



Increase your Federal benefits strategic resources by coming to the Office of Personnel Management's (OPM) 2011 Fall Festival of Training

Retirement Services, Benefits Officers Training and Development (BOTD) announce their 2011 Fall Festival of Training. We will be conducting an array of 21 workshops on November 29, 30 and December 1, 2011 at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Phoenix, AZ. These workshops consist of full and ½ day workshops.

During the Benefits Training, BOTD is offering these workshops to help you increase your knowledge of the Federal benefits programs and to improve your counseling skills. These workshops will be led by OPM experts and will offer an intensive, high-energy learning experience on selected topics. If you are responsible for administering benefits in your agency or providing counseling to employees about their benefits, you don't want to miss out on these informative workshops.

Attendance at the Benefits Training meets the requirement in 5 U.S.C 8350(3) that "once each year, each retirement counselor of an agency shall successfully complete a training session conducted under the [U.S. Office of Personnel Management] training program."

Be sure to register for the workshops early. When we have held this training in the past, workshops have filled quickly.

As in the past we will have a Customer Service Center available for you to check status of cases you are working on. Bring the identifying information with you to receive assistance on the questions you have.

Attached to this announcement is Registration information, Workshop Descriptions, General Information about the event and answers to some frequently asked questions.

For those registering using a training form or purchase order you may register now. For those registering using a credit card you may not do so until, Monday, October 3, 2011. The registration deadline for this event is Friday, October 28, 2011.

2011 Fall Festival Training Information

Location All workshops will be at the Hyatt Regency Hotel. The Hyatt Regency Hotel is located at 122 North Second Street, Phoenix, AZ 85004.

A block of rooms is reserved for attendees at the Hotel at the contracted government rate of \$106 per night, plus tax.

If you are staying overnight, you must make reservations directly with the Hyatt Regency Hotel and indicate that you are attending the OPM training. This will insure that you receive the proper rate.

Note: **You must show a government ID at check in.** The Hyatt Regency will accept reservations until October 28, 2011, at the contracted rate or up until block of rooms is full, if sooner. After that date the government rate will apply only if space is available.

A dedicated booking website has been created for you to make, modify or cancel your reservation. This is the Hotel's preferred way that you book your reservation. The web address is:

https://resweb.passkey.com/Resweb.do?mode=welcome_ei_new&eventID=4047473

If you must make a reservation via the telephone the number for reservations is toll free is 1-888-421-1442. Mention you are registering for the OPM Fall Festival of Training.

The Hyatt Regency is serviced by the Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport. The airport is 10 miles from the hotel. Airport shuttle & taxi service to and from the airport is available. The cost approximately \$20 each way.

Dates November 29, 30 and December 1, 2011

Workshop Times Registration will take place within your scheduled workshop at 8:00 AM unless otherwise specified. The workshops will begin promptly at 8:30 AM and end at 4:00 PM (unless taking a ½ day workshop). The workshops are scheduled to run for the full day and all attendees are expected to be there for the full day. Plan your travel schedule to allow you to remain until the scheduled end of the workshop.

Registration for the ½ day workshops will take place within your scheduled workshop at 8:00 AM and 12:15 PM. The morning ½ day workshop will begin promptly at 8:30AM and end at 11:45 AM. The afternoon ½ day workshop will begin promptly at 12:45 PM and end

at 4:00 PM. These workshops are also scheduled to run for their full time and all attendees are expected to be there for the full time. Plan your travel schedule to allow you to remain until the scheduled end of the workshop

Tuition 1-Day workshop -- \$345
½ -Day workshops -- \$245

Tuition is per workshop. There is no discount for taking multiple workshops. Tuition includes the welcome reception, continental breakfast and breaks. Lunch and dinner are on your own. In addition each workshop participant receives:

Workshop Handbook -- Filled with extra space for your notes, this handy reference guide will prove to be an indispensable resource back at the office. Keep it close at hand for future reference.

Certificate of Completion -- Upon **conclusion** of the workshop you'll receive a certificate suitable for framing; a copy makes an excellent addition to your official personnel folder.

How to Register You can register for the workshops by going to <https://registration.golearnportal.org> or you can submit a registration form. Please do not do both.

If you are paying tuition cost using a training form or purchase order you may register now.

If you are paying tuition cost using a credit card you will not be able to register until Monday, October 3, 2011.

Registration deadline is October 28, 2011.

If you are paying by credit card, all we need is the credit card information requested on the workshop registration form.

Please note: **If the credit card holder is not the workshop participant, provide an email address for the cardholder so an invoice can be sent.**

Registration Form If you are using the paper registration submit a separate workshop registration form for each individual. (Photocopies of the conference registration form are acceptable.) Please print or type in your name on the workshop registration form as you want it to appear on your certificate (and not the name of the credit card holder, if different).

If you are **not** registering on line, you can fax the registration form.

Fax: 202-606-4327

We send confirmation notices after we receive registration forms. If you do not receive a confirmation 2 weeks after submission please contact us at (202) 606-4900 or at benefits@opm.gov.

Fall Festival Vendor Information: If paying tuition costs via Training Forms or Purchase Orders you may need the following additional information to facilitate setting up vendor information in your agency's financial system:

Vendor Name: U.S. Office of Personnel Management
Address: 1900 E Street, N.W., Room 4351, Washington DC 20415
Attn: Fall Festival
Phone # 202-606-0788
EIN/Tax ID # 919999515
DUNS # 790907112
Contact # 202-606-2529 (Clyde Bronson)

Cancellation Policy You may cancel registrations up to or close of business eastern standard time on Thursday, **November 10, 2011**, to receive a refund. The request must be submitted in writing to us by close of business on November 10. **A \$100 administrative fee will be assessed to your refund for any cancellations.** Agencies will be billed the entire amount for spaces they have reserved if a cancellation is received **after** November 10. If you are unable to attend, your agency can send a substitute. Substitution information must be in writing, and a separate registration form must be completed. If no substitution is sent, the workshop material will be sent to the attendee that cancelled and no refund will be made.

