



OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

January 2026 Pay Schedules

AGENCY: Office of Personnel Management

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The President adjusted the rates of basic pay for certain Federal civilian employees effective in January 2026 by Executive order. The Executive order authorizes a 1.0 percent across-the-board increase for statutory pay systems and provides that locality pay percentages will remain at 2025 levels. This notice serves as documentation for the public record.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Lisa Dismond; Pay, Leave, and Workforce Flexibilities; Workforce Policy and Innovation; Office of Personnel Management; (202) 606-2858 or paypolicy@opm.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: On December 18, 2025, the President signed Executive Order (E.O.) 14368 (90 FR 60521), which implemented pay adjustments for certain Federal civilian employees in January 2026. E.O. 14368 provides an across-the-board increase of 1.0 percent for the statutory pay systems. This is consistent with the President's alternative pay plan issued under 5 U.S.C. 5303(b) and 5304a on August 28, 2025. The pay rates in E.O. 14132 have been superseded.

The publication of this notice satisfies the requirement in Section 5(b) of E.O. 14368 that the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) publish appropriate notice of the 2026 locality payments in the *Federal Register*.

Schedule 1 of E.O. 14368 provides the rates for the 2026 General Schedule (GS) and reflects a 1.0 percent increase from 2025. Executive Order 14368 also includes the percentage amounts of the 2026 locality payments. (See Section 5 and Schedule 9 of Executive Order 14368.)

General Schedule employees receive locality payments under 5 U.S.C. 5304. Locality payments apply in the United States (as defined in 5 U.S.C. 5921(4)) and its territories and possessions. In 2026, locality payments ranging from 17.06 percent to 46.34 percent apply to GS employees in the 58 locality pay areas. The 2026 locality pay area definitions¹ can be found on OPM's website.

The 2026 locality pay percentages became effective the first day of the first pay period beginning on or after January 1, 2026 (January 11, 2026). An employee's locality rate of pay is computed by increasing his or her scheduled annual rate of pay (as defined in 5 CFR 531.602) by the applicable locality pay percentage. (See 5 CFR 531.604 and 531.609.)

Executive Order 14368 establishes the new Executive Schedule (EX), which incorporates a 1.0 percent increase required under 5 U.S.C. 5318 (rounded to the nearest \$100). By law, Executive Schedule officials are not authorized to receive locality payments.

Executive Order 14368 establishes the 2026 range of rates of basic pay for members of the Senior Executive Service (SES) under 5 U.S.C. 5382. The minimum rate of basic pay for the SES is \$151,661 in 2026. The maximum rate of the SES rate range is \$228,000 (level II of the Executive Schedule) for SES members who are covered by a certified SES performance appraisal system and \$209,600 (level III of the Executive Schedule) for SES members who are not covered by a certified SES performance appraisal system.

The minimum rate of basic pay for the senior-level (SL) and scientific and professional (ST) rate range was increased by 1.0 percent (\$151,661 in 2026), which is the amount of the across-the-board GS increase. The applicable maximum rate of the SL/ST rate range is \$228,000 (level II of the Executive Schedule) for SL or ST employees who are covered by a certified SL/ST performance appraisal system and \$209,600 (level III of the Executive Schedule) for SL or ST employees who are not covered by a certified SL/ST performance appraisal system.

¹ Office of Personnel Management. "2026 Locality Pay Area Definitions." Locality Pay Area Definitions." <https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/pay-leave/salaries-wages/2026/locality-pay-area-definitions>

Agencies with certified performance appraisal systems for SES members and employees in SL and ST positions must also apply a higher aggregate limitation on pay—up to the Vice President’s salary (\$292,300 in 2026.)

The Continuing Appropriations, Agriculture, Legislative Branch, Military Construction and Veterans Affairs, and Extensions Act, 2026 (Public Law 119-37, November 12, 2025), contains a provision that continues the freeze on the payable pay rates for the Vice President and certain senior political appointees at the rates of pay and applicable limitations on payable rates of pay through January 30, 2026. Future Congressional action will determine whether the pay freeze continues beyond that date. OPM guidance on the continued pay freeze for certain senior political officials can be found in CPM 2025-21².

Executive Order 14368 provides that the rates of basic pay for administrative law judges (ALJs) under 5 U.S.C. 5372 are increased by 1.0 percent (rounded to the nearest \$100) in 2026. The rate of basic pay for AL-1 is \$197,200 (equivalent to the rate for level IV of the Executive Schedule). The rate of basic pay for AL-2 is \$192,400. The rates of basic pay for AL-3/A through 3/F range from \$131,700 to \$182,400.

The rates of basic pay for members of Contract Appeals Boards are calculated as a percentage of the rate for level IV of the Executive Schedule. (See 5 U.S.C. 5372a.) Therefore, these rates of basic pay are increased by 1.0 percent in 2026.

On December 9, 2025, OPM issued a memorandum³ on behalf of the President’s Pay Agent (the Secretary of Labor and the Directors of the Office of Management of Budget and OPM) that continues GS locality payments for ALJs and certain other non-GS employee categories in 2026. By law, EX officials, SES members, employees in SL/ST positions, and employees in certain other equivalent pay systems are not authorized to receive locality

² Office of Personnel Management. “Updated Guidance-Pay Freeze for Certain Senior Political Officials.” <https://www.opm.gov/chcoc/latest-memos/updated-guidance-pay-freeze-for-certain-senior-political-officials.pdf>

³ Office of Personnel Management. “Continuation of Locality Payments for Non-General Schedule Employees.” <https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/pay-leave/salaries-wages/2025/continuation-of-locality-payments-for-non-general-schedule-employees.pdf>

payments. (Note: An exception applies to certain grandfathered SES, SL, and ST employees stationed in a nonforeign area on January 2, 2010 (see CPM 2009-27)⁴).

On December 18, 2025, OPM issued a memorandum (CPM 2025-18)⁵ on the 2026 pay adjustments. The memorandum transmitted Executive Order 14368 and provided the 2026 salary tables, locality pay areas and percentages, and information on general pay administration matters and other related guidance. The 2026 “Salaries & Wages” posted on OPM’s website⁶ are the official rates of pay for affected employees and are hereby incorporated as part of this notice.

The Director of OPM, Scott Kupor, reviewed and approved this document and has authorized the undersigned to electronically sign and submit this document to the Office of the Federal Register for publication.

Office of Personnel Management.

Jerson Matias,

Federal Register Liaison.

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⁴ Office of Personnel Management. “Nonforeign Area Retirement Equity Assurance Act.” https://www.opm.gov/chcoc/transmittals/2009/nonforeign-area-retirement-equity-assurance-act_508_0.pdf

⁵ Office of Personnel Management. “January 2026 Pay Adjustments.” <https://www.opm.gov/chcoc/latest-memos/january-2026-pay-adjustments.pdf>

⁶ Office of Personnel Management. “Salaries & Wages.” <http://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/pay-leave/salaries-wages/>