

DEPARTMENTAL REGULATION		NUMBER:
SUBJECT: USDA Evacuation Policies and Procedures	DATE	
	OPI:	

1 **PURPOSE**

This regulation provides a coordinated and uniform USDA policy due to hurricane Katrina and the issuance of an order to evacuate.

2 **SPECIAL INSTRUCTION/CANCELLATIONS**

- a This regulation is effective immediately.
- b Appendix A is the Evacuation Policies and Procedures Instructions.
- c Appendix B is the Example Scenario.

Evacuation Policies and Procedures

Due to hurricane Katrina, and the issuance of an order to evacuate, USDA has reviewed the evacuation regulations and other applicable laws and has set forth the following two types of payments that may be made to USDA employees and their relatives. According to the Office of Personnel Management (OPM), these payments consist of advance pay and subsistence payments, subject to a few caveats. These are the only payments that may be made to Federal employees and their dependents under this authority.

1. Advance Net Salary Payments (Prepaid Card)

USDA will be making two types of salary payments:

- Advance payments of an employee's net salary, under 5 CFR 550.404, "shall cover a time period not to exceed 30 day increments, and not to exceed 180 days from the issuance of the evacuation." These payments would be issued to employees via a Prepaid card. Advances should be approved by supervisors or a designated authority.
- Replacement of salary payments: If the employee's bank is unable to process EFT payments, the employee may request a Prepaid card. The unprocessed EFT payment will then be cancelled.

Receiving Prepaid Cards:

Prepaid cards can be initiated by the appropriate official (employees for replacement of salary payments, supervisors and designated officials for salary advances) by calling (800) 981-3026 from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. central time.

Repayment and/or Repayment Forgiveness:

At the earliest possible date after the evacuation is terminated (or earlier if the circumstances justify), after the employee returns to his or her assigned duty station, or when the employee is reassigned officially, the payroll office having jurisdiction over the employee's account shall review each employee's account for the purpose of making adjustments. The employee's pay shall be adjusted on the basis of the rates of pay, allowances, or differentials, if any, to which he or she would otherwise have been entitled under all applicable statutes other than section 5527 of title 5, United States Code. Any adjustments in the employee's account shall also reflect advance payments made to the employee.

After an employee's account is reviewed, if it is found that the employee is indebted for any part of the advance payment made to him or her or his or her dependent(s) or designated representative, recovery of the indebtedness shall be effected by the payroll office having jurisdiction over the employee's account, unless a waiver of recovery has been approved. Repayment of the indebtedness may be made either in full or in partial payments, as determined by the head of the agency or designated official.

Recovery of indebtedness for advance payment shall not be required when it is determined by the head of the agency or designated official that the recovery

would be against equity or good conscience or against the public interest. Findings that formed the basis for waiver of recovery shall be filed in the employee's personnel folder on the permanent side.

For the period or periods covered by any payments made under this subpart, the employee shall be considered as performing active Federal service in his or her position without a break in service.

Tracking: Employees issued Prepaid cards will receive monthly activity statements (not a bill) from Bank of America.

Prepaid Card Restrictions:

- There are no merchant category code restrictions.
- The spending capability of the card is limited to the dollar amount loaded.
- There is a \$600 daily ATM limit; however the employee can obtain the maximum daily limit of \$3,000 by taking the card to a bank.

2. Subsistence Payments

Subsistence payments may be provided from the date of departure from the area being evacuated to the date of arrival at the agency designated safe haven in accordance with 5 CFR 550.405(a). An agency designated safe haven is defined as a designated area to which an employee or dependent will be or has been evacuated. On the date following arrival at the agency designated safe haven, subsistence payments may continue until the date that the evacuation order is terminated, or 180 days after the effective date of the order to evacuate, whichever is earlier. An employee must be returned to his/her regular duty station, or appropriate action must be taken to reassign him/her to another duty station, as in accordance with 5 CFR 550.406(c). The maximum per diem, and one half the maximum per diem for dependents under age 12, may be paid to the employee and his/her designated representative for up to 30 days. After 30 days, 60% of the maximum per diem may be paid for up to another 150 days. The per diem rates and percentages paid are provided in detail below.

