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HRDG 4630 - Absence and Leave - Section I

Last Modified:

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Definition

Home leave is leave granted with pay in addition to any other types of leave. It is earned by service abroad (time served as a Federal employee on or after September 6, 1960, at a duty station outside the United States and the employee's residence if the place of residence is in the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico or a territory or possession of the United States). Home leave is intended for use in the U.S., in the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, or in the territories or possessions of the U.S.

Employees stationed outside the 50 States and the District of Columbia are eligible to earn home leave if one or more of the following conditions are met. Employees must be/have been:

Eligibility

- Directly recruited or transferred by the Federal Government from the U.S., including transfers to Puerto Rico,
- Directly recruited or transferred by the Federal Government from Puerto Rico or possessions of the U.S. for employment outside the area of recruitment or the area from which they were transferred,
- Persons who are normally residents of the area concerned and are discharged from service in the Armed Forces of the U.S. to accept employment with the Federal Government.

For positions which require that employees accept assignments anywhere in the world, there must be evidence of a need, by the organizational entity, for foreign post rotation and an intent to require rotation of the employee. The Division/Program must document the need and intent with the following procedure:

**Documentation
of Need for
Foreign Post
Rotation**

Step Action:

- 1 Provide the employee with a memo notifying him/her of foreign post rotation.
- 2 Obtain a signed service agreement from the employee.
- 3 Prepare SF-52, Request for Personnel Action, to reassign the employee.
Send a copy of the memo and signed service agreement
- 4 along with the SF-52 to the servicing personnel office (SPO).
- 5 Notify the employee's timekeeper of home leave entitlement.

Creditable service for home leave includes:

**Creditable
Service for
Home Leave**

- Full credit for the day of arrival and the day of departure;
- Absence in a nonpay status up to 2 workweeks within each 12 months of service abroad;
- Authorized leave with pay;
- Any period of detail; and
- Time spent in the Armed Forces of the U.S. which interrupts otherwise creditable service. The service is included for eligibility, but not for leave earning purposes.

Creditable service for home leave accrual begins on the date an employee:

**Date Home
Leave Begins**

- Enters on duty (if recruited abroad);
- Arrives at overseas post following recruitment in the United States for service abroad; or
- Performs duties in an area outside the U.S. and outside the area of recruitment or area from which transferred, when performance of duty is required en route to an overseas post of regular assignment.

Creditable service for home leave accrual ends on the date an employee:

**Date Home
Leave Ends**

- Is separated from duty while abroad;
- Departs from the post of regular assignment for a transfer to, or reassignment in the U.S.; or
- Is given final administrative approval to effect a change in duty station when the employee is on detail or on leave in the U.S., or in an area (Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, or a possession of the U.S.) from which the employee was recruited or transferred.

For each 12 months of service abroad, home leave will be earned at the following rates:

Home Leave Earning Rates	If an employee:	Then the amount of home leave earned shall be:
	Accepts an appointment or occupies a position for which the agency has prescribed that the incumbent accept assignments anywhere in the world	15 days
	Serves with a U.S. mission to a public international organization	
	Serves at a post for which payment of a foreign or nonforeign (but not tropical) differential of 20 percent or more is authorized by law or regulation	
	Is not included in the above criteria and is serving at a post for which payment of a foreign or territorial (but not tropical) differential between 10% and 20% is authorized	10 days
	Is included in any of the above and has civilian service abroad interrupted by a tour of duty in the Armed Forces of the U.S. for the duration of such tour	0 days
	Is not included in any of the above	5 days

Home leave may accumulate without limitation. An employee may not receive a lump sum payment for unused accumulated home leave, nor may it be used as terminal leave. An employee will earn home leave for each month of creditable service abroad in the following amounts:

	MONTHS OF SERVICE	ACCRUAL RATE		
		(Days for each 12 months)		
		15 Days	10 Days	5 Days
Accumulating Home Leave	1	1	0	0
	2	2	1	0
	3	3	2	1
	4	5	3	1
	5	6	4	2
	6	7	5	2
	7	8	5	2
	8	10	6	3
	9	11	7	3
	10	12	8	4
	11	13	9	4
	12	15	10	5

Changing Leave Earning Rates

An employee who moves between different leave-earning rates during a month of service abroad, or has a change in differential during a month, will be credited for the month at the accrual rate to which he/she would have been entitled to before the change.

