

# OVERSEAS ALLOWANCE



**18 FSS/FSMCE**  
**Kadena Air base**

# What is an overseas allowance?

Overseas allowances (except the advance pay) are not automatic salary supplements; nor are they entitlements. They are specifically intended to be recruitment incentives for U.S. citizen civilian employees living in the United States to accept Federal employment in a foreign area. If a person is already living in the foreign area, that inducement is normally unnecessary.

Overseas allowances are authorized in Okinawa as follows:

- \*\* Advance pay
- \*\* Foreign Transfer Allowance (FTA)
- \*\* Temporary Quarters Subsistence Allowance (TQSA)
- \*\* Living Quarters Allowance (LQA)
- \*\* Post Allowance (PA)
- \*\* Separate Maintenance Allowance (SMA)
- \*\* Student Education Travel (SET)

## Advance Pay

When you are assigned to a post in a foreign area, you may request advance pay of up to three months of your net base pay. Salary advances may be made three weeks before your estimated departure or up to two months after your arrival on Okinawa. Repayment is by interest free payroll deductions over a maximum of 26 pay periods (12 months) beginning with the first pay period after receipt. Since the first paycheck may be delayed on assignment overseas, it's strongly recommended employees request advance pay if they do not have cash reserves to cover expenses their transition. Those desiring advance pay should contact the processing civilian personnel office for assistance. Getting settled in a foreign country presents many challenges. Employees may need several thousand dollars for such things as a car purchase, rental security deposit, first month's rent, utility deposits, etc. An advance in pay is available to help meet these needs.

**\*\* Advance pay is not allowed for employees returning to the U.S.**

## Foreign Transfer Allowance (FTA)

FTA is authorized only when there is a PCS move from the US to overseas area. It will reimburse lodging, meals, laundry cleaning and pressing expenses in temporary quarters for employees and their family members for up to ten days from the date of HHG pick up to **before final departure from your permanent duty station in the US** to a post in a foreign area. Meals will be reimbursed flat rate of per diem of your permanent duty station in the states. Receipts are required for only lodging. Reimbursement of FTA will be processed once you arrive here at Kadena AB.

## **Temporary Quarters Subsistence Allowance (TQSA)**

TQSA is granted to employees for the **reasonable** cost of temporary lodging, meals and laundry/dry cleaning expenses incurred by the employee and family members. TQSA is intended to assist in covering the average cost of adequate but not elaborate or unnecessarily expensive accommodations in a hotel or other transient quarters at the post of assignment, plus **reasonable** meal and laundry expenses.

**In-bound:** Up to 90 days after arrival at a new post in a foreign area. TQSA payment is given two options:

Bi-weekly payment: Employee may receive TQSA payment based on daily lodging rate plus flat meal rate for sponsor & family member bi-weekly until move into permanent quarters. **Employees must inform move-in date into the permanent quarters to Kadena CPF, Allowance Section immediately to avoid unnecessary overpayment.** At the time of termination, TQSA reconciliation is required.

Lump sum payment: Lump sum TQSA payment may be made if an employee has been assigned to a move-in date to a permanent quarters within 45 days of arrival. Employee must provide AF Form 3125, TQSA daily itemization of expense claimed, lodging and meal receipts for reimbursement to Kadena CPF at Allowance Section after move into permanent quarters.

**Out-bound:** 10 days is authorized prior to departure from Kadena AB. Upon receipt of PCS orders, contact allowance section for TQSA briefing. Employee should submit AF Form 3125, TQSA daily itemization of expenses claimed, lodging and meal receipts to Kadena CPF, Allowance Section prior to departure.

