

2015 NLS FAQs

Q: What is the NOAA Leadership Seminar?

A: The NOAA Leadership Seminar (NLS) is a 4+ day residential training program for selected NOAA employees from all Line and Staff Offices, all occupations, from both the field and headquarters. The 2015 NLS will be the eleventh training program of its kind. To date, 1,373 NOAA employees have attended an iteration of the NLS. This year, the NLS will be held June 15-19, 2015, at the Robert H. Mollohan Research Center in Fairmont, WV. The theme is *Creating Powerful Partnerships: Positioning NOAA for Future Success*. Participants will develop their partnering skills, political savvy/external awareness, and influencing techniques.

Q: What is the target audience for the NLS?

A: Attendees are GS-13-14s (or equivalents). Offices may also send GS-12 or GS-15s (or equivalents) at their discretion. Employees who attended the 2014 NLS must wait a minimum of THREE YEARS before being eligible to attend another iteration of the NLS. Therefore, 2014 NLS participants are not eligible to attend the 2015 NLS.

Q: What is the cost for attending the NLS?

A: Travel and per diem costs (e.g., meals, lodging, and travel) will be covered by each attendee's own organization and project/task code or by a Line/Staff Office headquarters code if the LO/SO chooses to provide one. There is no tuition fee. All participants will be on travel orders and will be reimbursed for meals, lodging, and travel expenses.

Q: What accounting code information do I use on my travel orders?

A: Travel and per diem costs (e.g., meals, lodging, and travel) will be covered by each attendee's own organization and project/task code or by a Line/Staff Office headquarters code if the LO/SO chooses to provide one. We are not currently aware of any LO/SO providing centralized funding, but we suggest that you check with your LO/SO first. If your LO/SO is not providing centralized funding, it is the responsibility of your home office to provide an accounting code to cover your participation.

Q: Does my travel count against my office's travel ceiling?

A: Yes.

Q: What is the per diem rate in Fairmont, WV?

A: The per diem rate for Fairmont, WV is \$46 per day; with $\frac{3}{4}$ M&IE (\$34.50) authorized for travel days. For participants not requesting early arrival or late departure, per diem will total \$207.00. The lodging rate for Fairmont, WV is \$83 per night. Most NLS rooms will be over the per diem rate. You will receive instructions for the language to be included on your travel orders to justify reimbursement of actual lodging expenses.

Q: How do I get to Fairmont, WV?

A: Fairmont is an approximately 4-hour drive from the Washington, DC Metropolitan area. The nearest airport for field participants is Pittsburgh International Airport (PIT) in Pittsburgh, PA. From Pittsburgh, participants will need to rent a car for the 90-minute drive to Fairmont. Carpooling is encouraged and a list of participants will be available on the website by mid-April, 2015.

Q: Where should I stay?

A: NLS participants will stay in one of several offsite hotels in room blocks that have been pre-arranged. Each invitee will receive an e-mail with information on their assigned hotel and instructions for making their sleeping room reservations. Limited rooms for the book-end nights of Sunday, June 14, 2015 and Friday, June 19, 2015 have been reserved for NLS participants traveling long distances (typically from the West coast, Hawaii, and Alaska.) If you are requesting early arrival or late departure, you must obtain approval from your office.

Q: When should I plan to arrive? When does the NLS end?

A: The program begins at 3:00 pm with arrival and registration from 1:30 p.m. – 2:45 p.m. on Monday, June 15, 2015, and ends at 12:30 p.m. on Friday, June 19, 2015. Participants are expected to arrange their travel in order to attend the entire event.

Q: Is there an expected dress code for NLS attendees?

A: Business attire (e.g., coat and tie) is recommended for Monday, June 15, 2015. For the rest of the event, business casual dress is acceptable. We recommend you bring a sweater or light jacket as the temperature of the meeting rooms may vary.

For NOAA Commissioned Corps Officers, khakis will be the uniform of the day on Monday, June 15 and Tuesday, June 16, 2015. For the rest of the event, ODU is acceptable.

Q: Is there pre-work required to attend the NLS?

A: Yes. Participants will be required to complete the following pre-work prior to arrival:

- Writing Assignment: Prepare a 1-page written leadership example for the “Leadership in Action: Working Together across NOAA” break-out group exercise.
- Reading Assignment: Read five case studies and answer corresponding pre-work questions in preparation for the “Power, Influence, and Strategic Public Management within a Constitutional System” modules.

Note: Additional pre-work may be assigned.

Q: Who should I contact if I have additional questions?

A: Please contact Tracy Levstik, the NLS Program Manager, at: Tracy.Levstik@noaa.gov or:
303-497-4231.