



# USAFRICOM

Incoming Civilian PCS Entitlements –

Sponsorship Training

J851 Civilian Pay Team

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# Civilian PCS Entitlements

## Key Points:

- Most entitlements are reimbursements, meaning that the employee will be out-of-pocket the initial payments until the reimbursement is received.
  - Many entitlements are paid via payroll, so payments can take up to two months depending on workload and pay period ending dates
- Understanding eligibility requirements for all entitlements is vital – employees need to know which actions might jeopardize their ability to be reimbursed.
- Employees should keep all possible documentation, including itemized receipts of even small expenses.
- Enforcement of restrictions on PCS entitlements has increased in recent years– do NOT assume just because you or your coworkers were able to use a “work around” that an incoming employee can do the same.
- Do not sugar-coat the financial reality of PCS’ing. Realistic expectations allow the incoming employee to better prepare.
- When in doubt, ask! Confirm your questions with the Entitlements Team.
- Make sure the employee attends the AFRICOM Entitlements in-brief and is aware of AFRICOM’s entitlements resources and how to contact the Entitlements Team once they are here.

# Civilian PCS Entitlements - Overview

**Entitlements are authorized individually and explicitly on the employee's orders – instruct incoming members to review their orders in full and resolve any questions or issues as soon as possible.**

## Common Incoming Civilian Entitlements:

- Household Goods, Non-Temporary Storage, and POV Shipment
- Travel Costs to drop off POV at shipping point
- En-Route Travel to new duty station
- FTA Pre-Departure Subsistence
- Advance of Pay
- Temporary Quarters Subsistence Allowance (TQSA)
- Miscellaneous Expense Allowance (MEA)
- Living Quarters Allowance (LQA) and Post Allowance (PA)
- Relocation Income Tax Allowance

# Civilian PCS Entitlements – Shipments

Employee should coordinate all shipments of Household Goods (HHG), Unaccompanied Baggage (UAB) and Non-Temporary Storage (NTS) with move.mil or their local transportation office.

- Remind employees to retrieve and retain their DD Form 1299 and/or DD Form 1164 from all goods shipments. These are obtained from move.mil and are used for some subsequent entitlements claims.

Personally Owned Vehicle (POV) shipments should be coordinated with the closest authorized POV shipment facility.

- Employees can file travel vouchers for transporting their POV to the shipment facility and returning to their residence.
- POV drop-off vouchers only cover transportation costs for one authorized traveler – no per diem or lodging is reimbursable
- Mileage is paid at the PCS rate, which is lower than the standard mileage rate.
- Website is: pcsmypov.com

DFAS' Civilian PCS Entitlement Guide provides more detailed information on eligibility and restrictions

- [Defense Finance and Accounting Service > CivilianEmployees > Civilian Permanent Change of Station \(PCS\) \(dfas.mil\)](#)
- Website is accessible from non-government computers and does NOT require a CAC

# Civilian PCS Entitlements – En Route Travel

Employees should coordinate transportation with TMO/CTO or their local transportation office.

- Use of TMO/CTO and Government Travel Card for booking travel is required
  - Specific authorization is required on the employee's orders to self-procure transportation
- Any deviations from standard government-procured point to point travel **MUST** be specifically authorized on the employee's orders
- All travel expenses incurred solely for the employees benefit (departing from an alternate location, etc.) is limited to the cost of a standard government-procured point to point travel

Remind employees that they need to keep all of their receipts for travel expenses

- A baggage ticket is **NOT** a receipt for excess baggage. Employees **MUST** keep an actual receipt notating the type of charge and the payment method.

# Civilian PCS Entitlements – FTA Pre-Departure Subsistence

Covers up to 10 days of temporary lodging, meals, and laundry expenses prior to departure.

