



## INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL

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### **I. Purpose**

This Directive establishes Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) policy governing International Travel.

### **II. Scope**

This Directive applies to all FEMA personnel and those travelling internationally on behalf of FEMA.

### **III. Policy and Procedures**

#### **A. General**

1. In general, the travel regulations that govern domestic travel also apply to international travel, and unless noted otherwise, the policies and regulations outlined in this Directive apply to both domestic and international travel. However, this Directive is intended to highlight some of the travel regulations that are specific to international travel.
2. All international travel must be coordinated through the proposed international traveler's office/directorate/component, FEMA's Office of External Affairs (OEA) International Affairs Division, FEMA's Office of the Chief Security Officer, and other FEMA offices as appropriate, and approved by the FEMA Administrator or his/her designee, in accordance with this Directive.
3. International travel, as defined by FEMA for travel approval authority, refers to travel outside of the 50 United States, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, and the territories and possessions of the United States (Continental United States - CONUS and non-foreign Outside the Continental United States - OCONUS). International travel may occur between CONUS/non-foreign OCONUS locations and foreign OCONUS locations, as well as between two or more foreign OCONUS locations.
4. FEMA leadership and subject matter experts are occasionally asked to travel outside of the United States to speak at events or to provide guidance, technical assistance, or training to other international audiences. Engaging in information exchanges, meetings, conferences, exercises, and other activities with foreign governments and international organizations active in emergency management and related fields

supports FEMA's strategic objective to encourage international partners in building mutual preparedness. Knowledge gleaned from participating in such activities can enhance FEMA's capabilities in domestic policy, planning, and operations by considering international lessons observed and smart practices. International travel can also provide FEMA personnel with professional development opportunities.

5. To maximize the value of such exchanges, it is necessary to ensure that official international travel is in the United States Government's best interest and in accordance with the guidelines set forth herein, regardless of the payment source.
6. Travel accommodations for FEMA employees on official international travel are limited to coach-class, unless certain exemptions require otherwise (see Section III.C, "Class of International Travel Accommodations and Upgrades").
7. All travel that is funded by a non-FEMA source must be reviewed and approved by FEMA's Office of the Chief Counsel (OCC)/Ethics Office. FEMA Form (FF) 122-1-1-2 "International Travel/Project Analysis and Approval" and the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Form 1560-0 "Authorization for Acceptance of Travel Payment from Non-Federal Source" must be submitted in advance of international travel (see section III.E, "Payment of International Travel Expenses by Other Sources").
8. All authorized travel expenses incurred while on official international travel must be charged to the individual-billed account (IBA) travel charge card, including the purchase of air travel. Travel expenses that are exempt from these provisions are expenses incurred at a vendor that does not accept the travel charge card, meals (when use of the card is impractical, such as group meals), local transportation, parking, laundry/dry cleaning, taxi, phone calls, tips, or in special situations in which due to a special travel advisory, such as those issued by the U.S. State Department, travelers are urged to not use credit cards or ATM cards.

#### B. Approval Authority for International Travel

1. The authority to approve requests for international travel is delegated to the FEMA Administrator or his/her designee.
2. Approving Officials are responsible for ensuring that: travel objectives link to the office mission; travel is cost effective; the appropriate numbers of officials travel; length of travel time is appropriate; travelers possess the appropriate level of expertise; travel is coordinated with other affected offices; and country clearance is obtained. In addition, Approving Officials will be accountable when questions arise regarding the management and control of international travel (see Section III.C, "Class of International Travel Accommodations and Upgrades").

