This section of the FEDERAL REGISTER contains notices to the public of the proposed issuance of rules and regulations. The purpose of these notices is to give interested persons an opportunity to participate in the rule making prior to the adoption of the final rules.

OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

5 CFR Part 532

RIN 3206–AM70

Proposing Rate Systems; Redefinition of the St. Louis, MO; Southern Missouri; Cleveland, OH; and Pittsburgh, PA, appropriated Fund Federal Wage System Wage Areas


ACTION: Proposed rule with request for comments.

SUMMARY: The U.S. Office of Personnel Management is proposing a rule that would redefine the geographic boundaries of the St. Louis, MO; Southern Missouri; Cleveland, OH; and Pittsburgh, PA, appropriated fund Federal Wage System wage areas. The proposed rule would redefine Bollinger, Cape Girardeau, and Perry Counties, MO, from the Southern Missouri wage area to the St. Louis wage area and Mercer County, PA, from the Pittsburgh wage area to the Cleveland wage area. OPM considers the following regulatory criteria under 5 CFR 532.211 do not permit splitting private industrial establishments.

Federal Register

Vol. 77, No. 221

Thursday, November 15, 2012

This proposed rule would redefine Bollinger, Cape Girardeau, and Perry Counties, MO, from the Southern Missouri wage area to the St. Louis wage area and Mercer County, PA, from the Pittsburgh wage area to the Cleveland wage area. Perry County does not resemble one survey area more than another. Cape Girardeau County favors the St. Louis wage area more than the Southern Missouri wage area. The commuting patterns criterion does not favor any wage area more than another. Cape Girardeau County does not resemble one survey area more than another survey area in terms of the overall population, employment, and the kinds and sizes of private industrial establishments.

In addition, OPM regulations at 5 CFR 532.211 do not permit splitting Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSAs) for the purpose of defining a wage area, except in very unusual circumstances. OPM recently completed reviews of the definitions of the Cape Girardeau-Jackson, MO-IL and Youngstown-Warren-Boardman, OH-PA MSAs and, based on analyses of the regulatory criteria for defining wage areas, is proposing the changes described below. The Federal Prevailing Rate Advisory Committee (FPRAC), the national labor-management committee responsible for advising OPM on matters concerning the pay of FWS employees, recommended these changes by consensus. These changes would be effective on the first day of the first applicable pay period beginning on or after 30 days following publication of the final regulations. FPRAC recommended no other changes in the geographic definitions of the St. Louis, Southern Missouri, Cleveland, and Pittsburgh wage areas.

Cape Girardeau-Jackson, MO-IL Metropolitan Statistical Area

Alexander County, IL, and Bollinger and Cape Girardeau Counties, MO, comprise the Cape Girardeau-Jackson, MO-IL MSA. The Cape Girardeau-Jackson MSA is currently split between the St. Louis, MO, and Southern Missouri wage areas. Alexander County is part of the area of application of the St. Louis wage area and Bollinger and Cape Girardeau Counties are part of the area of application of the Southern Missouri wage area.

Based on an analysis of the regulatory criteria for Cape Girardeau County, the core county in the Cape Girardeau-Jackson MSA, we recommend that the entire Cape Girardeau-Jackson MSA be defined to the St. Louis area of application. The distance criterion for Cape Girardeau County favors the St. Louis wage area more than the Southern Missouri wage area. The commuting patterns criterion does not favor any wage area more than another. Cape Girardeau County does not resemble one survey area more than another survey area in terms of the overall population, employment, and the kinds and sizes of private industrial establishments.

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Based on an analysis of the regulatory criteria for Cape Girardeau County, the core county in the Cape Girardeau-Jackson MSA, we recommend that the entire Cape Girardeau-Jackson MSA be defined to the St. Louis area of application. The distance criterion for Cape Girardeau County favors the St. Louis wage area more than the Southern Missouri wage area. The commuting patterns criterion does not favor any wage area more than another. Cape Girardeau County does not resemble one survey area more than another survey area in terms of the overall population, employment, and the kinds and sizes of private industrial establishments.

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Cape Girardeau-Jackson, MO-IL Metropolitan Statistical Area

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Based on an analysis of the regulatory criteria for Cape Girardeau County, the core county in the Cape Girardeau-Jackson MSA, we recommend that the entire Cape Girardeau-Jackson MSA be defined to the St. Louis area of application. The distance criterion for Cape Girardeau County favors the St. Louis wage area more than the Southern Missouri wage area. The commuting patterns criterion does not favor any wage area more than another. Cape Girardeau County does not resemble one survey area more than another survey area in terms of the overall population, employment, and the kinds and sizes of private industrial establishments.

