

Pay and Personnel Center Travel eNewsletter/Frequently Asked Questions – Updated April 2019



2019 Transfer Season is about to be in full swing!

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Good Morning AO's and Travelers

I couldn't be happier with the superstars I am able to call my shipmates and I'd like to give a shout out to the amazing 1700+ AO's we have worldwide. If it were not for what you all do, the Coast Guard would be in the hurt locker. Your ability and dedication to help resolve traveler's issues is unprecedented. Keeping a good network is the key to being a successful AO. I hope that this newsletter will be helpful to everyone.

Customer service and empathy are my driving factors for the PPC Travel Department.

Process for contacting PPC Travel:

If you are unsure or unable to find what you are looking for through your AO network, the JTR or the Supplement to the JFTR, **please have your AO submit a Customer Care Ticket with your question and the research you and your AO have done.** It will help us understand what the issue is and we will do our best to assist you.

We hope you enjoy the newsletter/FAQ, and don't pull what hair you may or may not have left on your head out during this transfer season.

Thank you all for your outstanding hard work and amazing support for our travelers.

***CWO3 MATTHEW FALOR
TRAVEL BRANCH CHIEF
COAST GUARD PAY & PERSONNEL CENTER
Motto: Ensuring our people stay grounded to the deck plate our shipmates stand upon.***

One of the successes I have seen since coming to the Travel Branch at (PPC) is the amazing team of people that work hard day in and day out processing claims. Sometimes the work we do is very repetitive and so we try and maintain a fun atmosphere. We have collectively identify ourselves with characters from Despicable Me and wanted to share some of that fun with you.

Norbert's Corner



I'm sure not too many of you speak or read Minion, so I'll use English.

Mr. Falor a.k.a. Dr. Nefario and I showed up about the same time. I have him beat by a little while which keys tanks that matters, so I can always rag him about how I have been here longer...

It's crazy, the amount of claims that come through this office. It's over 10,000 PCS/Temporary Duty (TDY) claims a month and only nine production members working them.

There is a team for post audits that is fun to watch. One of them keeps losing her mind because a rental car company has been overcharging travelers. She feels bad for the travelers because it can cause them to end up with a debt for the amount above what we can reimburse. But with Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and the other external auditors, the audit team can't allow the additional charges to the agency and so it results in a debt.

Our Travel Support Team (TST) department is also like a minion looking in the mirror running around a little crazy. They are all frantically digging in the manuals trying to find a way to legally approve all entitlements.

Then there is the systems team. They are working with programmers at another unit and trying to understand the stuff that makes the system work. We can see how they are trying to make life easier for the traveler, but the traveler will probably never know how much work goes into the different enhancements.

Please keep our travel team in your thoughts as they are working very hard to ensure our shipmates are reimbursed according to the law and faster than Jimmy Johns.

We Pay What We Can

When a claim is submitted and there is a problem, we will process what we can and put in the remarks block of T-Pax what was not paid and why.

An example is a claim that includes a rental car when the receipt was not attached. We will process the other entitlements on the order and identify in the remarks block that in order to process a reimbursement for the rental car we would need the receipt.

Decedent Affairs Officer (DAO) Communications with Pay and Personnel Center (PPC) TVL Branch Chief

Decedent Affairs Officers, please understand that we at PPC TVL are glad to move you to the head of the line. I've been a CACO twice, and know how stressful this can be. We will do everything in our power to help you professionally and I will help personally if need be. Please, if you have a travel claim issue or any questions about travel claim submissions, do not hesitate to contact me directly. I will drop everything I am doing to assist you and set you up for success.

Disclaimer: This is for the DAO, and for DAO situations. ALCGPSC 033/17 is very specific about all other communications. Please do not mistake this for an open door about other situations/issues.

CG7421-A Form and Requirements

An "AO Designation Memo." is no longer required. When supervisors within the immediate chain of command sign as the Command Signature, they are certifying that the member requesting AO permissions has "By Direction Authority" on file at the unit. AO course completion transcripts will still be required. This may be a screenshot from Learning Management System (LMS) that shows the tests completed and includes the member's name in the top left of the screen.

