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SUBJECT: Policy on Reimbursement for Local Travel

Instruction 9002

(FMG)

ABSTRACT

This Instruction establishes policy regarding reimbursement for local transportation expenses incurred by a Service member, a Department of Defense (DoD) civilian employee, a dependent of a Service member or civilian employee, or an invitational traveler of the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences (USU).

A. **Reissuance and Purpose.** This Instruction reissues Instruction 9002 (*Reference (a)*) and establishes policy on reimbursement for local transportation expenses.

B. **References.** See *Enclosure 1*.

C. **Policy.**

1. Travelers are authorized reimbursement for local transportation expenses when approved by their designated Approving Officials as long as the travel is outside the limits of the boundaries of the established Permanent Duty Station (PDS). The DoD installation, base, senior commanders, or senior officials may determine the boundaries of the PDS as long as it is not an arbitrary mileage radius.

2. Authority to Restrict Mileage: The Comptroller General has ruled that Federal entities have the authority to restrict mileage where travel is performed in the vicinity of an official duty station.

a. DoD Instruction 4515.14 (*Reference (b)*) defines the "Washington Local Commuting Area" of the National Capital Region.

b. Travelers assigned to a PDS other than the USU main campus (such as Southern and Western Region satellite sites, and HQS Defense Health Agency sites) must follow the respective regional host command's definition of "Local Commuting Area."

3. Mileage will not be reimbursed for travel to or from any points within the following PDS defined areas:

a. The following Maryland counties and all points within: Prince George and Montgomery County.

b. The following Virginia counties and all points within; as well as the cities that are surrounded by these counties: Arlington, Fairfax, Loudoun, and Prince William Counties, as well as the City of Alexandria.

c. The District of Columbia.

d. The following installations and offices: Naval Support Activity Bethesda (NSAB), Andrews Air Force Base (AFB), Bolling AFB, Fort Belvoir, Defense Health Agency, the Pentagon, Fort Myer, Forest Glen Annex, United States Marine Corps (USMC) Quantico, Fort McNair, Ballston, and Crystal City.

4. Mileage may be reimbursed for traveling to or from the following counties and points within:

a. Maryland: Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Baltimore City, Calvert, Charles, Frederick, Howard, Hartford, St. Mary's, and Washington.

b. Virginia: Albemarle, Clarke, Culpeper, Fauquier, Greene, King George, Madison, Orange, Spotsylvania, Stafford (excluding Marine Corps Base (MCB) Quantico), and all cities and municipalities surrounded by these counties.

c. Pennsylvania: Adams County.

5. Reimbursement Rules:

a. Travel Orders and Voucher Claims:

1) Prior to commencing TDY, the trip must be approved in writing by the Defense Travel System (DTS) authorizing official, to determine a list of authorized mission-dictated travel expense items (A standard pre-trip DTS authorization may be applicable only if lodging or rental car reservations are required.)

2) Where appropriate, travelers should file a "Local Voucher" travel claim in DTS for reimbursement of mileage and authorized expenses after the trip. Approving officials must ensure that this Instruction is followed when approving any local travel requests.

b. Travel by Government Vehicle:

1) This travel method is "Most Advantageous to the Government" (*Reference (c)*) and should be the primary/preferred method of transportation, before considering authorized travel via rental car or Privately Owned Vehicle (POV).

2) USU Administrative Support Division (ASD) oversees the issuance and maintenance of the government cars and vans for official use.

3) Gasoline must be purchased using the ASD-designated GSA credit card.

4) The traveler will not be authorized reimbursement of mileage expense.

c. Reimbursement for Transportation Expenses (public transit, taxi or POV): When authorized, the daily expenses necessary for the transport to and from the TDY site may be reimbursable to the traveler – the reimbursable amount is limited to the dollar amount (or the number of equivalent miles) that exceeded the traveler's normal daily commuting cost to the PDS. For example:

1) Transportation between home and an approved off-site TDY location (within the localities listed in paragraph 4 above) is only authorized reimbursement for the additional incurred cost:

a) If the daily commute to USU is 20 miles, but the mileage to the TDY site is 25 miles, then the traveler is authorized to claim 5 miles.

b) If the daily commute to USU is 20 miles, but the mileage from home to the TDY site is 20 miles or less, then the traveler is not authorized to claim any mileage.

2) However, if the travel begins or ends at the traveler's PDS, then full reimbursement is authorized for the actual miles driven between the PDS and off-site TDY location. Motor vehicle in use must be owned by, or on a long-term lease (12 or more months) to the member/employee, or the member/employee's dependent for the primary purpose of providing personal transportation.

a) For the purpose of calculating above entitlements, authorized telecommuters may be considered to normally incur \$0.00 (or zero miles) daily PDS commuting cost.

d. Reimbursement for Other Travel Costs:

1) Travelers may be authorized reimbursement for additional tolls and parking expenses at TDY or lodging site away from their PDS, even when not otherwise entitled to mileage reimbursement.

2) Travelers may be authorized reimbursement for gasoline purchases (only for the pre-authorized rental car).

3) Reimbursement must not be authorized for any parking fees at the PDS.

4) Reimbursement must not be authorized for any parking citations or driving infractions.

e. Per Diem Entitlements:

- 1) Lodging reimbursement may be authorized if the TDY period is more than 12 consecutive hours, and overnight lodging is required.
- 2) Meals and Incidental Expenses (M&IE) must not be authorized for local area travel, unless overnight lodging is required. (*Reference (d)*)

6. Exceptions and Waivers:

a. Prior to the trip start date, the traveler must submit a request for exception to policy through the department DTS Authorizing/Approving official, to be approved by USU Financial Services Officer or designee.

b. Waivers may be granted, in part or in full, with sufficient justification to ensure effective mission accomplishment.

1) For example, if the temporary duty location is within the local travel limit as defined above, but:

- a) Commuting daily is impractical due to time or logistical constraints, reimbursement of partial or full lodging expenses may be authorized for overnight stay away from the traveler's home of record.
- b) The cost of daily transportation would be more expensive than authorizing reimbursement of lodging at the TDY location. (Billeting is more economical than the daily commute.)

D. **Effective Date.** This Instruction is effective immediately.



Richard W. Thomas, MD, DDS, FACS
President

Enclosure:

1. References

REFERENCES

(a) USU Instruction 9002, "USU Policy on Reimbursement for Local Travel," dated October 26, 2012 (hereby canceled).

(b) DoD Instruction 4515.14, "Washington Local Commuting Area," dated June 28, 2013 with Incorporating Change 1, Effective May 24, 2017.

(c) The Joint Travel Regulations (JTR): Uniformed Service Members and DoD Civilian Employees Par. 020203 "Transportation Types Most Advantageous to the Government," dated December 1, 2020.

(d) The Joint Travel Regulations (JTR): Uniformed Service Members and DoD Civilian Employees Par. 0206 "Travel In and Around the PDS," dated December 1, 2020.