



Service Member Guide

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Introduction

Congratulations and welcome to PFI. Your selection shows you have what it takes to make a significant impact to your selecting agency and the Department of Defense as a whole. This guide is intended to help answer the many questions you may have throughout your tour. Please take the time to review this document and take proactive action where necessary. If at any time you need additional assistance or cannot find the answer to your question, please call your PFI Coordinator.

PFI's Mission Statement is to support operational needs within eligible Department of Defense activities by facilitating reimbursable, voluntary active-duty tours of reserve component personnel from participating military services to fill unique or non-permanent human capital requirements.

PFI operates as a small and exclusive program that matches guard and reserve Service Members with defense agencies, providing the defense agencies a means to fill critical workforce needs. Defense working capital activities operate like a commercial business whereas the director of the activity "sells" services to other defense agencies. Just like a commercial business, the director must accurately select the raw materials and human capital in order to produce a competitive product. Service members selected for PFI tours are the human capital components to producing valuable and competitive outputs for the defense agency working capital fund.

Service Members are placed on United States Code, Title 10, 12301(d) orders. This type of order is not the same as a mobilization order and does not count as mobilization time. However, these tours include full active duty pay and allowances. During the course of the tour, all Service Members are accountable to the Uniformed Code of Military Justice (UCMJ) at the duty location where assigned.

You must do the best job possible to ensure the agency sees the value-added benefit of paying for a reservist versus the many other manpower options available to them. Specifically, it is critical that the agency realize the value-added benefit of having PFI as a partner in its current and future manpower fulfillment sources. You are the conduit for this relationship. You represent yourself, fellow reserve Soldiers and Airmen, and those who will follow after you. Your performance reflects on PFI and the Reserve Components as a whole. So, do your best, represent us well us well and enjoy your tour!

Useful Tips

The following are helpful suggestions you should keep in mind before you start and throughout your tour. Think ahead, be proactive, and stay involved.

Research - Do your homework and find out about your new agency and duty location. Reach out to them and ask about the work environment, local area, housing, school district, and other info to help you relocate. Use search engines to familiarize yourself with the new area. Also, review the section in this guide on PCS Travel as well as the Joint Travel Regulation (JTR). The more you do to prepare prior to your start date, the easier the transition will be.

DEERS - The Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System (DEERS) must be updated for all entitlements and pay to process accurately after you receive your orders. For the most part, this should be automatic, but you can verify within milConnect at <https://milconnect.dmdc.osd.mil/milconnect/> or at a local office. For Soldiers, you must have a valid temporary assignment within IPPS-A that matches your current ADOS orders. If they don't, contact your PFI Coordinator.

ID Cards - Once you're registered in the Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System (DEERS), ensure your Common Access Card (CAC) is up to date. If not, go to your nearest facility to receive a new one. To locate an issuing facility, go to: <https://www.dmdc.osd.mil/rsl/appj/site?execution=e1s1>

VA - If you are receiving VA disability benefits, they must be stopped while on active duty. You cannot receive VA benefits while on active duty. This can be done by submitting a VA Form 21-8951-2 Notice of Waiver of VA Compensation or Pension to Receive Military Pay and Allowances. Contact for the VA at 1-800-827-1000 or at https://www.va.gov/vaforms/form_detail.asp?FormNo=21-8951-2 for more information.

Readiness – Maintain your readiness before and during your tour. This includes all medical (PHA, HIV, dental, etc.), fitness, and standard mandatory training. Stay in contact with your unit

and provide them updated copies of training certificates or fitness tests. This will make your unit happy and assist in the extension process.

PCS Travel

Orders through PFI over 180 days are considered a Permanent Change of Station (PCS) and you will be entitled to move yourself, dependents, and household goods. There are many resources noted below to assist. You should also contact your nearest military transportation office and seek their assistance. Do not use DTS or your local unit to schedule travel. Contact SATO direct for airline ticketing and your nearest Transportation Management Office for HHG shipment.

