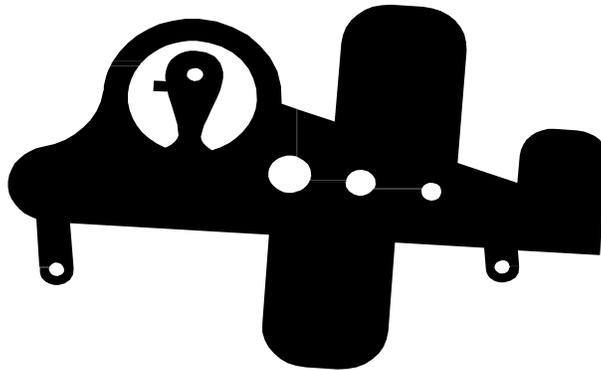


OCONUS
EVACUATION GUIDE
FOR DOD FAMILIES



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TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	1
<u>SECTION I</u> ADVANCE PLANNING FOR AN EVACUATION	
PERSONAL PAPERS.....	2
FINANCES.....	2
PERSONAL PROPERTY INVENTORY.....	2
POWER OF ATTORNEY.....	3
TRAVEL ORDERS.....	3
AUTOMOBILES.....	3
PETS.....	3
SELECTING A SAFE HAVEN LOCATION.....	3
<u>SECTION II</u> EVACUATION PROCEDURES	
PREPARING TO LEAVE POST.....	5
FAMILY SUPPORT REPRESENTATIVE.....	5
STOP MOVEMENT.....	6
DEPENDENT COLLEGE STUDENT.....	7
<u>SECTION III</u> ENTITLEMENTS	
PER DIEM – MILITARY.....	8
PER DIEM – DOD CIVILIAN.....	10
UNACCOMPANIED BAGGAGE.....	11
AIR FREIGHT REPLACEMENT ALLOWANCE.....	11
LOCAL TRANSPORTATION.....	11
FILING VOUCHERS.....	11
DEPENDENT VISITATION.....	12
CHANGING SAFE HAVEN LOCATION.....	12
<u>SECTION IV</u> PROCEDURES FOLLOWING TERMINATION	
EVACUATION LIFTED.....	13
POST DECLARED UNACCOMPANIED.....	14
<u>SECTION V</u> FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS	15
<u>SECTION VI</u> EVACUATION CHECKLIST	17

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this guide is to provide basic information to military and Department of Defense (DoD) civilian family members so they can be aware of procedures and be better prepared in the event of an evacuation. No two evacuations are exactly alike, but the information in this guide will provide basic tools for planning and can be modified for local and specific use.

Evacuations are a very real possibility in today's world. An evacuation can be declared due to political unrest, war, natural disaster, epidemic or any other hosts of reasons. Although no one can predict when or where an evacuation may happen, knowing what steps to take to prepare for an evacuation, and knowing what to expect after you have evacuated will help to ease your anxiety and worry.

Everything in this guidebook is addressed in both the Joint Federal Travel Regulation (JFTR) chapter 6 for military families and the Joint Travel Regulation (JTR) chapter 6 for DoD civilian families. Unlike military members, a DoD civilian employee can also be evacuated.

Suggestions from families, military members and civilian employees to better this guide for everyone are always welcome.

SECTION I

ADVANCE PLANNING FOR AN EVACUATION

This section of the Guide will talk about things you can do now to prepare for the possibility of evacuation. Talk them over with your spouse and children and add anything else you think is important to the list.

PERSONAL PAPERS

Always keep important papers together in a safe place, and most importantly, up-to-date. Keep them in a separate container/briefcase so they will be ready at a moment's notice. Listed below are many (but necessarily all) of those important papers that you will need to **hand carry** from station to your safe haven:

- Passport, visa, and military identification card
- DD Form 1610 Evacuation Travel Orders (filed at the sponsor's office)
- Will and Power of Attorney
- Medical and dental records, shot records, pharmacy prescriptions
- Insurance policies and financial papers/documents
- Pet records (specifically current shot records)
- School records, transcripts, test scores, recommendations
- U.S. driver's license, auto insurance policies, car registration and title
- Cash in both U.S. and local currencies
- Birth certificate(s), naturalization certificate(s), adoption papers, marriage license
- Spouse's personal papers, resumes
- Household goods inventory list (pictures-digital or hard copy of possessions/furniture)
- Duplicate address book
- Listing of regular billing dates for all recurring expenses
- Listing of names, addresses, and phone numbers of doctors, dentist, lawyers, and other professional services personnel
- This Evacuation Guide

FINANCES

Family members should talk now about finances. For example, who will pay the bills and will it be on-line or by check? If you (the spouse) currently work outside the home, how will this affect your family's income? The bottom line is families must work out now how to handle the money hassles of an evacuation. Evacuees will receive allowances during an evacuation, but families will need to pay most expenses up front and get reimbursed later. Be prepared for the possibility that all expenses may not be covered.

