

Quick Reference Guide

for

Financial Management Career Program

Mentors



Department of the Navy
Financial Management Career Program Office

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FMCP Mentor's Quick Reference Guide

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Introduction

Purpose

This **FM Quick Reference Guide** is provided to help Mentors guide their Trainees through this 28-month training program. It is a brief distillation of information provided more completely and at greater length in the *FMTP Procedures Manual*. The Manual, as it will be termed in this Guide, is provided to every Mentor and Trainee prior to the Trainee coming on-board. Mentors should be familiar with the Manual, and should use this Guide solely to reinforce what they learned in the Manual.

FMCP – Program Description

The Department of the Navy (DON) Financial Management Trainee Program (FMTP) is part of the DON's suite of programs managed through the Navy Financial Management Career Program Office (FMCPO), located in Pensacola, Florida. College-caliber individuals are hired by the FMCP for the DON as financial management analysts, accountants and auditors (job series 501, 510 and 511, respectively). Trainees are officially assigned to the FMCPO, but are stationed at various Navy and Marine Corps activities – their "homeports" – throughout the DON. Following successful completion of their 28-month training program, FMCP Trainees graduate from the program and are placed in suitable positions at their homeport.

Homeports

To participate in the FMTP, activities submit their Trainee requirements annually to the FMCPO via their chain of command. Quotas are allocated to commands, who then select Trainees from the pool of qualified applicants. Trainees are selected for specific positions that they will transfer to following graduation from the program.

To qualify as a homeport (or training site), activities must:

- Project availability of a suitable government position for Trainees who successfully complete the program;
- Identify an individual who will be each Trainee's Financial Mentor, or FM. (Note: No individual may Mentor more than two Trainees at one time.)
- Agree to provide the Trainee with an Individual Development Plan (IDP) that lays out the Trainee's entire 28-month training program, and that meets all program requirements; and,
- Agree to follow all program procedures.

Financial Mentor – FM – Responsibilities

Trainee Selection and Hiring

The formal hiring process may differ year to year, but will always involve the homeport selecting potential Trainees they wish to sponsor. The FMCPO will coordinate hiring, and will notify the homeport and each Mentor, in writing, once a Trainee has accepted the position. The letter to the Mentor will include the individual's application (OF-612 or Resume), a copy of the Manual and a master timesheet to be used throughout the Trainee's tenure in the program.

Trainees receive an "Entry on Duty" (EOD) package that will include all the necessary personnel, payroll and security forms required for in-processing. Each Mentor will also receive a pre-addressed FedEx label to use for returning EOD forms and checklists to the FMCPO. Upon receipt from the Mentor, the FMCPO will process all forms in the EOD package, including security clearances and visit requests. EOD information should be returned to the FMCPO within two days after the trainee reports on board.

The next sections note what each Mentor should do before the Trainees get to the homeport, immediately after the Trainee arrives, during the 28-month program and just before graduation and placement with the homeport.

Before the Trainee arrives

The Mentor should ensure that the homeport command is ready for their Trainee. This includes, but is not limited to the following:

- Appropriate work space
- Computer, with internet access
- Other necessary office equipment
- DON Email account
- Necessary homeport passes, permits, etc.

When the Trainee arrives – Entry on Duty (EOD) actions

When the Trainee arrives at the homeport, the Mentor has several specific FMCPO actions to complete, along with whatever actions are required by their own activity. These are detailed more completely on the "Financial Mentor's Homeport Orientation Checklist" located in the Manual, and include:

- Ensure the Trainee receives homeport orientation;
- Ensure homeport personnel office conducts courtesy in-processing of Trainee
Assist the Trainee in processing an application for a Government-issued Travel Card (Note: this is a critical, as Trainees have frequent, long TDY rotations);
- Assign a homeport Timekeeper for the Trainee;
- Ensure Timekeeper information and signature cards are returned with other EOD forms;

- Ensure Trainee has a copy of the National Security Personnel System (NSPS) Business Rules, and has read and understands them;
- Completes the "Financial Mentor's Homeport Orientation Checklist", including signatures from the Mentor and the Trainee, and returns the completed checklist to the FMCPO within five working days of the Trainee's EOD;
- Ensure the appropriate homeport individual (this can be the Mentor) completes and signs the "EOD Checklist;"
- Ensure the Trainee reads, understands and signs the statement concerning health care on the "EOD Checklist," and,

Immediately after EOD and continuing

The Mentor's responsibilities continue as the Trainees move through their 28-month training program. Some of these may only need to be done once, but most are recurring:

- Establish the Trainee's Individual Development Plan (IDP);
- Provide educational and development counseling, on entry and throughout the program;
- Provide homeport approval of all training requests before submission to the FMCPO;
- Contact every rotation or work assignment supervisor at least six weeks before the Trainee is to arrive, and remind them of the assignment and the expected results; remind them if there are any performance, conduct, or other issues, they need to be documented and highlighted immediately to the mentor;
- Conduct periodic and annual performance reviews; and,
- Offer general counsel and assistance, answer questions, provide formal and non-formal career guidance.

Just before Graduation

When the Trainee graduates they will be placed in the position identified by the homeport when that Trainee was initially hired. Several steps are needed for this to happen. The Mentor's responsibilities are:

- Provide written placement plans to the FMCPO not less than 60 days before the Trainee is to graduate;
- Submit a Request for Personnel Action (SF-52) indicating, "conversion from excepted service appointment to competitive service appointment." (Note: the homeport originates the SF-52.)