In addition, OPM regulations at 5 CFR 532.211 do not permit splitting Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSAs) for the purpose of defining a wage area, except in very unusual circumstances. OPM recently completed reviews of the definitions of the Cape Girardeau-Jackson, MO-IL and Youngstown-Warren-Boardman, OH-PA MSAs and, based on analyses of the regulatory criteria for defining wage areas, is proposing the changes described below. The Federal Prevailing Rate Advisory Committee (FPRAC), the national labor-management committee responsible for advising OPM on matters concerning the pay of FWS employees, recommended these changes by consensus. These changes would be effective on the first day of the first applicable pay period beginning on or after 30 days following publication of the final regulations. FPRAC recommended no other changes in the geographic definitions of the St. Louis, Southern Missouri, Cleveland, and Pittsburgh wage areas.

Cape Girardeau-Jackson, MO-IL Metropolitan Statistical Area

Alexander County, IL, and Bollinger and Cape Girardeau Counties, MO, comprise the Cape Girardeau-Jackson, MO-IL MSA. The Cape Girardeau-Jackson MSA is currently split between the St. Louis, MO, and Southern Missouri wage areas. Alexander County is part of the area of application of the St. Louis wage area and Bollinger and Cape Girardeau Counties are part of the area of application of the Southern Missouri wage area.

Based on an analysis of the regulatory criteria for Cape Girardeau County, the core county in the Cape Girardeau-Jackson MSA, we recommend that the entire Cape Girardeau-Jackson MSA be defined to the St. Louis area of application. The distance criterion for Cape Girardeau County favors the St. Louis wage area more than the Southern Missouri wage area. The commuting patterns criterion does not favor any wage area more than another. Cape Girardeau County does not resemble one survey area more than another survey area in terms of the overall population, employment, and the kinds and sizes of private industrial establishments.

In addition, OPM regulations at 5 CFR 532.211 do not permit splitting Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSAs) for the purpose of defining a wage area, except in very unusual circumstances. OPM recently completed reviews of the definitions of the Cape Girardeau-Jackson, MO-IL and Youngstown-Warren-Boardman, OH-PA MSAs and, based on analyses of the regulatory criteria for defining wage areas, is proposing the changes described below. The Federal Prevailing Rate Advisory Committee (FPRAC), the national labor-management committee responsible for advising OPM on matters concerning the pay of FWS employees, recommended these changes by consensus. These changes would be effective on the first day of the first applicable pay period beginning on or after 30 days following publication of the final regulations. FPRAC recommended no other changes in the geographic definitions of the St. Louis, Southern Missouri, Cleveland, and Pittsburgh wage areas.

Cape Girardeau-Jackson, MO-IL Metropolitan Statistical Area

Alexander County, IL, and Bollinger and Cape Girardeau Counties, MO, comprise the Cape Girardeau-Jackson, MO-IL MSA. The Cape Girardeau-Jackson MSA is currently split between the St. Louis, MO, and Southern Missouri wage areas. Alexander County is part of the area of application of the St. Louis wage area and Bollinger and Cape Girardeau Counties are part of the area of application of the Southern Missouri wage area.
current no FWS employees working in Perry County.

**Youngstown-Warren-Boardman, OH-PA Metropolitan Statistical Area**

Trumbull and Mahoning Counties, OH, and Mercer County, PA, comprise the Youngstown-Warren-Boardman, OH-PA MSA. The Youngstown-Warren-Boardman MSA is currently split between the Cleveland, OH, and Pittsburgh, PA, wage areas. Trumbull and Mahoning Counties are part of the area of application of the Cleveland wage area, and Mercer County is part of the area of application of the Pittsburgh wage area.

Based on an analysis of the regulatory criteria for Mahoning County, the core county in the Youngstown-Warren-Boardman MSA, the entire Youngstown-Warren-Boardman MSA would be defined to the Cleveland wage area. The distance criterion does not favor one wage area more than another. We believe distance is not a determining factor in this case. The commuting patterns criterion does not favor one wage area more than another. The difference between the resident workforce commuting to work in the Cleveland and Pittsburgh survey areas is insignificant; however, marginally more people commute into the Cleveland survey area (1.23 percent) than into the Pittsburgh survey area (0.76 percent). The overall population and employment and the kinds and sizes of private industrial establishments criteria do not favor one wage area more than another.

Based on the mixed nature of the regulatory analysis findings, we believe the fact that the city of Youngstown in Mahoning County is generally considered to be part of the greater Cleveland area provides sufficient evidence that Mahoning County is appropriately defined to the Cleveland wage area. OPM regulations at 5 CFR 532.211 permit splitting MSAs only in very unusual circumstances. Since there appear to be no unusual circumstances that would permit splitting the Youngstown-Warren-Boardman MSA, OPM proposes to redefine Mercer County to the Cleveland wage area so that the entire Youngstown-Warren-Boardman MSA is in one wage area. The remaining county in the Youngstown-Warren-Boardman MSA, Trumbull County, is already defined to the Cleveland wage area. There are currently two FWS employees working in Mercer County.

