

October 15, 2003

**GENERAL PAY INCREASE AND SPECIAL SALARY RATES APPROVED  
UNDER TITLE 38 UNITED STATES CODE (U.S.C.) 7455 (RCN 05-0827)**

**1. PURPOSE AND SCOPE:** This Veterans Health Administration (VHA) Directive authorizes approval of a general pay increase equal to the amount of the basic General Schedule (GS) increase effective January 11, 2004, for employees being paid special rates authorized under Title 38 United States Code (U.S.C.) 7455, when necessary to ensure adequate staffing or competitive pay rates.

**2. POLICY:** The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) policy is to authorize a general pay increase equal to the amount of the basic GS increase for employees being paid special salary rates authorized under 38 U.S.C. 7455 if the increase is necessary to ensure adequate staffing or competitive pay, and local funds are available to support the amount of the adjustment.

**3. ACTION**

a. Special rates will be increased by the amount of the GS increase unless the facility Director certifies that the existing rates are competitive and an adjustment is not necessary to maintain adequate staffing for the occupation. *NOTE: It is recommended that facility Directors allow pre-decisional involvement by local labor-management partnership councils before reaching a decision not to authorize an increase.*

b. To facilitate this process, each facility is provided a summary of the special rate authorizations covered by the annual review. The Workforce Information System Team distributes the summary to facilities through the Personnel Accounting Integrated Data (PAID) Control Points by October 29, 2003.

c. Signed certifications (see Att. A) must be submitted no later than November 28, 2003, to the appropriate Network Director (10N\_/051) for coordination and processing. Copies of signed certifications must be faxed to the Human Resources Management (HRM) Programs and Policies Service (051) at 202-273-7607. If a certification that an increase is not necessary is not received in 051 by December 5, 2003, the occupation will receive the GS increase.

d. HRM Programs and Policies (051A) staff will contact the facility Human Resources Management Service (HRMS) to confirm receipt of certification that an increase is not necessary. If the facility HRMS contact person has not received confirmation by December 12, 2003, the certification was not received by (051A), and the occupation will receive the GS increase unless immediate action is taken. Increases granted as a result of certifications received past the deadline may not be rescinded.

e. Advisory assistance on the provisions of this Directive may be obtained by contacting the HRM Programs and Policies Service (051A) representative handling special salary rates for your facility.

**THIS VHA DIRECTIVE EXPIRES JANUARY 8, 2005**

**VHA DIRECTIVE 2003-059**  
**October 15, 2003**

**4. REFERENCES**

- a. Title 38 U.S.C. 7455.
- b. VA Handbook 5007, Part VI, Chapter 6, Paragraphs 2 and 3.

**5. FOLLOW-UP RESPONSIBILITY:** The Office of Human Resources Management (051) is responsible for the contents of this Directive. Questions may be directed to 202-273-9810.

**6. RESCISSIONS:** VHA Directive 2002-066 is rescinded. This VHA Directive expires January 8, 2005.

S/ Nevin M. Weaver for  
Robert H. Roswell, M.D.  
Under Secretary for Health

Attachment

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ATTACHMENT A

**SAMPLE FORMAT FOR  
CERTIFICATION THAT AN INCREASE IN SALARY RATES IS NOT NECESSARY**

I certify that existing special rates are competitive and an increase equivalent to the general schedule increase is not necessary to maintain adequate staffing.

Occupation

Reason

Medical Technologist, GS-644

Current rates are competitive with non-Federal health care facilities.

1. Signature of Certifying Official: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Medical Center Director)

2. Facility \_\_\_\_\_  
(Enter Facility Name and Station Number)

3. Human Resources Management Service Contact Person, Telephone Number, and Date:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
(Human Resources Management Service Contact Person)

Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_