

# INTERAGENCY POST EMPLOYEE POSITION DESCRIPTION

Prepare according to instructions given in Foreign Service National Handbook, Chapter 4 (3 FAH-2)

<b>1. POST</b> Panama	<b>2. AGENCY</b> State	<b>3a. POSITION NO.</b> A32222
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**3b. SUBJECT TO IDENTICAL POSITIONS? AGENCIES MAY SHOW THE NUMBER OF SUCH POSITIONS AUTHORIZED AND/OR ESTABLISHED AFTER THE "YES" BLOCK.**     Yes     No

**4. REASON FOR SUBMISSION**

a. Reclassification of duties: This position replaces  
Position No. \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ (Title) \_\_\_\_\_ (Series) \_\_\_\_\_ (Grade)

b. New Position

c. Other (explain) Recruitment Process and Position Description Update

5. CLASSIFICATION ACTION	Position Title and Series Code	Grade	Initials	Date (mm-dd-yy)
a. Post Classification Authority	FEDERAL BENEFITS ASSISTANT, 1425	FSN-8; FP-6		
b. Other				
c. Proposed by Initiating Office				

<b>6. POST TITLE POSITION (if different from official title)</b> Federal Benefits Assistant	<b>7. NAME OF EMPLOYEE</b> Vacant
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<b>8. MISSION/SECTION</b> Consular Section	a. First Subdivision Federal Benefits Unit
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b. Second Subdivision	c. Third Subdivision
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<b>9. This is a complete and accurate description of the duties and responsibilities of my position.</b>  <hr style="border: 0; border-top: 1px solid black; margin: 10px 0;"/> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <span>Typed Name and Signature of Employee</span> <span>Date(mm-dd-yy)</span> </div>	<b>10. This is a complete and accurate description of the duties and responsibilities of this position.</b>  <hr style="border: 0; border-top: 1px solid black; margin: 10px 0;"/> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <span>Typed Name and Signature of Local Supervisor</span> <span>Date(mm-dd-yy)</span> </div>
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<b>11. This is a complete and accurate description of the duties and responsibilities of this position. There is a valid management need for this position.</b>  <hr style="border: 0; border-top: 1px solid black; margin: 10px 0;"/> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <span>Typed Name and Signature of American Supervisor</span> <span>Date(mm-dd-yy)</span> </div>	<b>12. I have satisfied myself that this is an accurate description of the position, and I certify that it has been classified in accordance with appropriate 3 FAH-2 standards.</b>  <hr style="border: 0; border-top: 1px solid black; margin: 10px 0;"/> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <span>Typed Name and Signature of Human Resources Officer</span> <span>Date(mm-dd-yy)</span> </div>
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**13. BASIC FUNCTION OF POSITION**  
Provide basic orientation service and assistance to US citizens arriving at the Embassy, and directing them to the correct areas within the Consular Section to receive services. Ensures that visitors are directed to the appropriate section.

The incumbent also performs a wide range of services for the following U.S. federal agencies: Office of Personnel Management (OPM), Office of Federal Employees' Group Life Insurance (OFEGLI), Social Security Administration (SSA), Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), Department of Labor (DOL) - Office of Workers' Compensation (OWCP), and Railroad Retirement Board (RRB), with a clientele numbering over 15,000. To perform his duties, the Incumbent must be familiar with the various rules, regulations and procedures of the above agencies as well as the different types of documentation needed to establish entitlement to certain benefits.

**14. MAJOR DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

See attached

**% OF TIME****15. QUALIFICATIONS REQUIRED FOR EFFECTIVE PERFORMANCE**

- a. Education:  
At least 2 years of college or university studies is required.
- b. Prior Work Experience:  
Two (2) years experience working extensively with the public or in a job with extensive client contact and customer service work is required.
- c. Post Entry Training:  
Incumbent must receive on-the-job training and courses offered by the FSI, DOL, OPM, SSA, VA & RRB
- d. Language Proficiency:  
IV (Fluent) Speaking/Reading/Writing Spanish is required. Level IV (Fluent) Speaking/Reading/Writing English is required.
- e. Job Knowledge:  
Must be familiar with valid/authentic Panamanian documents. Must be familiar with Panamanian notarial services, and possess general knowledge of Panamanian immigration and customs rules, regulations, and procedures. Must know how to use a wide variety of computer applications including Word, Excel, Outlook and Internet Explorer. Will need to acquire knowledge of US Agency systems (OWCP, VA, SSA, OPM, RRB).
- f. Skills, and Abilities:  
Must have strong interpersonal and customer service skills. Must be able to deal efficiently and courteously with an often demanding public. Must be able to work under pressure.

