

OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

5 CFR Part 532

[Docket ID: OPM–2024–0016]

RIN 3206–AO69

Prevailing Rate Systems; Change in Criteria for Defining Appropriated Fund Federal Wage System Wage Areas

AGENCY: Office of Personnel
Management.

ACTION: Final rule.

SUMMARY: The Office of Personnel Management (OPM) is issuing a final rule to change the regulatory criteria used to define Federal Wage System (FWS) wage area boundaries and make changes in certain wage areas. The purpose of this change, which will affect around ten percent of the FWS workforce, is to make the FWS wage area criteria more similar to the General Schedule (GS) locality pay area criteria. This change is based on a December 2023 majority recommendation of the Federal Prevailing Rate Advisory Committee (FPRAC), the statutory national-level labor-management committee that advises OPM on the administration of the FWS.

DATES:

Effective date: This rule is effective October 1, 2025.

Applicability date: Changes to wage schedules resulting from the revised wage areas of application in appendix C to subpart B of 5 CFR part 532 apply on the first day of the first applicable pay period beginning on or after October 1, 2025. Changes to wage survey areas apply at various times beginning on or after October 1, 2025, based on the annual schedule of wage surveys, as listed in appendix A to subpart B of 5 CFR part 532, and with the timing of survey area expansions for affected wage areas as noted in the wage area listings in appendix C to subpart B of 5 CFR part 532.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Ana Paunoiu, by telephone at (202) 606–2858 or by email at paypolicy@opm.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Overview

There are two major job classification and pay systems in use by the Federal Government: the GS and the FWS. The GS covers around 1.5 million employees, and the FWS covers around 200,000 employees with around 170,000 in the appropriated fund system. On October 11, 2024, OPM issued a proposed rule (89 FR 82874) to change the regulatory criteria used to define

FWS wage area boundaries for the appropriated fund system and make changes in certain wage areas. Specifically, OPM proposed to amend 5 CFR 532.211 to make the criteria OPM uses to define the geographic boundaries of FWS wage areas more similar to the GS locality pay area criteria and to define revised wage area boundaries in accordance with those revised criteria.

The 60-day comment period ended on December 10, 2024. OPM received 585 comments from Members of Congress, labor organizations, several hundred Federal employees, and one agency. Public comments, with one exception, strongly supported changing the regulatory criteria in 5 CFR 532.211. After consideration of public comments about the proposed rule, OPM is issuing a final rule that amends the regulatory criteria in 5 CFR 532.211, pursuant to its authority to issue regulations governing the FWS in 5 U.S.C. chapter 53, subchapter IV. In general, this final rule implements changes to certain wage areas, as identified in the proposed rule. This final rule also reflects a few corrections, which are described in detail after the discussion of comments, and it makes nonsubstantive changes to the authority citations for part 532 by amending the existing authority citations to comply with 1 CFR part 21, subpart B.

Background

During the period GS locality pay was being introduced in the early 1990s, FPRAC¹ examined the differences in criteria between the GS and FWS, and by consensus, recommended that OPM not change the FWS criteria just for the sake of changing the criteria to make the systems look more similar. Locality pay for GS employees was a new and unproven concept at that time. Since then, however, the differences in geographic pay area boundaries for the GS and FWS have increasingly raised concerns among employees, their

unions, local management officials, and consequently Members of Congress.

As stated in the proposed rule, since around 2006 the labor and employing agency representative members of FPRAC have discussed the possibility of making FWS wage areas more similar to GS locality pay areas, but there was not a consensus for change. The labor organization members expressed views that the difference in geographic treatment between the FWS and GS systems is inequitable. The management members expressed views that the differences best meet the intent of the relevant laws that established the two systems.

In House Report 117–79² accompanying the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year (FY) 2022, Congress encouraged OPM “to explore limiting the number of local wage areas defined within a GS Pay Locality to a single wage area.” Given the magnitude of the potential change in policy, FPRAC established a labor-management working group to study various issues concerning the FWS, including options on how to make the geographic wage area boundaries of FWS and GS pay areas more similar. At its 649th meeting, on December 21, 2023, based on working group discussions, FPRAC recommended by a 9 to 1 majority vote that OPM revise the regulatory criteria for defining wage areas so that wage area criteria approved by the Director of OPM will be more similar to GS locality pay area criteria approved by the President’s Pay Agent.

OPM examined FPRAC’s arguments and concluded that the amendments to 5 CFR 532.211 constitute an improvement to the FWS. OPM determined that the changes to the regulatory criteria used to define and maintain FWS wage areas will address the lack of equity that arises when FWS workers within a given GS locality pay area are paid from two, three, or more different wage schedules, while the GS employees who work alongside them are all paid from the same salary schedule. Implementation of the amendments to 5 CFR 532.211 will resolve equitably several of the thorniest issues on FPRAC’s agenda related to specific geographic areas, such as the Tobyhanna Army Depot and other long-standing areas of interest, such as folding in the Narragansett Bay, Rhode Island, FWS wage area with the Boston wage area, redefining Monterey County, California, to the San Francisco, CA, wage area, and redefining Shawnee

¹ The Federal Prevailing Rate Advisory Committee is composed of a Chair, five representatives from labor unions holding exclusive bargaining rights for Federal prevailing rate employees, and five representatives from Federal agencies. Entitlement to membership on the Committee is provided for in 5 U.S.C. 5347. The Committee’s primary responsibility is to review the Prevailing Rate System and other matters pertinent to establishing prevailing rates under subchapter IV, chapter 53, 5 U.S.C., as amended, and from time to time advise the Director of OPM on the Governmentwide administration of the pay system for blue-collar Federal employees. Transcripts of FPRAC meetings can be found under the Federal Wage System section of OPM’s website (<https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/pay-leave/pay-systems/federal-wage-system/#url=FPRAC>).

² House Report 117–79 can be found at <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/CRPT-117hrpt79/pdf/CRPT-117hrpt79.pdf>.

County, Kansas to the Kansas City, Missouri, wage area.

Comments Received on the Proposed Rule

Implementation Timeline

OPM invited comments on the implementation timeline and requested input regarding any alternative implementation plans. OPM received over 100 comments regarding the implementation timeline from employees, many of whom requested that the final rule be implemented “as soon as possible.” See, e.g., Comments 008, 174, and 492.³

In addition, several commenters questioned the effective date of the proposed change recommending retroactive applicability. See, e.g., Comments 176, 187, 224, 227, and 414. OPM defines wage areas through regulations in 5 CFR part 532. Changes in OPM’s FWS regulations are prospective, not retroactive. OPM lacks authority to implement this change on a retroactive basis.

As OPM discussed in the proposed rule, many of the operational aspects of this rule could be achieved relatively quickly following publication of the final rule; however, one potential approach that OPM highlighted was to delay the effective date of the final rule to address budgetary constraints. OPM noted that, although the overall budgetary impact of the rule is relatively small, the impact at the local level could be considerable, making it difficult for local units to manage sudden, unexpected increases in payroll. Given that this final rule is publishing in the middle of FY 2025 and while agencies are operating under a continuing resolution, OPM has concluded that imposing the unplanned-for payroll costs 30 days after publication, in the middle of the fiscal year, would place undue burdens and potentially unmanageable costs on multiple agencies. OPM recognizes that the delayed implementation date has real impacts on individual employees, but this rule will result in long-term structural changes that will increase equity between FWS and GS employees within defined geographic areas. OPM expects that, by delaying the effective date until the beginning of the next FY, agencies will be able to better plan for and manage increased payroll expenses,

³ A reference at the end of a comment summary provides the location of the item in the public record. (i.e., the three-digit number associated with the location in the docket). Comments filed in response to the proposed rule are available at *OPM-2024-0016-0nnn*, where “nnn” is the comment number. Note that the number must be three digits, so insert preceding zeroes as appropriate.

leading to a more effective implementation of this change. OPM recognizes that a longer lead time (e.g., FY 2027) would further ease the transition for agencies; however, OPM believes that organizational interests need to be balanced with the impact that further delays may have on employees. Accordingly, balancing the governmental interests and the interests of employees, this final rule will be effective on October 1, 2025, the first day of FY 2026. Changes in pay based on the updated wage area boundaries will be effective the first day of the first pay period following October 1, 2025.

Several commenters mentioned that the affected counties will be moved to the new wage areas after the new full-scale surveys. See, e.g., Comments 93, 236, 238, and 287. We note that only changes to the survey areas will be staggered across FYs 2026 to 2028 as reflected in the amended survey schedule in appendix A to subpart B of 5 CFR part 532 and appendix C to subpart B of part 532. These schedule changes will allow the Department of Defense (DOD) sufficient time to plan for conducting full-scale wage surveys in survey areas that will expand significantly, in some cases doubling, in geographic size. As described in the proposed rule, a survey area county that is removed from a current wage area that is being eliminated and defined to a different wage area that is being continued but revised in this rule would initially be added to the area of application of the gaining wage area rather than being defined directly to the survey area. The county would subsequently be incorporated into the relevant wage area’s survey area based on the timing of full-scale local wage surveys. For example, Calhoun County, AL, is currently part of the Anniston-Gadsden, AL, survey area. Under this rule, Calhoun County will be moved to the Birmingham-Cullman-Talladega, AL, area of application, effective the first day of the first pay period following October 1, 2025, until January 2028. Calhoun County will subsequently be moved from the Birmingham-Cullman-Talladega, AL, area of application to the Birmingham-Cullman-Talladega, AL, survey area, effective for wage surveys beginning in January 2028, coinciding with the survey cycle for this wage area.

Under this final rule, there will be an initial implementation resulting in wage rate increases for most affected employees. Once surveys have been conducted in the expanded survey areas, wage schedules will be adjusted. However, OPM anticipates that the long-standing pay cap and floor increase provisions will control subsequent wage

schedule adjustments. (See 89 FR 82875 for discussion of the pay cap and floor increase provisions.)

Impact on Local Businesses

OPM requested public comments from local businesses on the implementation and impacts of moving the small number of FWS employees who would be affected by the proposed rule to different wage schedules and the likelihood that the changes would affect those businesses. We only received one comment—from a Federal employee who also owns a plumbing business—stating that “the private sector pays so much more than the government would ever be willing to” and that he would not be able to hire anyone if his business paid rates as low as the FWS. Comment 343. As explained in the proposed rule and further detailed in this final rule, over the years, the FWS goal of setting pay in line with prevailing private sector rates has been diminished by appropriations legislation provisions that have capped FWS wage schedule adjustments regardless of local market conditions. On January 27, 2022, OPM approved DOD requests to establish special rates⁴ to establish a minimum pay rate of \$15 per hour for Appropriated Fund and Nonappropriated Fund FWS employees, in accordance with Compensation Policy Memorandum (CPM) 2022–02, “Achieving a \$15 Per Hour Minimum Pay Rate for Federal Employees.”⁵ This policy helped address the gap between FWS and private sector wage levels overall, but pay gaps are still substantial in different parts of the country as a result of the wage schedule adjustment cap.

FWS vs GS

Locality Pay

OPM received numerous comments from employees supporting FWS employees receiving “locality pay.” As stated in the proposed rule, FWS and GS employees are paid under separate pay systems. The pay systems differ because they are governed by separate laws and regulations authorizing different types of surveys, occupational and geographic coverage, pay adjustment cycles, and pay ranges. The Federal Employees Pay Comparability Act of 1990 was enacted to provide locality pay to GS employees. FWS employees are specifically excluded

⁴ The “Special rates” section later in this rule provides more information about the role of special rates.

⁵ The “Achieving a \$15 Per Hour Minimum Pay Rate for Federal Employees” memorandum may be found at <https://chcoc.gov/content/achieving-15-hour-minimum-pay-rate-federal-employees>.

from coverage under the locality pay system for GS employees because FWS employees have their own statutory local prevailing rate pay system. As such, GS locality pay percentages, which are add-ons to the base GS pay table, by law do not apply to the FWS. Instead, through annual appropriations legislation, employees in the FWS receive at least the same annual percentage pay adjustment as GS employees based on where they work.

Likewise, there were several comments from FWS employees reflecting a misunderstanding of the intent of this rule, with some comments suggesting that FWS employees will be moved to the GS pay scale. That is not what this rule does. We reiterate that the FWS and GS are different statutory pay systems, and this rule is focused to address the major issue identified for administrative resolution by FPRAC, which is to change the regulatory criteria for wage areas such that wage area definitions will, in almost all cases, follow the same labor market definitions and consider the same economically integrated regions as used for GS non-Rest of U.S. (RUS) locality pay areas. The FWS and GS will continue to be distinct and separate job classification and pay systems.

Cost of Living

Numerous employees argued that amending the regulatory criteria used to define and maintain FWS wage areas is necessary because of a high cost of living. See, e.g., Comments 17, 112, 329, 459. OPM notes that, by law, the cost of labor within a wage area, rather than the cost of living, determines FWS pay rates. Similarly, GS locality payments are not based on living costs but on salary surveys done by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, as required by law.

Annual Pay Adjustments Timing

Other commenters indicated that annual pay increases for FWS and GS employees do not coincide and that FWS employees receive their pay adjustments several months after GS employees. Both GS and FWS workers receive only one annual pay adjustment each year. FWS employees do not necessarily receive pay adjustments after GS employees; they are just on a different annual cycle than GS employees. Pay adjustments for the GS and FWS have separate effective dates. The annual adjustments for GS employees are made in January of each year (see 5 U.S.C. 5303(a)). Because FWS employees are paid according to local prevailing rates, FWS pay rates are adjusted each year based on prevailing private sector wage levels for similar

work in a local wage area subject to pay cap and floor increase provisions. DOD obtains the rates paid by local private sector employers by conducting annual local wage surveys. The wage surveys are scheduled throughout the year and, consequently, the pay increases are effective based on when wage surveys are completed throughout the year (see 5 U.S.C. 5344(a)). For example, FWS employees in the Boston, MA, wage area receive pay adjustments that are effective in October each year, three months earlier in the FY than GS employees receive their pay adjustments. (Pay increases for FWS employees typically occur in October, whereas GS increases typically take effect in January.)

Grade and Steps Structure

A few commenters also expressed concerns regarding the FWS and GS grades and steps structure. For example, one commenter said that FWS and GS grades do not align and another asserted that, while FWS grades are divided into 5 steps, GS grades are divided into 10 steps. See, e.g., Comments 221 and 312. As already stated, differences between the FWS and GS pay systems include occupational coverage and pay ranges.⁶ The FWS pay system covers most trade, craft, and laboring employees (blue-collar workers) in the Executive Branch and has existed in various forms based on local prevailing wage levels since 1862. The FWS has a multi-level job-grading system that includes the full range of trade, craft, and laboring jobs. Occupations often cover more than one grade level, and many occupations are typically represented at each grade. Regardless of occupation, the pay range for all regular schedule jobs at a particular grade level in a specific wage area is the same.

The FWS pay structure is primarily divided into wage grade nonsupervisory (WG), wage leader (WL), and wage supervisor (WS) hourly wage schedules. The WG and WL schedules have 15 levels or grades each, and the WS schedule has 19 grades. Generally, each grade represents progressively more

difficult levels of work requiring higher levels of skills and/or experience. Employees are paid the full prevailing rate at step 2 of each grade level. Step 5, the highest step in the FWS, is 112 percent above the prevailing rate of pay. The FWS grade structure is established under 5 U.S.C. 5343(e)(1). The FWS regular wage schedule regulations can be found at 5 CFR 532.203.

The GS pay system covers most white-collar civilian Federal employees. The GS has 15 grades (GS-1 through GS-15). Again, each grade represents progressively more difficult levels of work requiring higher levels of knowledge and/or experience. Each grade has a range of salary divided into 10 steps. The GS grade structure is established under 5 U.S.C. 5332(a)(2).

Hazard Pay

One commenter noted that FWS employees “make less money for equivalent work” and “only get hazard pay for the hours (. . .) in a hazard zone.” Comment 48. Other commenters suggested that their work duties are more hazardous than those of GS employees. See, e.g., Comments 79, 295, 481. Hazardous duty pay (HDP) is paid to qualifying GS employees and Environmental Differential Pay (EDP) is paid to qualifying FWS employees. HDP and EDP have separate legal authorities. The legal authority for HDP is found in 5 U.S.C. 5545(d). The legal authority for EDP is found in 5 U.S.C. 5343(c)(4). The regulations for GS HDP are in 5 CFR 550.901. The regulations for FWS EDP are in 5 CFR 532.511.

Under 5 CFR 532.511, an FWS employee must be paid an environmental differential when exposed to a working condition or hazard that falls within one of the categories approved by OPM. Although OPM issues EDP regulations, each agency is responsible for evaluating local situations to determine if it should pay EDP. This responsibility was given to the agencies because each local agency and installation can best determine the nature of the work performed by its employees. In order to receive a differential, there must be actual exposure to the environmental condition. An environmental differential is paid either on the basis of actual exposure or on the basis of hours in pay status.⁷

⁷ Information on EDP may be found in Subchapter S8 Pay Administration in the *Federal Wage System Appropriated Fund Operating Manual* at <https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/pay-leave/pay-systems/federal-wage-system/#url=Appropriated-Fund>. The Schedule of Environmental Differentials Paid for Exposure to Various Degrees of Hazards, Physical Hardships, and Working Conditions of an

⁶ OPM provides information regarding the classification process and job grading criteria for GS employees in *Classifying General Schedule Positions* available at <https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/classification-qualifications/classifying-general-schedule-positions/#url=Standards>; and for FWS employees in *Classifying Federal Wage System Positions* (available at <https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/classification-qualifications/classifying-federal-wage-system-positions/#url=Standards>) and *Introduction to the Federal Wage System Job Grading System* (available at <https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/classification-qualifications/classifying-federal-wage-system-positions/fwsintro.pdf>).

GS Supervisory Differential

One commenter stated that special rates established for FWS employees in their area led to some GS employees making less than FWS employees they are supervising. Comment 330. GS supervisors may receive a supervisory differential when they have a higher paid subordinate that is not covered by the GS pay system. OPM encourages GS employees to discuss such matters with their employing agency's human resources office for any policy guidance their agency uses in similar situations. We note that there is no authority to pay a supervisory differential to an FWS employee supervising a higher paid subordinate who is under a different pay system.

