

Pay & Personnel Newsletter

United States Coast Guard Pay & Personnel Center

Contents

Direct Access Payroll Retroactive Processing 2

Direct Access Web Browser Compatibility..... 3

Improvements to the TRICARE Dental Program 3

Web-TPAX Server Move (New Address) 3

Defense Travel Management Office Allowances and Regulations Update 3

Update to Critical Housing Areas 4

Top 10 Tuesday Recording and Q&A Posted 4

Direct Access Competency Dictionary Update 4

Personally Procured Movements of Household Goods..... 5

Transfer Season 2017 Household Goods (HHG) Shipping Information 5

Mandatory Use of the General Services Administration City Pair Program 5

Travel Reimbursement Process Changes..... 5

Pay & Personnel Center, Travel Branch

Email Updates 

[Customer Care](#) | [WEBTPAX](#) | [CG Finance Center Travel Apps \(CG Portal Link\)](#) | [GetThere \(ADVTRAV\)](#) | [Gov't Travel Charge Card](#) | [Per Diem Rates](#) | [Move.MIL, Defense Personal Property System \(HHGs\)](#)

- News
- General Information
- Known Issues
- E-Learning
- AO Designation
- Other Resources
- Forms/Pubs

Training Announcements and PPC News Feeds

- ▶ PPC General Announcements
- ▶ Top 10 Tuesday Recording and Q&A Posted
- ▶ Top Ten Tuesdays (2017) Monthly Online Learning and Q&A Sessions with PPC
- ▶ Travel & WEB-TPAX News Updates



Visit PPC's New Travel Web Page - <https://www.uscg.mil/ppc/tvl.asp>

About the PPC Customer Newsletter: An authorized publication, the PPC Customer Newsletter is published under the direction of the U.S. Coast Guard Pay & Personnel Center. Views and opinions expressed are not necessarily those of the Department of Homeland Security or the U.S. Coast Guard. The PPC Customer Newsletter shall not be considered an authority for any official action and is non-record material. The PPC Customer Newsletter is published quarterly. Articles are solicited from all readers.

How to submit an article: Articles for the PPC Customer Newsletter may be submitted by e-mail to [the Procedures & Development branch e-mail address "PPC-PF-PD"](#).

Pay & Personnel Newsletter

United States Coast Guard Pay & Personnel Center

Direct Access Payroll Retroactive Processing

In Range vs. Out of Range

Introduction

Pay transactions with effective dates more than 24 pay periods in the past (approximately a year) require special handling.

In Range

If a transaction is **In Range**, the entire affected period is within 24 pay periods or one year.

For instance...if BAH was started for the wrong BAH Quarter Status (like it was started with the without dependents rate instead of the with dependents rate or vice versa) when the member checked in 2 months ago, that correction would be considered **In Range**. Follow the [Correcting BAH guide](#) to make the change and the system will automatically correct the appropriate calendars and either create a debt or credit the member.

Out of Range

If a transaction is **Out of Range**, the affected period includes dates older than 24 pay periods or one year. **ALL Out of Range transactions require a PPC Customer Care ticket.**

For instance...if a member divorced over a year ago and had no other dependents and just told their SPO about it (that never happens, right?), that correction would be considered **Out of Range**. Follow the [Correcting BAH guide](#) to make the change and the system will correct the most recent 24 pay calendars but a PPC Customer Care ticket must be submitted so all earlier calendars can be manually adjusted by PPC-MAS. The guide specifically tells the user to take screen shots of what the member currently has before making any changes so they can be attached to the trouble ticket. This will assist the pay techs in MAS when they are making their manual adjustments. This is especially critical when you have to delete rows of any kind. Once those deletions are approved by a SPO auditor, they are gone forever.

So please remember to include those screen shots with your tickets.

Procedure for Out of Range Transactions

When a SPO enters a pay related transaction with any effective dates that are older than one year (more than 24 pay calendars in the past), Direct Access will not process that transaction - This is defined as an "**out of range transaction**". The SPO must follow these steps:

1. Enter the transaction into Direct Access;
2. Approve the transaction in Direct Access;
3. Submit a ticket to PPC Customer Care with a description and the following information:
 - a. Name of entitlement(s);
 - b. Effective date(s) entered;
 - c. Name and EMPLID of the SPO Auditor;
 - d. Screen shots of any deleted rows;
 - e. The date when the transaction was approved.

