

# MS 671 SEPARATION PROCESS FOR PEACE CORPS EMPLOYEES

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## 1.0 AUTHORITIES

22 U.S.C. 2506

## 2.0 PURPOSE

This Manual Section outlines procedures and policies for processing the separation of Peace Corps staff.

### **3.0 APPLICABILITY**

This Manual Section covers all U.S. Direct Hire Peace Corps employees.

### **4.0 DEFINITIONS**

*Separation* is the end date of the appointment and includes resignation, retirement, transfer, end of tour, and termination for cause, among others.

*Resignation* is initiated by the employee, thus ending employment.

*Transfer* is the movement of a Peace Corps employee to a position in another federal agency without a break in service.

*Separation Travel* is travel for overseas USDH staff from post to Home of Record (HOR) in conjunction with separation from Peace Corps.

### **5.0 PERSONNEL ACTIONS**

#### **5.1 Separation**

Prior to the separation of an employee for any reason, the appropriate headquarters office will submit a "Request for Personnel Action" to the Office of Human Resource Management (HRM). The "Request for Personnel Action" should be submitted at least five working days before the scheduled separation date.

The separation date for overseas employees is normally the last day of authorized travel to the employee's home of record. However, for employees who choose to travel an indirect route to their home of record, the separation date will be the last day of duty at post.

#### **5.1.1 Resignation**

Employees should state in a letter or memo the reason(s) for the resignation and the effective date. The memo or letter should be submitted with the "Request for Personnel Action." If an employee resigns orally, the supervisor or staffing analyst should try to obtain written confirmation. If this is not possible, the person who received the oral resignation must document it in a memo for the record. The reason(s) for the resignation may be used to determine entitlement to unemployment benefits and will be recorded on the resignation SF-50 Notification of Personnel Action.

#### **5.1.2 Transfer**

When an employee accepts a position with another federal agency, he or she should inform the staffing analyst and HRM staff as soon as feasible. Upon notification, HRM will coordinate the effective date with the new agency and ensure continuity of applicable benefits. Failure to notify the staffing analyst or HRM may result in a lapse of some benefits coverage or a debt to the government for an erroneous lump sum payout of annual leave.

#### **5.2 Separation Procedures for Domestic Staff**

Before separating from the Peace Corps, employees must obtain an exit package from their staffing analyst that includes form PC-671A *Peace Corps Clearance for Final Payment*. After employees obtain the certifying signatures from all offices designated on the PC-671A, the form must be submitted to their staffing analyst or office point of contact. Failure to submit will delay the final lump sum payout for accrued and unused annual leave or delay the transfer of annual and sick leave to a new federal agency, if applicable.

## **5.3 Separation Procedures for Overseas USDH Employees**

### **5.3.1 Initiating Separation Procedures**

Ninety days prior to the proposed separation date, the staffing analyst will mail separation papers and issue a separation notification to post to advise the employee on the separation procedures.

### **5.3.2 Separation Medical Examinations**

All overseas USDH employees and most family members (as determined by the Department of State) are eligible to complete a comprehensive physical exam as they plan their departure from Peace Corps employment. Exit physicals are not required, but employees and family members are strongly encouraged to take advantage of this benefit. Employees may have the exam at their HOR or at the Embassy Health Unit if available. Prior authorization from Peace Corps is required.

Expenses for exit physicals other than at the Embassy Health Unit are primarily covered by elected federal health insurance benefits or other personal medical insurance. A claim for reimbursement of out-of-pocket expenses not covered by insurance may be submitted directly to the Department of State Office of Medical Claims.

### **5.3.3 Completion of Final Clearance Forms**

Overseas employees must obtain the certifying signatures from all offices designated on the PC-671A. The staffing analyst will assist in obtaining signatures from Headquarters offices. Failure to submit will delay the final lump sum payout for accrued and unused annual leave or delay the transfer of annual and sick leave to a new federal agency, if applicable. All U.S. direct hire employees separating from Peace Corps must have an ethics briefing from an ethics official in the Office of the General Counsel. The staffing analysts should notify OGC of the separation of a U.S. direct hire at least two weeks prior to the employee's departure.

### **5.3.4 Waiver of Separation Travel**

Employees who will not be returning to the U.S. within one year of separation may, at the time of separation, choose to waive their right to separation travel so that all final clearances may be processed.

Employees choosing to waive separation travel must submit the following with the form PC-671A:

- (a) Written notification to the Regional Director of the decision to waive separation travel; and
- (b) A travel voucher showing a zero balance.

