

**FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
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OVERVIEW

12.1 What is the purpose of this chapter? This chapter provides guidance and procedures for U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) employees who travel locally in and around their permanent duty station (within a 50-mile radius) for work-related duties.

12.2 What is the scope of this chapter?

- A. This chapter applies to local travel in and around a permanent duty station.
- B. This chapter does not cover:

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- (1) Temporary Duty Travel (TDY) (see [265 FW 1 - 10](#));
- (2) Local travel in and around a TDY location;
- (3) Permanent Change of Station (PCS) travel (see [266 FW 1](#)); or
- (4) Temporary Change of Station (TCS) travel (see [Federal Travel Regulation, Part 302, Subpart E](#)).

12.3 What are the authorities for this chapter? See [265 FW 1](#) for a list of the authorities for all the chapters in Part 265.

12.4 What terms do you need to know to understand this chapter?

A. Commuting cost is the primary expense of traveling to and from a permanent duty station. Costs may include Privately Owned Vehicle (POV) mileage, tolls, and parking expenditures. POV mileage to a bus stop, park-and-ride lot, etc. is excluded from commuting costs.

B. Commuting residence is the location where an employee travels to and from work the majority of the time. It is not necessarily the location listed on the employee's personnel forms.

C. Local travel is travel that does not meet the distance requirement for TDY travel. It includes Government and commercial flights to locations fewer than 50 miles from the permanent duty station or commuting residence.

D. Permanent duty station, for the purposes of local travel, means the street address to which the employee most commonly reports (i.e., the majority of the time).

E. TDY travel is travel that is performed for official purposes and is over 50 miles from both the employee's permanent duty station and commuting residence.

RESPONSIBILITIES

12.5 What are the responsibilities related to local travel requirements? See Table 12-1.

Table 12-1: Responsibilities for Local Travel

This Employee...	Is responsible for...
A. The Director	Approving or declining to approve Servicewide policy.
B. Directorate members (e.g., Assistant Directors, Regional Directors)	(1) Approving per diem within 30-50 miles of the traveler's permanent duty station and commuting residence, and (2) Issuing guidance on travel-related issues as necessary.
C. Federal Agency Travel Administrators (FATA)	(1) Providing travelers with guidance on Federal Travel Regulations (FTR) and Department of the Interior (Department), Service, and Regional travel policies; and

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This Employee...	Is responsible for...
	(2) Working with the Division of Financial Management in Headquarters to identify and resolve travel policy and system-related issues.
D. Project Leaders/ Supervisors (Approving Officials)	(1) Ensuring claims are properly prepared, (2) Ensuring expenses are authorized and allowable and the associated amounts are accurate, and (3) Ensuring required documentation (i.e., justifications) and receipts are attached.
E. Travelers	(1) Requesting approval to travel locally prior to leaving for a trip; (2) Deducting normal commuting costs from local travel reimbursement claims; and (3) Traveling in compliance with the FTR and Departmental, Service, and Regional policy (see 265 FW 4-7).

LOCAL TRAVEL

12.6 What are the basic distinctions between local travel and TDY travel? See Table 12-2.

Table 12-2: Distinguishing Between TDY and Local Travel

Question	TDY Travel	Local Travel
What is it?	TDY travel is any official travel that is further than 50 miles from both the employee's permanent duty station and residence. This is lowered to 30 miles for severe conditions like adverse weather, health or safety, training, or a meeting or conference if the traveler gets approval from his/her supervisor and supervising Directorate member. If a trip takes less than 12 hours (including travel time) but is over 50 miles, it is considered TDY, but no per diem is paid.	Local travel is travel that does not meet the requirements of TDY travel. Employees traveling locally for work are not entitled to per diem reimbursement.
How do I obtain approval to conduct travel?	Employees must have a valid travel authorization before going on TDY travel.	Employees should follow their Regional or internal office policies for approving local travel to ensure supervisors will cover their travel expenses.

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Question	TDY Travel	Local Travel
What mileage may I claim when I use my own vehicle?	We reimburse mileage for TDY travel by POV at the applicable General Services Administration (GSA) mileage rate when your use of a POV is advantageous to the Government.	We reimburse mileage for local travel by POV at the applicable GSA mileage rate when it is advantageous to the Government. If an employee is directed to travel as a passenger in a Government-Owned Vehicle (GOV) and they choose to drive their POV, they are not eligible for mileage reimbursement. Reimbursement is limited to costs in excess of normal commuting costs (see section 12.10). This limitation applies to all local travel, including travel to training and travel on a scheduled telework day.
How do I claim reimbursement?	The traveler must create a travel voucher in the Electronic Travel System (ETS) to claim reimbursement for TDY travel.	The traveler must file a Claim for Reimbursement for Expenditures on Official Business (Optional Form (OF)-1164) to claim reimbursement for local travel (see 261 FW 4). Do not use the ETS to submit a claim for reimbursement for local travel.