Government Travel Card - Government Travel Card (GTC) use is mandatory for PCS expenses. SMs should work with parent unit to get a GTC issued at least 30-60 days prior to PCS and have the card limit set to PCS (higher dollar amount). If you already have a car, ensure it valid and active. SMs must work with POCs at both parent unit and gaining / supported customer agency to have GTC & DTS accounts transferred while on tour (and returned to parent unit upon REFRAD). PCS travel is **not** in DTS, however, any mission-related travel while on tour should be through DTS and funded / processed by the supported customer agency.

Planning - Familiarize yourself with <https://www.militaryonesource.mil/>. Under the topic 'Move your personal property' you can go to the Defense Personal Property System (DPS) account that will allow you to schedule your PCS move and get resources to facilitate your PCS move. Also visit the DFAS website for Army PCS: <https://www.dfas.mil/MilitaryMembers/travelpay/armypcs/Army-PCS-2/>. Most all your travel related entitlements can be found at this website.

Expenses - Travel costs for the Service Member and/or family from home of record to the duty location is your responsibility. You will be reimbursed for expenses in accordance with the [Joint Travel Regulations \(JTR\)](#) once you file a travel voucher (explained later in this section).

Advance Travel Pay - Advance travel payments may be authorized for some entitlements if the Member is not a Government Travel Charge Card (GTCC) holder or an advance is not specifically prohibited in the orders. If an Army member is a card holder, an advance travel payment may only be authorized for DLA. The GTCC must be used for all other PCS travel expenses. More information can be found on the DFAS website here:

<https://www.dfas.mil/MilitaryMembers/travelpay/armypcs/>

PCS Travel Voucher – To file your voucher, access the service specific site for your category and follow the steps as outlined. Errors take time to correct and delay payment, ensure you have all the proper documentation to avoid mistakes!

1. Army (all)

a. Smart Voucher - <https://smartvoucher.dfas.mil/consent> - or-

b. Travel Voucher Direct -

<https://corpweb1.dfas.mil/askDFAS/custMain.action?mid=5080>

2. Air Force

a. USAFR/ANG use the Comptroller Services Portal (CSP) -

<https://csp.cce.af.mil/#/profile>

b. IMA use my Force Support Squadron (myFSS) - <https://myfss.us.af.mil/>

Finance

Army – If you are not located near an Army Military Pay Office (AMPO), your PFI Coordinator has already submitted your orders to finance to start your initial pay. Review your LES to ensure everything is accurate. If you need to make changes to dependents or marital status, contact your unit to complete a DA5960. If you have any finance related issues while on tour, please contact your coordinator for assistance.

If you are located on an Army installation, submit your orders to the local AMPO to start pay and for all other related finance issues. If you are entitled special incentive pay (i.e. hazardous duty, family separation pay, etc), your command will need to submit the appropriate paperwork (DA 4187) to finance. If you have questions, contact your PFI Coordinator.

Air Force – To start your active duty pay, you will need to send a certified copy of your orders to your home unit Military Pay Office. A second certified copy showing your departure will need to be submitted to your military pay office after the end of your tour.

Leave

In accordance with AR 600-8-10 and AFI 36-3003 Service Members earn 30 days of leave a year with pay and allowances at a rate of 2 ½ days a month. It is up to you and your supervisor to manage those days while on tour to ensure leave is used responsibly. Monitor your LES to ensure leave is charged and there is a proper balance. Supervisors hold the discretion to approve or disapprove leave based on mission.

Army – Soldiers should submit an absence request via IPPS-A. See Appendix A for more details. A DA 31 can be used for local approval and substantiating documentation with IPPS-A. Leave and passes will be granted in accordance with AR 600-8-10. If you notice leave is not being charged on your LES, contact your PFI Coordinator.

