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OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

5 CFR Part 531

RIN 3206-AJ62

Locality Pay Areas

AGENCY: Office of Personnel Management.

ACTION: Final rule.

SUMMARY: The Office of Personnel Management is issuing final regulations on behalf of the President's Pay Agent to tie the metropolitan area portion of locality pay area boundaries to the geographic scope of Metropolitan Statistical Area and Consolidated Metropolitan Statistical Area definitions that are contained in the attachments to Office of Management and Budget Bulletin 99-04.

EFFECTIVE DATE: These regulations will become effective on May 22, 2003.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Allan Hearne, (202) 606-2838; FAX: (202) 606-4264; e-mail: payleave@opm.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Section 5304(f) of title 5, United States Code, authorizes the President's Pay Agent (the Secretary of Labor, the Director of the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), and the Director of the Office of Personnel Management (OPM)) to determine appropriate pay localities. The Pay Agent must give thorough consideration to the views and recommendations of the Federal Salary Council, a body composed of experts in the fields of labor relations and pay policy and representatives of Federal employee organizations. The President appoints the members of the Federal Salary Council, who submit annual recommendations to the President's Pay Agent about the locality pay program for General Schedule employees. The establishment or modification of locality

pay area boundaries must conform with the notice and comment provisions of the Administrative Procedure Act (5 U.S.C. 553).

Based on the Council's recommendations in 1993, the Pay Agent approved using Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) and Consolidated Metropolitan Statistical Area (CMSA) definitions as the basis for defining locality pay areas. OMB defines MSAs and CMSAs based on population size, population density, and commuting patterns. The Council also recommended and the Pay Agent approved criteria for adding adjoining areas to locality pay areas that are not already part of the MSA or CMSA as defined by OMB. Under our current regulations, the metropolitan area portion of locality pay areas changes automatically when OMB revises its metropolitan area definitions.

In October 2000, the Federal Salary Council recommended that the Pay Agent revise the regulations to hold the current MSA or CMSA portion of locality pay areas constant until the Pay Agent and the Federal Salary Council have had an opportunity to review new metropolitan area definitions and new commuting patterns and other data from the 2000 census. OMB plans to revise its metropolitan area definitions substantially in 2003 based on new census data and new criteria. The Council also recommended that the Pay Agent continue to monitor counties adjacent to locality pay areas during this period and make minor adjustments in locality pay area boundaries if a particularly egregious situation justifies such action.

Under the final rule, locality pay areas will no longer change automatically if OMB changes metropolitan area definitions. The new reference to the "geographic scope" of an MSA or CMSA is designed to make certain that locality pay area boundaries are not affected by county name changes or changes in the geographic boundaries of counties within the original geographic scope of the MSA. Dade County, FL, changed its name to Miami-Dade County, and the County of Broomfield, CO, recently was created out of portions of Adams, Boulder, Jefferson, and Weld Counties. All of these areas were already within the geographic scope of the Miami or Denver CMSA, as listed in attachments to OMB Bulletin 99-04, and remain

covered by the existing locality pay areas.

A full listing of locality pay areas is at <http://opm.gov/oca/02tables/locdef.asp>. The change to hold constant the metropolitan area portion of locality pay areas will have no effect on current locality pay area boundaries or locality rates.

We received two comments on the proposal. One comment from a Federal agency concurred with the proposed rule and the other comment from a Federal employee was outside the scope of the proposal.

E.O. 12866, Regulatory Review

The Office of Management and Budget has reviewed this rule in accordance with E.O. 12866.

Regulatory Flexibility Act

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

List of Subjects in 5 CFR Part 531

Government employees, Law enforcement officers, Wages.

Office of Personnel Management.

Kay Coles James,

Director.

Accordingly, OPM is amending 5 CFR part 531 as follows:

PART 531—PAY UNDER THE GENERAL SCHEDULE

■ 1. The authority citation for Part 531 continues to read as follows:

Authority: 5 U.S.C. 5115, 5307, and 5338; sec. 4 of Pub. L. 103-89, 107 Stat. 981; and E.O. 12748, 56 FR 4521, 3 CFR, 1991 Comp., p. 316;

Subpart B also issued under 5 U.S.C. 5303(g), 5333, 5334(a), and 7701(b)(2);

Subpart C also issued under 5 U.S.C. 5304, 5305, and 5553; sections 302 and 404 of the Federal Employees Pay Comparability Act of 1990 (FEPCA), Pub. L. 101-509, 104 Stat. 1462 and 1466; and section 3(7) of Pub. L. 102-378, 106 Stat. 1356;

Subpart D also issued under 5 U.S.C. 5335(g) and 7701(b)(2);

Subpart E also issued under 5 U.S.C. 5336; Subpart F also issued under 5 U.S.C. 5304, 5305(g)(1), and 5553; E.O. 12883, 58 FR 63281, 3 CFR, 1993 Comp., p. 682; and E.O. 13106, 63 FR 68151, 3 CFR, 1998 Comp., p. 224;

Subpart G also issued under 5 U.S.C. 5304, 5305, and 5553; section 302 of FEPCA, Pub.

L. 101–509, 104 Stat. 1462; and E.O. 12786, 56 FR 67453, 3 CFR, 1991 Comp., p. 376.

Subpart F—Locality-Based Comparability Payments

■ 2. In § 531.602, the definitions of *CMSA* and *MSA* are revised to read as follows:

§ 531.602 Definitions.