PERSONAL PROPERTY INVENTORY

Have an up-to-date inventory of all personal property and household goods with appraised values. The inventory should list the item, quantity, cost, and date purchased of each item. Keep receipts of high-value items. You might want to photograph the more valuable items and either tape the information to the back of the photo or keep a CD of your pictorial inventory filed with the inventory list. Keep one copy of the inventory with you and another copy at a safe location in the U.S. The list should be amended periodically for additions and deletions.

POWER OF ATTORNEY

A child's well-being is always of concern during an emergency/evacuation. In case you might be away at the time of an emergency (any kind, not just an evacuation) you should have a Special Power of Attorney prepared. This will give someone on station the authority to make decisions on your child's behalf and to escort your child back to the States if you are absent or unable.

TRAVEL ORDERS

Someone in your sponsor's office should prepare a DD Form 1610 Travel Order for your family; (1 form per family) shortly after your arrival on station. You will need to provide your name and social security number and your children's names and birth dates. You will also have to decide where you want to safe haven (discussed later in this guide) and provide the location. The DD Form 1610 will be filed and used only if an evacuation is declared. If not used while you are on your overseas assignment, the document will be destroyed upon your departure.

AUTOMOBILES

In an evacuation where the Service Member or DoD Civilian employee must also leave station, instructions will normally be given as to what to do with privately owned vehicles. Cars may be gathered together in a safe, central location and reclaimed by their owners at a later date, or if the evacuation becomes permanent, shipped out when conditions permit. It might be necessary for you to leave a duplicate set of keys to the car with a designated person/office along with information on make, year and model of vehicle and the owner's name and U.S. address.

PETS

As of FY 08 families on official evacuation orders from an OCONUS permanent duty station (PDS) are authorized funding to ship up to 2 pets to their safe haven location.

SELECTING A SAFE HAVEN LOCATON

Families should decide now where to go in the event of an evacuation. Department of State (DoS) will declare the United States as the safe haven location for the evacuees, but each family must decide where in the U.S. they want to go.

The government will move families only one time to a safe haven location so take into consideration things such as public transportation, availability of temporary lodging facilities, public schools, military support offices, as well as proximity to family and friends. Since evacuations can last as long as six months, it is important to consider carefully where you want to safe haven.

For military and DoD Civilian families who are from Alaska, Hawaii, Puerto Rico or other U.S Territories (U.S. OCONUS locations), and for foreign-born spouses who want to safe haven in their native countries (foreign OCONUS locations), an approval process is required. Below are steps you must take and things you should consider if you are deciding this option.

- For foreign OCONUS safe haven locations you must get DoS approval prior to leaving your overseas PDS, a process that usually takes only a day or two. U.S. OCONUS locations (i.e. Guam, Puerto Rico) do not require DoS approval.
- All OCONUS safe haven locations require approval from Office of the Under Secretary of Defense (OUSD) which can take several weeks. Once you have DoS approval you are authorized to travel to the OCONUS location, but in order to get reimbursed for your every day living (per diem) expenses you must wait for OUSD approval. Although OUSD approves nearly all OCONUS requests, families must understand they are taking a risk. If OUSD does not approve their OCONUS request they will not get reimbursed for their living expenses (but travel expenses are still covered.)
- Support from your Service or Agency in foreign OCONUS and US territory safe haven locations is very limited.
- Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA) will not fund education costs outside the members PDS. Therefore, any costs at the safe haven location associated with education are the family's responsibility.
- Families do not have access to the U.S. Embassy in the OCONUS safe haven location for things such as postal/pouch service, Health Unit, check cashing, etc.

SECTION II

EVACUATION PROCEDURES

PREPARING TO LEAVE POST

When DoS declares an evacuation they will indicate if it is an authorized or ordered departure. If it's ordered, families are required to depart post immediately or at the first reasonably available time. If it is declared an authorized (some refer to this as voluntary) evacuation, families can decide if and when they want to depart post. Please note: when a DoD family leaves post on evacuation orders (ordered or authorized) they will not be able to return to the overseas location until the evacuation has been officially lifted by DoS and announced by DoD.