Tips For Travel Claim Processing

- If you have an electronic receipt ensure it is switched to HTML before you print and attach in T-Pax.
- Orders **MUST** be provided with your claim. There has been an increase in the number of claims returned to members because orders were not provided.
- Supplemental claims: On Manual claims, annotate on the DD-1351-2 that this submission is a supplemental and highlight the new items being claimed. On T-Pax claims, annotate in remarks what this submission is for.
- Ensure you input current addresses in the "Remit To" tab/Block 6 and Dependent's address upon receipt of orders is in the "Remit To" tab/Block 13. Update your address in Direct Access and your T-Pax profile upon reporting. Without these updates Dislocation Allowance (DLA) may not be approved.
- Personally Procured Move (PPM) claims and Household Goods (HHG) items (to include POV Shipment, Temporary Lodging Allowance (TLA)) are processed by Finance Center (FINCEN) not PPC. Do not include them with your PCS claim or mail them to PPC. Though these items are listed in T-Pax, PPC is not able to process them.

- Locations claimed (includes TDY) must be authorized on orders/amendment. Do not claim Virginia Beach, VA if your orders stated Yorktown, VA.
- Authorizations go on amendments, not in the remarks block.
- Use the remarks block for travel clarification.
- Claims involving travel via the Alaska Marine Highway System (AMHS) must include the AMHS itinerary/booking confirmation. The ADTRAV receipt cannot be used for processing the claim.
- Check the website...use the guides...there have been many kickbacks that could have been avoided if the guides had been used.

Official Distance

From CG-1332. The following will be added to the end of par. 2650 in the new CGS-JTR:

The Defense Table of Distances (DTOD) programmed in the electronic travel system (e.g., T-Pax) on the date the voucher is approved for payment is used to calculate the official mileage.

There is no reason to use the DTOD website any longer.

Any questions and concerns with policy should be directed to CG-1332 via your chain of command.

Typically, the issue that arises with this is when someone doesn't use the unit and uses the city or zip code. If the unit is in DTOD/T-Pax that is what is used to get the correct mileage. (i.e. Petaluma USCG TrngCtr, CA, vice Petaluma, CA)

Supplemental

When submitting a supplemental please ensure the notes state exactly what the supplemental is for, and ensure all documentation is uploaded.

Note: On a supplemental submission the original submission does not link to the supplemental claim. This can cause major time delays looking for the original documentation. We must reprocess the entire claim, the original and the supplemental claim, as the system does not tell us exactly what the supplemental submission was for. To help us expedite processing, please upload all documentation with the each supplemental claim.

Travel Order Number (TONO) to TONO Per Diem and Lodging

If you have back to back consecutive orders (for whatever reason) you must use the "TONO to TONO 25%" dropdown in reimbursables in both sets of orders, and the "TONO to TONO Lodging" will go on the first set of orders for the last days lodging. As an example, the first set of orders are from 1-7 January, second set of orders is from 8-13 January. The night of the 7th will be charged to the first set of orders.

Note: If a member has back to back TDY orders the member cannot begin the next set of orders on the date the last set of orders ended.

Rental Vehicle Reimbursement Information

PPC Travel has a Rental Vehicle Reimbursement Guide that has been posted to our website for information on rental vehicle entitlements.

- ❑ Travelers renting from a GARS vendor through ADTRAV are reimbursed for the amount of rental cost incurred not to exceed the lowest available Ceiling Rate for the authorized class at the TDY location. If the traveler is errantly charged through ADTRAV in excess of the Ceiling Rate then ADTRAV must reimburse the difference to the member.
- ❑ Travelers renting from a non-GARS vendor through ADTRAV may receive a quoted rate that exceeds the GARS Ceiling Rate. The ADTRAV Agent is required to counsel the traveler prior to completing the reservation. Reimbursement is limited to the lowest available Ceiling Rate for the authorized class at the TDY location. The traveler is responsible for the excess cost.
- ❑ The AO may authorize/approve the actual cost of the authorized class or a class upgrade at that TDY location when a GARS vendor is not available at the TDY location.
- ❑ When travelers personally procure a rental they may be reimbursed for the amount of rental cost incurred not to exceed the lowest available Ceiling Rate for the authorized class at the TDY location. Ref JTR 020209 and the [U.S. Government Rental Car Program](#).

Rental Vehicles and Government Administrative Rate Supplemental (GARS)

If no valid rental receipt is obtainable then the traveler and AO may complete a Statement of Lost, Missing or Unobtainable Receipt with reimbursement determined by the availability of a GARS vendor. GARS vendors are rental locations which participate in the Defense Travel Management Office (DTMO) Rental Agreement.

	GARS Vendor Available at the TDY site for the authorized rental class.	GARS Vendor Not-Available at the TDY site for the authorized rental class.
No Valid Receipt	AO must approve rental reimbursement not to exceed the authorized rental class ceiling cap for the lowest available GARS vendor at the TDY site OR a rental class upgrade.	AO may authorize/approve actual \$ cost for the authorized rental class on orders/amendment OR a rental class upgrade.

