

For: FSA Federal and County Employees

Clarifying and Correcting Notice PM-2891 and Communication From HRD Director

Approved by: Administrator



1 Overview

A Background

Notice PM-2891 announced the opportunity for all eligible employees to take advantage of voluntary separation incentive payments (VSIP's) either through Voluntary Early Retirement Authority (VERA) or optional retirement with an incentive payment where appropriate.

Exhibit 2 of the notice provided a summary of VSIP's by State and county for CO and GS employees, including priority, organization/location, maximum number to be approved, and eligible positions. Errors have been identified in the information that was provided for Alabama and West Virginia in the exhibit.

Also, several offices have requested clarification about eligibility for VERA only and unused VSIP's for targeted positions.

B Purpose

This notice:

- corrects information provided in Notice PM-2891, Exhibit 2 for Alabama and West Virginia
- clarifies guidance about eligibility for VERA only
- provides a communication from the HRD Director about the opportunity to apply for VSIP/VERA (Exhibit 1).

C Labor-Management Obligations

Where exclusive representation exists, bargaining may be requested to the extent allowed by applicable statutes and according to contract language. Negotiation issues raised must be resolved before implementation of this notice for employees in that collective bargaining unit.

Disposal Date	Distribution
December 1, 2013	All FSA Federal and County Employees; State Offices relay to County Offices

Notice PM-2892

2 Corrections to VSIP Selection Priority Information

A Corrected Information for Alabama and West Virginia

The grade level for the following CED position in Alabama has been corrected.

State: Alabama					
Priority	Office Name	Organizational Structure Name	Duty Station	Maximum To Be Approved	Eligible Positions
9	Etowah	Etowah County Office	Gadsden	1	CED, CO-1101-11

The maximum number of VSIP's to be approved for West Virginia has been corrected.

State: West Virginia					
County					
Priority	Organization/Location			Maximum To Be Approved (1)	Eligible Positions
	Office Name	Organizational Structure Name	Duty Station		
1	All County Offices	All County Offices	Statewide	1	All
Federal					
Priority	Organization/Location			Maximum To Be Approved (2)	Eligible Positions
	Office Name	Organizational Structure Name	Duty Station		
1	State Office, all districts, and Service Centers	State Office, all districts, and Service Centers.	Statewide	2	All

3 Clarifying VERA Guidance and Unused VSIP's

A Approval of VERA Applications

Employees are not eligible for a VERA without a VSIP.

B Targeted VSIP's

Employees who are not in targeted positions listed in Notice PM-2891, Exhibit 1 or 2, are not eligible for a VSIP.

**THIS COMMUNICATION IS ISSUED ON BEHALF OF
THE FFAS HUMAN RESOURCES DIRECTOR**

To: FSA Employees

Subject: Announcement of Opportunity to Apply for Voluntary Separation Incentive Payment (VSIP) and Voluntary Early Retirement Authority (VERA) for FSA Employees

As many of you are aware, Notice PM-2891, Opportunity to Apply for Voluntary Separation Incentive Payment (VSIP) and Voluntary Early Retirement Authority (VERA) for FSA Employees, was issued on Monday, September 16, 2013. The Notice announces the opportunity for all eligible employees to take advantage of VSIP either through VERA or optional retirement with an incentive payment where appropriate. Employees who are not eligible for any type of retirement may receive VSIP through resignation. Resigning employees may receive the lesser of severance pay or an incentive payment, if granted VSIP.

Note: VSIP is being offered in conjunction with VERA for targeted positions under the VSIP Authority. However, an employee seeking VSIP and VERA must be eligible for both. The offer for this VSIP is a maximum of **\$25,000** or an amount equal to the amount of severance pay an employee would be entitled to, whichever is less.

Employees are encouraged to review Notice PM-2891 (http://www.fsa.usda.gov/Internet/FSA_Notice/pm_2891.pdf) to become familiar with all eligibility requirements, VSIP selection priorities, and answers to frequently asked questions. A few key steps and points of contacts have been extracted from the Notice and are included in this communication to assist you as you consider this opportunity:

- **Step 1:** Employees shall submit a completed application at <https://wdcprod80.sc.egov.usda.gov/vvas>. The VSIP/VERA Automated System (VVAS) is only accessible through official government computers and is accessible during the application window of **September 17 - 27, 2013**. Employees should reference Notice PM-2891, Exhibits 3 and 4, for guidance on how to submit an application. VSIP applications received in HRD after **September 27, 2013** (11:59 p.m. Central Time), will **not** be considered.
- **Step 2:** Contact your servicing Benefits Specialist (see Notice PM-2891, subparagraph 7 C) for contacts to request a retirement annuity computation estimate and counseling for you and your family members.
- **Step 3:** Notification of the status of your application will be provided following a determination of your tentative approval by October 15, 2013.
- **Step 4:** Upon receipt of your tentative approval, contact your servicing Benefits Specialist to complete the appropriate resignation or retirement application, or any additional separation documents. Retirement package forms (CSRS and FERS) can be found at <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/FSA/hrdapp?area=home&subject=bnft&topic=ret>.

For questions about application procedures, changes, and withdrawals, contact: Marvin Jones, HRD, at 202-401-0432 or FSA-VERA-APPLIC@WDC.usda.gov.

For guidance about VSIP calculations, see Notice PM-2891, Exhibit 3, subparagraphs J and K. For questions regarding VSIP calculations, contact: Ranay Brady, HRD, at 816-926-6118 or ranay.brady@kcc.usda.gov.