Additional Information

Review the [Global Pay Framework](#) and the [Global Pay Terminology](#) topics in the [Direct Access / Global Pay Knowledgebase](#) to learn more about the payroll process.

Related Resources

Guide: [How to take "screen shots" and submit trouble tickets with supporting images.](#)

Articles:

- [Combat Tax Exclusion - Retroactive Transactions](#)
- [What to do when you get an error while processing PCS, BAH, OHA, or COLA/OCOLA changes with dates prior to 01 January 2017.](#)
- [Impact when Coast Guard Standard Meal Rate \(CGSMR\) is not started in a timely manner](#)

Pay & Personnel Newsletter

United States Coast Guard Pay & Personnel Center

Direct Access Web Browser Compatibility

As of Jan 2016, browsers compatible with our current version of DA are:

Apple Safari for OS X, versions 8.x and 9.x
Apple Safari for iOS, version 8.0.2
Google Chrome for Windows, version 43.x (rapid release version)
Google Chrome for Android, versions 5.x and 6.x
Microsoft Edge, version 25.10586
Microsoft Internet Explorer, version 11.x
Mozilla Firefox, versions 38.x and 42.x/

Improvements to the TRICARE Dental Program

Beginning on May 1, 2017, United Concordia Companies, Inc. (United Concordia) will manage the TRICARE Dental Program (TDP). Beneficiaries don't need to take any actions to continue their coverage.

The TDP is a voluntary dental benefit for eligible active duty family members, National Guard and Reserve members and their families. Several improvements to the TDP include:

- The annual maximum TDP will pay will increase from \$1,300 to \$1,500
- The TDP will consider sealants a free and preventive treatment, and no longer include a 20 percent cost share
- The auto-enrollment age for family members will lower from age four to one
- For most beneficiaries, the monthly premium rate will decrease (See [Monthly Premiums](#) for the new rates effective 1 May 2017)

The [Active Duty Dental Program](#) and [TRICARE Retiree Dental Program](#) will not change.

The TDP will continue to provide access to a network of civilian dentists around the world. Your access to quality care will not change. However, some dentists currently in the TDP network may leave, while new ones will join. So, those currently enrolled may need to find a new dental provider. To find participating dentists please visit: <https://www.uccitdp.com/find->

[a-dentist/](#). You may nominate dentists to participate by clicking on "[Nominate Your Dentist](#)" on the page linked above and completing a simple form.

For more information regarding the TDP, please visit the [TRICARE website](#) or www.uccitdp.com.

Source: [TRICARE News Center - Improvements to the TRICARE Dental Program, 05 April 2017](#)

Web-TPAX Server Move (New Address)

A scheduled WEB TPAX outage will occur from 1400 (CDT) Friday, 07 April to 0600 (CDT) Monday, 10 April.

The system will be moved from servers located at PPC Topeka to OSC/FINCEN Chesapeake and will be unavailable during this time.

Please ensure all travel claim documents are approved by the AO prior to 1400 (CDT) Friday, 07 April.

New URL for WEB TPAX will be <https://webtpax.osc.uscg.mil>. Please delete any/all favorites and shortcuts to the old WEB TPAX URL.

Defense Travel Management Office Allowances and Regulations Update

The Defense Travel Management Office has updated the following information for 01 April 2017:

[OCONUS Non-Foreign and Foreign Per Diem Rates](#)
[Overseas Housing Allowances \(OHA\)](#)
[Overseas Cost of Living Allowances \(COLA\)](#)
[Joint Travel Regulations \(JTR\) and Appendices](#)

To access this information, visit the [DTMO Website](#).

Pay & Personnel Newsletter

United States Coast Guard Pay & Personnel Center

Update to Critical Housing Areas

[ALCGPSC 001/17](#) announced the annual review of critical housing areas (CHA). [ALCGPSC 044/17](#) added Baton Rouge, LA, effective 23 March 2017.