There will be a designated person in your sponsor's office that is responsible for evacuation procedures, including obtaining your airline tickets. Make sure that person has completed the DD Form 1610 Travel order (and provides you with a copy) and give him/her the following information:

- Safe haven location, city and state (actual address if you have it) or OCONUS location (if applicable)
- Name, phone number and/or email address of a Point of Contact (POC) for you in the U.S. (preferably at your safe haven location)
- Name and ages of your children

FAMILY SUPPORT REPRESENTATIVE

Each family who has chosen a safe haven within the 50 U.S. States and District of Columbia will be assigned a local Family Support Representative (FSR.) This person is located at the nearest military installation and is usually from the same military Service although sometimes from another Service when circumstances call for that. Either way, the FSR will assist the family with whatever needs they have in getting settled in their safe haven location and will remain in contact with the family throughout the entire duration of the evacuation.

Civilian family members will be contacted by someone in their sponsor's state-side HQs who may or may not be close to the evacuee's safe haven location but will remain in contact with them throughout the evacuation.

If you have not been contacted by a FSR within 2 to 3 days of arriving at your safe haven, contact your sponsor's overseas office or state-side HQ.

Each evacuating family must complete a DD Form 2585 Repatriation Processing Center Sheet. Check with the Evacuation POC at your sponsor's overseas office for a copy or ask your FSR for the form. Once completed give it to your FSR.

STOP MOVEMENT

When DoS releases a cable declaring an evacuation DoD will follow with a memo, part of which includes issuing a Stop Movement. This will immediately suspend travel for all DoD dependents to the evacuated location/country. If a family is preparing to depart on their Permanent Change of Station (PCS) to the evacuated location they will be prohibited from doing so. The Service member/DoD civilian employee must request permission from DoS to enter the country, which is usually granted, but the family will not be permitted to enter the country any time during the evacuation. If a family is caught in this situation, one of two outcomes will result.

- If the family has already sold/vacated their house, has an irrevocable contractual agreement for lease/resale of their residence, and/or had their household goods (HHG) packed, the family is identified as having disestablished their residence and will be placed on evacuation orders the day the family was scheduled to depart for their PDS.
- If the evacuation is declared prior to the family disestablishing their residence the family should immediately stop all moving preparations, i.e., vacating/selling their house and packing/shipping their HHG and car. Assuming the Service member is authorized to travel to the evacuated country, the family's situation will be treated the same as an unaccompanied assignment. The Service member will continue to receive a housing allowance for his family (as well as receive housing in the overseas location) and will also be entitled to separation pay.

If DoD Civilian family members are caught in a Stop Movement on their way to the overseas PDS and are in the same circumstances as the first example above, they will also be entitled to evacuation allowances. However, if they are on PCS orders to the evacuated country but do not meet the criteria of the first example then they will be eligible for Involuntary Separation Maintenance Allowance (ISMA) effective the date the employee begins official travel under assignment orders. Check with your sponsor's office for more details.

A Stop Movement can also affect a family that has already PCSd and settled into their overseas location. If the family is away from the host country for any reason (personal leave/vacation, medical travel, Funded Environmental Moral Leave (FEML), etc.) at the time an evacuation is declared, the Stop Movement will apply to them as well. Again, the Service member/employee will need to request permission to return to post, which is granted most of the time. Although the family can also request permission to return to post, it is rarely granted. Therefore, starting on the day the family had intended to return to post but is now prohibited from doing so, they will be considered evacuees and their evacuation allowances (and travel to their chosen safe haven location if it is different from where they are) will begin.

DEPENDENT COLLEGE AND/OR BOARDING SCHOOL STUDENT

If the command-sponsored dependent of a Service member or DoD civilian is a student attending school away from post (either in the States or in another country) at the time of the evacuation, the student is not considered an evacuee until such time he/she would normally visit his/her family (Christmas break, summer vacation, etc.) at the overseas location.

The student's evacuation allowances begin the day he/she departs school. Whether the student joins the family at their safe haven location or moves to a separate safe haven location, he/she is entitled to full evacuation allowances for his/her first 30 days, regardless of whether the family's allowances have already dropped (explained in Section III of this Guide.)

SECTION III

ENTITLEMENTS

Evacuation entitlements for all command sponsored family members can be found in the Joint Federal Travel Regulation (JFTR), chapter 6. Below is an explanation of these entitlements, but you can also look on-line for more details. The sponsor's military Service funds the evacuation allowances for military families.