Approval: Supervisors or higher level officials may authorize subsistence payments to employees and their dependents. Payments should be authorized (for both employees and dependents) on the AD-202.

Additional Information and Restrictions

Transportation: Travel expenses for the employee and dependents will be determined, in accordance with the FTR, from the evacuated area to the agency designated safe haven.

Lodging-plus: Actual amount of lodging plus a set allowance for meals and expenses (per diem).

Per Diem Percentages Allowed:

Adult 1st 30 days: Employees and dependants that are 12 years and older are entitled to 100% of the maximum per diem.

Adult 31-180 days: Employees and dependants that are 12 years and older are entitled to 60% of the maximum per diem.

Children 1st 30 days: Dependents under the age of 12 are entitled to 50% of the maximum per diem.

Children 31-180 days: Dependents under the age of 12 are entitled to 30% of the maximum per diem.

Dependent: As defined under the OPM regulations a dependant is a relative of the employee residing with the employee and dependent on the employee for support.

Vouchering:

- **Employees:** Employees should receive travel authorizations for their personal subsistence expenses. Vouchers should be completed using the normal travel voucher processes.
 - Consult your supervisor or administrative staff to determine travel authorization and voucher processes.
 - USDA's travel authorization (AD 202) and voucher (AD 616) [forms](#) should be used to authorize and voucher travel expenses.
 - Note that the authorizations should be completed to allow only those expenses authorized by 5 CFR 550.405.
- **Dependents:** Subsistence expenses will be reimbursed using a [SF 1164](#), "Claim for Reimbursement for Expenditures on Official Business." The SF 1164 must be approved by the employee's supervisor or designated authority.

Paying Subsistence Expenses (see Example Scenario in Appendix A):

- **Prepaid card (dependent expenses only)**
 - Prepaid cards are limited to the balance authorized.
 - Prepaid cards can include the subsistence payments of dependents. Employees should use the travel card or travel advance processes.
 - The amount issued on the Prepaid card must be subtracted from the reimbursement requested on an SF 1164. See page A-4 of Appendix A, "Example Scenario" for the recommended format.
 - Supervisors or a designated authority may request Prepaid cards at (800) 981-3026 from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. central time.
- **Travel card (employees only)**
 - If the employee needs to make ATM withdrawals and does not have a PIN, contact Bank of America customer service at 1-800-472-1424 to obtain PIN.

- The amount reimbursed on the travel card may not exceed the amount authorized for subsistence payments.
- Employees using the travel card will need to provide Bank of America with their new temporary address and are expected to pay in a timely manner.
- Travel advance (employees without a travel card)
 - Consult your supervisor or administrative staff to obtain a travel advance through USDA's travel system.
 - Travel advances should be repaid via the travel voucher. Block 40 of AD 616 allows for repaying travel advances.

Restrictions:

- Receipts documenting actual lodging and transportation costs will be required. If receipts are unavailable, supervisors can accept alternate documentation at their discretion. (Example: Employee lost receipt due to the need to evacuate, documentation of the charges from EAGLS or Bank of America billing statements can be used.)
- Subsistence per diem can be used for any purpose. If lodging expenses are not charged to the employee (or family), no lodging reimbursement will be provided. This includes lodging provided by evacuation shelters, family and charities.
- If the employee takes annual leave, leaves the agency designated safe haven or performs official temporary duty travel, subsistence payments to the employee will be suspended for this period. Payments will continue for dependents that remain at the agency designated safe haven and will resume for the employee when they return to the agency designated safe haven. Administrative or sick leave does not interrupt subsistence payments.
- If dependents of the employee leave the agency designated safe haven, subsistence payments will be suspended for this period. Payments will resume once the dependent returns to the agency designated safe haven. Payments will continue for the employee and dependents that remain at the agency designated safe haven.
- Subsistence payments will terminate for both the employee and dependents when the evacuation is terminated or when an employee is assigned to a permanent duty station (relocation).
- The per diem amount claimed must be reduced for meals provided by the government or complimentary lodging meals. Use the schedule below to calculate the reduction for each meal provided. If the maximum per diem rate is reduced due to the age of a dependent or the length in subsistence, the schedule below should be reduced by the same percentage.