* * * * *

CMSA means the geographic scope of a Consolidated Metropolitan Statistical Area, as defined by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) in List II of the attachments to OMB Bulletin 99–04.

* * * * *

MSA means the geographic scope of a Metropolitan Statistical Area, as defined by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) in List I of the attachments to OMB Bulletin 99–04.

* * * * *

■ 3. In § 531.606, paragraph (g) is revised to read as follows:

§ 531.606 Administration of locality rates of pay.

* * * * *

(g) In the event of a change in the geographic coverage of a locality pay area, the effective date of the change in an employee's entitlement to a locality rate of pay under this subpart is the first day of the first applicable pay period beginning on or after the date on which the change in geographic coverage becomes effective.

* * * * *

[FR Doc. 03–9831 Filed 4–21–03; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6325–39–P

OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

5 CFR Part 532

RIN 3206–AJ64

Prevailing Rate Systems; Redefinition of the Scranton-Wilkes-Barre, PA, Appropriated Fund Wage Area; Correction

AGENCY: Office of Personnel Management.

ACTION: Correction to final rule.

SUMMARY: The Office of Personnel Management inadvertently omitted a county from the area of application for the State of Pennsylvania in the Scranton-Wilkes-Barre Federal Wage System wage area. Columbia County should have been listed immediately following Carbon County. This document corrects this error.

EFFECTIVE DATE: February 5, 2003.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Mark A. Allen at (202) 606–2838; FAX at (202) 606–4264; or e-mail at maallen@opm.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: In rule FR Doc. 03–215 published on January 6, 2003 (68 FR 459) make the following corrections. On page 460, in the first column, correct appendix C to subpart B of part 532 by adding “Columbia” in between “Carbon” and “Lycoming” under the area of application for the State of Pennsylvania.

Office of Personnel Management.

Jacqueline Carter,

Federal Regulations Liaison Officer.

[FR Doc. 03–9830 Filed 4–21–03; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6325–39–M

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Agricultural Marketing Service

7 CFR Part 925

[Docket No. FV03–925–2 IFR]

Grapes Grown in a Designated Area of Southeastern California; Establishment of Safeguards and Procedures for Suspension of Packing Holidays

AGENCY: Agricultural Marketing Service, USDA.

ACTION: Interim final rule with request for comments.

SUMMARY: This rule establishes safeguards and procedures for the suspension of packing holidays prescribed under the California grape marketing order (order). The order regulates the handling of grapes grown in a designated area of Southeastern California and is administered locally by the California Desert Grape Administrative Committee (Committee). The procedures and safeguards will be used by the Committee when considering and making decisions on packing holiday suspension requests. Additionally, this rule clarifies existing maturity requirements for Flame Seedless variety grapes and corrects errors in the regulatory text regarding references to the California Code of Regulations (CCR).

DATES: *Effective date:* April 23, 2003; *Comment period:* comments received by June 23, 2003, will be considered prior to issuance of a final rule.

ADDRESSES: Interested persons are invited to submit written comments concerning this rule. Comments must be sent to the Docket Clerk, Marketing

Order Administration Branch, Fruit and Vegetable Programs, AMS, USDA, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW., STOP 0237, Washington, DC 20250–0237; Fax: (202) 720–8938, or E-mail: moab.docketclerk@usda.gov. All comments should reference the docket number and the date and page number of this issue of the **Federal Register** and will be made available for public inspection in the Office of the Docket Clerk during regular business hours, or can be viewed at: <http://www.ams.usda.gov/fv/moab.html>.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Rose Aguayo, California Marketing Field Office, Marketing Order Administration Branch, Fruit and Vegetable Programs, AMS, USDA, 2202 Monterey Street, suite 102B, Fresno, California 93721; telephone: (559) 487–5901, Fax: (559) 487–5906; or George Kelhart, Technical Advisor, Marketing Order Administration Branch, Fruit and Vegetable Programs, AMS, USDA, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW., STOP 0237, Washington, DC 20250–0237; telephone: (202) 720–2491, Fax: (202) 720–8938.

Small businesses may request information on complying with this regulation by contacting Jay Guerber, Marketing Order Administration Branch, Fruit and Vegetable Programs, AMS, USDA, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW., STOP 0237, Washington, DC 20250–0237; telephone: (202) 720–2491, Fax: (202) 720–8938, or E-mail: Jay.Guerber@usda.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: This rule is issued under Marketing Order No. 925 (7 CFR part 925), regulating the handling of grapes grown in California, hereinafter referred to as the “order.” The order is effective under the Agricultural Marketing Agreement Act of 1937, as amended (7 U.S.C. 601–674), hereinafter referred to as the “Act.”

The Department of Agriculture (USDA) is issuing this rule in conformance with Executive Order 12866.

This rule has been reviewed under Executive Order 12988, Civil Justice Reform. This rule is not intended to have retroactive effect. This rule will not preempt any State or local laws, regulations, or policies, unless they present an irreconcilable conflict with this rule.

The Act provides that administrative proceedings must be exhausted before parties may file suit in court. Under section 608c(15)(A) of the Act, any handler subject to an order may file with USDA a petition stating that the order, any provision of the order, or any obligation imposed in connection with