Entitlements for DoD civilian family members are listed in the Joint Travel Regulation (JTR) chapter 6. These rules/entitlements are similar to those of DoS, but are funded by the civilian sponsor's parent office within DoD.

Please note: Non-command sponsored dependents are only authorized one-way transportation to their U.S. safe haven. Per Diem allowances and return travel to the PDS are not authorized.

PER DIEM – MILITARY

Per Diem allowances for military command sponsored dependents while in a safe haven status are based on the Lodging-Plus System which provides a fixed amount for meals and incidental expenses (M&IE) and reimburses actual lodging costs up to a specified maximum amount. The applicable maximum per diem allowance is the rate prescribed for the safe haven location and depends on the age of the family members.

Example Family and safe haven location: (real dollar amounts depend on actual location)

Family Members: Mom, 14 year old, and 9 year old.

Per Diem rate: lodging \$100 per day and M&IE \$50 per day:

Family gets hotel suite for daily rate of \$175.00

1. For the first 30 days, beginning upon arrival at the safe haven, each family member 12 years of age and older will receive 100% of the fixed amount for M&IE and reimbursed for actual lodging costs not to exceed the maximum amount allowed in the safe haven per diem rate. Each family member under 12 years of age will receive up to 50% of that rate.

For lodging the Mom in our example family is entitled to \$100 per day, first child \$100 per day and second child \$50 per day which equals \$250 per day, but that is more than what she is paying for the hotel room. Therefore Mom will be reimbursed for the actual cost of the lodging which is \$175 per day.

For M&IE Mom is entitled to \$50, first child \$50, and second child \$25 totaling \$125. Family will receive the entire amount.

2. Beginning on the 31st day after the family arrives at their safe haven location and not to exceed 149 additional days, the amount allowed for lodging and M&IE (as described above)

is reduced to 60% for dependents 12 years of age and older and 30% for those under 12 years of age.

Now Mom is entitled to \$60 per day, first child \$60 per day and second child \$30 per day. The new authorized maximum lodging amount for this family is now \$150 per day. Therefore Mom will not be reimbursed for the entire cost of the hotel suite (\$175) because it now exceeds the maximum allowable rate for the family.

For M&IE the rate has also dropped and Mom is now entitled to \$30 per day, first child \$30 per day and second child \$15 per day equaling \$75 per day. Family will receive the entire amount.

3. If the reduced per diem allowance is inadequate, the family may apply for an increased allowance from the Per Diem Travel and Transportation Committee. Contact your FSR for assistance on submitting a request. Please note; a strong and reasonable justification is necessary. If the request is granted an Evacuation Allowance Determination (EAD) specifying the amount of the approved increased per diem will be issued. The EAD will be sent to you with a copy to the appropriate finance office. It is recommended after you receive a copy of the approval that you contact the finance office you have been working with to insure they received a copy.

Please note the following:

4. It is recommended that families NOT sign any contractual agreement for lodging while on evacuation status. When the evacuation is lifted the family may not be able to be released from the contract and may therefore be responsible for any remaining fees, deposits, and/or charges on the contract.
5. The lodging allowance is forfeited if the evacuated family resides with family or friends.
6. If a family temporarily leaves their safe haven location (to visit friends, go on a vacation, etc.) the family will still received lodging and M&IE allowances. However, if they are renting a place at their safe haven location, they will not get reimbursed for the hotel at the vacation site. But, if the family stops paying for lodging at their designated safe haven location and vacations someplace else, they will be reimbursed up to the allowable rate at their safe haven location, not at the vacation site.
7. Receipts for lodging are required, including lodging related items such as telephone and cable hook-up charges, deposit on a trash receptacle, etc.
8. Although receipts for M&IE are not required when you file your claim, it is recommended you save all receipts for the first month. Should you need to request an increase allowance after the rates have been reduced to 60/30% it will be necessary for you to show your expenses.
9. Furniture rental (NOT furniture purchase) is permitted as a reimbursable expense but is separate from the lodging allowance. Contact your FSR for more details.

PER DIEM – CIVILIAN

Some of the evacuation allowances for DoD command sponsored dependents of DoD state-side hired civilians are different than evacuation allowances of military families. Recommend DoD civilian families read the JTR, chap 6 (on-line) for more details of the Subsistence Expense Allowance (SEA) and other entitlements. Like the JFTR, safe haven location and family size will determine the amount of the allowable reimbursement.