12.7 What documentation is required for local travel?

A. Prior to local travel:

(1) We do not have Servicewide policy for the documentation required to get authorization to travel locally. Requirements are based on Regional or local policy.

(2) Departmental policy prohibits the use of the Travel Authorization form (DI-1020) or ETS for anything other than TDY travel.

B. Cost comparisons: Although there is not a national requirement for preparing cost comparisons for local travel reimbursements (e.g., POV vs. ride hails/rideshares, such as a taxi, Uber, or Lyft), we recommend them for costs that exceed \$100. Regional and local policies may require such comparisons.

12.8 May an employee’s supervisor dispute the local mileage amount claimed on an OF-1164? Yes, your supervisor may:

A. Determine which mileage software tool to use (e.g., Google maps, MapQuest) to calculate the number of miles to claim. When there are multiple routes available, the supervisor normally

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uses the shortest distance for calculating reimbursement;

B. Limit reimbursement to the authorized mode (e.g., bus, shuttle) when you use your POV instead of that mode; and

C. Follow the Department's 10% variance rule (see the Department's [Financial Management Memorandum \(FMM\)-2016-029](#), 7/11/2016). The Department allows up to a 10% variance between an employee's claim and what the supervisor determines to be the correct mileage for both local travel and TDY. However, a traveler cannot use the 10% variance to classify local travel of less than 50 miles as TDY or vice versa.

12.9 How does an employee's telework status impact local travel?

A. If the employee's permanent duty station is a Service facility:

(1) The employee cannot be reimbursed for reporting to his/her permanent duty station, even on days that he/she is not regularly scheduled to do so.

(2) The employee may be reimbursed for local travel to an alternate work site that is within 50 miles of either the commuting residence or permanent duty station. The employee must deduct his/her normal commuting costs from the claim (see [section 12.10](#)).

B. If the employee's permanent duty station is the telework location, the employee may be reimbursed for local travel to an alternate work site within 50 miles of the telework location, which includes costs for reporting to a Service facility. Commuting costs to a Service facility are not deducted from the claim. A teleworker's official duty station is the telework location if the employee is not scheduled to report at least twice a pay period to the official duty station (see [226 FW 4](#) and [370 DM 226](#)).

12.10 How do employees calculate commuting costs to deduct from a local travel claim?

A. Following are scenarios describing how to calculate costs for commuting based on how the employee travels to the duty station:

(1) POV: Include costs associated with the number of miles driven round trip, tolls, and parking expenditures (if applicable). To calculate the cost of POV mileage, see [GSA's online POV Mileage Reimbursement Rate](#) chart for current rates.

(2) Carpool/vanpool/shuttle: Regardless of whether there is a cost associated with a carpool, vanpool, or shuttle, calculate the commuting cost based on the number of miles that would be driven round trip if the employee used his/her POV. Use this calculation even if the employee pays some other rate for the carpool, vanpool, or shuttle.

(3) Mass transit: Regardless of whether there is a cost associated with the mass transit option, calculate the commuting cost based on the number of miles that would be driven round trip if the employee used his/her POV. Use this calculation even if the employee pays some other rate for

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mass transit.

(4) *Bicycle*: Calculate the commuting cost based on the number of miles that would be driven round trip if the employee used his/her POV.

B. See Exhibit 1 for examples.

MULTIPLE RESIDENCES AND DUTY STATIONS

12.11 What if a traveler has multiple residences? If an employee’s permanent residence that is listed on his or her Notice of Personnel Action (SF-50) is outside the commuting area of the assigned duty station, and he/she has a temporary residence (e.g., trailer, quarters, apartment) from where he/she normally commutes, use the temporary residence to calculate local travel and TDY.

12.12 What if a traveler has multiple duty stations? If an employee reports to work at multiple sites (e.g., two different refuges within a National Wildlife Refuge System complex), use the street address of where he or she reports the majority of the time as his/her permanent duty station for travel purposes.

TRAVEL CHARGE CARD

12.13 May employees use their Government-issued travel charge cards for local travel expenses? Employees may use Government-issued travel charge cards for some expenses, but not all. See Tables 12-3 and 12-4.

A. **Allowable expenses:** See Table 12-3.

Table 12-3: Use your Government-issued travel charge card as follows for these expenses for local travel...

Type of Expense	Must Use Government Charge Card	Use Government Charge Card when Practical
Rental vehicles	X	
Fuel and oil for rental vehicles	X	
Local ground transportation		X
Parking		X
Ride hails or rideshares to and from your permanent duty station to any work-related location other than your residence , including a maximum 20% tip		X
Tolls		X

B. **Prohibited expenses:** See Table 12-4.

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**Table 12-4: DO NOT use your Government-issued travel charge card
for these expenses for local travel...**

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• ATM cash advance• Expenses for a person other than you• Fuel or repair services for your POV	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Meeting space rental• Meals• Ride hails or rideshares for commuting to and from your residence (e.g., taxi, Uber, Lyft), including the tip
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RENTAL CARS

12.14 How does an employee rent a car for local travel?

A. When renting a car for local, non-routine travel, employees must use the same Government car rental program agreement that we use for TDY travel (see the [Defense Travel Management Office website](#) for more information).

