



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
UNITED STATES ARMY EUROPE AND AFRICA
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AERM

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MEMORANDUM FOR

HQ USAREUR-AF Staff Principals
Commander, HHBN (Prov), HQ USAREUR-AF
Commanders, USAREUR-AF Major Subordinate Commands
U.S. Army Field Support Brigade USEUCOM, European Travel Branch

SUBJECT: USAREUR-AF Policy on Emergency Leave and Emergency Visitation Travel of Servicemembers and Department of the Army Civilians (AEA Cmd Memo 2023-005)

This memorandum expires in 2 years.

1. Supersession. This memorandum supersedes USAREUR-AF, AERM memorandum (USAREUR-AF Policy on Emergency Leave and Emergency Visitation Travel of Servicemembers and Department of the Army Civilians), 19 November 2020 (AE Cmd Memo 2020-039).

2. References.

- a. Joint Travel Regulations (JTR), chapter 4, paragraphs 0402 and 0403.
- b. DODI 1327.06, Leave and Liberty Policy and Procedures.
- c. 22 United States Code, section 4081; Travel and Related Expenses.

3. Overview. The goal of this policy is to ensure that leaders are authorizing USAREUR-AF Servicemembers and Department of Defense (DOD) civilians the proper allowances for emergency leave (for Servicemembers) and emergency visitation travel (EVT) (for DOD Civilians). According to references 2a and b, eligibility criteria for these allowances, as they apply to this policy, are as follows:

a. Emergency Leave. Commanders may authorize up to 30 days of emergency leave. Emergency leave is chargeable leave. Emergency leave and extensions thereto will normally be granted to Servicemembers for family emergencies involving members of their household, their immediate family, or a sole surviving relative whenever the circumstances warrant and the military situation permits. Swift and sensitive action on emergency leave requests is essential. Nevertheless, care must be taken to ensure that an emergency does exist and that the Servicemember's presence can resolve or alleviate the situation.

This memorandum is available at
<https://intranet.eur.army.mil/aepubs/SitePages/HomeNew.aspx>.

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(1) The following are conditions under which emergency leave may be appropriate:

(a) A member of the household or immediate family has died.

(b) The Servicemember's presence would contribute to the welfare of a dying member of the household or immediate family.

(c) Serious illness of a member of the household or immediate family imposes a demand on the Servicemember that must be met immediately and cannot be accomplished from the duty station or by any other means.

(d) The Servicemember's failure to return home places a severe or unusual hardship on the Servicemember, on his or her household, or on the immediate family.

(2) When the commander granting leave has reason to doubt the validity of an emergency situation, he or she should request assistance in determining the validity and the need for the Servicemember's presence from the American Red Cross or from Military Service personnel nearest the location of the emergency. The commander must take caution to ensure that delays in obtaining verification do not result in the Servicemember arriving too late to accomplish the purpose for which the emergency leave is intended.

(3) When emergency leave is granted, Servicemembers and eligible dependents are authorized government funded travel under the following conditions:

(a) The Servicemember must be on permanent duty outside the continental United States (OCONUS) or be assigned to units operating OCONUS.

(b) The Servicemember's dependents must be command sponsored and must reside, and be authorized to reside, OCONUS with the Servicemember. The Servicemember must receive a station allowance for these dependents while on permanent duty OCONUS.

(4) Emergency leave transportation allowances.

(a) Eligible Servicemembers or dependents are authorized transportation from the Servicemember's and Servicemember dependent's OCONUS permanent duty station (PDS) to the international airport in the CONUS closest to the location from

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which the Servicemember or dependent departed and to which air transportation is available along a normally traveled international route (ref 2a).

(b) For the purposes of this policy, the closest International Airport in the CONUS is Boston Logan International Airport, Boston, MA (BOS). The only criterion for the cost limit to be used for transportation to another airport; or any airport in the CONUS that is closer to the Servicemember's or dependent's destination, is that the transportation cost must be less than the transportation cost to BOS. Airfare should not exceed the government "YCA or _CA" fare at the time of booking. Travelers may request travel management company assistance ("TMC Assistance") within the Defense Travel System (DTS) to ensure contract fares are attained (ref 2a).