Example Family and safe haven location: (actual dollar amounts depend on location)

Family Members: Mom, 14 year old, and 9 year old.

Per Diem rate: lodging \$100 per day and M&IE \$50 per day:

Family gets hotel suite for daily rate of \$175.00

- **COMMERCIAL RATE**

First 30 days: The first evacuee is authorized up to 100% of the lodging rate or 150% if they qualify for the Special Family Compensation (see JTR), plus 100% of the M&IE per day. Each additional evacuee 18 years and older is entitled to 100% M&IE and each evacuee under age 18 is entitled to 50% of M&IE. Please note, only the first evacuated dependent (usually the spouse) is authorized a lodging allowance and receipts are required for the lodging.

For lodging the Mom in our example family is entitled to \$150 per day (since there are three dependents in the family she qualifies for the Special Family Compensation.) Since the authorized maximum lodging amount for this family is \$150 per day, Mom will not be reimbursed for the entire cost of the hotel suite (\$175) because it exceeds the maximum allowable rate for the family.

For M&IE Mom is entitled to \$50, first child \$25, and second child \$25 totaling \$100. Family will receive the entire amount.

For days 31-179: The first evacuee's entitlement remains at 100% (or 150% if qualified for Special Family Compensation) of the lodging portion but the M&IE drops to 80% for each evacuee 18 and over and 40% for each evacuee under 18 years of age.

Mom is still entitled to \$150 per day for lodging but since the cost of the hotel suite (\$175) exceeds the maximum allowable lodging amount Mom will not be reimbursed for the entire cost of lodging.

For M&IE the rate has dropped and Mom is now entitled to \$40 per day, and both children are entitled to \$20 per day totaling \$80. Family will receive the entire amount.

- **NONCOMMERCIAL RATE**

If an evacuated family is residing with friends or family members, for the first 30 days only, they are entitled to a lodging allowance in an amount equal to 10% of the lodging per diem rate for their area.

The family is also entitled to the same M&IE entitlements as described above; 100/50% for the first 30 days and 80/40% for days 31-179.

UNACCOMPANIED BAGGAGE (UAB)

Evacuated families are entitled an UAB shipment in an amount not to exceed 350 pounds for each dependent age 12 and older, and 175 pounds for each dependent under age 12, with a maximum family limit of 1,000 pounds. The purpose of the shipment is for families to pack items they will need to sustain a temporary household, i.e. extra clothing, linens, toys, etc. However, please note that although UAB is shipped expeditiously, many times the shipment takes longer than expected, sometimes more than a month or two. Therefore do not ship “must-have” items such as medications, important papers, etc. in UAB.

AIR FREIGHT REPLACEMENT ALLOWANCE

If UAB cannot be shipped, or the family would rather not hassle with a shipment, an air freight replacement allowance may be authorized to help defray costs of items ordinarily part of the UAB that must now be purchased. The flat amounts are: one evacuated dependent-\$250.00; two evacuated dependents-\$450.00; three or more evacuated dependents-\$600.00. No receipts are required for this allowance. Note: If/when the evacuation is lifted and families are allowed to return to their OCONUS PDS, the family is then eligible to ship the purchased items as UAB using the weight restrictions listed above.

LOCAL TRANSPORTATION

Local transportation allowances are paid as a flat rate of \$25.00 per day, per family regardless of the number of dependents in the family. No receipts are required.

Command sponsored evacuated dependents are authorized reimbursement for transportation when required to travel from the safe haven location to obtain/renew a passport/military ID, or for medical screening required as a prerequisite to return to the member’s PDS.

FILING VOUCHERS

To receive reimbursement for evacuation expenses, families need to complete DD-Form 1351-2. Your FSR can assist with processing administrative and financial paperwork. Army and Navy families will work directly with Defense Finance and Accounting Services (DFAS). Air Force, Marine Corp and Coast Guard dependents need to communicate with a Service Finance Center, usually the one nearest to where the family is safe havening, or where their FSR is located. DoD civilian families need to contact their Service or Agency HQ for further instructions.

DEPENDENT VISITATION

Check with your sponsor's parent HQ to determine if dependent visitation (or an equivalent entitlement) is offered. For certain military members/civilian employee who's HQs do offer such a program, the policy is stated as such:

Dependent visitation may be authorized three months after the family has evacuated if the Service member/civilian employee is traveling to the United States, and four weeks if he/she is traveling to an overseas location, but no later than three months/four weeks before the end of the member/employee's PDS.