Pay Increases for FWS Employees Impacted by This Rule

OPM received various comments from FWS employees reflecting a misunderstanding of the expected impact on wages for FWS employees as a result of implementing this rule, with some comments indicating a "12 percent across-the-board pay increase." See, e.g., Comments 70, 83, 137, 257, and 499. As explained in the "Impact" section of the proposed rule, the pay increases will vary considerably, based on wage area and grades. For example, pay increases for FWS employees in Monroe County, PA, who will be moved to the New York, NY, wage area, will vary from around \$0.49 per hour at grade WG-01 to \$7.85 per hour at grade WG-15 based on current wage levels. In some wage areas employees will be placed on lower wage schedules and either be covered by pay retention rules or experience a reduction in pay if they are not eligible to retain a rate of pay.

Recruitment and Retention Issues

Many commenters indicated that the changes to the regulatory criteria in 5 CFR 532.211 are necessary because of recruitment and retention issues. For example, several commenters stated that placing FWS employees in the same geographic area as GS employees for pay setting purposes would help recruit and retain skilled candidates. See, e.g., Comments 50, 74, 120, and 284. While we acknowledge that pay increases may help address some recruitment and retention issues, the changes in criteria used to define and maintain FWS wage areas are not driven by recruitment or

retention challenges, and FWS area definition criteria have never considered recruitment and retention criteria, just as GS locality pay area criteria contain no mention of recruitment or retention. This rule seeks to make the labor market determinations and pay area boundaries more similar, as recommended through National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) language, by using similar criteria in both pay systems, and to therefore advance greater equity between the two systems.

Comments Regarding Specific Wage Areas

Southern Missouri FWS Wage Area

OPM received a few comments from FWS employees requesting that several counties in the Southern Missouri wage area be redefined to the St. Louis, MO, wage area (see, e.g., Comments 259 and 296) and one comment requesting that Butler County, MO, be redefined to either the St. Louis wage area or Memphis, TN, wage area (Comment 264). Some commenters expressed concerns that FWS rates of pay in Southern Missouri are lower than those received by employees who work in the St. Louis wage area, by GS employees, or by people who work in comparable jobs in the private sector. See, e.g., Comments 57, 203, 253, 263, 264, 265, 296, and 395.

Neither the current regulatory criteria nor the new criteria support the suggested changes to the Southern Missouri wage area. As stated in the proposed rule, OPM must receive the advice of FPRAC before reviewing and making any changes to wage area boundaries. Any management or labor member of FPRAC may introduce a subject for discussion by the Committee. For example, for FPRAC to consider a proposal to change the definition of a county, a member of the Committee must introduce the matter for discussion. It is the Chair's responsibility to approve items to be discussed on the Committee's agenda. FWS employees may wish to consider going through the chain of command within their employing agency or through their labor union representative to bring issues to FPRAC's attention.

We note that local wage surveys in the Southern Missouri wage area continue to meet all requirements for determining prevailing wage rates in the local labor market. The wage schedule for the Southern Missouri wage area is based on data collected from Christian, Greene, Laclede, Phelps, Pulaski, and Webster Counties, MO. The difference in rates of pay between the Southern

Missouri wage area and other wage areas, including St. Louis, MO, and Memphis, TN, reflects the fact that the prevailing cost of labor varies by wage area. It is not unusual for FWS employees who work in different wage areas to receive substantially different rates of pay even though they may have similar grade levels and job duties. For example, the wage rate for a WG-10, step 2, employee in the Southern Missouri wage area is \$27.45, while it is \$34.12 in the St. Louis wage area. These rates reflect the prevailing wage levels for this level of work in each wage survey area subject to annual pay cap and floor increase appropriations law provisions.

Puerto Rico Wage Area

OPM also received two comments inquiring if these changes will apply to the Puerto Rico wage area and asserting that pay rates in this wage area are lower than in other wage areas. See Comments 246 and 312. As stated in the proposed rule, changes to the criteria used to define and maintain wage areas will not result in any changes to the Puerto Rico wage area boundaries or pay. Likewise, as explained in response to the comments regarding the Missouri wage areas, FWS employees are paid different wage rates based on their location since the cost of labor varies from wage area to wage area. The pay system is neither designed nor intended to ensure all FWS employees receive the same wage rates in all regions.

Boston-Worcester-Providence, MA, Wage Area

OPM received several comments requesting that Hancock County, ME, and Acadia National Park be redefined to the new Boston-Worcester-Providence, MA, wage area. See, e.g., Comments 348, 385, and 393. Hancock County and Acadia National Park are defined to the Central and Northern Maine wage area. Neither the current nor the new regulatory criteria support the redefinition of Hancock County and Acadia National Park to the Boston-Worcester-Providence wage area. We also note that Hancock County is not neighboring the Boston wage area with the Central and Northern Maine and the Boston-Worcester-Providence wage areas being separated by the Augusta, ME, wage area.

OPM received several comments requesting that Aroostook County, ME, be removed from the Central and Northern Maine survey area because it only has 15 FWS employees and does not meet the minimum 100 FWS employees working in the county requirement and that Hancock County

Unusual Nature is listed under Appendix J of this manual (available at <https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/pay-leave/pay-systems/federal-wage-system/appropriated-fund-operating-manual/appendixj.pdf>). Appendix J lists all the FWS EDP categories either as actual exposure categories or as hours in a pay status categories.

be added to this survey area instead. See, e.g., Comments 389, 393, and 529. As previously mentioned, OPM proposes changes to wage areas, including changes to existing survey areas, based on the advice of FPRAC. FWS employees may wish to consider going through the chain of command within their employing agency or through their labor union representative to bring issues to FPRAC's attention.

OPM received a comment from an employee requesting the Kennebec County, ME, be redefined from the Augusta, ME, wage area to the new Boston-Worcester-Providence wage area. See Comment 388. Neither the current regulatory criteria nor the new criteria support this suggested change.

Mono and Inyo Counties, CA

OPM received a few comments from local government officials in Mono and Inyo Counties, CA, requesting that these two counties be redefined in their entirety to the Los Angeles, CA, wage area. See, e.g., Comment 293. Currently, Mono County, with the exception of locations where the Bridgeport, CA, special schedule applies, is defined to the Reno, NV, wage area, and Inyo County, with the exception of the China Lake Naval Weapons Center portion, is defined to the Las Vegas, NV, wage area. Neither the current nor the new regulatory criteria support redefining these two counties in their entirety to the Los Angeles, CA, wage area. As mentioned previously, OPM proposes any changes to wage area definitions after FPRAC review and recommendation.

Yuma County, AZ

One agency recommended that Yuma County, AZ, be redefined from the San Diego County, CA, wage area to the Phoenix, AZ, wage area because the Federal Salary Council recommended the inclusion of Yuma County into the Phoenix-Mesa-Scottsdale, AZ GS locality Pay Area, still pending approval from the President's Pay Agent. Changes in GS locality pay area definitions will not result in automatic changes in FWS wage area definitions. Neither the current nor the new regulatory criteria support redefining Yuma County to the Phoenix, AZ, wage area. As already mentioned, OPM proposes any changes to wage area definitions after FPRAC review and recommendation.

San Diego, CA, Survey Area

OPM received a comment from an FWS employee in the San Diego, CA, wage area opposing the redefinition of Yuma County, AZ, from the San Diego area of application to the San Diego

survey area. The commenter argued that the cost of living is lower in Yuma County than in San Diego County and adding survey data from Yuma County to the San Diego wage area would lead to overall lower pay in the wage area. Comment 394. As stated in the proposed rule, OPM is moving Yuma County to the San Diego survey area beginning in September 2027 because more than 100 FWS employees work in this county. This move is necessary to comply with the requirement that OPM include in survey areas all counties with 100 or more FWS employees. A future wage survey will determine the impact, if any, on wage levels that apply in the San Diego wage area and that would likely continue to be subject to annual appropriations legislation setting a cap and floor on wage schedule adjustments.

Southern Colorado Wage Area

OPM received three comments from FWS employees in the City of Colorado Springs, CO, expressing concerns that FWS rates of pay in the City of Colorado Springs are lower than those earned by people who work in comparable jobs in the private sector and in the Consolidated City and County of Denver. See, Comments 444, 454, and 455. The City of Colorado Springs, in El Paso County, CO, is defined to the Southern Colorado wage area, and the Consolidated City and County of Denver is defined to the Denver, CO, wage area. Local wage surveys in the Southern Colorado wage area continue to meet all requirements for determining prevailing wage rates in the local labor market. The wage schedule for the Southern Colorado wage area is based on data collected from El Paso, Pueblo, and Teller Counties, CO. The difference in rates of pay between the Southern Colorado and Denver wage areas, as previously mentioned regarding other wage areas, reflects the fact that the prevailing cost of labor varies by wage area.

Neither the current regulatory criteria nor the new criteria support a redefinition of the Southern Colorado wage area.

Gettysburg National Military Park

OPM received a comment from a labor organization local representative at the Gettysburg National Military Park requesting that this installation be defined to the new Washington-Baltimore-Arlington wage area, and pointing out that the cost of living is the same for both GS and FWS employees and that FWS employees are "earning less than employees at the local Sheetz and warehouses." Comment 365.

The Gettysburg National Military Park is located in Adams County, PA, which is defined to the Harrisburg, PA, wage area, and part of the Harrisburg-York-Lebanon, PA, combined statistical area (CSA). The purpose of this rule is not to make the FWS system identical to the GS locality pay system but to no longer allow, in almost all cases, non-RUS locality pay areas to be split by FWS wage areas. Please see why Adams County will continue to be defined to the Harrisburg wage area in the "Statement of Need" subsection below.

Assateague Island

Two commenters stated that "[t]he Assateague Island FWS exception needs to be eliminated," and argued that moving Worcester County, MD, to the Philadelphia-Reading-Camden, PA, wage area would lead to FWS employees at Assateague Island National Seashore being paid a lot less than counterparts working in the rest of Worcester County. Comments 333 and 546. OPM has been defining Worcester County (excluding the Assateague Island part) to the Wilmington, DE, wage area and the Assateague Island part of Worcester County to the current Norfolk-Portsmouth-Newport News-Hampton, VA, wage area. According to OPM data, there are 10 FWS employees working for the Department of the Interior, with a duty station in the Town of Chincoteague, Accomack County, VA. Since the duty station is located within the current Norfolk-Portsmouth-Newport News-Hampton wage area, this rule will continue to define the Assateague Island part of Worcester County to the new Virginia Beach-Chesapeake, VA, wage area. As already explained, OPM proposes any changes to wage area definitions, other than the ones automatically resulting from the application of revised regulatory criteria defining wage areas, after FPRAC review and recommendation.

Ft. Wayne-Marion, IN, Wage Area

OPM received one comment from a labor organization local representative requesting that the J.E. Roush Lake Project part of Huntington County and Wabash County, IN, be redefined from the Ft. Wayne-Marion, IN, wage area to the new Indianapolis-Carmel-Muncie, IN wage area. Comment 491. Neither the current regulatory criteria nor the new criteria support the suggested changes to the Ft. Wayne-Marion, IN, wage area. FPRAC may consider a proposal to review the definition of Huntington and Wabash Counties if a committee member introduces this issue for discussion.

Timing of the Local Wage Surveys

OPM received one comment from an FWS employee in the Central and Northern Maine wage area requesting that the local wage survey order month in this wage area be changed from May to August. Comment 393. Under 5 CFR 532.207, FWS wage surveys are scheduled to begin in specific months each year based on the following criteria: timing of wage surveys in relation to wage adjustments in principal local private sector establishments; reasonable distribution of survey workloads for the lead agencies; timing of wage surveys in nearby wage areas; and scheduling relationships with other pay surveys. FPRAC may consider a proposal to change a survey order month if a committee member introduces a proposal for discussion.

Conduct of Local Wage Surveys

One labor organization stated that the way local wage surveys are conducted needs reforming because they “fail to accurately reflect the true conditions of the labor markets.” Comment 543. Several other commenters also expressed concern about the results of the local wage surveys, saying that they fail to capture private sector wages. See, e.g., Comment 259. One agency stated that, in certain survey areas, such as Narragansett Bay area, there are challenges in identifying private establishments with jobs comparable with the survey jobs willing to participate in surveys. As previously stated, the intent of this rule is to make the regulatory criteria OPM uses to define FWS wage areas more similar to GS locality pay areas and make changes to certain wage areas based on the revised criteria in 5 CFR 532.211. Any reforms to the local wage surveys collection process need to be reviewed by FPRAC.

Special Rates

One commenter requested that OPM consider special rates for Acadia National Park, Bar Harbor, and Mount Desert Island, in the Central and Northern Maine wage area. Comment 408. Another commenter requested extending special rates currently established in the Jacksonville, FL, wage area to FWS positions in Polk County, FL, which is being redefined to this wage area through this rule. Comment 346. Under 5 CFR 532.251, a lead agency with the approval of OPM may establish special rates for pay within all or part of a wage area for a designated occupation or occupational specialization and grade, in lieu of rates

on the regular schedule. OPM may authorize special rates to the extent it considers necessary to overcome existing or likely significant handicaps in the recruitment or retention of well qualified personnel when these handicaps are due to any of the following circumstances: rates of pay offered by private sector employers for an occupation or occupational specialization and grade are significantly higher than rates paid by the Federal Government within the competitive labor market; the remoteness of the area or location involved; or any other circumstance that OPM considers appropriate. If an employing agency should find it necessary to establish special rates for FWS employees in the Central and Northern Maine or Jacksonville, FL, wage areas, it must submit data to DOD demonstrating staffing problems and certify the availability of sufficient funds to support a special rates request for specific occupations, grades, installations, and/or locations. If DOD concurs that special rates are necessary for those occupations, grades, installations, and/or locations, the request will be forwarded to OPM for review.

One agency asked how the changes in wage areas resulting from amending the regulatory criteria in 5 CFR 532.211 would affect existing special rates. OPM sees no basis for canceling existing special rates. Special rates sometimes apply wage area wide and sometimes apply to a specific Federal installation or set of occupations within a wage area. If an employee who is paid a special rate would be entitled to a higher wage rate from a regular wage schedule upon movement to a different wage schedule, the employee would be entitled to the higher wage rate on the regular wage schedule. OPM will continue to work closely with the lead agency to manage appropriate special wage rates to address recruitment or retention challenges.

Elimination of the “Pay Cap” Provision

One labor organization wrote in support of the elimination of the yearly “pay cap” provision from the appropriations legislation. Comment 543. As stated in the proposed rule, each year since fiscal year 1979, appropriations legislation has limited FWS pay adjustments so as not to exceed average GS pay adjustments. For FY 2024, the FWS pay limitation of 5.26 percent was in section 737 of division B of the Further Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2024. Congress originally imposed limits on FWS pay adjustments during the high inflation

era of the late 1970’s for budget purposes and to ensure that FWS pay rates did not increase more rapidly than GS pay rates. In certain high cost of labor areas, GS employees were leaving white-collar positions to take higher paying blue-collar positions. Federal employee organizations have strongly opposed FWS pay limitations since they were first imposed, but agencies were concerned about the budget impact of lifting the cap system-wide in any one fiscal year. At the October 20, 2022, FPRAC public meeting,⁸ the Committee recommended by consensus that OPM should seek elimination of an annual provision placed in the Financial Services and General Government Appropriations Act that establishes a statutory limitation each year on the maximum allowable FWS wage schedule adjustment. OPM is considering available policy options and solutions to advance this policy change forward.

GS Locality Pay Areas

OPM received several comments requesting that Lucas County, OH, be included in the Detroit-Warren-Ann Arbor, MI, GS locality pay area. Comments 362, 363, and 356. Two other commenters requested that several counties in Western Colorado be added to the Denver-Aurora, CO, GS locality pay area. Comments 151 and 205. The purpose of this rule is to change the regulatory criteria used to define and maintain FWS wage areas and to redefine certain FWS wage areas established for the FWS pay system under 5 U.S.C. 5343. This rulemaking does not address boundaries of locality pay areas for the GS pay system and other pay systems that receive locality pay under 5 U.S.C. 5304.

One commenter wrote against the implementation of OPM’s proposal, stating that adding outlying counties to the core GS locality pay area would lead to lower rates of pay for employees working within the Metropolitan Statistical Area and arguing that the FWS wage areas and GS locality pay areas should not be aligned until the GS system is reformed. Comment 417. This commenter also noted that FWS wage areas would not fully coincide with GS locality pay areas. As explained previously, the purpose of this rule is to make changes to the criteria used to define and maintain FWS wage areas and to redefine boundaries of FWS wage

⁸ A copy of the October 20th, 2022 FPRAC meeting transcript may be found at <https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/pay-leave/pay-systems/federal-wage-system/federal-prevailing-rate-advisory-committee/meeting-number-642-october-20-2022.pdf>.

areas, according to the amended regulatory criteria. This rule is not meant to make changes to the GS system or consider ideas for reforming the GS system. Lastly, as stated in the proposed rule and reiterated in this final rule, the new wage area definitions are not intended to mirror GS locality pay areas, and some differences between the geographical boundaries of wage areas and locality pay areas will continue to exist.

Corrections

The proposed rule contained an error where Union County, PA, was listed in both the proposed Harrisburg-York-Lebanon (89 FR 82892 and 82916) and Scranton-Wilkes-Barre wage areas (89 FR 82893 and 82917). This error occurred because, while drafting the proposed rule, Union County was identified as one of the four counties of the Bloomsburg-Berwick CSA, which is within the Harrisburg, PA, wage area. Under the new wage area criteria, a CSA should not be split between two wage areas except in unusual circumstances. In this instance, OPM intended to make an exception to the metropolitan area criterion based on a comprehensive analysis of all of the wage area definition criteria.

