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Office of Allowances

Frequently Asked Questions Evacuation

NOTE: FAQs associated with the 2020 Global Authorized Departure (G/AD) have been moved to the end of Evacuation FAQs

GENERAL

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2. Q: [Do all US Government agencies subscribe, follow or adhere to the Department of State Standardized Regulations \(Government Civilians, Foreign Areas\) \(DSSR\) on evacuations?](#)
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SUBSISTENCE EXPENSE ALLOWANCE (SEA) AND ADVANCE PAYMENTS

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18. Q: [What is the maximum time period an employee may receive SEA payments?](#)

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21. Q: [When an employee is evacuated after eligible family members \(EFMs\) have been evacuated at an earlier date, is the employee entitled to SEA under DSSR 632.1, at the full amount for the first evacuee or at the amount for an additional family member?](#)

22. Q: [May employees and EFMs on home leave or on R&R receive SEA payments?](#)

23. Q: [If Permanent Change of Station \(PCS\) travel orders have been issued prior to an employee/EFM's evacuation orders, which orders take precedence?](#)

24. Q: [What if EFMs have been evacuated and the employee later joins the evacuated family on a different type of travel order such as R&R or home leave?](#)

25. Q: [How is it determined whether the commercial or non-commercial rate for SEA applies, and can an employee draw SEA at the commercial rate and EFMs draw SEA at the non-commercial rate?](#)

26. Q: If the family composition requires more than one hotel room or larger quarters is there flexibility to allow reimbursement above the commercial rate maximum of 100% of the lodging portion of the safehaven?
27. Q: What if I have a special family composition not included as one of the five listed in the previous question?
28. Q: Upon termination of an evacuation order, is there a grace period for continuation of SEA until the day an evacuee returns to post? What if the employee is being transferred and not returning to post?
29. Q: Is my nanny or caregiver eligible for SEA?
30. Q: Is there any other provision under the evacuation payments if I need further help with unexpected expenses related to evacuation?
31. Q: What work assignments may an employee expect while on evacuation?
32. Q: An evacuated employee was assigned TDY to another post directly from the evacuated post. When are post differentials terminated and initiated in this situation provided the losing and the gaining posts grant them?
33. Q: An evacuated employee was assigned to the Department of State in Washington, D.C. and was receiving SEA payments. Subsequently the employee was assigned TDY to a foreign post that has a post hardship differential. When will the employee's SEA be terminated and the post hardship differential payments be initiated?
34. Q: When are SEA payments terminated?
35. Q: What happens after an evacuation has terminated and the post becomes unaccompanied, meaning family members can no longer go to post?

TRAVEL ALLOWANCES

36. Q: Are evacuated employees and/or EFM's granted air freight (UAB) for their departure from post?
37. Q: What if this authorized UAB shipment cannot be arranged at the time of the employee's and EFM's' evacuation departure?
38. Q: If an employee receives the above allowance, is the employee entitled to ship UAB back to post upon the termination of evacuation?
39. Q: If an employee ships UAB for an EFM to the U.S. safehaven, may UAB be shipped from the U.S. safehaven to the employee's next duty station where the EFM rejoins the employee?
40. Q: A spouse or domestic partner of an employee is considered as emergency personnel and works in an EFM position at an Embassy that is on ordered departure. When the evacuation terminates and the post becomes unaccompanied, the EFM position is to be abolished and the spouse must then leave post for safehaven in the U.S. Under what kind of orders may the spouse or domestic partner travel, and what allowances may be granted?

41. Q: After an evacuation terminates and the post becomes unaccompanied, what benefits are available to EFM's? For example, an employee's EFM's want to move from their safehaven in Washington, DC to a different location in the U.S. to commence involuntary SMA. What allowances may be granted the employee for the family members?
42. Q: After a period of time, if an unaccompanied post is declared accompanied and the employee's EFM's want to return to post, what allowances may be granted the employee?
43. Q: After an evacuation terminates and EFM's may return to post, an employee requests that EFM's remain at the safehaven site for two months before returning to post. What allowances may be granted an employee whose EFM's remain at the safehaven on voluntary SMA under the exception at DSSR 264.2(b)?
- 44a. Q: An employee is evacuated from post leaving a pet behind to be cared for by friends. While at safehaven in Washington, DC and assigned to the Department the employee's tour was curtailed. The employee went on home leave and then proceeded to a newly assigned overseas post on PCS. The employee wants to send the pet to the new post. May this shipment be done at government expense?
- 44b. Q: Per a change in the DSSR I understand my pet can be evacuated. Can you give me some details?

EDUCATION ALLOWANCES AND EDUCATIONAL TRAVEL

45. Q: Are any other special education benefits available to evacuees and their families?
46. Q: Does the away from post education allowance continue during the evacuation period?
47. Q: May an EFM on educational travel or away from post education allowance, travel to the safehaven following evacuation of a post?
48. Q: May an EFM student travel at government expense from the student's safehaven site (the student's school is located in the U.S.) to the home leave address of the employee to join the family on home leave?
49. Q: During an evacuation, EFM students at away from post schools (boarding schools) continue to receive the away from post education allowance until the end of the school year, but do not receive SEA during the spring school break. When the school term ends, what options are available for students?
50. Q: What options are available to boarding school students on away from posteducation allowance who would normally be permitted to travel back to post during an evacuation? May they travel to the safehaven at government expense? What are their options should the evacuation terminate and they wish to return to post for the summer break?
51. Q: What options are available to college students who would normally be eligible for educational travel during an evacuation? The safehaven normally replaces the post for computing educational travel, but is it permissible to delay using educational travel to post in anticipation of the imminent termination of evacuation and thus retain the option of the EFM student returning to post during the summer break?
52. Q: An employee is assigned to an unaccompanied post. The employee's EFM student, age 18, is enrolled in college but cannot visit the employee using educational travel. In these circumstances, may the employee

receive involuntary SMA for the EFM student?

53. Q: Some families have EFM students in boarding school and/or college in different locations that in addition terminate the school term on different dates. Must all family members proceed to the same safehaven site or may EFMs of the same family declare different and separate safehaven sites? If they are permitted to travel to different safehaven sites, what is the basis for the MIE payments?

54. Q: At the termination of an evacuation and a declaration that EFMs may return to post, an employee's EFMs nonetheless wish to remain in the U.S. so that the EFM students may complete the final term of the current school year. What allowances may be granted the employee?

TRANSITIONAL SEPARATE MAINTENANCE ALLOWANCES (TSMA)

55. Q: An employee returns to the safehaven on evacuation orders to join his previously evacuated family two weeks before the end of the 180-day evacuation period. At the end of the 180-day evacuation period, the employee's post is declared unaccompanied. At this time the employee takes two weeks of annual leave and then returns to post. May the employee receive TSMA on behalf of this family for the two weeks following the termination of the evacuation, even though the family was not separated?

56. Q: An employee's EFMs were evacuated six months ago and have been living in a furnished apartment. The evacuation has been terminated and the post is declared as unaccompanied. The EFMs would like to move to a less expensive rental house. Is this move permissible while still retaining TSMA eligibility?

57. Q: After an employee's EFMs move into a permanent residence are they still eligible to receive TSMA until they receive their full HHE shipment?

58. Q: An employee ships some HHE from post to EFMs on TSMA in the U.S. If the HHE does not arrive within 60 days may TSMA be extended beyond this period?

59. Q: What are the TSMA rates?

60. Q: Is TSMA taxable?

61. Q: How are TSMA payments initiated, received, and then terminated?

62. Q: Once TSMA is terminated what options remain for the employee?

63. Q: What other allowances are available once TSMA terminates and the post is declared unaccompanied?

64. Q: May an employee receive TSMA for EFMs who have been evacuated to an alternate approved foreign safehaven?

65. Q: What constitutes non-commercial quarters?

66. Q: An employee is to be reassigned within a month after the termination of evacuation orders. May his EFMs living in the U.S. receive TSMA for this period?

SEPARATE MAINTENANCE ALLOWANCES (SMA)

67. Q: At what age must voluntary SMA terminate for a dependent child?
68. Q: If an employee's spouse or domestic partner is in Washington, D.C. on voluntary or involuntary SMA and the employee is evacuated from post to the safehaven site of Washington, D.C., is SMA terminated?
69. Q: At what age must involuntary SMA terminate for a dependent child?
70. Q: If an eligible family member on SMA travels to the post at personal expense will the Department assume any responsibility in the case of an emergency involving the EFM?
71. Q: When an employee receiving SMA is transferred to another post does the SMA automatically continue?
72. Q: Following the termination of evacuation, may an employee's EFM's remain at their safehaven on voluntary SMA and then return to post later?
73. Q: Who may officially authorize approval or disapproval of an employee's SMA request?
74. Q: What procedure must an employee follow in submitting an SMA request?
75. Q: Is an employee's EFM student eligible to receive educational travel while on SMA?
76. Q: Is an employee's EFM student eligible to receive an education allowance while on involuntary SMA?
77. Q: The spouse or domestic partner of an employee at a foreign post is residing in the U.S. on SMA. When the employee leaves (transfers from) post the SMA will be terminated. How much Home Service Transfer Allowance (HSTA) is the employee eligible to receive? Further, should the subsistence portion of this allowance include the spouse or domestic partner as well?

