

# **Frequently Asked Questions**

## **Authorized Departure**

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### **Department of the Navy**

#### **Policy & Programs**

As of 21 March 2020, 00:00





**1. Q: What is an Authorized Departure?**

**A:** An Authorized Departure (AD) is a type of evacuation that is voluntary for official eligible family members (EFMs) and covered employees. Employees and/or EFMs who choose to depart the duty location based on an AD may not return until the Under Secretary for Management terminates the order.

**2. Q: What are evacuation payments? Are they intended to cover all my expenses?**

**A:** Evacuation payments are made when a civilian employee/family member(s) is authorized or ordered to evacuate a foreign post. Evacuation payments consist of (1) a subsistence allowance to help cover the costs of lodging, meals, laundry, and dry cleaning; (2) local transportation at the safe haven; and (3) an air freight replacement allowance if air freight is not shipped from post. Subsistence amounts are based on the safe haven's per diem rate if the family is occupying commercial quarters, and vary based on family size. M&IE payments decrease over time. Evacuation payments terminate no later than 180 days after the evacuation order is issued.

Evacuation payments are intended to help cover costs, they may not cover all costs.

**3. Q: If I choose to depart, where do I report?**

**A:** The Authorized Departure order will officially designate the safe haven location for employees and family members. Review the AD order for locations for employees and/or EFMs.

**4. Q: I am a civilian employee. Per the AD order, the designated safe haven is Arlington, VA. However, my eligible family members (EFMS) want to go to Pensacola, FL. Can they go to Florida or must they evacuate to the same location as me?**

**A:** If the AD order states that the official safe haven is the U.S., family members may depart to any location in the U.S. Generally, the United States (anywhere in the 50 States and the District of Columbia) is designated as the official safe haven, and evacuees are required to return to the U.S. to receive allowances. An employee may request designation of an alternate safe haven for special family needs but approval is not guaranteed. The approval of an alternate safe haven is at the discretion of the command.

**5. Q: When do Subsistence Expense Allowance (SEA) benefits commence for evacuees?**

**A:** SEA benefits will commence from the day following arrival at the safe haven location. No SEA will be paid for travel enroute to the safe haven location. (DSSR 632 and JTR 060402)

**6. Q: I have a pet. Will I receive reimbursement for pet transportation if I bring my pet with me?**

**A:** A civilian employee is authorized transportation and quarantine fees for up to two household pets (defined as a cat or dog) to or from a safe haven or designated place if he or she currently owns them at the evacuated foreign PDS. If the civilian employee transports the



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pets at personal expense, then reimbursement is limited to the constructed cost that the Government would have incurred if it had transported the pets. A civilian employee traveling on a separation order is not authorized reimbursement for pet transportation or quarantine fees. (JTR, 060407)

**7. Q: If EFMs under an evacuation order are unable to travel alone due to special needs or minor age, who can be reimbursed to accompany them to a U.S. safe haven?**

**A:** Only employees' and EFMs' evacuation travel can be funded by the Government. Therefore, either the employee parent designated nonessential could accompany, or another employee or EFM could serve as an escort, if willing and able to do so. If the EFM's U.S. safe haven is not the same as the escort's duty station or safe haven, that escort's travel will be on a cost-constructive basis calculated from the evacuated post to the escort's U.S. duty station.

**8. Q. At what rate should agencies pay evacuated employees performing work at a safe haven (e.g., the employee's home) due to a pandemic health crisis?**

**A.** If the employee is performing work, the employee is in work status and is entitled to his or her regular pay for those hours. If an employee requests to be excused from performing assigned work, the employee would need to take an appropriate form of personal leave (e.g., annual leave, sick leave, or leave without pay).

**9. Q. When married couple employees or domestic partnership employees depart post on evacuation orders, how are their SEA payments determined?**

**A.** Employees will each receive evacuation benefits not to exceed an employee's eligibility, but without duplication of benefits for family members on their orders. Both employees are considered to be the first evacuee. (This is based on married couple employees' or domestic partnership employees' eligibility for all other allowances, including transfer allowances and temporary lodging, on a per person employee basis. However, only 50% of the lodging allowance is granted for each employee if the employees are sharing lodging.) (DSSR 632.1)Q. If employee is quarantined before they PCS, can their TQSA be extended beyond 30 days because they are unable to leave? If so, who would have the authority to approve the TQSA extension?

**10. Q. Upon termination of an evacuation order, is there a grace period for continuation of SEA until the day an evacuee returns to post? What if the employee is being transferred and not returning to post?**

**A.** Upon termination of an evacuation order, an employee or EFM will continue to receive SEA for an automatic grace period of three (3) days except when the full 180 days has expired. (DSSR 635)Q. What documentation is required for civilian personal property service shipments affected by the Stop Movement Order?

**11. Q: What about return travel expenses back to my duty location when the AD is lifted?**



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**A:** Travel expenses to return to the permanent duty location are authorized only after the Government officially permits employees and eligible family members to return. Evacuated employees should use the same Evacuation Travel Orders issued when they departed the duty location to make the reservations to return.

**12. Q: Who do I contact if I have more questions about travel and allowances under an Authorized Departure?**

**A:** Contact your Command/BSO Lead Defense Travel Administrator (LDTA) for travel-related questions.

For additional information, the following resources are available:

- **Answers to Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) regarding evacuation are available via the Department of State Office of Allowances:**  
[https://aoprals.state.gov/content.asp?content\\_id=164&menu\\_id=75](https://aoprals.state.gov/content.asp?content_id=164&menu_id=75)
- **DSSR Section 600, “Payments During Evacuation/Authorized Departure,”**  
[https://aoprals.state.gov/content.asp?content\\_id=109&menu\\_id=75](https://aoprals.state.gov/content.asp?content_id=109&menu_id=75)
- **JTR Chapter 0604, “Standard Allowances for Civilian Employees and their Dependents,”** <https://www.defensetravel.dod.mil/Docs/perdiem/JTR.pdf>
- **5 CFR §550.401-409, “Payments During Evacuation” from a non-foreign OCONUS or inside CONUS,** <https://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?SID=8a6ee76348207209cea80fc4940545a6&mc=true&node=pt5.1.550&rgn=div5#sp5.1.550.d>