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OPM affirms \$15 minimum wage for federal civilian employees

Human Resources agency issues official guidance for implementation

WASHINGTON — The Office of Personnel Management will now pay all federal workers a minimum of at least \$15 per hour.

OPM's [guidance\[CS1\]](#) directs agencies on adjusting pay rates for General Schedule and Federal Wage System employees stationed in the U.S and how to use administrative authority for other pay systems, with implementation of the changes by Jan. 30.

In total, this impacts 67,000 out of 2.2 million federal employees. During his first week in office, President Biden signed an [Executive Order on Protecting the Federal Workforce](#) directing OPM's leadership to provide him a report with recommendations to promote a \$15 per hour minimum wage for the federal workforce. That report was submitted to the White House and the issued guidance reflects the report's findings.

The Departments of Veterans Affairs, Defense and Agriculture collectively employ most of the personnel who are currently paid an hourly rate below \$15. Many of the employees who will benefit from this wage increase have been on the front lines throughout the pandemic, working resiliently to serve the American public.

"Of the nearly 67,000 affected federal employees, 9,700 are from the Department of Veterans Affairs," said VA Secretary Denis McDonough. "How we treat our workforce directly impacts their morale and success — and increasing pay rates to at least \$15 per hour is a necessary step to achieve these goals. Some of these affected individuals are VA food service workers and housekeeping aides."

VA housekeeping staff support the department's mission to help Veterans improve their health quicker by keeping facilities clean and safe, which are essential to the patient care experience.

VA's food service workers are also essential to patient care as they deliver excellent dining that nourishes the Veterans they serve. Safety, sanitation and quality, along with customer service are paramount in the Veterans Health Administration's health care systems.

[OPM's memorandum\[CS2\]](#) to department and agency heads outlines guidance for implementing the pay rate adjustments.

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