(c) The policy in subparas (a) and (b) above applies to a Servicemember traveling alone or with one or more dependents and to one or more dependents traveling without the Servicemember. A different destination may be approved through the secretarial process. Return transportation from the destination to the originating location or PDS is authorized as part of the emergency leave process.

(d) Time spent in emergency leave travel authorized at Government expense or on military aircraft will not be charged to the Servicemember's leave account.

(e) Servicemembers should use Patriot Express when available, practical, and advantageous. If Patriot Express is not available or does not meet the mission requirements for the purposes of the emergency leave, travelers should book flights directly with their local scheduled airline ticket office (SATO) (also known as Travel Management Company (TMC)) using the reservation module in DTS.

(5) Below is a list of reimbursable expenses while on emergency leave:

(a) SATO/TMC fees.

(b) Charges for the first checked bag (up to carrier's standard checked baggage allowance).

(c) Arrival or departure taxes or fees.

(d) Currency conversion fees for allowable transportation costs.

(e) Ground transportation between interim airports (for example, a connecting flight is at a different airport from the arrival airport.)

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(6) Below is a list of non-reimbursable expenses while on emergency leave:

- (a) Per diem or meal tickets.
- (b) Excess accompanied baggage.
- (c) Unaccompanied baggage.
- (d) Transportation from the PDS, home, or destination to and from the airport.
- (e) Airport terminal parking fees.

b. Emergency Visitation Travel (EVT). According to references 2a and c, a civilian employee or dependent residing with the civilian employee at a foreign PDS OCONUS is authorized transportation allowances in specific emergency circumstances. The civilian employee must be a U.S. citizen and have a Service agreement that provides for return travel to the civilian employee's "actual residence" in the CONUS. The reasons for EVT are divided into six categories with varying allowances, requirements, and limitations, and are detailed in the subsequent paragraphs:

(1) Medical (travel in response to a medical emergency). The civilian employee, or the civilian employee's spouse or domestic partner, can take one round trip to visit an immediate family member who is seriously ill or injured. If the civilian employee, spouse, or domestic partner returns to the PDS from the EVT visit, and the ill or injured family member subsequently dies, the authorizing official (AO) may authorize or approve a second trip. Funded travel is limited to one round-trip for each serious illness or injury of each family member.

(2) Eldercare Travel. A civilian employee is limited to two round trips using EVT for eldercare during his or her lifetime. The civilian employee's spouse or domestic partner is also limited to two round trips using EVT during the spouse's or domestic partner's lifetime. The eligible traveler may use both EVT trips to visit one incapacitated parent, or may use one trip for each incapacitated parent.

(3) Travel for Death of an Immediate Family Member. EVT is authorized for the interment of a civilian employee's spouse or domestic partner; child (including a stepchild or adopted child) or an individual who is or was under legal guardianship of the civilian employee, spouse, or domestic partner; a parent of the civilian employee, spouse, or domestic partner; or a brother, stepbrother, sister, or stepsister of the civilian

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employee, spouse, or domestic partner. Either the civilian employee or the civilian employee's spouse or domestic partner may be eligible for EVT, but not both.

(4) Travel for Death of a Civilian Employee or Dependent. When a civilian employee or dependent dies in a foreign location, regardless of whether death occurs at the PDS or elsewhere in a foreign area, each of the civilian employee's dependents is authorized to accompany the body anywhere in the world. This travel is limited to one round trip to the place of interment for each eligible dependent who resides at the civilian employee's PDS.

(5) Travel for Unusual Personal Hardship. EVT may be authorized for a civilian employee, spouse, or domestic partner who has exceptional circumstances that require emergency family visitation for reasons other than visiting an ill or injured family member, the death of a family member, or the care of an incapacitated parent. Table 4-9 of reference 2a summarizes what a traveler may be authorized. This travel is limited to one round trip between the PDS and the EVT location.

(6) Travel for New Child. The civilian employee or the civilian employee's spouse or domestic partner may depart the PDS up to 45 days before the expected date of delivery and up to 45 days after date of delivery, and may return to the PDS at any time (example, if parents want to bond with the baby at the birth location). This travel is limited to one round trip between the PDS and the EVT location per birth. There are no lifetime or yearly caps on the number of new child EVT's a traveler may take.