The Federal Correctional Complex Allenwood in Union County has been defined to the Harrisburg wage area since it opened in the early 1990s, and OPM finds no compelling reason based on the mixed nature of a comprehensive analysis of the regulatory criteria to move Union County to a different wage area. From an organizational relationship perspective, there are other Bureau of Prisons institutions immediately to the south of Allenwood in Lewisburg, PA, that will be defined to the Harrisburg-York-Lebanon wage area. As correctly noted in the proposed rule, OPM's intent was to first define Union County, PA, to the Harrisburg-York-Lebanon area of application and then, effective for wage surveys beginning in May 2026, Union County would become part of the survey area for the Harrisburg-York-Lebanon wage area because there are more than 100 FWS employees with official duty stations in the county. This decision required that the Bloomsburg-Berwick CSA remain split between the Harrisburg-York-Lebanon and Scranton-Wilkes-Barre wage areas as an exception to the metropolitan area criteria. The Bloomsburg-Berwick CSA is comprised of four Micropolitan Statistical Areas with some of its counties geographically closer to Harrisburg and some closer to Scranton and Wilkes-Barre. The employment interchange criterion

indicates that there are only marginal differences in commuting rates to and from the Bloomsburg-Berwick CSA as a whole and the Harrisburg-York-Lebanon and Scranton-Wilkes-Barre survey areas.

After recognizing that Union County was erroneously listed in two wage areas in the proposed rule, OPM is correcting the disposition of the following counties for the final rule. Columbia, Montour, and Northumberland Counties, PA, will be defined to the area of application of the Scranton-Wilkes-Barre wage area as noted in the proposed rule. Union County and Snyder County, on the west side of the Susquehanna River, will be defined to the Harrisburg-York-Lebanon wage area. Snyder County is located to the south of Union County and both counties are closest to Harrisburg.

Wayne County, PA, was erroneously listed as being part of the Scranton-Wilkes-Barre, PA, wage area in the "Definitions of Wage Areas and Wage Area Survey Areas" section (see 89 FR 82917). As correctly stated elsewhere in the proposed rule, Wayne County is moving to the New York-Newark, NY, wage area. (See 89 FR 82890, 82893, and 82914.)

The area of application designation for Palm Beach County, FL, was erroneously listed as January 2027 (see 89 FR 82883 and 82905); however, the proposal correctly identified May 2027 as the effective date for the survey area (see 89 FR 82905). This error occurred because currently the wage survey order month for the Miami-Dade, FL, wage area is January. However, DOD had requested certain changes in wage survey order months to allow balancing of the wage survey workload throughout the year, including revising the listing of the beginning month of survey from "January" to "May" for the Miami-Dade wage area (see 89 FR 82878). As such, OPM is correcting the area of application designation for Palm Beach County to read "May."

Expected Impact of This Final Rule

1. Statement of Need

OPM is issuing this rule pursuant to its authority in 5 U.S.C. 5343 to issue regulations governing the FWS. The purpose of these changes is to address longstanding inequities between the Federal Government's two main pay systems. While the pay systems are different in some ways, the concept of geographic pay differentials based on local labor market conditions is a key feature of both systems. The FWS regulatory criteria in 5 CFR 532.211 are being revised to better align FWS wage areas with non-RUS GS locality pay

areas. The revised FWS criteria include CSA and micropolitan statistical area (MSA) definitions and employment interchange data reported by the Census Bureau that reflects social and economic integration in a region. Revised FWS wage area definitions are based on an analysis of these factors by FPRAC's working group and OPM's analysis of the criteria to be consistent with the FPRAC majority recommendation to use the new criteria. There is no intent that FWS wage areas will be identical to GS locality pay areas in all cases. In limited circumstances, such as with Adams and York Counties, PA, this rule will not result in all non-RUS locality pay areas no longer including more than one FWS wage area. The Harrisburg, PA, wage area, will continue to coincide with the Washington-Baltimore-Arlington, DC-MD-VA-WV-PA and the Harrisburg-Lebanon, PA GS locality pay areas. Adams and York Counties, PA, are currently part of the Washington-Baltimore-Arlington GS locality pay area, based on a Federal Salary Council recommendation and Pay Agent decision to keep these counties defined to that locality pay area after a new GS locality pay area was later established for Harrisburg. Adams and York Counties will continue to be defined to the Harrisburg, PA, wage area because they are part of the Harrisburg-York-Lebanon, PA, CSA and to avoid splitting this CSA as will be required by the new regulatory criteria.

2. Impact

Per available data, OPM expects these changes will impact approximately 17,000 FWS employees nationwide or about 10 percent of the appropriated fund FWS workforce. The amendments to current regulatory criteria used to define and maintain FWS wage areas will result in numerous changes in the composition of many of these wage areas. As a result, several FWS wage areas will no longer be viable separately, and the counties in those abolished wage areas will be defined to another wage area.

Most employees affected by this approach will receive increases in pay, but some will be placed on pay retention if moved to a lower wage schedule or experience a reduction in pay if not eligible for pay retention. As such, about 85 percent of the affected employees (roughly 14,500 employees) will receive pay increases, about 11 percent (roughly 1,800 employees) will be placed on pay retention, around 3 percent (about 500 employees) will be placed at a lower wage level, and around 1 (less than 200 employees) percent will see no change in their wage

level because their current wage rate is identical to the wage rate on a wage schedule they will be moved to.

This rule primarily affects FWS employees of DOD and its components, although employees of many other agencies, including the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), are impacted. For example, the Anniston-Gadsden, AL, wage area will be abolished and most of its counties will be added to the Birmingham-Cullman-Talladega, AL, wage area. FWS employees working in these counties will see their pay increased at most grades. For example, based on current wage levels, at grades WG-01 through WG-04 there will be no change in pay while, at grades WG-05 through WG-15, pay increases could vary from \$0.72 per hour to \$5.99 per hour. Likewise, based on these proposed changes, Monroe County, PA, will be moved to the New York, NY, wage area. As such, based on current pay levels, pay increases for FWS employees in Monroe County will vary from about \$0.49 per hour at grade WG-01 to \$7.85 per hour at grade WG-15. However, the Washington, DC, Baltimore, MD, and parts of the Hagerstown-Martinsburg-Chambersburg, MD, wage areas will be combined into a revised Washington, DC, based wage area. FWS employees will be moved to the existing Washington, DC, wage schedule, which will result in placement on a wage schedule with lower rates, based on current pay levels, than in the current Baltimore and Hagerstown wage areas at lower grade levels. This will primarily affect employees at lower grade levels at VA Medical Centers in these wage areas. For example, WG-2, step 2, for the Washington, DC, wage schedule is currently \$18.47 per hour whereas it is \$24.51 per hour for Baltimore, which will result in around a \$6 an hour decrease, based on current wage levels, once this final rule goes into effect. Nonetheless, most employees will retain their current wage rates if they are not under temporary or term appointments. There are around 35 FWS employees at the Baltimore VA Medical Center under temporary appointments who will see an actual reduction in pay if their appointments are not changed to be permanent and assuming their temporary employment status will

continue in future. At higher wage grades, employees in the Baltimore and Hagerstown wage areas will receive higher rates under a Washington, DC, based wage schedule based on current pay levels.

This final rule affects about 10 percent of FWS appropriated fund workers, and there will be 118 separate appropriated fund wage areas versus 130 today. The changes are limited in scope with most FWS employees seeing no impact at all on their wage levels.

This rule has potential budgetary impacts affecting three major Army Depots, in particular, that will need to be managed appropriately and effectively by employing agencies. It is noteworthy, however, that the overall budget impact of revising wage area boundaries under this final rule equates to about \$140 million per year—only around 1 percent of the current base payroll for the FWS appropriated fund workforce as a whole.

As mentioned previously, 14 percent of the affected employees will be placed on retained pay status; however, a vast majority of the affected employees—about 85 percent—will receive a pay increase. OPM concludes that the benefits of this final rule outweigh the negative impacts since this rule will better equalize geographic pay area treatment across the Federal Government's two main pay systems. The pay retention law exists to alleviate potential decreases in wage rates caused by management actions such as changes in wage area boundaries. We also note that Federal agencies have considerable discretionary authority to provide pay and leave flexibilities to address significant recruitment and retention problems. Pay and leave flexibilities are always an option to address recruitment or retention challenges at any time. Agency headquarters staff may contact OPM for assistance with understanding and implementing pay and leave flexibilities when appropriate. Information on those flexibilities is available on the OPM website at <https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/pay-leave/pay-and-leave-flexibilities-for-recruitment-and-retention>.

Considering that a fairly small number of employees is affected, OPM does not anticipate this rule will have a substantial impact on the local

economies or a large impact in the local labor markets. As these and future wage area changes may impact higher volumes of employees in geographical areas and could rise to the level of impacting local labor markets, OPM will continue to monitor the revised wage areas for such impacts.

As described below, OPM estimates the rule results in annualized transfers in the form of additional payroll of approximately \$149.9 million and annualized costs of approximately \$0.9 million over ten years at a 2 percent discount rate.

3. Baseline

The geographic boundaries of FWS wage areas and of GS locality pay areas are not the same. Around 1.5 million GS employees are in 58 locality pay areas and around 170,000 appropriated fund FWS employees are in 130 wage areas. However, since 2004, appropriations legislation has required that FWS employees receive the same percentage adjustment amount that GS employees receive where they work.⁹ This provision is known as the floor increase provision. Consequently, the floor increase provision requires pay adjustments each FY that result in certain FWS wage areas having more than one wage schedule in effect where there are multiple wage areas within the boundaries of a single non-RUS GS locality pay area. Although a majority of FWS wage areas coincide only with part of the RUS GS locality pay area, many FWS wage areas coincide with parts of more than one GS locality pay area. In each situation where the boundary of a prevailing rate wage area coincides with the boundary of a single GS locality pay area boundary, DOD must establish one wage schedule applicable in the wage area. For example, the New Orleans, LA, FWS wage area coincides with part of the RUS GS locality pay area. In this case, the minimum prevailing rate adjustment for the New Orleans wage area in FY 2024 was the same as the RUS GS locality pay area adjustment, 4.99 percent.

⁹ For FY 2024, the floor increase and pay cap provisions may be found in section 737 of Division B of the Further Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2024 (the FY 2024 Act), Public Law 118-47.

In each situation where a prevailing rate wage area coincides with part of more than one GS locality pay area, DOD must establish more than one prevailing rate wage schedule for that wage area, and therefore, FWS employees within the same wage area may receive substantially different rates of pay. For example, the boundaries of the Philadelphia, PA, FWS wage area coincide with parts of two different GS locality pay areas—New York-Newark, NY-NJ-CT-PA and Philadelphia-Reading-Camden, PA-NJ-DE-MD. In this case, DOD established two separate wage schedules for use during FY 2024 in the Philadelphia FWS wage area. In the part of the Philadelphia wage area that coincides with the New York-Newark, NY-NJ-CT GS locality pay area, the minimum prevailing rate adjustment was 5.53 percent and in the part coinciding with the Philadelphia-Reading-Camden, PA-NJ-DE-MD GS locality pay area, the minimum prevailing rate adjustment was 5.28 percent. OPM's guidance to agencies regarding FY 2024 FWS pay adjustments can be found at <https://www.chcoc.gov/content/fiscal-year-2024-prevailing-rate-pay-adjustments>.

Furthermore, at Tobyhanna Army Depot, the largest employer in Monroe County, PA, more than 1,000 Federal employees paid under the GS work in close proximity to more than 1,500 Federal employees paid under the FWS. Prior to 2005, Monroe County was part of the RUS GS locality pay area, while the county was (and is) part of the Scranton-Wilkes-Barre FWS wage area. In January 2005, Monroe County was reassigned from RUS to the New York GS locality pay area. As a result, all GS employees at Tobyhanna got an immediate 12 percent pay increase, of which 8 percent was attributable to the reassignment of Monroe County to the New York locality pay area. This led to a deep sense of unfairness on the part of FWS employees at Tobyhanna which continues to this day.

This final rule addresses most of the differences in pay among FWS employees within the same wage area and between FWS employees and GS employees working at the same location. It revises the wage area criteria for FWS to achieve better alignment between FWS wage areas and GS locality pay areas and addresses observable geographic pay disparities between FWS and GS employees that have been caused by using different sets of rules to define FWS wage areas and GS locality pay areas.

4. Costs

OPM employs four full-time staff, at grades GS-12 through GS-15, to discharge its responsibilities under the FWS. The annual cost is estimated at \$753,215 based on an average salary of \$188,304 and includes wages, benefits, and overhead. This estimate is based on the 2024 GS salary pay rate for the Washington-Baltimore-Arlington, DC-MD-VA-WV-PA locality pay area. We do not anticipate an increase in administrative costs for OPM under this final rule.

During FPRAC discussions on methods to address the House Report language, it became apparent that DOD might need to hire additional staff members to conduct surveys in the expanded wage areas. However, there will also be fewer wage surveys to conduct each year because 12 wage areas will be abolished, and their survey counties moved to neighboring wage areas. Currently, DOD's operating costs for conducting FWS wage surveys and issuing wage schedules are estimated at \$12 million, but it is reasonable to expect that additional specialist wage survey staff members may be needed to complete local wage survey work in the wage areas that will become larger in the time allotted¹⁰ by statute for local wage surveys to be completed. OPM estimates that an average wage specialist at around the GS-9 level with a \$70,000 a year salary in the Washington, DC, area could have a fully burdened cost of \$140,000 to carry out the additional wage survey work. Allowing for six new DOD employees would increase government costs by around \$840,000 for the first year. OPM requested comments regarding the costs of wage survey administration. One labor organization proposed a change in legislation so that wage schedules are calculated using data collected by the Bureau of Labor Statistics instead. Comment 478. As previously stated, this rulemaking amends the regulatory criteria used to define and maintain wage areas and redefine certain wage areas accordingly and cannot make

¹⁰ Local wage surveys are scheduled in advance, with surveys scheduled by regulation to begin in a certain month in each wage area. The beginning month of appropriated fund wage surveys and the fiscal year during which full-scale surveys are conducted are set out as appendix A to subpart B of part 532. Under 5 U.S.C. 5344(a), any increase in rates of basic pay is effective not later than the first day of the first pay period on or after the 45th day, excluding Saturdays and Sundays, after a survey was ordered to begin in a wage area. For example, the January wage schedule is ordered in January and becomes effective in March of each year.

regulatory changes that would require changes in existing law.

FWS wage surveys are conducted under the information collection titled "Establishment Information Form," "Wage Data Collection Form," and "Wage Data Collection Continuation Form" OMB Control number 3260-0036. DOD wage specialist data collectors survey about 21,760 businesses annually. Based on past experience with local wage surveys, DOD estimates that each survey collection requires 1.5 hours of respondent burden for collection forms, resulting in a total yearly burden of 32,640 hours. (See the *Paperwork Reduction Act* section below.) The changes in wage area boundaries in this rule are not expected to affect the public reporting burden of the current information collection. This is because the number of counties included in future survey areas will remain very similar to those included in current survey areas. OPM invited public comment on this matter, but no comments were submitted.

This final rule will affect the FWS employees of up to 30 Federal agencies—ranging from cabinet-level departments to small independent agencies—affecting around 17,000 FWS employees. The estimated payroll cost of this final rule, including 36.70 percent fringe benefits,¹¹ is approximately \$150 million when annualized at a 2 percent rate, and its cumulative undiscounted 10-year cost is around \$1.5 billion for geographic areas being moved from one wage area to another as a result of amending the criteria used to define FWS wage area boundaries. The total first year base payroll cost represents around 1 percent of the \$10 billion overall annual base FWS payroll. About half the overall cost will be incurred by the Department of the Army, primarily at Tobyhanna, Letterkenny, and Anniston Army Depots because a substantial number of the FWS employees who will be affected by the proposed changes is concentrated at these large federal installations.

Attachment 1¹² provides OPM's estimate of the payroll costs for the first 10 years of implementation of this rule. This document was developed by OPM staff who provide technical support to FPRAC. The cost estimate lists the wage areas that will have counties added as

¹¹ DOD provides annual costs for civilian personnel fringe benefits at https://comptroller.defense.gov/Portals/45/documents/rates/fy2024/2024_d.pdf.

¹² Attachment 1 may be found in the docket OPM-2024-0016 on www.regulations.gov.

a result of the final rule and identifies the counties being added.

To calculate the estimated first year cost of around \$140 million, we used Wage Grade, Wage Leader, and Wage Supervisor employment numbers in each impacted county and compared the difference in pay between the grade's step-2 rate under the county's current wage schedule, the prevailing wage grade level, and the wage schedule the county will be defined under by this final rule. The overall costs were further adjusted based on the average step rate for FWS employees being above step 2.¹³ The ten cells to the right of each county provide the costs for the first ten years of implementation. In the "Totals" worksheet, the "Totals" column provides the estimated total cost for the increased payroll for the first 10 years after implementation. The "Emps" column provides the sum of Wage Grade, Wage Leader, and Wage Supervisor employees in the county. The bottom row of each wage area section of Attachment 1 provides the total payroll costs associated with this rule for all counties being moved to the wage area listed. Estimated costs for the second through tenth years were calculated using a 2 percent adjustment factor, in line with the President's budget plan for FY 2025 and an estimated 36.7 percent fringe benefit factor. As these are only estimates, actual future costs will vary.

Future wage schedules will be based on local wage surveys that will include survey counties that were previously survey counties in wage areas with different prevailing wage levels. As such, the measurable prevailing wage levels within a wage area are likely to be different than those measured in the most recent local wage surveys. For instance, starting with new full-scale wage surveys beginning in October 2027, the proposed San Jose-San Francisco-Oakland wage area will include Monterey and San Joaquin Counties, CA, in its wage surveys. It is possible that inclusion of these counties in an enlarged San Jose-San Francisco-Oakland survey area might result in prevailing wage levels being measured at a lower level than if they were not included. However, as a result of statistical sampling methods and natural changes in wage growth across the mix

¹³ The step 2 rate is the prevailing wage level, or 100 percent of market, that DOD bases all the other step rates on. The average step for employees changes over time and is different from area to area and grade to grade within a wage area. Currently, the average rate is just above step 3, which is 4 percent above step 2. FPRAC has used this methodology for calculating costs for many years and has found it to be a fairly accurate predictor of cost.

of private industrial establishments that will be surveyed, it is not certain what, if any, impact will occur on wage survey results until a full-scale wage survey has been completed in the expanded wage area. It is reasonable to anticipate that adding counties with lower prevailing wage levels to a survey area with higher prevailing wage levels will result in somewhat lower wage survey findings overall and lower wage schedules. However, the floor increase provision that has been included in appropriations law each year since FY 2004 would offset that impact if the provision is continued. As long as a floor increase provision provides for a minimum annual adjustment amount for a wage schedule, the combining of counties with lower prevailing wage levels into a wage area with higher prevailing wage levels will have no impact on the payable wage rates in that wage area should the floor increase amount continue to be higher than the pay cap amount. In this scenario, the additional payroll costs that agencies would incur in Monterey and San Joaquin counties would be because employees there would be paid wage rates from the San Jose-San Francisco-Oakland wage schedule that are higher than wage rates applicable in their current wage areas.