The minimum charge for home leave is 1 day. Home leave may be granted for use only in the United States, its territories, or Puerto Rico:

**Granting and
Charging Home
Leave**

- After an employee has completed 24 months of continuous service abroad, or after 18 months of continuous service abroad if the assigned tour abroad was for only 18 months;
- Only when an employee is expected to return to an assignment abroad; and
- Within 6 months after an employee returns from service abroad if he/she is expected to return to service abroad immediately or upon completion of an assignment in the United States. If home leave is not granted at such time, it may not be granted until an employee completes another substantial period of service abroad. This period of service may not be less than the tour prescribed for the employee's post of assignment unless an earlier grant of home leave is justified by an authorized official .

**Applying to Use
Home Leave** An employee must request to use home leave by submitting an application for leave to the appropriate approving official.

Home leave regulations are found in Title 5 United States Code 6304[b], 6305; Title 5 Code of Federal Regulations Part 630 Subpart F; Human Resources Desk Guide (HRDG) Subchapter 4630, Absence and Leave; and various Comptroller General (CG) and Office of Personnel Management (OPM) decisions. These regulations and decisions state that:

In order to take home leave, you must be working abroad (outside of the 50 states) and eligible to earn 45 days of annual leave.

In addition to using the guidance found in HRDG Subchapter 4630, Absence and Leave, Section I, supervisors may use the chart below when making home leave determinations:

If the employee's permanent residence is:	And s/he is recruited to work in:	And s/he is	Then s/he:
U.S. - stateside, excluding Puerto Rico (P. R.)	P. R.	Eligible to accrue 45 days annual leave	Is entitled to home leave back to the U.S. - stateside.
U.S. - stateside	Guam, Virgin Islands, Europe etc.	Eligible to accrue 45 days annual leave	Is entitled to home leave back to the U.S. - stateside.
P. R.	P. R.	NOT eligible to accrue 45 days annual leave	Is NOT entitled to home leave.
P. R.	Guam, Virgin Islands, Europe etc.	Eligible to accrue 45 days annual leave	Is entitled to home leave back to P. R.
P. R.	The U.S. - stateside	NOT eligible to accrue 45 days annual leave	Is NOT entitled to home leave back to P. R.

Refund for Home Leave

An employee is indebted for home leave used and must make a refund to the Government when he/she fails to return to service abroad after a period of leave or after completion of an assignment in the United States. The amount of refund to the Government shall be equal to the travel expenses.

The authorizing agency official will provide documentation to the appropriate office indicated below. That office will request the National Finance Center to bill the employee for the amount of travel indebtedness.

Agency: Office:

AMS	Administrative office as designated by the respective program USDA, APHIS, M&B, FSO
APHIS	Accounting Team Minneapolis, MN

A refund for home leave may be waived if:

Waiver of Refund

- An employee has completed 6 months of service in an assignment in the U.S. following a period of leave; and
- The appropriate official determines that the employee's failure to return to duty is due to compelling personal reasons (such as physical or mental health), circumstances over which the employee has no control, or it is in the public interest not to return the employee abroad.

The approving official will provide a copy of the documentation granting the waiver to the SPO.

**Transfer and
Recredit o
Home Leave**

Accumulated home leave will be transferred or recredited when an employee:

- Moves between agencies, or
- Is reemployed in the Federal service without a break in service of more than 90 days.

Travel Time

An employee who is authorized to accumulate up to 45 days of annual leave may be granted travel time without charge to leave for the time from his/her duty post to a place of residence and return if he/she is serving outside the U.S. or in the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico or a territory of the U.S., and his/her place of residence is elsewhere.

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