

ARS □ CSREES □ ERS □ NASS

Policies and Procedures

Title: Field Party Advances

Number: 337.0-ARS

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Originating Office: Financial Management Division, Systems, Analysis, and Policy Branch, ARS/AFM

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Distribution: ARS Headquarters, Areas, and Locations

This P&P states policy and responsibilities for designating ARS employees as Chiefs of Field Parties. The ARS Financial Management Manual (FMM), Chapter 3700, provides specific instructions for establishing, operating, safeguarding, and closing-out field party advances.

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1. Authority

National Finance Center (NFC) Manual Title II, Chapter 6, Section 1, Imprest Funds and Field Party Advances.

2. Policy

It is ARS policy to designate employees, in writing, to serve as Chief of Field Party (CFP). The CFP's will be responsible and personally liable for the field party advance funds (cash/checks) assigned to their possession and for the proper expenditure of such funds.

Field party advances are authorized for ARS field research parties to operate in remote foreign and domestic areas where cash payment is the only practical method of paying for goods and services acquired in conducting official business of ARS.

Field party advances are permitted only to pay the necessary expenses to carry out official program activities while on a field trip.

Field party advances are **not** permitted to pay for travel, per diem, and subsistence expenses of the CFP and other ARS employees. Such expenses must be claimed on form AD-616, Travel Voucher, and submitted to NFC for payment.

3. Summary of Responsibilities

Area Director (AD) or Associate Area Director or Area Administrative Officer (AAO), acting for the AD

- Designate the CFP's and approve their form AD-202, Travel Authorizations.

Research Leader (or the designated supervisor of the employee to be nominated as CFP)

- Submit forms ARS-337, Request for Field Party Advance, and AD-202 to the AD for approval and authorization of field party trip.

Director, Financial Management Division (FMD)

- Authorize requests (sign form ARS-337) for field party advances that exceed \$10,000.

Head, Reporting Section No. 4, National Finance Center (NFC)

- Review and authorize requests (sign form ARS-337) for field party advances up to \$10,000; and examine and certify all payment vouchers for advance of funds to the CFP.
- Establish a CFP fund closeout date (approximately 120 days after the field trip ends) to make sure the CFP fund is properly accounted for and closed out.

Chief of Field Party (CFP)

- Properly account for and safeguard field party advances, checks and other accountable documents at all times.
- Promptly submit vouchers for cash replenishment as needed, and submit the final (close-out) form OF-1129, Reimbursement Voucher, when a trip ends.

Area Budget and Fiscal Officers and Location Administrative Officer

- Coordinate and monitor the completion of the processes necessary to advance funds to the designated CFP and the proper close-out of the CFP fund.

4. Glossary

AD. Area Director

CFP. Chief of Field Party. An ARS employee designated the leader of a research party by the appointed Agency official. Cash is advanced to the CFP to pay authorized official business expenses while working in remote foreign and domestic areas.

FMM. Financial Management Manual

NFC. National Finance Center

AD-202. Travel Authorization

AD-616. Travel Voucher

ARS-337. Request for Field Party Advance (form is available in FMM, Chapter 3700). An amount of cash advanced to an ARS employee (designated CFP) to make certain types of cash payments for goods and services for official business expenses. See FMM, Chapter 3700 for examples of expenses.

OF-1129. Reimbursement Voucher

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