

## **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ON POST ALLOWANCE**

### **Q1: What is Post Allowance?**

Post Allowance is a Cost-of-Living Allowance (COLA) granted to U.S. appropriated fund employees officially stationed at a post in a foreign area where the cost of living, exclusive of quarters costs, is substantially higher than in Washington, D.C. Allowance payments are based on family size, salary levels, and the post of assignment. Employees stationed on Okinawa are granted Post Allowance.

### **Q2: Do I receive current Post Allowance rate of my basic salary for my Post Allowance?**

No. It is not your basic salary, but the spendable income is used to calculate your Post Allowance. Your size of family and the post of assignment are factored in as well.

### **Q3: Where can I find information on rates for Post Allowance at my duty location?**

Employees can find the Post Allowance rates in the post classification tables in Section 229 at the following web address:

<https://aoprals.state.gov/Web920/cola.asp>

### **Q4: What is the Post Allowance rate for Okinawa?**

You can check current Post Allowance rate at the following web address:

<https://aoprals.state.gov/Web920/cola.asp>

Post Allowance rate changes and amount will fluctuate due to foreign currency exchange rate as often as every payday without advance notification to the employee. The Defense Finance and Accounting Service (DFAS) will calculate and pay Post Allowance.

### **Q5: How can I calculate my Post Allowance?**

The annual post allowance amounts are found in the six payment tables in DSSR 229.

To assist employees in calculating the amount they might receive on a biweekly basis, the Office of Allowances has created COLA Calculator. You can find the COLA Calculator at following web address:

<https://aoprals.state.gov/Content/documents/WebCOLAFeb2019.xls>

### **Q6: When do employees submit an application for Post Allowance?**

Employee submits a completed and signed Foreign Allowances Application, Grant and Report (SF-1190) to Labor/Employee Relations Unit at Civilian Human Resources Office (CHRO) to report any of the following situations/changes.

- Initiating payment of Post Allowance (starting a job, or starting to receive Living Quarters Allowance)
- Change in number of dependents (e.g. marriage/divorce/birth/death/adoption)
- Temporary absences of 31 days or more from the post of employee and/or family

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member(s)

- PCS/Transfer to different command
- Departure of employee and/or family member(s) on Renewal Agreement Travel (RAT)
- Dependent(s) other than spouse reaching age 21 (age 23 for full time student)
- More than 14 consecutive days of Leave Without Pay (LWOP)
- Separation or retirement from the Federal Service

### **Q7: Is Post Allowance taxable?**

No, Post Allowance is not taxable income.

### **Q8: My spouse is active duty and receiving COLA while we are stationed in Okinawa, and I am a Federal Civilian Employee. Do I receive Post Allowance?**

If your spouse is an active duty and receives COLA at the “with family” rate, you will be authorized only for “single rate” Post Allowance.

### **Q9: My spouse is the Command Sponsor, Federal Civilian Employee and receiving Post Allowance and I am also a Federal Civilian employee. Do I receive Post Allowance?**

If both of you and your spouse are eligible for Post Allowance, these are the options.

#### **Option 1**

Your spouse claims all Post Allowance for all family members including you.

#### **Option 2**

You can claim your own Post Allowance at a “single rate” and your spouse needs to decrease his/her Post Allowance (required to submit a copy of SF50, LES and signed SF-1190 from sponsor’s HR office showing that number of family member claimed on your spouse’s Post Allowance and effective date).

Failure to provide the information may result in delayed processing of the change. Employees may receive an indebtedness letter if post allowance is paid beyond the date the entitlement changed or expired.

### **Q10: Where can I read more about Post Allowance?**

The regulation authorizing Post Allowance is the Department of State Standardized Regulations (DSSR), Section 220. You may read more about Post Allowance at the following web address:

[https://aoprals.state.gov/content.asp?content\\_id=245&menu\\_id=75](https://aoprals.state.gov/content.asp?content_id=245&menu_id=75)