



III Marine Expeditionary Force

Press Release

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FEML Ends as Japan Opens Its Borders

MARINE CORPS BASE CAMP BUTLER, OKINAWA, JAPAN – Temporarily authorized Funded Environmental and Morale Leave (FEML) for personnel assigned to Okinawa ends August 1, 2022, approximately 60 days after the Government of Japan's (GOJ) decision to end arrival testing and quarantine requirements for inbound travelers.

The Office of the Secretary of Defense determination to end Okinawa's FEML status is based on Japan's removal, effective June 1, 2022 of all non-local travel quarantine restrictions for affected SOFA personnel. Travelers inbound to Japan must still take and pass a pre-departure molecular COVID-19 test 72 hours prior to commencing international travel.

Okinawa was designated as a FEML location November 19, 2021, due to ongoing travel hardships caused by GoJ COVID-19 pandemic and virus mitigation measures. Subsequent DoD guidance issued in April directed the sundown of the program 60 days after FEML-qualifying GoJ travel restrictions ended.

The new policy does not affect those with approved FEML travel that begins on or before July 31, 2022 with return flights after Jul 31. Individuals with FEML travel reservations to begin after July 31 must contact their approving officials for additional guidance and to align existing travel with updated policy, as feasible. All FEML travel must begin on or before July 31.

The authorization of FEML allowed DoD personnel and their families in Okinawa to travel to the United States and elsewhere for the first time since the start of the pandemic without lengthy and cost-prohibitive mainland Japan quarantine requirements upon return. Since the initiation of Okinawa FEML in November 2021 through May 2022, more than 6,000 forward-deployed service members and civilians took advantage of FEML travel.

For more information about the FEML process, visit [U.S. Forces Japan > FEML \(usfj.mil\)](http://U.S.ForcesJapan>FEML(usfj.mil)).

For questions regarding this release, please email III Marine Expeditionary Force Communication Strategy and Operations at IIIMEFmedia@usmc.mil.

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