SINGLE PARENTS / MARRIED COUPLE EMPLOYEES / DOMESTIC PARTNERSHIP EMPLOYEES

78. Q: If a single parent employee is assigned to a position designated by the post as an emergency position will the employee's children be evacuated when ordered departure for EFM's is declared? If so, what allowances will the EFM children receive?
79. Q: When married couple employees or domestic partnership employees depart post on evacuation orders, how are their SEA payments determined?
80. Q: In the case of married couple employees or domestic partnership employees with EFM children and only one parent/employee being evacuated, on whose orders should the evacuated children be placed?
81. Q: How do married couple employees or domestic partnership employees evacuated to the same official safehaven submit their receipts under the commercial rate formula for lodging?

SHIPMENTS AND PROPERTY CLAIMS

82. Q: May Privately Owned Vehicles (POVs) be shipped from the post to the safehaven point at government expense?

83. Q: [May an employee have access to HHE while on evacuation status?](#)
84. Q: [If an employee does not ship UAB from post during an evacuation and subsequently receives the airfreight replacement allowance, may the employee ship UAB back to post after the evacuation?](#)
85. Q: [What if an employee is assigned to a new post, but all personal effects remain at the evacuated post?](#)
86. Q: [What should an employee do if personal property has been lost or damaged at post?](#)
87. Q: [What is the maximum amount that may be claimed for lost and damaged personal property?](#)
88. Q: [Who should the employee contact to begin this claims procedure?](#)

TERMINATION OF EVACUATION

89. Q: [What is the period of validity for evacuation travel orders?](#)
90. Q: [How are SEA payments and travel vouchers administered at the termination of an evacuation period?](#)
91. Q: [What happens if an evacuation ends and an employee is liable for paying a lease penalty?](#)

INVOLUNTARY SEPARATE MAINTENANCE ALLOWANCE (ISMA)

92. Q: [If families are separated for the convenience of the government, why are all of our housing expenses not covered like they would be at post?](#)
93. Q: [If the post allows only spouses or domestic partners \(or spouses or domestic partners and children under 5\), but a spouse or domestic partner cannot go because there are children \(or older children\), is the employee then eligible for ISMA?](#)
94. Q: [What happens if the family has been on ISMA and the post status changes back to accompanied, but because we are in the middle of the school year it is not advisable for the family to move? Can the employee continue to receive ISMA, or does it shift back to voluntary? If it shifts to voluntary, do I need to fill in another SF-1190?](#)
95. Q: [If a family member fails to get a medical clearance, is the employee eligible for involuntary SMA? Is there a reporting requirement with regard to the medical condition? Do you have to continue to demonstrate the medical need for ISMA? If there is no longer justification for a medical ISMA, would the EFM still be eligible for voluntary SMA?](#)
96. Q: [I am assigned to an accompanied post and my family members are with me. Unfortunately, one of my EFMs has developed a medical condition and the Regional Medical Officer \(RMO\) has stated that he cannot remain at post with me. He will return to the United States to get medical treatment for the remainder of my tour. May I put him on SMA? What type of SMA would he receive - voluntary or involuntary?](#)
97. Q: [What support is available to families on involuntary separation?](#)
98. Q: [How does ISMA relate to travel of separated families?](#)

TSMA & EVACUATION

99. Q: [My family and I were evacuated six months ago and I have been leasing a furnished apartment in a high rise building. Now that the evacuation has ended and the post is unaccompanied, I'd like to move my family to a rental house that is less expensive. Can I do this and still receive Transitional Separate Maintenance Allowance \(TSMA\) for them?](#)
100. Q: [Even after my family moves, they will have a lot of extraordinary expenses \(like furniture rental\) until they receive the full Household Effects \(HHE\) shipment. When will my TSMA payments stop?](#)
101. Q: [Even if my spouse or domestic partner, who is still at post, ships some of our HHE right away, it will still probably take more than 60 days to get here. How do I extend the TSMA to 90 days?](#)
102. Q: [Are the TSMA amounts different for days 61 through 90?](#)
103. Q: [Is TSMA taxable?](#)
104. Q: [What if I get some of our furniture from storage and also have some of our HHE shipped. Would I still be eligible for TSMA after I get the items from storage, but until the HHE arrives?](#)
105. Q: [How do you know when my complete HHE has arrived?](#)
106. Q: [Is TSMA paid automatically once it commences?](#)
107. Q: [Once TSMA is terminated, what are my options?](#)
108. Q: [Is there anything else available following termination of TSMA?](#)
109. Q: [What if my family is at an alternate approved foreign safehaven at the end of the evacuation. Can I get TSMA for my family members in the foreign area?](#)
110. Q: [Can you give me examples of non-commercial quarters?](#)
111. Q: [I understand you're not supposed to receive regular SMA unless you will be in that status for at least 90 days. I expect my spouse or domestic partner to be reassigned in a month or so. Am I still eligible for TSMA?](#)

GENERAL

1. Q: What is the difference between an authorized departure and an ordered departure?

A: Authorized departure merely allows the Chief of Mission greater flexibility in determining which employees or groups of employees may depart, and avoids any negative connotation that might be attached to the use of the term evacuation. Since the law uses the terms synonymously, there is no difference in benefits now in application of the regulations. Note: Once the Under Secretary of State for Management (M) approves the evacuation status for post, either authorized or ordered, the 180-day clock begins ticking. Only one departure is permitted an evacuee during any one evacuation period, except for certain employees in unusual circumstances as determined by the Secretary of State.

2. Q: Do all US Government agencies subscribe, follow or adhere to the Department of State Standardized Regulations (Government Civilians, Foreign Areas) (DSSR) on evacuations?

A: In accordance with DSSR 645 all civilian agencies have agreed to implement the regulations. In order to ensure fair and consistent treatment of all evacuees, any agency that proposes to deviate from DSSR Chapter 600 must seek Secretary of State approval.

Uniformed military personnel and their dependents are covered separately under the Department of Defense Joint Travel Regulations (JTR).

3. Q: How are Members of Household (MOHs) of U.S. direct hire employees affected during an evacuation?

A: MOHs who are U.S. citizens are provided the same evacuation assistance as private American citizens. The no double standard policy requires private American citizens be given the same evacuation opportunities/assistance as official Americans. It is the Department of State policy to make available to private Americans any evacuation option planned for the official USG community, when appropriate and feasible. MOHs who are not U.S. citizens are also rendered evacuation assistance, either to the U.S. if documented for entry or otherwise eligible to enter as determined by the post, with assistance from Immigration and Customs Enforcement as necessary, or to a third country if documented or otherwise determined to be eligible for entry.

4. Q: Who is responsible for travel costs of Members of Household (MOHs)?

A: MOHs are personally responsible for their travel costs. As a general rule, the U.S. Government does not provide funds for evacuating persons other than U.S. Government employees and eligible family members.

5. Q: Where can I find more information on evacuation guidelines for U.S. citizens and other persons for whom the U.S. Government may have a responsibility?

A: The Overseas Citizens Services, Bureau of Consular Affairs provides assistance for U.S. citizens living abroad. You can contact them on the internet at <http://www.travel.state.gov>.

6. Q: Do Members of Household (MOHs) have to leave during an evacuation?

A: No. The Chief of Mission (COM) cannot order the departure of MOHs or other private U.S. citizens.

7. What happens if a Member of Household (MOH) is occupying USG housing - would s/he be required to vacate the house?

A: If the Chief of Mission (COM) feels that the presence of MOHs in post housing could impact post security resources or otherwise affect post operations, then the COM can direct the employee to move MOHs out of that housing.

8. Q: At what age do children become ineligible for evacuation-related payments under DSSR 600?

A: Allowances eligibility for children usually ends when they reach age 21 (unless incapable of self-support due to mental or physical impairment). Evacuation-related payments under DSSR 600 are no exception to this rule. The definition of children found at DSSR 040m under Family governs their eligibility for foreign allowances except when waived or modified in specific DSSR sections that follow 040. DSSR 600 contains no such waiver or modification.

SAFEHAVEN

9. Q: How does an eligible family member (EFM) select an official safehaven and what is the subsistence expense allowance (SEA) based on?

A: On April 10, 2020, the Under Secretary of State for Management (M) approved on an interim basis changes to DSSR 610L, definition for Safehaven. For DSSR Chapter 600 U.S. safehaven shall refer to a safehaven in the fifty United States, District of Columbia or non-foreign areas (U.S. territories, possessions, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands). Designated safehavens may be the U.S., a foreign location, or both when necessary as the official safehaven location(s). In most cases, eligible family member (EFM) evacuees are directed to travel to the U.S. safehaven. An EFM evacuee should select a U.S. safehaven based on where he/she anticipates spending the longest time, such as where children may go to school or where family/friends reside. An evacuee is not required to remain at the U.S. safehaven. The regulations provide that SEA payments will be based on the per diem rate of the chosen U.S. safehaven location, however, DSSR 632.3 allows an agency to pay a lower rate if the authorizing officer determines that such lower rate would be more in keeping with necessary living expenses. For example, if an evacuee submits a lodging receipt at a location where the per diem rate is lower than their safehaven, reimbursement can be calculated not to exceed the per diem of the lodging location. A U.S. safehaven location for EFMs may be changed once during an evacuation and SEA payments will then be based on the new U.S. safehaven. However, any change in safehaven location is at the evacuee's personal expense, except when previously evacuated EFMs are allowed to rejoin their evacuated sponsor (the employee) in Washington, DC (or wherever his/her U.S. work assignment location is during evacuation). Be sure to notify the appropriate evacuee locator and accounting offices of any change in address. For assistance with figuring SEA, see DSSR Section 960 Evacuation Payments Worksheet. A Global Authorized Departure (G/AD) due to the COVID-19 outbreak was authorized in 20 STATE 28418. In light of the expected unprecedented number of evacuees under this G/AD, the State Department announced in 20 STATE 31352 a Simplified Subsistence Expense Allowance Calculation. USG agencies may follow the simplified method or the usual calculation of SEA as outlined in DSSR 630 and on the DSSR 960 Evacuation Payment Worksheet. For State Department COVID-19 Authorized Evacuees a new SEA Payment template and instructions are available at CGFS's SharePoint (Intranet only): <https://usdos.sharepoint.com/sites/CGFS>.