The following is a list of MHAs and zip codes that are designated as a Coast Guard CHA:

- A. Abbeville, LA (Zip Code 70511)
- B. Baton Rouge, LA (Zip Code 70809) (IAW [ALCGPSC 044/17](#))
- C. Buxton/Hatteras, NC (Zip Code 27943)
- D. Brownsville, TX (MHA TX 281)
- E. Coastal Maine (MHA ME141) with the exception of Zip Code 04679
- F. Demopolis, AL (Zip Code 36732)
- G. Freeport, TX (Zip Code 77541)
- H. Greenville, MS (Zip Code 38701)
- I. Keokuk, IA (Zip Code 52632)
- J. Lake Charles, LA (MHA LA370)
- K. Port O'Connor, TX (Zip Code 77982)
- L. Station Menemsha, MA (MHA MA151)
- M. Station Yankeetown, FL (Zip Code 34498)
- N. Station Provincetown, MA (Zip Code 02657)
- O. Venice, LA (Zip Code 70091)

Effective immediately, Station Montauk, NY (Zip Code 11954) is no longer designated as a CHA.

Top 10 Tuesday Recording and Q&A Posted

Thank you to all those who attended our online virtual session on Tuesday, 21 March. We discussed several PCS topics, including screening for overseas and out CONUS, shipment and storage of privately owned vehicles, personally procured moves, and held a question and answer session with PPC's travel experts.

A recording of the session is available at <https://dhsconnect.connectsolutions.com/p77ttl4gdr8/>.

A transcript of the questions and answers that came up during the session is online at

<https://www.uscg.mil/ppc/training/2017Tuesdays/MarchQandA.pdf>.

Mark your calendars for our next session on 18 April 2017. We will fill you in on Selective Reenlistment Bonuses.

DA Known Issue Resolved - Pay Transactions With Effective Dates of the 31st (or 29 February)


The Direct Access programming issue which prevented SPOs from using the 31st day of the month or 29 February in pay transaction effective dates has been resolved. It is no longer necessary for SPOs to shift the effective date of pay transactions to the 1st day of the following month.

April 2017 Enlisted Personnel Advancement Announcement

[ALCGENL message 028/17](#) lists enlisted advancements authorized on 1 April 2017. In addition to the message, a spreadsheet is available which also shows the member's unit:

 [EPAA0417.xls](#)

Direct Access Competency Dictionary Update

The [Direct Access Competency Dictionary](#)  (a spreadsheet which shows all authorized competency codes and descriptions) has been updated by Comdt (CG-1B-1).

Changes made since last update (12 January 2017) are hi-lighted in blue text on the spreadsheet.

- 13 Competencies created
- 01 Competency inactivated
- 01 Competency modified

Pay & Personnel Newsletter

United States Coast Guard Pay & Personnel Center

Personally Procured Movements of Household Goods

During peak season it may be difficult to secure a Government-contracted transportation service provider (TSP) that meets the desired packing, pick-up, and delivery dates of everyone affected. If a TSP cannot be contracted, or if a member prefers, they may perform a full or partial Personally Procured Movement (PPM) of Household Goods (HHGs) and receive the incentive payment of 95% of the government's constructed expense, not to exceed the authorized weight allowance as published in the Joint Travel Regulations. [ALCOAST 077/17](#) provides detailed information for those planning to use the Personally Procured Movements (PPM) of Household Goods program.

Transfer Season 2017 Household Goods (HHG) Shipping Information

The 2017 HHG transportation season will be upon us soon, and whether a member is performing a long distance permanent change of station (PCS) move or a funded local move, HHG counseling is mandatory. To ensure members are aware of their HHG transportation entitlements, commands should ensure that all members departing on PCS orders, or separating from the Coast Guard receive a printed copy of [ALCOAST 072/17; Transfer Season 2017 Household Goods \(HHG\) Shipping Information and Mandatory Customer Satisfaction Survey](#).

Mandatory Use of the General Services Administration City Pair Program

Coast Guard travelers on official business are required to use the General Services Administration (GSA) City Pair Program (CPP) contract carrier unless a specific contract exception applies. [ALCOAST message 073/17](#) communicates these requirements and establishes the required procedures for using any of the allowed exceptions.

Travel Reimbursement Process Changes

02 MAR 2017
BT
UNCLAS //N02620//
ALCGPSC 033/17

SUBJ: CG TRAVEL REIMBURSEMENT PROCESS CHANGES

A. PPCINST M1000.2 (series), Personnel and Pay Procedures Manual

1. This message outlines travel process changes and TPAX enhancements that will improve the overall timeliness and effectiveness of the CG travel reimbursement program. Over the past year, while the average PPC travel claim processing times were 3.3 days for TDY claims and 16.6 days for PCS claims, processing times increased significantly during the peak of the PCS travel season. Primary factors driving these increased times include: travel claim volume, staff (experience and vacancies), travel claims submissions (incomplete, inaccurate, and not timely), and approving official's (AOs) thoroughness and proficiency.

