Question: **What is a regular merit increase?**  
Answer: A regular merit increase is an increase to an employee’s base salary, meaning they will receive a higher base pay on future checks. The employee will remain in the same salary group.

Question: **What is a one-time merit increase?**  
Answer: A one-time merit increase is a one-time payment of a percentage of their salary given to the employee. It does not increase base pay. The employee will remain in the same salary group.

Question: **What is the maximum percentage for merit increases?**  
Answer: The maximum for a regular merit increase is 5% of the employee’s current salary. The maximum for a one-time merit is 3.5%. Increases exceeding these amounts must be approved by the agency head.

Question: **How do I award a merit increase to my employee?**  
Answer: From the access HR portal go to the manager's center, then compensation management and either request regular merit increase or award one-time merit.

Question: **I am receiving an error message when awarding a regular merit to my employee.**  
Answer: First, verify that the employee is eligible for the merit. They must have been employed by their current agency for at least six months without receiving a promotion, one-time merit, regular merit, or enhanced compensation award in that time period. Next, verify that the merit amount does not put the employee over the maximum for their salary grade (regular merits). If this is the problem, the merit amount must be decreased enough to keep the employee under the maximum compensation limit. If you are receiving a future dated row error or still can not enter the merit, contact access HR by email or phone for assistance.

Question: **Who must approve the merit request I submitted?**  
Answer: It must be approved by your supervisor and the department head.

Question: **How do I approve a merit request?**  
Answer: Go to access HR, then go to your Work List and click on the request, and then Approve/Deny.

Question: **I received a notice to approve/deny a merit, but it is not in my work list.**  
Answer: Verify that the employee is reporting to you correctly in access HR. It is possible that you need to do a reports to change. If this is not the problem, contact access HR for further assistance 1-888-894-4747 TTY (Hearing Impaired) 866-839-2747

Question: **I received an approval request for a merit, but I am not the department head for that employee.**  
Answer: You should deny the merit so the manager can re-submit it. You should also contact your agency’s budget office to be removed as the department head.  

*Note: Once denied, the manager who initially submitted the merit will have to re-submit it. They should not do this until the department head listing has been corrected.*

Question: **I am supposed to be receiving a one-time merit increase, but have not. Why?**  
Answer: You will need to speak with your manager to determine if it has been approved or not. If they need assistance with the approval process, please have them contact access HR for assistance.

Question: **A merit increase was fully approved for my employee but they have not received it.**
Answer: When was the merit fully approved? If it was after the payroll deadline, it should pay on their next check. If it was fully approved prior to the payroll deadline, contact access HR by email or phone for assistance.

*Note: If a regular merit increase was approved after the payroll deadline, but was effective that month, you will need to submit a Manual Payment Request form to have the difference in pay for that month paid to the employee.*