date of the temporary promotion.

### Q. How does an agency determine the date of the last “equivalent increase?”

**A.** After an agency has set an employee's pay, the agency must go back the length of the waiting period in the employee's work history to determine the date of the last equivalent increase. For example, a WJ-11 employee is hired into a GS-13 position and pay is set at step 1. The waiting period at step 1 is 52 weeks. If the employee did not receive an equivalent increase in the prevailing rate pay system during that time period, the employee is entitled to a WGI to step 2 upon movement to the GS position.

### Q. What is a quality step increase (QSI) and how does it affect a within-grade increase?

**A.** A QSI is a faster-than-normal WGI used to reward employees at any GS grade level who display high quality performance. To be eligible for a QSI, employees must:

* Be below step 10 of their grade level;
* Have received the highest rating available under their performance appraisal system;
* Have demonstrated sustained performance of high quality; and
* Have not received a QSI within the preceding 52 consecutive calendar weeks.

A QSI does not affect the timing of an employee’s next regular WGI unless the QSI places the employee in step 4 or step 7 of his or her grade. In these cases, the employee becomes subject to the full waiting period for the new step, i.e., 104 weeks or 156 weeks, respectively, and the time an employee has already waited counts towards the next increase. The employee receives the full benefit of receiving a WGI at an earlier date and has not lost any time creditable towards his or her next WGI.

See 5 U.S.C. 5336, 5 CFR part 531, subpart E, and [QSI Fact Sheet](http://www.opm.gov/perform/articles/1999/apr99-7.asp) for additional information on QSIs.

### Q. What is considered an “equivalent increase” for non-GS employees who move to the GS pay system?

**A.** For an employee who performs service under a non-GS Federal pay system which is potentially creditable towards a within-grade increase waiting period, an equivalent increase is considered to occur at the time of any of the following personnel actions in the non-GS pay system:

* A promotion to a higher grade or work level within the non-GS pay system (unless the promotion is cancelled and the employee's rate of basic pay is re-determined as if the promotion had not occurred); or
* An opportunity to receive a within-level or within-range increase that results in forward movement in the applicable range of rates of basic pay (including an increase granted immediately upon movement to the non-GS pay system from another pay system-e.g., to account for the value of accrued within-grade increases under the former pay system or to provide a promotion-equivalent increase), where "forward movement in the applicable range" means any kind of increase in the employee's rate of basic pay other than an increase that is directly and exclusively linked to (1) a general structural increase in the employee's basic pay schedule or rate range (including the adjustment of a range minimum or maximum) or (2) the employee's placement under a new basic pay schedule within the same pay system, when such placement results in a nondiscretionary basic pay increase to account for occupational pay differences.

A non-GS pay system is one that does not meet the definition of "General Schedule" or "GS" in 5 CFR 531.403. The personnel actions above must have occurred within the same pay system. That is, even if an employee receives an increase in pay moving between pay systems, that "promotion" or other pay increase is not considered an equivalent increase. [See Note 1](http://www.opm.gov/oca/pay/HTML/wgiQA.asp#note1).

For example, the DoD NSPS pay system is a non-GS pay system. The following NSPS pay events would be considered equivalent increases under 5 CFR 531.407(b):