(7) EVT Validation. Whenever possible, EVT eligibility must be properly validated by the command and the AO before the DTS authorization is created. In some circumstances, the civilian employee or the civilian employee's eligible spouse or domestic partner may travel before the AO authorizes the EVT. In such cases, personally incurred transportation expenses may be reimbursed if the travel is approved after the fact.

4. Emergency Leave Procedures.

a. All USAREUR-AF Servicemembers using emergency leave must have an approved DTS authorization (DD Form 1610) and an approved, digitally signed Request and Authority for Leave (DA Form 31) before departing the USAREUR-AF area of operations.

b. The current emergency leave policy is designed to get Servicemembers to the closest port of entry to the United States (BOS) and may not always get

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Servicemembers to their final destination airport. Servicemembers should use Patriot Express when available, practical, and advantageous; however, using Patriot Express should not be forced if it adversely affects the emergency leave or visitation (for example, timeliness).

c. Servicemembers will book travel in DTS and request "TMC Assistance" for flights; or will contact the DTA-7 24-hour emergency SATO if DTS is unavailable, or if time constraints do not allow the use of DTS. If the use of the centrally billed account (CBA) is required, Servicemembers are required to book flights directly with their local TMC/SATO office. Obtaining airfare through any other commercial airfare booking service is prohibited and will not be refunded.

(1) All Servicemembers are required to create, sign, and have an approved DTS authorization. An approved DTS authorization will reflect the travel authorization number in block 22 of DD Form 1610. An approved DA Form 31, digitally signed by the requester, supervisor, and commander, is also required.

(2) Servicemembers who have a Government Travel Charge Card (GTCC) will use the card to pay for their emergency leave airfare. The GTCC must also be used for accompanying dependents. Travelers who do not have a GTCC will be authorized to use a CBA.

(a) When using a GTCC, Servicemembers will communicate with their respective agency program coordinator (APC) to determine whether their GTCC will need to be placed in a "mission critical status" and if the card limit must be increased. To increase the card limit, the servicing APC must receive a written request from the Servicemember's commander. If the written request cannot be provided before emergency leave travel starts, a verbal order of the commanding officer (VOCO) is acceptable. The VOCO must be followed by a written and digitally signed confirmatory order.

(b) Servicemembers are not required to complete any special processes to use a CBA. They only need to provide their local SATO or, if after hours, the DTA-7 24-hour SATO, a copy of their approved travel authorization. They do, however, need to ensure that their DTS profile shows no GTCC and that they are exempt from the Travel and Transportation Reform Act.

(3) When creating the DTS authorization, travelers, or other individuals designated to prepare the travel, must take the following steps to ensure that the

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authorization is built correctly and to avoid delays in obtaining approval and acquiring airfare:

(a) Select "+ Create New Document," "Routine TDY Trip." Under trip details at the bottom of the page, the "Type" selected must be "Government Funded Leave," and the purpose must be "Emergency – Personal." By selecting these entries, DTS ensures that no other entitlements besides airfare and CTO fees can be paid to the Servicemember, avoiding an unnecessary debt during a time of hardship.

(b) When creating the airfare using the CBA, the traveler or travel preparer will create a manually added ticket by selecting "Ticketed Expenses," then selecting the appropriate item, "Airline Ticket (CBA)."

(c) Travelers or travel preparers should add the appropriate corresponding CTO fee (individually billed account (IBA) or CBA) in the "Enter Expenses" tab of the Authorization or Voucher. CTO fees are typically updated each September, depending on the update of the DTA-7 contract.

(d) Authorizing or approving officials should verify that the traveler has uploaded the Red Cross message as a supporting document only if directed by the command local policy of the traveler. This is not mandatory since granting emergency leave is at the discretion of the unit commander.

(e) Upload a valid DA Form 31 as a supporting document. The form must show a valid control number in block 1 and be digitally signed by the Servicemember (block 11), the Servicemember's supervisor (block 12), and the unit commander (block 13).