B. Employees may book a rental car for local travel by either:

(1) Calling their travel management center and incurring a service fee.

(a) Do not use the ETS to book rental cars for local travel, and

(b) Ask staff at the travel management center not to “sweep” the rental car reservation into the ETS; or

(2) Contacting a local rental car company directly, but that company must be able to use the Government car rental agreement.

(a) Ensure the rental is booked under the Government’s car rental agreement and identify yourself as a Federal Government traveler.

(b) If a local rental car company does not offer cars using our Government car rental agreement, you cannot use their services.

C. Employees must not use third party booking agents.

D. Employees must rent a compact size car unless they get an exception for a larger size car (see [265 FW 5](#)).

E. The Government car rental program does not cover:

(1) Hourly rate “zip” cars,

(2) Recreational vehicles,

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(3) Large passenger vans,

(4) Driving off of paved roads, or

(5) Routine local travel at or near (within 50 miles) the permanent duty station when a Government-Owned Vehicle (GOV) is normally used. Our Government car rental agreement covers non-routine local travel only, such as a meeting or training in the local area.

12.15 Can an employee seek reimbursement for renting a car for local travel when his/her POV is being shipped because of a PCS move? No. A PCS employee cannot seek reimbursement or use a Government credit card to rent a car to commute from his/her residence to a permanent duty station under any circumstances.

12.16 When employees rent cars for local travel, can they add the rental car company's collision damage waiver to the contract?

A. No, not in most circumstances. Rental car companies using the [Government's car rental agreement](#) provide full insurance coverage for property damage and injury or death to third parties resulting from an employee's use of a rented vehicle within the Continental United States (CONUS) and most non-foreign, Outside Continental United States (OCONUS) locations (e.g., Hawaii, U.S. Virgin Islands).

B. If an OCONUS rental car company that does not offer vehicles under the [Government's car rental agreement](#) is the only practical vendor, and it requires purchase of the collision damage waiver, an employee may add it if necessary.

12.17 When employees rent cars for local travel over multiple days, can they drive them to/from their residence? Yes, but they must:

A. Obtain prior supervisory approval, and

B. Reimburse the Government for the cost of their daily commute by writing a check payable to the Service and submitting it to a Collections Officer.

VOLUNTEERS

12.18 How does the Service reimburse volunteers for local travel and miscellaneous expenses?

A. Local travel expenses. The Volunteer Service Agreement ([OF-301A](#)), signed by both the volunteer and the Service representative, must specify the type of local travel expenses (e.g., mileage, taxis, tolls, parking) and the amount of reimbursement that is allowable (see [150 FW 3](#)).

(1) When reimbursing volunteers for actual expenses, the volunteer must use [FWS Form 3-2373](#), Claim for Reimbursement for Volunteer Expenses, and attach appropriate documentation.

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(2) We use the [Internal Revenue Service's \(IRS\) volunteer mileage rate](#) to reimburse for travel to and from the duty station.

(3) We may reimburse volunteers for these types of transportation expenses regardless of the volunteer's place of residence and distance to the work site.

(4) Submit the form to an accounts payable technician for entry into the Financial and Business Management System (FBMS) (see [261 FW 3](#) for instructions).

B. Miscellaneous expenses. The Project Leader/supervisor may decide whether or not to reimburse a volunteer for miscellaneous expenses.

(1) The expense must be directly related to Service work (see [150 FW 3](#)).

(2) We may reimburse volunteers for miscellaneous expenses regardless of the volunteer's place of residence.

(3) When reimbursing volunteers for actual expenses, use [FWS Form 3-2373](#), and attach appropriate documentation.

(4) Submit the form to an accounts payable technician for entry into FBMS (see [261 FW 3](#) for instructions).

FIREFIGHTERS

12.19 How does the Service reimburse "casual hire firefighters" for local travel and miscellaneous expenses?

A. The hiring of "casual hire firefighters" is of uncertain and purely temporary duration and must be terminated when we can begin other employment methods.

B. These firefighters should use the Incident Time Report form ([OF-288](#)) to claim local travel and miscellaneous expenses. The casual hiring unit must document reimbursement requests on the Approving Official Batch Memo or Travel Worksheet and include it with the OF-288 before sending it to the Casual Payment Center for final processing (see the Department's [FMM 2016-10](#), Casual Hire Travel Expense Reimbursement Waiver, 2/17/2016).

/sgd/ Stephen Guertin
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

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New, but supersedes policy memorandum, "Using Government Charge Card for Local Travel," 3/22/2016