1. A promotion to a higher band under 5 CFR 9901.354, excluding a temporary or probationary promotion that is later cancelled;
2. Any within-band increase other than a general salary increase under 5 CFR 9901.323, which would include the following:
   1. A performance pay increase under 5 CFR 9901.342;
   2. A special within-band increase under 5 CFR 9901.344;
   3. A developmental pay increase under 5 CFR 9901.345;
   4. A pay adjustment upon placement in an NSPS position under 5 CFR 9901.351(c)(a WGI adjustment equivalent) ([See Note 1](http://www.opm.gov/oca/pay/HTML/wgiQA.asp#note1));
   5. A reassignment increase under 5 CFR 9901.353 upon reassignment to a position within the same band, including such a reassignment increase granted immediately upon movement from a non-NSPS position (i.e., excluding reassignment to a comparable band, since that band is in a different NSPS pay schedule with its own basic pay schedule);
   6. An increase (if any) under 5 CFR 9901.355 provided after a reduction in band in the same pay schedule, including such an increase provided immediately upon movement from a non-NSPS position (i.e., excluding movement to a lower band in a different pay schedule); or
   7. A one-time pay adjustment upon conversion to NSPS under 5 CFR 9901.371(j) (e.g., a WGI adjustment) ([See Note 1](http://www.opm.gov/oca/pay/HTML/wgiQA.asp#note1));
   8. A noncompetitive promotion equivalent increase provided to eligible employees during the first 12 months following conversion under 5 CFR 9901.371(l).
3. A zero increase at the time of an opportunity for an increase, which would include the following:
   1. A zero performance pay increase under 5 CFR 9901.342, excluding employees who do not have an opportunity for an increase because their rate equals or exceeds a range maximum ([See Note 1](http://www.opm.gov/oca/pay/HTML/wgiQA.asp#note1));
   2. A zero developmental pay increase under 5 CFR 9901.345, if there is a fixed schedule for receiving such an increase;
   3. A zero pay adjustment (WGI adjustment) upon conversion to NSPS under 9901.371(j), if the zero adjustment was based on the employee being rated below an acceptable level of competence (as defined in 5 CFR part 531, subpart D), as required by NSPS 5 CFR 9901.371(j)(6); or
   4. A zero pay adjustment (WGI adjustment equivalent) upon placement in an NSPS position and application of 5 CFR 990.351(c), if the zero adjustment was based on the employee being rated below an acceptable level of competence.

**Note 1**: OPM has a general policy that a pay increase resulting from a change in pay system does not count as an equivalent increase. However, the NSPS WGI adjustment and WGI adjustment equivalent are pay adjustments made under the NSPS system after conversion or placement (although effective on the same date). Under the NSPS regulations, employees are converted with no change in pay. The WGI adjustment under 5 CFR 9901.371(j) is a mandatory adjustment following that conversion. The WGI adjustment equivalent under 5 CFR 9901.351(c)(1) also is a mandatory adjustment, and the WGI adjustment equivalent under 5 CFR 9901(c)(2) is a discretionary adjustment, both made following placement in an NSPS position.

**Note 2**: To the extent that DoD establishes any control point that serves as a maximum rate for all positions within a defined subcategory within a band based on labor market factors (without regard to performance rating), a pay increase denied solely because of such control point would not be considered to be an opportunity for an increase and thus would not be considered to be an equivalent increase.

**Note 3**: Consistent with 5 CFR 531.407(c), a local market supplement adjustment under NSPS would not be considered an equivalent increase. Also, an adjustment resulting from being placed in a subcategory of positions to which a higher supplement applies would not be an equivalent increase.

### Q: How is an employee's pay set when a temporary promotion is made permanent?

**How is the pay set if the employee's temporary promotion expires and the employee is returned to the lower grade and then subsequently promoted?**

**A:** If a temporary promotion is made permanent immediately after the temporary promotion ends, the employee is not returned to the lower grade in order to process the permanent promotion. See 5 CFR 531.214(e). The agency must convert the employee's temporary promotion to a permanent promotion without a change in pay. The appropriate action is to process the promotion (nature of action code 702) showing the higher grade as the grade before and after promotion. (See rules 5 and 6, Table 14-B, chapter 14, Office of Personnel Management's Guide to Processing Personnel Actions.) In effect, the promotion increase granted at the time of the temporary promotion is ratified and made permanent by the removal of the not-to-exceed-date limitation on the temporary promotion.

If there is any period of time between the end of a temporary promotion and the beginning of a permanent promotion, the employee must be returned to the lower grade. As required by 5 CFR 531.215(c), the agency must re-compute the employee's rate of basic pay for the lower grade as if the employee had never been temporarily promoted. Also, the agency may choose, at its discretion, to apply the maximum payable rate rule in 5 CFR 531.221 if that would yield a higher rate. Whatever method is used, the resulting rate is the basis for any subsequent promotion.   
With respect to the "maximum pay rate" rule, please note that an employee's highest previous rate may not be based on a rate received in a position to which the employee was temporarily promoted for less than 1 year, except upon permanent placement in a position at the same or higher grade. (See 5 CFR 531.223(b).) If an agency chooses to apply the maximum payable rate rule, it may set pay at any step equal to or less than the maximum payable rate, but not less than the rate to which the employee is entitled under the normal pay-setting rules.