**16. POSITION ELEMENTS**

- a. Supervision Received:  
Supervised by the Federal Benefits FSN Supervisor (Position #N32221).
- b. Supervision Exercised: None
- c. Available Guidelines:  
7 FAM, Immigration and Naturalization Act, Social Security Handbook and Publications, CSRS and FERS Handbook, FEGLI booklet, Federal Benefits for Veterans and Dependents, OWCP regulations and manuals, Internal procedures, Standard Operating Procedures, Passport and Notarial Procedures.
- d. Exercise of Judgment:  
In a brief conversation with visitors be able to quickly understand their basic needs and be able to direct them to the correct resource in the Consular section. Incumbent must use judgment and common sense in finding creative solutions to clients' concerns and in determining whether a claim is fraudulent.
- e. Authority to Make Commitments:  
None
- f. Nature, Level, and Purpose of Contacts:  
Daily contact with general public, Panamanian government, financial, medical institutions, and all U.S. federal agencies serviced by the FBU unit.
- g. Time Expected to Reach Full Performance Level:  
One year.

## 14. MAJOR DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

### FBU DUTIES

70% OF TIME

Provides assistance and information based on a thorough knowledge of the laws, rules and regulations, and procedures of the U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM), the Office of Federal Employees' Group Life Insurance (OFEGLI), the Social Security Administration (SSA), the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), the Department of Labor/Office of Workers' Compensation Program (DOL/OWCP), and the Railroad Retirement Board (RRB).

Provides the broadest range of services, which may include advising applicants about benefits to which they may be entitled, providing appropriate forms, and assisting applicants in completing the forms. Incumbent should be able to assist applicants in completing, the following forms: Application for Death Benefits, Application for Retirement Insurance Benefits, Application for Wife's or Husband's Benefits, Application for Disability Benefits, Application for Child's Insurance Benefits, Application for Parent's Insurance Benefits, Application to be Selected as a Representative Payee, Application for Divorced Spouse/Widow(er) Benefits, Enrollment in Medicare Medical Insurance, and Application for Lump Sum Benefits.

Incumbent arranges medical appointments for evaluations and special examinations requested by federal agencies, files claims, provide information or referrals as required by the federal agencies, and follows up with the federal agencies on the status of various claims. When standard practices don't apply, or special circumstances exist, Incumbent seeks advice from the corresponding federal agency. The Incumbent controls information received from federal agencies and discloses it to beneficiaries in accordance with the Privacy Act of 1974.

The Incumbent is responsible for examining supporting documents to determine their accuracy and authenticity, including birth certificates, passports, Panamanian identification cards (cedulas), marriage certificates, death certificates, divorce certificates and court orders granting guardianship. If incumbent identifies fraudulent claimants, claims or supporting documents, incumbent must alert supervisor and Unit Fraud Investigator of these potentially false claims.

The Incumbent acts as an intermediary between the beneficiaries and the institutions that play a role in their benefits – not only the benefits-paying U.S. federal agencies, but also financial institutions, hospital/clinics, physicians, laboratories, pharmacies, medical suppliers, the Panamanian Civil Registry, Panamanian post offices, the local Ministry of Social Development, and social workers.

The Incumbent enrolls recipients of benefits in the International Direct Deposit Program through the International Treasury Service (ITS), which is a secure website containing highly sensitive and private information for over 13,000 federal retirees. Incumbent tracks the IDD enrollments processed until the beneficiary is properly paid. Upon the death of a recipient, the Incumbent inputs a stop-payment order in the ITS, thus cancelling the enrollment and avoiding disbursement of funds which could become unrecoverable for the federal agency.