2. In an effort to further reduce processing times and avoid spikes during high volume periods, PPC is implementing the changes outlined below. These changes will be incorporated in a future change to ref (A).

- A. "Kick-back" Processing - Starting 1 May, resubmitted claims will be processed separately from first-time submissions. This change will reduce processing time for these claims and will also reduce field frustrations.
- B. Audit Processing - PPC has already implemented a number of audit process efficiencies that have reduced both the audit backlog by over 33% and overall audit processing times.
- C. Claim Completion Notifications - Starting in May, travel claim notification e-mails will alert travelers when reimbursement amounts differ from what was originally submitted (i.e. amounts adjusted or zeroed out).

Pay & Personnel Newsletter

United States Coast Guard Pay & Personnel Center

- D. AO Kickback Notifications - Starting in May, both the traveler and AO will be notified when a claim is returned for correction. Including the AOs on the notification will facilitate quicker resolution and resubmission of the claim.
- E. Member / PPC Communications - Starting on 1 May, all travelers will work directly with their AOs to complete claims, resolve errors, and obtain information regarding claim status, audits, supplemental claims, travel policy, or requests for explanation of travel payments. This change will provide the most rapid resolution of members travel issues, will improve AO/traveler communications and efficiency, will improve AO proficiency and expertise, and will reduce overall claim processing and reimbursement times. If an issue cannot be resolved at the AO level, the AO will submit an electronic based ticket to PPC. Directions for submitting an electronic ticket can be found at <https://www.uscg.mil/ppc/ccb/>. PPC Customer Care will continue to field emergency calls related to travel advances, debt collection overpayments, and other miscellaneous travel related emergencies.
- F. New AO Training Course - In July 2016, PPC launched a new AO training course that is available in LMS (<https://elearning.uscg.mil/Course#100102> - "Travel Authorizing/Approving Official (AO) Course"). This course focuses on the AO responsibilities, common elements of PCS and TDY travel claims, and provides AOs with the core knowledge needed to be successful.
- G. AO Familiarization/Refresher - In April, PPC will provide a virtual AO familiarization and refresher that will cover AO responsibilities, TPAX tools and reports, and common errors and resolutions. These sessions will be recorded and available 24 X 7 on the PPC Travel Website. Specific information will be provided SEPCOR.
- H. Updated PPC Travel Website - On 15 Feb, PPC launched a new/revamped Travel Website (<https://www.uscg.mil/ppc/tvl.asp>). This site is easier to navigate and employs a "two-click" approach (everything you need in two clicks or less). Below is a summary of the information available on the site:

(1) News - providing PPC General Announcements, Top Ten Tuesdays (2017)

Monthly Online Learning and Q&A Sessions with PPC, and Travel & WEB-TPAX News Updates.

(2) General Information - containing General Travel and Contact Information to include, Travel Payment Status, Claims, Mailing Address, Web TPAX Audit Process Overview, Signatures on Travel Orders, Rate Changes, How to calculate "Cost of GTR", Lost Receipts or Original Orders, Calculators, and Travel Frequently Asked Questions.

(3) Known Issues - maintaining a running list of known issues and procedural highlights for the past six months.

(4) E-Learning - containing the Web TPAX User Guides, Tutorials and Webinar Recordings.

(5) AO Designation - containing the Travel Approving Official Training and Designation Procedures.

(6) Additional Resources - containing general Travel Information and Resources. (7) Library - containing links to Travel Related Directives, Publications and Guides.

3. While the process for submitting travel claims has not changed, several TPAX enhancements and internal process changes will further improve the overall travel reimbursement program. The comprehensive changes outlined in this message will accomplish several goals: improve the overall travel reimbursement program, increase AO proficiency and expertise, and mitigate impacts to the CG travel program as a result of a personnel redux. PPC will continue to work with AOs and the field to identify future improvements.

4. Direct inquiries to PPC Customer Care Branch (CCB) via e-mail to ppc-dg-customer-care@uscg.mil or by completing a trouble ticket at <https://www.uscg.mil/ppc/ccb/>.

5. Released by: RDML M. T, Bell, Jr., Commander, CG Personnel Service Center. The Service Center for our Most Important Resources - Our People.

6. Internet release authorized.