



NEWS RELEASE

DEFENSE FINANCE AND ACCOUNTING SERVICE
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DFAS website offers tips for Army civilian PCS travel

COLUMBUS, OH (July 28, 2011) – With 36,000 travel vouchers expected this year from Army civilian employees making permanent change of station moves, avoiding mistakes becomes a major part of paying these travelers quickly and accurately.

In addition to the anticipated numbers of PCS vouchers, many from employees who will be experiencing PCS moves for the first time in their careers due to Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) changes, the job of receiving, reviewing and processing these claims falls on the 50 person staff of the Defense Finance and Accounting Service's Travel Claims section.

Each year, as many as 40 percent of vouchers received by DFAS contained errors that delay processing and payment. Some errors are as simple as missing signatures, but all mistakes or missing information must be corrected before the claim can be settled.

Help is a click away

DFAS has made getting information on travel vouchers available on its website (www.dfas.mil) and other online sources.

A new YouTube video has been produced that is available on the agency's homepage or at www.youtube.com/user/WePayDoD. The video features members of the Travel Claims team describing the most common voucher errors that delay travel payments. The top 10 are also listed at www.dfas.mil/dfas/pcstravel/civtoperrors.html.

Another tool is the PCS Traveler's Checklist available at www.dfas.mil/dfas/pcstravel/checklists.html. Once printed, this checklist provides a handy and useful way to make sure vouchers are correct the first time.

The personal touch

But when mistakes happen, the DFAS Travel Claims team is there to help.

"Every time there is a mistake we go out of our way to call and, if at all possible, talk to the person to let them know what the problem is and help them get their claim back on track," said Nick Hinson, a DFAS travel entitlement specialist.

"If I send in my IRS return without signing it, nobody calls me and says, 'Mr. Hinson I have your return here and you'd didn't sign it.' We do," Hinson said.

The DFAS travel team works hard to reach their customers because they know that money can be tight during a PCS move, and getting a travel claim paid can make a big difference to people during a move.

If DFAS can't reach the traveler on that first phone call, team members make sure they leave a message to keep the traveler informed of problems with their voucher. If calling doesn't work, an email goes out to the traveler. If that fails, a letter is sent via the U.S. postal service

As good as the DFAS procedures are in helping its customers recover from errors, it would be to everyone's advantage to avoid mistakes in the first place.

"If travelers would follow the checklist we make available to them on our website, we think we would see a substantial reduction in the number of vouchers we have to return," said Tina Gilbert, another DFAS travel entitlement specialist.

And that would mean that PCS travelers would get their cash much more quickly, at a time when it is needed most.

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Media Point of Contact

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About DFAS

The Defense Finance and Accounting Service provides responsive, professional finance and accounting services to the men and women who defend America. DFAS pays about 6.4 million people and in FY 2010 made 8.1 million travel payments, paid 11.4 million commercial invoices, made \$578 billion in disbursements to pay recipients, and managed \$487.9 billion in military retirement and health benefits funds. For more about DFAS visit <http://www.dfas.mil>.