For more information on the DTMO Rental Agreement, available GARS Vendors and the CONUS/OCONUS rental ceiling caps please refer to: <http://www.defensetravel.dod.mil/site/rental.cfm>

Privately Owned Vehicles (POV) More Advantageous

POV mileage is authorized up to the cost of the Constructed Cost of Airfare (old Government Travel Request (GTR)), it doesn't matter if it is more advantageous or not. Constructed Cost of Airfare is YCA+TMC Fee. 020210 (table 2-11)

There is only one instance where a member would get travel days or local mileage for TDY, which is 020203.A.3.b. "When travel must be by automobile,
a. Government automobile is most advantageous. If a Government automobile is not available, then:

b. A POV is considered most advantageous to the Government only after the other transportation types have been considered.”

To provide an example on the Constructed Cost of Airfare:

If there is an YCA fare from Permanent Duty Station (PDS) to TDY site, as per JTR POLICY CONSTRUCTED AIRFARE. The least expensive, unrestricted economy/coach airfare. If the policy constructed airfare turns out to be, or to include, a city pair airfare, and if there are both a YCA and a CA airfare, the YCA airfare is used. A capacity controlled city pair airfare (CA airfare) is not included when creating a policy constructed airfare for comparison purposes.

As per JTR 2-11 the policy-constructed airfare turns out to be, or to include, a General Service Administration (GSA) City Pair Program airfare and both a YCA and a CA airfare are available, then the YCA airfare is used for cost comparison.

Under JTR 020210.F "The constructed cost is the sum of the transportation ticket cost plus the Travel management Center (TMC) fee."

So, YCA plus TMC Fee is the Constructed Cost of Airfare (old GTR).

When there is not a YCA fare available from an airport within the RCD of the PDS or TDY site (and no unit instruction directing the use of a specific airport), then and only then would the "The least expensive, unrestricted economy/coach airfare" apply for the "Constructed Cost of Airfare." I.E. an e-mail from ADTRAV with this cost will be used as the "Constructed Cost of Airfare." And this would have to be on the orders or an amendment from the AO.

Various Units On Orders

If the orders identify various units (inspectors, forcecom, CMC, etc...) the T-Pax AO must be the same person (or from the same unit) that originally signed the orders. This will ensure confirmation that the AO is aware of the authorizations made on the orders and can provide proper documentation to the external auditors if one of these claims is chosen for review.

Travel Lodging Expense (TLE)

TLE will be processed as per the JTR and Per Diem website.

We understand there has been some confusion on this. The Supplement to the JTR is being updated by CG 1332. But the below should clear it up. Remember, the JTR takes (and always has) precedence, and we must use the Supplemental when it does not conflict with the JTR.

Question: "If you have 22 days elapsed time between PDS(s) and the allowable travel time is 7 days, you may be paid the maximum TLE allowance." I.E. if they depart on the 1st, and report on the 22nd (to stay within the confines of this example) the member could be paid TLE from the 13th to the 22nd. It could be for the 10 days before you report to the new PDS, right?

Per Diem, Travel and Transportation Allowance Committee (PDTATAC) staff Response: Yes, provided those 10 days are in the vicinity of the old or new PDS.

Education and Training Quota Management Command (ETQC) Orders and AO's Signing Unauthorized Amendments

ALCOAST 343/18

ETQC asked if we can spot check claims where amendments have been submitted authorizing entitlements that ALCOAST 343/18 says must be authorized by ETQC prior to settlement.

If you are an AO and have done an amendment to authorize a traveler without following the direction of ALCOAST 343/18, ETQC may be notified.

Authorizing Official Requirements

As an AO, you could be doing your members a disservice by approving expenditures without first ensuring it is a legal reimbursement. AOs are reminded that they have the responsibility to perform their duties in accordance with the law, regulations, policy and guidance. AOs can be held liable for improperly approved payments.

An AO can be designated by position: Successful USCG AO Course completion is still required when a specified signature authority (e.g. DAO, Health, Safty and Work-Life (HSWL), Invitational Travel Authorization (ITA)) is required by reference and/or regulation (e.g. JTR, Federal Travel Regulation (FTR) or COMDTINST) and automatically confers AO status on that position.

Note: Test out option. If you pass the test, you can screen shot it and upload it as your documentation. Make sure your name is included on the screen shot.

Manual Claim Submissions

There are a couple of guidelines we want to share with you when it comes to manual claims that will help all parties involved.

