

U.S. Agency for International Development  
Bureau of Conflict Prevention & Stabilization (“CPS”)  
Office of Transition Initiatives (“OTI”)

**U.S. Personal Services Contractor**

# **USPSC HANDBOOK**

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March 2021

Many of the links within this document will only work if you are logged into the USAID Internal Network or on OTI Anywhere. If a link does not work for you, please search for the listed relevant policy or reach out to the OTI Employee Services listserv ([cps.otiemployeeservices@usaid.gov](mailto:cps.otiemployeeservices@usaid.gov)).

Many of the citations here reference specific OTI teams and policies, therefore if you are not an OTI employee, and have additional questions related to the information in this handbook, please reach out to your CO, EXO, or the USPSC Association ([psc-association-executive-committee@usaid.gov](mailto:psc-association-executive-committee@usaid.gov)).



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# Introduction

Congratulations on becoming a U.S. Personal Services Contractor (“USPSC”) with the U.S. Agency for International Development (“USAID”). This handbook provides a general description of the Personal Services Contracts mechanism and entitlements. It is designed to give you an overview of the underlying policies for Personal Services Contracts and to point you to specific regulatory sources for each benefit or allowance addressed. However, this handbook is not intended to be comprehensive.

In fact, given the complexity of most of the regulations, it is always a good idea to look up the regulatory references for more details, and to ask for advice on their applicability to your specific situation. For the benefit of OTI staff, OMD will post any updates on relevant policies, benefits, or allowances on [OTI Anywhere](#). Be sure to check there for the latest information.

OMD will update this handbook on an annual basis and share it with the PSC Association. See the [PSC Association](#) section below for more information.

## **Rule Number 1: READ YOUR CONTRACT!**

Your Personal Services Contract is long and may sound like legalese on occasion, but it controls your employment with USAID. **USPSCs are personally responsible for knowing the terms and conditions of their own employment.** Take the time to read your contract. If you have questions related to your contract, please contact your contract point-of-contact, or office-specific personnel management/HR team.

## **Rule Number 2: CHECK FOR THE MOST RECENT GUIDANCE!**

Aside from death and taxes, nothing is guaranteed. Policies, regulations, and procedures are changing all the time, so the guidance provided below should not be considered “set in stone.” As specific issues arise, you should confirm the applicability of the guidance provided. Within OTI, OMD is a good source for such information. When the guidance provides (or links to) references, always double check the references before taking action.

# USAID's Workforce

The USAID workforce consists of a number of different hiring types or mechanisms. It is not necessary to know about all of the hiring types, but it is important to know the details of the Personal Services Contracts mechanism under which you have been hired.

A Personal Services Contract is a service contract characterized by the employer-employee relationship it creates between the government and the contractor. In a service contract, this relationship is created when, as a result of either the contract's terms or the manner of its administration during performance, the U.S. Government exercises relatively continuous supervision and control over the contractor performing the contract. That is, the contractor appears, in effect, to be a government employee. Per FAR 37, Government agencies are not permitted to award Personal Services Contracts unless specifically authorized by statute or appropriation.

*For specific regulations, please see [FAR 37.104: Personal Services Contracts](#)*

## Personal Services Contracts at USAID

Section 636(a)(3) of the [Foreign Assistance Act](#) ("FAA") (22 U.S.C. 2396(a)(3)) provides USAID with the statutory authorization to enter into contracts with individuals for personal services abroad, "provided, that such individuals shall not be regarded as employees of the United States Government for the purpose of any law administered by the Civil Service Commission." (Note: The Civil Service Commission is now the U.S. Office of Personnel Management ("OPM").) Through annual appropriations legislation, USAID is also authorized to hire USPSCs for services *within* the United States. USAID makes extensive use of its Personal Services Contract authorities with U.S. citizens, foreign service nationals, and third country nationals.

In accordance with [FAR Part 17: Special Contracting Methods](#), USAID established a policy mandating that Personal Services Contracts be limited to five years. At the end of a five-year cumulative contract period, a Contracting Officer ("CO") must close out the contract. If USAID determines that it requires the same services to be continued beyond the five-year maximum period, the CO must execute a new award following the appropriate competitive procedures governing all types of Personal Services Contracts. This policy is codified in Section 309.3.1.1(e) of [ADS 309: Personal Services Contracts with Individuals](#).

*For specific regulations, please see [ADS 309: Personal Services Contracts with Individuals](#); [FAR 5.102\(a\)\(5\)\(iii\): Availability of Solicitations](#); and [AIDAR 706.302-70\(b\)\(5\): Solicitation Requirement-Impairment of Foreign Aid Programs](#)*

The rules governing USAID Personal Services Contracts with U.S. Citizens and U.S. resident aliens are based on those contained in the [Agency for International Development Acquisition Regulation \(AIDAR\)](#),

Appendix D. The key provisions of Appendix D are incorporated as General Provisions appended to all USAID Personal Services Contracts.

In AIDAR Appendix D, a Personal Services Contract is defined as “a contract that, by its express terms or as administered, makes the contractor personnel appear, in effect, government employees.” As such, **USAID USPSCs are considered U.S. Government employees except that they are not able to participate in programs administered by OPM.** This means that federal retirement benefits, health insurance, and life insurance, all of which are administered by OPM, are not available to USPSCs. In each case, however, USAID has provided alternative programs and funds to assist USPSCs offset some of the costs associated with obtaining coverage similar to that provided to U.S. Direct Hire (“USDH”) employees (i.e., Civil Service, Foreign Service, and political appointees). See the [Fringe Benefits](#) section below for more details.

As government employees, USAID USPSCs are subject to the same standards of conduct as USDH employees. Further, USPSCs may be delegated any authority, duty, or responsibility delegated to a USDH employee, except for the following:

1. USPSCs cannot supervise USDH employees of USAID or other U.S. Government agencies as part of their regular duties. USPSCs may supervise USDH employees *on a limited basis*, not to exceed 60 days in any 180-day period, to cover a temporary USDH absence. USPSCs may, of course, supervise non-USDH employees (e.g., other USPSCs and non-U.S. citizen employees);
2. USPSCs may participate in personnel selection matters, but may not be delegated authority to make a final decision on USDH personnel selections; and
3. USPSCs may represent USAID and communicate planning and implementation decisions; however, communications that reflect a final policy decision of USAID must be cleared by a USDH employee.

*For specific regulations, please see [AIDAR Appendix D, Section 1\(b\): Definitions](#); and [AIDAR Appendix D, Section 12\(2\): Compliance with Laws and Regulations Applicable Abroad](#); [AIDAR Appendix D, Section 4\(b\): Limitations on Personal Services Contracts](#); and [Agency Notice 9101: Delegation of Authority, Duty, or Responsibility to USPSCs and Non-U.S. Citizen Employees](#)*

## **Intermittent USPSCs**

In order to maintain the rapid-response capability that is central to our mission, OTI has established a cadre of professionals who are able to respond quickly to requests for immediate, short-term assistance on an intermittent basis. This cadre of Intermittent USPSCs is referred to collectively as the OTI Bullpen. In connection with existing Agency policies, OTI established [Office Order 17-009](#) on the employment and use of Intermittent USPSCs. Throughout this Handbook, wherever Intermittent USPSCs receive different treatment from full-time USPSCs, we will note it.

*For specific regulations, please see [Office Order 17-002: Bullpen](#). You may also reach out to the FPD Bullpen Supervisor for more information*

## **Probationary Period in OTI Personal Services Contracts**

Personal Services Contracts in OTI include a 90-day probationary period. At the conclusion of the 90 days, the USPSC's performance will be evaluated. Upon a satisfactory performance evaluation (as determined by their supervisor), the USPSC will no longer be subject to this condition. If at any point during the 90-day probationary period, the USPSC's performance is deemed to be unsatisfactory by their supervisor, OTI will take appropriate measures, up to and including termination of the Personal Services Contract pursuant to the "Termination" clause of Personal Services Contracts. Note: During the 90-day probationary period, a Personal Services Contract may be terminated immediately by the CO on advice from the supervisor with formal documentation.

## **Termination of Personal Services Contracts**

The U.S. Government may terminate performance of work under the Personal Services Contracts for cause (i.e., breach of contract, fraud, or misconduct) or for the convenience of USAID with advance written notice of no less than 15 calendar days to the USPSC. The USPSC may, with the written consent of the CO, terminate the contract upon at least 15- days written notice to the CO. If a USPSC is terminated for cause, no costs of any kind incurred after the date of the termination notice will be reimbursed, except the cost of return transportation (not including travel allowances) if approved by the CO.

*For specific regulations, please see [ADS 309.3.1.20: Contract Termination](#); and [AIDAR Appendix D, Section 12\(16\): Termination](#)*

# Compensation for USPSCs

## Salary Determination

As a matter of Agency policy, USAID has adopted the OPM General Schedule (“GS”) Pay Table as the basis to determine the market value for a USPSC position (i.e., their compensation). Unlike U.S. civil service employees, USPSCs are not GS-based employees because the GS is a pay program administered by OPM. Instead, a “GS-equivalent” pay scale is established to provide a consistent estimate of what a comparable GS position would total (including basic salary, allowances, and differentials, if appropriate).

The GS is separated into 15 grades (where GS-1 is the lowest and GS-15 is the highest), which represent the market value of a position. Each grade is separated into 10 “steps.” The grade for a position is determined before a position is advertised, via a formal review known as a Market Value Determination, which is conducted by the CO. The initial step of an assigned grade is determined by the CO based on the salary history of an applicant. USAID does not entertain or negotiate any salary determinations above the established “GS-equivalent” pay grade in the solicitation. Pay scales can be found on [OPM’s website](#).

*For specific regulations, please see [ADS 309.3.1.12: Award Negotiation](#); and [309.3.2.1: Establishing the Position Level and Market Value](#)*

Additionally, the U.S. Government has established a system for salaries that recognizes the differences in costs of living from one city or region to another within the United States. This system is referred to as “locality pay” adjustments. USPSCs who are based in the Washington, DC metropolitan area are paid according to the Washington, DC locality pay scale. This area includes all of the federal district and parts of Maryland (17 counties) and Virginia (20 counties), along with a small portion of West Virginia (Berkeley, Hampshire, Jefferson and Morgan counties) and Pennsylvania (Adams, Franklin and York counties). USPSCs who are assigned to posts overseas will receive salaries in accordance with the “non-locality pay” pay scale. However, USPSCs assigned to a post overseas may get allowances specific to the country/location where they are posted. See the [Field Allowances](#) section below for more information.

Over the course of a career, an individual may be employed under several Personal Services Contracts, in locations that may span from Washington, DC to overseas and back. When transitioning from one contract to another, the CO will consider the prior base salary (excluding any benefits and/or differentials overseas) to determine the new salary. In terms of salary determinations, it is best to focus on the amount of annual salary, rather than grade/step distinctions, as there is substantial overlap in salary levels in adjacent grades.

## Withholdings

USPSCs are considered employees of the U.S. Government for purposes of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended, and the Internal Revenue Code (Title 26 of the United States Code). As such,

USPSCs are subject to withholding for both the Federal Insurance Contributions Act (“FICA”) and Federal Income Tax. Further, USPSCs are precluded from receiving the Foreign Earned Income Tax exclusion of 26 U.S.C. Section 911. See the Special Note on the Cover Page of USAID Form 309-1 (the front page of USAID Personal Services Contracts).

*For specific regulations, please see [AIDAR Appendix D, Section 4\(c\)\(1\): Withholdings and Fringe Benefits](#); and [AIDAR Appendix D, Section 12\(7\): Social Security, Federal Income Tax, and Foreign Earned Income](#)*

Federal and state taxes are automatically withheld by USAID through the [National Finance Center](#) (“NFC”). See the [FICA \(Social Security and Medicare Tax\) Contributions](#) section for more information. The NFC assumes that the state of record is the same as the work location (note: all overseas positions are assigned a Washington, DC location for the purposes of taxation unless and until otherwise specified). USPSCs who are not Washington, DC residents must submit [Form D-4A: Certification of Non-Residence](#), to the payroll office, along with the appropriate state tax form. For state tax specific forms and requirements, visit the [Internal Revenue Service](#) (“IRS”) for more information.

It is extremely important to check your pay stubs or your earnings and deductions records on [NFC](#) to ensure the correct taxes (federal and state) are being withheld. It is your responsibility to make sure the correct tax forms are submitted for processing. Please notify the appropriate administrative office if your information has changed.

## Salary Payments

Salary payments are made via direct deposit. At the time of entry on duty, USPSCs should complete and sign form [SF-1199A](#), Direct Deposit Sign Up. Changes to direct deposit accounts are made by using the same form and submitting it to the Contracts Team. Please note that the Financial Management Office (FMO) cannot do split payments at this time.

Once you have established an account with the [NFC](#), you can review your direct deposit and earnings history as well as make self-service changes to direct deposit, taxes, and addresses within the system.

Intermittent USPSCs should note that the NFC can only accommodate one employment record at a time. If they have other intermittent contracts, or take a temporary full-time contract (for example, with a Mission), either of which overlap with the intermittent contract with OTI, the intermittent USPSC must request the gaining timekeeper to contact the losing timekeeper to move the timekeeper from one contract to another. Please be sure that you have communicated with the employing organization on this to avoid problems.

## Performance Pay

Pay grades established for Personal Services Contract positions are generally designated at the full performance level and positions are filled at the required level. Within the grade, USPSCs are eligible for a one-step annual increase at the time of their contract’s anniversary, although they must attain the

required overall performance rating (as stated in the solicitation) to advance to the next step. That is, the annual pay increase for a USPSC is not automatic but is based on their supervisor's recommendation to the CO of satisfactory performance throughout the contract year. The pay increase, if granted, will be effective on the first day of a full pay period after the PSC's anniversary. See the [PSC Performance Evaluations](#) section below for more information.

If a USPSC is currently at the top of the grade (i.e., equivalent to step 10), then, generally, they are not eligible for performance pay increases. Salary is always capped at the top step of the grade. However, if a USPSC was hired for a "ladder" position at a lower grade than the full performance level for the ladder, there may also be a performance-based grade-level increase. Moreover, some individuals may have been hired at a grade below the full performance level when the solicitation allowed for hiring at a training level if none of the applicants met the qualifications required for the full performance level. In such situations, the USPSC may be promoted to the next higher grade level, provided that (1) their supervisor certifies that the USPSC is ready to perform at the higher level, which is accomplished by an overall performance evaluation at the "Excellent" level or higher, and (2) the USPSC meets the minimum qualifications established for the higher grade in the original solicitation.

*For specific regulations, please see [AIDAR Appendix D, Section 4\(c\)\(2\)\(iv\)](#); and [ADS 309.3.1.18: Contractor Performance Evaluation](#)*

## **Pay Comparability**

Federal employees may receive a pay comparability adjustment in January of each year, at a rate established annually by Congress for all Federal agencies. Please note that the adjustment could be "zero" if determined as such by Congress. USPSCs receive this adjustment on the same basis and on the same schedule as USDH employees. This adjustment is automatic and will be handled by the financial management office (M/OFM in Washington, or the Controller's office in the field) at the appropriate time. USPSCs should be sure to check their payroll voucher, the NFC web portal, and bank records to ensure that they are being paid regularly, and that their pay is adjusted appropriately.

*For specific regulations, please see [AIDAR Appendix D, Sections 4\(c\)\(2\)\(iii\) and 4\(h\)](#); and [AIDAR Appendix D, Section 12\(4\)\(b\): Compensation \(Pay Comparability\) Adjustments](#)*

## **Overtime and Special Schedules**

USPSCs are not eligible for overtime payment unless specifically authorized in their Personal Services Contracts. Similarly, USPSCs are typically not eligible for a six-day or seven-day workweek unless specifically authorized in the contract (usually in connection with an overseas assignment).

### **Six- or Seven-Day Workweek**

If authorized in the Personal Services Contract, USPSCs may work a six- or seven-day workweek when (1) it is standard U.S. Government practice at the post of assignment or of temporary-duty ("TDY"); or (2) when approved in advance and in writing by the office-specific authority. When working a sixth or

seventh day, the additional duty days are paid at the basic rate (not time-and-a-half). Note that a sixth or seventh day is not included in basic compensation used to calculate allowances and differentials, and must be reported on the USPSC's timesheet (using WebTA).

*For specific regulations, please see [AIDAR Appendix D, Section 12\(4\): Workweek and Compensation](#); and [ADS 309.3.2.2: Determining Withholdings, Benefits and Other Facets of Compensation](#)*

## **Sunday Premium Pay**

Sunday premium pay (a.k.a. Sunday differential) is a payment made for working on Sunday when Sunday is included in the normal workweek, according to an overseas post's normal operating schedule. This applies whether the USPSC is assigned to the post or is there on TDY. Sunday premium pay is calculated as 25% of basic pay for the Sunday worked; it is not paid for Sundays when no work is performed, such as holidays or days of vacation or sick leave. Sunday premium pay is not included as basic compensation used to calculate allowances and differentials, and must be reported on the USPSC's timesheet (using WebTA).

*For specific regulations, please see [ADS 309](#); [3 FAM 3136: Sunday Premium Pay](#); [5 CFR 550.171: Authorization of pay for Sunday work](#); and [4 FAH-3 H533.5: Sunday Pay](#)*

## **Incentive Awards**

USPSCs are eligible to participate in the USAID Incentive Awards Program, operated and funded on a fiscal year basis. USAID's Office of Human Capital and Talent Management ("HCTM") will issue a General Notice with a call for Agency Awards nominations for both monetary and non-monetary awards and submissions within a time frame as specified in the notice. For a full list of awards and eligibility requirements, please visit the [HCTM awards page](#). For more information on available award options and eligibility, visit [OTI Anywhere](#) or contact your office-specific personnel management team.

USPSCs are eligible to receive the Personal Services Contracts-specified Distinguished Honor, Superior Honor, Meritorious Honor, and Certificates of Appreciation. Additionally, USPSCs are eligible for three types of monetary awards: on-the-spot cash awards, special acts awards, and time-off awards. Note that all monetary awards are considered as income by the IRS and are subject to withholding and other payroll taxes.

- **On-the-Spot Cash Awards** recognize a special, outstanding effort on a specific, non-recurring assignment as a way to provide immediate recognition for a job well done. USPSCs may receive between \$100 and \$800 per contract year. Nominations may be made across, as well as within, organizational lines. Nominations are made via [AID Form 456-1](#).
- **Special Acts Awards** recognize a specific, nonrecurring superior act or contribution to the public interest that is above and beyond the required level of performance within the scope of the contract. Unlike other cash awards, this award may not be given for general superior performance of the work required by the contract. USPSCs may receive between \$801 and

\$2,000 per contract year. Nominations may be made across, as well as within, organizational lines. Nominations are made via [AID Form 456-1](#).

- **Time-Off Awards** recognize non-recurring, outstanding effort at any point in time. USPSCs may be awarded up to 40 hours of awarded time off per contract year. Time-off periods of more than 8 hours must be approved at least one level above the supervisor. The form is submitted to the CO for inclusion in the contract file. Awarded time-off must be used within 26 pay periods (one year) of the date of approval or prior to the termination of the contract, whichever comes first. Time-off awards are not payable at the end of the contract. A nomination for a time-off award can be made on [AID Form 400-11](#).

Additionally, OTI has established its own program of non-monetary awards and encourages all employees to participate. OTI supervisors are encouraged to consider the full range of awards available, both monetary and non-monetary.