(f) When using CBA for the airfare, the traveler or travel preparer will create a \$0.00 expense by selecting "Other Expenses, Other - Create Your Own," labeling the expense name "PARKING," and choosing "Personal" as the method of reimbursement in the DTS authorization. This \$0.00 expense is necessary to ensure proper processing in the Army's accounting system, the General Fund Enterprise Business System (GFEBs). If this \$0.00 expense is not listed, the authorization could be rejected, creating issues during reconciliation and voucher filing.

(g) On the digital-signature tab, travelers or travel preparers will ensure that the routing list selected is the emergency leave routing list (if available) for their unit. This list is designed to route the DTS authorization directly to those authorized to approve the emergency leave travel. A proper emergency leave routing list should route

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the action directly from the traveler to the approver and should not contain any CTO stamps since airfare cannot be purchased inside the DTS module.

(h) Airfare reservations should be booked directly in DTS using the traveler's IBA whenever possible. If utilizing the CBA, Servicemembers are directed to print the approved DD Form 1610 from DTS and take it to the local TMC SATO to have the airfare booked and purchased. If the local TMC SATO is closed at the time that booking is required, Servicemembers or their travel preparers must contact the DTA-7 24-hour emergency SATO at 001-866-422-9428 or collect from overseas at 001-210-877-6828.

(4) Within 5 calendar days after completion of travel, all Servicemembers are required to file a voucher to settle their DTS authorization. Travelers will also ensure that their DA Form 31 is submitted to the local finance office to be processed in the Defense Joint Military Pay System.

5. Emergency Visitation Travel Procedures.

a. All DOD civilian employees and eligible dependents who perform EVT should have an approved DTS authorization (DD Form 1610) before departing the USAREUR-AF area of operations.

b. Civilian employees and their eligible dependents should make an attempt to use the Patriot Express when available, practical, and advantageous, before securing commercial flights via SATO/TMC.

c. For commercial flights, civilian employees will obtain commercial airline tickets through their local TMC SATO or the DTA-7 24-hour emergency SATO. Purchasing commercial airline tickets through any other service is prohibited. Although the JTR allows the reimbursement of airfare purchased from commercial sites (for example, Expedia, Kayak, SkyScanner), USAREUR-AF will not reimburse these fares.

d. When building the DTS authorization, civilian employees will follow the guidance in paragraphs 4c(3)(a) through (h).

e. Civilian employees are required to book airfare directly in DTS. For the method of reimbursement, travelers will select the appropriate IBA or CBA.

f. When using CBA for the airfare, the traveler or travel preparer will create a \$0.00 expense by selecting "Other Expenses, Other - Create Your Own," labeling the expense name "PARKING," and choosing "Personal" as method of reimbursement in the DTS

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authorization. This \$0.00 expense is necessary to ensure proper processing in GFEBs. If this \$0.00 expense is not shown, the authorization could be rejected, creating issues during reconciliation and voucher filing.

(g) Finally, on the digital-signature tab, civilian employees will ensure that the routing list selected is the emergency leave or EVT routing list for their unit. This list is designed to route the DTS authorization directly to those authorized to approve emergency leave or EVT travel but will also include CTO stamps so that the authorization routes through the servicing TMC for ticketing.

(h) Once the DTS authorization has been approved, civilian employees are encouraged to confirm with the local TMC SATO that tickets have been successfully purchased.

(i) Within 5 calendar days after completion of travel, all civilian employees are required to file a voucher to settle their DTS authorization.

6. Exceptions and Changes to Policy.

a. Requests for changes to this policy may be sent to the Secretary of the General Staff, HQ USAREUR-AF; and exceptions to policy may be sent to the Chief of Staff, HQ USAREUR-AF for consideration.

b. Periodic changes may be made based on updates to the costs of airfare, locations containing unrestricted coach fares (YCA), or CTO fees.

7. POC. The POC for this memorandum is the Chief, Managerial Accounting Division, Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff, G8, HQ USAREUR-AF, at email: *usarmy.wiesbaden.usareur.mbx.odcs-g8-pbd-bmb-dts@mail.mil*.


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