



United States Department of the Interior
FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
Fire Management Branch
National Interagency Fire Center
3833 South Development Avenue
Boise, Idaho 83705



Refer to: FMB120070

December 13, 2012

To: Regional Fire Management Coordinators, Regions 1-8
From: ^{Acting} Chief, Branch of Fire Management 
Subject: Guidance (Update) for Office of Wildland Fire Coordination Policy Memorandum 2011-2, Department of the Interior Fire Boot Stipend

This memorandum provides eligibility requirements and payment procedures for the Wildland Fire Boot Stipend and supersedes Branch of Fire Management Memo *FMB 120020* dated February 12, 2012.

The payment of a one-hundred dollar (\$100) annual stipend, based on a calendar year, is authorized for employees holding a valid Incident Qualification Card with a fitness rating of moderate or arduous as per "*Office of Wildland Fire Coordination Policy Memorandum 2011-2 - Department of the Interior Wildland Fire Boot Stipend.*" Validity of the card is determined by the fitness expiration date on the card. This authorization includes Permanent Full Time (PFT), Term, Career Conditional, Pathways, Temporary, Collateral Duty, and Casual employees hired using the Administratively Determined (AD) hiring authority.

The Unit's Fire Management Officers (FMOs) are responsible for determining who is eligible for the stipend and shall track who receives the boot stipend each calendar year. To ensure that duplicate payments are not made, supervisors of transferred employees should check with the employee's previous home unit before issuing the annual stipend. The boot stipend payment is considered a taxable fringe benefit and shall be processed as follows:

Permanent Full Time Employees (PFT), Term, Career Seasonal, Pathways, and Temporary Employees

Preparedness and Hazardous Fuels Reduction (HFR) funded employees, submit boot stipend requests by mailing a completed FWS Form 3-206 to the National Business Center (NBC) identifying the home unit cost center and the sub-activity used to fund the employee's base salary with the employee's regional identifier and the project code of **FFBT0**.

For eligible collateral duty employees whose base salary is non-fire funded, the annual stipend will be paid for using the applicable Preparedness or HFR funds. If a collateral duty employee's home unit does not receive preparedness or HFR funding, then the Cost Center for that employee should reflect the zone FMO's home unit.

Administratively Determined (AD) Employees

It is required to offer the boot stipend to AD employees hired into a position requiring a moderate or arduous fitness rating. To process the boot stipend for an AD, the home/hiring unit should follow the steps below.

1. Complete FWS Form 3-206 with authorized signature. A digital signature is acceptable.
2. Attach FWS Form 3-206 to casual's Emergency Firefighter Time Report (OF-288).
3. Indicate in the Remarks/Commissary section of the OF-288 the current year, "Boot Stipend" and the amount of the reimbursable (\$100).
4. Identify the cost string used to charge the boot stipend.
5. Send the FWS Form 3-206 and the OF-288 to the DOI Casual Payment Center (CPC).

The Home/Hiring Unit Cost Accounting Code on the OF-288 shall include the hiring unit's cost center, regional identifier of Home/Hiring Unit, and the project code of **ADBT0**. The Work Breakdown Structure (WBS) should reference either suppression (FF.F2) or HFR (FF.F31) funds.

The CPC will track the entry to eliminate duplicate reimbursement in the same calendar year.

Any questions regarding this program should be directed to Billie Farrell, Administrative Officer, Fire Management Branch at 208-387-5536 or Billie_Farrell@fws.gov or Ted Mason, FWS National Fire Safety Specialist at 208-387-5831 or Theodore_Mason@fws.gov.

Attachment 1 - OWFC Policy Memorandum 2011-2

Attachment 2 - FWS - Form 3-206 (Firefighter Boot Stipend Reimbursement)

cc: Jim Kurth, Chief, National Wildlife Refuge System
Jeff Rupert, Chief, Division of Natural Resources and Conservation Planning
Rebekah Giddings (WO-HR)
Casual Payment Center (CPC)

Date: _____

Memorandum

To: National Business Center
Payroll Operations
P.O. Box 272030
Mail Code: **D-2661**
Denver, Colorado 80227

From: Fish and Wildlife Service
Region: _____

Subject: Report of Taxable Benefit (**Firefighter Boot Stipend
Reimbursement**)

Employee Name: _____

Employee SSN: _____

Department: IN Bureau: 15 Subbureau: _____

Amount of Entitlement:
\$ _____ (not to exceed \$100 annual)

Cost Structure Number: _____ - _____ - _____
(Work Breakdown Structure) (Fund) (Cost Center)

Fiscal Officer: _____
(Signature and Title)

Supervisor: _____
(Signature and Title)

Date: _____ Telephone Number: () _____

PRIVACY ACT STATEMENT

Information on this form is protected by the Privacy Act. Disclosure may be made only to authorized persons according to Title 5 U.S.C. 552a(b).