*For specific regulations, please see [AIDAR Appendix D, Section 4\(f\): Incentive Awards](#); [Agency Notice 8068: Cash Awards for US and TCN PSCs](#); [ADS 491: USAID Incentive Awards Program](#); [ADS 309mab: Incentive Awards for Personal Services Contracts with Individuals](#); and [3 FAM 4800: Department Awards Program](#)*

# Fringe Benefits

Fringe benefits and allowances for Personal Services Contracts are authorized by law and are established by the following regulations:

- Federal Acquisition Regulation (“FAR”)
- Agency for International Development Acquisition Regulation (“AIDAR”), Appendix D
- Automated Directives System (“ADS”) Chapter 309 Personal Services Contracts with Individuals
- Acquisition and Assistance Policy Directives (“AAPD”s)
- Foreign Affairs Manual (“FAM”) (as applicable)
- Department of State Standardized Regulations (“DSSR”) (as applicable)

Benefits and allowances are NOT negotiable on a case-by-case basis. Any exceptions require approval from USAID’s Office of Acquisition and Assistance (“M/OAA”). The following benefits apply to all USPSCs. The [Field Allowances](#) section below provides allowances only available to USPSCs assigned overseas or on TDY, as applicable.

## FICA (Social Security and Medicare Tax) Contribution

The U.S. Government pays the employer portion of both the Social Security and Medicare taxes under FICA; the USPSC pays the employee portion (i.e., 6.2% for Social Security tax and 1.45% for Medicare tax) via biweekly payroll deductions.

There is a cap on the total salary subject to Social Security taxes, which generally changes from year to year. The cap is announced prior to the start of each tax year, usually via an Agency Notice. Once cumulative salary payments reach the cap, the Social Security tax portion of FICA deductions cease (resulting in an increase in take-home pay). If a USPSC receives FICA-covered salary payments under more than one contract during a tax year, the USPSC may be eligible for a refund of any overpayment made. This should be addressed when submitting income tax forms.

Unlike Social Security taxes, Medicare tax payments are calculated based on the full annual salary.

*For specific regulations, please see [AIDAR Appendix D, Section 4\(c\)\(1\): Withholdings and Fringe Benefits](#); and [AIDAR Appendix D, Section 12\(7\): Social Security, Federal Income Tax, and Foreign Earned Income](#)*

## Health Insurance Contribution

***Please note that USAID cannot endorse any individual insurance company/vendor. The OTI Employee Services Team has compiled a resource guide of possible insurance companies/vendors, however this resource only represents some of the benefit options available to USPSCs and is not meant to serve as an exhaustive list. The mention of any company/vendor does not constitute an endorsement of their***

*company or the policies they offer. To access this resource guide, or for more information, please visit [OTI Anywhere](#), [USPSC Association page](#), or [EXO NET](#).*

Per FAA Section 636(a)(3), USPSC employees are not eligible to participate in health insurance programs administered by the Office of Personnel Management (OPM), unless they are covered as a U.S. Direct Hire (USDH) retiree or as a spouse of a USDH employee. Instead, the U.S. Government provides an annual contribution to help defray the costs of private health care plans. Currently, the U.S. Government will **reimburse up to 72% of the actual cost of a healthcare plan**, not-to-exceed \$7,266 per contract year for an individual health plan and \$20,339 per contract year for USPSC employees participating in a family plan. The costs for dental and/or vision health benefits obtained via an add-on to the health insurance plan or separate, specialized plans are not reimbursable.

A USPSC employee is not eligible to receive this health insurance reimbursement if:

- They are covered under a spouse's health insurance plan, where the spouse's employer pays some or all of the health insurance costs;
- They are retired USDH employees and already enrolled in a federal program; or
- They are the spouse of a current or retired Civil Service, Foreign Service, or Military Service member and covered by their spouse's government health insurance policy.

USPSCs should submit reimbursement requests for health insurance costs using form [SF-1034](#): Public Voucher. It is recommended that reimbursement requests be submitted monthly or quarterly.

*For specific regulations, please see [AIDAR Appendix D, Sections 4\(c\)\(2\)\(ii\)\(A\), 4\(c\)\(3\), and 4\(c\)\(4\)](#); and [AIDAR Appendix D, Section 12\(9\)\(b\): Health and Life Insurance](#)*

## **Information for New Employees**

New USPSCs should note that enrollment in a new health insurance plan may not be automatic, and may take up to one month to go into effect. It is suggested that new USPSCs request COBRA coverage or other health insurance options from a former employer, if possible. COBRA coverage costs are reimbursable subject to the conditions applicable to health insurance reimbursement contributions.

USAID has negotiated a USPSC group health insurance plan with the Bowman Gaskins Financial Group. Please visit [www.psc-healthplan.com](http://www.psc-healthplan.com) for more information, including details on the plan. Bowman Gaskins offers both domestic and international health care coverage. This plan is open only to full-time USPSCs, not to Intermittent USPSCs.

In some cases, Intermittent USPSCs may be eligible for the Bowman Gaskins plan, but they must discuss their individual circumstances with Bowman directly to enroll. Intermittent USPSCs who are interested in enrolling in a Bowman Gaskins offering are recommended to contact the PSC Association at [psc-association-executive-committee@usaid.gov](mailto:psc-association-executive-committee@usaid.gov) for guidance.

Note that use of the Bowman Gaskins health plan is not mandatory; you can elect to use any private health insurance plan of your choosing. USAID cannot endorse one vendor over another. Please visit [healthcare.gov](https://www.healthcare.gov) for more general information on health insurance coverage.

*For specific regulations, please see [Agency Notice 0526: Health Plan Enrollment Available for USPSCs](#); and [Agency Notice 0544: Agency Makes Health Plan Enrollment Available for USPSCs](#)*

## Health Insurance While Overseas

USPSCs who are assigned overseas or traveling overseas on TDY should remember that they are responsible for their healthcare costs, both in the U.S. and abroad. An employee's health insurance service provider is considered the primary payer for medical services provided, subject to any terms, conditions, limitations, and exclusions of the particular insurance policy. When a USPSC is not covered by insurance, the USPSC becomes the primary payer for the total amount of any medical costs incurred, and the U.S. Government has no payment obligation. In the event of an emergency situation while a USPSC is overseas, USAID may cover such costs, which must be reimbursed to the Agency either from the employee's health insurance provider or by the employee directly. For this reason, USPSCs who are stationed abroad or traveling overseas are required to ensure their health insurance has (or otherwise procure separate insurance with) international health insurance coverage that includes overseas hospitalization.

*For specific regulations, please see [AIDAR Appendix D, Section 12\(28\): Medical Expense Payment Responsibility](#); [ADS 309.3.2.2: Determining Withholdings, Benefits and Other Facets of Compensation](#); [AAPD 06-10: USPSC Medical Expense Payment Responsibility](#); and [16 FAM 520: Responsibility for Payment of Medical Expenses](#)*

## Life Insurance Contribution

Per FAA Section 636(a)(3), USPSCs are not eligible to participate in the life insurance program administered by OPM. Instead, the U.S. Government provides an annual contribution to help defray the costs of life insurance; USPSCs are entitled to receive up to **50% reimbursement** of the actual costs of annual life insurance not to exceed \$500 per year. Note that USPSCs who are retired USDH employees are not eligible to receive contributions for life insurance expenses if they are already enrolled in the federal program.

USPSCs should submit reimbursement requests for life insurance costs using form [SF-1034](#).

*For specific regulations, please see [AIDAR Appendix D, Sections 4\(c\)\(2\)\(ii\)\(A\), 4\(c\)\(3\), and 4\(c\)\(4\)](#); and [AIDAR Appendix D, Section 12\(9\)\(b\): Health and Life Insurance](#)*

## Workers' Compensation Benefits

As confirmed by OAA/Policy and the Department of Labor's Office of Workers' Compensation Programs ("OWCP"), USPSCs at USAID are eligible to receive benefits for job-related injury, disability, or death under the Federal Employees' Compensation Act ("FECA"), which is administered by the Department of Labor, not OPM. The FECA program provides medical benefits, continuation of pay, disability compensation, vocational rehabilitation, and death benefits, including funeral benefits and survivor compensation. The program applies to disabilities that are temporary or permanent, partial or total, when incurred as a result of a work-related disease, illness, or traumatic injury. Accidents or injuries should be immediately reported to supervisors to ensure full coverage.

*For specific regulations, please see [AIDAR Appendix D, Section 4\(c\)\(2\)\(viii\)](#); [AIDAR Appendix D, Section 12\(9\)\(a\): Worker's Compensation Benefit](#); [ADS 442: Workers' Compensation Program](#); and the Department of Labor's [Workers' Compensation Frequently Asked Questions](#), [Information Guide for Federal Employees](#), and [Form CA-2 for reporting occupational diseases or illness](#)*

Inquiries related to Worker's Compensation for all staff can be submitted to the [HCTM Help-Desk](#).

## **Casualty Benefits**

In the event that a USPSC dies as a result of a work-related injury or illness, their beneficiary or beneficiaries can receive compensation under FECA. USPSCs do not have to be posted overseas to be eligible for this benefit. The survivor(s) of a USPSC are entitled to certain death benefits, payable if a claim is filed by eligible beneficiaries.

The USPSC's supervisor must complete [Form CA-6](#), Official Superior's Report of Employee's Death. If the USPSC is survived by a spouse and/or children, [Form CA-5](#), Claim for Compensation by Widow, Widower, and/or Children must be filed. If the USPSC is survived by parents, brothers, sisters, grandparents or grandchildren, [Form CA-5b](#), Compensation by Parents, Brothers, Sisters, Grandparents, or Grandchildren is required.

The Human Capital Service Center ("HCSC")/Employee Services and Benefits ("ESB") in USAID's HCTM must submit Form CA-6 to OWCP, and OWCP will provide Forms CA-5 and CA-5b to any survivor(s). Whether a USPSC has life insurance does not affect the FECA benefit. The beneficiary or beneficiaries may decide which benefit is more appropriate for them. Note that the process takes approximately 3 to 6 months for benefits to be disbursed.

*For specific regulations, please see [ADS 442.3.8: Death Benefits](#); [FECA](#), 5 U.S.C. Sections 8101, 8112, 8133, and 8139; and [20 C.F.R. Part 10: Federal regulations that apply to claims for compensation under the FECA](#)*

## **Professional Liability Insurance Contribution**

Professional liability insurance provides coverage for legal liability for damages due to injuries to other persons or their property, or for other damages or losses resulting from any tortious act, error, or omission by the covered individual while the individual is performing their official duties.

For “eligible employees,” USAID will reimburse 50% of the annual premium for professional liability insurance, up to a maximum of \$175. An “eligible employee” for reimbursement includes both USDH employees and USPSCs who are supervisors, management officials (defined as those required to submit annual financial disclosure reports), or law enforcement officials. Purchase of private professional liability insurance is optional for these employees; reimbursement may be made to eligible USPSCs without reference to their contracts. If you are considering purchasing this insurance, it is highly encouraged to first confirm your reimbursement eligibility under this regulation with the CO.

*For specific regulations, please see [ADS 53Z: Professional Liability Insurance](#)*

## **Medical Evacuation (Medevac) Services**

USAID will provide Medical Evacuation (“Medevac”) services to USPSCs who are posted overseas and their authorized dependents, as well as a USPSC who is on TDY abroad, through the Department of State’s Bureau for Medical Services (“M/MED”), similar to those provided to USDH employees in accordance with [16 FAM 300: Medical Travel](#). Medevac costs include travel and per diem, but do not include medical care costs. To be covered by the Medevac program, the USPSC and authorized dependents must obtain and maintain international health insurance coverage that includes overseas hospitalization, and must provide proof of such insurance to the OTI Contracts Team and CO prior to relocation abroad. A medical clearance or physician statement is also required. See the [Medical Clearances](#) section below for more information. USAID does not reimburse USPSCs for privately obtained medical evacuation insurance.

*For specific regulations, please see [AIDAR Appendix D, Section 12\(25\): Medical Evacuation \(MEDEVAC\) Services, as amended by AAPD-18-02 REVISED: Revisions to Medevac Policies for USPSCs and TCNPSCs](#); [ADS 309.3.2.2: Determining Withholdings, Benefits and Other Facets of Compensation](#); [16 FAM 300: Medical Travel](#), and [16 FAM 122: Eligibility](#)*

## **Pension/Annuity**

While USPSCs are not eligible to participate in any federal pension program, they may enroll in a Supplemental Retirement Annuity through USAID, which has enlisted the services of the New York-based firm of Teachers Insurance and Annuity Association of America (“TIAA”). This plan is a taxed-deferred annuity plan under which USPSCs may contribute up to the announced [annual IRS limit](#). USAID does not make an employer contribution to this plan.

USPSCs can visit the TIAA web site at [www.tiaa.org](http://www.tiaa.org), or call the TIAA Counseling Center (1-800-842-2776) to obtain information about products and services offered. For interested USPSCs, they should enroll online and then complete the [Salary Reduction Agreement](#) and [Certification of](#)

[Participant Contribution](#) forms. Completed forms can be submitted directly to USAID's FMO at [uspssc@usaid.gov](mailto:uspssc@usaid.gov). For field-based USPSCs, it is advisable to use a U.S.-based address for enrollment; otherwise, TIAA is unable to give you investment advice per U.S. law.

*For specific regulations, please see [ADS 637: USPSC 401\(k\) Defined Contribution Plan](#); and [Agency Notice 11415: USAID 401\(k\) Plan for USPSCs](#)*

## **Metro Transit Subsidy**

Employees based in Washington, DC are encouraged to choose mass transit and other commuting options that reduce air pollution and congestion. As such, USPSCs are eligible to participate in the Metro Transit Subsidy Program to cover the cost of commuting to and/or from work on public transit (i.e., metrorail, metrobus, commuter trains (VRE and MARC), commuter buses, and Transit Authority Vanpool). The transit benefit will be deposited electronically onto a [SmartsBenefits®](#) card on the first of each month. For OTI-specific guidance to sign up for the Transit Subsidy Benefits, visit [OTI Anywhere](#).

*For specific regulations, please see [ADS 515: Metro Transit \(SmartBenefits®\) Program](#)*

## **Unemployment**

According to a ruling by the Department of Labor in its directive entitled, "Unemployment Insurance Program Letter No. 41-99" dated August 3, 1999, USPSCs are not eligible for unemployment insurance for Federal workers or the Unemployment Compensation for Federal Employees benefits. However, USPSCs may apply for unemployment benefits through their local/state government. Information about State Unemployment Insurance Programs can be found [here](#).

*For specific regulations, please see [ADS 309.3.1.1\(d\)](#)*

# Leave Benefits

USPSCs are eligible for a number of leave benefits. USPSCs are required to maintain complete leave records for themselves and may be asked to make them available to the CO. USPSCs may access their NFC earnings and leave statements at <https://www.nfc.usda.gov/epps/>.

For Intermittent USPSCs, please note that any holidays and leave claimed count against the total number of paid days authorized in the contract. All Intermittent USPSCs may only work a maximum of 250 days in a contract year, or the amount authorized in the contract (e.g., 6 month intermittent contracts may only authorize 125 days).

*For specific regulations, please see [AIDAR Appendix D, Section 12\(5\)\(h\): Leave Records](#), as amended by [AAPD 15-02 Revised 2: Leave and Holidays Clause, including FML](#); [ADS 309.3.2.2: Determining Withholdings, Benefits and Other Facets of Compensation](#); [ADS 480: Leave](#); [Office Order 17-009, Section 4: Procedures](#); and the [Bulpen Guide 2018 on Leave](#)*

## Annual Leave

USPSCs with Personal Services Contracts longer than 90 days are authorized annual leave (“AL”) based on the number of years of service they have performed (either as a USDH employee or USPSC). Prior USDH employee service (civilian or military) as well as Peace Corps will be used in calculating vacation leave rates.

**Table 1. Annual Leave Accrual Rates**

Years of Service	AL hours earned per pay period	Max per year
Less than 3 years	4 hours	104 hours (13 days)
Over 3 years but less than 15 years	6 hours (including 10 hours on the last pay period of year)	160 hours (20 days)
Over 15 years	8 hours	208 hours (26 days)

*For specific regulations, please see [AIDAR Appendix D, Section 4\(c\)\(2\)\(ix\)](#); [AIDAR Appendix D, Section 12\(5\)\(a\): Annual Leave](#), as amended by [AAPD 15-02 Revised 2: Leave and Holidays Clause, including FML](#); [ADS 309.3.2.2\(b\)](#); and [ADS 480.3.2](#)*

For Intermittent USPSCs, AL accrual is prorated based on the number of hours worked in a pay period. Like for other USPSCs, the AL hours earned is based on the years of service they have performed (either as a USDH employee or USPSC). Intermittent USPSCs will earn AL as follows:

**Table 2. Prorated Annual Leave Accrual Rates**

<b>Years of Service</b>	<b>Prorated AL hours earned</b>
Less than 3 years	1 hour of AL for every 20 hours worked
Over 3 years but less than 15 years	1 hour of AL for every 13 hours worked
Over 15 years	1 hour of AL for every 10 hours worked

*For specific regulations, please see [Office Order 17-009, Section 4: Procedures](#); and the [Bullpen Guide 2018 on Annual Leave](#)*

### **Use (or forfeiture) of Annual Leave**

AL is provided primarily for the purpose of affording necessary rest and recreation during the contract's period of performance. OTI strongly encourages all staff (including USPSCs) to use their accumulated AL on a regular basis to avoid burnout.

To use AL, a USPSC must make a request electronically via the WebTA system. AL must be used in increments of 15 minutes. Once the request is approved in WebTA, AL time can be claimed and validated on the electronic timesheet. The approval of a request for AL (both in terms of timing and duration) is up to the USPSC's supervisor, who must consider leave requests submitted by others and coverage requirements. USPSCs are encouraged to plan AL schedules as early in the leave year as possible. The "leave year" runs from pay period one through pay period 26 (generally, but not strictly, in line with the calendar year). USPSCs should monitor leave balances in WebTA, and immediately report any discrepancies to their Timekeeper.

***\*\*Note: All new USPSC contracts effective on or after Nov. 16, 2020, contain language in "GP 5. Leave and Holidays" limiting the maximum number of AL hours that you can carry over from one leave year to the next (i.e., January 1 through December 31 of a calendar year). This carryover maximum is 240 hours. AL earned in excess of the carryover maximum but not taken by December 31st of each calendar year will be forfeited on January 1st of the subsequent year, as is standard practice for USDH employees.***

AL earned but not taken by the end of a Personal Services Contract's period of performance may be forfeited. To prevent forfeiture of AL, the CO may approve (i) use of AL during the concluding weeks of the contract; or (ii) payment of a lump-sum for AL not taken. An AL payout is not automatic, nor is it a matter of personal preference on the part of the USPSC. To obtain approval for an AL payout, the USPSC must provide the CO with a Determination and Findings ("D&F") memorandum for the payout. The D&F memorandum must set out the facts and circumstances that prevented the USPSC from taking AL, and the CO must find that these facts and circumstances were not caused by, and were beyond the control of, the USPSC. An approved AL payout payment cannot exceed the number of hours that can be

earned within one calendar year. AL in excess of this amount will be forfeited. USPSCs should make every effort to schedule AL throughout the period of performance to avoid forfeiting accrued AL.

*For specific regulations, please see [AIDAR Appendix D, Section 12\(5\)\(a\)\(3\)](#), as amended by [AAPD 15-02 Revised 2: Leave and Holidays Clause, including FML](#), as amended by [USAID Final Rule on Leave and Holidays for USPSCs Issued on October 16, 2020](#)*

## **Annual Leave Transfer only with M/OAA-approved Deviation**

As a general rule at USAID, USPSCs are not authorized to transfer unused AL from one Personal Services Contract to another. Unused AL may only be transferred if/when there is an active, M/OAA-approved deviation memo in place. Periodically, CPS has been able to work with M/OAA to approve these deviations, with limitations. Deviations that allow transfer of AL hours from one contract to another may change from time to time. Please check with the Employee Services team to determine whether a deviation is in place for AL transfers and applicable guidelines. The office-specific personnel management team must work with the CO to construct a formal request for this process.

When a deviation is authorized, USPSCs have the option of transferring AL or receiving an AL payout. An AL transfer requires a Leave Forbearance memorandum, signed by the CO, and prevents the USPSC from pursuing an AL payout request for the Personal Services Contract ending. The maximum AL that can be transferred from one Personal Services Contract to another (within the same office) cannot exceed the number of hours that can be earned within one calendar year.