AF Form 3125 is located at:

<http://kadenaservices.com/CPE/US/>

**\*\* Post Allowance is not authorized while receiving TQSA**

**The following is TQSA meal receipts requirement policy:**

### **RECEIPTS REQUIREMENTS**

**Receipts are not required for any single meal, per person that does not exceed these meal rates.**

#### **MEAL RATES:**

	<b>ADULT</b>	<b>CHILD (Age 12 and below)**</b>
<b>BREAKFAST:</b>	<b>\$6.00</b>	<b>\$5.00</b>
<b>LUNCH:</b>	<b>\$10.00</b>	<b>\$6.00</b>
<b>SUPPER:</b>	<b>\$15.00</b>	<b>\$10.00</b>

**Receipts are required for expenses claimed for TQSA to include lodging, laundry and for any single meal purchase that exceeds the above rates.**

**\*\* Adult Meal Rates apply to children whose ages are 13 and older.**

## **Living Quarters Allowance (LQA)**

Employees recruited from the US are granted LQA when government-owned or leased quarters are not provided free of charge. LQA is designed to reimburse substantially all costs for suitable, adequate, (not extravagant) living quarters, including rent, agency fee, and utilities, (electricity, gas, kerosene, water, and trash collection) up to a maximum limit for each location established by the Department of State. Employees do not receive LQA reimbursement for rental or utility deposits these are refundable. It is intended to cover most, but not necessarily all expenses. LQA maximum rates are based on grade of the employee and how many dependents are living with the employee and are adjusted periodically to correspond with the yen/dollar exchange rate. The maximum rate is subject to change without advance notice.

It is important for individuals to know that LQA is a reimbursement, based on actual expenses. It is adjusted every pay period for changes in monetary exchange rates. For the first year, LQA will be paid based on estimated rent and utility amount. After the first year and each year thereafter, employees are required to submit a reconciliation along with the actual receipts for their utility expenses. If there are major changes to expenses during the year, the employee should notify Kadena CPF, Allowance Section to request an adjustment to avoid under-or over-payments. LQA is not taxable.

Employees need to be aware that LQA records are subject to audit at any time to determine if reimbursements match actual expenses. To avoid under- or over-payments, it is incumbent on the employee to maintain accurate records of expenses and periodically review their Leave and Earning Statements. Unexplained changes to LQA reimbursements should be reported immediately to Kadena CPF, Allowance Section. When it is determined that reimbursements exceed actual expenses the employee will receive a debt notification from DFAS. Alternatively, when actual expenses exceed reimbursements, an employee will receive payment for the difference.

It is also important that employees maintain their records after they leave their overseas assignment. As stated above, LQA audits, similar to other Government financial audits, may occur anytime.

### **How is LQA paid?**

LQA is based on the annual cost of living quarters and is paid biweekly. The annual LQA cost is divided by the number of days in the calendar year to obtain a daily rate and then multiplied by 14 to obtain a biweekly rate. If the annual costs exceed the employee's maximum LQA rate, the maximum LQA rate is divided by the number of days in the calendar year to obtain a daily rate and the multiplied by 14 to obtain a biweekly rate. It is adjusted every pay period for changes in monetary exchange rates. The LQA exchange rate is used the beginning day of pay period, by the State Department Rates.

## **LQA Reconciliation**

The Department of State requires LQA reconciliation upon occupancy of new quarters after the first year. Employee must submit the rent and utility receipts for 12 months to Kadena CPF, Allowance Section. If the employee's expenses were greater than the LQA actually paid, you will receive a reimbursement of the difference subject to your maximum amount authorized. If, however, the employee's expenses were less than what you received, the employee will be required to pay the difference to the Government. After the reconciliation, an adjustment will be made between the amount of LQA paid to the employee and the actual expense the employee incurred for next year.

## **Post Allowance (PA)**

Post Allowance is part of the Cost-of-Living Allowance (COLA) paid to full-time employees assigned to a foreign post where the cost of living is significantly higher than in Washington, DC. It is a balancing factor designed to permit employees to spend the same portion of their basic compensation for current living expenses without incurring a reduction in their standard of living. It is a tax-free allowance paid at a flat rate based on base pay, size of family, and post of assignment. It is subject to adjustment based on the yen/dollar exchange rate or as costs fluctuate relative to those in Washington, DC.

