



United States Department of Agriculture

Food Safety and Inspection Service

IN-PLANT PUBLIC HEALTH VETERINARIAN INCENTIVES PROGRAM



Protecting Public Health and Preventing
Foodborne Illness

Public Health Veterinarians (PHVs) are key members of the regulatory team at the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS). PHVs are essential to the Agency's public health mission and have multi-faceted responsibilities, including primary responsibility for examining and making dispositions for food animals. FSIS offers a number of recruitment and retention incentives to veterinarians who remain with the Agency in in-plant PHV positions. Each incentive has unique features, requirements, and benefits. Incentives are discretionary, and offerings may change over time according to Agency needs and resources.

RECRUITMENT INCENTIVE

- A recruitment incentive is a monetary payment to an employee for accepting a position and working in that position for the duration of a service agreement.
- FSIS currently offers a recruitment incentive of \$5,000 per year for a period of 4 years, totaling \$20,000 (less taxes) for each newly hired in-plant PHV.
- A lump sum payment is made to the employee after the first year of service, and at yearly intervals thereafter for a total of four payments.

RETENTION INCENTIVE

- A retention incentive is a monetary payment made to an employee as an incentive to remain in a position; this payment is in addition to the employee's basic salary.
- FSIS currently offers a retention incentive to eligible in-plant PHVs at specific points in their career with FSIS.
- FSIS employees with 5-11 years of service as an in-plant PHV are eligible for bi-weekly retention incentive payments. During years 5-11, eligible employees will be offered a sliding scale retention incentive that will vary between 2% - 6% of the employee's rate of basic pay. No service agreement will be required.
- FSIS employees with 15+ years of service as an in-plant PHV are also eligible to receive a lump sum retention incentive payment of 5% of their rate of basic pay at key 5-year milestones with the completion of a one-year service agreement to be paid out in year 15 and at 5-year intervals thereafter with 20, 25, 30, and 35+ years of service. Eligible in-plant PHVs may enter into service agreements in year 14 and at subsequent 5-year intervals.

TRAVEL AND TRANSPORTATION EXPENSES TO FIRST DUTY STATION

- Payment of travel and transportation expenses to the first duty station allows a newly hired Federal employee or a former Federal employee with a break in service of at least 90 days to be reimbursed for travel costs associated with moving to their official duty location.
- Depending on where the PHV is moving to, the PHV may qualify for reimbursement of moving expenses to their first post of duty if it is 50 miles or greater from their residence.
- Reimbursement is to the extent allowed by Federal travel regulations. The employee's duty location is the geographic location of the position for which the employee is selected.
- A one-year service agreement is required, and repayment will be required if the employee does not fulfill the service agreement in most circumstances.



RELOCATION INCENTIVES FOR CURRENT IN-PLANT PHVs

- A relocation incentive is a monetary payment of up to 25% of an employee's basic salary offered on a case-by-case basis as determined by Agency management.
- This payment may be made as a lump sum at the commencement of the agreement or at the end of a specified interval, or it can be made in installments.
- This incentive can only be offered to current employees and may be made for up to 4 years.
- Employees must sign a service agreement.
- This incentive requires establishing a residence in the designated location.
- This incentive can also include moving expenses to the extent allowed under Federal Travel Regulations.

STUDENT LOAN REPAYMENT

- Student loan repayments permit Federal agencies to repay qualifying Federally insured student loans as a recruitment or retention tool for candidates or current Agency employees.
- For those enrolled in the FSIS Student Loan Repayment Program for in-plant PHVs, the payments are \$10,000 per year for up to 3 years with a minimum 3-year service agreement.
- Payment is made directly to the loan holder/lending institution.

CREDITABLE SERVICE FOR ANNUAL LEAVE ACCRUAL

- Creditable Service for Annual Leave Accrual (CSALA) allows for non-Federal work experience or work experience performed during active military duty to be credited for annual leave accrual purposes if the work experience is directly related to the position being filled.
- Annual leave is paid time off from duty for personal use. This incentive is for newly appointed Federal employees and/or former Federal employees with a break in service of at least 90 days.
- All employment applications for newly hired in-plant PHVs are evaluated for CSALA eligibility.
- CSALA determinations must be made prior to entry on duty. They cannot be approved retroactively.
- Upon completion of a one-year service agreement, the employee retains this service credit throughout their Federal career.

Incentives are important tools and provide flexibility to attract and retain veterinarians to in-plant PHV positions. FSIS is pleased to offer these incentives in addition to Federal employee pay and benefits.