In the event that special circumstances such as serious illness, accident or death of a close family member arise and the circumstance can't be reported until after November 10, documentation to support the special circumstance (e.g. physician's statement, copy of death certificate, etc) will be required in order to process a refund (less the \$100 administrative fee); however, no refund will be considered after **November 18, 2011**.

Payment with 2011 funds You may pay for the Fall Festival training using FY 2011 funds. In 70 Compo Gen. 296 (1991), the Comptroller General ruled training that began in the next fiscal year is chargeable to prior fiscal year appropriations where the training had been identified as a need in the prior year.

For More Information Check out the Frequently Asked Questions. If your question isn't there, you can fax us at (202) 606-4327, email us at benefits@opm.gov, or call us at (202) 606-4900.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is the cost of the classes?

1-Day workshop -- \$345

½-Day Workshop--\$245

Is there a discount for taking more than one workshop?

Tuition is per workshop. There is no discount for taking multiple workshops.

What is the attire?

Attire during the Fall Festival of Training is business casual.

What is the address of the hotel?

The Hyatt Regency is located at 122 North Second Street, Phoenix, AZ 85004

Do I need to make my own hotel reservations?

Yes, you must make your own hotel reservations. A block of rooms at the contracted rate of \$106, plus tax, has been reserved. Make your reservations directly with the Hyatt Regency at:

https://resweb.passkey.com/Resweb.do?mode=welcome_ei_new&eventID=4047473.

This is the preferred way. If you must make a reservation via telephone, the Telephone number is 1-888-421-1442.

How far is the airport from the hotel?

The Hyatt Regency is located approximately 10 miles from The Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport. Airport shuttle & taxi service is available. The cost is \$20 each way.

Is parking available? If so, what is the cost?

Yes. The cost is \$19 for self parking and \$27 for valet parking..

Will any meals be provided?

Tuition includes the welcome reception, continental breakfast and breaks. Lunch and dinner are on your own.

Are childcare services provided?

No, childcare will not be provided. Due to the intensive nature of the workshops, it is not appropriate to bring children to the workshops. Only the Federal employees registered for the workshop may attend. If you have family with you, please ensure that you make adequate childcare arrangements so you are free to focus on the workshops.

What time are all day classes?

Registration will begin each day at 8:00 AM in your scheduled workshop. The workshops will begin promptly at 8:30 AM and end at 4:00 PM unless otherwise noted. The workshops are scheduled to run for the entire day and all attendees are expected to be

there for the **entire** workshop. You should plan your travel schedule to allow you to remain until the scheduled end of the workshop.

What time are ½ day classes?

Registration will begin each day in the scheduled workshop at 8:00 AM for the morning classes and 12:15 PM for the afternoon classes. The workshop will begin promptly at 8:30 AM and will end at 11:45 AM for the morning class and will begin promptly at 12:45 PM and end at 4:00 PM for the afternoon class.

Can I register onsite?

No. The Benefits Training workshops fill quickly. You should register on line at <https://registration.golearnportal.org/> or submit your registration form to us as soon as possible.

If you are paying tuition cost using a training form or purchase order you may register now.

If you are paying tuition cost using a credit card you will not be able to register until Monday, October 3, 2011.

The registration deadline is October 28, 2011.

Can I purchase a workshop handbook without attending the class?

The workshop handbooks are designed to be an integral part of the training. They are not designed to be stand-alone documents. Therefore, it isn't possible to make them available to people who do not attend the workshop.

Do I need to submit an SF 182 (or equivalent) form?

If you are paying by a government issued credit card, you do not need to submit an SF 182 (or equivalent). Just complete the credit card payment information on the registration form.

Can I send the registration form and send the payment information later?

Your Benefits Training registration form is **not** complete until we receive both the registration form and complete payment information.

Can I enroll in more than one workshop on the same day?

Workshops are scheduled to run from 8:30 AM to 4:00 PM. You can only take one workshop on each day unless you are taking a ½ day workshop.

Can I indicate a second choice workshop in case my first choice is filled?

Yes, if you want to indicate a first and second choice for a workshop, clearly indicate it with a 1 and 2. Do not put check marks by more than one workshop per day.

When will I receive a confirmation on my registration?

Online registration confirmations are emailed once your payment has been processed.

We email confirmation of your faxed registration to you within one week of our receipt of your completed registration. If you do not receive confirmation within 2 weeks of registering, please email us at benefits@opm.gov or call (202) 606-4900.

When will my credit card be charged?

Generally the credit card will be charged after we receive your completed registration. There may be some exceptions.

What do I need to provide the hotel so they won't charge tax?

To claim tax exemption, you must provide the Hyatt Regency with the Arizona Exemption Certificate. For your convenience, the tax exempt form is included with this announcement. You must bring this form with you **along with your Government ID** and present it at check in. The Hotel does not provide this form. Otherwise under GSA's rules, you may file with your agency for reimbursement of these taxes under "Miscellaneous Expenses" without going through "actual expenses" claim process.

Will there be a Customer Service Center (CSC) available to check on the status of a case that I am working on?

Yes – as in the past, we will have a CSC. There will be staff available to assist you with your cases from 8:00 AM – 4:30 PM. Bring the identifying information with you to receive assistance.

Who can I contact for further information?

For more information about the Benefits Training you can fax us at (202) 606-4327, email us at benefits@opm.gov, or call us at (202) 606-4900.