Air Force - Prior to departing on leave, Airmen should have their AF IMT 988, Part I (Leave Request/Authorization) signed by their supervisor and then faxed/emailed to their Home Unit Military Pay Office to obtain a leave authorization number. After the end of your leave, complete Part III of the AF IMT 988 and fax/email it to your Home Unit Military Pay Office.

Evaluations

Army - It is your responsibility to ensure that you obtain a proper evaluation for your time on active duty. You may have a civilian rater and they will need your help in counseling and completing the evaluation. You should take responsibility for this and inform the supervisor of regulatory requirements. The PFI office can provide recommendations on rating chain or processing.

Air Force - Evaluations remain the responsibility of your Reserve/Guard supervisor to accomplish. Your ADOS supervisor has the option of completing AF Form 77, Letter of Evaluation (LOE), to provide feedback to your Reserve/Guard supervisor to be included in your official Enlisted Evaluation Report (EPR). Letters of Evaluations assist raters in preparing officer and enlisted evaluations and are most often used when the ratee is under the supervision of someone other than the official rater. Raters may request LOEs from deployed/TDY supervisors or former supervisors with less than 120 calendar days of supervision during the evaluation reporting period.

Awards

As a Service Member on active duty with your respective DoD agency, you may be eligible for awards based on your duty and performance. All award actions should be handled through the agency you are on tour with. Soldiers may qualify for the Army Good Conduct Medal under Para 4-3, Army Regulation 600-8-22. You should work this award in conjunction with your agency and home unit. This is to ensure you are not awarded the Reserve Component Good Conduct Medal for the same time period.

Out Processing

Service Members are required to out process, whether it is a result of an early release, mission completion, or their order end date. Congress has mandated all SMs serving over 180 days on active duty must complete a DoD Transition Assistance Program.

<https://www.dodtap.mil/>

Additionally, Service members who are separating and plan to file for disability can file their claim before separation. This is done through the Veterans Affairs (VA) Benefits Delivery at Discharge (BDD) program. This program allows Service members to apply for VA disability compensation benefits prior to separation. Claims must be filed between 180 to 90 days prior to separation. Visit <https://www.va.gov> for more information or to get started.

Army –To receive a DD214 at the completion of your tour, you will need to contact the nearest military transition center a month or two before your end date. If you have been on orders for more than 180 days, you will need to complete the online series of courses to help transition back to the civilian workforce. For additional info and links to training, visit <https://www.dodtap.mil/dodtap/app/home>. This is a mandatory step in order to receive your DD214. Most transition centers will require the following documents: DA 2648, DA 2958, Leave Certification Memo, approved DA 31 (if applicable), and a Clearing Memo from your agency. Always call to verify and schedule an appointment.

Soldiers, who will have served less than 180 days but at least 90 days, are not required to complete TAP; however, in order to receive a DD 214 Soldiers must coordinate directly with the nearest transition office (or after orders work w/their state or HRC). A DD 220 is typically for Soldiers who have served less than 90 days.

Transition Centers can issue DD 214s to service members before or on the separation date but not after the separation date. If you fail to complete SFL-TAP and receive a DD214 prior to your end date, USAR (TPU/IRR/IMA) Soldiers will need to request a DD 214 via IPPS-A as a Personnel Action Request (PAR) to the workflow listed here: Template ID: 000000000048463; Template Name: RC_HRC_RPMD_ORD_PAB_SEPDOCS; Description: DD Form 214; Business Unit: ARCCA. Guard Soldiers should contact their state headquarters.

Soldiers traveling outside the 50-mile radius to the nearest installation to out process may seek a travel reimbursement from their assigned activity. Any reimbursement for travel will be submitted via DTS. Soldiers will work directly with their supervisor when submitting DTS requests to ensure preapproval and compliance with local policy. Your activity/department is responsible for funding any TDY associated with out processing.

Air Force – All Airmen will conduct out processing with their home units. Please contact your Force Support Squadron before the end of your tour for out-processing and DD Form 214 instructions.