10. Q: May an evacuated employee choose to accompany family members to their safehaven point prior to the employee reporting for work at the U.S. or foreign safehaven as determined by the employee's agency?

A: Either the post or appropriate bureau or agency head determines whether an employee must report directly to the U.S. or foreign safehaven and if any annual leave is authorized. However, the employee's travel at government expense will be cost constructive not to exceed the cost of travel from the post to the employee's U.S. or foreign location as instructed by the employee's agency. The employee is not eligible for the Subsistence Expense Allowance (SEA) until s/he arrives at the U.S. or foreign safehaven.

11. Q: If EFMs under an evacuation order are unable to travel alone due to special needs or minor age, who can be reimbursed to accompany them to a U.S. safehaven?

A: Only employees' and EFMs' evacuation travel can be funded by the Government. Therefore, either the employee parent designated nonessential could accompany, or another employee or EFM could serve as an escort, if willing and able to do so. If the EFM's U.S. safehaven is not the same as the escort's duty station or safehaven, that escort's travel will be on a cost-constructive basis calculated from the evacuated post to the escort's U.S. duty station. Under the Global Authorized Departure (G/AD) due to the COVID-19 outbreak, per 20 STATE 28418 In the event Post determines a single parent with a minor EFM or both parties of a tandem couple with a minor EFM are emergency personnel, round-trip transportation is authorized for one employee to accompany their minor EFM(s) to the designated safehaven location. Management officials at post may authorize, from post funds, reimbursement of travel expenses, including transportation costs, per diem, and authorized miscellaneous expenses. Time in travel status should be minimized to the extent possible. Posts should use e2 TDY travel orders to authorize this travel, not EMS.

12. Q: What benefits are available for those going to an alternate safehaven?

A: Benefits for EFMs are only available if the alternate foreign safehaven is approved as in the best interest of the U.S. Government by the Under Secretary of State for Management (M) following endorsement by the head of agency or designee on behalf of the agency EFMs. The only benefits are cost constructive travel (not to exceed the cost of travel between the evacuated post and the U.S. or foreign location duty station) under DSSR 631a(1), and limited SEA, based on the lowest of three per diem rates: the official safehaven (whether U.S. or foreign), the alternate safehaven, or the standard CONUS, under DSSR 632.2b. If there is a first evacuee (employee or family member) at a U.S. or foreign safehaven, SEA calculations for family members at the alternate safehaven will be limited to the calculation for additional family members based on the M&IE of the applicable lowest per diem rate. No education allowance of any type can be authorized, nor are any diplomatic immunities, privileges, or services available at an alternate foreign safehaven. Special Note for evacuees under the Global Authorized Departure (G/AD) and agencies using the Simplified SEA Calculation: if EFMs are occupying commercial quarters at an alternate foreign safehaven reimbursement is a flat amount of the CONUS lodging rate plus a flat amount of 10% for room tax. M&IE will not reduce after the first 30 days and will remain for the 60 days currently authorized. First evacuee 100%; second and additional evacuees 18 and older 80%; and 50% for all evacuees under 18.

13. Q: May previously evacuated eligible family members (EFMs) join the employee at his or her official U.S. safehaven?

A: Yes, EFMs evacuated to a U.S. or foreign safehaven may be permitted to rejoin the employee subsequently evacuated to a U.S. duty station. Transportation costs would be at U.S. Government expense for the family members from their U.S. or foreign safehaven to the employee's U.S. duty station. EFM travel from an alternate foreign safehaven to the employee's U.S. duty station will be on a cost constructive basis not to exceed the cost of travel from the evacuated post to the U.S. duty station (DSSR 631a(1)).

14. Q: May an employee and eligible family member (EFM) children take an authorized departure from post while the employee's spouse or domestic partner remains at post for professional reasons?

A: Yes, an employee and EFM children may be granted an authorized departure from post upon approval of the Chief of Mission, per DSSR 610j. If they were married couple employees or domestic partnership employees, the employee's spouse or domestic partner would not be required to evacuate. If the employee's spouse or domestic partner is a locally hired employee at the Mission or is otherwise employed outside the Mission the spouse or domestic partner would not be required to evacuate, for example, if the employee's spouse or domestic partner was employed as a teacher in an international school.

15. Q: May an eligible family member (EFM) on educational travel or away from post education allowance, travel to the U.S. or foreign safehaven following evacuation of a post?

A: Yes. Either the U.S. or foreign safehaven location displaces the foreign post of assignment for travel purposes under education allowance and educational travel as provided in DSSR 633.2 and DSSR 633.4, respectively. Travel to an alternate foreign safehaven to join other EFMs is on a cost constructive basis not to exceed the cost of travel to either the U.S. or foreign safehaven. Note: Payment of subsistence expense allowance (SEA) is not allowed for children on away from post education allowance (DSSR 633.2) but is allowed between grant years. Note: SEA payments may be made during the COVID19 outbreak and unexpected school closures prior to the end of a normal school year. Payment of SEA is allowed for children under educational travel only when they are temporarily at the safehaven and only for children unmarried and under 21 (see definition of child in DSSR 040m(2)).

16. Q: Do newly assigned employees/eligible family members (EFMs) not yet arrived at the post qualify for evacuation benefits under DSSR Chapter 600?

A: No, not under Chapter 600. Under the evacuation benefits law, only employees and dependents who are temporarily away from their foreign post of assignment at the time of the evacuation order are eligible for evacuation benefits if prohibited from returning. However, under the transfer allowance authority, DSSR 245 does allow equivalent benefits to certain newly assigned personnel who are prohibited from proceeding to post. These equivalent benefits provide for Subsistence Expense Allowance (SEA) payments as well as justified grace periods needed to commence travel to post at the end of an evacuation, and the lease penalty payment. To qualify for these equivalent benefits the following three criteria must be met: (1) the employee's transfer orders have been issued; (2) on the date of the ordered/authorized departure order the employee must be within 60 days of scheduled departure to the new post; and (3) either (a) the employee's HHE have been packed out and the

employee's residence has been vacated; or (b) the employee transferring from a post in the U.S. has an irrevocable contractual agreement for lease or sale of his or her residence; or (c) the employee has transferred from a foreign post with direct transfer orders (i.e. no home leave, or equivalent, prior to reporting to the new foreign post) and is required by post to vacate residence quarters. If all three criteria are not met, EFMs are eligible for only Involuntary Separate Maintenance Allowance under DSSR 262.1 effective the date the employee begins official travel under assignment orders.

SUBSISTENCE EXPENSE ALLOWANCE (SEA) AND ADVANCE PAYMENTS

17. Q: When do Subsistence Expense Allowance (SEA) benefits commence for evacuees?

A: (1) U.S. or Foreign Safehaven: SEA benefits will commence from the day following arrival at the safehaven location, per DSSR 632. No SEA will be paid for travel enroute to the safehaven location.

(2) Alternate Foreign Safehaven for EFMs: If an alternate foreign safehaven is approved prior to the EFMs evacuation, SEA benefits will commence from the day following arrival at the alternate foreign safehaven location. If an alternate foreign safehaven is approved after evacuees have arrived at that location, SEA will commence no earlier than the date the Department approved the request for the alternate foreign safehaven. If the request for an alternate foreign safehaven is denied, no SEA is authorized until the evacuee arrives at the U.S. or foreign safehaven.

18. Q: What is the maximum time period an employee may receive SEA payments?

A: Evacuation status is authorized by the Under Secretary of State for Management in 30-day increments, up to a maximum of 180 days, per DSSR 623f.

19. Q: What happens to an employee's allowances, post hardship differential and danger pay during the period of SEA payments?

A: Per DSSR 532a effective 6/28/2021, post hardship differential may continue for up to 30 consecutive days while the employee is temporarily away from post on travel orders due to evacuation. Danger pay and post (cost of living) allowance terminate as of the close of business on the day an employee commences travel under orders for emergency evacuation, per DSSR 621.2(a) and (f). School at post education allowance terminates without financial penalty [see Exception at DSSR 621.1(d)(1) and DSSR 621.2(d)(1)]. School away from post education allowance may continue until the end of the school year, per DSSR 621.2(d)(2). Employees should check their earnings and leave statements for post hardship differential, danger pay and post (cost of living) allowance payments that should have been terminated. The employee is responsible for refunding any overpayments. See FAQ 68 for continuation of SMA when an employee is temporarily evacuated from post.

20. Q: Do SEA payments stop while an evacuated employee is on temporary duty (TDY)? What happens to the employee's evacuated eligible family members (EFMs)?

A: To meet the needs of the service, employees in evacuation status may be assigned TDY to another location. However, during the TDY period, when the employee is receiving TDY per diem, the payment of SEA for the individual is suspended, per DSSR 634. SEA may be resumed when the TDY ends.