#### C. Class of International Travel Accommodations and Upgrades

1. Travel accommodations for FEMA employees on official domestic or international travel are limited to coach-class. Coach-class is the basic class of accommodation offered. The traveler may request authorization of other accommodations if coach-class seating is not reasonably available in time to accomplish the purpose of the trip.
2. Any travel accommodations above coach-class must be approved in advance of travel by the appropriate Approving Official. Expenses incurred for travel accommodations above coach-class that were not authorized in advance of travel will not be reimbursed except in an emergency.
3. First-class travel is not permitted unless authorized in advance of travel and in writing by the Secretary of DHS.
4. Business-class travel also may be approved if the traveler is going outside the continental United States, if the trip is more than 14 hours, and if the traveler must report directly to work without time to obtain the equivalent of a night's rest. Business-class travel requests must be justified in writing, and submitted to the FEMA Administrator for approval prior to travel. The FEMA Administrator has the authority to re-delegate this authority to their principal deputy or to the Chief Financial Officer. However, when planning travel, travelers are responsible for making their travel arrangements as far in advance as possible. This will help ensure both the availability of coach seating when booking a flight and enough time for a rest period en route. Lack of available coach seating when booking at the last minute is not an acceptable reason for traveling business-class, unless the need to travel arose at the last minute, is urgent, and cannot be postponed.
5. In general, FEMA employees may upgrade to a premium-class of accommodations using their individual frequent flyer miles given that there is no additional cost to the Government. However, employees are expected to exercise good judgment and discretion when wearing the DHS or FEMA seals, insignia, or markings when traveling in premium-class accommodations given the negative public image this may cause.

#### D. Travel Authorization

1. Travel Authorizations (TAs) must be completed for all authorized business travel, and submitted and processed through FEMA's established TA process even if a non-FEMA source is paying for the travel.

#### E. Payment of International Travel Expenses by Other Sources

1. If a source other than FEMA or another U.S. Government agency offers to fund either part or all of the travel and/or travel-related expenses, a traveler must complete and submit DHS Form 1560-0 "Authorization for Acceptance of Travel Payment From

Non-Federal Source", as well as relevant sections of FF 122-1-1-1 "International Travel/Project Analysis and Approval".

2. If an employee receives an invitation to travel by a third party funder and the third party is a country offering to pay any or all expenses associated with the travel overseas, this must be clearly outlined in the invitational letter.
3. After the trip, employees must complete and file a Standard Form 326 "Semiannual Report of Payments Accepted from a Non-Federal Source" to account for all moneys reimbursed by the third party.
4. If another U.S. Government agency is funding the travel, employees must obtain the invitation and travel orders from the sponsoring agency and forward them with a travel request to the FEMA OEA International Affairs Division for consideration.

#### F. Security and Safety Issues related to International Travel

1. Before departing on international travel, all FEMA travelers must check the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Centers for Disease Control (CDC) website at <http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/default.aspx> and U.S. Department of State website at <http://www.travel.state.gov> for information on safety and welfare while traveling.
2. For reasons of health and to avoid possible difficulties under the quarantine regulations of foreign countries, passport applicants should contact the nearest representative of the U.S. Public Health Service concerning immunization requirements of the countries to be visited before departure.
3. Any presentations or materials to be shared with foreign audiences must be cleared with the traveler's supervisor (for content) and with the Office of Chief Security Officer (OCSO). This may require additional lead time and the traveler should plan accordingly.
4. All international travelers, especially holders of U.S. government security clearances, must coordinate with the Office of Chief Security Officer (OCSO) to ensure the traveler is aware of any security related issues in the destination country. After receiving approval to travel, the traveler should coordinate with OCSO to:
  - a. Inform OCSO of the anticipated travel and itinerary.
  - b. Provide a listing of individuals anticipated to meet.
  - c. Schedule a "Foreign Travel and Counter Intelligence Brief".
  - d. Provide all presentations, handouts, and speeches for review.
  - e. Within 72 hours of return, meet with OCSO staff, if requested, for debriefing.