USPSCs are ineligible to participate in the leave donation program (either as donors or recipients).

*For specific regulations, please see [AIDAR Appendix D, Section 4\(b\)\(5\)](#)*

## **Advanced Annual Leave**

Advanced AL may be granted to a USPSC by the CO if approved by the Mission Director or cognizant AA. If the circumstances warrant, the CO may grant advanced AL in excess of that earned, up to what the USPSC can earn in one year or over the life of their Personal Services Contract, whichever is less. In such circumstances, the USPSC agrees to reimburse USAID for any balance of advanced AL outstanding at the completion or termination of their Personal Services Contract. Advanced AL requires a pre-approval memorandum.

*For specific regulations, please see [AIDAR Appendix D, Section 12\(5\)\(a\)\(4\)](#), as amended by [AAPD 15-02 Revised 2: Leave and Holidays Clause, including FML](#)*

## **Sick Leave**

USPSCs with Personal Services Contracts longer than 90 days are authorized and may use sick leave on the same basis and for the same purposes as USDH employees. These include, but are not limited to: when an employee is incapacitated by physical or mental illness; for medical, dental, or optical exams and

treatments; to provide care for a family member; and/or for bereavement purposes. For more allowable uses of sick leave see [ADS 480.3.3](#).

**Sick leave is earned at a rate not to exceed four hours every two weeks for a total of 13 workdays per year.**

*For specific regulations, please see [AIDAR Appendix D, Section 4\(c\)\(2\)\(ix\)](#); [AIDAR Appendix D, Section 12\(5\)\(b\): Sick Leave, as amended by AAPD 15-02 Revised 2: Leave and Holidays Clause, including FML](#); and [ADS 480.3.3: Sick Leave](#)*

For Intermittent USPSCs, sick leave accrual is prorated on the basis of one hour of leave for every 20 hours worked in a pay period.

*For specific regulations, please see [Office Order 17-009, Section 4: Procedures](#); and the [Bullpen Guide 2018 on Sick Leave](#)*

### **Use (or forfeiture) of Sick Leave**

Use of sick leave is reflected on the biweekly statement of earnings and leave. USPSCs should monitor leave balances in WebTA, and immediately report any discrepancies to their Timekeeper.

Generally, unused sick leave may be carried over only under an extension or renewal of the USPSC's contract for the *same* work. That is, sick leave will not carry over from one post to another or from one Personal Services Contract to another. Unlike with Annual Leave, USPSCs will not be compensated for unused sick leave upon completion or termination of their Personal Services Contract. Any unused sick leave balance at the end of the contract will be forfeited.

### **Sick Leave Transfer only with M/OAA-Approved Deviation**

The transfer of unused sick leave (i.e., to establish a starting balance) may be authorized from one Personal Services Contract to another within the same office for USPSCs in OTI, OFDA, and FFP only when an M/OAA policy deviation is in effect. The deviation enables M/OAA to transfer up to 208 hours of sick leave from one Personal Services Contract to another for USPSCs remaining in the same office. Note that there is no payout option for sick leave, so any unused sick leave balance at the end of the contract will be forfeited. USPSCs are ineligible to participate in the leave donation program (either as donors or recipients).

*For specific regulations, please see [AIDAR Appendix D, Section 4\(b\)\(5\)](#)*

### **Advanced Sick Leave**

If the circumstances warrant, and with the approval of the Mission Director or cognizant AA, the CO may grant a USPSC advanced sick leave in excess of that earned, but in no case may the CO grant more

than the maximum possibly earned in one year. The USPSC agrees to reimburse USAID for any balance of advanced sick leave outstanding at the completion or termination of their Personal Services Contract.

*For specific regulations, please see [AIDAR Appendix D, Section 12\(5\)\(a\)\(4\)](#), as amended by [AAPD 15-02 Revised 2: Leave and Holidays Clause, including FML](#)*

## **Bereavement Leave**

Sick leave may be used to make arrangements necessitated by the death of a family member or attend the funeral of a family member. USPSCs can utilize up to 13 days (or 104 hours) of sick leave for the purposes of making arrangements necessitated by the death of a family member or to attend the funeral of a family member. Bereavement leave should be coded as sick leave in WebTA and approved by the supervisor.

*For specific regulations, please see [AIDAR Appendix D, Section 12\(5\)\(b\): Sick Leave](#), as amended by [AAPD 15-02 Revised 2: Leave and Holidays Clause, including FML](#); [ADS 480.3.3\(a\)\(5\)\(d\)](#); [3 FAM 3423\(a\)\(5\): Sick Leave General](#); and OPM's [Fact Sheet: Sick Leave for Family Care or Bereavement Purposes](#)*

## **Leave Without Pay (LWOP)**

Leave without Pay (“LWOP”) is a temporary non-pay, non-duty status requested by an employee. LWOP may be granted only with the written approval of the CO or Mission Director, unless a USPSC is requesting LWOP for family and medical purposes. See the [Family and Medical Leave](#) section for more information.

To request LWOP, a USPSC must do so in writing via a memo or email (as well as recorded in WebTA). The LWOP request must include the reason for the request as well as the proposed beginning and end dates. USPSC may request LWOP if/when all their paid leave has been exhausted or they have insufficient paid leave balances. For requests of LWOP of less than two weeks, only their supervisor approval is required. Requests for LWOP of two weeks or more require the approval from the CO and the concurrence of the supervisor and approval by the CO.

*For specific regulations, please see [AIDAR Appendix D, Section 12\(5\)\(g\): Leave Without Pay \(LWOP\)](#), as amended by [AAPD 15-02 Revised 2: Leave and Holidays Clause, including FML](#); and OTI [Office Order: Work and Leave Schedules](#)*

## **Compensatory Time Off (Comp Time)**

Compensatory time off (“Comp Time”) generally means leave equal to overtime worked. As a general rule, Comp Time is not authorized for USPSCs, except for travel and awards. Comp Time for overtime may only be granted with the written approval of the CO or Mission Director when it has been “determined absolutely essential.” Comp Time may be used under the same guidelines as applied to USDH employees.

Where Comp Time is authorized in connection with overtime or travel, it must be used within 26 pay periods (one year), or it is forfeited. Where Comp Time is authorized in connection with an award, it must also be used within 26 pay periods (one year) of the approval date, or it will be forfeited.

Comp Time is non-transferable and will not transfer from one Personal Services Contract to another. Unlike AL, it is not possible to request a payout or transfer of these leave hours.

*For specific regulations, please see [AIDAR Appendix D, Section 12\(5\)\(h\): Compensatory Time, as amended by AAPD 15-02: Authorization of Family and Medical Leave for USPSCs.](#)*

For Intermittent USPSCs, all Comp Time taken (inclusive of Comp Time for Awards) counts against the total paid hours authorized in their Personal Services Contract.

*For specific regulations, please see [Office Order 17-009, Section 4: Procedures; and the Bullpen Guide 2018 on Leave](#)*

## **Compensatory Time Off for Travel**

[Agency Notice 9442](#) states that, “[w]hile the premium pay statute in 5 U.S.C. Chapter 55, Subsection V, does not apply to ... USPSCs, it is Agency policy that USPSCs may use compensatory time off on the same basis as do U.S. Direct Hire employees.” Section 203 of the Federal Workforce Flexibility Act of 2004 authorizes Comp Time for time spent by an employee in an official travel status.

**Prior to travel**, USPSCs may request Comp Time for official (i.e., TDY) travel performed outside of their regular duty hours. Entitlement travel (e.g., home leave, R&R, Medevac, visitation, etc.) and assignment travel (i.e., to or from a new post) do not qualify for Comp Time for Travel. USPSCs are encouraged to visit [OTI Anywhere](#) for guidance on requesting Comp Time for Travel.

*For specific regulations, please see [Agency Notice 9442: New Compensatory Time Off for Travel Provision and New Time Limit For Use of Compensatory Time Off](#)*

## **Compensatory Time Off for Awards**

Comp Time may be authorized for USPSCs in the context of the Incentive Awards program. See the [Incentive Awards](#) section above for more information. USPSCs are encouraged to visit [OTI Anywhere](#) for OTI-specific guidance.

*For specific regulations, please see [ADS 491.1: Time-off Award](#)*

## **Compensatory Time Off for Religious Observances**

Per Subpart J 5 C.F.R. 550, with M/OAA Policy approval, a USPSC may request to modify their work schedules so that they may abstain from work at certain times of the workday or workweek to meet religious obligations. The USPSC may work hours in lieu of the normal work schedule to accumulate

Religious Comp Time to cover an approved absence(s) but this does not create any entitlement to premium pay.

Religious Comp Time may be earned within 13 pay periods in advance of a pay period in which the USPSC intends to use it, or within 13 pay periods following the pay period in which it was used. If a USPSC fails to earn the amount agreed upon within 13 pay periods, an Employee Services Timekeeper will take corrective action to eliminate or reduce the negative balance by making a corresponding action in the USPSCs available balance of annual leave, credit hours, Comp Time, Comp Time for travel, and/or Comp Time for awards.

*For specific regulations, please see [Subpart J 5 CFR 550: Compensatory Time Off for Religious Observances](#)*

## **Family and Medical Leave (FML)**

USAID provides that USPSCs may be eligible for family and medical leave (“FML”) in accordance with Title I of the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993, as amended, and as administered by the Department of Labor under [29 CFR 825](#). To be eligible, a USPSC must have been employed for (i) at least a total of 12 months by USAID; and (ii) performed work in “on-duty” status for at least 1,250 hours during the 12-month period immediately preceding the leave. As a matter of policy, USAID extends FML to USPSCs working within and outside the U.S.

According to [ADS Reference 309MAL, Family and Medical Leave for USPSCs](#), USPSCs may “take up to a total of 12 workweeks of leave during any 12-month period for any one, or more, of ...[the following reasons]: (a) The care of the USPSC’s newborn child; (b) The care of the USPSC’s newly placed adopted or foster care child; (c) The care of the USPSC’s spouse, child or parent with a serious health condition; (d) The USPSC’s own serious health condition; (e) A qualifying exigency arising from the USPSC’s spouse, child or parent in active duty military status; and (f) Other qualifying exigencies as determined by the Department of Labor.”

FML is generally LWOP in accordance with 29 CFR 825.207. However, a USPSC invoking FML may choose, or USAID may require them, to substitute LWOP with accrued paid leave, including accrued annual or sick leave, or Comp Time earned under their Personal Services Contract. **Note that FML is not authorized for any period beyond the completion or termination of a Personal Services Contract.**

When a USPSC intends to take FML, they must complete a [Family and Medical Leave Application Request](#), and review it with their supervisor to confirm eligibility. The approved application form and any supporting documentation must be retained in the USPSC’s contract file.

For more information on eligibility, application forms, and complaints for possible violations of the act, please see the U.S. Department of Labor’s [Wage and Hour Division \(WHD\) Publication I 420](#).

*For specific regulations, please see [AIDAR Appendix D, Section 12\(5\)\(i\): Family and Medical Leave \(FML\)](#); and [ADS Reference 309MAL, Family and Medical Leave for USPSCs](#)*

## **Maternity/Paternity Leave**

USPSCs may, with the approval of the supervisor and CO, request to take up to 12 workweeks LWOP, to be considered FML, for “maternity/paternity leave,” and not to exceed six months total paid and unpaid leave for the birth/adoption of each child. OTI has an office order with additional details on this leave.

OTI’s USPSCs may also request advanced AL and sick leave in limited amounts, based on their Personal Services Contract, with approval from the OMD Chief, the CO, and Supervisor. This action is generally discouraged as the USPSC (i) may receive a bill of collection (i.e., will have to pay the U.S. Government back) if their Personal Services Contract terminates prior to earning a positive leave balance; and (ii) may result in no accrued leave available to the USPSC for post-natal and/or pediatric care. The USPSC would have to request LWOP.

*For specific regulations, please see [AIDAR Appendix D, Section 12\(5\)\(i\): Family and Medical Leave \(FML\)](#), as amended by [AAPD 15-02 Revised 2: Leave and Holidays Clause](#), including FML; [AIDAR Appendix D, Section 12\(5\)\(a\)\(4\)](#); and [OTI Officer Order: Work and Leave Schedules](#)*

## **Military Leave**

A USPSC who is a reservist of the U.S. Armed Forces may be granted paid military leave of not more than 15 calendar days in any calendar year. The USPSC should provide advance notice of the pending military leave to the CO or Mission Director for approval as soon as known.

*For specific regulations, please see [AIDAR Appendix D, Section 12\(5\)\(f\): Military Leave](#), as amended by [AAPD 15-02 Revised 2: Leave and Holidays Clause](#), including FML*

## **Paid U.S. Holidays**

USPSCs are entitled to all holidays granted by USAID to USDH employees (i.e., 10 U.S. Government federal holidays per year, as well as any additional “holidays” the U.S. Government announces for special events, such as Inauguration Day).

*For specific regulations, please see [AIDAR Appendix D, Section 12\(5\)\(e\): Holidays and Excused Absences](#), as amended by [AAPD 15-02 Revised 2: Leave and Holidays Clause](#), including FML*

## **US Holidays for Intermittent USPSCs**

Intermittent USPSCs are eligible for paid holidays only when in “paid status” (including sick or annual leave) for an entire workday (i.e., 8 hours) on the workday before and the workday after the holiday, in

accordance with office policy in either Washington, DC or the field. Intermittent USPSCs may also claim a federal holiday if working remotely, as long as they meet the same criteria as listed above.

“Paid status” includes the following: leave, Comp Time, Comp Time for travel, or credit hours. When on a field assignment, unless otherwise arranged in advance, Intermittent USPSCs will follow the federal and local holiday policies of the Embassy, USAID Mission, or Post where assigned. Intermittent USPSCs must receive their supervisor’s approval in advance to utilize these leave categories.

Intermittent USPSCs should remember that holidays count against the total number of paid days authorized under their contract.

*For specific regulations, please see [Office Order 17-009, Section 4: Procedures](#); and the [Bullpen Guide 2018 on Federal Holidays](#)*

## **Jury Duty**

Jury duty is an authorized absence, meaning that annual leave is not charged and compensation is paid at regular rate. A USPSC who is under summons to serve on a jury must be granted court leave of absence with pay. A USPSC must add the Jury Duty line to their WebTa timesheet, where they will record work hours until the completion of their jury duty service. The USPSC must provide a summons from the court indicating the date that they were ordered to report for jury duty and the date that they were released from duty to their supervisor.

*For specific regulations, please see [ADS 480.3.9: Court Leave](#); and [3 FAM 3450: Court Leave](#)*

Intermittent USPSCs reporting for Jury Duty must be on assignment on the day before and the day after to claim administrative leave for Jury Duty.

*For specific regulations, please see [Office Order 17-009, Section 4: Procedures](#); and the [Bullpen Guide 2018 on Special Leave Circumstances](#)*

# Travel

## Travel - Generally

Official travel should only be conducted with an approved Travel Authorization (“TA”). All headquarters-managed travel must be handled through the USAID travel management contractor (“TMC”). Field offices must abide by Mission travel orders. USPSCs assigned overseas should familiarize themselves with the procedures in place at their duty station. See Mission-specific personnel management staff for guidance. OTI staff who have questions are encouraged to contact the [OTI Travel Team](#).

**As a general rule, all official travel is conducted using the lowest cost, unrestricted economy fare on the most direct, regularly traveled route.** Government-contract carrier city-pair fares provide direct routes. An overseas post may, however, have more than one regularly traveled route. The use of restricted fares is encouraged where the total cost of the travel (including any penalties that may be assessed in the case of an unavoidable change in travel schedule) is less than the lowest-cost, unrestricted economy fare.

Frequent flyer miles that accrue as a result of official travel are considered the property of the traveler, not of USAID, and may be used for personal travel or for upgrading to a higher class accommodation when on official travel. See the [Airline Mileage](#) section below for additional information.

*For specific regulations, please see [AIDAR Appendix D, Section 12\(10\): Travel and Transportation Expenses](#); [Agency Notice 11018: Use of Restricted Tickets](#); [14 FAM 580: Performing Travel](#); and [14 FAM 560: Allowable Travel and Miscellaneous Expenses](#)*

## Fly America Act

The Fly America Act requires the use of U.S. flag carriers wherever they are available. This applies to travel as well as the shipment of personal effects (see [section](#) below for more information on HHE, POV, etc.). Most travel offices are familiar with the Fly America Act regulations and will ensure compliance when establishing an itinerary for any official travel. However, please note that, ultimately, it is the responsibility of the traveler (or USPSC) to comply with this requirement. Any USPSC going on official travel is highly encouraged to check the reservations proposed by a travel office, whether in the U.S. or overseas. In special (rare) circumstances, a waiver may be granted; speak with the appropriate office-specific personnel management team for more information.

*For specific regulations, please see [FAR Clause 52.247-63: Preference for U.S. Flag Air Carriers](#); [AIDAR Appendix D, Section 12\(10\)\(n\): International Ocean Transportation](#); and [14 FAM 583: Use of U.S. Flag and Foreign Air Carriers](#)*

## Country Clearance

All travel to an overseas post requires an approved country clearance **prior to travel**, whether traveling on assignment, TDY orders, from Washington to the field or from one overseas post to another. The office sponsoring the travel is responsible for preparing and transmitting the cable or electronic request for a country clearance. When planning travel, please ensure that the request has been sent as early in the process as possible. The USPSC going on official travel should ensure that they have a copy of the approved clearance in hand before traveling as well as a copy of the approved TA and their itinerary.

## Diplomatic Passport/Visas

All USPSCs hired in the U.S. and assigned to Missions are required to apply for a diplomatic passport. Washington-based USPSCs who perform TDY overseas may also apply for a diplomatic passport. Locally-recruited personal services contractors hired to perform services abroad may not be issued a diplomatic or an official passport. The U.S. Department of State, Special Issuance Agency will determine whether conditions exist that warrant the issuance of the type of passport. U.S. Embassies or Consulates abroad may issue a regular passport to applicants of diplomatic or official passports who must travel on short notice and have insufficient time to wait for the normal official passport application process.

*For specific regulations, please see [ADS 522.3.11: Passports](#)*

Check with the OTI Travel Team about requesting a diplomatic passport. A diplomatic passport is requested through the Classified Visa and Passport Services Office, collocated with the USAID Travel Office in Room CI-7, in the Ronald Reagan Building. There are four application forms to complete plus two passport photos and proof of citizenship must be submitted. USPSCs must also provide a copy of the front page of their Personal Services Contract, showing signature and expiration dates, as well as the options years page(s). If overseas when requesting a passport, the application package is processed through the Consular Section of the U.S. Embassy. The Embassy will forward the package to the Special Issuance Agency in Washington. More detailed information can be found on [OTI Anywhere](#).

Each USPSC is personally responsible for ensuring that a new diplomatic passport is requested for renewal. Please also note that some countries will not issue a visa on a passport with less than six months remaining to expiration. If traveling to such a country, the traveler (the USPSC) will need to obtain a new passport prior to requesting a visa.

Visas can be obtained through USAID's Classified Visa and Passport Services Office in Washington, where they have the required country-specific forms on file. If overseas, the Embassy Human Resources office (or sometimes the consular section) provides assistance with obtaining visas, both for the country of residence and for other countries to which the USPSC may travel while abroad. Contact the appropriate office well in advance of any planned travel; third country visas can often take weeks to obtain.

## Authorized/Excess Luggage Allowances

Each traveler (including each authorized dependent) is authorized to check, at the U.S. Government's expense, two pieces of luggage which do not exceed the airline's size limitations or that are not considered "oversized" by the operating carrier. Luggage may weigh up to 50 lbs (23kg) per piece. This allowance constitutes "authorized luggage". It applies to all types of travel and to/from all locations. Receipts are required for any baggage payments.

Luggage exceeding the weight, size, or quantity limit for "authorized luggage" is considered "excess luggage." In order to be transported at U.S. Government expense, excess luggage required for an official purpose must be specifically authorized in advance of travel. Travel orders that include authorization for the transport of excess luggage must include a justification detailing the specific official purpose necessitating the transport and an estimated cost of such transport.

