



United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
Washington, D. C. 20240



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Memorandum

To: Service Directorate

From: Assistant Director - Management and Administration **JANINE VELASCO**

Subject: Guidelines on Evacuation Special Allowances (Travel and Subsistence) for Employees Affected by Natural Disasters

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This memorandum provides guidelines on evacuation special allowances (travel and subsistence) reimbursement for employees affected by a natural disaster (e.g. hurricane, catastrophic fire, etc.) based on Federal Regulation [5 CFR 550.405](#), U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) [hurricane and other natural disasters guidance](#), and the Department of the Interior Office of Emergency Management Frequently Asked Questions ([FAQ](#)) on emergency evacuation.

Employees who are under a mandatory evacuation order by their state or local municipality may be eligible to receive reimbursement for themselves and dependent(s) for approved special allowances. Due to the nature of separate jurisdiction, a State, Tribal, Territorial, or local government evacuation order, by itself, does not convey eligibility to receive Federal compensation, leave benefits, or relieve an employee from a scheduled tour of duty. An agency is not required to issue an order of evacuation when a state or local evacuation is ordered for travel and per diem. An agency's evacuation order is also separate from Federal monetary aid and response activities provided to State, Tribal, Territorial, and local governments under the Disaster Relief Act of 1974, amended by the Stafford Act of 1988 (42 U.S.C. § 5121 et. seq. and 44 CFR § 206). Evacuation-related payments and allowances may not be used to duplicate personal assistance accepted from other sources, including but not limited to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), Red Cross, dependents' place of employment, or personal insurance.

Upon issuance of an evacuation order, travel expenses to/from safe haven and per diem for an employee and their dependents is payable from the date of departure from the evacuated area through the date of arrival at the safe haven, including any period of delay en route that is beyond an evacuee's control or that may result from evacuation travel arrangements.

Reimbursement ends when the employee returns to their own residence, a U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) provided temporary residence, or a Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) provided temporary residence, whichever is made available first. If the evacuation has not been terminated after 30 days, the per diem rate is reduced to 60 percent of the prescribed

rates. This rate may be paid for a period not to exceed 180 days after the effective date of the order to evacuate. Payment of subsistence expenses shall be decreased by the applicable per-person amount for any period during which the employee is authorized regular travel per diem in accordance with Federal Travel Regulations (FTR).

The supervising directorate member (e.g., Assistant Director, Regional Director) may not delegate the authority to pay per diem of evacuated employees and dependents, per Service Manual Chapter (SMC) [033 FW 15](#), Travel and Transportation Delegations.

Travel authorizations must be prepared on the Travel Authorization Form DI-1020 (Attachment 1) in lieu of using the ConcurGov automated travel system. Group authorizations may be prepared for multiple employees and family members by indicating in the remarks and attaching a list of evacuated employees. Dependents' names and ages must be included on the travel authorization (DI-1020).

- Reimbursement for lodging, meals and incidental expenses (M&IE), will be in accordance with current [per diem rates](#) established by GSA. For reimbursement of subsistence expenses while at an approved safe haven, the current OPM regulations for evacuation compensation only allow the “lodgings plus per diem” system (see 41 CFR 301-11, Subpart B). Actual expenses and Miscellaneous Expenses are not available because they fall outside of the “lodgings plus per diem system.”
- Lodging and M&IE rates for family members are in accordance with CFR 550.405, Determination of Special Allowances:
 - Family Member > 12 years of age; 100% of employee rate
 - Family Member < 12 years of age; 50% of employee rate
- Per diem entitlements for evacuations are the same as non-emergency temporary duty travel (TDY), and do not include allowances for items such as pet expenses or shipment of privately-owned vehicle (POV) or household goods.
- Mileage reimbursement is limited to the designated radius based on the evacuation order and is as follows:
 - Authorized mileage reimbursement will be for one round trip, residence to safe haven and return, based on the employee's odometer reading at the start and end of trip.
 - Reimbursement will be at the current POV [mileage rates](#) established by GSA, in accordance with 41 CFR 301-10.

After evacuation travel is concluded, employees who were authorized to receive reimbursement for evacuation special allowances, should complete the attached form, Claim for Reimbursement for Expenditures on Official Business OF-1164 (attachment 2), and submit for payment in accordance with Service Manual Chapter [261 FW 4](#), Employee Claims for Reimbursement of Official Business Expenses. Claims must be submitted for approval through the employee's supervisor. Employees will need to attach the DI-1020 travel authorization, a copy of this memorandum, evacuation orders, and receipts to the OF-1164. Employees will also need to supply their station's cost center, work breakdown structure (WBS), and use budget object code (BOC) 118B, Federal Employee Compensation. The OF-1164 payment package will be

processed by the Interior Business Center. Please note that employees will need to keep a digital copy of the payment package for their records in the event that there is an audit.

For questions regarding these procedures, please contact Susan Humphrey, Lead, TDY Travel Policy, at 715-307-4209 or susan_humphrey@fws.gov; Joanne Pena, Branch Chief, Payments and Collections, at 505-315-7310 or joanne_pena@fws.gov; or Michael Sciortino, Chief, Financial Operations, at 703-358-2054 or michael_sciortino@fws.gov.

Attachments (2)