## G. Documents Necessary to Travel Internationally

1. Official travel to an international location involves the completion of specific documents and activities prior to traveling. Employees should submit the international travel package to the FEMA OEA International Affairs Division at least four weeks in advance. Items that are needed for international travel may include: passports; visas and visa photos; birth, health, and identification certificates; country clearances; affidavits; and vaccinations.
  - a. Passport - An official Government passport is required for all international travel for official business. It is FEMA policy that an individual have a U.S. personal passport prior to applying for an official government passport. For Government passport application procedures, please contact the FEMA OEA International Affairs Division.
  - b. Visas - Visas may be needed to enter certain countries for official U.S. Government business. Prior to travel (at least four to six weeks prior), employees should contact the FEMA OEA International Affairs Division to determine whether a visa is necessary. Obtaining a visa is a lengthy process and will likely require the employee to obtain passport-sized photos, complete a visa application, and obtain an invitational letter from the host country or the organizer of the trip.
  - c. Country Clearance - Country clearance is a notification to the U.S. Embassy overseas that a U.S. Government official is travelling to that country. Generally, these requests are sent via cable to the appropriate U.S. embassy. All requests for country clearance must be coordinated through the FEMA OEA International Affairs Division. Country clearance must be obtained for all international travel performed by FEMA employees on official business. Notification that country clearance has been granted must be obtained prior to travel.
  - d. Health Considerations and Vaccinations - All travelers should familiarize themselves with conditions at their international travel destination(s) that could affect their health, such as required vaccinations, availability of required pharmaceuticals, high altitudes, water quality, pollution, or availability of medical facilities. If a vaccination is required based on the international travel destination, it is the responsibility of the traveler to seek out a health care professional to receive the appropriate vaccination(s) in advance of departure. To be effective, most vaccinations must be taken 4 to 6 weeks before arrival in a foreign country.

## H. Fly America Act

1. The *International Air Transportation Fair Competitive Practices Act of 1974* or the "Fly America Act" specifies that, to the extent possible, Federal Government employees must fly United States flag air carriers to and from their foreign duty

locations. In situations where FEMA employees travel by non-U.S. flag air carriers, they must include, in the TA, the applicable exception(s) to the use of U.S. flag air carriers. The exceptions can be found in 41 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Chapter 301-10.135, 10.136, and 10.137.

2. A major exception allowed under the Fly America Act is the use of European Union (EU) carriers under the 2007 United States–EU Open Skies Air Transport Agreement. EU carriers may be used when transportation is between points for which there is a city-pair contract fare in effect for air passenger transportation services or transportation is obtained or funded by the Secretary of Defense or the Secretary of a military department. A listing of the member States as found in the U.S.–EU Open Skies Agreement may be accessed via the U.S. Department of State's website at <http://www.state.gov/e/eeb/tra/ata/index.htm>.
3. The Fly America Act does not apply to air travel that is fully paid for by a third party, such as a foreign Government, international agency, or other organization. Due to concerns about safety issues for travelers however, Authorizing Officials may use their discretion in allowing employees to travel other than under the Fly America Act, when the airfare is paid by a source outside of the U.S. Government.

#### I. Rest Stop

1. Employees may be authorized a rest stop not to exceed 24 hours when all the following conditions exist:
  - a. Either the destination or point of origin is OCONUS;
  - b. Scheduled flight time, including stopovers, exceeds 14 hours;
  - c. Travel is by a direct or usually travelled route; and
  - d. Travel is by coach-class accommodations.
2. A rest stop may not be scheduled if a flight will arrive at its destination (either on the outbound or return) after duty hours, allowing the traveler a reasonable opportunity to get the equivalent of a night of rest before reporting to duty.
3. A rest stop is not allowed if the employee is using business-class or first-class accommodations.
4. When a rest stop is authorized, the applicable per diem rate is the rate for the rest stop location.

#### J. Embassy-Provided Support Services

1. On certain occasions, travelers will require support services from the U.S. Embassy in the country they are visiting. These services may include embassy transportation, control rooms, and administrative support. The FEMA OEA International Affairs Division will forward these requests to the U.S. Embassy prior to travel.
2. Travelers should be aware that some services provided by U.S. embassies are not free-of-charge and thus must be authorized and budgeted by the Approving Official as appropriate.