*For specific regulations, please see [AIDAR Appendix D, Section 12\(10\)\(c\): International Travel](#); [ADS 522.3.22: Luggage allowance](#); and [14 FAM 568: Airline Luggage Allowances](#).  
[Excess luggage](#)*

## Personal Travel in Conjunction with Official Travel

Personal travel in conjunction with official travel may be permitted, but only on a cost-constructive basis. Any difference in cost between the official and personal travel as well as any change fees are the responsibility of the traveler (the USPSC). Cost-construct travel should be arranged through the designated TMC. Please remember that in these situations, a traveler is not authorized to use government contract fares, they must use commercial published fares.

*For specific regulations, please see [ADS Chapter 522.3.16: Cost Construct Travel](#)*

## Local Travel

Travel conducted within a 50-mile radius from the USPSC's duty station is considered local travel. All local travel must be conducted in accordance with the applicable rules and procedures set forth by USAID Washington or Mission. Local travel is not prepared in E2, and should be vouchered using form [SF-1034](#). Per diem is not allowed for local travel. This includes local transportation, whether via U.S. Government-owned or private vehicles (e.g., cars, buses, taxis, etc.). Please check with the OTI Travel Team, EXO, Administrative Officer, and/or GSO as to the guidelines that are in effect at the post of assignment. Some Embassies have established restrictions on the use of local public transportation for health, safety, or security reasons. Be sure to be aware of any such restrictions.

*For specific regulations, please see [AIDAR Appendix D, Section 12\(10\)\(d\): Local Travel](#)*

## International/Regional Travel

All international/regional travel by a USPSC outside of the country of assignment **must be approved** by the OTI Regional Team Leader responsible for the post of assignment. The TA for such official travel will

be issued by OTI/Washington for Country Representatives (and Deputies), and by the Mission for other field staff. A TA is not required for personal travel outside of the country of assignment, but approval is still required from the OTI Regional Team Leader (for the Country Representative) or from the Country Representative (for other field staff) for the absence from post.

*For specific regulations, please see [AIDAR Appendix D, Section 12\(10\)\(c\): International Travel](#)*

## Temporary Duty Travel

Temporary Duty Travel (“TDY”) includes any travel performed for work outside the regular duty station of the traveler (or USPSC), whether in the country of assignment but out of the city of residence, or out of the country of assignment. The list of TDY benefits includes:

- Per Diem
- Airline Mileage
- Comp Time for Travel (see [section](#) above for more information)
- Danger Pay (see [section](#) below for more information)
- Post Differential (see the [section](#) below for more information)

Regulations and per diem rates for domestic travel (travel within the U.S.) are published and administered by the General Services Administration (“GSA”), in the form of [Federal Travel Regulations](#) (“FTR”). Regulations and per diem rates for international travel (travel outside the U.S.) are published and administered by the Department of State, in the form of the [Department of State Standardized Regulations](#) (“DSSR”).

## Per Diem Allowance

The Per Diem allowance consists of two components: lodging, and meals and incidental expenses (“M&IE”). The *lodging* component covers the cost of commercial facilities (including government guest housing) where a usage fee is assessed. The lodging portion of per diem is not payable when lodging is provided in a private residence or at no cost to the traveler (e.g., some conferences are conducted at hotels, where the cost of the room has been included in the overall cost of the conference).

*M&IE* includes meals and the costs incidental to meals (i.e., taxes, tips, etc.). The M&IE component of per diem may be reduced in accordance with specific guidelines provided by regulation such as where meals are provided by the government at no cost to the traveler or as part of a conference or other event. Meals provided by a hotel do not affect the M&IE component of per diem. As a general rule, costs of M&IE are allocated as follows: 15% for breakfast, 25% for lunch, 40% for dinner, and 20% for incidentals.

There are some differences between FTR and DSSR for per diem that can cause confusion for staff. For example, the FTR permits the reimbursement of domestic hotel taxes as a separate expense from per diem, while hotel taxes are incorporated in the per diem rates in foreign areas as per the DSSR. The FTR establishes the use of a “lodging plus” system as the standard practice for per diem; this system is also

standard practice for foreign travel. Although standard practice, USAID has the discretion to determine which system is appropriate per any given situation.

“Lodging plus” means that a traveler is paid the actual cost of their lodging plus the standard amount for M&IE. The traveler must provide a copy of their hotel bill when submitting their travel voucher. “Flat rate” means that the traveler receives the full amount of the authorized per diem, with no hotel bills required. In special cases, a traveler may be authorized reimbursement for actual expenses, even when higher than the established per diem rate (e.g., if an employee is participating in a conference sponsored by a non-U.S. Government organization at a specific location, where the costs are higher than per diem rates).

On M&IE, when it is known in advance of the travel that some meals will be provided by the government, the per diem estimate(s) on the travel authorization may reflect any reductions in accordance with specific guidelines of a regulation. However, this is not always the case, nor is it always known in advance whether, or which, meals will be provided. In such cases, the USPSC is responsible for reporting any meals provided so that appropriate reductions can be made on the travel voucher.

*For specific regulations, please see [ADS 522: Performance of TDY in the U.S. and Abroad](#); [ADS 633: Financial Management Aspects of TDY Travel](#); and [14 FAM 533: Temporary Duty Travel](#)*

## **Miscellaneous Expenses**

Miscellaneous expenses are reimbursed separately from the per diem allowance when authorized or approved by USAID, usually on the travel authorization (“TA”). Miscellaneous expenses may include: local transportation (e.g., metro, taxi, bus) costs; hotel taxes (within the U.S. only); official communications (phone calls and internet access fees for performing official business only); fees associated with obtaining money (e.g., for travelers checks, money orders, ATM transactions, etc.); passport or visa photos and fees; airport fees; commissions on foreign currency transactions; immunizations (for foreign travel only); laundry/dry cleaning charges (within the U.S. only, for UPSCs who have 4 or more consecutive nights of lodging while on official travel); and expenses associated with the transport of breast milk expressed by an employee while on TDY.

*For specific regulations, please see [14 FAM 562.1: Miscellaneous Expenses not covered by Per Diem](#); and [Federal Travel Regulations, Part 301-12](#)*

## **Airline Mileage**

All USAID employees, their dependents, and others whose travel is funded by the Agency, may retain promotional items (e.g., frequent flyer miles, upgrades, access to carrier clubs or facilities) for personal use, earned as a result of official travel under terms available to the general public and at no extra cost to the U.S. Government. This includes all benefits earned.

Travelers may accept free upgrades of services to business-class or first-class accommodations and check cashing privileges offered by an airline as a promotional program, as long as they are obtained under terms available to the general public and at no extra cost to the U.S. Government.

Per [FTR Chapter 301, Part 53](#), travelers may redeem frequent flier miles (or use personal funds) to upgrade to business- or first-class accommodations when performing official travel. It is the responsibility of each traveler to communicate directly with a service provider to establish their frequent travel promotional benefits account. Costs associated with establishing this account are to be paid by the traveler and are not a reimbursable expense.

### **TDY Travel - Rest Stop**

TDY travel time in excess of 14 hours on a regularly traveled route, including scheduled stopovers, when traveling by less than premium-class accommodations, may be interrupted for a rest period or rest stop of up to 24 hours. The point of interruption for a rest stop should be midway in the journey or as near to it as the schedule permits. Where per diem is authorized for the travel, it is payable for the one-day rest stop.

If travel will be interrupted for more than 24 hours, it is not considered a rest stop and there is no entitlement to per diem, even for the first day. If travel is interrupted for *personal reasons* for more than 24 hours at any point of a rest stop, the traveler (the USPSC) will lose their eligibility to use their government ticket and will need to work directly with an airline to buy a new ticket from the point of the rest stop to the final travel destination using regular “public” airfares.

Rest stops are not authorized when indirect travel is performed. “Indirect travel” is travel on a route that is not the regularly traveled route.

### **TDY Travel - Options in lieu of Rest Stop**

Travelers may elect to buy access to a business-class lounge instead of taking a rest stop. If the traveler (the USPSC) plans to buy a business-class lounge pass, they should ensure that it is included in the TA. As with a rest stop, this benefit is not authorized when indirect travel is performed (i.e., cost-construct).

Business class travel *may* be authorized for travel that is in excess of 14 hours, in lieu of a rest stop, *where budgets and/or agency policy permit*. The Assistant Administrator for the CPS Bureau approves all business-class travel requests. A USPSC may elect to upgrade to premium-class (business- or first-class) on a cost-constructive basis or by using frequent flier miles. Business-class travel for purposes other than TDY is generally not authorized, regardless of the length of the trip. Exceptions may be made on a case-by-case basis.

*For specific regulations, please see [ADS 522: Performance of TDY travel in U.S. and Abroad](#); [Business Class Lounge In Lieu of Rest Stop For Travel Over 14 Hours](#); [14 FAM 584.5](#); [14 FAM 567.2-4: Business Class Travel](#); and [14 FAM 584.4: Rest Stop](#)*

Seat Selection Program (SSP) is an airline program where a passenger may obtain additional seating space within the coach class cabin for an additional fee regardless of flight length or type of travel. Seat selection cannot be in Business or First Class. The allowable reimbursement for the cost of the SSP is limited to \$300 for travel each way between authorized duty locations (i.e., authorized origin to authorized destination) as stated on the TA. All receipts for such upgrades must be provided with the travel voucher to qualify for reimbursement. Reimbursement is not allowable for costs incurred to upgrade to the SSP on any segments of indirect (cost-constructed) travel. The TMC is not authorized to purchase the seat assignments for the traveler. Travelers must contact the airline directly and not the TMC for assistance with such an upgrade. SSP must be authorized by the approving official, or designee in Washington, and the EXO at the Mission in advance of travel to be reimbursed.

*For specific regulations, please see [14 FAM 567.2-1: Seat Selection and Assignment](#); [FTR Part 301-52.4](#); and [FTR Part 301-52.7](#)*

The travel regulations are extensive and sometimes quite complicated, but it is always the responsibility of the USPSC to ensure their full compliance. It is best to check the rules if unsure of any entitlement.

## **Travel Expenses Reimbursement and Claims**

If, when traveling, costs are incurred for official expenses, the traveler (the USPSC) should claim these on their travel voucher. When the USPSC is at post and has official (non-travel related) expenditures, they should be submitted for reimbursement using form [SF-1034](#). However, the claim for expenses at post should be relatively minimal as the USAID or embassy procurement office, or an implementing partner, should be completing most of the program procurements.

Travel vouchers (claims for reimbursement) must be submitted in E2 within five business days after completion of the trip, or every 30 days if in long-term travel status. Receipts must be submitted for any claimed item in excess of \$75.

If the TA was issued by OTI/Washington, then the voucher should be submitted to OTI/Washington. If the TA was issued locally (i.e., in the field), then the reimbursement request should be submitted to the Mission in accordance with Mission procedures. The traveler (the USPSC) should keep copies of all financial documents, including travel receipts, for at least six years and three months, in case of an audit.

A USPSC can be reimbursed for personal items that were lost or permanently damaged during official travel or storage. To file a claim, send an email to the current M/MS/TTD Storage, Invoicing and Claims POC Katrina Riley-Sawyer ([kriley-sawyer@usaid.gov](mailto:kriley-sawyer@usaid.gov), (202) 712-1698), stating the intent of the claim and a detailed account of the situation (e.g., time, place, items lost, etc.). A USPSC must complete and submit form [DS-1620](#): Claim For Private Personal Property Against the United States.

*For specific regulations, please see [ADS 521: Claims for Losses of Private Personal Property](#); and [14 FAM 640: Claims for Private Personal Property Losses](#)*

## Government Travel Card

The U.S. Government Travel Card Program is mandatory for all USPSCs travelling frequently on official government business. **This card is for official business only; absolutely no personal use of the card is permitted.** Except in unusual circumstances, travel advances are obtained as a cash advance against the travel card. When traveling to a location where the travel card cannot be used, travel advances can be obtained in the U.S. in the form of travelers checks, processed as an advance against the travel card. Check with the OTI Travel Team for information on obtaining a travel card. Note: To use this card at an ATM, you will need a Personal Identification Number (PIN). To obtain and customize your PIN, please call the customer service number on the back of the travel card and follow instructions in the Voice Response Unit (VRU). Memorize your PIN and keep it in a safe place separate from the card. A cash advance fee will be assessed.

*For specific regulations, please see [ADS 633.3.2: Government-Sponsored Travel Card](#); [Agency Notice 9250: Travel Card Policy Update](#); and [Agency Notice 1204: Agency Travel Card Use and Payment](#)*

## Obtaining Cash Overseas

U.S. Government employees (including USPSCs) are prohibited from converting U.S. Dollars to local currency on the black market. USPSCs assigned overseas are expected to use the post-provided ATM machine located at the Embassy with their personal ATM card. USPSCs may have access to check-cashing privileges at either the USAID Mission or the Embassy at post. However, many posts no longer allow accommodation exchange (the cashing of personal checks from a U.S. financial institution), and employees are expected to use the ATM machine. Additionally, when accommodation exchange is used with the Embassy cashier, there is a resulting ICASS charge. Check with admin staff at post on arrival.

*For specific regulations, please see [4 FAM 360: Accommodation Exchange](#); and [4 FAM 390: Cashier Operations](#)*

# Field Allowances

USPSCs assigned overseas (i.e., field-based USPSCs) are entitled to receive the following allowances and differentials as provided in the [DSSR](#) (Government Civilians, Foreign Areas) on the same basis as USDH employees:

1. [Temporary lodging allowance](#)
2. [Living quarters allowance](#)
3. [Post allowance](#)
4. Supplemental post allowance
5. [Separate maintenance allowance](#)
6. [Education allowance](#)
7. [Educational travel](#)
8. [Post differential](#)
9. [Payments during evacuation/authorized departure](#)
10. [Danger pay](#)

*For specific regulations, please see [AIDAR Appendix D, Section 4\(c\)\(2\)\(v\)](#); [AIDAR Appendix D, Section 12\(6\): Differentials and Allowances](#); and the [State Department's Standardized Regulations](#) for additional information*

## Post Allowance (Cost of Living Allowance)

Post allowance, commonly referred to as the Cost of Living Allowance (“COLA”), is a **non-taxable allowance** designed to offset the higher overseas prices of non-housing goods and services. COLA levels are expressed in terms of a percentage, but do not equate to a simple calculation of a percentage of base pay. Rather, it is a percentage of spendable income. COLA is based on a formula of salary and family size, and calculated by comparing costs for goods and services in 11 categories to the cost of those same goods and services in Washington, D.C. The 11 categories include: food (consumed at home or in restaurants); tobacco/alcohol; clothing; personal care items; furnishings; household goods; medical services; recreation; public transportation; vehicle-related expenses; and household help. COLA can go up or down depending on a post price survey, which is reviewed by the State Department’s [Office of Allowances](#). This allowance must be claimed and vouchered on the USPSC COLA voucher form.

COLA will terminate when a USPSC is away from post, with certain caveats:

1. When a USPSC leaves post on official leave orders that authorize payment of per diem in connection with the travel (e.g., home leave), COLA terminates on the date of commencement of the travel, *except that* the allowance is reduced rather than terminated when family members remain at post, to a level appropriate for the reduced family size at post.
2. When a USPSC leaves post on official leave orders that do not authorize payment of per diem in connection with the travel (e.g., R&R), COLA terminates on the 31<sup>st</sup> day of travel, *except that*

the allowance is reduced rather than terminated when family members remain at post, to a level appropriate for the reduced family size at post.

3. When a USPSC leaves post on official orders other than leave orders (e.g., TDY), COLA terminates on the 31<sup>st</sup> day of travel, *except that* the same reduction is made for family remaining at post as described in (2) above.

Please visit the Department of State's Office of Allowances [COLA FAQ](#) page for additional information.

*For specific regulations, please see [AIDAR Appendix D, Section 4\(c\)\(2\)\(v\)\(C\): Post Allowance](#); [AIDAR Appendix D, Section 12\(6\)\(4\): Post Allowance](#); [3 FAM 3230: Cost of Living Allowance](#); [4 FAH-3 H-535: Allowances](#); and [DSSR Section 220: Post Allowance](#)*

## Living Quarters Allowance

Living quarters allowance is an allowance granted to reimburse an employee (i.e., USPSC assigned overseas) for rental of a residence (plus utilities) whenever Government-owned or Government-rented housing is not provided at the post of assignment without charge. This is a **non-taxable allowance** and is requested via form [SF-1190: Application for Benefits and Allowances](#). However, at most overseas posts, USPSCs will be provided housing by the U.S. Government (either USAID or the embassy) as part of a housing pool, and this allowance will not be provided.

*For specific regulations, please see [AIDAR Appendix D, Section 4\(c\)\(2\)\(v\)\(B\): Living Quarters Allowance](#); [AIDAR Appendix D, Section 12\(6\)\(a\)\(2\): Living Quarters Allowance](#); [3 FAM 3220: Living Quarters Allowance](#); and [DSSR Section 130: Living Quarters Allowances](#)*

## Temporary Lodging Allowance or Temporary Quarters Subsistence Allowance (TQSA)

Temporary lodging allowance is an allowance granted to a USPSC assigned overseas for the reasonable costs associated with living in temporary quarters at post until they are provided permanent quarters. This can last up to 90 days and includes actual (itemized) costs for all meals, lodging, laundry/dry cleaning, etc. This is a **non-taxable allowance** and is requested via form [SF-1190](#). More information can be found on [OTI Anywhere](#).

*For specific regulations, please see [AIDAR Appendix D, Section 4\(c\)\(2\)\(v\)\(A\): Temporary Lodging Allowance](#); [AIDAR Appendix D, Section 12\(6\)\(3\): Temporary Lodging Allowance](#); and [DSSR Section 120: Temporary Quarters Subsistence Allowance](#)*

## Post Differential (Hardship Pay)

Post differential (also called Hardship Pay) is intended to provide additional compensation for USPSCs assigned overseas where living conditions differ substantially from those in the continental U.S. and

warrant additional compensation as a recruitment and retention incentive. Post differentials are established for each post between 0% and 35% of basic compensation, exclusive of any overtime, allowances, differentials, or any additional work days authorized. Unlike COLA, post differential is a true percentage of salary and **is taxable**.

Post differential will terminate when a USPSC assigned overseas travels to the U.S. and does not begin again until the USPSC has returned to their post of assignment. For travel directly to the U.S., post differential terminates at the close of business on the date of commencement of travel under official orders. Post differential is also not payable during periods of home leave.

However, post differential does not terminate when a USPSC is detailed or medevaced to the U.S. and a family member remains at post. Please note there are also exceptions relating to USPSCs assigned to certain “critical posts.” USPSCs are encouraged to check the [DSSR](#) for these specific instances.

Additionally, when a USPSC takes leave in another country while en route to the U.S., post differential will terminate upon arrival in the U.S. (rather than upon commencement of travel). If a USPSC assigned overseas is planning to take some time in another country during their leave period, it is best to make the stop en route to the U.S. rather than en route back to post. Post differential does not resume until returning to post, so stopping on the way back to post means that post differential will not apply while in the foreign location. Stopping on the way to the U.S., on the other hand, means that the post differential continues while in the foreign location.

For USPSC assigned overseas (i.e., posted abroad), no formal request is needed for this allowance. Post differential must be claimed in the WebTA timekeeping system. The post differential line must be added to the WebTA timesheet and eight hours for each regular work day should be claimed while spent outside of the U.S. Please note that post differential should not be limited to max 40 hours per week.

