



United States Department of the Interior

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

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FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT MEMORANDUM 2017-038 (Vol X.B)

To: Bureau Chief Financial Officers

From: Douglas A. Glenn *D.A. Glenn*
Deputy Chief Financial Officer and Director
Office of Financial Management

Subject: Authorization for Actual Expense Per Diem for Official Temporary Duty and Permanent Change of Station Travel to Declared Disaster Areas

The General Services Administration (GSA) Federal Travel Regulations (FTR) Chapter 301-70.201, grants executive agencies the authority to authorize actual expense per diem for temporary duty (TDY) travel to locations that are declared disaster areas by the President of the United States.

Effective immediately, when TDY travel is performed at a location which has been declared a disaster area by the President, as identified in the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) disaster declaration website, that travel will be granted a blanket authorization of actual expense per diem reimbursement without the requirement of advance authorization prior to the trip. This blanket authorization will be in effect for one year from the declaration of disaster date, or when the disaster designation is officially removed, whichever occurs first.

The following conditions apply regarding travel to affected disaster areas.

TDY Travel

- Travelers are authorized actual per diem expense reimbursement not to exceed 300 percent of the TDY location per diem rate.
- If circumstances prevent lodging from being obtained at the authorized TDY location, then travelers are authorized the per diem rate for the location where lodging is actually obtained.

Extended TDY

Under normal circumstances, a traveler who will be on TDY or training related to travel for periods of 30 days or more is subject to the restrictions outlined in Financial Management Memorandum 2009-004, *Reduced Per Diem for Temporary Duty and Training Travel for Periods 30 or More Days*. However, when extended TDY travel is to an area affected by a declared disaster, the rule requiring per diem reduction will be waived for the period of one year from the date the disaster is declared or the date the declaration is rescinded. Travelers who are assigned on an extended TDY to a disaster area should consider the following recommendations when planning travel:

- Travelers are encouraged to pursue long-term lodging (corporate apartments, suite hotels) to reduce costs as much as reasonably possible.
- The per diem rate should be established based on the conditions that exist at the TDY location. Over time, infrastructure will be repaired and lodging will become more available, reducing the cost of lodging.

Relocation Travel

- The requirements for temporary quarters to be within reasonable proximity to the new official station will be waived for areas affected by the flooding. However, the Department of the Interior requirements for authorizing extensions of temporary quarters subsistence expense (TQSE) beyond 60 days cannot be waived.
- TQSE in the affected areas will not be limited to the standard Continental United States rate. Authorization may be granted for the locality per diem rate or the actual expense reimbursement allowance, when it is necessary.
- House hunting trips may be paid as an actual expense allowance, when necessary.

Questions regarding this memorandum should be referred to Robert Smith, in the Office of Financial Management at (202) 208-5684 or via e-mail at Robert_Smith@ios.doi.gov.

Cc: Office of Emergency Management

Bureau Finance Officers