

Change in Official Duty Station (ODS) Tool Kit

APHIS is committed to supporting a balance between a family-friendly workplace and a results-focused Agency which expects its mission to be carried out as efficiently and effectively as possible. When employees are faced with significant life events and it is in the Agency's best long-term interest, alternatives to traditional duty station designations may be considered. While it is expected that requests for changes to Official Duty Stations (ODS) will be rare, they may be considered under the following circumstances:

- Care for a family member with a health crisis;
- Recovery from a personal health crisis;
- Relocation of a partner/spouse; or
- Another significant life event

This tool kit consists of the following parts:

1. Employee application packet
2. Supervisory review packet
3. Decision Documentation
4. A Change in Official Duty Station Agreement

Authority to approve employee-generated requests for a change in the ODS is delegated to the Deputy Administrator in each program. In consultation with the respective program management team, the Deputy Administrator will make the final decision for approval or disapproval of the request. The authority to approve these requests cannot be re-delegated.

First-line supervisors will be responsible for forwarding requests through their chains of command for consideration and will also be responsible for notification to the employee when a decision has been reached. Approved requests will require completion of an agreement, which will be maintained and monitored by the first-line supervisor.

This does not apply to personnel assigned overseas by APHIS or personnel from APHIS on detail with another Federal Agency or international organization.

Employee Information

When a life event occurs which may necessitate consideration of a change in official duty station (ODS), the following criteria must be addressed in a written justification and submitted along with the application to your immediate supervisor for his/her consideration. [Use MRP Form 372, Employee Application for Change in Official Duty Station \(ODS\)](#). The justification must include information/explanation of:

- **Your Personal Situation**
 - Explain the reason(s) for the request, e.g., medical, spousal/significant other, job relocation.
 - Identify if the request is for a permanent or temporary change in ODS. If the request is temporary, provide the beginning and ending dates.
 - Explain any adverse impacts to you and your family if the request is not approved.
 - Discuss your personal suitability for a change in ODS. Identify any personal work-related characteristics and performance accomplishments that you would like considered when evaluating the request.
- **Cost to the Agency**
 - Prepare a cost-benefit analysis (e.g., examples or estimates of cost savings, cost avoidance, travel expenses, equipment needed).
- **Benefit to the Mission**
 - Mission-related benefit(s) to APHIS, both tangible and intangible, to include any value added to the Agency's work processes and/or procedures.
 - Any adverse Agency impacts to current work projects, loss of expertise/skills, missed project obligations and commitments, staff impacts, or loss of project funding if the request is denied.
 - Method to evaluate employee's work assignments.
- **Communication Needs**
 - Time zone considerations, if any.
 - How official communication needs will be achieved or issues associated with the change in ODS.
- **IT Requirements**
 - IT equipment needed from the Agency,
 - IT support, including repair and maintenance of laptop, PC or other Agency equipment, maintenance of phone and high speed internet connectivity,
 - Security of IT information
- **Any Other Significant Factors that need to be Considered**

Supervisory Information/Worksheet

Upon receipt of an employee request for change in ODS, carefully evaluate and assess the applicable areas below. [Complete MRP Form 370, Managerial Assessment Worksheet for Change in Official Duty Station \(ODS\)](#) which will assist you in your evaluation process. Both pieces of the consideration process will help you determine the feasibility of the request. Please address any questions or need for clarification with the employee. Once you have completed your assessment, please forward the signed package through your chain of command to the Program Deputy Administrator for decision. [Your Deputy Administrator will use MRP Form 373, Decision Document for Change in Official Duty Station \(ODS\) to document his/her decision.](#) Additionally, the flow chart below will help you determine the appropriate route requests/decisions should take depending upon the reason for the request and the requested length of the ODS change.



Request for
Voluntary Change of

Flow Chart that will be placed on web with the above Form and HRD Guidance (please double click to access):

1. Evaluate the Written Justification

Consider the following points when evaluating viability of a request:

- **Cost to the Agency:**
 - Cost-benefits to the Agency (e.g., cost savings, cost avoidance, travel expenses, equipment needed).
 - Any salary and other benefits increase, decrease or neutrality due to the change in ODS.
- **Benefit to the Mission:**
 - Tangible and intangible mission-related benefit(s) to APHIS, if any, to include any value added to the Agency's work processes and/or procedures.
 - Any adverse Agency impacts to current work projects, loss of expertise/skills, missed project obligations and commitments, staff impacts, or loss of project funding if the request were denied.
 - Supervisor's evaluation of the employee's work assignments.
- **IT Requirements:**
 - Assess IT requirements and the need for IT support. Identify the APHIS office closest to the proposed duty station where IT support would be obtained.
 - Security of IT information
- **Other Significant Factors to Consider:**
 - Ability to maintain security of PII.
 - The first level supervisor's certification that the duties of the position are portable and that the changing of the employee's duty station will NOT adversely affect other employees.
 - The employee's performance and rating.
 - Any disciplinary issues.

- Any reasonable accommodation issues.
- Any other factors presented.

Forms to be used for this Process:

- a. [MRP 370, Managerial Assessment Worksheet for Change in Official Duty Station \(ODS\)](#)
- b. [MRP 371, Change in Official Duty Station \(ODS\) Agreement](#)
- c. [MRP 372, Employee Application for Change in Official Duty Station \(ODS\)](#)
- d. [MRP 373, Decision Document for Change in Official Duty Station \(ODS\)](#)