- Only for employees who are eligible for LQA and are departing from the US
- Actual expense reimbursement – NOT a flat meal per diem
  - All expenses must be listed down to the penny
  - The daily maximum eligible to be reimbursed is based on the per diem of the employee's releasing PDS
  - **Itemized** receipts required for lodging and for meals over \$75 (no matter the family size).
- FTA can only cover days after the employee has vacated their permanent residence
  - Vacating permanent residence needs to be within 30 days of claimed dates
  - Documentation is required to support clearing the residence, such as documentation of HHG shipment
- Employee **MUST** depart from their prior PDS. Expenses incurred prior to departing from an alternate departure point are not eligible for reimbursement.
- Lodging must be at a conventional hotel – **non-conventional lodging such as Airbnb, VRBO, etc. are NOT eligible for reimbursement.**
- Book hotels directly with the facility – not through a third party site such as Booking.com, etc.
- Ten days are claimed **TOTAL**. If dependents are on delayed travel, the combined claim of the employee and dependent cannot exceed ten days.

# Civilian PCS Entitlements – Advance of Pay

**Pay advance of up to six pay periods of base pay, repaid via payroll deduction for 26 pay periods (1 year).**

- Employees can claim once arrive on post.
- Employees must request no later than 60 days after arriving on post.
- Funds in-flow designed to help with multiple parts of PCS'ing to a foreign location.
  - Funds on-hand to pay reimbursable expenses while waiting on payment
  - Security deposit for new lodging
- Employee needs to review their own personal financial situation to determine if Advance of Pay will work for them
  - Is not a grant or allowance – is a debt to be repaid
  - Employee will have reduced paycheck for a year during repayment
  - Employees can claim any amount up to the maximum – a lesser amount can be requested if that suits the employee's situation better

# Civilian PCS Entitlements – TQSA

Assists in covering temporary lodging, meals and laundry expenses in the commutable area of post for up to 90 days after arrival at post.

- Employees must be eligible for LQA to receive TQSA
- Actual expense reimbursement – NOT a flat meal per diem
  - All expenses must be listed down to the penny
  - Itemized receipts required for lodging, meals, and dry cleaning
- Reimbursable maximum decreases every 30 days
- MUST use conventional lodging – cannot be reimbursed for non-conventional lodging such as Airbnb, VRBO, etc.
- Needs to be booked directly with hotel – do not use a third party booking site such as Expedia, etc.
- Currently there is no requirement to first use on-post lodging
  - VAT forms must be used if the employee lodges off-post
- Not all lodging costs are reimbursable. If lodging is a “package deal” employee must exclude any ineligible costs. Examples of ineligible costs:
  - Parking
  - Pet Fees
  - Cleaning Fees



# Civilian PCS Entitlements – Living Quarters Allowance (LQA)

**Substantially covers the cost of suitable living quarters and utilities at a foreign post.**

- The amount of LQA received is limited based on the employee's grade level and family size
  - Amount fluctuates every pay period based on exchange rates
  - Any expenses incurred over the limit are not reimbursed
- All-inclusive rental contracts are not allowed
  - All utility payments to landlords must be reconciled
- Employees should review the eligible costs table in Army in Europe Regulation 690-500.592 to understand which utilities and expenses are eligible under LQA
- LQA must be started within 90 days of lease commencement
- Employees ruled ineligible for LQA are not able to receive FTA and TQSA

# Civilian PCS Entitlements – Miscellaneous Expense Allowance

**Option for flat rate or itemized allowance. Different requirements and guidelines for government employees transferring between PDSes and new government employees.**

**Current Government Employees: Block 10 of PCS Orders “Between Official Stations” is checked**

- Flat rate \$650 for single member, \$1,300 for family
- Taxable
- Cannot be claimed until moved into new permanent residence
- Can itemize eligible costs (with receipts) up to lesser of:
  - One week of base pay for the employee at time of transfer (two weeks for family)
  - One week of base pay for GS-13 Step 10 (two weeks for family)
  - See Joint Travel Regulations (JTR) for examples of eligible costs

**New Government Employees: Block 10 of PCS Orders “Other: First Duty Travel” is checked**

- Flat rate \$750 for single member, \$1,500 for family
- Not taxable
- Can be claimed upon arrival at post
- Can itemize eligible costs (with receipts) up to lesser of:
  - One week of base pay for the employee at time of hire (two weeks for family)
  - One week of base pay for GS-13 Step 10 (two weeks for family)
  - See Department of State Standardized Regulations (DSSR) for examples of eligible costs
  - Pet transportation expenses are NOT eligible for itemization