

This serves to remind employees that the current leave year ends on January 12, 2013. By law, the maximum amount of annual leave that most employees may carry into the new leave year is 240 hours. Foreign Service employees overseas have a ceiling of 360 hours and Senior Executive Service (SES), Senior-Level (SL) and Scientific or Professional (ST) and Senior Foreign Service (SFS) employees have a leave ceiling of 720 hours or the employee's personal ceiling.

"Use or lose" leave (annual leave) is the excess annual leave above an employee's leave ceiling and is subject to forfeiture at the end of the leave year. Employees who have "use or lose" annual leave must schedule the annual leave for use in writing no later than December 1, 2012, to avoid forfeiture at the end of the leave year. "Use or lose" annual leave may be considered for restoration if the leave was forfeited due to an exigency of the public business, administrative error, or sickness of the employee only if the leave was scheduled and approved in writing by December 1, 2012. "Use or lose" annual leave scheduled by December 1, 2012, and subsequently canceled, does not automatically qualify for restoration. If an employee has an opportunity to reschedule and use the "use or lose" annual leave that has been cancelled and does not do so before the end of the leave year, the leave is not subject to restoration. All requests for leave restoration are to be submitted via Form CD-479, Request for Restoration of Annual Leave, to the Department of Commerce's Human Resources Operations Center in room 7412. Please note that requests for annual leave restoration may not be submitted for consideration until the leave year ends.

The September 2001 Presidential Proclamation declaring a National Emergency by Reason of Certain Terrorist Attacks is still deemed an exigency of the public business for restoring forfeited annual leave. Employees who forfeit "use or lose" annual leave because their services are required for the national emergency are entitled to have their leave restored.

Employees who have "use or lose" annual leave may also consider donating excess annual leave to approved leave recipients under the Department's Voluntary Leave Transfer Program. Additional information on restoring annual leave or donating annual leave under the Leave Transfer Program is available at:  
[http://hr.commerce.gov/Practitioners/CompensationAndLeave/DEV01\\_006139](http://hr.commerce.gov/Practitioners/CompensationAndLeave/DEV01_006139) and  
[http://hr.commerce.gov/Practitioners/CompensationAndLeave/DEV01\\_006149](http://hr.commerce.gov/Practitioners/CompensationAndLeave/DEV01_006149),  
respectively.

**For additional information or question, please contact the Office of Compensation and Benefits at (202) 482-3827.**