#### K. Gifts

1. On certain occasions, employees traveling abroad will receive gifts during official travel from a non-Federal source. In this event and immediately upon return, employees must coordinate with the FEMA OCC Ethics Counsel if any gifts were received during official travel.

#### L. Travel Advance

1. In general, employees are able to use their IBA travel charge card to obtain cash travel advances in foreign locations; however, if they are travelling to remote foreign locations, employees may want to get Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) payments or cash from an Automatic Transfer Machine (ATM) in advance of their travel. If the current card and cash advance limits are inadequate for international travel, the employee may request, in writing (email is sufficient), that their card limit be raised. The request should be sent to the Authorizing Official approving the travel. The Approving Official should indicate approval and forward the request to the FEMA's travel card coordinator.

#### M. Per Diem Allowances

1. Maximum rates of per diem allowances for travel to OCONUS non-foreign areas (Alaska, Hawaii, Commonwealths of Puerto Rico and the Northern Mariana Islands, and territories and possessions of the United States) are established by the U.S. Department of Defense and appear in section 925 of the U.S. Department of State Standardized Regulations (DSSR). The rates are also listed on the Internet at <http://www.state.gov/travelandbusiness/>.
2. Maximum rates of per diem for OCONUS foreign areas are established by the U.S. Department of State in a per diem supplement to Section 925 of the DSSR and can also be accessed at <http://www.state.gov/travelandbusiness/>.

#### N. Actual Expense Allowances for Foreign Locations

1. The actual expense allowance for foreign locations is limited by statute to no more than 300 percent of the applicable lodging per diem allowance (see Financial Directive - FD 126-2, "Per Diem and Miscellaneous Travel Expenses Directive").

## O. Miscellaneous Travel Expenses Incident to International Travel

1. Some typical miscellaneous expenses that are reimbursable include, but are not limited to: visa photo and application expenses; FEMA Travel Management Center (TMC) processing fee; airport and country departure fees; and vaccinations and malaria prophylaxis.

## P. Lodging Taxes and Laundry

1. Unlike the case for travel within CONUS (48 states and District of Columbia), lodging taxes and laundry and dry cleaning costs are not treated as miscellaneous expenses for international travel. Lodging taxes and laundry and dry cleaning costs are included in the per diem allowances.

## Q. Driver's License

1. A driver's license issued in the United States, in most cases, will be sufficient for travelers who are renting a car overseas. FEMA will not reimburse employees who are going on international Temporary Duty Travel (TDY) for the cost of international driver's licenses.

## R. Reimbursement for Car Insurance when Necessary

1. Employees may be reimbursed for the cost of travel insurance purchased for the use of a privately-owned vehicle (POV) or a rental car during official international travel if there are no rental car vendors at the TDY location who participate in the Surface Deployment and Distribution Command (SDDC) Government Car Rental Agreement. Reimbursement is limited to instances in which the purchase of such insurance is necessary because of rental or leasing agency requirements, foreign statute, or is a practical necessity due to the legal procedures of the foreign country.

## S. Travel Vouchers for International Travel

1. FEMA's Travel Management Center (TMC) is the authorized portal for employee TAs and vouchers for international travel. Employees must report all foreign travel expenses on the voucher in U.S. dollars. The total expenditure in foreign currency must be converted to U.S. dollars at the exchange rate(s) at the time of conversion. The exchange rates must be disclosed on the vouchers. If an employee receives delayed charges on his/her travel charge card bill, and the charge is billed at a higher exchange rate, a supplemental voucher must be filed. A copy of the bank statement and a copy of the original voucher must be attached to the supplemental voucher being filed to reflect the rate difference.

## T. Travel Vouchers and Crossing the International Date Line

1. Travelers lose a day when they cross the International Date Line (180th meridian) traveling west and gain a day traveling east. To avoid calendar day complications, travelers must track the actual time that elapses on the trip.