Agency payroll providers will need to properly assign official duty station codes within their systems for impacted employees by reassigning the codes from one FWS wage schedule to another. Although around 17,000 FWS employees will be affected by these changes in wage area boundaries, there are far fewer official duty station codes that will need to be updated by the four major payroll providers in their payroll systems. OPM estimates this number of impacted official duty station codes to be around 254. This is not anticipated to be a significant additional cost burden or to require additional funding as agency payroll systems are often updated as a routine business matter as pay area boundaries change and as wage schedules are updated every year. For example, the payroll providers implemented changes in GS locality pay area affecting around 34,000 employees in January 2024. However, OPM estimates that implementing payroll changes in terms of the time required for the 254 official duty station codes across the four payroll providers at a cost of around \$7,800. OPM calculated this estimate by allowing for ten minutes to manually update each duty station change in each of the four payroll systems by a mid-range payroll processing staff member with an average

salary and benefits cost of around \$96,000 per year, which equates to a cost of around \$7.66 per change per provider. OPM invited public comment on this estimate, but no comments were received.

5. Benefits

This rule has important benefits. Employees have expressed understandable equity concerns since the mid-1990s about why there are different geographic boundaries defined for the Federal Government's two main pay systems. Over the years, Members of Congress have expressed interest in this issue and written letters in support of aligning FWS wage areas and GS locality pay areas. FPRAC heard testimony from Congressional staff, local union and management representatives, and employees in support of better aligning the geographic boundaries of FWS wage areas and GS locality pay areas, including testimony that a high rate of commuting interchange—which, for example, triggered Monroe County's reassignment from the Rest of U.S. GS locality pay area to the New York-Newark GS locality pay area in 2005—should also be reflected in the FWS wage areas. This final rule will address most of the internal equity and fairness concerns found across the country that are unnecessarily damaging to employee morale when an alternative and defensible approach is possible. This can also be accomplished at a relatively low cost of an increase in base payroll of only around 1 percent. FPRAC acknowledged that, although around 2,000 FWS employees will be placed on lower wage schedules as a result of these actions, around 1,870 of these employees will be entitled to pay retention. Accordingly, FPRAC found that the benefits to FWS employees overall outweighed the concerns regarding the limited number of positions negatively impacted.

Further, FPRAC members, agency and union representatives, and employees expressed concerns at public FPRAC meetings that the FWS no longer reflects modern compensation practices for prevailing rate tradespeople and laborers and that updating the wage area definition criteria to be more similar to the GS locality pay area criteria will be a step in the right direction to begin modernizing the prevailing rate system. Despite the projection of continuing application of the floor and pay cap provisions to the FWS wage schedules, implementation of these changes to the criteria used to define and maintain FWS wage areas, in particular adopting the use of employment interchange

measures and CSA definitions, will better position the FWS to align with regional prevailing wage practices because they better reflect current commuting, employment, and recruitment patterns.

6. Alternatives

Over the course of 15 working group meetings, at which there was extensive discussion, FPRAC considered various options to address the FWS and GS pay equity concerns expressed in the House Report language. These discussions had been taking place for many years previously without consensus. One alternative to the approach adopted in this final rule was to make no changes to the current FWS wage areas and encourage agencies to use pay flexibilities when challenged with recruitment issues. However, maintaining the status quo will not resolve employee equity concerns or address the interests expressed by Congress.

Another option considered was conducting piecemeal reviews of wage areas using the existing wage area definition criteria (distance, commuting, demographic), only when employees or other stakeholders raise concerns. This has been FPRAC's approach since 2012, but it has not addressed the fundamental inequities resulting from managing the FWS and GS with different sets of rules (*i.e.*, different criteria) for defining pay area boundaries. The current regulatory criteria were not designed to allow for changing wage area definitions absent factors such as military base closures or changes in MSAs.

FPRAC also considered adding CSA definitions alone as a criterion to the existing regulatory criteria in 5 CFR 532.211. OMB published new CSA and MSA definitions on July 21, 2023, in OMB Bulletin 23–01, and FPRAC has a practice of using new MSA definitions when they become available. The new OMB definitions and an analysis of the current FWS regulatory criteria to define wage areas did not appear to address some of the most contentious counties under FPRAC discussion as those counties still did not align with the GS locality pay areas. For example, the 2023 OMB definitions moved Monroe County, PA, from the New York-Newark, NY-NJ-CT-PA, CSA to the Allentown-Bethlehem-East Stroudsburg, PA-NJ, CSA. OMB Bulletin No. 20–01 (which FPRAC previously used) included the East Stroudsburg, PA, MSA, comprised only of Monroe County, PA, in the New York CSA. OMB Bulletin No. 23–01 supersedes the previous ones and lists Monroe County

as the sole county of the East Stroudsburg, PA, micropolitan statistical area, and part of the Allentown-Bethlehem-East Stroudsburg, PA-NJ, CSA. Both Monroe County and the Allentown CSA are part of the New York locality pay area for GS employees. Based on the updated OMB Bulletin and applying the criteria in this final rule, Monroe County will be defined to a wage area consistent with the rest of the Allentown-Bethlehem-East Stroudsburg, PA-NJ, CSA. Applying employment interchange analysis to better recognize regional commuting patterns helps to clarify where best to define the Allentown-Bethlehem-East Stroudsburg, PA-NJ, CSA and results in the Allentown-Bethlehem-East Stroudsburg, PA-NJ, CSA, including Monroe County, being defined as part of the New York, Newark wage area.

The committee also considered and decided against merely adopting and applying GS locality pay area definitions to FWS wage areas. For GS locality pay purposes, pay disparities with the non-Federal sector for GS employees stationed in a locality pay area are based on data for the entire locality pay area. The FWS continues the concept of using survey areas and areas of application because FWS employees tend to be employed in greater numbers at military installations and VA Medical Centers and not throughout an entire wage area. In contrast, GS employees are widely distributed geographically at all agencies.

FPRAC's members had disparate views on how future wage schedules based on these geographic changes in wage area definitions could best reflect prevailing wage levels. One view held that combining the survey areas of two wage areas together should result in an entirely new wage schedule being applied to FWS employees in the expanded wage area. OPM determined that this method was not appropriate given that the floor increase provision in appropriations law each year requires that wage schedules be adjusted upwards by the same percentage adjustment amount received by GS employees in the area. It would also be contrary to longstanding precedent to ignore statutory pay cap and floor increase provisions when wage survey areas change. Consequently, in this rule OPM first adds counties moving between wage areas to the area of application of the gaining wage area and subsequently adds counties to survey areas for the next full-scale wage survey in the wage area.

These regulations will not immediately expand survey areas for

continuing, but enlarged, wage areas. Instead, abolished wage areas will first be merged into the areas of application of continuing wage areas and subsequently added to the survey areas for the next regularly scheduled full wage surveys beginning in FY 2026, FY 2027, and FY 2028. This will provide DOD time to allocate and train appropriate additional staff, if needed. OPM invited comment on any additional alternative approaches that could be considered that are in accordance with the permanent and appropriations laws governing the development of FWS wage schedules. One labor organization suggested that changes to FWS wage areas should be automatic based on changes to GS locality pay areas. Comment 478. Another commenter supported this suggestion. Comment 497. FWS wage area changes have never been automatic and no changes in wage area boundaries have ever been made without first receiving an FPRAC recommendation. This rule will not change this practice. FWS wage area boundaries could be revised through rulemaking concurrent with changes in GS locality pay area boundaries after receiving and approving an FPRAC recommendation and with the opportunity for public input.

Procedural Issues and Regulatory Review

Regulatory Review

OPM has examined the impact of this rule as required by Executive Order 12866 (Sept. 30, 1993), as supplemented by Executive Order 13563 (Jan. 18, 2011) and amended by Executive Order 14094 (Apr. 6, 2023), which directs agencies to assess all costs and benefits of available regulatory alternatives and, if regulation is necessary, to select regulatory approaches that maximize net benefits (including potential economic, environmental, public, health, and safety effects, distributive impacts, and equity). A regulatory impact analysis must be prepared for certain rules with effects of \$200 million or more in any one year. This rule does not reach that threshold but has otherwise been designated as a "significant regulatory action" under section 3(f) of Executive Order 12866, as amended by Executive Order 14094.

Regulatory Flexibility Act

The Acting Director of OPM certifies that this rule will not have a significant economic impact on a substantial number of small entities because the rule will apply only to Federal agencies and employees.

Federalism

This rule will not have substantial direct effects on the States, on the relationship between the National Government and the States, or on distribution of power and responsibilities among the various levels of government. Therefore, in accordance with Executive Order 13132 (Aug. 10, 1999), it is determined that this final rule does not have sufficient federalism implications to warrant preparation of a Federalism Assessment.

Civil Justice Reform

This rule meets the applicable standards set forth in section 3(a) and (b)(2) of Executive Order 12988 (Feb. 7, 1996).

Unfunded Mandates Act of 1995

Section 202 of the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act of 1995 (UMRA) requires that agencies assess anticipated costs and benefits before issuing any rule that would impose spending costs on State, local, or Tribal governments in the aggregate, or on the private sector, in any 1 year of \$100 million in 1995 dollars, updated annually for inflation. That threshold is currently approximately \$183 million. This rule will not result in the expenditure by State, local, or Tribal governments, in the aggregate, or by the private sector, in excess of the threshold. Thus, no written assessment of unfunded mandates is required.

Congressional Review Act

Subtitle E of the Small Business Regulatory Enforcement Fairness Act of 1996 (also known as the Congressional Review Act) (5 U.S.C. 801 *et seq.*) requires rules (as defined in 5 U.S.C. 804) to be submitted to Congress before taking effect. OPM will submit to Congress and the Comptroller General of the United States a report regarding the issuance of this action before its effective date, as required by 5 U.S.C. 801. OMB's Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs has determined that this rule meets the criteria in 5 U.S.C. 804(2).

Paperwork Reduction Act

Notwithstanding any other provision of law, no person is required to respond to, nor shall any person be subject to a penalty for failure to comply with a collection of information subject to the requirements of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. 3501 *et seq.*) (PRA), unless that collection of information displays a currently valid OMB Control Number.

OPM plans to use an existing collection, Establishment Information

Form, Wage Data Collection Form, and Wage Data Collection Continuation Form approved under OMB control number 3206-0036 in association with this final rule. OPM does not believe this rule will result in a significant change to the burden, reporting, recordkeeping, and other compliance requirements as discussed in the preamble of the rule. Additional information regarding this collection—including all current background materials—can be found at Information Collection Review (reginfo.gov) by using the search function to enter either the title of the collection or the OMB Control Number.

List of Subjects in 5 CFR Part 532

Administrative practice and procedure, Freedom of information, Government employees, Reporting and recordkeeping requirements, Wages.

Office of Personnel Management.

Kayyonne Marston,

Federal Register Liaison.

For the reasons stated in the preamble, OPM amends 5 CFR part 532 as follows:

PART 532—PREVAILING RATE SYSTEMS

■ 1. The authority citation for part 532 is revised to read as follows:

Authority: 5 U.S.C. 5343, 5346. Sec. 532.707 also issued under 5 U.S.C. 552.

■ 2. Revise § 532.211 to read as follows

§ 532.211 Criteria for appropriated fund wage areas.

(a) Each wage area shall consist of one or more survey areas along with nonsurvey areas, if any.

(1) *Survey area.* A survey area is composed of the counties, parishes, cities, townships, or similar geographic entities in which survey data are collected. Survey areas are established and maintained where there are a minimum of 100 or more wage employees subject to a regular wage schedule and those employees are located close to concentrations of private sector employment such as found in a Combined Statistical Area or Metropolitan Statistical Area.

(2) *Nonsurvey area.* Nonsurvey counties, parishes, cities, townships, or similar geographic entities may be combined with the survey area(s) to form the wage area through consideration of criteria including local commuting patterns such as employment interchange measures, distance, transportation facilities, geographic features; similarities in overall population, employment, and

the kinds and sizes of private industrial establishments; and other factors relevant to the process of determining and establishing rates of pay for wage employees at prevailing wage levels.

(b) Wage areas shall include wherever possible a recognized economic community such as a Combined Statistical Area, a Metropolitan Statistical Area, or a political unit such as a county. Two or more economic communities or political units, or both, may be combined to constitute a single wage area; however, except in unusual circumstances and as an exception to the criteria, an individually defined Combined Statistical Area, Metropolitan Statistical Area, county or similar geographic entity shall not be subdivided for the purpose of defining a wage area.

(c) Except as provided in paragraph (a) of this section, wage areas shall be established and maintained when:

(1) There is a minimum of 100 wage employees subject to the regular schedule and the lead agency indicates that a local installation has the capacity to do the survey; and

(2) There is, within a reasonable commuting distance of the concentration of Federal employment:

(i) A minimum of either 20 establishments within survey specifications having at least 50 employees each; or 10 establishments having at least 50 employees each, with a combined total of 1,500 employees; and

(ii) The total private enterprise employment in the industries surveyed in the survey area is at least twice the Federal wage employment in the survey area.

(d)(1) Adjacent economic communities or political units meeting the separate wage area criteria in paragraphs (b) and (c) of this section may be combined through consideration of local commuting patterns such as employment interchange measures, distance, transportation facilities, geographic features; similarities in overall population, employment, and the kinds and sizes of private industrial establishments; and other factors relevant to the process of determining and establishing rates of pay for wage employees at prevailing wage levels.

(2) When two wage areas are combined, the survey area of either or both may be used, depending on the concentrations of Federal and private employment and locations of establishments, the proximity of the survey areas to each other, and the extent of economic similarities or differences as indicated by relative

levels of wage rates in each of the potential survey areas.

(e) Appropriated fund wage and survey area definitions are set out as appendix C to this subpart and are incorporated in and made part of this section.

(f) A single contiguous military installation defined as a Joint Base that will otherwise overlap two separate wage areas shall be included in only a single wage area. The wage area of such a Joint Base shall be defined to be the wage area with the most favorable

payline based on an analysis of the simple average of the 15 nonsupervisory second step rates on each one of the regular wage schedules applicable in the otherwise overlapped wage areas.

■ 3. Revise and republish appendix A to subpart B to read as follows:

**Appendix A to Subpart B of Part 532—
Nationwide Schedule of Appropriated
Fund Regular Wage Surveys**

This appendix shows the annual schedule of wage surveys. It lists all

States alphabetically, each State being followed by an alphabetical listing of all wage areas in the State. Information given for each wage area includes—

- (1) The lead agency responsible for conducting the survey;
- (2) The month in which the survey will begin; and
- (3) Whether full-scale surveys will be done in odd or even numbered fiscal years.

| State | Wage area | Lead agency | Beginning month of survey | Fiscal year of full-scale survey odd or even |
|----------------------|--------------------------------------|-------------|---------------------------|--|
| Alabama | Birmingham-Cullman-Talladega | DoD | January | Even. |
| | Dothan | DoD | July | Odd. |
| | Huntsville | DoD | April | Even. |
| Alaska | Montgomery-Selma | DoD | August | Odd. |
| | Alaska | DoD | July | Even. |
| Arizona | Northeastern Arizona | DoD | March | Odd. |
| | Phoenix | DoD | March | Odd. |
| | Tucson | DoD | March | Odd. |
| Arkansas | Little Rock | DoD | July | Even. |
| California | Fresno | DoD | February | Odd. |
| | Los Angeles | DoD | November | Odd. |
| | Sacramento-Roseville | DoD | February | Odd. |
| | San Diego | DoD | September | Odd. |
| | San Jose-San Francisco-Oakland | DoD | October | Even. |
| Colorado | Denver | DoD | January | Odd. |
| District of Columbia | Southern Colorado | DoD | January | Even. |
| | Washington-Baltimore-Arlington | DoD | July | Odd. |
| Florida | Cocoa Beach | DoD | October | Even. |
| | Jacksonville | DoD | January | Odd. |
| | Miami-Port St. Lucie-Fort Lauderdale | DoD | May | Odd. |
| | Panama City | DoD | September | Even. |
| | Pensacola | DoD | September | Odd. |
| Georgia | Tampa-St. Petersburg | DoD | April | Even. |
| | Albany | DoD | August | Odd. |
| | Atlanta | DoD | May | Odd. |
| | Augusta | DoD | June | Odd. |
| | Macon | DoD | June | Odd. |
| Hawaii | Savannah | DoD | May | Odd. |
| | Hawaii | DoD | June | Even. |
| Idaho | Boise | DoD | July | Odd. |
| Illinois | Bloomington-Pontiac | DoD | September | Odd. |
| | Chicago-Naperville, IL | DoD | September | Even. |
| Indiana | Evansville-Henderson | DoD | October | Odd. |
| | Fort Wayne-Marion | DoD | October | Odd. |
| | Indianapolis-Carmel-Muncie | DoD | October | Odd. |
| Iowa | Cedar Rapids-Iowa City | DoD | July | Even. |
| | Davenport-Moline | DoD | October | Even. |
| Kansas | Des Moines | DoD | September | Odd. |
| | Manhattan | DoD | November | Even. |
| Kentucky | Wichita | DoD | November | Even. |
| | Lexington | DoD | February | Even. |
| Louisiana | Louisville | DoD | February | Odd. |
| | Lake Charles-Alexandria | DoD | April | Even. |
| | New Orleans | DoD | June | Even. |
| Maine | Shreveport | DoD | May | Even. |
| | Augusta | DoD | May | Even. |
| Massachusetts | Central and Northern Maine | DoD | June | Even. |
| | Boston-Worcester-Providence | DoD | August | Even. |
| Michigan | Detroit-Warren-Ann Arbor | DoD | January | Odd. |
| | Northwestern Michigan | DoD | August | Odd. |
| | Southwestern Michigan | DoD | October | Even. |
| Minnesota | Duluth | DoD | June | Odd. |
| | Minneapolis-St. Paul | DoD | April | Odd. |
| Mississippi | Biloxi | DoD | November | Even. |
| | Jackson | DoD | February | Odd. |
| | Meridian | DoD | February | Odd. |
| | Northern Mississippi | DoD | February | Even. |
| Missouri | Kansas City | DoD | October | Odd. |
| | St. Louis | DoD | October | Odd. |
| | Southern Missouri | DoD | October | Odd. |
| Montana | Montana | DoD | July | Even. |
| Nebraska | Omaha | DoD | October | Odd. |
| Nevada | Las Vegas | DoD | September | Even. |
| | Reno | DoD | March | Even. |
| New Hampshire | Portsmouth | DoD | September | Even. |
| New Mexico | Albuquerque-Santa Fe-Los Alamos | DoD | April | Odd. |
| New York | Albany-Schenectady | DoD | March | Odd. |
| | Buffalo | DoD | September | Odd. |
| | New York-Newark | DoD | January | Even. |
| | Northern New York | DoD | March | Odd. |
| | Rochester | DoD | April | Even. |