*For specific regulations, please see [AIDAR Appendix D, Section 4\(c\)\(v\)\(H\): Post Differential](#); [AIDAR Appendix D, Section 12\(6\)\(1\): Post Differential](#); [3 FAM 3260: Post Differential](#); [4 FAH-3 H533.10: Post Differential](#); and [DSSR Section 500: Post Differential](#)*

For USPSCs who are overseas on TDY, they are eligible for post differential after 42 consecutive days at post. Except in certain countries, post differential starts on the 43<sup>rd</sup> day and is not retroactive to day one. USPSCs making requests for post differential payment must do so via the Post-Diff for TDY memo completed by the Executive Officer or Controller at the TDY post. The memo must be submitted to the [USPSC Support Team](#), who will process the post diff payment through a special pay system at NFC. Payment of post diff will be deposited separately from regular salary pay. USPSCs should be able to see the post diff payment calculation (gross, taxes & net amount) in their EPP under Payroll Adjustment.

*For specific regulations, please see [Agency Notice 17874: Post Differential for TDY Employees](#)*

## Danger Pay

USPSCs are eligible to receive the danger pay allowance, in accordance with [DSSR Chapter 650](#): Danger Pay. Danger pay is intended to provide additional compensation above and beyond basic pay for services in foreign areas where there exist conditions of civil insurrection, civil war, terrorism or wartime conditions which threaten physical harm or imminent danger to the health or well-being of an employee. The [Department of State](#) determines the amount of danger pay authorized for a [specific post](#), which can be up to 35% of an employee’s basic compensation. Danger pay is **taxable**.

Danger pay begins at time of arrival and is paid until departure, including days of leave and holidays while the USPSC remains at post. Danger pay is exclusive of any overtime, allowances, differentials, or any additional work days authorized.

USPSCs eligible to claim danger pay must add the line with the authorized percentage for the specified post to their WebTA timesheet, claiming eight hours for each regular workday they are in the country for four or more business hours. Danger Pay should not exceed 40 hours per week, and is not received for hours (or days) for which no basic pay is received. Danger pay stops when a USPSC is away from post for any reason.

*For specific regulations, please see [AIDAR Appendix D, Section 4\(c\)\(2\)\(v\)\(j\)](#): Danger Pay; [AIDAR Appendix D, Section 12\(6\)\(9\)](#): Danger Pay Allowance; [3 FAM 3270](#): Danger Pay; [4 FAH-3 H-533.12](#): Danger Pay; and [DSSR Section 650](#): Danger Pay*

## Separate Maintenance Allowance

Separate maintenance allowance (“SMA”) is an allowance to assist employees (i.e., USPSCs assigned overseas) meet the additional expenses of maintaining members of their family somewhere other than at the employee’s foreign post of assignment. This allowance is paid when a USPSC is assigned to a post that is classified as an “unaccompanied post,” or to meet the special needs of a USPSC, including health, career, or educational considerations for a spouse, children, or other family member. There are three types of SMA: Involuntary (ISMA), Voluntary (VSMA), and Transitional (TSMA). See Table 3 below for details.

USPSCs are eligible to receive SMA payments not to exceed that made to USDH employees in accordance with the [DSSR Chapter 260](#). The SMA amount paid is based on the number of authorized dependents. See [DSSR Section 267](#): Payment for more details. This allowance **is taxable** and the application for SMA should be made using form [SF-1190](#) per the guidance in Table 3.

**Table 3. Types of Separate Maintenance Allowance**

Type	Reason for Granting	Reimbursement Method
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<b>Involuntary separate maintenance allowance (ISMA)</b>	May be granted because of dangerous, notably unhealthful, or excessively adverse living conditions at the USPSC's post of assignment in a foreign area, or for the convenience of the Government. <a href="#">See DSSR 262.1</a>	Reimbursable using form <a href="#">SF-1190</a> , starting on the first day that the USPSC arrives at post.
<b>Voluntary separate maintenance allowance (VSMA)</b>	May be granted to a USPSC who personally requests such an allowance, based on special needs or hardship involving the USPSC or their family member(s). <a href="#">See DSSR 262.2</a>	Reimbursable using form <a href="#">SF-1190</a> , beginning 90 days after the USPSC has arrived at post (i.e., following separation from family members).
<b>Transitional separate maintenance allowance (TSMA)</b>	May be granted to a USPSC whose family members temporarily occupy commercial quarters following termination of an evacuation, or in connection with an unaccompanied assignment. <a href="#">See DSSR 262.3</a>	

## Suspension or Termination of ISMA and VSMA

A change in circumstances, such as the situations noted below in Table 4, may cause the suspension or termination of SMA. Please immediately contact your support team if the following occurs, and refer to [DSSR Section 266](#) for more information.

**Table 4. Situations affecting ISMA and VSMA**

Situation or Change	Impacts	Effect or impact on allowance
<b>Family Visitation to Post</b>	ISMA or VSMA on behalf of a family member	Allowance is suspended the day that the family member arrives at post when their stay is or will be in excess of 30 consecutive days, or has exceeded or will exceed 90 days during a 12-months period. No other allowances or benefits under these regulations may be authorized for this family member while visiting post.*
<b>Permanent Change Transfer</b>	ISMA or VSMA	Allowance will terminate as of the earlier of the following:

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● date the USPSC starts travel under the transfer order; or</li> <li>● effective date of transfer when no travel by the USPSC under the transfer order is involved.</li> </ul>
<b>Separation</b> (termination of employment by resignation, retirement, or death)	ISMA or VSMA	Allowance will terminate as of the earlier of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● last day of employment; or</li> <li>● date on which the USPSC is reunited with their family member(s).</li> </ul>

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\* ISMA or VSMA payments may be resumed effective the day the family member departs, provided their stay at post did not exceed 90 days within a 12-months period. The grant of SMA on behalf of a family member may continue during the family member's visit to post when the visit is for 30 consecutive days or less, providing the family member is again en route by the 31st day and the total number of days the family member stayed at the post did not exceed 90 days during a 12-months period.

*For specific regulations, please see [AIDAR Appendix D, Section 12\(10\)\(j\): Home Leave Travel](#); [ADS 480.3.5: Home Leave](#); and [3 FAM 3430: Home Leave](#); [DSSR 266.3 Separation](#); and [DSSR 266.1: Transitional](#)*

## Termination of TSMA

TSMA shall terminate as of the earliest of the following dates:

1. Date the USPSC commences travel under transfer orders from the formerly evacuated post, or date of transfer when no travel by the USPSC under the transfer order is involved (pertains to DSSR 262.3a, 262.3b and 262.3c only).
2. Date the authorized period for Transitional SMA ends.
3. Date the complete Household Effects (HHE) shipment is delivered to the family (pertains to DSSR 262.3a and 262.3d TSMA only).
4. Date the family members occupy non-commercial quarters.
5. Date the family members occupy permanent quarters.
6. Three days after the last day of school (pertains to DSSR 262.3b TSMA only).
7. Date the family members commence travel to the USPSC's onward accompanied post of assignment (pertains to DSSR 262.3e TSMA only).

*For specific regulations, please see [AIDAR Appendix D, Section 4\(c\)\(2\)\(v\)\(E\): Separate Maintenance Allowance](#); [AIDAR Appendix D, Section 12\(6\)\(8\): Separate Maintenance Allowance](#); [DSSR Chapter 260: Separate Maintenance Allowance](#); and [DSSR 266.4: Transitional SMA](#)*

## Education Allowance

The education allowance is intended to assist an employee (i.e., the USPSC assigned overseas) in meeting the extraordinary and necessary expenses incurred by reason of their service overseas to provide adequate grades K-12 education for their children. That is, this allowance helps the employee with defraying those costs necessary to obtain educational services that would normally be free of charge in the U.S. This allowance covers tuition and other approved costs for dependents enrolled in grades K–12, either in a school at post or away from post.

Education allowances are established by the Department of State for each post, and can be found in [DSSR Section 920](#). Up to date summaries of post allowances are also maintained on the Department of State's [Allowances by Location](#) page. Education allowances may also include a special needs and/or supplementary instructions allowance, depending on the needs of the USPSC's dependents. There have been significant changes in the past several years to the Special Needs allowance and USPSCs should review the [Department of State's FAQ on Education Allowance](#) for additional information.

This is a **non-taxable allowance** and is reimbursed via form [SF-1034](#). A USPSC requesting this allowance must submit the voucher form along with the following documents: 1) copy of tuition receipts; 2) copy of the Personal Services Contract (which verifies the allowance); and 3) copy of the Assignment to Post TA (which verifies children were included on the TA). In some circumstances, school tuition will be paid through a contract funds transfer directly to the USAID Mission. USPSCs should contact their financial management administrator for more information.

*For specific regulations, please see [AIDAR Appendix D, Section 4\(c\)\(2\)\(v\)\(F\): Education Allowance](#); [AIDAR Appendix D, Section 12\(6\)\(a\)\(7\): Education Allowance](#); [DSSR Chapter 270: Education Allowance](#); and [Department of State's General Information on Education Allowance](#)*

## Educational Travel

Educational travel is an allowance authorized only for USPSCs whose assignments are at least two years. This allowance permits one round-trip flight per year between a post-secondary school attended by a USPSC's dependent children and the USPSC's foreign post of assignment. This benefit is primarily intended to reunite a full-time post-secondary student attending college (including the post-baccalaureate level), technical or vocational school with the parent, an employee (i.e., USPSC) serving the U.S. Government in the foreign area.

Educational travel can begin from either the school or the post, but only one round-trip flight between the school and post is allowed annually. This is a **non-taxable allowance** and is requested via form [SF-1190](#). A USPSC will receive educational travel payments for their dependent children under age 23 provided such payment does not exceed that which would be payable in accordance with [DSSR Chapter 280](#).

The educational travel allowance may be paid for a child in secondary school (grades 9 through 12) instead of the education allowance. But, the educational travel allowance cannot be paid at the same time as the education allowance, and should not be confused with the transportation component of the "away-from-post" education allowance.

*For specific regulations, please see [AIDAR Appendix D, Section 4\(c\)\(2\)\(v\)\(G\): Educational Travel](#); [AIDAR Appendix D, Section 12\(6\)\(a\)\(10\): Educational Travel](#); and [DSSR Chapter 280: Educational Travel](#)*

## **Shipments of Personal Effects**

In addition to the monetary benefits described above, USPSCs assigned overseas are authorized the shipment of personal effects for themselves and their dependents. Personal effects may be authorized to be shipped to post or stored at an authorized U.S. Government facility at U.S. Government expense, up to the limits noted below. All shipments authorized will be identified on the post assignment TA. Some overseas posts may limit the amount of personal effects that may be shipped.

All shipments from the U.S. to an overseas location (including unaccompanied air baggage, household effects, personally owned vehicles, and consumables (when allowed)) are arranged through the Department of State Transportation Operations Branch, regardless of where in the U.S. the shipments will originate. OTI staff should contact OTI's Travel Team for instructions.

Shipments from an overseas location back to the U.S. or to another post are usually handled by the General Services Office ("GSO") of the U.S. Embassy at post. Since such shipments require customs clearances through diplomatic channels, and USAID Missions generally process such shipments through the Embassy. This is true for incoming shipments at post as well. Please contact the Embassy GSO for instructions and forms. The USAID Mission Executive Officer ("EXO") can assist with this process.

## **Duty-Free Entry**

As a U.S. Government employee on official duty abroad, the personal effects of a USPSC assigned abroad are not subject to import fees or customs in the country of assignment. Personal effects are also eligible for duty-free entry into the U.S. on completion of the contract, except for items shipped for commercial purposes. Please note that any vehicles shipped from overseas to the U.S. must comply with U.S. specifications.

*For specific regulations, please see [AIDAR Appendix D, Section 12\(10\)\(l\): Transportation of Motor Vehicles, Personal Effects and Household Goods](#); and [Consumables List Alphabetically by Post](#)*

## **Unaccompanied Air Baggage (UAB or Air Freight)**

Unaccompanied Air Baggage ("UAB") is commonly referred to as air freight. USPSCs assigned abroad are authorized gross 250 lbs. of UAB. This allowance includes the weight of any packing materials and containers. In addition to the USPSC, their first authorized dependent is allowed 200 lbs., the second

150 lbs., and the third and each subsequent authorized dependent is allowed 100 lbs. each. USPSCs should remember to consider the weight of a container when planning a UAB shipment.

UAB is considered personal belongings needed by the traveler (i.e., the USPSC assigned abroad) upon arrival at their destination. Therefore, the transportation of UAB must be initiated promptly, preferably in advance of the traveler's departure. Shipment of UAB must be initiated within 30 days of the last traveler's arrival at their final destination. UAB shipment may be authorized for Home Leave travel.

Please note that the shipment of electronic equipment (e.g., televisions, computers, radios, audio systems, etc.) is not authorized in UAB under the DSSR. This means that such items, if shipped, are sent at personal risk. The Department of State may refuse such shipments and/or may deny any claims for loss or damage of such items if included in the UAB. Use of military or Department of State postal systems for shipments of UAB is also prohibited.

For some specific posts where the Household Effects allowance is not authorized, there may be an authorized increase for UAB. USPSCs should carefully review post specific guidance for authorized UAB and HHE shipping.

*For specific regulations, please see [AIDAR Appendix D, Section 12\(10\)\(m\)](#): Unaccompanied Baggage; and [14 FAM 613.3](#): Unaccompanied Air Baggage (UAB)*

## **Household Effects (HHE)**

Transportation costs of household effects ("HHE") for USPSCs will be paid on the same basis as for USDH employees serving the same length assignment overseas. HHE refers to property associated with the house and personal effects belonging to an employee (i.e., USPSC), including furniture, household goods, and personal items. A USPSC assigned abroad is authorized a **maximum of net 7,200 lbs.** of HHE, usually shipped by surface transportation, at U.S. Government expense. Overseas shipments above net 7,200 lbs. are at the USPSC's personal expense, computed on a cost-construct basis. "Net" means that the weight of the lift van or the container that the goods are shipped in does not count against the weight allowance authorized. The weight of the packing cartons and packing materials do count against the weight allowances authorized. Please note that approved weight allowances may vary by post, and this benefit is often not available in Critical Priority Countries ("CPC") posts.

HHE shipments must be initiated within 12 months of arrival at, or departure from, the post of assignment. Please remember that government housing provided overseas is furnished, so most personal household furniture should be placed in storage. Use of military or Department of State postal systems for shipments of HHE is prohibited.

There are restrictions on shipment of recreational vehicles and firearms. Please check with the appropriate shipping office for specific restrictions applicable to that post.

*For specific regulations, please see [AIDAR Appendix D, Section 12\(10\)\(l\)](#): Transportation of Motor Vehicle, Personal Effects and HHE; [14 FAM 611.6](#): Household Effects (HHE); and [14 FAM 614](#): Processing Shipments of Household and Personal Effects*

## Personally Owned Vehicle (POV)

USPSCs assigned overseas with Personal Services Contracts that are longer than one year may be authorized shipment of one vehicle from the U.S. (or some other point on a cost-constructive basis) to their post of assignment, and back at the end of the contract. The vehicle shipped must be in compliance with the laws and regulations of the country where the vehicle will be operated.

*For specific regulations, please see [AIDAR Appendix D, Section 12\(10\)\(l\): Transportation of Motor Vehicle, Personal Effects and Household Effects](#); and [14 FAM 615: Personally-Owned Motor Vehicles \(POVs\)](#)*

## Storage of Household Effects

A USPSC assigned overseas is authorized domestic storage of personal effects in a U.S. Government authorized facility at U.S. Government expense. The combined total weight of HHE shipped to post plus stored effects **may not exceed net 18,000 lbs.** This means that if a USPSC ships less than their 7,200 lbs. authorized, they can apply the unused portion to their storage weight allowance. Storage amounts in excess of the combined level of 18,000 lbs. are at the USPSC's personal expense.

*For specific regulations, please see [AIDAR Appendix D, Section 12\(10\)\(o\): Storage of Household Effects](#); [14 FAM 613.1: Shipment and Storage Weight Allowances](#); and [14 FAM 620: Storing Effects](#)*

## Consumables Allowance

The consumables allowance is a benefit available at designated posts where consumable items are difficult to purchase locally or are extremely expensive. The Foreign Affairs Manual has a [listing of posts](#) that are eligible for consumables allowances. Please check the listing before traveling. The allowance is specified on the post assignment TA.

If a USPSC is assigned to a consumables post for a two-year assignment, the USPSC, regardless of family size, is authorized to ship **gross 2,500 lbs.** of foodstuffs, toiletries, paper products, and non-hazardous cleaning supplies. For each additional year of assignment at the post, an additional 1,250 lbs. will be authorized. These are in addition to the HHE weight allowance. Consumables shipments may not contain HHE or items used for car maintenance. Additionally, perishable and frozen foods may not be contained in a consumables shipment.

See [14 FAM 613.6: Shipping Consumables](#), for relevant time limitations on when consumables can be shipped to post. Shipments must usually be initiated within 12 months of the date of the TA. Also, USPSCs should be mindful of expiration dates when ordering consumables, to ensure that foodstuffs will not expire before they can be used. If on a two-year tour, USPSCs may want to consider doing an initial shipment of less than 2,500 pounds. A second shipment can then be made later in the first year, before the authorization expires.

If you are going to a post with a consumables allowance, please check with the USAID Mission EXO or the Embassy Community Liaison Office (“CLO”) to find out what items are readily available at post (either in the local markets or in a U.S. Government-sponsored commissary, where such exist). This information will guide the selection of consumable items to ship.

*For specific regulations, please see [AIDAR Appendix D, Section 4\(c\)\(2\)\(vi\)](#); and [14 FAM 613.6: Shipping Consumables](#)*

## **Pets**

USPSCs are not eligible for reimbursement for transportation costs of pets. Further, the restrictions on animals vary greatly from one country to another as do quarantine requirements. Please refer to [Overseas Briefing Center](#) (“OBC”) and to post-specific travel cables on file at the OBC, regarding importation of pets into a USPSC’s specific country of assignment. The OBC is part of the Transition Center (“TC”) at the Foreign Service Institute.

## **Rest and Recuperation (R&R) Travel**

Rest and Recuperation (“R&R”) travel authorizations are based on the conditions at post, are authorized by the Department of State, and are listed in the Automated Directed Service (ADS) and Foreign Affairs Manual (FAM). USPSCs are authorized R&R travel on the same basis as USDH employees at the same post. Check with the post’s personnel management staff on R&R entitlements; some posts may have multiple R&Rs because of special working conditions or hardships.

R&R consists of an airline ticket to the post-specific designated R&R point or to some other point within the United States. Each post has a specific designated R&R point. Travel to other non-U.S. locations is allowed on a cost-constructive basis (each post has a predetermined amount that can be used in cost constructive travel). The regulations on R&R are extensive and sometimes complicated, especially for travel on a non-direct route. OTI’s USPSCs are highly encouraged to check with the OTI Travel team for more detailed guidance.

R&R is generally not granted within six months of the beginning and end of a USPSC’s assignment overseas, or within six months of a previously authorized R&R or family visitation trip. There is no special leave for R&R. Any time on R&R (including travel time if traveling on a workday) must be accounted for as AL, sick leave (supported by a doctor’s certification of incapacity), earned Comp Time, or LWOP. See the [Leave Benefits](#) section above for more details.

Note that USPSCs are not entitled to any local holidays which occur after departure from post on R&R travel orders. No per diem or miscellaneous costs are reimbursable other than visas, airport taxes, and transportation *between airports*.

*For specific regulations, please see [AIDAR Appendix D, Section 12\(10\)\(k\): Rest and Recuperation Travel](#); [3 FAM 3720: R&R Travel](#); and [14 FAM 531.5: Rest and Recuperation Travel](#)*

## Ordered/Authorized Departure - Travel & Payments

When an evacuation is authorized or ordered, specific information about safe havens and payments will be given via the Department of State's Ordered Departure Cable. USPSCs who will be posted overseas should familiarize themselves with the evacuation guidelines issued by the Department of State *prior to* arriving at post. Guidance on the types of documents to bring to post and actions to take prior to leaving the U.S. (school records, health records, powers of attorney, etc.) can be found in [DSSR Chapter 600: Payments During Evacuation/Authorized Departure](#).

In situations of ordered/authorized departure in the event of emergency evacuation, the DSSR provides the authority for payment of compensation, post differential, and allowances for the USPSC and any authorized dependent evacuated from the post of assignment.