#### U. Reporting Requirements

1. Upon the completion of all foreign travel, a brief trip report should be forwarded to the traveler's supervisor, with a copy to the FEMA OEA International Affairs Division. The report should include, at a minimum, the individual's (U.S. and foreign) contacted; substance of the discussions; and follow-up actions and activities.

#### V. International Travel Exceptions:

1. Exception to certain requirements of this Directive is provided to support activities related to fulfillment of Agency obligations under the Compact of Free Association or under any other U.S. Government treaty or legislation. This exception to certain procedural requirements relates primarily to the Republic of the Marshall Islands and the Federated States of Micronesia. Contact the Director, International Affairs Division, for further guidance.

### V. Responsibilities

#### A. The FEMA Office of the Chief Financial Officer (OCFO) is responsible for:

1. Establishing, updating, and overseeing the development of FEMA international travel policies in conjunction with FEMA OEA, International Affairs Division, and in accordance with DHS prescribed guidance.
2. Ensuring that FEMA has a travel management center (TMC) in place to accommodate international travel arrangements.

#### B. The FEMA OEA, The International Affairs Division is responsible for:

1. Submitting and processing requests for official passports for travelers;
2. Submitting country clearance cables to appropriate U.S. Embassies through the Department of State's online eCountry Clearance system;
3. Notifying DHS International Affairs Division and the Senior DHS Representative in the destination country of the upcoming travel;
4. Assisting the Traveler with obtaining any necessary Visas for approved travel;
5. If applicable, forwarding offers of funding from a non-U.S. Government Agency or private entity to OCC, for approval; and

6. Providing background information on the proposed country of travel, if requested by the traveler.

C. Approving Officials are responsible for:

1. Reviewing and approving any presentation materials and the FEMA Form 122- 1- 1- 1 to ensure that:
  - a. The travel benefits the mission of the program office at FEMA;
  - b. The travel benefits FEMA's mission and strategic goals;
  - c. The travel enhances the employee's career development;
  - d. The employee's absence will not impact FEMA's ability to perform essential functions; and
  - e. The employee can meet all international travel requirements (e.g. obtain an official passport and visa) prior to commencement of travel.
2. If the proposed travel is to provide technical assistance and/or training to another country or international organization, FEMA Form 122-1-1-1 must be reviewed by the supervisor to determine the following prior to approval:
  - a. Is the technical assistance and/or training provided as part of a structured program or project for the recipient country?
  - b. Are other options, such as Train-the-Trainer, available that would minimize FEMA staff time out of the office and at the same time create a stronger foreign capacity for training and development programs?
  - c. Has similar technical assistance and/or training been conducted by FEMA in the past in this particular location?
  - d. How and by whom will the effectiveness of FEMA technical assistance and/or training for the recipient country be evaluated?
  - e. How will this international request for technical assistance and/or training strengthen or enhance FEMA's traditional domestic readiness, response and recovery mission?

## VI. Supersession

This Directive supersedes FEMA Directive 122-1, International Travel Policy.

## VI. Authorities

- A. 31 U.S.C. § 1353, Acceptance of Travel and Related Expenses from Non-Federal Sources.
- B. 41 C.F.R. Chapter 304, Payment of Travel Expenses from a Non-Federal Source.
- C. 5 U.S.C. § 4111 Acceptance of Contributions, Awards, and Other Payment.
- D. 5 U.S.C. § 7342 Receipt and Disposition of Foreign Gifts and Decorations.
- E. 41 C.F.R. § 304, Payment of Travel Expenses from a Non-Federal Source.
- F. 49 U.S.C. § 40118, Fly America Act.
- G. 49 U.S.C. § 1517, International Air Transportation Fair Competitive Practices Act of 1974

## VII. References

- A. DHS Management Directive (MD) 1560.2, Payment of Official Travel Expenses by Non-Federal Sources.
- B. DHS MD 2270, Public Speaking Opportunities.
- C. FEMA Manual 109-3, Missions and Functions (formally 1010.1, Missions and Functions).
- D. FEMA Directive 122-2, Travel Regulations (formally 6200.1, Travel Regulations).