### **5.3.5 Return of Official Passport**

Employees returning directly to the U.S. must return their official passport(s) to the Transportation Branch (M/AS/T) and obtain certification on form PC-671A that the passport has been returned. Employees remaining overseas for an extended period after separation must return official passport(s) to the Embassy and obtain a personal passport or official passport from the new agency if transferring to another federal agency. The employee must get a statement from the Embassy that the official passport has been submitted to the Embassy for cancellation, which statement should be attached to the PC-671A.

### **5.3.6 Final Travel Vouchers**

All employees must submit a final SF-1012 Travel Voucher, to the Region to account for all separation travel expenses. Employees must submit a final voucher even if not claiming travel expenses.

Any outstanding debts or travel advances charged to the employee must be cleared before obtaining the appropriate signatures on form PC-671A.

The final travel voucher must include a forwarding address (including zip code), telephone number, and e-mail address, if available, so that the employee may be contacted regarding any delay in the processing of the voucher. Copies of travel authorizations must also be attached. Employees who waive or who are ineligible for separation travel must submit a voucher showing a zero balance. The staffing analyst or office point of contact must receive the final voucher before certifying the PC-671A.

## **5.4 Leave Close Out**

### **5.4.1 Leave Transfer**

When an employee accepts a position with another federal agency without a break in service, the employee's leave balances will be transferred to the new agency. An SF-1150 Record of Leave Data is generated after the separation is processed and leave balances verified. The SF-1150 is filed in the employee's Official Personnel Folder (OPF). When the new agency requests and receives the OPF from HRM, the SF-1150 is used to verify the leave balances to be transferred.

### **5.4.2 Processing Lump Sum Payment**

An employee is eligible to receive a lump-sum payment for accrued and unused annual leave when he or she separates from federal service. The lump sum payment will not be issued until HRM receives a complete exit package from the staffing analyst or office point of contact. The completed exit package consists of all clearances/signatures obtained on form PC-671A, including the reconciliation of travel vouchers and the PC-57 Annual Attendance Card, signed by the timekeeper and the employee's supervisor. The completed package should be sent to HRM no earlier than the Thursday after the pay period that the employee separated (this will ensure a complete and final PC-57 card).

Upon receipt of the exit package, the HRM Systems staff will conduct a final leave audit on the separated employee's record.

Lump sum payments are subject to offset for any employees with an outstanding debt regarding leave or salary over-payments or other debts in accordance with Peace Corps rules on claims collection (22 CFR Part 309 and MS 778).

Once lump sum payments are processed, funds will be sent directly to the employee via Electronic Funds Transfer to the financial institution designated by the employee.

## **5.5 Employee Benefits**

### **5.5.1 Transfer of Benefits**

When an employee accepts a position with another federal agency without a break in service, some employee benefits will be transferred to the new agency once HRM processes the personnel action (executing the transfer). The employee must initiate the transfer of certain benefits by the insurance administrator to the new agency. Prior to separating, an employee should consult with the benefits specialists in HRM to discuss whether he or she has benefits that require action to have the benefits transfer to the new agency.

### **5.5.2 Termination of Benefits**

When an employee resigns or separates from service, the employee is entitled to continuation of some benefits. Prior to separating, employees should consult with the HRM benefits staff to discuss whether they have benefits that can continue after separation.

Employees retiring from federal service should consult with the HRM benefits staff at least six (6) months prior to separating from service to ensure continuity of benefits.

### **5.5.3 Unemployment Compensation**

A separated employee may be entitled to unemployment compensation. Entitlement to such benefit is a matter of state law, and benefit levels and eligibility requirements vary from state to state. HRM will provide the employee a claim form and additional information.

### **5.5.4 Benefits Separation Package**

Upon confirmation of separation from the HRM operations staff, the HRM benefits staff will forward a “Benefits Separation Package” to the mailing address of record (within two (2) weeks of the separation date). The package will contain comprehensive benefits entitlement information and necessary forms for completion.

## **6.0 RECORDKEEPING**

### **6.1 Personnel records**

Personnel records, including the separation SF-50 and the Notification of Personnel Action, will be maintained by HRM in the employee’s Official Personnel Folder (OPF) for 120 days or until requested by another federal agency. After 120 days, the OPF will be sent to the National Personnel Records Center (NPRC). After 120 days, employees must write to NPRC directly to obtain personnel records. The letter must contain the following information:

- Full name used during federal employment
- Social Security Number
- Date of Birth
- Name(s) of federal employing agency(s)
- Approximate dates of federal employment, especially separation

The letter must also state the information being sought and must contain the individual’s or authorized representative’s signature.

Mail to:  
National Personnel Records Center  
Civilian Personnel Records  
111 Winnebago Street  
St. Louis, MO 63118

### **6.2 Payroll records**

Payroll and time card information will be maintained by HRM as per the agency’s records schedule.

## **7.0 EFFECTIVE DATE**

The effective date is the date of issuance.