Payroll/Personnel Manual
Time and Attendance Procedures
Time and Attendance Instructions
http://dab.nfc.usda.gov/pubs/na-pubsmain.html

Title 1
Chapter 7
Section 3

Overview
STAR is a Windows-based application of the National Finance Center (NFC). STAR operates in a Windows environment requiring Windows 95 or higher, or Windows NT 4.0 or higher. This application is used to:

- Gather data entered by timekeepers for the purpose of recording attendance and leave and for calculating employee wages each pay period.
- Enter T&A data at any time during the pay period.
- Enter corrected/split T&A's.
- Perform certain edits to determine if the data is correct.
- Print T&A's to be reviewed and approved by supervisory personnel.
- Prepare T&A's for transmission to NFC.
- Create a transmit file to transmit T&A's to NFC.

Through the use of STAR and local telecommunication capabilities, agencies can prepare T&A's on their personal computers (PC's) and transmit them to NFC for processing. T&A transmission files are transmitted through a communication connection that the agency establishes with NFC. NFC assigns a unique 8-digit batch number to the transmitted T&A's and sends back to the agency a confirmation of the number of T&A's received. The confirmation is a summary reflecting the total number of 80-character records, total hours, and total transaction codes (TC's) received.

The T&A's are processed through the T&A Validation System (TIME) which reads, collects, edits, audits, and validates the data for payment. All errors encountered are reflected on an error list, and the T&A in question is placed in an error suspense file. The T&A is corrected by NFC and is processed through TIME again. After T&A's pass all edits and validate, the database is updated for subsequent payment processing.

Timely submission of T&A's is necessary because of the impact on the employee's pay. T&A's should be closed on the last day of the pay period and processed as soon as possible. T&A's should be transmitted to NFC no later than the Tuesday following the last day of the pay period.

Per agency request through CULPRPT, NFC provides the agencies' T&A Contact Points with CULPRPT Report P0099, Error Analysis For T&A Processing, generated by TIME. The T&A coordinators also receive a cumulative statistical report of T&A's processed.

Agencies can obtain information concerning updates to the Payroll/Personnel database through the Information/Research Inquiry System (IRIS) and the Payroll/Personnel Inquiry System (PINQ). For more information about IRIS and PINQ, see Title I, Chapter 15, IRIS, or Title VI, Chapter 4, Section 1, PINQ.

STAR Users
The System Administrator establishes STAR users in the Employee System (EMCP). Once the users are established, roles are given in the Permissions System (PRMS). PRMS is used to assign applicable permission level(s). There are five possible permission levels. An individual may have all five or any combination of the five permission levels. For more information see Title I, Chapter 24, Employee System (EMCP) or Title I, Chapter 25, Permissions System (PRMS).

Timekeeper. Allows the user to perform T&A functions; to print employee data; to convert data from the Personal Computer Time and Attendance Remote Entry System (PC–TARE) to STAR; to back up, restore, and archive employee and table data and to modify the accounting and pay period tables.

System Administrator. Creates and controls the user ID record for each authorized user; backs up and restores files; uses the Import/Export function; archives data; and converts data from PC–TARE to STAR.

Transmitter. Prepares a transmit file and establishes job control language (JCL).

Application Administrator. Maintains and updates tables and establishes contact points.

User Administrator. Assigns specific contact points for user access. Also, the agency must designate an individual(s) to download/install STAR, be responsible for safeguarding STAR at the agency location, provide guidance to users, and act as a liaison between STAR users and NFC for STAR matters. In addition, this individual is responsible for establishing transmission capabilities. For more information about computer security, see Title VI, Chapter 1, Security Access Procedures. STAR options available to a particular user are highlighted according to the assigned roles.

Record Retention Requirements
For T&A data electronically transmitted to NFC, agencies must maintain the certified T&A report (i.e., printout, worksheet, etc.) and all appropriate supporting documentation for a **6-year period** in compliance with General Records Schedule (GRS)–2 and the General Accounting Office (GAO) audit requirements.

NFC will maintain the personal payment history required in Fair Labor Standard Act cases and court-ordered restorations as cited in the supplemental authorization NC1–16–79–5 to GRS–2.

Hardware and Software Requirements
You will need the following equipment to run STAR:

- A PC capable of supporting Windows 95 or higher, or Windows NT 4.0 or higher.
- Windows 95 or higher, or Windows NT 4.0 or higher.
- Super Video Graphics Array (SVGA) monitor set to 800x600 resolution and small fonts.
- Inkjet printer or laser printer (with at least one megabyte of memory).
- STAR application software.

NOTE:
For complete instructions – Please refer to the NFC Time and Attendance Procedures Manual (dated September 2000 Chapter 7). If you do not have this manual, you can download it from the above listed website.