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Bulletin

Title: Update to P&P 402.3, Section 5 - Compensatory Time Off for Travel

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Originating Office: Human Resources Division/Policy Branch/Pay and Leave

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This bulletin serves to announce recent legislation which established a new form of compensatory time off for time spent by an employee in a travel status away from the employee's official duty station. The regulations to this law became effective January 28, 2005. This bulletin also serves to update Policy and Procedures 402.3, Premium Pay. Section 5 - Compensatory Time Off for Travel has been added.

Compensatory Time Off for Travel

Compensatory time off for travel may be earned by an employee for time spent in a travel status away from the employee's official duty station when such time is not otherwise compensable. Travel for the purpose of this provision is travel that is for work purposes and must be approved by an authorized agency official. For situations that not addressed in this section contact a human resources specialist on the Pay and Leave staff of the Human Resources Division.

Wage Grade, Intermittent and SES employees are not entitled to compensatory time off for travel.

An employee can receive compensatory time off for travel only for those hours spent in a travel status outside their regular tour of duty. Travel status includes only the time actually spent traveling between the official duty station and a temporary duty station, or between two temporary duty stations, and the usual waiting time that precedes or interrupts such travel (normally 1 to 2 hours – depending on whether it is domestic or foreign travel). If the waiting time exceeds 2 hours as some circumstance may warrant, the time may be approved as compensatory time off for travel at the discretion of the immediate supervisor.

If an employee experiences an unusually long wait prior to his or her initial departure or between actual periods of travel during which the employee is free to rest, sleep, or otherwise use the time for his or her own purposes, the extended waiting time that is outside the employee's regular working hours is not creditable time in a travel status. An extended waiting period that occurs during an employee's regular working hours is compensable as part of the employee's regularly scheduled administrative workweek. For the purpose of earning compensatory time off for travel, bona fide meal periods are not considered time in a travel status.

If an employee travels directly between his or her home and a temporary duty station outside the limits of the employee's official duty station (e.g., driving to and from a 3-day conference), the agency must deduct the employee's normal home-to-work/work-to-home commuting time from the creditable travel time. A deduction of an employee's normal commuting time from the creditable travel time must be made if the employee is required—outside of regular working hours—to travel between home and a transportation terminal (e.g., an airport or train station) outside the limits of the employee's official duty station.

Employees may not earn compensatory time off for travel during basic (non-overtime) holiday hours because they are entitled to their rate of basic pay for those hours. Compensatory time off for travel may be earned by an employee only for time spent in a travel status away from the employee's official duty station when such time is *not otherwise compensable*.

There is no limitation on the amount of compensatory time off for travel an employee may earn. However, if it is not used within 26 pay periods after the pay period in which it was credited to the employee, it will be forfeited. Except for military leave or on-the-job injury status, a voluntary separation from Federal service will result in forfeiture of unused compensatory time off for travel. When an employee returns to duty from military leave or from on-the-job injury, the employee must use all of the compensatory time off by the end of the 26th pay period following the pay period in which the employee returns to duty, or it will be forfeited. If an

employee voluntarily transfers to another Executive agency, or moves to a Federal position not covered by this provision (for e.g.: as a Senior Executive Service member or in the U.S. Postal Service), the employee's unused compensatory time off will be forfeited.

Upon return from official travel, an employee must submit a request for approval to be credited with compensatory time for travel. The request from the employee must be made before the transmission of the second pay period after the pay period in which the compensatory time was earned. A fifteen minute increment is the smallest measurement that will be used to record the compensatory time off. This request is made on the employee's time and attendance worksheet (REE-331) and is subject to supervisory approval via the signed time and attendance system's final print-out. Employees will be credited compensatory time for travel for the pay period in which it was earned.

This change in policy has been reviewed and approved through the Financial Management Division.

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