Dependent visitation provides transportation and/or payment for transportation expenses for the member/employee to visit his/her family that has been evacuated. No per diem, excess baggage or UAB charges or any expenses other than transportation are authorized.

CHANGING SAFE HAVEN LOCATION

Changing a safe haven location can be difficult. It requires requesting/notifying the Service, DFAS, amending the family's evacuation orders and establishing a new per diem rate based on the new location.

Unless the family is directed by their Service/agency to move to a new safe haven all transportation costs incurred as a result of moving to a new safe haven is the responsibility of the family/member.

If a family is simply moving from one address to another in the same location area (i.e. from a hotel to a temporary apartment a few miles away), the above procedure is not required. However, it is still necessary to contact the FSR to notify them of the change in address, phone number, etc.

For families who want to move to a new safe haven which will require traveling (either private or commercial transportation) from one safe haven location to another, the family will be responsible for all transportation expenses incurred in moving to the new safe haven location unless the Service has approved the request in advance and in writing.

Evacuees who initially stay with friends or relatives often later move to commercial accommodations as the evacuation period is extended. This could result in changing the entire safe haven location (see paragraph above), but will at the very least, require a change in safe haven allowances.

Evacuation allowances drop to 60/30% (for military dependents) or 80/40% for civilian dependents) of the per diem rate starting on the 31st day following the family's departure from the host country. It stays at the reduced rate throughout the duration of the evacuation, even if the family relocates to a new safe haven.

Contact your FSR if you are considering changing your safe haven location.

SECTION IV

PROCEDURES FOLLOWING TERMINATION OF EVACUATION

EVACUATION LIFTED

Every 30 days DoS reviews the situation in country to determine if it is safe for families to return to post. If it is not, the evacuation will be extended for another 30 days. When it is finally safe for families to return to the PDS, DoS will release a cable indicating on what day the evacuation will be lifted. DoD will follow with a memorandum allowing military families and DoD civilian families to return.

Please note: DoD military and civilian families must wait for the DoD memo authorizing their return to their PDS. This memo usually takes one to three additional days after the DoS cable is released.

The memorandum will also indicate how long evacuation allowances will continue, usually an additional 10 days from the date of the DoD memo. Within this 10-day time frame families must:

- Give notice to vacate their lodging
- Contact travel with their orders (and DoD memo) to receive return tickets
- Contact transportation to arrange for UAB to be packed and shipped
- Disenroll the children from school and obtain their records
- Settle the last claim or save all contact POC information (name of person you've been dealing with, phone and fax numbers, email and mailing address, etc) so the claim can be submitted after returning to the PDS
- Contact the FSR

If a family **wishes** to stay at their safe haven location beyond the 10 days following the lifting of the evacuation, they may do so, but per diem entitlements end after the 10th day. However, the evacuation order can still be used to obtain return airline tickets to the PDS even after this 10-day period.

There may be reasons a family **cannot** return to their PDS following the lifting of the evacuation. Examples of such reasons are:

- Service member/civilian employee has less than 60 days remaining on station and according to the JFTR/JTR the family's return travel is not authorized. This can be waived but only with OSD approval.
- An evacuated family member is receiving medical care and is either too ill to return, is awaiting the results of a medical test or is waiting for follow-up treatment (get a doctor's statement indicating what the issue is.) Dependent children are nearing the end of their school term (usually within 30 days) and need to finish out the year in their current school (get a copy of the school calendar.)

If a family cannot return to the PDS, they can request for their safe haven allowances to continue until such time they can return. The request, with justification and documentation must go through the appropriate approval offices (check with your FSR.) If approved, a written authorization will be

provided. A copy of this approval must be submitted with the claim that covers the time beyond the 10-day grace period following the evacuation's termination.

POST DECLARED UNACCOMPANIED

Should DoS determine it is not safe for families to return to the host country, it will declare the post unaccompanied and families will not be allowed to return to post. This decision can come at any time during the evacuation but usually does not happen until the evacuation has gone the entire 6 months. By law an evacuation cannot exceed 179 days. Families should be in contact with their FSR during these procedures.

For military families, if the post is declared unaccompanied they will be directed to find a designated place and can either:

- Convert their safe haven to a designated place
- Relocate to a permanent location at government expense

Families are given 30 days to make the necessary arrangements and settle into their designated place/permanent location. Orders will need to be cut and families may qualify for Dislocation Allowance (DLA.) Families can have their HHG shipped from station and/or non-temporary storage (NTS), as well as their car.