EFMs at same U.S. or Foreign Safehaven as employee: If there are EFMs of this employee in evacuation status, one family member receiving SEA becomes the first evacuee and thus receives lodging per diem. The family is not disadvantaged since the total SEA benefit package is reduced by only one MI&E allowance when the employee departs on TDY status.

EFMs at U.S. Safehaven and employee is at Foreign Safehaven: SEA benefits remain unchanged for EFMs ♦ there is still one EFM designated as first evacuee at the U.S. Safehaven.

21. Q: When an employee is evacuated after eligible family members (EFMs) have been evacuated at an earlier date, is the employee entitled to SEA under DSSR 632.1, at the full amount for the first evacuee or at the amount for an additional family member?

A: When necessary and in the interest of the U.S. Government, there may be more than one official safehaven designated. This may include both a U.S. Safehaven (50 United States, the District of Columbia and non-foreign areas which include U.S. territories, possessions, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands) and a Foreign Safehaven.

When the employee is evacuated later than EFMs to the same U.S. or Foreign Safehaven as the EFMs, the employee may be treated as the first evacuee or simply as an additional family member.

When the employee is evacuated to a Foreign Safehaven after EFMs have been evacuated to a U.S. Safehaven the employee will be designated as the First Evacuee at the Foreign Safehaven and one EFM will remain as the First Evacuee at the U.S. Safehaven.

The DSSR allows for eligible family member(s) and the employee to be at different official safehaven locations. There can be one first evacuee under the formula (whether commercial or non-commercial) at a U.S. Safehaven and at a Foreign Safehaven. Example: When an employee (designated as first evacuee) is at the U.S. safehaven (and physically located in Washington, D.C.) and family members are at the U.S. safehaven (and physically located in Iowa), SEA payments for the employee and family members would be calculated based on the per diem rate for Washington, D.C. (location of the first evacuee).

Restriction: If there is a first evacuee at either a U.S. or foreign safehaven there cannot also be a first evacuee (EFM) at the alternate foreign safehaven. The SEA in this case would be based on the guidelines in DSSR 632.1 and calculated using the formula for each additional evacuee using the lowest of the per diem rates for the (1) U.S. or foreign safehaven; (2) the alternate foreign safehaven; or (3) the Continental US (CONUS).

22. Q: May employees and EFMs on home leave or on R&R receive SEA payments?

A: Employees and EFMs cannot receive SEA while on home leave or in R&R status per DSSR 632.4(a). If away from post at the time of the evacuation order, the employee either must return to post or declare his/her intention to do so before any family member can qualify for evacuation benefits. Transportation may be authorized to the safehaven location. SEA may not commence for evacuees until each arrives at the authorized safehaven and providing the employee has commenced official travel to the duty station (either to safehaven or return to post). Determination of the exact date may also in some circumstances depend on the date the employee or EFMs members were officially due to return to post.

23. Q: If Permanent Change of Station (PCS) travel orders have been issued prior to an employee/EFM's evacuation orders, which orders take precedence?

A: PCS travel orders always take precedence over any other type of travel orders, including evacuation orders. An evacuee's travel should therefore be charged to his/her PCS orders. An evacuee may, however, be eligible to receive SEA benefits if the evacuation occurs prior to his/her originally scheduled PCS travel. When EFMs depart post under evacuation orders, and the employee subsequently departs post under PCS orders, all evacuation benefits will cease for EFMs when the employee's PCS travel begins.

24. Q: What if EFMs have been evacuated and the employee later joins the evacuated family on a different type of travel order such as R&R or home leave?

A: Employees cannot receive SEA. However, SEA continues for family members previously evacuated per DSSR 632.4.

25. Q: How is it determined whether the commercial or non-commercial rate for SEA applies, and can an employee draw SEA at the commercial rate and EFMs draw SEA at the non-commercial rate?

A: When necessary and in the interest of the U.S. Government, there may be more than one official safehaven designated. This may include both a U.S. Safehaven (50 United States, the District of Columbia, and non-foreign areas which include U.S. territories, possessions, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands) and a Foreign Safehaven. For an example, the employee can draw the commercial rate at the Foreign Safehaven and the EFMs can draw the non-commercial rate at the U.S. Safehaven. Commercial or non-commercial applies to the type of lodging the first evacuee occupies. Per DSSR 632.1, There can only be one 'first evacuee' per family at a U.S. Safehaven and one first evacuee at a Foreign Safehaven, except as per DSSR 632.4(b) ('Married Couple Employees or Domestic Partnership Employees'). Only the first evacuee (this may be the employee or eligible family member) is reimbursed for up to 100 percent (or up to 150 percent for special family compositions) of the lodging portion of the per diem rate for his/her U.S. or Foreign Safehaven location under the commercial rate. All other eligible family members get only a percentage of the

meal and incidental expense portion of the per diem rate of the first evacuee's U.S. or Foreign Safehaven location. If the first evacuee submits a commercial lodging receipt, then the commercial rate formula applies. If a commercial lodging receipt is not submitted, then the non-commercial rate formula applies. Both formulas are shown in a separate document entitled, Evacuation Payments Worksheet (EPW), in DSSR 960. Note: If evacuees stay in commercial lodging that does not include furniture and/or cost of utilities, these additional costs may be reimbursed as part of lodging (receipts must be submitted with lodging receipts).

26. Q: If the family composition requires more than one hotel room or larger quarters is there flexibility to allow reimbursement above the commercial rate maximum of 100% of the lodging portion of the safehaven?

A: The first evacuee may be reimbursed up to 50% above the lodging maximum when using the commercial rate, per DSSR 632.1(b). Special consideration is given to the following family compositions: (1) First evacuee plus one (non-spouse or non-domestic-partner family member, age 18 and older); (2) First evacuee plus one (non-spouse or non-domestic-partner family member of opposite gender, age 12 and over); (3) First evacuee plus two (one non-spouse or non-domestic-partner family member, age 18 and older; or one non-spouse or non-domestic-partner family member, opposite gender, age 12 and older); (4) First evacuee plus three (one non-spouse or non-domestic-partner family member, age 12 and over); and (5) First evacuee plus four or more family members.

27. Q: What if I have a special family composition not included as one of the five listed in the previous question?

A: Requests for other special family considerations should be submitted through your agency to the Director, Office of Allowances (A/OPR/ALS), U.S. Department of State, Washington, D.C. 20522-0103, per DSSR 632.1(b).

28. Q: Upon termination of an evacuation order, is there a grace period for continuation of SEA until the day an evacuee returns to post? What if the employee is being transferred and not returning to post?

A: Upon termination of an evacuation order, an employee or EFM returning to post will continue to receive SEA for an automatic grace period of three (3) days except when the full 180 days has expired, per DSSR 635. For the employee not returning to post, SEA payments may be allowed only through and including the evacuation order termination date as long as he/she has not commenced travel under an assignment order to another duty location. For employees/family members returning to the evacuated post, an additional seven (7) days may be authorized due to transportation delays. Evacuees must provide a statement on their travel voucher justifying the additional seven (7) days required to arrange for return travel to post, such as airline reservations and air freight pick up. Other reasons of a personal nature do not qualify the evacuee for SEA for the additional days. Under no circumstance can SEA payments be made to exceed the 180-day clock.

29. Q: Is my nanny or caregiver eligible for SEA?

A: Unless the nanny or caregiver is an eligible family member (EFM), the answer is no. However, he/she may be the designated representative (DSSR 610f) who is named by an employee for the purpose of caring for, escorting, or receiving monetary payments on behalf of an EFM.

30. Q: Is there any other provision under the evacuation payments if I need further help with unexpected expenses related to evacuation?

A: Yes. Per DSSR 615, an employee may be paid in advance of the normal payday when, in the judgment of the authorizing officer, payment is required to help defray the immediate expenses incident to an evacuation. The advance payment shall be for a maximum of 30 days based on the rate of compensation including any allowances or post differential the employee was entitled to immediately prior to the evacuation order. The advance payment may be made at any time after the date the evacuation has been ordered but no later than 30 days after this date.

31. Q: What work assignments may an employee expect while on evacuation?

A: Evacuated employees may be assigned to perform any work considered necessary or required to be performed during the evacuation period, per DSSR 625.1. Failure or refusal to perform assigned work may be a basis for terminating further evacuation payments and taking disciplinary action, per DSSR 625.2.

32. Q: An evacuated employee was assigned TDY to another post directly from the evacuated post. When are post differentials terminated and initiated in this situation provided the losing and the gaining posts grant them?

A: Effective for travel commencing on or after 6/28/2021, per DSSR 532a, the Post Hardship Differential terminates for the employee's permanent post of assignment close of business the 30th day he/she is temporarily away from his/her post of assignment. The employee will receive the post hardship differential for the TDY post commencing with the 31st day at post. The employee will not receive SEA payments because the employee is on TDY receiving per diem and has not been evacuated to a safehaven site.

33. Q: An evacuated employee was assigned to the Department of State in Washington, D.C. and was receiving SEA payments. Subsequently the employee was assigned TDY to a foreign post that has a post hardship differential. When will the employee's SEA be terminated and the post hardship differential payments be initiated?

A: The employee's SEA payments are terminated the day prior to departure from Washington, D.C. to the TDY post. The employee will receive the TDY post's hardship differential commencing FROM the 31st day at this post unless the employee is at a DSSR 920 footnote N post for the first 30 consecutive (NOT cumulative) days of detail. If that pertains, then once the 30 days consecutive are obtained, a look

back to day one is allowed and the employee is paid the applicable post hardship differential percentage applied to basic compensation paid during the 30 day period. This change from 42 to 30 days was effective for travel commencing on or after 6/28/2021.