Employees and Adult Dependents (12+ Years Old) – Days 1-30						
Meals	Per Diem Breakdown by Agency Designated Safe Haven					
	Breakfast	\$6	\$7	\$7	\$9	\$9
Lunch	6	8	8	9	11	12
Dinner	16	18	20	22	24	26
Incidental	3	3	3	3	3	3
Total Daily Per Diem	\$31	\$35	\$39	\$43	\$47	\$51

Employees and Adult Dependents (12+ Years Old) – Days 31-180						
Meals	Per Diem Breakdown by Agency Designated Safe Haven					
	Breakfast	3.60	4.20	4.20	5.40	5.40
Lunch	3.60	4.80	4.80	5.40	6.60	7.20
Dinner	9.60	10.80	12.00	13.20	14.40	15.60
Incidental	1.80	1.80	1.80	1.80	1.80	1.80
Total Daily Per Diem	18.60	21.60	22.80	25.80	28.20	30.60

Dependents Less Than 12 Years Old– Days 1-30						
Meals	Per Diem Breakdown by Agency Designated Safe Haven					
	Breakfast	3.00	3.50	3.50	4.50	4.50
Lunch	3.00	4.00	4.00	4.50	5.50	6.00
Dinner	8.00	9.00	10.00	11.00	12.00	13.00
Incidental	1.50	1.50	1.50	1.50	1.50	1.50
Total Daily Per Diem	15.50	18.00	19.00	21.50	23.50	25.50

Dependents Less Than 12 Years Old – Days 31-180						
Meals	Per Diem Breakdown by Agency Designated Safe Haven					
	Breakfast	1.80	2.10	2.10	2.70	2.70
Lunch	1.80	2.40	2.40	2.70	3.30	3.60
Dinner	4.80	5.40	6.00	6.60	7.20	7.80
Incidental	0.90	0.90	0.90	0.90	0.90	0.90
Total Daily Per Diem	9.30	10.80	11.40	12.90	14.10	15.30

USDA EVACUATION POLICIES AND PROCEDURES, 2300-004
 EXAMPLE SCENARIO

APPENDIX B

Example Scenario: Employee is evacuated to the Grand Prairie, Texas, safe haven location. Travel from the evacuation area begins on 8/28/05 and ends on 8/29/05. Transportation expenses of \$300 were incurred (mileage of personally owned vehicle). Subsistence at the agency designated safe haven begins 8/30/05.

On the evening of 8/28/05, the employee and dependents (spouse and three children ages 11, 12, and 16) stay at a relative/friends house (cost \$0); 8/29/05 was spent at a motel (two rooms for a total of \$125). The employee receives a Prepaid card worth \$3,000 as an advance for the family's subsistence expenses.

The employee and/or family stay at the agency designated safe haven location for 81 days. The family rents an apartment for \$2,000 per month. During that period, some family members leave according to the schedule below:

- Days 7 – 12: Employee performs official travel to Washington, DC.
- Days 31 – 52: The three children visit grandparents in Portland, Oregon, (outside the agency designated safe haven area).
- Days 31 – 40: Employee and spouse travel back to permanent duty station to survey the damage to their personal property.