## VIII. Definitions

- A. **Actual Expense Allowance:** An actual expense allowance is an authorized payment of actual expenses incurred by an employee while on TDY travel.
- B. **Actual Expense Method:** The method by which an employee may be reimbursed for actual expenses incurred while on TDY travel.
- C. **Approving Official:** This official is normally a staff or program official, branch chief or above, who has been delegated authority, in writing, to approve travel. Normally, the

Approving Official is the traveler's supervisor who has full knowledge of the purpose and requirements of the proposed travel.

- D. **Continental United States (CONUS):** The 48 contiguous States and the District of Columbia.
- E. **Contract Carriers:** U.S.-certified air carriers that are under contract with the Government to provide Federal employees and other persons authorized to travel at Government expense with passenger transportation service. This also includes the General Services Administration (GSA) scheduled airline passenger service between selected U.S. cities/airports and between selected U.S. and international cities/airports at reduced fares.
- F. **E-Gov Travel Service (ETS) or Electronic Travel System:** The Government-contracted, end-to-end travel management service that automates and consolidates the Federal travel process in a self-service Web-centric environment, covering all aspects of official travel, including travel planning, authorization, reservations, ticketing, expense reimbursement, and travel management reporting.
- G. **Government-issued Travel Charge Card:** A Government contractor-issued and individually-billed travel charge card used by authorized individuals to pay for official travel and transportation related expenses for which the contractor bills the employee.
- H. **Invitational Traveler:** Authorized travel of individuals either not employed or employed (under 5 United States Code - U.S.C. 5703) intermittently in the Government service as consultants or experts and paid on a daily when-actually-employed basis and for individuals serving without pay or at \$1 a year when they are acting in a capacity that is directly related to, or in connection with, official activities of the Government. Travel allowances authorized for such persons are the same as those normally authorized for employees in connection with TDY.
- I. **Locality:** The location where an employee is authorized on a TA to conduct official Government business.
- J. **Miscellaneous expenses:** The allowable travel expenses that cannot be classified as either subsistence or transportation expenses.
- K. **Outside the Continental United States (OCONUS):** The areas outside of the 48 contiguous states and the District of Columbia.
- L. **Per Diem Allowance:** A per diem allowance is an established daily amount intended to provide for an employee's daily lodging and meals and incidental expenses (M&IE) while on authorized official TDY travel.
- M. **Travel Management Center (TMC):** The Agency's designated travel management center for reserving lodging, common carrier, and rental cars.

**IX. Forms Prescribed**

- A. DHS Form 11053-1, Notification of Foreign Travel
- B. DHS Form 1560-1, Authorization for Acceptance of Travel Payment from Non-Federal Source
- C. FF 122-1-1-1, International Travel/Project Analysis and Approval
- D. FF 122-1-1-2, Widely Attended Gathering (WAG)/ Gift of Third Party Travel/ Official Participation Questionnaire
- E. FEMA OEA, International Affairs Division Form, Country Clearance Template

**X. Responsible Office**

The following two offices are responsible for implementing this Directive: FEMA OCFO and FEMA OEA.

**XI. Questions**

For questions about international travel, please contact the FEMA OEA International Affairs Division at [FEMA-International@dhs.gov](mailto:FEMA-International@dhs.gov) or the FEMA Office of the Chief Financial Officer (OCFO) Financial Policy Unit at [FEMA-TravelPolicy@fema.gov](mailto:FEMA-TravelPolicy@fema.gov) or the FEMA Office of Chief Security Officer at [FEMA-AdministrativeSecurity@fema.gov](mailto:FEMA-AdministrativeSecurity@fema.gov).

  
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