34. Q: When are SEA payments terminated?

A: Entitlement to SEA payments ends on the earliest of the following dates, per DSSR 635:

- the date the employee commences travel under an assignment order to another duty station outside the evacuation area;
- the effective date of transfer when the employee is already at the post to which transferred;
- the date of separation;
- the date specified by the head of agency;
- 180 days after the evacuation order is issued; or
- the date the evacuee commences return travel to post.

When a departure (evacuation) order is terminated and evacuees are allowed to return to post, entitlement to SEA payments ends on the day that return to post is authorized. Normally a grace period of three, not to exceed ten days, is granted during which SEA may continue to be paid while an evacuee is making arrangements to return to post. The grace period taken must be justified on the employee's travel voucher (i.e. that the extra days were necessary to arrange return to post). SEA payments are limited to 180 days, the grace period included.

35. Q: What happens after an evacuation has terminated and the post becomes unaccompanied, meaning family members can no longer go to post?

A: Employees whose EFMs are in temporary commercial lodging should apply for Transitional Separate Maintenance Allowance. Employees whose EFMs have been in non-commercial lodging should apply for Involuntary SMA. In lieu of Involuntary SMA for children in grades K-12, employees may consider the away from post education allowance option (see DSSR 276.23 for details). Since SMA payments cannot be made retroactively, the employee should submit Standard Form (SF-1190) to his/her regional bureau Executive director (or agency appropriate authorizing official) requesting SMA before the evacuation ends in order to take advantage of these benefits.

TRAVEL ALLOWANCES

36. Q: Are evacuated employees and/or EFMs granted unaccompanied air baggage (UAB) for their departure from post?

A: Yes, Department of State employees/EFMs are allowed UAB, per 14 FAM 613.3-1, as follows: First person traveling to an authorized safehaven, 250 lbs.; second person traveling to an authorized safehaven, 200 lbs.; third person traveling to an authorized safehaven, 150

lbs.; fourth or more persons traveling to an authorized safehaven, 100 lbs. Employees of other agencies should consult their applicable travel regulations for agency-specific weight allowances.

37. Q: What if this authorized UAB shipment cannot be arranged at the time of the employee's and EFM's evacuation departure?

A: For Department of State employees: in lieu of an airfreight allowance from post, an airfreight replacement allowance may be granted to help defray costs of items normally part of the authorized airfreight shipment that must be purchased at the safehaven location.

The flat rates are ***per authorized safehaven:***

- first evacuee without family: \$250;
- first evacuee with one family member: \$450;
- first evacuee with two or more family members: \$600.

Examples:

1. Employee is at the foreign safehaven and three family members are at the U.S. safehaven. The allowable amount would be \$250 for the employee at the foreign safehaven and \$600 for the three family members at the U.S. safehaven.
2. Employee is at the U.S. safehaven and three family members are at an alternate foreign safehaven. The allowable amount would be \$250 for the employee at the U.S. safehaven and \$600 for the three family members at the alternate foreign safehaven.
3. Employee is at the U.S. safehaven (and physically located in Washington, D.C.) and three family members are at the U.S. safehaven (and physically located in Iowa). The allowable amount would be \$600 because the employee and family members are all at the U.S. safehaven even though they are in separate U.S. locations.

Receipts are not required for this allowance, per DSSR 631a.(3). Note that the maximum airfreight replacement allowance per authorized safehaven is \$600, while the maximum UAB allowance could exceed 600 lbs., depending on family size. Employees of other agencies should consult their applicable travel regulations for airfreight allowances in this situation.

38. Q: If an employee receives the above allowance, is the employee entitled to ship UAB back to post upon the termination of evacuation?

A: Yes, the standard UAB shipment weights cited above apply, per DSSR 631a.(3). Employees of other agencies should consult their applicable travel regulations for airfreight allowances in this situation.

39. Q: If an employee ships UAB for an EFM to the U.S. safehaven, may UAB be shipped from the U.S. safehaven to the employee's next duty station where the EFM rejoins the employee?

A: Yes. However, the UAB is shipped using the employee's PCS orders, not the evacuation orders. Total weight of UAB shipped from the safehaven to the next post and from the employee's current duty station to the next post may not exceed the UAB weight authorized on the PCS orders. Employees of other agencies should consult their applicable travel regulations for airfreight allowances in this situation.

40. Q: A spouse or domestic partner of an employee is considered as emergency personnel and works in an EFM position at an Embassy that is on ordered departure. When the evacuation terminates and the post becomes unaccompanied, the EFM position is to be abolished and the spouse or domestic partner must then leave post for safehaven in the U.S. Under what kind of orders may the spouse or domestic partner travel, and what allowances may be granted?

A: The spouse or domestic partner travels under evacuation orders to the involuntary SMA location, per DSSR 264.1. The employee may receive involuntary SMA commencing the day after the spouse or domestic partner arrives in the U.S. The spouse or domestic partner is not entitled to transitional separate maintenance allowance (TSMA) because the spouse or domestic partner did not leave post during the evacuation and did not receive SEA payments.

41. Q: After an evacuation terminates and the post becomes unaccompanied, what benefits are available to EFMs? For example, an employee's EFMs want to move from their safehaven in Washington, DC to a different location in the U.S. to commence involuntary SMA. What allowances may be granted the employee for the family members?

A: For the Department of State, Global Talent Management (GTM) will fund the EFMs' travel from the safehaven (in this case Washington, DC) to the involuntary SMA location and will issue SMA orders that designate Washington, D.C. as the alternate point of origin to the SMA location, per DSSR 264.1. The EFMs may ship their evacuation UAB to this location and may access their HHE at government expense. Employees of other agencies should check with appropriate officials within your agency for guidance.

42. Q: After a period of time, if an unaccompanied post is declared accompanied and the employee's EFMs want to return to post, what allowances may be granted the employee?

A: For the Department of State, Global Talent Management (GTM) will fund the EFMs' travel back to post, provided the return to post is prior to the employee's final 90 days before PCS, per DSSR 264.2(b). Employees of other agencies should check with appropriate officials within your agency for guidance.

43. Q: After an evacuation terminates and EFMs may return to post, an employee requests that EFMs remain at the safehaven site for two months before returning to post. What

allowances may be granted an employee whose EFM's remain at the safehaven on voluntary SMA under the exception at DSSR 264.2(b)?

A: Following termination of an authorized/ordered departure an employee may elect voluntary SMA at the official safehaven for eligible family members previously eligible for SEA payments under DSSR Chapter 600 and for whom round-trip travel expenses have already been authorized. The employee may be permitted to then terminate this voluntary SMA and these eligible family members may be permitted to return to post provided return travel to post does not occur during the employee's last 90 days at a post of assignment. No additional expenses for travel, access to goods in storage, shipment of household effects or other such SMA-related expenditures may be incurred on their behalf. Note this election of voluntary SMA does not count as the one change of election during a tour of duty as normal voluntary SMA would (see Exception under DSSR 264.2b).

44a. Q: An employee is evacuated from post leaving a pet behind to be cared for by friends. While at safehaven in Washington, DC and assigned to the Department the employee's tour was curtailed. The employee went on home leave and then proceeded to a newly assigned overseas post on PCS. The employee wants to send the pet to the new post. May this shipment be done at government expense?

A: The family pet or pets may now be shipped under the Foreign Transfer Allowance (FTA) Pet Shipment and Required Quarantine Expense Portion. See DSSR 242.5 for additional information.

44b. Q: Per a change in the DSSR I understand my pet can be evacuated. Can you give me some details?

A: DSSR 600 (Evacuation Payments) now includes a Pet Shipment and Pet Quarantine Allowance. See DSSR 631c for more information.

EDUCATION ALLOWANCES AND EDUCATIONAL TRAVEL

45. Q: Are any other special education benefits available to evacuees and their families?

A: Usually education allowances are not granted for children evacuated from post to a safehaven in the U.S. if accompanied by a parent. Exception 1: If prior to evacuation, a child was attending school in the U.S. and was receiving the away from post education allowance, the rate authorized for the evacuated post may continue for the remainder of the school year, per DSSR 633.2. There is no entitlement for SEA payments for children on away from post education allowance except during the school break between grant years (note: SEA payments may be made during the COVID19 outbreak and unexpected school closures prior

to the end of a normal school year). Exception 2: If prior to evacuation, a child of an employee assigned to a border post (Canada or Mexico) was attending school in the U.S. and was receiving the at post education allowance, the rate authorized for the evacuated post may continue for the remainder of the school year, per DSSR 621.1(d)(1) and DSSR 621.2(d)(1).

Children under an at post education allowance are entitled to subsistence expense allowance if the Exception at DSSR 621.1(d)(1) and 621.2(d)(1) applies.

46. Q: Does the away from post education allowance continue during the evacuation period?

A: The away from post education allowance continues until the end of the current school year and the safehaven location replaces the foreign post of assignment as the destination for travel within the education allowance. Allowable travel expenses to the safehaven shall not exceed the cost of travel between the school attended and the post of assignment [DSSR 277.2c(1)]. No payment of SEA is authorized for any period of time covered by the away from post education allowance (DSSR 633.2), however, SEA payments may be made during the COVID19 outbreak and unexpected school closures prior to the end of a normal school year.