**Eligible Employee:** Full-time (temporary or permanent) U.S. appropriated fund employees who are officially stationed at Kadena AB are eligible for Post Allowance. Part-time, intermittent, and dependent student hire employees are not entitled to Post Allowance. The actual amount of Post Allowance paid to an employee varies by salary level and family size and is subject to change without notice by the Department of State. If you are military or civilian dependent and your spouse is drawing a cost of living allowance or post allowance that includes yourself and family, you are limited to claiming yourself only. Post Allowance is not authorized for any child over 21 even if they are full-time student. You can receive Post Allowance for a child under 21 even if they are full-time student. You can receive Post Allowance for a child under 21 for the period of time the child returns to Okinawa between college terms or for a child over 21 if that child is incapable of self-support.

Employees are required to submit a SF1190, Foreign Allowances Application, Grant and Report to report any of the following changes:

Change in number of family members by:

- • marriage or divorce
- • birth or death of a family member(s)
- • arrival or permanent departure of family member(s)
- • departure of employee and/or family member(s) on Renewal Agreement Travel (RAT)
- • temporary absences of 31 days or more from post of employee and/or family member(s)
- • family member(s) other than spouse reaching age 21 (to include full time students)
- • family member(s) no longer residing with the sponsor
- • Employment or separation with the U.S. government from employment of a spouse of change in the post allowance received by a spouse
- • Change in post of assignment
- • Receipt of Temporary Quarters Subsistence Allowance (TQSA) (post allowance requires termination in this case)
- • Change in command sponsorship
- • Change in employment status from part-time or intermittent to a full time employee
- • Periods of Leave Without Pay (LWOP) of greater than 14 days

## **Separate Maintenance Allowance (SMA)**

SMA is intended to offset the additional expenses incurred when employees must maintain a separate household in another geographical location for family members. This situation can occur when, for the convenience of the government, employees are precluded from bringing family members to a new duty station, or when employees, because of special need or hardship involving the employee or family members, elect to have one or more family members not accompany them on the overseas assignment. Conditions under which SMA can be granted are as follows:

- When an employee, for the convenience of the Government, is precluded from maintaining family members at the official overseas post of assignment, SMA will be authorized.
- When an employee has a substantial hardship or special need to maintain family members elsewhere (such as career, educational or family considerations of the spouse, educational considerations for children or health considerations for either), SMA may be authorized. Requests should be submitted through the processing Civilian Personnel Flight (CPF) to the employee's gaining MAJCOM (e.g., HQ PACAF or HQ AFMC) **prior to departing the US**. Once initial election is made, there are restrictions on subsequent changes to that election.

At the time of assignment, an employee must elect to either have a dependent included on the employee's PCS travel orders or not placed on the travel orders and instead be placed on SMA. After this initial election, the employee may request that SMA either commence/terminate, depending on the initial election, only once for each member of family during a tour. However, this change cannot occur during the employee's first or last 90 days at post. For additional information, contact the Kadena CPF, Allowance Section.

Upon approved of SMA, payment will begin after you arrive at Kadena AB. Usually, SMA is approved for initial tour of duty only. If your overseas tour of duty is extended, SMA must be requested for extension.

## **Student Education Travel (SET)**

Student Education travel allows for employee's to be able to send their child(ren) for one round trip travel within a 12 month period between Kadena AB and CONUS for college education purposes. The student must be attending a university or college, including 2-year junior or community college, and registered in a full-time program at the undergraduate level. Education travel is authorized until the student's 23d birthday or graduation, whichever occurs first.

In order to request SET travel, employee must provide a letter from the school's Register stating that the child(ren) are enrolled full time student to Kadena CPF, Allowance Section. Upon receipt of SETorders, travel arrangements must be made through TMO.

## **Reference:**

Department of State Standardized Regulations (DSSR)

<http://www.state.gov/m/a/als/c1843.htm>

Department of Defense Regulation 1400.25-M, Subchapter 1250

<http://www.cpms.osd.mil/cpm/docs/M1401250.pdf>

LQA maximum rate/Post Allowance Table

<http://kadenaservices.com/CPE/US/>

Travel Per Diem Rate

<http://www.dtic.mil/perdiem/pdrates.html>

**For more information concerning overseas allowances, please contact the Kadena Civilian Personnel Office at 632-9326.**

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