

**Department of Transformation and Shared Services**

Governor Sarah Huckabee Sanders

Secretary Leslie Fisker

Director Kay Barnhill

November 15, 2023

The Honorable Breanne Davis, Co-Chairperson  
 The Honorable Mark Berry, Co-Chairperson  
 Uniform Personnel Classification and  
 Compensation Plan Subcommittee  
 Arkansas Legislative Council  
 State Capitol Building, Room 315  
 Little Rock, Arkansas 72201

Dear Senator Davis and Representative Berry:

The Office of Personnel Management (OPM) submits a request from the Disability Determination for Social Security Administration (DDSSA)

The Disability Determination for Social Security Administration is requesting an OPM differential of up to 10% as established by Arkansas Code Annotated § 21-5-221 (g). DDSSA is requesting this OPM differential for the classifications listed below:

<b><u>CLASS</u></b>			<b><u>GRADE</u></b>	<b><u>SALARY RANGE</u></b>
<b><u>CODE</u></b>	<b><u>TITLE</u></b>			
X143C	DDSSA Claims Adjudicator		GS06	\$36,155 - \$52,425
X201C	DDSSA Adjudicative Specialist		GS05	\$32,405 - \$46,987
C049C	DDSSA Adjudicative Assistant		GS04	\$29,046 - \$42,117

**JUSTIFICATION**

DDSSA is requesting an OPM differential primarily for employees that perform additional work associated with the processing of disability cases. There are still over 8,200 disability cases backlogged and have almost doubled from 24,372 in 2020 to 46,367 today. DDSSA already has approval to use a differential rate of pay for working additional disability cases. The use of a differential rate pay to compensate employees that work these additional disability cases will significantly help reduce this backlog.

Office of Personnel Management

501 Woodlane Street, Suite 205 \* Little Rock, AR 72201 \* 501.682.1753

The Honorable Breanne Davis, Co-Chairperson  
The Honorable Mark Berry, Co-Chairperson  
November 15, 2023  
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**RECOMMENDATION**

The Office of Personnel Management (OPM) has reviewed this request from Disability Determination for Social Security Administration and recommends that the certification differential of up to 10% be established for the following classifications:

<b><u>CLASS CODE</u></b>	<b><u>TITLE</u></b>	<b><u>GRADE</u></b>
X143C	DDSSA Claims Adjudicator	GS06
X201C	DDSSA Adjudicative Specialist	GS05
C049C	DDSSA Adjudicative Assistant	GS04

The cost for the Disability Determination for Social Security Administration OPM differential is approximately \$694,288 and the department states that they have sufficient funding to support this request.

Your consideration of this request is greatly appreciated.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
STATE PERSONNEL DIRECTOR

10/30/23  
DATE

KB/lh:1-2



SARAH HUCKABEE SANDERS  
Governor

October 10, 2023

Kay Barnhill, Director  
Department of Transformation and Shared Services  
Office of Personnel Management  
501 Woodlane, Suite 205  
Little Rock, AR 72201

Dear Ms. Barnhill,

In March 2023, Disability Determination for Social Security Administration (DDSSA) had over 16,000 disability cases in backlog, which was due to a variety of factors, including issues related to the pandemic, increased attrition, and a new case operating system that was introduced before it was entirely functional. The use of a differential rate of pay to compensate employees that elect to work additional disability cases has helped to reduce the backlog, but it is still over 8,200 disability cases. In addition to the backlog, DDSSA's pending cases have almost doubled, increasing from 24,372 in September 2020 to 46,367 currently.

In order to manage this massive increase of disability cases, DDSSA developed new business processes, in which some of the job duties performed by adjudicators are now performed by administrative personnel. As with adjudicators, the work performed by administrative personnel is also measured for self-management, accuracy, quality, thoroughness, and technical skills. Also, like adjudicators, some administrative personnel can efficiently perform additional work during their normal workday.

The use of a differential rate of pay to compensate employees that work additional disability cases continues to help with the backlog. As additional cases are assigned, the workloads of administrative personnel increase accordingly. As such, DDSSA is requesting the flexibility to use a differential rate of pay (up to 10%) to provide administrative personnel with the same opportunity to perform additional work associated with the processing of disability cases.

DDSSA already has approval to use a differential rate of pay for working additional disability cases. I hope you will consider our request to expand the use of a differential rate of pay to the administrative personnel that perform additional work, as it will assist in reducing the amount of time that a claimant is waiting for a medical decision on their disability case.

Sincerely,

Arthur Boutiette  
Agency Director

1975  
**STATE OF ARKANSAS**

*Disability Determination for Social Security Administration*

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LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS 72201  
TELEPHONE 501-682-3030

OCT 18 2023

ARTHUR BOUTIETTE  
Director