47. Q: May an EFM on educational travel or away from posteducation allowance, travel to the safehaven following evacuation of a post?

A: Yes. The safehaven location replaces the foreign post of assignment for travel purposes under education allowance and educational travel as established in DSSR 633.2 and DSSR 633.4 not to exceed the cost of travel between the school and the employee's post of assignment. Note: Payment of SEA is not allowed for children on away from post education allowance (DSSR 633.2). Subsistence expense is payable for such students only during the school break between grant years. Note: Subsistence expense is payable during the COVID19 outbreak with unexpected school closures prior to the end of a normal school year. Payment of SEA is allowed for children under educational travel only when they are temporarily at the safehaven and only for children unmarried and less than 21 years old. (Child is defined in DSSR 271g for education allowance and DSSR 281d for educational travel.) Per DSSR 633.4 while the child is at the school there are no SEA payments.

48. Q: May an EFM student travel at government expense from the student's safehaven site (the student's school is located in the U.S.) to the home leave address of the employee to join the family on home leave?

A: Yes, this travel is authorized, per DSSR 284. The EFM student would have been on the home leave orders of the employee had the student been able to return to post, a return that was precluded owing to the evacuation.

49. Q: During an evacuation, EFM students at away from postschools (boarding schools) continue to receive the away from post education allowance until the end of the school year,

but do not receive SEA during the spring school break. When the school term ends, what options are available for students?

A: After the school year ends, the students may travel to a safehaven location using the remaining travel monies from the away from post education allowance. Travel expenses may not exceed the cost of travel between the school attended and the employee's post of assignment. They may then begin receiving evacuation payments (SEA). The reason is that if the evacuation continues into the succeeding school year, students would not be eligible for an education allowance when the new school year begins. However, the employee may pay any required deposit or tuition payment for the first semester of the following school year from personal funds with the understanding the employee risks not receiving reimbursement for this expenditure.

Should the evacuation terminate during the school year and EFMs are permitted to return to post, the Office of Allowances within the U.S. Department of State maintains and updates the at post and away from post education allowances which could subsequently be used to fund educational expenses for that school year (assuming the EFMs met the requirements of DSSR 270). Posts may not pay a deposit or down payment for tuition payment for the succeeding school year while the post is in authorized or ordered departure status.

If after termination of the evacuation, the post is declared unaccompanied, and there is no natural or adoptive parent residing in the United States, then the employee is permitted to use the away from post education allowance for a child to attend boarding school in the U.S., per DSSR 276.23 and DSSR 276.3. See DSSR 276.3 for exceptions and restrictions. Note: The employee may choose the away from post education allowance for a child to attend boarding school outside the U.S. without the restriction of the parent residing in the same country.

50. Q: What options are available to boarding school students on away from post education allowance who would normally be permitted to travel back to post during an evacuation? May they travel to the safehaven at government expense? What are their options should the evacuation terminate and they wish to return to post for the summer break?

A: If there is no parent already evacuated to the U.S., the employee may designate a relative's or other adult's residence, or the city in which the boarding school is located, as the safehaven. The employee has the option of paying for travel from the boarding school to the safehaven location from personal funds and thereby save the remaining travel monies of the away from post education allowance for later use in the event the evacuation terminates and EFMs are permitted to return to post. Please refer to the question/answer 49 above regarding the options available should the evacuation continue into the succeeding school year.

51. Q: What options are available to college students who would normally be eligible for educational travel during an evacuation? The safehaven normally replaces the post for computing educational travel, but is it permissible to delay using educational travel to post in

anticipation of the imminent termination of evacuation and thus retain the option of the EFM student returning to post during the summer break?

A: If there is no parent evacuated to the U.S., the employee may designate a relative's or other adult's address or the city in which the college or university is located as the U.S. safehaven, per DSSR 610 I. The student, if under the age of 21, may begin receiving SEA payments after the student arrives at the safehaven. Parents have the option of paying for travel from the educational institution to the safehaven location themselves, thereby retaining the educational travel trip for later in the summer in the event the evacuation terminates and the post becomes accompanied again. If a student is already living in an off-campus apartment or similar housing at the end of the school year, then this accommodation will not be considered commercial lodging for purposes of SEA payments.

52. Q: An employee is assigned to an unaccompanied post. The employee's EFM student, age 18, is enrolled in college but cannot visit the employee using educational travel. In these circumstances, may the employee receive involuntary SMA for the EFM student?

A: Yes, the employee may receive involuntary SMA in lieu of educational travel in this instance, until the EFM student becomes 21 years of age.

53. Q: Some families have EFM students in boarding school and/or college in different locations that in addition terminate the school term on different dates. Must all family members proceed to the same safehaven site or may EFMs of the same family declare different and separate safehaven sites? If they are permitted to travel to different safehaven sites, what is the basis for the M&IE payments?

A: The safehavens are: Official U.S. (anywhere in the 50 United States, District of Columbia, and non-foreign areas which include U.S. territories, possessions, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands); Official Foreign; or Approved Alternate Foreign. EFMs are not required to travel to the same safehaven site. They may travel to another location in the U.S. or to an approved alternate foreign safehaven. However, there can be only one first evacuee for SEA calculations (DSSR 632) per official (U.S. or foreign) safehaven and a first evacuee at an approved alternate foreign safehaven ONLY if there is not already a first evacuee at an official safehaven.

There can be a first evacuee at an official U.S. safehaven and there can be a first evacuee at a foreign safehaven at the same time. When an employee or family member is at an official (U.S. or foreign) safehaven s/he is considered the first evacuee for SEA calculations even if other family members are at an alternate foreign safehaven. SEA calculations for the first evacuee for both the lodging and M&IE are based on the per diem of the first evacuee's location; SEA payments for family members at an alternate foreign safehaven are calculated on only the applicable M&IE portion for the lowest of the (1) official safehaven; (2) approved alternate foreign safehaven; or (3) Continental US (CONUS). If, however, there is not an

employee or family member at an official U.S. or official foreign safehaven, one family member at an alternate foreign safehaven may be considered the first evacuee and SEA calculated using both the lodging and M&IE for the lowest of the (1) official safehaven; (2) approved alternate foreign safehaven; or (3) Continental US (CONUS).

Travel of all other EFMs to safehaven sites different from the first evacuee is calculated on a cost-construct basis using the evacuated post to the safehaven of the first evacuee as the basis for this cost calculation.

54. Q: At the termination of an evacuation and a declaration that EFMs may return to post, an employee's EFMs nonetheless wish to remain in the U.S. so that the EFM students may complete the final term of the current school year. What allowances may be granted the employee?

A: If the EFMs are residing in commercial quarters, the employee may receive a maximum of 90 calendar days of Transitional SMA (TSMA) to allow the EFM students to complete the current term of the school year, per DSSR 262.3b. If the EFMs are residing in non-commercial quarters, the employee may be granted Voluntary SMA (VSMA). However, EFMs may not return to post if, at the end of the school year, the employee is within 90 days of Permanent Change of Station (PCS) (DSSR 264.2b).

TRANSITIONAL SEPARATE MAINTENANCE ALLOWANCES (TSMA)

55. Q: An employee returns to the safehaven on evacuation orders to join his previously evacuated family two weeks before the end of the 180-day evacuation period. At the end of the 180-day evacuation period, the employee's post is declared unaccompanied. At this time the employee takes two weeks of annual leave and then returns to post. May the employee receive TSMA on behalf of this family for the two weeks following the termination of the evacuation, even though the family was not separated?

A: Yes, TSMA may be granted for this period because the employee was maintaining quarters at the post during this temporary absence from post, per DSSR 265.3. TSMA in this case would be for the purpose of transitioning the family from commercial quarters occupied during the evacuation to permanent quarters because the post has been declared unaccompanied, per DSSR 262.3a. This TSMA may be granted for up to 60 calendar days with an additional 30 calendar days granted on a case by case basis for extreme or unusual circumstances.

56. Q: An employee's EFMs were evacuated six months ago and have been living in a furnished apartment. The evacuation has been terminated and the post is declared as unaccompanied. The EFMs would like to move to a less expensive rental house. Is this move permissible while still retaining TSMA eligibility?

A: Yes, this move is permissible provided that the less expensive commercially leased rental house is a transition residence prior to occupying permanent quarters (DSSR 262.3a). However, if this less expensive rental house is intended to be a permanent residence then the employee may not receive TSMA, but may receive involuntary SMA, per DSSR 262.1.

57. Q: After an employee's EFMs move into a permanent residence are they still eligible to receive TSMA until they receive their full HHE shipment?

A: TSMA payments terminate the earliest of the dates that are set forth in DSSR 266.4, i.e. (a) the date the employee commences travel under transfer orders from the evacuated post or the date of transfer if no travel is to occur under the transfer orders; (b) the final day of the authorized period of the TSMA; (c) the date the complete HHE shipment is received by the employee's EFMs; (d) the date the EFMs occupy non-commercial quarters; or (e) the date EFMs occupy permanent quarters.

If the employee's EFMs move into a permanent residence before they receive their full HHE shipment then their TSMA will terminate before they receive that shipment (on the day they occupy permanent quarters). Alternately, if they receive their full HHE shipment before occupying permanent quarters TSMA will terminate on the date they receive that shipment.

58. Q: An employee ships some HHE from post to EFMs on TSMA in the U.S. If the HHE does not arrive within 60 days may TSMA be extended beyond this period?