**CFR Corrections**

In addition, this proposed rule renames the Champaign-Urbana, IL, FWS wage area as the Central Illinois FWS wage area because this name better describes the boundaries of the wage area. This proposed rule also updates the name of the White Sands Proving Ground in the Albuquerque, NM, and El Paso, TX, wage areas because the Department of Defense now refers to it as that White Sands Missile Range. OPM announced these changes in interim (65 FR 48641) and final (65 FR 64337) rules published in 2000. However, Champaign-Urbana and White Sands Proving Ground continue to appear incorrectly in Appendix A to Subpart B of Part 532 and/or Appendix C to Subpart B of Part 532.

**Regulatory Flexibility Act**

I certify that these regulations would not have a significant economic impact on a substantial number of small entities because they would affect only Federal agencies and employees.

**List of Subjects in 5 CFR Part 532**

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


John Berry, Director.

Accordingly, the U.S. Office of Personnel Management is proposing to amend 5 CFR part 532 as follows:

**PART 532—PREVAILING RATE SYSTEMS**

1. The authority citation for part 532 continues to read as follows:

   **Authority:** 5 U.S.C. 5343, 5346; §532.707 also issued under 5 U.S.C. 552.

**Appendix A to Subpart B of Part 532 [Amended]**

2. In appendix A to subpart B of part 532, under the State of Illinois, revise the wage-area entry “Champaign-Urbana” to read “Central Illinois”.

3. In appendix C to subpart B of part 532, under the State of Illinois, revise the wage-area entry “Champaign-Urbana” to read “Central Illinois” and revise the wage area listings for the Southern Missouri; St. Louis, MO; Albuquerque, NM; Cleveland, OH; Pittsburgh, PA; and El Paso, TX, wage areas to read as follows:

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

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**MISSOURI**

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**St. Louis**

Survey Area

Illinois:

- Clinton
- Madison
- Monroe
- St. Clair

Missouri: (city)

- St. Louis

Missouri: (counties)

- Franklin
- Jefferson
- St. Charles
- St. Louis

Area of Application. Survey area plus:

Illinois:

- Alexander
- Bond
- Calhoun
- Clay
- Effingham
- Fayette
- Franklin
- Greene
- Hamilton
- Jackson
- Jersey
- Johnson
- Macoupin
- Marion
- Massac
- Montgomery
- Morgan
- Perry
- Pike
- Pope
- Pulaski
- Randolph
- Saline
- Scott
- Union
- Washington
- Wayne

Williamson

Missouri:

- Audrain
- Bollinger
- Boone
- Callaway
- Cape Girardeau
- Clark
- Cole
- Crawford
- Gasconade
- Knox
- Lewis
- Lincoln
- Marion
- Monticello
- Monroe
- Montgomery
- Osage
- Perry
- Pike
- Ralls
- Randolph
- St. Francois
- Ste. Genevieve
- Scotland
- 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
- Iron
- Jasper
- Lawrence
- Madison
- Maries
- Miller
- Mississippi
- Morgan
- New Madrid
- Newton
- Oregon
- Ozark
- Polk
- Reynolds
- Ripley
- St. Clair
- Scott
- Shannon
- Stoddard
- Stone
- Taney
- Texas
- Vernon
- Wayne
- Wright

**NEW MEXICO**

**Albuquerque**

**Survey Area**

- New Mexico: Bernalillo
- Sandoval

**Area of Application. Survey area plus:**

- New Mexico: Catron
- Cibola
- Colfax
- Curry
- De Baca
- Guadalupe
- Harding
- Lincoln (Does not include White Sands Missile Range portion)
- Los Alamos
- Mora
- Quay

- Ohio: Cayahoga
- Geauga
- Lake
- Medina

**Area of Application. Survey area plus:**

- Ohio: Ashland
- Ashtabula
- Carroll
- Columbiana
- Erie
- Huron
- Lorain
- Mahoning
- Ottawa
- Portage
- Sandusky
- Seneca
- Stark
- Summit
- Trumbull
- Wayne

**Pennsylvania:**

- Mercer

**Area of Application. Survey area plus:**

- Ohio: Belmont
- Harrison
- Jefferson
- Tuscarawas

- Pennsylvania: Armstrong
- Bedford
- Blair
- Cambria
- Cameron
- Centre
- Clarion
- Clearfield
- Clinton
- Crawford

- Elk (Does not include the Allegheny National Forest portion)
- Erie
- Fayette
- Forest (Does not include the Allegheny National Forest portion)
- Greene
- Huntingdon
- Indiana
- Jefferson
- Lawrence
- Potter
- Somerset
- Venango

- West Virginia: Brooke
- Hancock
- Marshall
- Ohio

**TEXAS**

**El Paso**

**Survey Area**

- New Mexico: Chaves
- Eddy
- Grant
- Hidalgo
- Lincoln (Only White Sands Missile Range portion)
- Luna
- Sierra
- Socorro (Only White Sands Missile Range portion)

- Texas: Culberson
- Hudspeth

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**BILLING CODE 6325–39–P**