| State | Wage area | Lead agency | Beginning month of survey | Fiscal year of full-scale survey odd or even | |
|---------------------------|--|-------------|---------------------------|--|------|
| North Carolina | Syracuse-Utica-Rome | DoD | March | Even. | |
| | Asheville | DoD | June | Even. | |
| | Central North Carolina | DoD | May | Even. | |
| | Charlotte-Concord | DoD | August | Odd. | |
| | Southeastern North Carolina | DoD | January | Odd. | |
| North Dakota | North Dakota | DoD | March | Even. | |
| Ohio | Cincinnati | DoD | January | Odd. | |
| | Cleveland-Akron-Canton | DoD | April | Odd. | |
| | Columbus-Marion-Zanesville | DoD | January | Odd. | |
| | Dayton | DoD | January | Even. | |
| Oklahoma | Oklahoma City | DoD | August | Odd. | |
| | Tulsa | DoD | August | Odd. | |
| Oregon | Portland-Vancouver-Salem | DoD | July | Even. | |
| | Southwestern Oregon | DoD | June | Even. | |
| Pennsylvania | Harrisburg-York-Lebanon | DoD | May | Even. | |
| | Philadelphia-Reading-Camden | DoD | October | Even. | |
| | Pittsburgh | DoD | July | Odd. | |
| | Scranton-Wilkes-Barre | DoD | August | Odd. | |
| Puerto Rico | Puerto Rico | DoD | July | Odd. | |
| South Carolina | Charleston | DoD | July | Even. | |
| | Columbia | DoD | May | Even. | |
| South Dakota | Eastern South Dakota | DoD | October | Even. | |
| Tennessee | Eastern Tennessee | DoD | February | Odd. | |
| | Memphis | DoD | February | Even. | |
| | Nashville | DoD | February | Even. | |
| | Austin | DoD | June | Even. | |
| Texas | Corpus Christi-Kingsville-Alice | DoD | June | Even. | |
| | Dallas-Fort Worth | DoD | October | Odd. | |
| | El Paso | DoD | April | Even. | |
| | Houston-Galveston-Texas City | DoD | March | Even. | |
| | San Antonio | DoD | June | Odd. | |
| | Texarkana | DoD | April | Odd. | |
| | Waco | DoD | May | Odd. | |
| | Western Texas | DoD | May | Odd. | |
| | Wichita Falls, Texas-Southwestern Oklahoma | DoD | July | Even. | |
| | Utah | Utah | DoD | July | Odd. |
| | Virginia | Richmond | DoD | November | Odd. |
| Roanoke | | DoD | November | Even. | |
| Virginia Beach-Chesapeake | | DoD | May | Even. | |
| Washington | Seattle-Everett | DoD | September | Even. | |
| | Southeastern Washington- Eastern Oregon | DoD | June | Odd. | |
| | Spokane | DoD | July | Odd. | |
| West Virginia | West Virginia | DoD | March | Odd. | |
| Wisconsin | Madison | DoD | July | Even. | |
| | Milwaukee-Racine-Waukesha | DoD | June | Odd. | |
| | Southwestern Wisconsin | DoD | June | Even. | |
| Wyoming | Wyoming | DoD | January | Even. | |

■ 4. Revise and republish appendix C to subpart B to read as follows:

Appendix C to Subpart B of Part 532—Appropriated Fund Wage and Survey Areas

This appendix lists the wage area definitions for appropriated fund employees. With a few exceptions, each area is defined in terms of county units, independent cities, or a similar geographic entity. Each wage area definition consists of:

(1) Wage area title. Wage areas usually carry the title of the principal city in the area. Sometimes, however, the area title reflects a broader geographic area, such as Combined Statistical Area or Metropolitan Statistical Area.

(2) Survey area definition. Lists each county, independent city, or a similar geographic entity in the survey area.

(3) Area of application definition. Lists each county, independent city, or a similar geographic entity which, in addition to the survey area, is in the area of application.

Definitions of Wage Areas and Wage Area Survey Areas

ALABAMA

Birmingham-Cullman-Talladega

Survey Area

- Alabama:
- Calhoun (effective for wage surveys beginning in January 2028)
- Etowah (effective for wage surveys beginning in January 2028)
- Jefferson
- St. Clair
- Shelby
- Talladega (effective for wage surveys beginning in January 2028)

- Tuscaloosa
- Walker

Area of Application. Survey area plus:

- Alabama:
- Bibb
- Blount
- Calhoun (effective until January 2028)
- Chilton
- Clay
- Coosa
- Cullman
- Etowah (effective until January 2028)
- Fayette
- Greene
- Hale
- Lamar
- Marengo
- Perry
- Pickens
- Talladega (effective January 2028)

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Winston | ARIZONA | Bradley |
| Dothan | <i>Northeastern Arizona</i> | Calhoun |
| <i>Survey Area</i> | <i>Survey Area</i> | Chicot |
| Alabama: | Arizona: | Clark |
| Dale | Apache | Clay |
| Houston | Coconino | Cleburne |
| Georgia: | Navajo | Cleveland |
| Early | New Mexico: | Conway |
| <i>Area of Application. Survey area plus:</i> | San Juan | Dallas |
| Alabama: | <i>Area of Application. Survey area plus:</i> | Desha |
| Barbour | Colorado: | Drew |
| Coffee | Dolores | Faulkner |
| Geneva | Gunnison (Only includes the Curecanti | Franklin (Does not include the Fort Chaffee |
| Henry | National Recreation Area portion) | portion) |
| Georgia: | La Plata | Fulton |
| Clay | Montezuma | Garland |
| Miller | Montrose | Grant |
| Seminole | Ouray | Greene |
| Huntsville | San Juan | Hot Spring |
| <i>Survey Area</i> | San Miguel | Independence |
| Alabama: | Utah: | Izard |
| Limestone | Garfield (Only includes the Bryce Canyon, | Jackson |
| Madison | Capitol Reef, and Canyonlands National | Johnson |
| Marshall | Parks portions) | Lawrence |
| Morgan | Grand (Only includes the Arches and | Lincoln |
| <i>Area of Application. Survey area plus:</i> | Canyonlands National Parks portions) | Logan |
| Alabama | Iron (Only includes the Cedar Breaks | Lonoke |
| Colbert | National Monument and Zion National | Marion |
| DeKalb | Park portions) | Monroe |
| Franklin | Kane | Montgomery |
| Lauderdale | San Juan | Newton |
| Lawrence | Washington | Ouachita |
| Marion | Wayne (Only includes the Capitol Reef and | Perry |
| Tennessee | Canyonlands National Parks portions) | Phillips |
| Giles | Phoenix | Pike |
| Lincoln | <i>Survey Area</i> | Polk |
| Wayne | Arizona: | Pope |
| Montgomery-Selma | Gila | Prairie |
| <i>Survey Area</i> | Maricopa | Randolph |
| Alabama | <i>Area of Application. Survey area plus:</i> | Scott |
| Autauga | Arizona: | Searcy |
| Elmore | Pinal | Sharp |
| Montgomery | Yavapai | Stone |
| <i>Area of Application. Survey area plus:</i> | Tucson | Union |
| Alabama | <i>Survey Area</i> | Van Buren |
| Bullock | Arizona: | White |
| Butler | Pima | Woodruff |
| Crenshaw | <i>Area of Application. Survey area plus:</i> | Yell |
| Dallas | Arizona: | CALIFORNIA |
| Lowndes | Cochise | Fresno |
| Pike | Graham | <i>Survey Area</i> |
| Wilcox | Greenlee | California: |
| ALASKA | Santa Cruz | Fresno |
| Anchorage | ARKANSAS | Kings |
| <i>Survey Area</i> | Little Rock | Tulare |
| Alaska: (boroughs and the areas within a 24- | <i>Survey Area</i> | <i>Area of Application. Survey area plus:</i> |
| kilometer (15-mile) radius of their corporate | Arizona: | California: |
| city limits) | Jefferson | Madera |
| Anchorage | Pulaski | Mariposa |
| Fairbanks | Saline | Tuolumne (Only includes the Yosemite |
| Juneau | <i>Area of Application. Survey area plus:</i> | National Park portion) |
| <i>Area of Application. Survey area plus:</i> | Arkansas: | Los Angeles |
| Alaska: | Arkansas | <i>Survey Area</i> |
| State of Alaska (except special area | Ashley | California: |
| schedules) | Baxter | Kern (effective for wage surveys beginning |
| | Boone | in November 2026) |
| | | Los Angeles |
| | | Orange (effective for wage surveys |
| | | beginning in November 2026) |
| | | Riverside (effective for wage surveys |
| | | beginning in November 2026) |
| | | San Bernardino (effective for wage surveys |
| | | beginning in November 2026) |

Santa Barbara (effective for wage surveys beginning in November 2026)
Ventura (effective for wage surveys beginning in November 2026)

Area of Application. Survey area plus:

California:

Inyo (Only includes the China Lake Naval Weapons Center portion)
Kern (effective until November 2026)
Orange (effective until November 2026)
Riverside (effective until November 2026)
San Bernardino (effective until November 2026)
Santa Barbara (effective until November 2026)
San Luis Obispo
Ventura (effective until November 2026)

Sacramento-Roseville

Survey Area

California:

Placer
Sacramento
Sutter
Yolo
Yuba

Area of Application. Survey area plus:

California:

Amador
Butte
Colusa
El Dorado
Glenn
Humboldt
Lake
Modoc
Nevada
Plumas
Shasta
Sierra
Siskiyou
Tehama
Trinity

San Diego

Survey Area

California:

San Diego

Arizona:

Yuma (effective for wage surveys beginning in September 2027)

Area of Application. Survey area plus:

Arizona:

La Paz
Yuma (effective until September 2027)

California:

Imperial

San Jose-San Francisco-Oakland

Survey Area

California:

Alameda
Contra Costa
Marin
Monterey (effective for wage surveys beginning in October 2027)
Napa
San Joaquin (effective for wage surveys beginning in October 2027)
San Francisco
San Mateo
Santa Clara

Solano

Area of Application. Survey area plus:

California:

Calaveras
Mendocino
Merced
Monterey (effective until October 2027)
San Benito
San Joaquin (effective until October 2027)
Santa Cruz
Sonoma
Stanislaus
Tuolumne (Does not include the Yosemite National Park portion)

COLORADO

Denver

Survey Area

Colorado:

Adams
Arapahoe
Boulder
Broomfield
Denver
Douglas
Gilpin
Jefferson

Area of Application. Survey area plus:

Colorado:

Clear Creek
Eagle
Elbert
Garfield
Grand
Jackson
Lake
Larimer
Lincoln
Logan
Morgan
Park
Phillips
Pitkin
Rio Blanco
Routt
Sedgwick
Summit
Washington
Weld
Yuma

Southern Colorado

Survey Area

Colorado:

El Paso
Pueblo
Teller

Area of Application. Survey area plus:

Colorado:

Alamosa
Archuleta
Baca
Bent
Chaffee
Cheyenne
Conejos
Costilla
Crowley
Custer
Delta
Fremont
Gunnison (does not include the Curecanti National Recreation Area portion)

Hinsdale
Huerfano
Kiowa
Kit Carson
Las Animas
Mineral
Otero
Prowers
Rio Grande
Saguache

CONNECTICUT

New Haven-Hartford

Survey Area

Connecticut:

Hartford
New Haven
New London (effective for wage surveys beginning in April 2027)

Massachusetts:

Hampden (effective for wage surveys beginning in April 2027)
Hampshire (effective for wage surveys beginning in April 2027)

Area of Application. Survey area plus:

Connecticut:

Litchfield
Middlesex
New London (effective until April 2027)
Tolland
Windham

Massachusetts:

Franklin
Hampden (effective until April 2027)
Hampshire (effective until April 2027)

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Washington-Baltimore-Arlington

Survey Area

District of Columbia:

Washington, DC

Maryland (city):

Baltimore (effective for wage surveys beginning in July 2027)

Maryland (counties):

Anne Arundel (effective for wage surveys beginning in July 2027)
Baltimore (effective for wage surveys beginning in July 2027)
Carroll (effective for wage surveys beginning in July 2027)

Charles

Frederick

Harford (effective for wage surveys beginning in July 2027)

Howard (effective for wage surveys beginning in July 2027)

Montgomery

Prince George's

Washington (effective for wage surveys beginning in July 2027)

Pennsylvania:

Franklin (effective for wage surveys beginning in July 2027)

Virginia (cities):

Alexandria
Fairfax
Falls Church
Manassas
Manassas Park

Virginia (counties):

Arlington
Fairfax

King George (effective for wage surveys beginning in July 2027)
Loudoun
Prince William
West Virginia:
Berkley (effective for wage surveys beginning in July 2027)

Area of Application. Survey area plus:

Maryland (city):
Baltimore (effective until July 2027)
Maryland (counties)
Allegany
Anne Arundel (effective until July 2027)
Baltimore (effective until July 2027)
Calvert
Caroline
Carroll (effective until July 2027)
Dorchester
Garrett
Harford (effective until July 2027)
Howard (effective until July 2027)
Kent
Queen Anne's
St. Mary's
Talbot
Washington (effective until July 2027)
Pennsylvania:
Franklin (effective until July 2027)
Fulton
Virginia (cities):
Fredericksburg
Harrisonburg
Staunton
Waynesboro
Winchester
Virginia (counties):
Albemarle (Only includes the Shenandoah National Park portion)
Augusta
Caroline
Clarke
Culpeper
Fauquier
Frederick
Greene (Only includes the Shenandoah National Park portion)
King George (effective until July 2027)
Madison
Orange
Page
Rappahannock
Rockingham
Shenandoah
Spotsylvania
Stafford
Warren
Westmoreland
West Virginia:
Berkeley (effective until July 2027)
Hampshire
Hardy
Jefferson
Mineral
Morgan

FLORIDA

Cocoa-Beach

Survey Area

Florida:
Brevard

Area of Application. Survey area.

Jacksonville

Survey Area

Florida:
Alachua
Baker
Clay
Columbia (effective for wage surveys beginning in January 2027)
Duval
Nassau
Orange (effective for wage surveys beginning in January 2027)
St. Johns
Sumter (effective for wage surveys beginning in January 2027)
Georgia:
Camden

Area of Application. Survey area plus:

Florida:
Bradford
Citrus
Columbia (effective until January 2027)
Dixie
Flagler
Gilchrist
Hamilton
Lafayette
Lake
Levy
Madison
Marion
Orange (effective until January 2027)
Osceola
Polk
Putnam
Seminole
Sumter (effective until January 2027)
Suwannee
Taylor
Union
Volusia
Georgia:
Charlton

Miami-Port St. Lucie-Fort Lauderdale

Survey Area

Florida:
Miami-Dade
Palm Beach (effective for wage surveys beginning in May 2027)

Area of Application. Survey area plus:

Florida:
Broward
Collier
Glades
Hendry
Highlands
Indian River
Lee
Martin
Monroe
Okeechobee
Palm Beach (effective until May 2027)

St. Lucie

Area of Application. Survey area.