A: Usually TSMA under DSSR 262.3a may be paid for a maximum of 60 days, but an additional 30 days may be allowed, with agency approval based on extreme or unusual circumstances. The employee at post should submit an SF-1190 (Rev. 07/2009) to the appropriate agency official before the end of the 60- day period to request an extension of TSMA payments for the additional 30 days. An example of extreme or unusual circumstances would be a situation in which the employee made reasonable efforts to ship the HHE to his EFMs in the U.S. but the shipment did not arrive in this time period.

59. Q: What are the TSMA rates?

A: Per DSSR 267.1b(2), TSMA rates are based on percentage of the Standard CONUS per diem rate and are per family, not per person: for days 1-30 100% Standard CONUS/day for 1-2 family members and 100% (Standard CONUS +\$20) /day for 3 or more family members; for days 31-60 75% Standard CONUS/day for 1-2 family members and 75% (Standard CONUS +\$20)/day for 3 or more family members; for days 61-90 50% Standard CONUS/day for 1- 2 family members and 50% (Standard CONUS+\$20)/day for 3 or more family members.

60. Q: Is TSMA taxable?

A: No, TSMA is not subject to federal or state income taxes, per DSSR 054.1.

61. Q: How are TSMA payments initiated, received, and then terminated?

A: An employee submits a Standard Form (SF) -1190 (Rev. 07/2009) that is processed and approved, per DSSR 264.3. Payments are made to the employee by payroll and continue until the employee submits an SF-1190 requesting termination of the allowance. The employee should submit this termination notice upon the initial occurrence of any of the following events, per DSSR 266.4: (a) the date the employee commences travel under transfer orders from the evacuated post or the date of transfer if no travel is to occur under the transfer orders; (b) the final day of the authorized period of the TSMA; (c) the date the complete HHE shipment is received by the employee's family members; (d) the date the family members occupy non-commercial quarters; or (e) the date the family members occupy permanent quarters.

62. Q: Once TSMA is terminated what options remain for the employee?

A: The employee may submit an SF-1190 to the appropriate agency requesting involuntary SMA for each family member and specifying in box #18 of the SF-1190 the reason for the request; namely, that the post is unaccompanied and travel to post has been denied to the employee's family members, per DSSR 264.1. An employee's minor family members are covered by involuntary SMA until the age of 21 (age 18 for voluntary SMA with the exception of those over 18 who are in secondary school). Annual rates for VSMA and ISMA are at DSSR 267.1a.

63. Q: What other allowances are available once TSMA terminates and the post is declared unaccompanied?

A: If the employee has EFM students in grades K through 12 then the employee may request either involuntary SMA or the applicable away from post education allowance. The applicable away from post education allowance is that specified for the employee's post of assignment, per DSSR 276.23. The away from post education allowance option may be chosen unless the child is going to school in the U.S. and the parent (natural, adoptive, or step) resides in the U.S. also (rare exceptions noted at DSSR 276.3). If this is the case, the employee is not eligible for the away from post education allowance. The logic is that the child could live with the parent and attend public school free of charge. This same prohibition does not apply if the child is going to school in a foreign country and the parent resides in the same foreign country because school wouldn't be free in the foreign country as in the U.S. The only restriction on the away from post education allowance when a child is going to school in a foreign country is at DSSR 277.2. Room and board could not be paid to the parent if the child lived with that parent outside the U.S. (rare exceptions noted at DSSR 277.2b).

64. Q: May an employee receive TSMA for EFM's who have been evacuated to an alternate approved foreign safehaven?

A: EFM's are eligible to receive TSMA, per DSSR 264.3, if they are occupying temporary commercial quarters. They are not eligible for TSMA if they are residing in non-commercial quarters. If they are not eligible for TSMA they may be eligible for either involuntary SMA or away from post education allowance (see the previous Q&As on this topic).

Note: EFM's are officially considered to be residing in the U.S. on involuntary SMA. However, the employee may request that the alternate foreign safehaven of the EFM's be designated as the official involuntary SMA site. If this request is approved by the appropriate agency official an at post education allowance may be paid for eligible EFM students unless they have traveled to a secondary school (grades 9-12) under the educational travel authority within the previous 12 months (DSSR 262.5). (Department of State employees should make this request to the Executive Director of the appropriate regional bureau.)

65. Q: What constitutes non-commercial quarters?

A: Non-commercial quarters are those that are not commercially leased or rented. Employees and EFM's living with family, friends, etc. would be considered living in non-commercial quarters, per DSSR 632.1.

66. Q: An employee is to be reassigned within a month after the termination of evacuation orders. May his EFM's living in the U.S. receive TSMA for this period?

A: The employee's EFM's are eligible for TSMA while they reside in temporary commercial quarters. However, if the employee is expecting to be transferred to the U.S. within a month the subsistence expense portion of the Home Service Transfer Allowance (HSTA) may provide a better benefit for the employee than the TSMA. If TSMA is approved, EFM's will not be eligible for the HSTA unless official transportation was authorized permitting those family members to join the employee at the new post of assignment in the U.S. , per DSSR 252.8.

SEPARATE MAINTENANCE ALLOWANCES (SMA)

67. Q: At what age must voluntary SMA terminate for a dependent child?

A: Voluntary SMA must be terminated on a child's 18th birthday, unless the child is attending secondary school or is determined to be incapable of self-support (due to physical or mental impairment), per DSSR 262.2 and DSSR 264.2a(4).

68. Q: If an employee's spouse or domestic partner is in Washington, D.C. on voluntary or involuntary SMA and the employee is evacuated from post to the safehaven site of

Washington, D.C., is SMA terminated?

A: The SMA is not terminated. When the employee is evacuated, it is considered a temporary absence from post. Per DSSR 265.3 the grant shall continue during the absence of the employee from the post provided the employee maintains quarters at the post, unless terminated under the provisions of DSSR 266.2 or 266.3 (Transfer or Separation).

69. Q: At what age must involuntary SMA terminate for a dependent child?

A: Involuntary SMA must be terminated on a child's 21st birthday, unless the child is determined to be incapable of self-support (due to physical or mental impairment), per DSSR 262.1. A child who is in post-secondary school/college and not currently working is not considered to be incapable of self-support.

70. Q: If an eligible family member on SMA travels to the post at personal expense will the Department assume any responsibility in the case of an emergency involving the EFM?

A: When an EFM travels to the employee's post at personal expense, the family member is considered a private citizen visiting the country. As such, that family member is not eligible for any allowances or benefits paid on behalf of family members of USG civilian employees, including any medical emergency evacuation travel, per DSSR 261.2. However, if the employee has not previously used the one change of option per tour (applies to voluntary SMA and not involuntary SMA) to terminate SMA, the employee might be permitted to do so once an emergency arises while the EFM is at the employee's post.

71. Q: When an employee receiving SMA is transferred to another post does the SMA automatically continue?

A: When an employee is transferred, SMA must be terminated, per DSSR 266.2. The employee must then elect to apply for SMA at the new post or have family members included on the travel orders (if an accompanied post).

72. Q: Following the termination of evacuation, may an employee's EFMs remain at their safehaven on voluntary SMA and then return to post later?

A: Following termination of an authorized or ordered departure an employee may elect voluntary SMA at the official safehaven for the EFMs previously eligible for SEA payments and for whom round-trip travel expenses have already been authorized, per DSSR 264.2b Exception. However, an EFM who has been living in an official overseas safehaven and wishes to remain there must reaffirm that this location meets Department of State security

standards. The employee may be permitted to terminate this voluntary SMA and EFMs may be permitted to return to post provided return travel to post does not occur during the employee's final 90 days at post. This SMA is not to be considered the one change of option during a tour of duty.

73. Q: Who may officially authorize approval or disapproval of an employee's SMA request?

A: Employees must check with their agencies for officials who are authorized to approve/disapprove SMA. Within the foreign affairs agencies, the following officials are authorized to approve SMA requests for their respective agencies (see 3 FAM 3232 and 3FAH-1 H3232.2 for additional instructions):

State Department--Executive Director of the appropriate bureau
U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) --See ADS 477
USDA--FAS -- Director, International Services Division, OFSO
Department of Commerce--Director, Office of Foreign Service Human Capital

Only the following officials can disapprove SMA applications for their respective foreign affairs agencies:

State Department--Deputy Assistant Secretary for Human Resources
USAID--See ADS 477
USDA--FAS -- Deputy Administrator, Office of Foreign Service Operations
Department of Commerce--the Director General or Appropriate Secretarial Officer.

74. Q: What procedure must an employee follow in submitting an SMA request?

A: The employee must complete and sign the SF-1190 (Rev. 07/2009) that contains a statement certifying the veracity of the request. Employees from agencies other than State should contact their respective headquarters for guidance. If an employee is requesting SMA on behalf of a spouse or domestic partner, the spouse or domestic partner must also sign the SF-1190 so that the spouse or domestic partner is aware of the request for SMA on his/her behalf.

75. Q: Is an employee's EFM student eligible to receive educational travel while on SMA?

A: No. When EFM students are on either involuntary or voluntary SMA they are not eligible for other allowances, including educational travel.

76. Q: Is an employee's EFM student eligible to receive an education allowance while on involuntary SMA?

A: If a foreign area is designated as the official SMA (involuntary) location, an EFM student may be eligible for an at post education allowance, per DSSR 262.5. Unless specifically designated otherwise by the head of agency, EFMs on SMA (voluntary) are considered to be officially residing in the U.S. and can attend U.S. public schools free of charge. However, if SMA is granted for the convenience of the government (involuntary) and a foreign area is designated as the official SMA location, the EFM student authorized to reside at that location may be authorized an education allowance within the applicable school at post education allowance rate for the officially authorized foreign Involuntary SMA location unless the child has traveled under the Educational Travel authority within the previous 12 months.