Benefits (Army/ Air Force)

You will be placed on United States Code, Title 10, 12301(d) orders. This is not considered a mobilization order and does not count as mobilization time. However, these orders include full active duty pay and allowances. During the course of the tour, you may also become eligible for some additional benefits mentioned below.

VRA Eligibility - Veterans Recruitment Appointment (formerly Veterans Readjustment Appointment) is a special authority by which agencies may, if they wish, appoint an eligible veteran without competition. The candidate does not have to be on a list of eligible candidates, but must meet the basic qualification requirements for the position. For more information on veteran preferences in federal hiring, visit: <https://www.usajobs.gov/Help/working-in-government/unique-hiring-paths/veterans/>

Reduced of Retirement Age - The National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for Fiscal Year 2008 enacted the Reduced Retirement Age for Reserve Component (RC) Soldiers based on Active Duty (AD) performance. This reduces the retirement age for Reserve Component (RC) Soldiers from 60 to a lesser age, but not below age 50, for those who have served on Active Duty (AD) in an eligible status on or after 29 Jan 08. Your orders through PFI qualify for this reduced retirement. For more information, visit: <https://www.hrc.army.mil/content/REDUCED%20AGE%20RETIREMENT>

Post 9/11 GI Bill - Veterans who have served at least 90 days of active duty service after September 10, 2001 and received an honorable discharge will qualify for the Post-9/11 GI Bill. To qualify for the full benefit a Veteran must have served at least 3 years of active duty after September 10, 2001 for more information visit: <http://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/>

Service Members Civil Relief Act SCRA- The Service member's Civil Relief Act (SCRA) SCRA provides a wide range of protections for individuals called to active duty. It is intended to postpone or suspend certain civil obligations to enable service members to devote full attention to duty and relieve stress on the family members of those deployed service members. A few

examples of such obligations you may be protected against are: outstanding credit card debt, mortgage payments, taxes, or terminations of a lease. For more information visit:

<https://scra.dmdc.osd.mil/>

Medical and Dental coverage - Active duty service members and their families (spouses and children registered in DEERS) are eligible for TRICARE. At the end of your Title 10 tour, you will NOT qualify for Transitional Assistance Management Program (TAMP), your health benefits end the day of your orders. You should begin to consider healthcare options before the end of your tour in order to ensure coverage for you and your family.

Military Buy-back for Federal Employees – If you are or planning on becoming a federal employee, you can buy back your active-duty military periods, this is known as a military service deposit. A military service deposit is a payment made to the civilian retirement fund to allow creditable military service to be used toward civilian retirement eligibility and in annuity computations. All active-duty military service is potentially creditable for retirement purposes. For more information, visit the DFAS site:

<https://www.dfas.mil/CivilianEmployees/militaryservice/militaryservicedeposits/>

Resources (Army/ Air Force)

Military OneSource - Military OneSource is a confidential Department of Defense-funded program providing comprehensive information on every aspect of military life at no cost to active duty, Guard and Reserve Component members, and their families. Information includes, but is not limited to, deployment, reunion, relationship, grief, spouse employment and education, parenting and childhood, and much more. <http://www.militaryonesource.mil/>

MilConnect - With milConnect, DoD affiliates and beneficiaries manage their benefits and records through a convenient self-service portal. Integrated applications give them secure access to many of their personal and personnel records held in the Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System (DEERS). <https://www.dmdc.osd.mil/milconnect/>

MyPay - For pay, entitlements, debts deductions or tax information related inquiries visit <https://mypay.dfas.mil/mypay.aspx>

USERRA - The Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act of 1994 (USERRA) is a Federal law that establishes rights and responsibilities for uniformed Service members and their civilian employers. Learn more here: <https://www.dol.gov/vets/programs/userra/>

PFI – As always, your best resource is your PFI Coordinator. We have handled many different situations and issues over the years and can be a quick resource to answer a question or point you in the right direction. Feel free to email us anytime at: dfas.indianapolis-in.zh.mbx.pfi@mail.mil.