*For specific regulations, please see [AIDAR Appendix D, Section 4\(c\)\(2\)\(v\)\(l\): Authorized Departure](#); [AIDAR Appendix D, Section 12\(6\)\(a\)\(6\): Payments During Evacuation](#); and [DSSR Chapter 600: Payments During Evacuation/Authorized Departure](#)*

## Medical Evacuation (Medevac) Travel

Official medevac travel and transportation may be authorized for USPSCs and their eligible family members from any place where presence is due to the U.S. Government orders to the nearest locality where suitable medical care can be obtained and then to an official duty station. See the [Medical Evacuation \(Medevac\) Services](#) section above for more details. Travel of attendants may be authorized. When medevac is authorized, specific information about medical evacuation authorized location and payments will be given via the Department of State Medical Cable.

*For specific regulations, please see [14 FAM 534: Medical Travel](#); [16FAM 300: Medical Travel](#); and [14 FAM 523.2-1\(e\): Travel Authorities/State Department](#)*

## Emergency Visitation Travel

USPSCs assigned overseas are eligible for Emergency Visitation Travel ("EVT") in connection with certain types of family emergencies. Examples include, but are not limited to: a life-threatening illness or condition involving an immediate family member, a death in the immediate family, the need to deal with the incapacitation of a parent, etc.

This handbook will not address the various types of situations warranting such travel, the frequency of permissible travel, the definitions of immediate family, and the travel benefits payable. If you encounter a situation warranting EVT, please review the applicable guidelines and consult with your office-specific personnel management team, with the field Mission EXO, and/or with the Embassy HR Office.

For specific regulations, please see [AIDAR Appendix D, Section 12\(10\)\(i\): Emergency and Irregular Travel and Transportation](#); [3 FAM 3740: Emergency Visitation Travel](#); and [3 FAM 3730: Visitation Travel](#)

## Home Leave

Home leave is leave earned for service abroad for use only in the U.S., its commonwealths, possessions, and territories. Home leave days are separate from annual and sick leave days. It is an extraordinary leave available to full-time USPSCs who (1) have served at least two years at the same USAID Mission, under the same contract; (2) have not taken more than 30 working days leave (annual, sick, or LWOP) in the U.S.; and (3) will return to service overseas upon completion of home leave. The number of home leave days a USPSC will earn and receive depends on the post the USPSC will return to after home leave and the duration of the additional period of service. See Table 5 below for more details.

The “period of service” overseas required for home leave includes actual days in orientation in the U.S. (less language training). Actual days overseas begin on the date of arrival in the overseas post, inclusive of authorized delays en route. Any allowable AL and sick leave taken while overseas are included in the required period of service overseas but LWOP is not counted. Any AL and/or sick leave taken by the USPSC in the U.S., its commonwealths, possessions, or territories will be added to the required period of service overseas. Note that to be eligible for home leave, a USPSC may not have taken more than 30 workdays of leave (AL, sick, or LWOP) in the U.S. If the USPSC has taken leave in the U.S., they should check with the CO to determine the impact of that leave on their eligibility for home leave.

**Table 5. Basic Home Leave Requirements**

<b>1. USPSC will return to</b>	<b>2. For an additional period of service</b>	<b>3. then, a USPSC will receive home leave of:</b>
<b>the same overseas post...</b>	of 2 years ...	30 work days to be taken at one time.
<b>the same overseas post...</b>	shorter than 2 years but not less than 1 year (as approved in writing by the Mission Director before departure for leave)...*	30 work days to be taken at one time.
<b>a different overseas post...</b>	of 2 years...	No more than 20 work days to be taken at one time.
<b>a different overseas post...</b>	shorter than 2 years but not less than 1 year (as approved by the Mission Directors of both the “losing” and “gaining” Mission)...	No more than 20 work days to be taken at one time.

\*OTI USPSCs may be permitted only to stay less than two year at post with documentation approved in advance by the USAID Mission or OTI Director.

A USPSC may be granted “advanced home leave” of 30 days where the USPSC has served at least 18 months at the same USAID Mission, under the same contract, and who will return to service overseas at the same post upon return from home leave. The USPSC must serve out the remaining time required to meet two years of service overseas plus the additional period of service, either of two years or a shorter period but not less than one year.

After taking home leave, a USPSC is required to return to duty for their “additional period of service” at post. This requirement begins the day after the USPSC has returned to post. If the USPSC does not complete the additional period of service required (which the CO finds is other than for reasons beyond the USPSC's control), the cost of home leave, travel and transportation, and any other related costs must be repaid by the USPSC to USAID. If a USPSC's contract ends before the additional service requirement would be met but is due to be extended, the USPSC must sign a contract modification and/or commit to an additional contract year prior to taking home leave.

Home leave that is not used is not reimbursable under Personal Services Contracts. Further, home leave must be taken at one time; it cannot be taken incrementally in separate time periods.

*For specific regulations, please see [AIDAR Appendix D](#), Section 12(5)(c): Home Leave, as amended by [AAPD 15-02 Revised 2: Leave and Holidays Clause](#), including FML*

### **Home Leave for Qualifying Posts (“HLQP”)**

USPSCs who ordinarily qualify for home leave and have completed a 12-month assignment at one of the USAID “qualifying posts” (currently: Iraq, Afghanistan and Pakistan) are entitled to take 10 workdays of leave in addition to the traditional home leave a USPSC is normally entitled. There is no requirement that an eligible USPSC take this additional leave; it is for optional use by the USPSC. If an eligible USPSC decides to take HLQP, they must take 10 workdays of home leave and return to the qualifying post.

*For specific regulations, please see [AIDAR Appendix D](#), Section 12(5)(d): Home Leave for Qualifying Posts (HLQP), as amended by [AAPD 15-02 Revised 2: Leave and Holidays Clause](#), including FML*

### **Requesting Home Leave**

All requests for home leave must be submitted via a memo in advance, especially for USPSCs changing Personal Services Contracts and/or posts. Recognizing that a USPSC may not always be able to take home leave immediately after completion of the initial service requirement, a suitable schedule between the USPSC and the USAID Mission(s) must be negotiated to ensure that the USPSC can use this benefit.

*For specific regulations, please see [AIDAR Appendix D](#), Home Leave and Revised General Provision 5, Leave and Holidays*

## Home Leave Travel

Travel in connection with home leave must be by the most direct route and includes an authorization for shipment of air freight (UAB) from and to post. See the [Unaccompanied Air Baggage](#) section below for more details. Home leave travel is authorized between the overseas post and the place of residence in the U.S. Note that Comp Time for travel cannot be accumulated when traveling for home leave. Additionally, consultations in Washington in connection with home leave may be approved by the CO under certain conditions.

*For specific regulations, please see [AIDAR Appendix D, Section 12\(10\)\(j\): Home Leave Travel, Home Leave and Revised General Provision 5: Leave and Holidays; ADS 480.3.5: Home Leave; and \[3 FAM 3430: Home Leave\]\(#\)](#)*

## Permanent Change of Station Travel

Permanent Change of Station (“PCS”) Travel will be accomplished using the most economical and direct route to post. Travel by other than the most direct route is a personal expense of the employee (i.e., the USPSC), on a cost-constructive basis.

Travel costs and allowances will be allowed for authorized dependents to and from the assignment post, only if the dependent remains at post for at least nine months or one-half of the USPSC’s period of performance, whichever is greater. Note that this does not refer to otherwise authorized travel for education, medical or emergency visitation. If the dependent is eligible for educational travel, time spent away from post resulting from educational travel will be counted as time at post.

## Repatriation Travel

At the end of USPSC’s overseas contract, USAID will pay for their return travel and any eligible family members. Travel will be to their Service Separation Residence address as shown on the Personal Services Contract. USAID will also pay for the transportation of personal effects (POV, HHE, UAB, etc.) to the same location. For shipment of effects, another location may be designated if approved by the Contracting Officer. See the [Shipments of Personal Effects](#) section above for more information.

*For specific regulations, please see [AIDAR Appendix D, Section 12\(10\)\(c\): International Travel; and \[AIDAR Appendix D, Section 12\\(10\\)\\(l\\): Transportation of Motor Vehicle, Personal Effects and Household Effects\]\(#\)](#)*

## Sale of Personal Property Overseas

If departing from an overseas post, USPSCs may want to consider selling some of their personal property at post rather than shipping it home or to their next overseas posting. There are strict rules dealing with an in-country sale of personal property that entered the country duty-free. While selling to another diplomat is often not a problem, selling to host country nationals can involve host country

customs restrictions. As a general rule, Embassy permission is required for the sale of any vehicles and of any property above a certain value (usually based on original purchase price).

U.S. Government employees (including a USPSC assigned overseas) are prohibited from making a profit on the sale of personal property; the Embassy will monitor sales to ensure compliance. The authorization for sale will also authorize reverse accommodation for any local-currency receipts of sale (i.e., the seller will be permitted to deposit the local currency proceeds of sale with the embassy cashier, who will convert the local currency to U.S. dollars and deposit the dollars in their bank account via electronic funds transfer). Be sure to check with the post's administrative staff for any post-specific restrictions and procedures.

*For specific regulations, please see [AIDAR Appendix D, Section 12\(2\)\(b\): Purchase or Sale of Personal Property or Automobiles](#); [2 FAM 225.3: Importation and Sale of Personal Property](#); and [4 FAH-3 H368: Disposition of Employee's Personal Property Overseas](#)*

## **Paid Holidays**

### **U.S. Holidays**

USPSCs assigned overseas are authorized the same U.S. holidays observed by the U.S. Government and as published by the Embassy at the post of assignment.

*For specific regulations, please see [AIDAR Appendix D, Section 12\(5\)\(d\): Holidays](#)*

### **Local Holidays**

USPSCs assigned overseas are authorized the same local holidays as are USDH employees of the Mission and as published by the Embassy, while they are physically located at post. As a general rule, Missions abroad are precluded from authorizing more local holidays than there are U.S. holidays (or a maximum of 20 U.S. and local holidays per year). The Embassy will publish, usually in the form of an administrative notice, the schedule of recognized holidays for a given year. USPSCs assigned overseas should get a copy of the published notice for their own planning purposes. Specific rules apply for each type of absence from post, which can affect the claiming of a local holiday. Local holidays cannot be claimed when away from post on official travel orders (including R&R), but can be claimed when traveling away from post at the traveler's own expense.

*For specific regulations, please see [AIDAR Appendix D, Section 12\(5\)\(d\): Holidays](#)*

## **Health Unit Access**

USPSCs assigned overseas and their authorized dependents are authorized to use the health unit at post, provided that they have received the proper medical clearance from M/MED. See the [Medical Clearance](#) section above for more information. USPSCs on TDY overseas are also authorized to use the health unit,

subject to the condition if on TDY for more than 30 days, they must have a valid medical clearance. See the [Medical Clearance for TDY Travel](#) sections above for more information.

Non-dependents (such as parents, other relatives, or Members of Household (MOH)) may not be authorized to use the post health unit. It is best to check with the post's admin staff for more detailed guidance if planning to take a non-dependent abroad. Note: An ICASS subscription to these services is required.

*For specific regulations, please see [AIDAR Appendix D, Section 4\(c\)\(2\)\(vii\)](#); [AIDAR Appendix D, Section 12\(3\)\(c\): Health Room Privileges](#); and [Cable 14 STATE 31156: Overseas Health Unit Access and Services](#)*

## Mail Services

USPSCs assigned overseas to a post are authorized the use of military postal services and pouch service on the same basis as USDH employees, in accordance with any applicable restrictions by the post of assignment. Use of mail while on TDY varies from post to post. There are five categories of posts for mail purposes. Category A are those posts with a Military Postal System ("MPS", i.e., APO or FPO). Category B posts are those with access to the diplomatic pouch but no access to MPS or DPO. Category C posts are those with access to the Diplomatic Post Office ("DPO"). Category D posts are those where international mail must be used. Category E posts are those where mail is addressed to a U.S. zip code and transported across the border. Please note that most posts with APO privileges do not allow use of the diplomatic pouch for personal mail; employees are expected to use the APO for such items. The same policy applies for those posts with DPO privileges. Check with your post of assignment for guidance on which system to use for personal mail, and on post-specific limitations on weight and size of packages.

It is also best to check on any restrictions on what can be mailed through the system. For more details, see [14 FAM 761.4](#): Items prohibited for Diplomatic Post Office; [14 FAM Exhibit 723.2](#): Items prohibited for Pouch Dispatch. For example, you cannot send cans with pop-tops, currency, aerosols or pressurized containers, liquids in glass containers, some kinds of batteries, or human remains. You can send liquids in non-glass containers, but no more than 16 ounces per box. Failure to comply with applicable regulations can result in loss of APO or pouch privileges, so be sure to check on the most recent guidance.

Both MPS/DPO and pouch mail systems handle outgoing letter mail, but pouch systems generally do not allow for outbound shipment of packages. Some post employee recreation associations have implemented a system for out-mailing of packages, but this is rare and usually very expensive when available. Make sure that your family and friends are aware of the restrictions noted above. Also notify family, friends, and business organizations (e.g., bank, credit union, credit card companies, magazines, etc.) of your change of address. Be sure to allow plenty of time for handling critical financial transactions to avoid penalties for late payments due to transit times in the MPS/DPO or pouch. Note: An ICASS subscription to these services is required.

*For specific regulations, please see [AIDAR Appendix D, Section 12\(20\): Use of Pouch Facilities](#); [AIDAR Appendix D, Section 12\(13\): Post of Assignment Privileges](#); and [14 FAM 700: Diplomatic Pouch and Mail Services](#)*

## **Commissary/PX**

At some larger posts, the military runs a commissary and USPSCs are eligible, in accordance with post policy, to use the facilities. However, in most Missions there is a “cooperative” commissary run by the U.S. employees’ association, for which dues are usually required. Any costs for joining associations are the personal responsibility of the USPSC and are not reimbursable. (Note: Employee associations usually offer other facilities/activities in addition to the commissaries, such as club facilities, video clubs, swimming pool, tennis courts, snack bars, exercise facilities, etc. Each post association determines the facilities/services that they will provide.)

*For specific regulations, please see [AIDAR Appendix D, Section 12\(13\): Post of Assignment Privileges](#); and [6 FAM 542: Use of Facilities](#)*

## **Housing**

USPSCs serving overseas on long-term assignments will be provided housing on the same basis as USDH employees. See the [Living Quarters Allowance](#) section above for more details.

The housing pool at post provides housing for all official Americans, including OTI USPSCs, in accordance with space standards established by the Foreign Affairs Manual. These space standards take into consideration locality, position, grade, family size, and representational duties. Where government-owned or government-leased housing is provided, basic utilities (i.e., electric, water, gas, and sewage) are paid directly by the housing service provider (i.e., the USAID Mission, the Embassy, or the implementing partner). Residential furniture and equipment are generally provided for U.S. Government-assigned housing, along with maintenance and repair services for the residence and U.S. Government-owned furniture and equipment. On arrival at an overseas post on assignment orders, USPSCs should check with the post service provider for guidance on policies and procedures there.

*For specific regulations, please see [15 FAM 237: Determining Residential Space Authorizations](#); [15 FAM 237A: Space Allocation](#); and [15 FAM 237B: List of Localities](#)*

Telephone services are generally not provided at U.S. Government expense. The field service provider (i.e., USAID Mission, the Embassy, or other) may provide one or two residential telephones and will arrange for local telephone service, but bills for local service subscriptions and personal calls are personal expenses. This is true whether the telephones provided are for land-lines, mobile lines, or both. USPSCs should check with the field office for more information on post-specific policies.

# Working at USAID

## Security Clearance

Before starting work, all USPSCs are required to obtain a security clearance, or to be granted a temporary clearance. With the appropriate level of either a temporary or final security clearance, USPSCs can participate in classified discussions and have access to classified material. A clearance can also be granted as “Facility Access” (formerly “Employment Authorization”) although this clearance does not provide any access to national security information and can also limit access to “classified” sections of government buildings.

Security clearances can be issued for any period up to five years. A reinvestigation is required after five years. If your security clearance is approaching the five-year point, you should bring that to the attention of your office-specific personnel management team to ensure timely reinvestigation.

A security clearance or facility access is required for issuance of a Federal Personal Identity Verification card (“PIV”) or any other badge that grants access to USAID spaces and to the AIDNet. Any loss or suspension could preclude the USPSC from performing the responsibilities assigned to them under their Personal Services Contract.

For more information about security clearances and your responsibility in maintaining your clearance, please see the [Office of Security](#).

*For specific regulations, please see [AIDAR Appendix D, Section 6\(b\)\(5\): Negotiating a Personal Services Contract](#); [AIDAR Appendix D, Section 12\(14\): Security Requirements](#); [ADS 566: USPSC Clearance Requirements and Position Designations](#); [Executive Order 12958: Classified National Security Information](#); and [Executive Order 12968: Access to Classified Information](#)*

## Identification Badge

USAID issues an identification badge (i.e., PIV card) to all employees. These badges provide electronic access to the controlled portions of the Ronald Reagan office building (“RRB”). The badge must be worn visibly at all times while in the office building. In addition to the USAID/Washington badge, USPSCs assigned overseas may sometimes also receive a USAID Mission or Embassy badge specific to the post of assignment. As with the Washington office, field offices require that these badges be worn visibly at all times. USPSCs who need regular access to Department of State building(s) may request that the Department of State access be added to their USAID ID badge. Check with your office-specific personnel management team for more information on this process. OTI staff should consult the Employee Services Team for any information related to badges. Please remember to return the badge when leaving post or terminating your contract with USAID.

## Self-Reporting Requirements

Employees (including USPSCs) who occupy positions of trust and handle sensitive information must report changes or incidents that may impact their clearance eligibility. The [Federal Adjudicative Guidelines](#) are a valuable tool in determining if a life event (e.g., change or incident) needs to be reported. Employees must report changes to [SECReporting@usaid.gov](mailto:SECReporting@usaid.gov). Examples of changes or incidents to report include, but are not limited to:

- Change in Personal Status (marital, cohabitation, change in name);
- Financial Problems (filing for bankruptcy, garnishment of wages, liens, evictions, inability to meet financial obligations);
- Arrests (any arrest regardless of whether charges were filed);
- Psychological/Mental Health Counseling unless counseling was (a) not court ordered, (b) strictly marital, family or grief counseling not related to violence by the employee; or (c) related to adjustments from service in a military combat environment. **Note:** Counseling in and of itself is not a reason to revoke or deny eligibility for access to classified information or to a sensitive position, suitability or fitness to obtain or retain Federal employment, fitness to obtain or retain contract employment, or eligibility for physical or logistical access to federally controlled facilities or information systems;
- Substance Abuse Counseling;
- Violations, unauthorized or unlawful use involving Information Technology Systems; and
- Any behaviors, activities, or situations involving USAID employees, USPSC's, and institutional contractors that may bear on the individual's eligibility to receive or retain a security clearance.

Additionally, the USPSC should report any Leave without Pay over 30 days to [SECReporting@usaid.gov](mailto:SECReporting@usaid.gov).

*For specific regulations, please see [ADS 566.3.4.2: Employee Reporting Requirements](#); and [ADS 566.3.5.2: Clearance Withdrawals for Non-Duty Status](#)*

## Medical Clearances - Generally

The medical clearance process is designed to identify any on-going medical, mental health, or special educational issues that may require adequate resources available at a specific post overseas. Medical Clearances are administered by the Department of State, Office of Medical Services, Medical Clearance Division ("M/MED/MC"). The medical clearance physical exam can be completed by a licensed medical provider or at the [Department of State Exam Clinic](#) in Washington DC.

Most people who have no significant health concerns can be posted anywhere in the world. USPSCs falling in this category would likely be issued a Worldwide Available (Class I) Clearance. However, for individuals with on-going medical, mental health, or educational issues, the adequate medical resources they may require may not be available in all countries. The Medical Clearance process matches an individual's medical needs with the posts capable of providing adequate medical or education services.