First, mailing in a travel claim adds at least 3 weeks to the normal reimbursement processing do to the length of time the claim is in the mail. And if there is an issue, it can add at least another month responding to the manual claim using the Post Office.

One example of a manual claim taking longer than it should is when an AO sent in a 1351 with no itinerary on it, just a line in the reimbursables for auto mileage of over 4k. The reason this was mailed in as a manual claim was that the AO couldn't figure out how to put it in T-Pax. The reason it could not go into T-Pax was that the traveler wasn't authorized the auto mileage.

Another issue that can arise from mailing in a manual claim is if the claim is for an A School traveler, and there is an issue, we have to mail it back to the address on the 1351, and there is a question of whether or not it will actually get back to the traveler. There are a number of things that can go wrong with manual travel claims. Unless absolutely necessary, AOs should make it the standard to enter the claims into T-Pax making it easier and more timely for the members to receive their reimbursement.

Second, travelers should not being mailing claims to PPC unless it's a separations/retirement claim. If it is necessary for the claim to be filed manually and an AO signed the 1351, then the AO should mail it in.

Lastly, we have seen a number of manual claims where the information on the claim is not legible. This makes it very difficult for us to verify eligibility.

As of 1 May 2019 all manual claim submissions to PPC must be accompanied by the AO's approved 7421 signed by the Supervisor. (Separation/retirement claims are exempt)

Note 1: DHS Financial Management Manual chapter 7 (update in progress) states the following: "Employees will be reimbursed for authorized, official travel expenses incurred while on travel by filling a travel voucher through their Component's on-line voucher processing system."

Note 2: If you are a YN on a Cutter or an AO for our shipmates that do not have access to T-Pax, i.e. foreign country tour, or for civilians that do not have WSIII/T-Pax access (Medical, ITA's) E-mail me directly, I may be able to assist you.

[Permanent Change of Station \(PCS\) Advances/PCS Signature Proxy](#)

PPC is approving PCS Advance permissions to Personnel and Admin (P&A) shops to help our shipmates get their advances in a timely manner.

It is the P&A's responsibility to track their members and ensure submission of the advance no more than 30 days prior to departure date. Servicing Personnel Office (SPO)'s will be the backup if a traveler does not have a P&A/YN. Uploading of a signed PCS order is required.

PPC is currently approving these roles. To stay in line with MCPO Naftal's piece in the RFMC newsletter, please do not use this to say "it's not my responsibility."

We understand that there are circumstances where the orders are going to be finished less than 30 days before departure (member not submitting their paperwork in time, or expedited orders). Working with the P&A shop or taking the initiative to just do the PCS Advances SPO would expedite this and should be considered.

Communicating between the P&A and SPO is key for this tasking. Our members will be the ones to suffer if we are assuming we are on the same page, it is better to verify.

[Post Audit Process](#)

Post payment audits are to ensure by sample that travel claims are legal and proper and will pass an audit by DHS, KPMG or Government Accounting Office (GAO). Closer attention to details and travel policy is needed to reduce the number of incorrect payments.

There will no longer be a notification that a traveler's name was pulled for a post payment audit.

A Traveler and AO are notified only if there is a problem with a claim and documentation is required, or approval for a reimbursement was not authorized as per the JTR/FTR.

At the point of the notification, the Traveler is encouraged to reach out to their AO for assistance and documentation should be attached to the reply (do not change the subject line). Please remember this is not an open door for a traveler or AO to question/complain or check on the status of something. This is just removing the post office from the equation.

If a response is received within 30 days, the PPC auditor reviews the required documentation and completes the audit. Both the traveler and AO should be notified. If there is no response, at 30 days a debt will be built on monies reimbursed without proper authorization or documentation.

If the required documentation is located after a debt has been built, it must be submitted to PPC via an AO in a customer care ticket. Once PPC receives this documentation, the case will be reopened and worked in the order it was received. This will not immediately stop the debt that may already be in a collection status. Once the case is reworked, it will be sent to FINCEN and FINCEN will resolve the debt/credit due (if any). PPC has no control over stopping a debt once it is created and FINCEN may take a few weeks to work the case.

Note: Remember, only the AO can contact PPC for questions and concerns. The traveler/AO need to remember to submit questions in accordance with ALCGPSC 033/17.

Bravo Zulu Shipmate!

YN2 Amato of Base Boston has done some amazing work with his Excel document for PCS entitlements.

As many of you may have seen there was quite the conversation on Facebook about TLE and hopefully it will help with the understanding. YN2 Amato took the challenge and never gave up. Not only has he created a document that we all can use, but he is now one of the TLE experts.

Great job YN2, we appreciate it!