To comply with the Antifraud Enforcement Program, the Incumbent assists in the completion of the Foreign Enforcement Questionnaires for the beneficiaries of the federal agencies served by FBU.

The Incumbent is always mindful of the potential for fraud and does whatever is necessary to ensure that U.S. federal benefits are paid only to those who are entitled to them. In practice, this means that ensuring that all proof-of-life questionnaires are distributed, all responses are processed and all non-responses are investigated promptly.

The Incumbent processes requests for assistance received from the different federal agencies requesting our assistance in contacting benefits recipients and potential beneficiaries.

The Incumbent advises customers that are eligible to apply for a deferred retirement from OPM how to apply for federal benefits.

The Federal Benefits Unit assumed the responsibility of the DOL/OWCP beneficiaries in Panama effective January 2000. To ensure that OWCP beneficiaries receive the benefits to which they are entitled, the Incumbent authorizes prescriptions presented by the beneficiary and ordered by their attending physician, ensures validity of these prescriptions, verifies that the medications prescribed are for the job related injury and approves them according to the OWCP regulations.

The Incumbent provides information to physicians on the preparation of OWCP Medical Reports for Schedule Awards in accordance with the American Medical Association Guides (AMA Guides.)

As an anti-fraud measure, the Incumbent verifies on a monthly basis the accuracy of the bills and requests for reimbursement submitted by the providers of OWCP (specialists, medical suppliers, hospitals/clinics, laboratories) and pensioners. Before providing these documents to the Supervisor for approval, the Incumbent thoroughly reviews these documents, ensuring that: the charges are customary to the area, the correct current procedural Terminology (CPT) for each service offered is used, and that the bills submitted are from a trusted source. Only then are these bills and requests for reimbursement forwarded to the Department of Labor for payment. If necessary, the bills/reimbursements are adjusted to reflect the costs customary to the area. This attention to detail is vital to avoid abuse of medications and fraudulent charges. Incumbent will be responsible for tracking on the bills until they are properly paid to the providers.

When payments are received for services or prescriptions, the Incumbent reconciles them against FBU records to avoid duplicate payments or overpayments. The Incumbent is responsible for delivering checks to providers for services and to beneficiaries for transportation totaling approximately USD \$50,000 per month.

The incumbent prepares monthly statistics reports based on all the requests, documents, forms, etc. sent by the Agency and the processing of paperwork handled in the FBU. These figures are very important for the preparation of the Annual Consular Package.

The Incumbent is responsible for maintaining files of highly sensitive case records which includes medical information and other personal information. He also keeps a daily log of claim forms, documents, and correspondence received from beneficiaries. The Incumbent prepares weekly packages to be mailed to the U.S. federal agencies.

The Incumbent drafts outgoing correspondence in English and Spanish and translates numerous documents for the beneficiaries, including agencies' correspondence and supporting documents (medical reports, including letters and memoranda as required) and physician's requests for authorizations.

The Incumbent advises beneficiaries of agencies that do not fall under the Federal Benefits programs (e.g. the John Hancock Insurance Company, the Local 338 Retirement Fund, retirement funds of individual states, the AAFES Retirement Program and U.S. military retirees) on how to contact the individual organizations to process their claims.

The Incumbent manages the various file systems on an ongoing basis, determines the type of office equipment and the amount of expendable supplies needed. He serves as a troubles-shooter for software and hardware problems. The Incumbent assists the Unit Chief and section supervisor as needed with various ongoing tasks.

## **OTHER DUTIES**

**25% OF THE TIME**

Serves as the backup for the Consular OMS.

Provide information and assistance to US citizens arriving at the Embassy, and directing them to the correct areas within the Consular Section to receive services

Reviewing inbound email queues in both ACS and FBU for emergency cases that need to be addressed immediately and bringing them to the attention of LES staff or officers.

Reviewing abandoned applications and documents and making calls to determine if the applicants have truly discontinued their interest in their cases and proceed with cancellation of the cases packaging and sending completed applications and other documents to the agencies that archive them in the US for both the ACS and FBU units.

Performs other related duties as required.

**5% OF THE TIME**