The Individual Development Plan – IDP

General IDP Guidance

A Trainee's IDP is their personalized program of development that details how the Trainee will acquire the relevant knowledge and skills needed for them to succeed as financial managers in the DON, both in their homeport position and throughout their career. The IDP should specify the knowledge and skills needed for their target position and list in chronological order all on-the-job training (OJT) the Trainee is to complete – homeport and rotational work assignments – as well as any academic training the Trainee needs to successfully complete the program.

Creating the IDP is the Mentor's responsibility, but should be done in consultation with the trainee. It is a guide designed from the outset to provide the meaningful and relevant training experiences that will bring the Trainee to full performance in their target position. It can be changed, when absolutely necessary, but all proposed changes must be formally approved by the FMCPO, and must comply with overall program requirements.

Each IDP will include the following, as detailed more completely in the Manual:

- Cover page and Statement of purpose
- One-page schedule of all OJT work assignments
- One-page description of each OJT assignment, noting the specific objectives for that assignment
- One-page listing of all required and desired academic training

IDPs are to be completed and submitted to the FMCPO for approval not later than 30 days after the Trainee's EOD. It is a good idea for Mentors to have their Trainee's IDP done in draft form prior to the Trainee's arrival at the homeport. At the least, Mentors should know which OJT rotations the Trainee will be given and the training that will be required. This information can be gleaned from the target position requirements and the Trainee's resume.

OJT Work Assignments

Work assignments in the IDP must be designed so that requirements of the trainee's homeport and DON-wide financial management functions are captured. To provide this overall understanding of financial management in the DON, certain rotational assignments are mandatory. They can be completed in any order.

- DFAS (preferred), or an Authorized Accounting Activity (AAA)
- Human Resources Office
- Auditing – either with the Naval Audit Service or the local Inspector General office
- Contracting

- One echelon above the homeport:

Echelon 2 and above major commands – an assignment with OASN (FM&C), OSD or OMR, an additional assignment with a field activity; these rotations should generally be done in the second year of the program;

Echelon 3 and below commands – an assignment with the major command HQ

Academic Training

Academic training includes certain required courses, and may also include other training specific to a Trainee's target position. Required training includes the following – many are available on-line:

- NSPS 101
- Fiscal or Appropriations Law
- Principles of Department of the Navy Budgeting (PNB)
- Navy Working Capital Fund 101
- Funds Usage Documents (FUD)
- FM 101
- Basic Statistics (if not completed in college)
- Oral Communications (if not completed in college)

Required training is discussed in more detail in the Manual.

Funding OJT and Training

The FMCPO funds all Trainee travel and training for mandatory rotations and all required training. Other rotational assignments or training may be provided to a Trainee. Any rotations beyond the mandatory assignments, however, must be formally approved by the FMCPO – if travel is required it must be funded by the homeport. Training beyond that required by the program may be provided by the homeport, at its expense.

Evaluation of Trainees

Evaluation of a Trainee's performance and development happens at periodic intervals throughout their tenure in the program. There are two separate and complementary processes for Mentors and OJT work assignment supervisors to use when evaluating Trainee; the PRC and formal NSPS reviews.

Performance Review Checklist

The most frequently applied evaluation procedure is the "Performance Review Checklist" (PRC), which is completed after every OJT rotational work assignment. The PRC can be found in the Manual. It offers an opportunity for systematic evaluation of and feedback on a Trainee's performance during each work assignment or rotation.

Trainee performance is measured against the objectives set by the Mentor for each rotation or assignment when the IDP was developed, and relate back to the requirements of the Trainee's target position. The PRC provides the opportunity for the objectives and rating standards to be discussed by the Mentor, the work assignment supervisor and the Trainee, before the Trainee starts an assignment. Both the Trainee and the work assignment supervisor are to sign and date the PRC when the assignment begins. This ensures that all parties know what is expected from the assignment, and enables the Trainee to monitor his/her performance on an ongoing basis.

At the end of each assignment, the Trainee and the work assignment supervisor discuss the Trainee's rating for the assignment, and both sign and date the form. The Trainee is to provide the signed form to their Mentor, and given the opportunity to discuss it.

NSPS Reviews

Trainees are in NSPS, regardless of whether or not their homeport is in NSPS. More detailed information can be found in the NSPS Business Rules. Mentors should ensure that their Trainee has a copy of these rules, and has read and understands them.

Mentor Responsibilities for Trainee Evaluation

Each Mentor:

- Reviews the Trainee's performance using the PRC and NSPS;
- Recommends retention or removal, as warranted; and,
- Recommends pay increases, where warranted.

Mentors should review all PRCs carefully. Performance and or disciplinary problems should be dealt with immediately, and must be documented. Copies of all such documentation must be sent to the FMCPO. It is also important to review PRCs when received. Early detection of problems a Trainee is having in an area – whether in skills or other issues – can result in improvements if dealt with quickly. Any concerns should also be indicated during the appropriate NSPS review.

It should be noted that as Excepted Service employees, Trainees are in a probationary period for the first twenty-four months (two years) they are in the program, and can be removed from the program if warranted and after a review of the pertinent documentation. After one year in the program, however, Trainees hired with Veteran's Preference, while still considered probationary employees, have certain appeal rights, as detailed in the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR, Title 5, Part 752). As probationary employees, however, all Trainees can and will be removed from the FMTP if their performance is not up to program standards. Mentors should ensure that Trainees continue to meet the standards of the FMTP.

FMCPD Points of Contact

Janice Travis	<i>Program Director</i>
Sandi Palmer & Blanche Hall	<i>Individual Development Plans – IDPs</i>
Gina Coggins	<i>Security, Travel, Training</i>
Blanche Hall	<i>Student Loan Repayment</i>
Debbie Startzel	<i>Payroll, Travel Claims</i>
Laura Holmes	<i>NSPS</i>