During the evacuation and while at the designated agency designated safe haven location, the following meals are provided at no cost to the employee and dependents:

- Evacuation day #1 (8/28/05); breakfast and lunch were provided by Red Cross
- Day #2 at agency designated safe haven location (8/31/05); employer provides dinner for all employees and their dependents.
- Day #5 at agency designated safe haven (9/03/05); employer provides lunch at the alternate work site. Employee had lunch, but dependents were not provided lunch.

The employee would be reimbursed the following:

<u>Dependents (SF 1164)</u>			
Evacuation Subsistence:			
	Cost Item		Calculation
Day #1 (8/28/05)			
<u>Per Diem</u>			
	Adults (3)	153.00	51*3
	Children (1)	25.50	51*0.5*1
<u>Provided Meals</u>			
	Adults (3)	-66.00	-(10+12)*3
	Children (1)	-11.00	-(10+12)*0.5
Total Day #1		101.50	
Day #2 (8/29/05)			
Lodging	62.50	125/2 (Other half on employee's AD 616)	
<u>Per Diem</u>			
	Adults (3)	153.00	51*3
	Children (1)	25.50	51*0.5*1
Total Day #2		241.00	

Total Evacuation Subsistence Costs:			
Lodging	62.50		
Per Diem	357.00		
Less Meals	-77.00		
Total	342.50		
Agency Designated Safe Haven Subsistence:			
<u>Per Diem</u>			
Days 3-8 (8/30-9/4)			
Adults (3)	918.00		51*3*6
Children (1)	153.00		51*0.5*1*6
<u>Provided Meals</u>			
Adults (3)	-78.00		-26*3
Children (1)	-13.00		-26*1*0.5
Total Days 3-8	980.00		
Days 9-14 (9/5-9/10)			
Adults (3)	918.00		51*3*6
Children (1)	153.00		51*0.5*6
Total Days 9-14	1,071.00		
Days 15-32 (9/11-9/28)			
Adults (4)	2,631.60		51*3*16 + 51*3*2*.6
Children (1)	438.60		51*0.5*16 + 51*.3*2
Total Days 15-32	3,070.20		
Days 33-42 (9/29-10-8)			
	0.00		
Days 43-54 (10/9-10/19)			
Adults (1)	336.6		51*1*0.6*11
Days 55-83 (10/20-11/17)			
Adults (3)	2662.2		51*3*0.6*29
Children (1)	443.7		51*0.3*29
Total Days 55-83	3,105.90		
Total Safe Haven Subsistence Costs:			
Lodging	0.00		
Per Diem	8,654.70		
Less Meals	-91.00		
Less Prepaid Card Advance	-3,000.00		
Total	5,563.70		

Employee (Travel System)			
Evacuation Subsistence:			
	Cost Item	Calculation	Comments
<u>Day #1 (8/28/05)</u>			
	Lodging	0.00	Stayed with relative (\$0 cost)
	Per Diem	51.00	51-10-12
	Less Meals	-22.00	-10-12 Breakfast & Lunch
	Transportation	300.00	Mileage for personally owned vehicle
<u>Day #2 (8/29/05)</u>			
	Lodging	62.50	125/2
	Per Diem	51.00	
Total Evacuation Costs			
	Lodging	62.50	
	Per Diem	102.00	
	Less Meals	-22.00	
	Transportation	300.00	
	Total	442.50	
Agency Designated Safe Haven Subsistence:			
	<u>Lodging</u>	6,000.00	2000*3 Receipt Required
	<u>Days 3-8</u>		8/30 – 9/4
	Per Diem	306.00	51*6
	Less Meals	-38.00	-26-12 Dinner and lunch
	Net Per Diem	268.00	
	<u>Days 9-14</u>	0.00	9/5 - 9/10 Employee on travel. Costs reimbursed under FTR rules.
	<u>Days 15-32</u>		(9/11 - 9/28)
	Per Diem	877.2	+51*16+51*.6*2 Reduced per diem takes affect on day 31
	<u>Days 33-42</u>	0.00	(9/29 - 10/8) Nobody at Agency designated safe haven
	<u>Days 43-83</u>	1,224.00	51*0.6*40 Reduced per diem
Total Employee Safe Haven Subsistence Costs:			
	Lodging	6,000.00	
	Per Diem	2,407.20	
	Less Meals	38.00	
	Total	8,445.20	