United States Department of the Interior

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20240

OCT 14 2011

Memorandum

To: Director, Bureau of Indian Affairs
Director, Bureau of Land Management
Director, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Director, National Park Service

From: Kim A. Thorsen, Deputy Assistant Secretary – Law Enforcement, Security, and
Emergency Management 

Subject: Office of Wildland Fire Coordination Policy Memorandum 2011-2
Department of the Interior Wildland Fire Boot Stipend

The Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) recently settled an arbitration case with the Federal Indian Service Employees (FISE) regarding the purchase of wildland fire boots. During the proceedings, the attorney for FISE wrote to the Assistant Secretary for Occupational Safety and Health in the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL), contending "... the Department of the Interior pays for these boots for the wildland firefighters employed by the National Park Service and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (almost all of whom are non-Indian) while it forces the predominately American Indian firefighting crews who work alongside them to pay for their own boots." The FISE asked the DOL to "escalate this to the Secretarial level and ask Secretary Solis to contact Secretary Salazar directly" for "prompt attention" and an "immediate response" from the Department of the Interior (DOI) to their complaint.

The National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG) establishes wildland fire standards for use by the bureaus and the NWCG Wildland Fire Boot standard has been adopted by each bureau as appropriate for safe work on the fireline. The NWCG concluded that protective footwear is very personal in nature and can be used by employees off the job site. Therefore, appropriate boots should be a condition of employment for firefighting positions. Boots should be purchased by the employee prior to employment.

Within the DOI, guidelines for purchasing boots for firefighters have indeed varied by bureau. However, the bureaus and Office of Wildland Fire, in consultation with the USDA Forest Service, have reached a consensus on the appropriate level and mechanism for providing financial assistance to all employees who, as a condition of employment, are required to purchase wildland fire boots. Our new policy will allow a \$100.00 per year stipend to qualified firefighters as described in the attachment. If you have questions or need additional information, please contact Kirk Rowdabaugh, 202-606-3447.

Attachment: Office of Wildland Fire Coordination Policy Memorandum 2011-2,
Department of the Interior Wildland Fire Boot Stipend

Office of Wildland Fire Coordination Policy 2011-2
Wildland Fire Boot Stipend

Purpose:

To provide Departmental guidance to the bureaus and offices on the payment of a yearly stipend to employees for wildland fire boots.

Background:

The National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG) establishes wildland fire standards for use by the bureaus, and the NWCG Wildland Fire Boot standard has been adopted by each bureau as appropriate for safe work on the fireline. The NWCG has also concluded that protective footwear is very personal in nature and can be used by employees off the job site. Therefore, appropriate boots should be a condition of employment for firefighting positions and should be purchased by the employee prior to employment.

Scope:

This policy applies to all bureaus and offices within the Department, and to all employees, regardless of their employment status.

Time Frame:

This policy is effective January 1, 2012 and remains in effect until rescinded or modified.

Policy:

The payment of a one-hundred dollar (\$100.00) per year stipend is authorized for employees holding a valid Incident Qualification Card with a Fitness Rating of moderate or arduous, and who, as a condition of employment, are required to purchase wildland fire boots that satisfy the standards described in the *Interagency Standards for Fire and Fire Aviation Operations* and the *Wildland Fire and Aviation Program Management and Operations Guide (BIA)*. Validity of the Incident Qualification Card is determined by the Fitness Expiration date on the card.

Personnel hired under the Administratively-Determined (AD) authority who qualify will receive the stipend at time of payment following their first fire assignment in an IQCS qualified position requiring an arduous or moderate fitness rating in each calendar year. DOI bureaus and offices will follow established payment processes for disbursement of stipends for all other personnel assigned to wildland fires.



Kim A. Thorsen
Deputy Assistant Secretary
Law Enforcement, Security and Emergency Management

10/14/11
Date

Distribution:

Director, Bureau of Indian Affairs
Director, Bureau of Land Management
Director, Fish & Wildlife Service
Director, National Park Service
DOI Fire Executive Council
DOI Bureau Fire Directors