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CBP hopes new bonuses will convince Border Patrol agents to stick around



By Eric White (<https://federalnewsnetwork.com/author/eric-white/>) @FEDERALNEWSCAST (<https://twitter.com/FEDERALNEWSCAST>)

April 25, 2019 9:39 am 5 min read

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- Customs and Border Protection will start paying Border Patrol agents a little more for sticking around. A new retention incentive will pay GS-12 and GS-13 agents a quarterly bonus equal to 5% of their base pay, if they enter into a 12-month service agreement. The agreements will become available in May. (*Customs and Border Protection* (<https://www.cbp.gov/newsroom/national-media-release/cbp-announces-retention-incentive-united-states-border-patrol-agents>))
- President Donald Trump signed a long-awaited executive order to transfer the governmentwide security clearance program from the Office of Personnel Management, to the Defense Department. The EO renames the Defense Security Service as the Defense Counterintelligence and Security Agency, and designates it as the new governmentwide security clearance provider. The EO instructs the OPM director and Defense secretary to begin transferring OPM people, resources, funding and IT to the Pentagon starting June 24. The existing National Background Investigations Bureau will conduct security clearances through Sept. 30. (*Federal News Network* (<https://federalnewsnetwork.com/workforce/2019/04/trump-makes-security-clearance-transfer-official-with-executive-order/>))
- Employees at the Agriculture Department's Economic Research Service are considering taking steps to unionize to maybe help keep their headquarters from moving. They'll vote May 9 on whether they should form a collective bargaining unit under the American Federation of Government Employees. The National Institute of Food and Agriculture will also be voting later in May. AFGE said it's not promising employees that it can block the proposed relocation of ERS and NIFA outside of Washington, but said a bargaining unit would give them a louder voice to protest the relocation. (*Federal News Network*)
- A former State Department employee pleads guilty to conspiring with Chinese agents. The Justice Department said Candace Claiborne accepted tens of thousands of dollars in gifts and benefits from the two foreign agents, in exchange for copies of internal State Department documents, concerning topics such as U.S. economic strategies. (*Department of Justice* (<https://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/former-state-department-employee-pleads-guilty-conspiring-foreign-agents>))
- Before the end of this year, the State Department's inspector general will issue a final decision on the legality of an agency reorganization proposed under former Sec. Rex Tillerson. In a new work plan, State IG Steve Linick said his office will determine whether the proposed reorg complies with federal law, and guidance from the Office of Management and Budget. Tillerson proposed the agency reorg under an executive order Trump signed in 2017, to streamline agency operations. (*Department of State Office of Inspector General* (https://www.stateoig.gov/system/files/state_oig_work_plan_for_fys_2019-2020.pdf))

Information Quality Act. It's a 2001 law aimed at ensuring the data used in agency research is to refresh their policies on what research requires peer review, and send annual peer-review and Regulatory Affairs. The memo also tasks agencies with releasing information on the quality of their data to the public. (*White House* (<https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/M-19-15.pdf>)) (<https://federalnewsnetwork.com>)

- A new chief technologist website (<https://www.cto.mil/?source=GovDelivery>) from the Defense Department, looks to keep members of the military, industry, academia, and allied partners in the loop with the Pentagon's research and development efforts. DoD hopes the site will help it engage with a broader research community.
- An industry day for a major IT contract with the Army Corps of Engineers IT will be held May 22. USACE is looking for ways to support its 39,000 users of its more than 1,500 sites and two data centers. Bloomberg Government projects (<https://www.bgov.com/core/news/#!/articles/PQFBGK6TTDS3>) the Modern Information Technology Services contract could generate between \$250 and 500 million. (*FedBizOpps* (https://www.fbo.gov/index?s=opportunity&mode=form&id=fa8e6eb8512dadb393777eac58cc0209&tab=core&_cview=1))
- The Army's chief data officer is leaving for a similar job in the Department of the Navy. Tom Sasala's last day working for the Army will be on Friday. His new position will be the director of Data Management in the Office of the Chief Management Officer. Sasala has been in his current role since April 2017. Before that, he was the chief technology officer at the Pentagon's Joint Service Provider. At least for now, the new Navy position won't come with the official title of chief data officer. The Navy has been mulling whether to designate a CDO for several years.
- The Federal Data Strategy is entering the final clearance stage. Federal CIO Suzette Kent said she's hopeful it will be out in the next 30 days. She said the strategy, and initial guidance that describes how agencies should implement the Foundations of Evidence-Based Policymaking Act, will be tied together. The guidance and the strategy will also describe the role of the chief data officer, and how the CDO should work with the CIO and privacy officer.
- The Bureau of Fiscal Service hangs out the "innovations wanted" sign and opens its doors to industry. The Office of Financial Innovation and Transformation in Treasury's Bureau of Fiscal Service is inviting contractors to provide topic-specific presentations on Friday afternoons starting this month and lasting through September. OFIT said the goal of these sessions is to educate federal financial management professionals and possibly identify new projects governmentwide. Vendors are asked to bring ideas and technologies to solve current business problems or improve federal financial management processes through innovations or emerging technologies. OFIT is interested in topics ranging from identity and access management to digital labor and AI to data analytics. (*Department of the Treasury* (<https://fiscal.treasury.gov/fit/fit-mf-innovation-program.html>))
- Two Trump administration efforts to secure the federal supply chain get going in earnest this month. First, the Department of Homeland Security's Supply Chain Risk Management Task Force held an all day meeting Wednesday to develop plans and recommendations to improve information sharing and the use of data to make risk-based decisions. Coming next week, the Federal Acquisition Security Council will hold its first meeting to enhance the government's supply chain risk management practices and begin work on a complementary set of work streams as the DHS/industry effort.
- A former employee working for a NASA contractor is found to have falsified pollution test results at the agency's Wallops Island facility in Virginia. Court documents said Monica Borowicz tampered the results of testing for Total Kjeldahl Nitrogen, which is pollution from storm-water runoff and sewage that can cause algae blooms. (*Associated Press* (<https://www.apnews.com/04f07f23947643ffa445979225532a45>))
- A Transportation Department decision means Americans could soon see packages literally dropping in on them. The Federal Aviation Administration gave the go-head to a consortium to offer commercial package delivery by drone. A collaboration of charter jet operator Wing Aviation, the Mid-Atlantic Aviation Partnership and Virginia Tech received certification to operate in Blacksburg, Virginia. It's the first such certification under a DOT initiative called Integration Pilot Program, aimed at safe, unmanned aerial operations in U.S. airspace. (*Federal Aviation Administration* (https://www.faa.gov/news/press_releases/news_story.cfm?newsId=23554))

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Eric White is news anchor and Federal Drive producer at Federal News Network. Follow @FEDERALNEWSCAST (<https://twitter.com/FEDERALNEWSCAST>)

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Trump makes security clearance transfer official with executive order

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