USDA EVACUATION POLICIES AND PROCEDURES, 2300-004
 EXAMPLE SCENARIO

APPENDIX B

CLAIM FOR REIMBURSEMENT FOR EXPENDITURES ON OFFICIAL BUSINESS		1. DEPARTMENT OR ESTABLISHMENT, BUREAU, DIVISION OR OFFICE USDA, OCFO, COD		2. VOUCHER NUMBER	
				3. SCHEDULE NUMBER	
<i>Read the Privacy Act Statement on the back of this form.</i>					
4. CLAIMANT	a. NAME (Last, first, middle initial) Doe, John		b. SOCIAL SECURITY NO. 999-99-9999		5. PAID BY
	c. MAILING ADDRESS (Include ZIP Code) Grand Prairie, TX		d. OFFICE TELEPHONE NUMBER		
6. EXPENDITURES (If fare claimed in col. (g) exceeds charge for one person, show in col. (h) the number of additional persons which accompanied the claimant.)					
		Show appropriate code in col. (b): A - Local travel B - Telephone or telegraph, or C - Other expenses (Itemized) D - Funeral Honors Detail E - Specialty Care		AMOUNT CLAIMED	
DATE	C O D E	<i>(Explain expenditures in specific detail.)</i>		MILEAGE RATE	
(a)	(b)	(c) FROM	(d) TO	NO. OF MILES (e)	MILEAGE (f)
8/29/05	C	Day 1 evacuation per diem	3 adults, 1 child, less 8 meals		
8/29/05					
8/30/05	C	Day 2 evacuation per diem	3 adults, 1 child		178.50
8/30/05					
8/30/05	C	Day 2 evacuation lodging	Receipt attached		62.50
8/30/05					
8/31/05	C	Safe Haven Subsistence/3-8	3 adults, 1 child, less 4 meals		980.00
9/5/05					
9/6/05	C	Safe Haven Subsistence/9-14	3 adults, 1 child		1,071.00
9/11/05					
9/12/05	C	Safe Haven Subsistence/15-32	3 adults, 1 child		3,070.20
9/29/05					
10/10/05	C	Safe Haven Subsistence/43-54	1 adult		336.60
10/20/05					
10/21/05	C	Safe Haven Subsistence/55-83	3 adults, 1 child		3,105.90
11/18/05					
11/18/05	C	Amount to be applied to pre-paid card advance			-3,000.00
<i>If additional space is required continue on the back.</i>				SUBTOTALS CARRIED FORWARD FROM THE BACK	
7. AMOUNT CLAIMED (Total of cols. (f), (g) and (i).)				TOTALS	
				5,906.20	
8. This claim is approved. Long distance telephone calls, if shown, are certified as necessary in the interest of the Government. (Note: If long distance calls are included, the approving official must have been authorized in writing, by the head of the department or agency to so certify (31 U.S.C. 680a).) <i>Sign Original Only</i>				10. I certify that this claim is true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief and that payment or credit has not been received by me. <i>Sign Original Only</i>	
APPROVING OFFICIAL SIGN HERE				CLAIMANT SIGN HERE	
DATE				DATE	
9. This claim is certified correct and proper for payment. <i>Sign Original Only</i>				11. CASH PAYMENT RECEIPT	
AUTHORIZED CERTIFYING OFFICER SIGN HERE				a. PAYEE (Signature)	
DATE				b. DATE RECEIVED	
ACCOUNTING CLASSIFICATION				c. AMOUNT \$	
				12. PAYMENT MADE BY CHECK NO.	