

Special Salary Rate Request Form

OPM Form 1397

Instructions

General

1. The Special Salary Rate Request Form (Office of Personnel Management (OPM) Form 1397) is an optional form that agencies may use to request that OPM establish, adjust, terminate, or modify coverage of special salary rates under the authority of 5 U.S.C. 5305 and 5 CFR part 530, subpart C. Special salary rates are higher rates of basic pay that are established for a group or category of General Schedule (GS) positions in one or more geographic areas to address existing or likely significant handicaps in recruiting or retaining well-qualified employees.

You may use an alternative format to submit data and information required in a special salary rate request. However, you must ensure that all of the available data and information requested by OPM Form 1397 are included in the alternative format.

2. An agency initiating a request to establish or adjust a special salary rate may be required to coordinate the request with all other affected agencies and aggregate the required staffing data from each agency. Contact OPM before submitting any special salary rate request to determine if your agency is required to coordinate the request with other agencies.
3. If you are requesting more than one special rate table for a category of positions (each covering a different geographic area, for example) fill out a separate Form 1397 (or alternative) for each table requested. As part of the analysis, OPM may request that you break down data even further.
4. For each type of special salary rate request covered by this form, you must provide a narrative justification and/or explanation on the reason for the request. See the specific instructions, below, on the type of narrative information needed.
5. When applicable, include the proposed special rate schedule with your request.

Section I - Type of Special Salary Rate Request and Agency Contact Information

1. Use OPM Form 1398 if you are requesting an increase equal to the General Schedule increase as part of OPM's annual review of special salary rates. Do not use this form for such requests.
2. For all other types of special rate requests, in this section you must indicate the type of special salary rate request, follow the italicized instructions provided for each type of request, and provide agency contact information.

Section II - Coverage

Follow the instructions provided on the form for this section. If the request involves an existing special salary rate authorization and no change in occupation, agency, or geographic coverage is involved, do not complete this section. Please ensure that the existing special rate table number is provided in section I.

Section III - Staffing Status

1. Follow the instructions provided on the form for this section. If data is unavailable, explain the reason in the narrative justification of your request.
2. When aggregating data from more than one organization, geographic location, or agency, each organization/location should provide data for the same period of time, i.e., use the same beginning and ending dates, if possible.