APPENDIX A – Soldier Leave Instructions for IPPS-A

When possible, absence requests should be submitted at least 10 days prior to the start for CONUS and 45 days prior for OCONUS requests. With IPPS-A Go-Live it is the responsibility of the member to submit, update, or cancel their absence requests. If a Soldier does not adjust the absence before their leave ends, the Soldier will be charged for the initial requested period and will need to request a leave balance adjustment for days charged in error.

Steps

1. Soldier log into <https://hr.ippsa.army.mil/psp/hcpdc/?cmd=login>
2. Click the Pay-Absence-Incent-Ded (PAID) tile
3. Selection Criteria Page
 - a. Employee ID
 - i. Default value
 - b. Entry Type
 - i. Absences
 - c. Entry ID
 - i. Default value (null)
 - d. Status
 - i. Initial
 1. Note that you can leave the status blank and just click add to start a new request
4. Absences Page
 - a. Absences
 - i. Absence Type
 1. Select appropriate type
 - ii. Absence Reason
 1. Select appropriate type
 - iii. Begin/End Date (chargeable dates)
 1. Input or select begin date
 2. Input or select end date
 3. **The begin and end dates are to be used to compute chargeable time that will affect a Member's accrued balance for chargeable absences**
 - b. Additional Information
 - i. Reason Code
 1. Default value
 - ii. Departure/Return Date
 1. Automatically populates
 - a. Manual input allowed
 - b. **If departing the day prior to the begin date after working half of the day or more, adjust the date of departure to the day before the begin date**
 - c. **If returning on a regularly scheduled non-duty day or on an official Federal holiday the end date (item 4.iii) should read the day before the return date**
 - iii. Supervisor ID
 1. Click magnifying glass

- a. Search for your supervisor or designed approver in accordance with local policy
 - b. Click name in search results
 2. Click the Search button
- iv. Contact Name
 1. Enter the legal name of contact that you are visiting, person traveling with you or a person who is able to reach you while you are on leave
- v. Contact Phone
 1. Input a phone number
- vi. Address Line 1
 1. Physical leave address
 - a. **Soldiers planning to travel outside the US for any reason must obtain clearance by using the DoD Foreign Clearance Guide (FCG) at <https://www.fcg.pentagon.mil/>**
 - b. Soldier will provide the following IRT foreign travel
 1. The Aircraft and Personnel Automated Clearance System (APACS) approval number
 2. ISOPREP (or confirmation that it has been completed)
 3. The travel clearance manager (or equivalent) at the Soldier's duty location will assist the Soldier in completing the above
- vii. Geographical Location Code (GEOLOC)
 1. Expand Search Criteria
 2. Input necessary information
 - a. Recommend adding country, state and city at a minimum
 3. Click the Search button
- viii. Postal Code
 1. Enter zip code
- ix. Comments
 1. Input any applicable comments
 2. **If the departure/return dates were adjusted, input comment noting working partial day on XX.XX.XXXX or returning on a non-duty day**
- c. Attachments
 - i. **Attachments**
 1. Upload any necessary attachments such as approved DA31
- d. Approval Map
 - i. Save for later
5. Submission
 - a. Scroll up to Submit button
 - b. Click Submit
 - i. Status changes to pending until actioned by approver
6. Approver receives notification to take action on the absence request
7. Member receives absence request status updates through notification alerts
 - a. Denied requests
 - i. IPPS-A no longer has the pushback option for absence requests
 - ii. The request will reflect as denied if corrections are required
 - iii. To review the notes, open the absence request, locate approval map and click
 1. The approval page will open and the comments will be visible

8. Soldier prints Absence Request - Authorization and Approval Data
 - a. Pay-Absence-Incent-Ded (PAID) tile
 - b. Selection Criteria
 - i. Entry Type
 1. Absences
 - ii. Status
 1. Approved
 - iii. Click Search
 - iv. Locate absence to print
 1. Select Amend/View icon
 - v. Print
9. Process complete; nothing else follows