

Chapter 7 Extended Assignments

265 FW 7

7.1 Purpose. This chapter prescribes policies for allowable travel and transportation expenses for travelers in training status, on details, or for other extended stays over 30 days.

7.2 Scope. This chapter applies to all employees on official travel status when travel assignments involve extended periods at temporary duty or training locations. Trip-by-Trip Travel Authorizations are required for extended assignment travel. Limited/Unlimited Open Travel Authorizations cannot be used to accomplish extended travel assignments.

7.3 Authority. The Government Employees Training Act (5 U.S.C. 4101-4118); Part 370, DM 334.1.1; and Financial Administrative Memorandum No. 94-037.

7.4 General Provisions for Training Assignments.

A. Employees are entitled to all or a part of per diem expenses while they are assigned to training at a temporary duty station. Specific guidelines allow for payment of per diem expenses for extended training assignments of more than 30 calendar days at temporary duty locations as detailed in paragraph 7.4B, below. Per diem allowances to and from a training assignment are under the "lodgings-plus" method. See 265 FW 5 for per diem allowances.

B. A reduced per diem of not more than 55 percent of the applicable maximum per diem rate will be applied while at the training site. Per diem above these levels (not to exceed the maximum per diem rates) must be justified and approved by the approving official prior to travel. Approval may be granted by the supervisory Regional or Assistant Director. Employees' families may accompany employees to the training site, but no allowances for travel or transportation expenses are provided for them. Family accompaniment is not a justification for a higher per diem rate at the training site. See paragraph 7.6 for further details on the 55 percent of the applicable per diem rate.

7.5. Intergovernmental Personnel Act Program (IPA) . In addition to the general provisions in 7.4 above, employees participating in the IPA program should be aware of the following:

A. It is the responsibility of the official authorizing the assignment to determine the type of reimbursement to be paid to the employee while on temporary duty travel (TDY).

B. If TDY is authorized, a lesser per diem rate (less than 55 percent of the per diem rate) may be paid if the employee agrees to it in writing; and,

C. Per diem or actual subsistence allowances may not be paid for more than 1 year unless the assignment is extended. Employees who are on extended temporary

duty travel of 1 year or more should be aware that reimbursements will be reported to the Internal Revenue Service as taxable income.

D. Individuals on IPA assignments from another Federal or State agency may be authorized transportation expenses or limited relocation expenses, but not both. A comparison of the estimated costs of each should be done to determine which method is most advantageous to the Service.

7.6 General Provisions for Details or Other Extended Stays Beyond 30 Days.

A. All temporary assignments of employees to a duty station outside their current commuting area under a "detail" action will require the preparation and approval of a separate Trip-by-Trip Travel Authorization; i.e., the detail cannot be accomplished under a Limited Open Travel Authorization.

B. Travelers are expected to rent apartments, rooms, or other weekly/monthly rentals while on extended assignments. The authorized per diem will be reduced to a flat rate on the first day of travel (i.e., 55 percent of the prescribed rate for the area or another rate commensurate with the traveler's expenses.) If a traveler is not able to secure lodging and/or meals at a lower rate and the maximum per diem rate for the area is required to meet expenses, approval must be obtained from the Regional Director or the Assistant Director - Administration. Requests will be forwarded through the Division of Finance at the Regional or Washington Office level.

7.7 Per Diem Computation when Temporary Duty or Training Assignments are Interrupted for Official Purposes.

A. When temporary duty or training assignments are interrupted for official purposes, payment for unused lodging costs may be reimbursed. However, it must be determined that the employee acted reasonably and prudently in incurring these lodging expenses. If it is determined that the employee acted reasonably, the unused portion of the prepaid lodging cost may be reimbursed within the guidelines set forth in 41 CFR 301, including a statement signed by the approving official supporting the additional lodging costs. This statement must be attached to the travel voucher.

B. The traveler will be reimbursed per diem under the lodgings-plus method for the temporary duty point, plus 55 percent of the lodging portion of the per diem for the extended duty location. This will compensate the traveler for the dual lodging costs. For example: Traveler on extended duty in Washington, D.C., where the per diem rate is \$126.00 for lodging, plus \$42.00 M&IE for a total

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allowance of \$168.00/day. Traveler receives 55 percent of \$168, or \$92.40/day, while at this location. Traveler is directed to travel to Denver from June 10 to June 15. Rates for Denver are \$92.00 plus \$34.00 = \$126/day. Per diem for the month of June would be calculated as follows:

June 1-June 9 9 days @ \$92.40 = \$ 831.60
June 10-June 15 6 days @ \$126.00/day = \$ 756.00 (Denver)
+ 6 days lodging @ (55% of \$126.00) \$69.30 = \$415.80
June 16 - June 30 15 days @ \$92.40/day = \$1,386.00

NOTE: This example is simplified to show the additional lodging reimbursement. Departure and arrival times (3/4-day calculations of the M&IE allowance) are not reflected in this illustration.

7.8 Occasional Trip Home. Extended assignments may be interrupted for an occasional return trip to an employee's official duty station. This return trip may be authorized as advantageous to the Government. When this condition is met, round trip transportation and per diem (for en route and return) may be authorized. If return trip activity is not included on the initial travel authorization, an amended travel authorization is required. Lodging at the extended duty site will be covered as long as the return trip is determined advantageous to the Government and not based on the employee's personal preference.