Panama City

Survey Area

Florida:
Bay

Gulf

Area of Application. Survey area plus:

Florida:
Calhoun
Franklin
Gadsden
Holmes
Jackson
Jefferson
Leon
Liberty
Wakulla
Washington
Georgia:
Decatur

Pensacola

Survey Area

Florida:
Escambia
Santa Rosa

Area of Application. Survey area plus:

Alabama:
Baldwin
Clarke
Conecuh
Covington
Escambia
Mobile
Monroe
Washington
Florida:
Okaloosa
Walton

Tampa-St. Petersburg

Survey Area

Florida:
Hillsborough
Pasco
Pinellas

Area of Application. Survey area plus:

Florida:
Charlotte
De Soto
Hardee
Hernando
Manatee
Sarasota

GEORGIA

Albany

Survey Area

Georgia:
Colquitt
Dougherty
Lee
Mitchell
Worth

Area of Application. Survey area plus:

Georgia:
Atkinson
Baker
Ben Hill
Berrien
Brooks
Calhoun
Clinch
Coffee
Cook
Echols

| | | |
|--|---|--|
| Grady | Heard | Montgomery |
| Irwin | Jackson | Peach |
| Lanier | Jasper | Pulaski |
| Lowndes | Lamar | Taylor |
| Quitman | Lumpkin | Telfair |
| Randolph | Madison | Treutlen |
| Schley | Marion | Washington |
| Sumter | Meriwether | Wheeler |
| Terrell | Morgan | Wilcox |
| Thomas | Muscogee (effective until May 2027) | |
| Tift | Oconee | Savannah |
| Turner | Oglethorpe | <i>Survey Area</i> |
| Ware | Pickens | Georgia: |
| Webster | Pike | Bryan |
| | Polk | Chatham |
| Atlanta | Putnam | Effingham |
| <i>Survey Area</i> | Rabun | Liberty |
| Alabama: | Spalding | South Carolina: |
| Lee (effective for wage surveys beginning in May 2027) | Stephens | Beaufort (effective for wage surveys beginning in May 2027) |
| Macon (effective for wage surveys beginning in May 2027) | Stewart | |
| Russell (effective for wage surveys beginning in May 2027) | Talbot | <i>Area of Application. Survey area plus:</i> |
| Georgia: | Taliaferro | Georgia: |
| Butts | Towns | Appling |
| Chattahoochee (effective for wage surveys beginning in May 2027) | Troup | Bacon |
| Cherokee | Union | Brantley |
| Clayton | Upton | Bulloch |
| Cobb | White | Candler |
| De Kalb | | Evans |
| Douglas | Augusta | Glynn |
| Fayette | <i>Survey Area</i> | Jeff Davis |
| Forsyth | Georgia: | Long |
| Fulton | Columbia | McIntosh |
| Gwinnett | McDuffie | Pierce |
| Henry | Richmond | Screven |
| Muscogee (effective for wage surveys beginning in May 2027) | South Carolina: | Tattnall |
| Newton | Aiken | Toombs |
| Paulding | <i>Area of Application. Survey area plus:</i> | Wayne |
| Rockdale | Georgia: | South Carolina: |
| Walton | Burke | Beaufort (effective until May 2027) |
| <i>Area of Application. Survey area plus:</i> | Emanuel | Hampton |
| Alabama: | Glascok | Jasper |
| Chambers | Jefferson | HAWAII |
| Cherokee | Jenkins | Hawaii |
| Cleburne | Lincoln | <i>Survey Area</i> |
| Lee (effective until May 2027) | Warren | Hawaii: |
| Macon (effective until May 2027) | Wilkes | Honolulu |
| Randolph | South Carolina: | <i>Area of Application. Survey area plus:</i> |
| Russell (effective until May 2027) | Allendale | Hawaii: |
| Tallapoosa | Bamberg | Hawaii |
| Georgia: | Barnwell | Kauai (includes the islands of Kauai and Niihau) |
| Banks | Edgefield | Maui (includes the islands of Maui, Molokai, Lanai, and Kahoolawe) |
| Barrow | McCormick | IDAHO |
| Bartow | Macon | Boise |
| Carroll | <i>Survey Area</i> | <i>Survey Area</i> |
| Chattahoochee (effective until May 2027) | Georgia: | Idaho: |
| Clarke | Bibb | Ada |
| Coweta | Houston | Boise |
| Dawson | Jones | Canyon |
| Elbert | Laurens | Elmore |
| Fannin | Twiggs | Gem |
| Floyd | Wilkinson | <i>Area of Application. Survey area plus:</i> |
| Franklin | <i>Area of Application. Survey area plus:</i> | Idaho: |
| Gilmer | Georgia: | Adams |
| Gordon | Baldwin | Bannock |
| Greene | Bleckley | Bear Lake |
| Habersham | Crawford | Bingham |
| Hall | Crisp | Blaine |
| Haralson | Dodge | |
| Harris | Dooley | |
| Hart | Hancock | |
| | Johnson | |
| | Macon | |
| | Monroe | |

Bonneville
Butte
Camas
Caribou
Cassia
Clark
Custer
Fremont
Gooding
Jefferson
Jerome
Lemhi
Lincoln
Madison
Minidoka
Oneida
Owyhee
Payette
Power
Teton
Twin Falls
Valley
Washington

ILLINOIS**Bloomington-Pontiac***Survey Area*

Illinois:
Champaign
Menard
Sangamon
Vermilion

Area of Application. Survey area plus:

Illinois:
Christian
Clark
Coles
Crawford
Cumberland
De Witt
Douglas
Edgar
Ford
Jasper
Livingston
Logan
McLean
Macon
Morgan
Moultrie
Piatt
Scott
Shelby

Chicago-Naperville, IL*Survey Area*

Illinois:
Cook
Du Page
Kane
Lake
McHenry
Will

Area of Application. Survey area plus:

Illinois:
Boone
Bureau
De Kalb
Grundy
Iroquois
Kankakee
Kendall
La Salle

Ogle
Putnam
Stephenson
Winnebago
Indiana:
Jasper
Lake
La Porte
Newton
Porter
Pulaski
Starke
Wisconsin:
Kenosha

INDIANA**Evansville-Henderson***Survey Area*

Indiana:
Davies
Greene
Knox
Martin
Orange

Area of Application. Survey area plus:

Illinois:
Edwards
Gallatin
Hardin
Lawrence
Richland
Wabash
White
Indiana:
Crawford
Dubois
Gibson
Perry
Pike
Posey
Spencer
Vanderburgh
Warrick
Kentucky:
Crittenden
Davies
Hancock
Henderson
McLean
Ohio
Union
Webster

Fort Wayne-Marion*Survey Area*

Indiana:
Adams
Allen
DeKalb
Huntington
Wells

Area of Application. Survey area plus:

Indiana:
Cass
Elkhart
Fulton
Jay
Kosciusko
LaGrange
Marshall
Noble
St. Joseph
Steuben

Wabash
Whitley
Ohio:
Defiance
Henry
Paulding
Putnam
Williams

Indianapolis-Carmel-Muncie*Survey Area*

Indiana:
Boone
Grant (effective for wage surveys beginning in October 2026)
Hamilton
Hancock
Hendricks
Johnson
Lawrence (effective for wage surveys beginning in October 2026)
Marion
Miami (effective for wage surveys beginning in October 2026)
Monroe (effective for wage surveys beginning in October 2026)
Morgan
Shelby
Vigo (effective for wage surveys beginning in October 2026)

Area of Application. Survey area plus:

Indiana:
Bartholomew
Benton
Blackford
Brown
Carroll
Clay
Clinton
Decatur
Delaware
Fayette
Fountain
Grant (effective until October 2026)
Henry
Howard
Jackson
Jennings
Lawrence (effective until October 2026)
Madison
Miami (effective until October 2026)
Monroe (effective until October 2026)
Montgomery
Owen
Parke
Putnam
Randolph
Rush
Sullivan
Tippecanoe
Tipton
Vermillion
Vigo (effective until October 2026)
Warren
Wayne
White

IOWA**Cedar Rapids-Iowa City***Survey Area*

Iowa:
Benton
Black Hawk
Johnson

| | | |
|---|---|--------------------|
| Linn | <i>Area of Application. Survey area plus:</i> | Comanche |
| <i>Area of Application. Survey area plus:</i> | Iowa: | Cowley |
| Iowa: | Adair | Decatur |
| Allamakee | Appanoose | Edwards |
| Bremer | Boone | Elk |
| Buchanan | Calhoun | Ellis |
| Butler | Carroll | Ellsworth |
| Cedar | Cerro Gordo | Finney |
| Chickasaw | Clarke | Ford |
| Clayton | Dallas | Gove |
| Davis | Decatur | Graham |
| Delaware | Franklin | Grant |
| Fayette | Greene | Gray |
| Floyd | Guthrie | Greeley |
| Grundy | Hamilton | Greenwood |
| Henry | Hancock | Hamilton |
| Howard | Hardin | Harper |
| Iowa | Humboldt | Harvey |
| Jefferson | Jasper | Haskell |
| Jones | Kossuth | Hodgeman |
| Keokuk | Lucas | Jewell |
| Mitchell | Madison | Kearny |
| Tama | Mahaska | Kingman |
| Van Buren | Marion | Kiowa |
| Wapello | Marshall | Labette |
| Washington | Monroe | Lane |
| Winneshiek | Poweshiek | Lincoln |
| Davenport-Moline | Ringgold | Logan |
| <i>Survey Area</i> | Union | McPherson |
| Illinois: | Wayne | Marion |
| Henry | Webster | Meade |
| Rock Island | Winnebago | Mitchell |
| Iowa: | Worth | Montgomery |
| Scott | Wright | Morton |
| <i>Area of Application. Survey area plus:</i> | KANSAS | Neosho |
| Illinois: | Manhattan | Ness |
| Brown | <i>Survey Area</i> | Norton |
| Carroll | Kansas: | Osborne |
| Cass | Geary | Pawnee |
| Fulton | Riley (effective for wage surveys beginning | Phillips |
| Hancock | in November 2027) | Pratt |
| Henderson | <i>Area of Application. Survey area plus:</i> | Rawlins |
| Jo Daviess | Kansas: | Reno |
| Knox | Brown | Rice |
| Lee | Clay | Rooks |
| McDonough | Cloud | Rush |
| Marshall | Coffey | Russell |
| Mason | Dickinson | Scott |
| Mercer | Lyon | Seward |
| Peoria | Marshall | Sheridan |
| Schuyler | Morris | Sherman |
| Stark | Nemaha | Smith |
| Tazewell | Ottawa | Stafford |
| Warren | Pottawatomie | Stanton |
| Whiteside | Republic | Stevens |
| Woodford | Riley (effective until November 2027) | Sumner |
| Iowa: | Saline | Thomas |
| Clinton | Washington | Trego |
| Des Moines | Wichita | Wallace |
| Dubuque | <i>Survey Area</i> | Wichita |
| Jackson | Kansas: | Wilson |
| Lee | Butler | Woodson |
| Louisa | Sedgwick | KENTUCKY |
| Muscatine | <i>Area of Application. Survey area plus:</i> | Lexington |
| Des Moines | Kansas: | <i>Survey Area</i> |
| <i>Survey Area</i> | Barber | Kentucky: |
| Iowa: | Barton | Bourbon |
| Polk | Chase | Clark |
| Story | Chautauqua | Fayette |
| Warren | Cheyenne | Jessamine |
| | Clark | Madison |
| | | Scott |
| | | Woodford |

Area of Application. Survey area plus:

Kentucky:
Anderson
Bath
Bell
Boyle
Breathitt
Casey
Clay
Estill
Fleming
Franklin
Garrard
Green
Harrison
Jackson
Knott
Knox
Laurel
Lee
Leslie
Lincoln
McCreary
Marion
Menifee
Mercer
Montgomery
Morgan
Nicholas
Owsley
Perry
Powell
Pulaski
Rockcastle
Rowan
Taylor
Washington
Wayne
Whitley
Wolfe

Louisville*Survey Area*

Indiana:
Clark
Floyd
Jefferson
Kentucky:
Bullitt
Hardin
Jefferson
Oldham

Area of Application. Survey area plus:

Indiana:
Harrison
Scott
Washington
Kentucky:
Breckinridge
Grayson
Hart
Henry
Larue
Meade
Nelson
Shelby
Spencer
Trimble

LOUISIANA**Lake Charles-Alexandria***Survey Area*

Louisiana:
Allen

Beauregard
Calcasieu
Grant
Rapides
Sabine
Vernon

Area of Application. Survey area plus:

Louisiana:
Acadia
Avoyelles
Caldwell
Cameron
Catahoula
Concordia
Evangeline
Franklin
Iberia
Jefferson Davis
Lafayette
La Salle
Madison
Natchitoches
St. Landry
St. Martin
Tensas
Vermilion
Winn

New Orleans*Survey Area*

Louisiana:
Jefferson
Orleans
Plaquemines
St. Bernard
St. Charles
St. John the Baptist
St. Tammany

Area of Application. Survey area plus:

Louisiana:
Ascension
Assumption
East Baton Rouge
East Feliciana
Iberville
Lafourche
Livingston
Pointe Coupee
St. Helena
St. James
St. Mary
Tangipahoa
Terrebonne
Washington
West Baton Rouge
West Feliciana

Shreveport*Survey Area*

Louisiana:
Bossier
Caddo
Webster

Area of Application. Survey area plus:

Louisiana:
Bienville
Claiborne
De Soto
East Carroll
Jackson
Lincoln
Morehouse
Ouachita

Red River
Richland
Union
West Carroll
Texas:
Gregg
Harrison
Panola
Rusk
Upshur

MAINE**Augusta***Survey Area*

Maine:
Kennebec
Knox
Lincoln

*Area of Application. Survey area:***Central And Northern Maine***Survey Area*

Maine:
Aroostook
Penobscot

Area of Application. Survey area plus:

Maine:
Hancock
Piscataquis
Somerset
Waldo
Washington

MASSACHUSETTS**Boston-Worcester-Providence***Survey Area*

Maine:
Androscoggin (effective for wage surveys beginning in August 2026)
Cumberland (effective for wage surveys beginning in August 2026)
Sagadahoc (effective for wage surveys beginning in August 2026)
York (effective for wage surveys beginning in August 2026)

Massachusetts:

Barnstable
Bristol (effective for wage surveys beginning in August 2026)
Essex
Middlesex
Norfolk
Plymouth
Suffolk
Worcester (effective for wage surveys beginning in August 2026)

New Hampshire:

Rockingham (effective for wage surveys beginning in August 2026)
Strafford (effective for wage surveys beginning in August 2026)

Rhode Island:

Bristol (effective for wage surveys beginning in August 2026)
Kent (effective for wage surveys beginning in August 2026)
Newport (effective for wage surveys beginning in August 2026)
Providence (effective for wage surveys beginning in August 2026)
Washington (effective for wage surveys beginning in August 2026)

Area of Application. Survey area plus:

Maine:

Androscoggin (effective until August 2026)
Cumberland (effective until August 2026)
Franklin
Oxford
Sagadahoc (effective until August 2026)
York (effective until August 2026)

Massachusetts:

Bristol (effective until August 2026)
Dukes
Nantucket
Worcester (effective until August 2026)

New Hampshire:

Belknap
Carroll
Cheshire
Coos
Grafton
Hillsborough
Merrimack
Rockingham (effective until August 2026)
Strafford (effective until August 2026)
Sullivan

Rhode Island:

Bristol (effective until August 2026)
Kent (effective until August 2026)
Newport (effective until August 2026)
Providence (effective until August 2026)
Washington (effective until August 2026)

Vermont:

Orange
Windham
Windsor

MICHIGAN**Detroit-Warren-Ann Arbor***Survey Area*

Michigan:

Lapeer
Livingston
Macomb
Oakland
St. Clair
Washtenaw (effective for wage surveys beginning in January 2027)
Wayne

Ohio:

Lucas (effective for wage surveys beginning in January 2027)

Area of Application. Survey area plus:

Michigan:

Arenac
Bay
Clare
Clinton
Eaton
Genesee
Gladwin
Gratiot
Huron
Ingham
Isabella
Jackson
Lenawee
Midland
Monroe
Saginaw
Sanilac
Shiawassee
Tuscola
Washtenaw (effective until January 2027)

Ohio:

Fulton

Lucas (effective until January 2027)

Wood

Northwestern Michigan*Survey Area*

Michigan:

Delta
Dickinson
Marquette

Area of Application. Survey area plus:

Michigan:

Alcona
Alger
Alpena
Antrim
Baraga
Benzie
Charlevoix
Cheboygan
Chippewa
Crawford
Emmet
Gogebic
Grand Traverse
Houghton
Iosco
Iron
Kalkaska
Keweenaw
Leelanau
Luce
Mackinac
Manistee
Menominee
Missaukee
Montmorency
Ogemaw
Ontonagon
Oscoda
Otsego
Presque Isle
Roscommon
Schoolcraft
Wexford

Wisconsin:

Florence
Marinette

Southwestern Michigan*Survey Area*

Michigan:

Barry
Calhoun
Kalamazoo
Van Buren

Area of Application. Survey area plus:

Michigan:

Allegan
Berrien
Branch
Cass
Hillsdale
Ionia
Kent
Lake
Mason
Mecosta
Montcalm
Muskegon
Newaygo
Oceana
Osceola
Ottawa
St. Joseph

MINNESOTA**Duluth***Survey Area*

Minnesota:

Carlton
St. Louis

Wisconsin:

Douglas

Area of Application. Survey area plus:

Minnesota:

Aitkin
Becker (only includes the White Earth Indian Reservation portion)

Beltrami
Cass
Clearwater
Cook
Crow Wing
Hubbard
Itasca
Koochiching
Lake
Lake of the Woods
Mahnommen

Wisconsin:

Ashland
Bayfield
Burnett
Iron
Sawyer
Washburn

Minneapolis-St. Paul*Survey Area*

Minnesota:

Anoka
Carver
Chisago
Dakota
Hennepin
Morrison (effective for wage surveys beginning in April 2027)
Ramsey
Scott
Stearns (effective for wage surveys beginning in April 2027)
Washington
Wright

Wisconsin:

St. Croix

Area of Application. Survey area plus:

Minnesota:

Benton
Big Stone
Blue Earth
Brown
Chippewa
Cottonwood
Dodge
Douglas
Faribault
Fillmore
Freeborn
Goodhue
Grant
Isanti
Kanabec
Kandiyohi
Lac Qui Parle
Le Sueur
McLeod
Martin
Meeker

Mille Lacs
 Morrison (effective until April 2027)
 Mower
 Nicollet
 Olmsted
 Pine
 Pope
 Redwood
 Renville
 Rice
 Sherburne
 Sibley
 Stearns (effective until April 2027)
 Steele
 Stevens
 Swift
 Todd
 Traverse
 Wabasha
 Wadena
 Waseca
 Watonwan
 Winona
 Yellow Medicine
 Wisconsin:
 Pierce
 Polk

MISSISSIPPI**Biloxi***Survey Area*

Mississippi:
 Hancock
 Harrison
 Jackson

Area of Application. Survey area plus:

Mississippi:
 George
 Pearl River
 Stone

Jackson*Survey Area*

Mississippi:
 Hinds
 Rankin
 Warren

Area of Application. Survey area plus:

Mississippi:
 Adams
 Amite
 Attala
 Claiborne
 Copiah
 Franklin
 Holmes
 Humphreys
 Issaquena
 Jefferson
 Jefferson Davis
 Lawrence
 Lincoln
 Madison
 Marion
 Pike
 Scott
 Sharkey
 Simpson
 Smith
 Walthall
 Wilkinson
 Yazoo

Meridian*Survey Area*

Alabama:
 Choctaw
 Mississippi:
 Forrest
 Lamar
 Lauderdale

Area of Application. Survey area plus:

Alabama:
 Sumter
 Mississippi:
 Clarke
 Covington
 Greene
 Jasper
 Jones
 Kemper
 Leake
 Neshoba
 Newton
 Perry
 Wayne

Northern Mississippi*Survey area*

Mississippi:
 Clay
 Grenada
 Lee
 Leflore
 Lowndes
 Monroe
 Oktibbeha

Area of Application. Survey area plus:

Mississippi:
 Alcorn
 Bolivar
 Calhoun
 Carroll
 Chickasaw
 Choctaw
 Coahoma
 Itawamba
 Lafayette (Does not include the Holly Springs National Forest portion)
 Montgomery
 Noxubee
 Pontotoc (Does not include the Holly Springs National Forest portion)
 Prentiss
 Quitman
 Sunflower
 Tallahatchie
 Tishomingo
 Union (Does not include the Holly Springs National Forest portion)
 Washington
 Webster
 Winston
 Yalobusha

MISSOURI**Kansas City***Survey Area*

Kansas:
 Jefferson (effective for wage surveys beginning in October 2026)
 Johnson
 Leavenworth
 Osage (effective for wage surveys beginning in October 2026)

Shawnee (effective for wage surveys beginning in October 2026)

Wyandotte

Missouri:

Cass
 Clay
 Jackson
 Johnson (effective for wage surveys beginning in October 2026)
 Platte
 Ray

Area of Application. Survey area plus:

Kansas:

Allen
 Anderson
 Atchison
 Bourbon
 Doniphan
 Douglas
 Franklin
 Jackson
 Jefferson (effective until October 2026)
 Linn
 Miami
 Osage (effective until October 2026)
 Shawnee (effective until October 2026)
 Wabaunsee

Missouri:

Adair
 Andrew
 Atchison
 Bates
 Buchanan
 Caldwell
 Carroll
 Chariton
 Clinton
 Daviess
 DeKalb
 Gentry
 Grundy
 Harrison
 Henry
 Holt
 Johnson (effective until October 2026)
 Lafayette
 Linn
 Livingston
 Macon
 Mercer
 Nodaway
 Pettis
 Putnam
 Saline
 Schuyler
 Sullivan
 Worth

St. Louis*Survey Area*

Illinois:

Clinton
 Madison
 Monroe
 St. Clair
 Williamson (effective for wage surveys beginning in October 2026)

Missouri (city):

St. Louis

Missouri (counties):

Boone (effective for wage surveys beginning in October 2026)
 Franklin
 Jefferson
 St. Charles

St. Louis
Area of Application. Survey area plus:
 Illinois:
 Adams
 Alexander
 Bond
 Calhoun
 Clay
 Effingham
 Fayette
 Franklin
 Greene
 Hamilton
 Jackson
 Jefferson
 Jersey
 Johnson
 Macoupin
 Marion
 Montgomery
 Perry
 Pike
 Pope
 Pulaski
 Randolph
 Saline
 Union
 Washington
 Wayne
 Williamson (effective until October 2026)

Missouri:
 Audrain
 Bollinger
 Boone (effective until October 2026)
 Callaway
 Cape Girardeau
 Clark
 Cole
 Cooper
 Crawford
 Gasconade
 Howard
 Iron
 Knox
 Lewis
 Lincoln
 Madison
 Marion
 Mississippi
 Moniteau
 Monroe
 Montgomery
 Osage
 Perry
 Pike
 Ralls
 Randolph
 St. Francois
 Ste. Genevieve
 Scotland
 Scott
 Shelby
 Warren
 Washington

Southern Missouri

Survey Area

Missouri:
 Christian
 Greene
 Laclede
 Phelps
 Pulaski
 Webster

Area of Application. Survey area plus:
 Kansas:
 Cherokee
 Crawford
 Missouri:
 Barry
 Barton
 Benton
 Butler
 Camden
 Carter
 Cedar
 Dade
 Dallas
 Dent
 Douglas
 Hickory
 Howell
 Jasper
 Lawrence
 Maries
 Miller
 Morgan
 New Madrid
 Newton
 Oregon
 Ozark
 Polk
 Reynolds
 Ripley
 St. Clair
 Shannon
 Stoddard
 Stone
 Taney
 Texas
 Vernon
 Wayne
 Wright

MONTANA

Montana

Survey Area

Montana:
 Cascade
 Lewis and Clark
 Yellowstone

Area of Application. Survey area plus:

Montana:
 Beaverhead
 Big Horn
 Blaine
 Broadwater
 Carbon
 Carter
 Chouteau
 Custer
 Daniels
 Dawson
 Deer Lodge
 Fallon
 Fergus
 Flathead
 Gallatin
 Garfield
 Glacier
 Golden Valley
 Granite
 Hill
 Jefferson
 Judith Basin
 Lake
 Liberty
 Lincoln

McCone
 Madison
 Meagher
 Mineral
 Missoula
 Musselshell
 Park
 Petroleum
 Phillips
 Pondera
 Powder River
 Powell
 Prairie
 Ravalli
 Richland
 Roosevelt
 Rosebud
 Sanders
 Sheridan
 Silver Bow
 Stillwater
 Sweet Grass
 Teton
 Toole
 Treasure
 Valley
 Wheatland
 Wibaux
 Wyoming:
 Big Horn
 Park
 Teton

NEBRASKA

Omaha

Survey Area

Iowa:
 Pottawattamie
 Nebraska:
 Douglas
 Lancaster
 Sarpy

Area of Application. Survey area plus:

Iowa:
 Adams
 Audubon
 Buena Vista
 Cass
 Cherokee
 Clay
 Crawford
 Fremont
 Harrison
 Ida
 Mills
 Monona
 Montgomery
 O'Brien
 Page
 Palo Alto
 Plymouth
 Pocahontas
 Sac
 Shelby
 Sioux
 Taylor
 Woodbury
 Nebraska:
 Adams
 Antelope
 Arthur
 Blaine
 Boone
 Boyd

| | | |
|---------------|--|---|
| Brown | NEVADA | Socorro (Does not include the White Sands Missile Range portion) |
| Buffalo | Las Vegas | Taos |
| Burt | <i>Survey Area</i> | Torrance |
| Butler | Nevada: | Union |
| Cass | Clark | Valencia |
| Cedar | Nye | NEW YORK |
| Chase | <i>Area of Applicaton. Survey area plus:</i> | Albany-Schenectady |
| Cherry | Arizona: | <i>Survey Area</i> |
| Clay | Mohave | New York: |
| Colfax | California: | Albany |
| Cuming | Inyo (Does not include the China Lake Naval Weapons Center portion.) | Montgomery |
| Custer | Nevada: | Rensselaer |
| Dakota | Esmeralda | Saratoga |
| Dawson | Lincoln | Schenectady |
| Dixon | Reno | <i>Area of Applicaton. Survey area plus:</i> |
| Dodge | <i>Survey Area</i> | Massachusetts: |
| Dundy | California: | Berkshire |
| Fillmore | Lassen (effective for wage surveys beginning in March 2026) | New York: |
| Franklin | Nevada: | Columbia |
| Frontier | Lyon | Delaware |
| Furnas | Mineral | Fulton |
| Gage | Storey | Greene |
| Garfield | Washoe | Hamilton |
| Gosper | <i>Area of Applicaton. Survey area plus:</i> | Schoharie |
| Grant | California: | Warren |
| Greeley | Alpine | Washington |
| Hall | Lassen (effective until March 2026) | Vermont: |
| Hamilton | Mono (Does not cover locations where the Bridgeport, CA, special schedule applies) | Bennington |
| Harlan | Nevada (city): | Rutland |
| Hayes | Carson City | Buffalo |
| Hitchcock | Nevada (county): | <i>Survey Area</i> |
| Holt | Churchill | New York: |
| Hooker | Douglas | Erie |
| Howard | Elko | Niagara |
| Jefferson | Eureka | <i>Area of Application. Survey area plus:</i> |
| Johnson | Humboldt | New York: |
| Kearney | Lander | Allegany |
| Keith | Pershing | Cattaraugus |
| Keya Paha | White Pine | Chautauqua |
| Knox | NEW MEXICO | Wyoming |
| Lincoln | Albuquerque-Santa Fe-Los Alamos | Pennsylvania: |
| Logan | <i>Survey Area</i> | Elk (Only includes the Allegheny National Forest portion) |
| Loup | New Mexico: | Forest (Only includes the Allegheny National Forest portion) |
| McPherson | Bernalillo | McKean |
| Madison | McKinley (effective for wage surveys beginning in April 2027) | Warren |
| Merrick | Sandoval | New York-Newark |
| Nance | <i>Area of Application. Survey area plus:</i> | <i>Survey Area</i> |
| Nemaha | New Mexico: | New Jersey: |
| Nuckolls | Catron | Bergen |
| Otoe | Cibola | Burlington (Only includes the Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst portion) |
| Pawnee | Colfax | Essex |
| Perkins | Curry | Hudson |
| Phelps | De Baca | Middlesex |
| Pierce | Guadalupe | Monmouth (effective for wage surveys beginning in January 2028) |
| Platte | Harding | Morris |
| Polk | Lincoln (Does not include the White Sands Missile Range portion) | Ocean (effective for wage surveys beginning in January 2028) |
| Red Willow | Los Alamos | Passaic |
| Richardson | McKinley (effective until April 2027) | Somerset |
| Rock | Mora | Union |
| Saline | Quay | New York: |
| Saunders | Rio Arriba | Bronx |
| Seward | Roosevelt | Dutchess (effective for wage surveys beginning in January 2028) |
| Sherman | San Miguel | Kings |
| Stanton | Santa Fe | |
| Thayer | | |
| Thomas | | |
| Thurston | | |
| Valley | | |
| Washington | | |
| Wayne | | |
| Webster | | |
| Wheeler | | |
| York | | |
| South Dakota: | | |
| Union | | |

Nassau
 New York
 Orange
 Queens
 Suffolk
 Westchester
 Pennsylvania:
 Monroe (effective for wage surveys
 beginning in January 2028)
Area of Application. Survey area plus:
 Connecticut:
 Fairfield
 New Jersey:
 Hunterdon
 Mercer
 Monmouth (effective until January 2028)
 Ocean (effective until January 2028)
 Sussex
 Warren
 New York:
 Dutchess (effective until January 2028)
 Putnam
 Richmond
 Rockland
 Sullivan
 Ulster
 Pennsylvania:
 Carbon
 Lehigh
 Monroe (effective until January 2028)
 Northampton
 Pike
 Wayne

Northern New York

Survey Area
 New York:
 Clinton
 Franklin
 Jefferson
 St. Lawrence
 Vermont:
 Chittenden
 Franklin
 Grand Isle

Area of Application. Survey area plus:

New York:
 Essex
 Lewis
 Vermont:
 Addison
 Caledonia
 Essex
 Lamoille
 Orleans
 Washington

Rochester

Survey Area
 New York:
 Livingston
 Monroe
 Ontario
 Orleans
 Steuben
 Wayne

Area of Application. Survey area plus:

New York:
 Chemung
 Genesee
 Schuyler
 Seneca
 Yates

Pennsylvania:
 Tioga
Syracuse-Utica-Rome

Survey Area

New York:
 Herkimer
 Madison
 Oneida
 Onondaga
 Oswego

Area of Application. Survey area plus:

New York:
 Broome
 Cayuga
 Chenango
 Cortland
 Otsego
 Tioga
 Tompkins

NORTH CAROLINA**Asheville**

Survey Area
 North Carolina:
 Buncombe
 Haywood
 Henderson
 Madison
 Transylvania

Area of Application. Survey area plus:

North Carolina:
 Avery
 Cherokee
 Clay
 Graham
 Jackson
 Macon
 Mitchell
 Polk
 Rutherford
 Swain
 Yancey

Central North Carolina

Survey Area
 North Carolina:
 Cumberland
 Durham
 Harnett
 Hoke
 Johnston
 Orange
 Wake
 Wayne

Area of Application. Survey area plus:

North Carolina:
 Alamance
 Bladen
 Caswell
 Chatham
 Davidson
 Davie
 Edgecombe
 Forsyth
 Franklin
 Granville
 Guilford
 Halifax
 Lee
 Montgomery
 Moore

Nash
 Northampton
 Person
 Randolph
 Richmond
 Robeson
 Rockingham
 Sampson
 Scotland
 Stokes
 Surry
 Vance
 Warren
 Wilson
 Yadkin
 South Carolina:
 Dillon
 Marion
 Marlboro

Charlotte-Concord

Survey Area
 North Carolina:
 Cabarrus
 Gaston
 Mecklenburg
 Rowan
 Union

Area of Application. Survey area plus:

North Carolina:
 Alexander
 Anson
 Burke
 Caldwell
 Catawba
 Cleveland
 Iredell
 Lincoln
 McDowell
 Stanly
 Wilkes
 South Carolina:
 Chester
 Chesterfield
 Lancaster
 York

Southeastern North Carolina

Survey Area
 North Carolina:
 Brunswick
 Carteret
 Columbus
 Craven
 Jones
 Lenoir
 New Hanover
 Onslow
 Pamlico
 Pender

Area of Application. Survey area plus:

North Carolina:
 Beaufort
 Bertie
 Duplin
 Greene
 Hyde
 Martin
 Pitt
 Washington

NORTH DAKOTA**North Dakota***Survey Area*

Minnesota:

Clay
Polk

North Dakota:

Burleigh
Cass
Grand Forks
McLean
Mercer
Morton
Oliver
Traill
Ward

Area of Application. Survey area plus:

Minnesota:

Becker (does not include the White Earth
Indian Reservation portion)

Kittson
Marshall
Norman
Otter Tail
Pennington
Red Lake
Roseau
Wilkin

North Dakota:

Adams
Barnes
Benson
Billings
Bottineau
Bowman
Burke
Cavalier
Dickey
Divide
Dunn
Eddy
Emmons
Foster
Golden Valley
Grant
Griggs
Hettinger
Kidder
LaMoure
Logan
McHenry
McIntosh
McKenzie
Mountrail
Nelson
Pembina
Pierce
Ramsey
Ransom
Renville
Richland
Rolette
Sargent
Sheridan
Sioux
Slope
Stark
Steele
Stutsman
Towner
Walsh
Wells
Williams

OHIO**Cincinnati***Survey Area*

Indiana:

Dearborn

Kentucky:

Boone
Campbell
Kenton

Ohio:

Clermont
Hamilton
Warren

Area of Application. Survey area plus:

Indiana:

Franklin
Ohio
Ripley
Switzerland
Union

Kentucky:

Bracken
Carroll
Gallatin
Grant
Lewis
Mason
Owen
Pendleton
Robertson

Ohio:

Adams
Brown
Butler
Clinton
Highland

Cleveland-Akron-Canton*Survey Area*

Ohio:

Cuyahoga
Geauga
Lake
Mahoning (effective for wage surveys
beginning in April 2027)
Medina

Area of Application. Survey area plus:

Ohio:

Ashland
Ashtabula
Carroll
Columbiana
Coshocton
Crawford
Erie
Holmes
Huron
Lorain
Mahoning (effective until April 2027)
Ottawa
Portage
Richland
Sandusky
Stark
Summit
Trumbull
Tuscarawas
Wayne

Columbus-Marion-Zanesville*Survey Area*

Ohio:

Delaware

Fairfield

Franklin

Licking

Madison

Pickaway

Ross (effective for wage surveys beginning
in January 2027)

Area of Application. Survey area plus:

Ohio:

Athens
Fayette
Guernsey
Hancock
Hardin
Hocking
Knox
Logan
Marion
Morgan
Morrow
Muskingum
Noble
Perry
Pike
Ross (effective until January 2027)
Seneca
Union
Vinton
Wyandot

Dayton*Survey Area*

Ohio:

Champaign
Clark
Greene
Miami
Montgomery
Preble

Area of Application. Survey area plus:

Ohio:
Allen
Auglaize
Darke
Mercer
Shelby
Van Wert

OKLAHOMA**Oklahoma City***Survey Area*

Oklahoma:

Canadian
Cleveland
McClain
Oklahoma
Pottawatomie

Area of Application. Survey area plus:

Oklahoma:

Alfalfa
Atoka
Beckham
Blaine
Caddo
Coal
Custer
Dewey
Ellis
Garfield
Garvin
Grady

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Grant | <i>Area of Application. Survey area plus:</i> | Camden |
| Harper | Oregon: | Gloucester |
| Hughes | Benton | Salem (effective for wage surveys beginning in October 2027) |
| Johnston | Clatsop | Pennsylvania: |
| Kingfisher | Columbia | Bucks |
| Lincoln | Gilliam | Chester |
| Logan | Hood River | Delaware |
| Major | Linn | Montgomery |
| Marshall | Sherman | Philadelphia |
| Murray | Tillamook | <i>Area of Application. Survey area plus:</i> |
| Noble | Wasco | Delaware: |
| Payne | Yamhill | Kent (effective until October 2027) |
| Pontotoc | Washington: | New Castle (effective until October 2027) |
| Roger Mills | Cowlitz | Sussex |
| Seminole | Klickitat | Maryland: |
| Washita | Skamania | Cecil (effective until October 2027) |
| Woods | Wahkiakum | Somerset |
| Woodward | | Wicomico |
| Tulsa | Southwestern Oregon | Worcester (Does not include the Assateague Island portion) |
| <i>Survey Area</i> | <i>Survey Area</i> | New Jersey: |
| Oklahoma: | Oregon: | Atlantic |
| Creek | Douglas | Cape May |
| Mayes | Jackson | Cumberland |
| Muskogee | Lane | Salem (effective until October 2027) |
| Osage | <i>Area of Application. Survey area plus:</i> | Pennsylvania: |
| Pittsburg | California: | Berks |
| Rogers | Del Norte | Schuylkill |
| Tulsa | Oregon: | Pittsburgh |
| Wagoner | Coos | <i>Survey Area</i> |
| <i>Area of Application. Survey area plus:</i> | Crook | Pennsylvania: |
| Arkansas: | Curry | Allegheny |
| Benton | Deschutes | Beaver |
| Carroll | Jefferson | Butler |
| Crawford | Josephine | Cambria (effective for wage surveys beginning in July 2027) |
| Franklin (Only includes the Fort Chaffee portion) | Klamath | Washington |
| Madison | Lake | Westmoreland |
| Sebastian | Lincoln | <i>Area of Application. Survey area plus:</i> |
| Washington | PENNSYLVANIA | Ohio: |
| Missouri: | Harrisburg-York-Lebanon | Belmont |
| McDonald | <i>Survey Area</i> | Harrison |
| Oklahoma: | Pennsylvania: | Jefferson |
| Adair | Cumberland | Pennsylvania: |
| Cherokee | Dauphin | Armstrong |
| Choctaw | Lebanon | Bedford |
| Craig | Union (effective for wage surveys beginning in May 2026) | Blair |
| Delaware | York | Cambria (effective until July 2027) |
| Haskell | <i>Area of Application. Survey area plus:</i> | Cameron |
| Kay | Pennsylvania: | Centre |
| Latimer | Adams | Clarion |
| Le Flore | Clinton | Clearfield |
| McCurtain | Juniata | Crawford |
| McIntosh | Lancaster | Elk (Does not include the Allegheny National Forest portion) |
| Nowata | Lycoming | Erie |
| Okfuskee | Mifflin | Fayette |
| Okmulgee | Perry | Forest (Does not include the Allegheny National Forest portion) |
| Ottawa | Snyder | Greene |
| Pawnee | Union (effective until May 2026) | Huntingdon |
| Pushmataha | Philadelphia-Reading-Camden | Indiana |
| Sequoyah | <i>Survey Area</i> | Jefferson |
| Washington | Delaware: | Lawrence |
| OREGON | Kent (effective for wage surveys beginning in October 2027) | Mercer |
| Portland-Vancouver-Salem | New Castle (effective for wage surveys beginning in October 2027) | Potter |
| <i>Survey Area</i> | Maryland: | Somerset |
| Oregon: | Cecil (effective for wage surveys beginning in October 2027) | Venango |
| Clackamas | New Jersey: | West Virginia: |
| Marion | Burlington (Excluding the Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst portion) | Brooke |
| Multnomah | | Hancock |
| Polk | | Marshall |
| Washington | | |
| Washington: | | |
| Clark | | |

Ohio
Scranton-Wilkes-Barre

Survey Area
Pennsylvania:
Lackawanna
Luzerne

Area of Application. Survey area plus:

Pennsylvania:
Bradford
Columbia
Montour
Northumberland
Sullivan
Susquehanna
Wyoming

PUERTO RICO

Puerto Rico

Survey Area
Puerto Rico (Municipios):
Bayamón
Canóvanas
Carolina
Cataño
Guaynabo
Humacao
Loíza
San Juan
Toa Baja
Trujillo Alto

Area of Application.