Once the family has established residency, or on day 31 following the date indicated on the DoD memorandum (whichever comes first) they will no longer be entitled to evacuation funding, but the sponsor will begin receiving a housing allowance and separation pay.

For DoD Civilian families, if the post is declared unaccompanied they should apply for Transitional Separation Maintenance Allowance (TSMA) if they are residing in commercial lodging and for Involuntary Separation Maintenance Allowance (ISMA) if they are residing in non-commercial lodging. For further instructions recommend families review the JTR, chapter 6 and contact their sponsor's office.

Please note: DoD families must wait for the DoD memorandum describing the post as unaccompanied and directing them to find a designated place. This memo comes from the Office of Undersecretary of Defense and is needed to generate orders. If families move prior to this memo they could be responsible for all moving expenses.

SECTION V

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What do I do if an evacuation is declared while I am traveling? Before you travel, ensure your sponsor's office has a complete itinerary of your trip. Also, make sure your papers and documents are gathered into one location and that someone in the office knows where they are located. You might even consider leaving the keys to your quarters and car with someone in the office or American Embassy. If word of evacuation reaches you contact your sponsor's OCONUS office or CONUS HQ.

Is an advance per diem authorized to evacuated dependents? An advance payment of per diem is authorized, normally up to 80% of the estimated entitlement for 30 days at the safe haven location. However, usually that advancement is taken out of the first submitted reimbursement claim. Therefore, if an advancement is needed, recommend the smallest amount possible be taken.

Why does the allowance decrease after 30 days? The per diem rates were established to cover the cost incurred when living in lodging other than your home. Expenses during the first month are higher when dependents are getting settled (i.e., staying in high-cost hotel while searching for more suitable lodging, cost of utility hook-up, purchase food staples, etc.) Following this initial period 60 percent of the per diem rate is usually adequate to cover the cost of meals, lodging and incidentals. A waiver to increase the reduced per diem can be requested.

Why do per diem allowances for dependents vary between families? Per Diem at a safe haven is based on (1) safe haven location, (2) number of dependents, (3) age of dependents, and (4) amount actually spent for lodging. Any one of these factors will change the amount of the allowance.

What expenses are covered by the lodging portion of the per diem paid? Besides the cost of a hotel room or apartment, the lodging portion of per diem covers other charges that may or may not be added separately to your bill such as maid service, mobile home parking, utility connection, use and disconnection charges (electrical, gas, water, oil, sewer, etc.), monthly telephone user fees (not individual call charges), and cost of special user fees (cable TV and/or internet connection.) Please note: Be very careful with signing any kind of lodging lease. Check to be sure it has a special clause permitting termination due to official government orders. Recommend you check with your finance office for specifics.

What entitlements are authorized to a dependent who turns 21 while at the sponsor's permanent duty station? A dependent who was moved at government expense to the member's PDS outside CONUS and who turns 21 years of age at the PDS or at a safe haven location, will be considered a dependent for transportation.

How will I receive medical care while I'm an evacuee? If you are a DoD civilian family member follow the guidelines for your personal health care coverage.

Military family members are entitled to TRICARE prime coverage while at your safe haven. The location of your safe haven will determine where you receive that coverage. Contact TRICARE (online or by phone), explain your circumstances and find out what is available in your location.

You can remain enrolled in your overseas TRICARE region for 60 days and still receive service anywhere in the US. Recommend after DoS makes the decision to extend the evacuation at the end of the first 30 days that you enroll in your local safe haven region sometime before the 59th day of your evacuation. If you do not re-enroll in the new area, and the evacuation extends beyond 60 days, your will be automatically converted to TRICARE Standard.

You may experience difficulties with TRICARE when trying to make an appointment in the States while still enrolled in your overseas TRICARE location. If you are unable to convince TRICARE that you are authorized to remain enrolled in your overseas TRICARE region, show the TRICARE official a copy of the TRICARE Portability Letter signed by the DoD Surgeon General. Ask your FSR where to acquire this letter.

If you are safe havening in a foreign OCONUS location there is no TRICARE Prime. TRICARE Prime in US OCONUS locations (i.e. Hawaii, Guam, etc.) varies so contact the regional TRICARE office for details. TRICARE Standard is always available but again, recommend you contact the regional TRICARE office for more guidance.