USPSCs falling in this category would likely be issued a Post-specific (Class 2) Clearance. Note that M/MED/MC will not clear an individual to go to a post that does not have adequate resources for them.

Medical clearances are valid for different lengths of time depending on the class of the clearance, place of performance, and any change in the contractor's medical status. A TDY medical clearance is valid for 2 years from the date it is issued. See [M/MED Medical Clearance Guidance and Instructions](#) for more information.

*For specific regulations, please see [AIDAR Appendix D, Section 12\(3\): Physical Fitness and Health Room Services](#); [309mac: Medical Clearance Process for USPSCs](#); [16 FAM 210: Medical Clearance](#); [Cable 14 STATE 31156: Overseas Health Unit Access and Services](#); and [M/MED Medical Clearance Guidance and Instructions](#)*

## **Pre-contract Medical Clearances**

Washington-based USPSCs are not required to have a medical clearance from M/MED unless there is an expectation that a USPSC will serve overseas for more than 30 days on any TDY. If there is even a remote chance of this scenario, please see the [Medical Clearance for TDY Travel](#) section below for more details.

USPSCs living in the Washington, DC metro area can utilize the [Department of State Medical Clinic](#) for their medical clearance exam. USPSCs may also choose to use their personal physician for the clearance documentation. In the latter case, USPSCs will be eligible for reimbursement of half of the costs of any required basic medical examinations plus any charges for any required immunizations for the USPSC and authorized dependents. This reimbursement of half of the actual costs of the required basic examinations will be made after deducting any reimbursement the USPSC receives for such examinations from their insurance company. USPSCs should use form [SF-1034](#) (after billing private insurance) to seek reimbursement for authorized expenses.

If M/MED requires additional tests before providing the clearance to a USPSC, M/MED will let the USPSC know in writing on their letterhead. The **USPSC must notify the CO in advance** of the additional test request to authorize the USPSC to incur such expenses. Such additional tests will be reimbursed at 100% of the costs to the USPSC minus any costs paid by the USPSC's insurance company.

*For specific regulations, please see [AIDAR Appendix D, Section 12\(3\): Physical Fitness and Health Room Privileges](#); [ADS 309mac: Medical Clearance Process for USPSCs](#); [AAPD 10-01: P Revision of Medical Clearance Process for USPSCs](#)*

## **Medical Clearances for USPSCs Assigned Overseas**

For a USPSC who will be assigned overseas, the CO must obtain a valid medical clearance from the M/MED/MC as required in 16 FAM 122, before awarding the contract for performance abroad, or issuing the travel orders for the USPSC and any traveling eligible family members. A minimum of a Level 2

Medical Clearance from M/MED/MC for the USPSC and all dependents accompanying the USPSC to post must be obtained.

USPSCs who do not have a valid medical clearance must complete [Form DS-1843](#): Medical History & Examination. If they have a valid medical clearance, then they should complete [Form DS-3057](#): Medical Clearance Update, for subsequent assignments or TDYs.

Level 2 Medical clearances for posted personnel are valid until home leave or at the end of the assignment, whichever comes first, and only for the post to which the employee is assigned. If there is a change in the individual's medical condition that could affect their medical clearance, the employee (the USPSC) is required to notify M/MED of any such change that could affect their overseas assignment. Any onward assignment to another post will require revalidation of the medical clearance for the new post **prior to** the USPSC's (or family member's) travel. USPSCs should renew their medical clearances during home leave or at the end of the assignment, whichever comes first.

If a USPSC is undergoing a permanent change of station to or extending their Personal Services Contract in an ESCAPE post (currently: Iraq, Afghanistan, Libya, Peshawar, Somalia, Yemen and Syria), the USPSC must complete [Form DS-1843](#): Medical History & Examination **and** [Form DS-6570](#): Pre-Deployment Physical Acknowledgment Form. Note that USPSCs assigned to an ESCAPE post receive a medical clearance valid for one year.

*For specific regulations, please see [AIDAR Appendix D, Section 12\(3\): Physical Fitness and Health Room Services](#); [309mac: Medical Clearance Process for USPSCs](#); [16 FAM 210: Medical Clearance](#); [Cable 14 STATE 31156: Overseas Health Unit Access and Services](#); and [M/MED Medical Clearance Guidance and Instructions](#)*

### **Medical Clearance for TDY Travel (Less than 30 Calendar Days)**

Unless a USPSC has a current active medical clearance from M/MED/MC, USAID requires the USPSC to obtain a physician's statement of physical fitness. The CO will not authorize a USPSC to travel or begin work without first obtaining the physician's statement.

Health unit access will normally be granted to those individuals on TDY overseas on trips less than 30 days in length. Because no formal medical clearance is required for such individuals, they are asked to notify the health unit of their arrival in the overseas post. Persons with health concerns should avoid traveling to localities where medical care is inadequate to meet their needs.

*For specific regulations, please see [AIDAR Appendix D, Section 12\(3\): Physical Fitness and Health Room Services](#); [309mac: Medical Clearance Process for USPSCs](#); [Mandatory Contract Template](#); [Cable 14 STATE 31156: Overseas Health Unit Access and Services](#); and [M/MED Medical Clearance Guidance and Instructions](#)*

## Medical Clearance for TDY Travel (30 Calendar Days or More)

For a USPSC whose duties involve overseas for 30 consecutive days or more in a calendar year, the CO must obtain a valid medical clearance from M/MED/MC as required in 16 FAM 122, before awarding the contract for performance abroad, or issuing travel orders for the USPSC. Often in these cases, a Level 1 (Worldwide) clearance is required prior to the travel overseas. A Worldwide clearance is valid anywhere in the world and is valid for exactly two years after it has been issued or upon changes to your medical condition. **Health unit access will not be authorized for individuals on TDY in excess of 30 consecutive days without a valid medical clearance.**

USPSCs who do not have a valid medical clearance must complete [Form DS-1843](#): Medical History & Examination. Otherwise, they should complete the [Form DS-3057](#): Medical Clearance Update, for subsequent TDYs.

If a USPSC is authorized for TDY for 30 or more consecutive days to an ESCAPE post (currently: Iraq, Afghanistan, Libya, Peshawar, Somalia, Syria, and Yemen), the USPSC must complete [Form DS-1843](#): Medical History & Examination **and** [Form DS-6570](#): Pre-Deployment Physical Acknowledgment Form.

*For specific regulations, please see [AIDAR Appendix D, Section 12\(3\): Physical Fitness and Health Room Services](#); [309mac: Medical Clearance Process for USPSCs](#); [Cable I4 STATE 31156: Overseas Health Unit Access and Services](#); and [M/MED Medical Clearance Guidance and Instructions](#)*

## Staff Care

USAID's [Staff Care Program](#) is an agency-wide program to enhance work/life balance, resilience, and wellness for all USAID employees and their families. USAID Staff Care is available 24/7 to the entire USAID workforce wherever USAID has employees by using the [website](#) or the phone numbers below:

<b>Free Phone</b>	877-98USAID (1-877-988-7243)
<b>Direct Dial</b>	919-645-4960
<b>Reverse Charge Calling</b>	+44-0-208-987-6200

Additionally, Staff Care maintains a service center located at 601 13th Street NW, Suite 900 South, Washington, DC 20005. Services can be utilized in-person on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays from 9 AM to 5 PM, and on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 10 AM to 6 PM. Drop-in meetings are available, as well as scheduled appointments.

## Staff Care support within OTI

OTI staff should visit [OTI Anywhere](#) for more information on [Staff Care Support](#).

## Staff Returning from Critical Priority Countries (CPC)

USAID employees (including USPSCs) who are returning from Critical Priority Countries (“CPC”)s are **required** to take the Department of State course “Mandatory - High Stress Assignment Out-Briefing,” which is provided through an arrangement with the USAID’s Staff Care Program. The course is held at the Foreign Service Institute. Non-USDH employees are scheduled through their USAID Mission’s Training Coordinator or through the Administrative Management Services (AMS) Officer (for help contact FSI at (703) 302-7272). For non-USDH employees, there is a fee for the course, which can be paid by the USPSC’s office or Operating Unit.

*For specific regulations, please see [ADS 458.3.4.2\(g\): Post-Deployment Training](#)*

## PSC Performance Evaluations (PPE)

USPSCs are not subject to the use of the Contractor Performance Assessment Reporting System (CPARS) to document their performance while on contract. Instead, per AIDAR Appendix, a USPSC’s supervisor must complete an annual performance evaluation using the [Annual Work Plan and Performance Evaluation Template](#) unless the CO approves a different performance evaluation template.

The approved PSC Performance Evaluation (“PPE”) process for USPSCs at OTI is as follows:

### PPE Process for New Employees

1	2	3	4
Initial Meeting	90-Day Performance Review	6-month Check-In	360 Review and Annual Performance Evaluation

### PPE Process after Initial Year

1	2
6-month Check-In	360 Review and Annual Performance Evaluation

Each part of the PPE process is required. Any contractually authorized performance pay increase may take effect after a minimum of 52 weeks at the current step, at the start of the first pay period following certification of satisfactory performance by the supervisor (wait period may be extended for

Intermittent USPSCs). See the [Performance Pay](#) section above for more details. For more information and details, USPSCs can read the OTI Office Order for PSC Evaluations on [OTI Anywhere](#).

*For specific regulations, please see [ADS 309.3.1.18: Contractor Performance Evaluation](#); [AIDAR Appendix D, Section 4\(g\): Annual Salary Increase](#); and [AAPD 06-07: Contract Budget, Salary Determination and Salary Increases](#)*

## Work Schedules

USAID recognizes that flexible work schedules and telework can have positive effects on recruitment and retention; employee work/life balance and overall effectiveness; traffic congestion and emissions; and can help ensure continuity of mission-critical Agency functions in the event of national or local emergencies.

### Flexible Work Schedule (AWS)

The option for a flexible alternate work schedule (“AWS”) is available to full-time Washington-based USPSCs. AWS in Washington consists of eight nine-hour days, one eight-hour day, and one regularly scheduled day off (“RDO”) every two weeks. The option and the exact times and days of the USPSC’s AWS must be approved by their supervisor. For OTI staff seeking more information on establishing an AWS, please visit [OTI Anywhere](#).

Some overseas posts also offer flextime. USPSCs assigned overseas interested in flextime will need to check with the HR office (USAID Mission or Embassy) at post for more information about post-specific options. Please note that some overseas posts work on a Mission-wide schedule that is different from the standard schedule of five eight-hour days. This is not considered flextime, since everyone works on the same schedule.

*For specific regulations, please see [ADS 479.3.1.4: Flexible 5/4-9 Work Schedule](#); and [ADS 479.3.1.3: Flextime Work Schedule \(Also Known As Flexitour or Flextime\)](#)*

### Telework

USPSCs are eligible to participate in USAID’s telework program, which includes (1) situational (episodic, intermittent, or ad hoc), in which telework is approved on a case-by-case basis and the hours worked are not part of a previously approved, ongoing, and regular telework schedule; (2) recurring/regular, in which telework occurs as part of an ongoing, regular/recurring schedule; and (3) long distance or remote telework arrangements, in which employees work most or all of the time from a different geographic area. The level of participation in telework is dependent on supervisory approval. USPSCs are encouraged to, at a minimum, participate in situational telework; however, all employees (including USPSCs) are required to have a telework agreement on file.

USPSCs contemplating telework must complete an interactive telework training on USAID University. The 2020 Telework Training schedule and registration information can be found [here](#).

USPSCs are responsible for obtaining approval for telework and following any required procedures, which includes attending the required training mentioned above and complying with office procedures and protocols. While teleworking, USPSCs must be readily available by telephone and e-mail at their alternative worksite, and can be called back to the official worksite at any time based on the needs of the office/bureau. Note that telework may be limited because of certain activities that cannot be completed via telework, such as those that require physical duties and on-site presence, or using classified information.

A USPSC may have the option to participate in both AWS and telework. For more information regarding the formal procedures and requirements, please visit the [Telework Support Center](#) or [OTI Anywhere](#).

*For specific regulations, please see [ADS 405: Telework](#)*

## **Timekeeping**

The Federal Government pays on a biweekly basis, roughly along calendar year lines, with 26 pay periods in a year. Each employee (including USPSC) reports their time and attendance through the automated WebTA system on a biweekly basis. USPSCs are responsible for completing and validating their timesheet, including any premium pay or differentials to which they are entitled, within the designated time frame. The USPSC's supervisor then certifies the hours. Supervisors are responsible for ensuring that their employees (including USPSCs) are entering hours and validating on time, for approving leave requests, and for certifying all of their employees' timesheets by the deadlines. USPSCs traveling overseas (either on assignment or on TDY) may be eligible for post differential, danger pay, or Sunday premium pay depending on the country. See the [Field Allowances](#) section above for more information.

USPSCs can access their Earnings and Leave statements as well as information regarding leave accrual, tax deductions, and salary benefits at the [NFC Website](#). USPSCs are responsible for reviewing this statement and promptly reporting any discrepancies or errors to the timekeeper or Office of Financial Management ([uspsc@usaid.gov](mailto:uspsc@usaid.gov)). A copy of the pay period schedule, showing start and end dates for each pay period and scheduled payment dates, can be found on the NFC website.

*For specific regulations, please see [ADS 472: Implementation of the WebTA Electronic Timekeeping System](#)*

## **Computer Access**

All USPSCs will have access to the USAID Network. The USAID Network allows transmission of information up to the Sensitive but Unclassified ("SBU") level. CIO now issues staff government furnished laptops and a remote access token that allows remote access to email accounts and other USAID sites, including the desktop and corporate accounts. OTI has also established [OTI Anywhere](#) so that OTI staff may have access to key office information via the internet.

USAID takes information systems security very seriously, so it is important that every USPSC is thoroughly briefed on security protocols before accessing the computer. USAID policy permits minimal

personal use of the internet where it does not interfere with the conduct of official business. Staff who check out a computer are personally responsible for repair or replacement if the equipment is lost or damaged due to personal negligence.

*For specific regulations, please see [ADS 545: Information Systems Security](#)*

## Property Control

USPSCs may be issued other equipment or furniture in connection with their employment. Whenever you are issued property, please ensure that receipts are signed, including the model and serial numbers where relevant; that you retain a copy of the receipts; and that you properly safeguard and maintain any property under your control. When moving to another position or location, USPSCs will need to account for all property issued to you. USPSCs are personally responsible for repair or replacement of any equipment or furniture lost or damaged due to their own negligence.

*For specific regulations, please see [FAR 52.237-2: Protection of Government Buildings, Equipment and Vegetation](#)*

## Political Activity

USPSCs are considered government employees for purposes of [Hatch Act](#) restrictions on political activity. “Political activity” means an activity directed toward the success or failure of a political party, candidate for partisan political office, or partisan political group (partisan means related to a political party). It includes any committee, club, or other organization that is affiliated with a political party or candidate for public office in a partisan election, or organized for a partisan purpose, or which engages in partisan political activity. As federal government contractors, USPSCs are also prohibited under the Federal Election Campaign Act from making donations to political parties and candidates for Federal office (i.e., President, Vice President, Members of the House of Representatives, and Senators).

Information about these restrictions is published by the USAID General Counsel, usually in the form of an Agency Notice, and is covered during the Annual Ethics Training. Please review both sets of restrictions to ensure full compliance. **Please note** that restrictions on Intermittent USPSCs are somewhat different than for full-time employees. Employees are responsible for reviewing the published restrictions and for fully complying with them.

Information on U.S. Government restrictions on political activity can be found at the [Office of Special Counsel](#). For specific questions that are not answered by the full text of the Notice, please contact the General Counsel directly (the contact point is provided in the Notice). This is a good use of email as it provides a record of the guidance provided, in case any questions are raised later.

*For specific regulations, please see [Agency Notice 11915: Political Activity by USAID Employees](#)*

## Training

USAID provides training opportunities to promote and support the career development of its employees, consistent with organizational needs, in order to improve individual and organizational performance, increase efficiency and economy, and build and retain a skilled workforce capable of achieving the Agency's mission and performance goals. Since USPSCs are hired for their expertise in a specific area, and for a limited period of time, training is handled somewhat differently than it is for USDH employees. OTI strongly encourages training for USPSCs in the following areas:

1. The way USAID does business, including USAID-specific courses that cover such topics as activity management, pre-award letters, etc.;
2. The enhancement of work-related skills such as supervision, time management, business communication, software (e.g., Word, Excel, Access, etc.), position classification, contracting, etc.;
3. Required training for access to, or participation in, USAID activities and facilities, such as mandatory security training, ethics training, information systems security training, etc. USPSCs serving under longer-term employment commitments are also eligible for some government-wide training programs, on a limited basis, such as leadership and executive training programs; and
4. Office-specific training activities.

USPSCs interested in any training external to USAID must make their request using form [SF-182](#): Request, Authorization and Certification of Training. USPSCs may participate in the Agency's e-learning program, [USAID University](#), which offers a number of general and USAID-specific courses. Accounts are automatically created for all USPSCs when they receive USAID Network access. If you have network access but receive an error message when attempting to access USAID University, please contact the HR Helpdesk ([hr-helpdesk@usaid.gov](mailto:hr-helpdesk@usaid.gov) or 202-712-1234) for assistance.

It is important to remember that there is no entitlement to training. Training must be work-related and provide a benefit to USAID (which underlies the prohibition on training during the last six months of a contract). A USPSC's supervisor also needs to consider the impact of training schedules on office workload, the budget implications of approved training (both in terms of course fees and travel costs), and equity among all of the employees in the office vis-à-vis training opportunities.

### Individual Learning and Training Plan

An Individual Learning and Training Plan ("ILTP"), sometimes called an Individual Development Plan, is a personal action plan, jointly agreed to by a USPSC and their supervisor, which identifies the USPSC's short and long-term career development and learning needs. An ILTP helps the USPSC and supervisor identify learning needs that support mandatory training, essential competencies, career development, and/or professional growth. It is a plan that allows supervisors to focus limited resources in the area of greatest need. The ILTP uses the [AID 400-21 Form](#).

ILTPs may include classroom training, e-learning courses, and on-the-job activities that a USPSC could pursue during duty or non-duty hours. Budget cuts, workload, course availability, and other factors may affect or change an USPSCs ILTP. Please note that it is not guaranteed that a USPSC will receive all training or development activities or a promotion as a result of completing the learning activities on their ILTP.

*For specific regulations, please see [ADS 458: Training and Career/Professional Development](#)*

## **Personal Property Insurance**

USPSCs assigned overseas are strongly advised to obtain private insurance for their personal property. Policies are available to cover property during shipment, while overseas, or both. Information about service providers can be obtained from OMD for Washington-based USPSCs or from the USAID Mission or Embassy's administrative offices overseas. There is a program under the Department of State to handle claims for lost or damaged property, but there is a cap on total payments, and the claims process can be quite lengthy.

If shipping a vehicle overseas, USPSCs must also have private vehicle insurance, the cost of which is not reimbursable under a Personal Services Contract. Check with the USAID Mission or Embassy at post to identify any requirements specific to the post. For example, many embassies require that one buy liability insurance in the host country to facilitate handling of claims in the event an accident occurs.

*For specific regulations, please see [AIDAR Appendix D, Section 12\(9\)\(c\): Insurance on Private Automobile](#)*

## **Keeping Records and Compliance**

Employees should not depend on USAID to retain personal records; employees (including USPSCs) should keep copies of all their personal records for verification of information, and in case of an audit. USPSCs should also keep copies of their current and all previous Personal Services Contracts. They may be needed as a reference for any negotiations or benefits on new contracts, as well as proof of employment. Please note that USPSCs do not receive SF-50 forms from the Office of Personnel Management.

*Hotel receipts*, while not required for submission when on flat-rate per diem, should be kept for six years and three month. When shipping property overseas, USPSCs should keep all *packing lists* and other related documents. At some posts overseas, the host country government will want to see the inventory of the incoming shipments when clearing the outgoing shipments. If a USPSC is issued a new passport while overseas, it is advised to hold on to the old one. Some host country governments may want to see the entry visa stamp before clearing an outgoing shipment, etc.