Puerto Rico

SOUTH CAROLINA

Charleston

Survey Area
South Carolina:
Berkeley
Charleston
Dorchester

Area of Application. Survey area plus:

South Carolina:
Colleton
Georgetown
Horry
Williamsburg

Columbia

Survey Area
South Carolina:
Darlington
Florence
Kershaw
Lee
Lexington
Richland
Sumter

Area of Application. Survey area plus:

South Carolina:
Abbeville
Anderson
Calhoun
Cherokee
Clarendon
Fairfield
Greenville
Greenwood
Laurens
Newberry

Oconee
Orangeburg
Pickens
Saluda
Spartanburg
Union

SOUTH DAKOTA

Eastern South Dakota

Survey Area
South Dakota:
Minnehaha

Area of Application. Survey area plus:

Iowa:
Dickinson
Emmet
Lyon
Osceola
Minnesota:
Jackson
Lincoln
Lyon
Murray
Nobles
Pipestone
Rock

South Dakota:
Aurora
Beadle
Bennett
Bon Homme
Brookings
Brown
Brule
Buffalo
Campbell
Charles Mix
Clark
Clay
Codington
Corson
Davison
Day
Deuel
Dewey
Douglas
Edmunds
Faulk
Grant
Gregory
Haakon
Hamlin
Hand
Hanson
Hughes
Hutchinson
Hyde
Jerauld
Jones
Kingsbury
Lake
Lincoln
Lyman
McCook
McPherson
Marshall
Mellette
Miner
Moody
Potter
Roberts
Sanborn
Spink
Stanley

Sully
Todd
Tripp
Turner
Walworth
Yankton
Ziebach

TENNESSEE

Eastern Tennessee

Survey Area

Tennessee:
Carter
Hawkins
Sullivan
Unicoi
Washington
Virginia (city):
Bristol
Virginia (counties):
Scott
Washington

Area of Application. Survey area plus:

Kentucky:
Harlan
Letcher
North Carolina:
Alleghany
Ashe
Watauga
Tennessee:
Cocke
Greene
Hancock
Johnson
Virginia:
Buchanan
Grayson
Lee
Russell
Smyth
Tazewell

Memphis

Survey Area

Arkansas:
Crittenden
Mississippi
Mississippi:
De Soto
Tennessee:
Shelby
Tipton

Area of Application. Survey area plus:

Arkansas:
Craighead
Cross
Lee
Poinsett
St. Francis
Mississippi:
Benton
Lafayette (Only includes the Holly Springs
National Forest portion)
Marshall
Panola
Pontotoc (Only includes the Holly Springs
National Forest portion)
Tate
Tippah
Tunica
Union (Only includes the Holly Springs
National Forest portion)

Missouri:
Dunklin
Pemiscot
Tennessee:
Carroll
Chester
Crockett
Dyer
Fayette
Gibson
Hardeman
Hardin
Haywood
Lake
Lauderdale
Madison
McNairy
Obion

Nashville*Survey Area*

Kentucky:
Christian
Tennessee:
Cheatham
Davidson
Dickson
Montgomery
Robertson
Rutherford
Sumner
Williamson
Wilson

Area of Application. Survey area plus:

Alabama:
Jackson
Georgia:
Catossa
Chattooga
Dade
Murray
Walker
Whitfield
Illinois:
Massac
Kentucky:
Adair
Allen
Ballard
Barren
Butler
Caldwell
Calloway
Carlisle
Clinton
Cumberland
Edmonson
Fulton
Graves
Hickman
Hopkins
Livingston
Logan
Lyon
McCracken
Marshall
Metcalfe
Monroe
Muhlenberg
Russell
Simpson
Todd
Trigg
Warren
Tennessee:

Anderson
Bedford
Benton
Bledsoe
Blount
Bradley
Campbell
Cannon
Claiborne
Clay
Coffee
Cumberland
Decatur
DeKalb
Fentress
Franklin
Grainger
Grundy
Hamblen
Hamilton
Henderson
Henry
Hickman
Houston
Humphreys
Jackson
Jefferson
Knox
Lawrence
Lewis
Loudon
McMinn
Macon
Marion
Marshall
Maury
Meigs
Monroe
Moore
Morgan
Overton
Perry
Pickett
Polk
Putnam
Rhea
Roane
Scott
Sequatchie
Sevier
Smith
Stewart
Trousdale
Union
Van Buren
Warren
Weakley
White

TEXAS**Austin***Survey Area*

Texas:
Hays
Milam
Travis
Williamson

Area of Application. Survey area plus:

Texas:
Bastrop
Blanco
Burnet
Caldwell
Fayette

Lee
Llano
Mason
San Saba

Corpus Christi-Kingsville-Alice*Survey Area*

Texas:
Hidalgo (effective for wage surveys
beginning in June 2026)
Nueces
San Patricio

Area of Application. Survey area plus:

Texas:
Aransas
Bee
Brooks
Calhoun
Cameron
Duval
Goliad
Hidalgo (effective until June 2026)
Jim Wells
Kenedy
Kleberg
Live Oak
Refugio
Starr
Victoria
Willacy

Dallas-Fort Worth*Survey Area*

Texas:
Collin
Dallas
Denton
Ellis
Grayson
Hood
Johnson
Kaufman
Parker
Rockwall
Tarrant
Wise

Area of Application. Survey area plus:

Oklahoma:
Bryan
Carter
Love
Texas:
Cherokee
Cooke
Delta
Erath
Fannin
Henderson
Hill
Hopkins
Hunt
Jack
Lamar
Montague
Navarro
Palo Pinto
Rains
Smith
Somervell
Van Zandt
Wood

El Paso

Survey Area

New Mexico:

Dona Ana

Otero

Texas:

El Paso

Area of Application. Survey area plus:

New Mexico:

Chaves

Eddy

Grant

Hidalgo

Lincoln (Only includes the White Sands

Missile Range portion)

Luna

Sierra

Socorro (Only includes the White Sands

Missile Range portion)

Texas:

Culberson

Hudspeth

Houston-Galveston-Texas City

Survey Area

Texas:

Brazoria

Fort Bend

Galveston

Harris

Liberty

Montgomery

Waller

Area of Application. Survey area plus:

Texas:

Angelina

Austin

Chambers

Colorado

Grimes

Hardin

Houston

Jackson

Jasper

Jefferson

Lavaca

Madison

Matagorda

Nacogdoches

Newton

Orange

Polk

Sabine

San Augustine

San Jacinto

Shelby

Trinity

Tyler

Walker

Washington

Wharton

San Antonio

Survey Area

Texas:

Bexar

Comal

Guadalupe

Area of Application. Survey area plus:

Texas:

Atascosa

Bandera

DeWitt

Dimmit

Edwards

Frio

Gillespie

Gonzales

Jim Hogg

Karnes

Kendall

Kerr

Kinney

La Salle

McMullen

Maverick

Medina

Real

Uvalde

Val Verde

Webb

Wilson

Zapata

Zavala

Texarkana

Survey Area

Arkansas:

Little River

Miller

Texas:

Bowie

Area of Application. Survey area plus:

Arkansas:

Columbia

Hempstead

Howard

Lafayette

Nevada

Sevier

Texas:

Camp

Cass

Franklin

Marion

Morris

Red River

Titus

Waco

Survey Area

Texas:

Bell

Coryell

McLennan

Area of Application. Survey area plus:

Texas:

Anderson

Bosque

Brazos

Burleson

Falls

Freestone

Hamilton

Lampasas

Leon

Limestone

Mills

Robertson

Western Texas

Survey Area

Texas:

Callahan

Ector

Howard

Jones

Lubbock

Midland

Nolan

Taylor

Tom Green

Area of Application. Survey area plus:

New Mexico:

Lea

Oklahoma:

Beaver

Cimarron

Texas

Texas:

Andrews

Armstrong

Bailey

Borden

Brewster

Briscoe

Brown

Carson

Castro

Childress

Cochran

Coke

Coleman

Collingsworth

Comanche

Concho

Cottle

Crane

Crockett

Crosby

Dallam

Dawson

Deaf Smith

Dickens

Donley

Eastland

Fisher

Floyd

Gaines

Garza

Glasscock

Gray

Hale

Hall

Hansford

Hartley

Haskell

Hemphill

Hockley

Hutchinson

Irion

Jeff Davis

Kent

Kimble

King

Lamb

Lipscomb

Loving

Lynn

McCulloch

Martin

Menard

Mitchell

Moore

Motley

Ochiltree

Oldham

Parmer

Pecos

Potter

Presidio
Randall
Reagan
Reeves
Roberts
Runnels
Schleicher
Scurry
Shackelford
Sherman
Stephens
Sterling
Stonewall
Sutton
Swisher
Terrell
Terry
Throckmorton
Upton
Ward
Wheeler
Winkler
Yoakum

**Wichita Falls, Texas-Southwestern
Oklahoma**

Survey Area

Oklahoma:
Comanche
Cotton
Stephens
Tillman
Texas:
Archer
Clay
Wichita

Area of Application. Survey area plus:

Oklahoma:
Greer
Harmon
Jackson
Jefferson
Kiowa
Texas:
Baylor
Foard
Hardeman
Knox
Wilbarger
Young

UTAH

Utah

Survey Area

Utah:
Box Elder
Davis
Salt Lake
Tooele
Utah
Weber

Area of Application. Survey area plus:

Colorado:
Mesa
Moffat
Idaho:
Franklin
Utah:
Beaver
Cache
Carbon
Daggett
Duchesne

Emery
Garfield (Does not include the Bryce
Canyon, Capitol Reef, and Canyonlands
National Parks portions)
Grand (Does not include the Arches and
Canyonlands National Parks portions)
Iron (Does not include the Cedar Breaks
National Monument and Zion National
Park portions)
Juab
Millard
Morgan
Piute
Rich
Sanpete
Sevier
Summit
Uintah
Wasatch
Wayne (Does not include the Capitol Reef
and Canyonlands National Parks
portions)

VIRGINIA

Richmond

Survey Area

Virginia (cities):
Colonial Heights
Hopewell
Petersburg
Richmond

Virginia (counties):

Charles City
Chesterfield
Dinwiddie
Goochland
Hanover
Henrico
New Kent
Powhatan
Prince George

Area of Application. Survey area plus:

Virginia (cities):
Charlottesville
Emporia
Virginia (counties):
Albemarle (Does not include the
Shenandoah National Park portion)

Amelia
Brunswick
Buckingham
Charlotte
Cumberland
Essex
Fluvanna
Greene (Does not include the Shenandoah
National Park portion)
Greensville
King and Queen
King William
Lancaster
Louisa
Lunenburg
Mecklenburg
Nelson
Northumberland
Nottoway
Prince Edward
Richmond
Sussex

Roanoke

Survey Area

Virginia (cities):

Radford
Roanoke
Salem
Virginia (counties):
Botetourt
Craig
Montgomery
Roanoke

Area of Application. Survey area plus:

Virginia (cities):

Buena Vista
Covington
Danville
Galax
Lexington
Lynchburg
Martinsville
Staunton
Waynesboro

Virginia (counties):

Alleghany
Amherst
Appomattox
Augusta (Does not include the Shenandoah
National Park portion)
Bath
Bedford
Bland
Campbell
Carroll
Floyd
Franklin
Giles
Halifax
Henry
Highland
Patrick
Pittsylvania
Pulaski
Rockbridge
Wythe

Virginia Beach-Chesapeake

Survey Area

North Carolina:

Currituck
Pasquotank (effective for wage surveys
beginning in May 2026)

Virginia (cities):

Chesapeake
Hampton
Newport News
Norfolk
Poquoson
Portsmouth
Suffolk
Virginia Beach
Williamsburg

Virginia (counties):

Gloucester
James City
York

Area of Application. Survey area plus:

Maryland:

Worcester (Only includes the Assateague
Island portion)

North Carolina:

Camden
Chowan
Dare
Gates
Hertford
Pasquotank (effective until May 2026)
Perquimans

Tyrrell
Virginia (city):
Franklin
Virginia (counties):
Accomack
Isle of Wight
Mathews
Middlesex
Northampton
Southampton
Surry

WASHINGTON**Seattle-Tacoma***Survey Area*

Washington:
Island (effective for wage surveys
beginning in September 2026)
King
Kitsap
Pierce
Snohomish

Area of Application. Survey area plus:

Washington:
Chelan (Only includes the North Cascades
National Park section)
Clallam
Grays Harbor
Island (effective until September 2026)
Jefferson
Lewis
Mason
Pacific
San Juan
Skagit
Thurston
Whatcom

Southeastern Washington-Eastern Oregon*Survey Area*

Oregon:
Umatilla
Washington:
Benton
Franklin
Walla Walla
Yakima

Area of Application. Survey area plus:

Oregon:
Baker
Grant
Harney
Malheur
Morrow
Union
Wallowa
Wheeler
Washington:
Columbia
Kittitas (Only includes the Yakima Firing
Range portion)

Spokane*Survey Area*

Washington:
Spokane

Area of Application. Survey area plus:

Idaho:
Benewah
Bonner
Boundary
Clearwater

Idaho
Kootenai
Latah
Lewis
Nez Perce
Shoshone
Washington:
Adams
Asotin
Chelan (Does not include the North
Cascades National Park portion)
Douglas
Ferry
Garfield
Grant
Kittitas (Does not include the Yakima
Firing Range portion)
Lincoln
Okanogan
Pend Oreille
Stevens
Whitman

WEST VIRGINIA**West Virginia***Survey Area*

Kentucky:
Boyd
Greenup
Ohio:
Lawrence
West Virginia:
Cabell
Harrison
Kanawha
Marion
Monongalia
Putnam
Wayne

Area of Application. Survey area plus:

Kentucky:
Carter
Elliott
Floyd
Johnson
Lawrence
Magoffin
Martin
Pike
Ohio:
Gallia
Jackson
Meigs
Monroe
Scioto
Washington
Virginia (city):
Norton
Virginia (counties):
Dickenson
Wise
West Virginia:
Barbour
Boone
Braxton
Calhoun
Clay
Doddridge
Fayette
Gilmer
Grant
Greenbrier
Jackson
Lewis

Lincoln
Logan
McDowell
Mason
Mercer
Mingo
Monroe
Nicholas
Pendleton
Pleasants
Pocahontas
Preston
Raleigh
Randolph
Ritchie
Roane
Summers
Taylor
Tucker
Tyler
Upshur
Webster
Wetzel
Wirt
Wood
Wyoming

WISCONSIN**Madison***Survey Area*

Wisconsin:
Dane

Area of Application. Survey area plus:

Wisconsin:
Adams
Columbia
Grant
Green
Green Lake
Iowa
Lafayette
Marquette
Rock
Sauk
Waushara

Milwaukee-Racine-Waukesha*Survey Area*

Wisconsin:
Milwaukee
Ozaukee
Washington
Waukesha

Area of Application. Survey area plus:

Wisconsin:
Brown
Calumet
Dodge
Door
Fond du Lac
Jefferson
Kewaunee
Manitowoc
Menominee
Oconto
Outagamie
Racine
Shawano
Sheboygan
Walworth
Winnebago

Southwestern Wisconsin*Survey Area*

Wisconsin:

Chippewa
Eau Claire
La Crosse
Monroe
Trempealeau

Area of Application. Survey area plus:

Minnesota:

Houston

Wisconsin:

Barron
Buffalo
Clark
Crawford
Dunn
Forest
Jackson
Juneau
Langlade
Lincoln
Marathon
Oneida
Pepin
Portage
Price
Richland
Rusk

Taylor
Vernon
Vilas
Waupaca
Wood

WYOMING**Wyoming***Survey Area*

South Dakota:

Pennington

Wyoming:

Albany
Laramie
Natrona

Area of Application. Survey area plus:

Nebraska:

Banner
Box Butte
Cheyenne
Dawes
Deuel
Garden
Kimball
Morrill
Scotts Bluff
Sheridan
Sioux

South Dakota:

Butte
Custer
Fall River
Harding
Jackson
Lawrence
Meade
Oglala Lakota
Perkins

Wyoming:

Campbell
Carbon
Converse
Crook
Fremont
Goshen
Hot Springs
Johnson
Lincoln
Niobrara
Platte
Sheridan
Sublette
Sweetwater
Uinta
Washakie
Weston

[FR Doc. 2025-00555 Filed 1-13-25; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6325-39-P