Guidelines for the Mentor

Introduction:
Mentoring is an exchange of knowledge gained through working experiences. It is designed to build relationships between experienced employees and employees striving to succeed within ARS. It is structured to identify and meet the developmental and professional growth needs of the Office Professionals within ARS.

Goals and Objectives:
1. Assist new Office Professionals in becoming acclimated to ARS through a strong mentoring program.
2. Evaluate effectiveness of Office Professionals by:
   - Recommending topics where training is needed.
   - Increasing awareness of training opportunities.
   - Encouraging personnel to utilize the Individual Development Plan and training programs available.

Mentoring Process:
The process requires a high level of communication between Mentor and Mentee. The process provides an opportunity to enhance natural skills and build strengths in weaker areas. Mentoring takes many forms. It can be formal, informal, planned or spontaneous. Keep in mind that many options are available for developing knowledge, skills, and abilities. In many cases, employees learn better by *doing* rather than just *listening*. Keep options open when working with your Mentee and seek advice from Sherri Buxton and other Mentors when needed. Be discrete and respectful when discussing Mentee progress.

Guidelines, Resources, Tools for the Mentor:
1. Make contact with your assigned Mentee and their Research Leader (RL) to:
   - Check on your Mentee's areas of expertise/knowledge (use Mentor/Mentee Checklist).
   - Determine areas needing training/assistance: both by using the Mentor/Mentee Checklist and monitoring work products.
   - Provide links to Midwest Area Council for Office Professionals (MWACOP) page.
   - Develop a method of communication between you and your mentee (be sure to include RL and AO on emails as appropriate).
2. Check with the Location Administrative Officer (AO) to see how procedures differ at that Location so you can give the best guidance to your Mentee.
3. If this is a current ARS employee that was reclassified into a PSA position, check with Area contacts for ARIS, OSQR, RPES, Travel, etc., to see if the individual needs additional guidance in any particular area(s).

Mentor/Mentee Checklist	
	Comments/Date Covered
Portal Overview	
Organizational Structure	
Key roles - Unit/Location; how they interact	
Reporting structure & information flow: • The Unit/Location	
• Center (if applicable)	
• Area Office & Headquarters (HQ)	
Role in providing customer service	
AgLearn	
REE Directory	
CRIS Allocation Tracking System/Status of Funds (CATS/SOF)	
Annual Resource Management Planning System (ARMPS)	
Correspondence/mail	
Records management	
Office software packages (Word, PowerPoint, Excel, Access, Outlook, SharePoint, Teams, Zoom, etc.)	
Proofreading (manuscripts, correspondence, etc.)	
Onboarding (if applicable – contact Location AO for procedures): • New Employee Unit orientation	
• IT request	
• LincPass	
Outlook office calendars and schedules	
Unit staff meetings	
Corporate Property Automated Information System (CPAIS)	
Bi-Annual Asset Inventory	
Damaged/Excess Property	
Off-site Use of Equipment/Property Pass	
Time & Attendance/WebTA: • Leave Requests	
• Premium Pay Requests	
• Stored Accounting	
• Split T&As	
• Employee Validation	
• Supervisor Certification	
• Takeover Employee	
• Reports	
Pay & Leave: • Premium Pay	

	Comments/Date Covered
Pay & Leave continued: • Leave	
• Paid Holiday Time Off	
• Administrative Leave	
• Telework	
• Leave Transfer Program	
Performance Management: • Enterprise Performance Management App (EPMA)	
• AD-435s (performance plans)	
• Individual Development Plans (IDPs)	
• Quarterly Reviews	
• Appraisals	
General Personnel: • Recruitment	
• Position Descriptions (PDs)	
• SF-52s (personnel actions)	
• SY CAT 1 Three-Year Progress Reviews	
• Research Position Evaluation System (RPES)	
• Promotions	
• Within Grade Increase (WGI)	
• AD-287-2 (award)/AD-3115 (Quality Step Increase-QSI)	
• Telework Database/AD-3018s (TED/telework agreements)	
• Retirement	
• HR Dashboard	
• Ethics: o SEB-102 (conflict of interest for agreements)	
o SEB-106 (official duty outside activity)	
o AD-1101s (sponsored travel)	
o Fundraisers	
o Brackets/Pools	
o Copyright law (see Ethics website)	
o ARS-213 (Congressional Office communication)	
o OGE-278 or OGE-450 (financial disclosure)	
USA Staffing System	
Portal Entries	
Agricultural Research Information System (ARIS)	
General ARIS: • ARS-115 (request to publish)	
• Detail by Author Reports (DBA)	
• AD-416/417 (agreement)	

	Comments/Date Covered
General ARIS continued: • Renumbering Projects	
• AD-421 (annual report)	
• Funds Transfers (permanent and temporary)	
• Requesting Source of Funds code	
• Requesting journal code	
• Patent application	
• Invention disclosure	
Incoming Agreements (Incoming Funds Records-IFRs): • Interagency Reimbursable Agreement (IRA)	
• Reimbursable Cooperative Agreement (RCA)	
• Trust Fund Cooperative Agreement (TFCA)	
Outgoing Agreements: • Non-Assistance Cooperative Agreement (NACA)	
• Cooperative Agreement (CA)	
• Non-Funded Cooperative Agreement (NFCA)	
• Research Support Agreement (RSA)	
• Grant Agreement (GA)	
• Outgoing Interagency Agreement (OIA)	
• Memoranda of Understanding (MOU)	
• Standard Cooperative Agreement (StCA)	
• Intellectual Property Agreement	
Office of Technology Transfer (OTT) Agreements: • Confidentiality Agreement	
• Material Transfer Agreement (MTA)	
• Data Transfer Agreement (DTA)	
• Material Transfer Research Agreement (MTRA)	
• Cooperative Research and Development Agreement (CRADA)	
Student Outreach Database (SOD): • ARS or Non-ARS Postdocs Working in ARS Facilities	
• ARS Students Working in ARS Facilities	
• Non-ARS Students Working in ARS Facilities	
• Non-ARS Students/Postdocs Working in Other Facilities	
• SY as Advisor	
• Adjunct or Other Professor Appointments	
• Mentorship	
• Visiting Scientist	
• Student Tours/Student Visits to ARS Locations	
• Presentations to Schools	
• Science Fair Participation	

	Comments/Date Covered
Student Outreach Database (SOD) continued: • Facilities and Equipment	
• Other Outreach Activities	
Office of Scientific Quality Review (OSQR) (5-year plan)	
Letter of Intent (LOI)	
Templates & Area Policy	
Portal Entries	
Requisitions (CATS & AD-700s)	
Purchase Cards (applications, training, and usage)	
NDAA-889 Certifications	
Required Sources	
US Bank on-line reconciling (AXOL)	
Integrated Acquisition System (IAS)	
Purchasing Vehicles	
WEX Fleet Cards usage	
Concur	
Domestic Travel	
Foreign Travel	
Acceptance of funds from outside sources (Sponsored Travel)	
Non-Federal travelers	
Passport applications/renewals	
Visa applications/renewals	
High Threat Security Training (HTST) or Counter Threat Awareness Training (FAS-CTAT)	
Travel Cards (applications, training, and usage)	
Approved hotels	
ARS Travel Information System (ATIS)	
Portal Entries	
J-1 Host Form	
Cover Letter	
Resume	
Letter of Invitation	
ARS-215 Form	
ARS-230 Form (optional for information gathering)	
Portal Entries	
MWACOP SOP Manual	
National Advisory Council for Office Professionals (NACOP) Resources	
Axon	