Submitted [SF-1034](#) forms must be held by a USPSC for two years before disposing of them. It is not the responsibility of the Office of Financial Management to maintain these records.

USPSCs and their authorized dependents must abide by all applicable laws and regulations of the cooperating country. USPSCs are subject to the Standards of Conduct applicable to Federal employees. USPSCs assigned overseas are under the authority of the U.S. Ambassador in the country of assignment and are under the general policy guidance of the USAID Mission Director. Further, USPSCs are covered by all U.S. Government ethics laws that apply to USDH employees, including the requirement that certain U.S. Government employees must file either form SF-450: Confidential Financial Disclosure Report, or form SF-278: Public Financial Disclosure Report. USPSCs should check the front page of their Personal Services Contract to find the “Ethics Code” section. Within that section, “N” means that no report is required; “P” means that the SF-278 is required, and “C” means that the SF-450 is required.

*For specific regulations, please see [FAR 52.203-7: Anti-Kickback Procedures](#); [FAR 52.203-12: Limitations on Payments to Influence Certain Federal Transactions](#); [AIDAR Appendix D, Section 12\(15\): Contractor-Mission Relationships](#); [AIDAR Appendix D, Section 12\(2\): Compliance with Laws and Regulations Applicable Abroad](#); and [3 FAM 4120: Employee Responsibilities Abroad](#)*

USPSCs are responsible for ensuring compliance with regulations relating to the release of information, data, and reports, which become the property of the U.S. Government. USPSCs may not, without the prior written approval of the CO, release any such information, data, or reports to any person, party, or government other than USAID, unless expressly authorized in the Personal Services Contract.

*For specific regulations, please see [FAR 52.232-23: Assignment of Claims](#); and [AIDAR Appendix D, Section 12\(17\): Release of Information](#)*

## **USPSC Employment Opportunities**

All USPSC employment opportunities must be posted on FedBizOpps per AIDAR regulation. Some additional places to find USPSC employment opportunities posted include the USAID Internet, USAID Agency Notices, OTIJobs.net for OTI-specific opportunities, and BHAjobs.net for BHA-specific positions. Additional international affairs and development job resources can be found [here](#).

## **PSC Association**

The PSC Association advocates for and provides support to the hundreds of USPSCs that work tirelessly to advance USAID’s mission worldwide. The PSC Association fulfills this purpose by presenting views and advocating recommendations on employment, workplace, and morale issues affecting USPSCs in Washington and overseas. The PSC Association operates under the principle that USPSCs deserve equitable benefits, entitlements, authorities, responsibilities, and limitations as those extended to USDH employees, unless restricted by law or external (non-USAID) Federal regulation. All USPSCs at USAID

are automatically members of the Association, which is managed by an executive committee of seven members elected to one-year terms.

For more information about the PSC Association, what it is, and how they can help; if you have questions about being a USPSC in general; or if you want to know how to contribute to the cause, please visit their [website](#).

# Regulations & Resources

## Useful Links

Resource	Description	Link
<b>ADS</b>	Automated Directives System, which contains the organization and functions of USAID, alongside policies and procedures that guide the Agency's programs and operations.	<a href="http://www.usaid.gov/policy/ads/">http://www.usaid.gov/policy/ads/</a>
<b>AIDAR Appendix D</b>	USAID Acquisition Regulation (AIDAR), Appendix D: Direct USAID contracts with a U.S. citizen or a U.S. resident alien for personal services abroad. These contain the rules governing USPSC employment with USAID.	<a href="http://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1868/aidar_0.pdf">http://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1868/aidar_0.pdf</a> <b>Go to Appendix D</b>
<b>AAPD &amp; CIBS for PSCs</b>	Acquisition and Assistance Policy Directive & Contract Information Bulletins for PSCs. For example, the latest information on USAID contribution to PSC health insurance. These can be amended and replaced throughout the year -- check back regularly.	<a href="http://www.usaid.gov/work-usaid/aapds-cibs">http://www.usaid.gov/work-usaid/aapds-cibs</a>
<b>Agency Notices</b>	Daily notices sent to all USAID employees.	<a href="https://notices.usaid.gov/">https://notices.usaid.gov/</a>
<b>FAM</b>	Foreign Affairs Manual	<a href="http://www.usaid.gov/who-we-are/agency-policy/external-reference-links/fam-fah">http://www.usaid.gov/who-we-are/agency-policy/external-reference-links/fam-fah</a>
<b>DSSR</b>	Department of State Standardized Regulations	<a href="https://aoprals.state.gov/content.asp?content_id=134&amp;menu_id=75">https://aoprals.state.gov/content.asp?content_id=134&amp;menu_id=75</a>
<b>Health Plan</b>	USPSC Group Health Plan	<a href="http://www.psc-healthplan.com">www.psc-healthplan.com</a>
<b>PSC Association</b>	Resources for current and potential USPSCs.	<a href="http://uspsca.wix.com/uspsscassociation">http://uspsca.wix.com/uspsscassociation</a>

## Useful Forms

Resource	Description	Link
<b>SF-1034</b>	<b>Expense Voucher</b> - Claims for Official Expenditures (Public Voucher for Purchases and Services other than Personal)	<a href="https://www.usaid.gov/forms/sf1034">https://www.usaid.gov/forms/sf1034</a>
<b>OF-126</b>	<b>Foreign Service Residence and Dependency Report</b>	<a href="https://www.usaid.gov/forms/of-126">https://www.usaid.gov/forms/of-126</a>

## Department of State Medical Clinic

Columbia Plaza (SA-1)  
 Second floor, Suite L201  
 2401 E Street, NW  
 Washington, DC  
 Tel: (202) 663-1718

## References

Click on [blue](#) text for link

### Automated Directive System (ADS)

<b>ADS 302</b>	USAID Direct Contracting
<b>ADS 309</b>	Personal Services Contracts with Individuals

### AIDAR

<b>Appendix D</b>	Direct USAID Contracts With a U.S. Citizen or a U.S. Resident Alien For Personal Services Abroad
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### Acquisition & Assistance Policy Directives (AAPDs)

<b>AAPD-15-02-Revised 2</b>	Extends implementation of the USAID policy for Leave and Holidays, including family and medical leave, by deviation
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<b>AAPD-10-01</b>	Personal Services Contracts - Changes in USG Reimbursement Amounts for Health Insurance and Physical Examination Costs
<b>AAPD 06-10</b>	USPSC Medical Expense Payment Responsibility
<b>AAPD 06-08</b>	Using the Optional Schedule to Incrementally Fund Contracts

### Contract Information Bulletins (CIBs)

<b>CIB 01-10</b>	Revision of Medical Clearance Process for USPSCs
<b>CIB 01-07</b>	Clarification of the Extension/Renewal Policy Regarding PSC contracts under Appendix D or Appendix J of the AIDAR
<b>CIB 99-22</b>	PSC Policy
<b>CIB 99-15</b>	Changes to the AIDAR Concerning USPSC Resident Hires and Deviations
<b>CIB 98-23</b>	Guidance Regarding Classified Contract Security and Contractor Personnel Security
<b>CIB 98-14</b>	Change in Required Application Form for USPSCs
<b>CIB 98-12</b>	Guidance Regarding Advertisement of PSCs, and Requirement for Evaluating Applications for PSCs
<b>CIB 98-11</b>	Determining a Market Value for PSCs under Appendix D, AIDAR
<b>CIB 97-19</b>	Advertising for Short-Term PSCs
<b>CIB 97-17</b>	PSCs with U.S. Citizens or U.S. Resident Aliens
<b>CIB 96-23</b>	Unauthorized Provision in Personal Service Contracts
<b>CIB 94-09</b>	Sunday Pay for U.S. Personal Services Contractors
<b>CIB 93-17</b>	Financial Disclosure Requirements under a PSC
<b>CIB 89-29</b>	Use of Government Bill of Lading for Transportation of PSC Personal Effects (UAB, HHE, POV)

## Agency Notices

<b>Notice 13581</b>	Revisions to the AIDAR, 48 CFR Chapter 7, Mandatory Reference to ADS 302
<b>Notice 13445</b>	Guidance – ADS 600 Series – Funding Guidance for Salary & Benefits and Support Costs Of Direct Hires and Personal Services Contractors
<b>Notice 12526</b>	Changes in the M Bureau Approval Required for New Offshore Hire PSCs and Extensions of Existing Offshore Hire PSC Contracts to Include OE-Funded Positions
<b>Notice 12337</b>	2007 Contributions for the USPSC 401(k) Defined Contribution Pension Plan
<b>Notice 12213</b>	Presentation for USPSCs Regarding Voluntary Dental Insurance Program
<b>Notice 11915</b>	Political Activity of USAID Employees
<b>Notice 11219</b>	Medical Clearance Requirements for Overseas Assignments and TDY
<b>Notice 11879</b>	Healthcare Insurance for PSCs
<b>Notice 11415</b>	USAID 401(k) Plan for USPSCs
<b>Notice 10290</b>	Medical Clearance Requirements for Overseas Assignments and TDY
<b>Notice 11061</b>	Intermittent USPSC Contracts and Allowance Benefits
<b>Notice 11016</b>	M Bureau Approval Required for New Offshore Hire USPSCs and Extensions of Existing Contracts
<b>Notice 10621</b>	Calculation of Vacation Leave for USPSCs
<b>Notice 10471</b>	Revised Hiring Procedures for OE-Funded Position
<b>Notice 0913</b>	Business Class Lounge In Lieu of Rest Stop for Travel over 14 hours
<b>Notice 9970</b>	USAID 401(k) Plan for USPSCs

<b>Notice 9442</b>	New Compensatory Time Off for Travel Provision and New Time Limit for Use of Compensatory Time Off
<b>Notice 9250</b>	Travel Card Policy Update (Revision 2)
<b>Notice 9101</b>	Delegation of Authority, Duty or Responsibility to USPSCs and Non-U.S. Citizen Employees
<b>Notice 8636</b>	ADS 633.5.4d, Miscellaneous Expenses – Medical Evacuation Insurance
<b>Notice 8497</b>	Approval of OE-Funded USPSCs Overseas
<b>Notice 8068</b>	Cash Awards for US and TCN PSCs
<b>Notice 8041</b>	Agency Makes Health Plan Enrollment for USPSCs
<b>Notice 8038</b>	Health Plan Enrollment Available for USPSCs
<b>Notice 7713</b>	Revision to ADS 637, USPSC 401(k) Tax Defined Contribution Pension Plan
<b>Notice 6365</b>	E-Learning Now Available
<b>Notice 5489</b>	Processing Payroll Procedures for USAID USPSCs

## Acronyms

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<b>A-</b>	Acting
<b>A&amp;A</b>	Acquisition and Assistance
<b>A/AID</b>	Office of the Administrator
<b>AA</b>	Assistant Administrator
<b>AA</b>	Office of the Assistant Administrator
<b>AAR</b>	After Action Review

<b>ABC</b>	Applied Best Practices and Coordination Team
<b>ADS</b>	Automated Directives System or Activity Data Sheet
<b>AER</b>	After Exit Review
<b>AIDAR</b>	Agency for International Development Acquisition Regulations
<b>AL</b>	Annual Leave
<b>AMS</b>	Administrative and Management Support
<b>AMS</b>	Administrative Management Services
<b>AOR</b>	Agreement Officer's Representative
<b>APA</b>	Administrative Program Assistant
<b>ASHA</b>	American Schools and Hospitals Abroad
<b>AWS</b>	Alternate Work Schedule
<b>BHA</b>	Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance
<b>BP</b>	Bullpen
<b>CIO</b>	Office of the Chief Information Officer
<b>CMC</b>	Office of Civilian-Military Cooperation (Also CPS/CMC)
<b>CN</b>	Congressional Notification
<b>CO</b>	Contracting Officer
<b>COACT</b>	Crisis and (Political) Opening Action Coordination Team
<b>COB</b>	Close of Business
<b>COLA</b>	Cost of Living Adjustment
<b>COM</b>	Chief of Mission
<b>COR</b>	Contracting Officer's Representative
<b>CPAR</b>	Contractor Performance Assessment Report
<b>CPS</b>	Bureau of Conflict Prevention and Stabilization
<b>CPS/AMS</b>	Office of Administrative Management Services (Also AMS)
<b>CPS/CMC</b>	Office of Civilian-Military Cooperation (Also CMC)
<b>CPS/CVP</b>	Office of Conflict and Violence Prevention (Also CVP)
<b>CPS/OTI</b>	Office of Transition Initiatives (Also OTI)

<b>CPS/PO</b>	Program Office (Also PO)
<b>CR</b>	Country Representative
<b>CS</b>	Civil Service
<b>CSO</b>	Bureau of Conflict and Stabilization Operations (Also State/CSO)
<b>CVE</b>	Countering Violent Extremism
<b>CVP</b>	Office of Conflict and Violence Prevention (Also CPS/CVP)
<b>D&amp;I</b>	Diversity and Inclusion
<b>DAA</b>	Deputy Assistant Administrator
<b>DAT</b>	Data Analysis Team
<b>DCHA</b>	Democracy, Conflict and Humanitarian Assistance or Bureau for Democracy, Conflict and Humanitarian Assistance (Retired)
<b>DCM</b>	Deputy Chief of Mission (State)
<b>DCR</b>	Deputy Country Representative
<b>de-ob (DEOB)</b>	Deobligation
<b>DG</b>	Democracy and Governance
<b>DH</b>	Direct Hire (Also USDH)
<b>DICE</b>	Development In Case of Emergency
<b>DRG</b>	Center of Excellence on Democracy, Human Rights and Governance
<b>DSSR</b>	Department of State Standard Regulations
<b>DTL</b>	Deputy Team Leader
<b>EO</b>	Executive Order
<b>EPP</b>	Employee Personal Portal
<b>ER</b>	Employee Relations Team
<b>ES</b>	Employee Services Team
<b>EXO</b>	Executive Officer
<b>FACT</b>	Foreign Affairs Counter Threat course
<b>FAM</b>	Foreign Affairs Manual
<b>FAR</b>	Federal Acquisition Regulation
<b>FM</b>	Office of Financial Management (Also M/FM)

<b>FMBC</b>	Financial Management Boot Camp
<b>FOIA</b>	Freedom of Information Act
<b>FPD</b>	Field Programs Division
<b>FPM</b>	Field Program Manager
<b>FSN</b>	Foreign Service National
<b>FSO</b>	Foreign Service Officer
<b>FY</b>	Fiscal Year
<b>GC</b>	Office of the General Counsel
<b>GIU</b>	Geographic Information Unit
<b>GLAAS</b>	Global Acquisition and Assistance System
<b>GS</b>	General Schedule
<b>GUC</b>	Grants Under Contract
<b>HCTM</b>	Human Capital and Talent Management
<b>HLQP</b>	Home Leave Qualifying Posts
<b>HTSOS</b>	High Threat Security Overseas Seminar
<b>ICASS</b>	International Cooperative Administrative Support Services
<b>IDIQ</b>	Indefinite Delivery Indefinite Quantity
<b>IDL</b>	Innovation Design Lab
<b>IDP</b>	Individual Development Plan
<b>IP</b>	Implementing Partner
<b>IQC</b>	Indefinite Quantity Contract
<b>ISC (IC)</b>	Institutional Support Contractor
<b>J&amp;A</b>	Justification and Approval
<b>JOFOC</b>	Justification for Other than Full and Open Competition
<b>KM</b>	Knowledge Management
<b>KN</b>	Knowledge Network
<b>LAC</b>	Latin America and Caribbean Team
<b>LOE</b>	Level of Effort

<b>LWOP</b>	Leave Without Pay
<b>M&amp;E</b>	Monitoring and Evaluation
<b>ME</b>	Middle East
<b>MOD</b>	Miscellaneous Obligation Document
<b>MOU</b>	Memorandum of Understanding
<b>MR</b>	Management Review
<b>NGO</b>	Non-Governmental Organization
<b>NPB</b>	National Press Building
<b>OAA</b>	Office of Acquisition and Assistance
<b>OCR</b>	Office of Civilian Response
<b>OE</b>	Operating Expense
<b>OMD</b>	Operations & Management Division
<b>OPP</b>	OTI Programming Principles
<b>OT</b>	Overtime
<b>OTI</b>	Office of Transition Initiatives (Also CPS/OTI)
<b>OTI/A</b>	OTI Anywhere
<b>OTI/W</b>	OTI/Washington
<b>PA</b>	Program Assistant
<b>PERC</b>	Pre-employment, Recruitment and Contracting Team
<b>PII</b>	Personally Identifiable Information
<b>PLI</b>	Program, Learning and Innovation Division
<b>PM</b>	Program Manager
<b>PO</b>	Program Office
<b>POC</b>	Point of Contact
<b>POV</b>	Privately Owned Vehicle
<b>PP</b>	Pay Period
<b>PPE</b>	PSC Performance Evaluation
<b>PPM</b>	Office of Program, Policy and Management

<b>PPR</b>	Program Performance Review
<b>PSC</b>	Personal Services Contractor
<b>QDDR</b>	Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review
<b>R&amp;R</b>	Rest and Recuperation
<b>R3</b>	Relief Response and Resilience Bureaus
<b>RA</b>	Rolling Assessment
<b>RDO</b>	Regular Day Off
<b>RED</b>	Record of Emergency Data
<b>RFS</b>	Bureau for Resilience and Food Security
<b>RPO</b>	Regional Programming Office
<b>RRB</b>	Ronald Reagan Building
<b>RSO</b>	Regional Security Officer
<b>SAM</b>	System for Award Management
<b>SBU</b>	Sensitive But Unclassified
<b>SC</b>	Startup Conference
<b>SCD</b>	Service Computation Date
<b>SEA</b>	Southern and Eastern Africa Team
<b>SEC</b>	Office of Security
<b>SMA</b>	Separate Maintenance Allowance
<b>SME</b>	Subject Matter Expert
<b>SOW</b>	Scope of Work
<b>SRS</b>	Strategic Review Session
<b>STTA</b>	Short Term Technical Assistance
<b>SWIFT</b>	Support Which Implements Fast Transactions
<b>T&amp;A</b>	Time and Attendance
<b>T3</b>	Transformation Task Team
<b>TA</b>	Travel Authorization
<b>TAP</b>	Transition Activities Pool

<b>TCN</b>	Third Country National
<b>TDY</b>	Temporary Duty
<b>TI</b>	Transition Initiatives Fund
<b>TL</b>	Team Leader
<b>TO</b>	Task Order
<b>TOC</b>	Theory of Change
<b>TOMAS</b>	Transition Office Management and Accounting System
<b>TQSA</b>	Temporary Quarters Subsistence Allowance
<b>TRG</b>	Training Resources Group
<b>TSU</b>	Transition Support Unit
<b>USAID</b>	United States Agency for International Development
<b>USAID/W</b>	USAID/Washington
<b>USDH</b>	United States Direct Hire (Also DH)
<b>USPSC</b>	United States Personal Services Contractor
<b>VDI</b>	Virtual Desktop Infrastructure
<b>VDIi</b>	Virtual Desktop Infrastructure Internal
<b>VE</b>	Violent Extremism
<b>WFP</b>	Workforce Planning Team
<b>WIT</b>	Working in Transitions
<b>WLC</b>	Washington Learning Center
<b>WWMM</b>	World Wide Management Meeting

Many of the links within this document will only work if you are logged into the USAID Internal Network or on OTI Anywhere. If a link does not work for you, please search for the listed relevant policy or reach out to the OTI Employee Services listserv ([cps.otiemployeeservices@usaid.gov](mailto:cps.otiemployeeservices@usaid.gov)).

Many of the citations here reference specific OTI teams and policies, therefore if you are not an OTI employee, and have additional questions related to the information in this handbook, please reach out to your CO, EXO, or the USPSC Association ([psc-association-executive-committee@usaid.gov](mailto:psc-association-executive-committee@usaid.gov)).