SECTION VI

EVACUATION CHECKLIST

Before Leaving Station

1. You will need a DD Form 1610 travel order for yourself and children (one form per family.) This form may have been completed upon your arrival on station, but double check to make sure it is done and ensure the safe haven location is current/accurate.
2. Admin personnel in your sponsor's office on station will acquire your airline tickets.
3. The PDS admin office will be sending necessary information regarding your family to your sponsor's HQ. You will need to provide him/her with a state-side POC, phone number and email address either at your safe haven location or for a person living in the US with whom you stay in contact. If the personal email address you are using at your PDS is accessible at your safe haven location, be sure and provide it as well.
4. Let the admin person know if someone will be meeting you at the airport of your final destination.
5. Prior to leaving country under evacuation orders, the admin personnel should provide you with a blank copy of a DD Form 2585 (which does not have to be completed prior to leaving post, but should be done before or shortly after arriving at you safe haven.) You should also receive a copy of the TRICARE Portability Letter.
6. Get an email address and web site from your children's school. Even if you enroll your children in a school in the states, it is important for them to keep up with their classes overseas if there's any chance you might return to your PDS assuming the evacuation is lifted.
7. Normally you are allowed two checked-through suitcases per person (check with the airlines to make sure there are no unusual restrictions.) Recommend you use the full amount of baggage allowed . Since you are on official government orders you should not be charged a baggage fee, but if you are it is reimbursable (keep the receipt.) However, you are not authorized excess baggage or overweight baggage.
8. You are also entitled to an unaccompanied baggage (UAB) shipment. Check with your sponsor's admin office (and this guide) for weight specifics and shipping procedures.
9. If you are unable or don't want to ship UAB you are then entitled to the Air Freight Replacement Allowance. Check with the admin office or this guide for specifics. Note: you get UAB or Air Freight Replacement Allowance, not both.
10. If no one is planning on meeting you at the airport of your final destination let your sponsor's office know so he/she can relay that information to the HQ repatriation POC back in CONUS.

After Arriving at Safe Haven

1. If at all possible a DoD representative should have met you at the airport of your safe haven destination (unless the HQ repatriation POC was notified that family or friends were meeting you.) This person will collect the DD Form 2585 (or let you know where to send it) and provide you with his/her phone number and/or email address (if not, ask for it.)
2. Within a day or two of arriving at your safe haven you will be contacted by a Family Support Representative (FSR) from either your sponsor's Service or DoD Civilian HQ. This person may be the same DoD representative that met you at the airport or someone different, but will stay in contact with you throughout the duration of the evacuation.
3. If you are not contacted within a day or two after arriving at your safe haven by the above individual call your sponsor's designated HQ repatriation POC and let him/her know.
4. Ask what finance office you need to work with for filing your vouchers either through your FSR or your spouses HQ Repatriation POC.
5. Contact your FSR if you are going to be away from your safe haven for more than a few days and provide a telephone number as to where you can be reached (or make sure your cell phone has coverage in that other location.)

General Reminders

1. Keep all lodging receipts (hotel bill, apartment rent, etc.) and receipts associated with lodging (electric bill, phone/cable hook-up charges, etc.)
2. If you realize the cost of your lodging will exceed the maximum allowable rate once the per diem drops, (which is most likely if you are a single evacuee (i.e. spouse only, meaning no children) contact your FSR for assistance in the process for requesting the lodging remain at a rate that will cover your costs. Please note: you must also show why you were not able to find lodging that stayed within the per diem rate (i.e. needed lodging close to public transportation, your safe haven location has seasonal rates which increased after the first 30 days, etc.)
3. You do not need receipts for your "in and around" transportation, or the air freight replacement allowance, but don't forget to list the transportation on each voucher, and the air freight replacement allowance on your first voucher.
4. The cost of renting furniture, car seat, vacuum cleaner, and other such items, is reimbursable (check with your FSR and finance officer), but the cost of purchasing these items is not; NO EXCEPTIONS. Keep all receipts.

5. If you are enrolled in TRICARE overseas you are eligible to use TRICARE Prime in the States. If the local TRICARE office questions your eligibility because you are not enrolled in the local region, contact your FSR or the regional TRICARE office. Because this happens quite often, it is recommended that you print a copy of the TRICARE portability letter and carry it with you. It is also recommended you enroll in the local TRICARE region if the evacuation is extended beyond 30 days.

6. Check the expiration date of your passport, visa, ID card, etc. If you think they might expire while you are out on evacuation give yourself plenty of time to renew them. Transportation to and from the passport/ID office is reimbursable.