77. Q: The spouse or domestic partner of an employee at a foreign post is residing in the U.S. on SMA. When the employee leaves (transfers from) post the SMA will be terminated. How much Home Service Transfer Allowance (HSTA) is the employee eligible to receive? Further, should the subsistence portion of this allowance include the spouse or domestic partner as well?

A: Family members for whom a SMA was authorized while the employee was posted in a foreign area are not considered members of the family for computing the HSTA unless official transportation was authorized permitting those family members to join the employee at the new post of assignment in the U.S., per DSSR 252.8. If transportation was not authorized for family members to join the employee at the new U.S. post, the employee is granted the HSTA as a single employee, not as one with EFMs.

SINGLE PARENTS / MARRIED COUPLE EMPLOYEES/DOMESTIC PARTNERSHIP EMPLOYEES

78. Q: If a single parent employee is assigned to a position designated by the post as an emergency position will the employee's children be evacuated when ordered departure for EFMs is declared? If so, what allowances will the EFM children receive?

A: Yes, the EFM children will be evacuated. They will be eligible for the customary evacuation benefits, per DSSR 630. If there is a single child, this child would be considered as the first evacuee of the family unit and would receive SEA based on the safehaven's per diem rate (if at the Official U.S. or foreign safehaven), including the actual lodging charge up to the lodging limit. If there are other children evacuated they would receive a percentage of the U.S. or foreign safehaven's locality M&IE rate according to the formulas set forth in DSSR 632.1. If, however, the children go to an approved alternate foreign safehaven SEA is calculated using the lodging and M&IE for the lowest of the (1) official safehaven; (2) approved alternate foreign safehaven; or (3) Continental US (CONUS) [DSSR 632.2(b)].

79. Q: When married couple employees or domestic partnership employees depart post on evacuation orders, how are their SEA payments determined?

A: Employees will each receive evacuation benefits not to exceed an employee's eligibility, but without duplication of benefits for family members on their orders. Both employees are considered to be the first evacuee, per DSSR 632.4(b) and each is eligible for up to the maximum lodging calculation at the safehaven location. If sharing the same quarters/room at the commercial establishment the total room expense is divided by 2 in order to get the allowable amount for reimbursement to each employee. If at a U.S. safehaven tax may be claimed in addition to the allowable lodging maximum.

80. Q: In the case of married couple employees or domestic partnership employees with EFM children and only one parent/employee being evacuated, on whose orders should the evacuated children be placed?

A: EFM children should be evacuated under the name of the employee who lists them for allowances and benefits at post.

81. Q: How do married couple employees or domestic partnership employees evacuated to the same official safehaven submit their receipts under the commercial rate formula for lodging?

A: Provided the evacuated employees are residing in the same quarters/room in the commercial establishment, they should submit their vouchers together. Reimbursement would be granted as first evacuee to each for lodging (one-half of the commercial lodging charge for each if sharing quarters) as well as first evacuee amount for the M&IE, per DSSR 632.1(b). If employees happen to be staying in separate rooms at the commercial establishment then they should probably submit their vouchers separately and calculation for allowable amounts will be based on each employee.

SHIPMENTS AND PROPERTY CLAIMS

82. Q: May Privately Owned Vehicles (POVs) be shipped from the post to the safehaven point at government expense?

A: No, POV shipments are not authorized, per 631b. However, a safehaven transportation allowance of \$25 per day is authorized when access to a POV is not available. The transportation allowance may not exceed \$25 per day per family and may be paid at only one safehaven even if evacuees from the same family are at two different safehavens. No receipts are required.

83. Q: May an employee have access to HHE while on evacuation status?

A: Access to, delivery and return to storage of household effects for evacuees is at personal expense, not Government expense, per DSSR 631b.

84. Q: If an employee does not ship UAB from post during an evacuation and subsequently receives the airfreight replacement allowance, may the employee ship UAB back to post after the evacuation?

A: Yes. The airfreight replacement allowance is only in place of the UAB from post, per DSSR 631a.(3).

85. Q: What if an employee is assigned to a new post, but all personal effects remain at the evacuated post?

A: If the household effects (HHE), unaccompanied air baggage (UAB), or privately owned vehicle (POV) are packed out, they will be shipped as soon as it is possible to do so. If the employee is not present at post, the post's Management section will be responsible for packing and shipping the employee's effects.

86. Q: What should an employee do if personal property has been lost or damaged at post?

A: A State Department employee may file a claim with the State Department Claims Office at claimsquery@state.gov for loss or damage of personal property. Loss or damage can occur in HHE/UAB/POV shipments, at quarters, in a natural disaster, by theft or vandalism, in an evacuation, and under other circumstances. What instructions and forms are required will vary according to the circumstances of the loss. State Department employees should contact the GSO at post and/or claimsquery@state.gov to report the loss as soon as possible as there are strict time restraints (75 days to report specified items damaged or lost from the date of delivery or date of loss, with the exception of POVs which must be reported upon delivery on the delivery receipt). Employees should contact the Claims Assistance Officer at post to assist them in filing their claim. Employees of other agencies can file a personal property claim with their respective agencies.

87. Q: What is the maximum amount that may be claimed for lost and damaged personal property?

A: The maximum amount payable for any loss or damage arising from a single incident is limited by law to \$40,000, unless the claim arises from an emergency evacuation or from extraordinary circumstances, in which case the maximum amount is \$100,000. Employees are strongly encouraged to carry private insurance against damage to or loss of their personal property. The Department settles personal property claims based on the depreciated value of an item, not the replacement cost. If the cost of repair is less than the depreciated value, you will receive the lesser amount (repair cost) of the two. There are further limitations on how much can be paid for certain items. No more than a specified maximum amount can be paid for jewelry (\$2,500 per item/\$10,000 per claim), antiques (\$5,000 per claim), furs (\$1,500

per item/\$3,000 per claim), art (\$1,000 per item/\$4,000 per claim), musical instruments (\$3,000 per claim), and much more. For this reason the Department strongly recommends the purchase of private insurance to cover the full value of your items. Employees should purchase coverage for both loss and damage of household goods and privately owned vehicles shipped and/or stored.

88. Q: Who should the employee contact to begin this claims procedure?

A: Department of State employees should contact the Transportation Management Division Claims Office at claimsquery@state.gov.

TERMINATION OF EVACUATION

89. Q: What is the period of validity for evacuation travel orders?

A: Under normal circumstances, evacuation travel orders are valid for up to nine months from the original date of approval of an evacuation order. However, if an employee still at post is reassigned to another post, evacuated family members are not allowed return travel within 30 days of reassignment.

90. Q: How are SEA payments and travel vouchers administered at the termination of an evacuation period?

A: For SEA payments: For Department of State employees, within 10 days of returning back to the evacuated post the final request should be emailed to GFSCSeaPackage@state.gov. The evacuee is responsible for sending the appropriate documentation including justification for any time between the termination of the evacuation and initiation of return travel to post. Justification includes making necessary travel arrangements. The final audit of SEA payments cannot be completed without appropriate supporting documentation.

SEA payments terminate on the earliest of the following dates, per DSSR 635:

- ◆ the date the employee commences travel under an assignment order to another duty station outside the evacuation area;
- ◆ the effective date of transfer when the employee is already at the post to which transferred;
- ◆ the date of separation;
- ◆ the date specified by the head of agency;
- ◆ 180 days after the evacuation order is issued; or

◆ the date the evacuee commences return travel to post.

When an evacuation order is terminated and evacuees are allowed to return to post, eligibility for SEA payments ends on the day return to post is authorized. Normally a grace period of three, not to exceed ten days, is granted during which SEA may continue while an evacuee is making arrangements to return to post. The grace period must be justified on the employee's travel voucher (i.e. that the extra days were necessary to arrange return to post). SEA payments are limited to 180 days, including the grace period for travel.

91. Q: What happens if an evacuation ends and an employee is liable for paying a lease penalty?

A: If an employee or designee signs a lease at the safehaven and is subsequently ordered to return to post, or if an evacuation terminates and the post subsequently becomes unaccompanied, then the employee's agency may waive the refund due the Government on an advance or reimbursement of lodging expenses incurred not to exceed 30 days. This lease coverage may not extend beyond the 180-day evacuation payment limit. See DSSR 632.4c.

INVOLUNTARY SEPARATE MAINTENANCE ALLOWANCE (ISMA)

92. Q: If families are separated for the convenience of the government, why are all of our housing expenses not covered like they would be at post?

A: The purpose of both Voluntary and Involuntary Separate Maintenance Allowances is to help defray the additional expenses associated with maintaining family members elsewhere than at post. The allowances are not meant to fully cover a family's expenses. The rates for Involuntary SMA are based on data provided by the Bureau of Labor Statistics for the average cost of maintaining a household in the continental United States (CONUS). The costs include average rent, utilities, miscellaneous furnishings and supplies. Because individual circumstances vary and most people do not live in the average area in CONUS, the rates may not fully cover each family's costs.

93. Q: If the post allows only spouses or domestic partners (or spouses or domestic partners and children under 5), but a spouse or domestic partner cannot go because there are children (or older children), is the employee then eligible for ISMA?

A: In addition to fully unaccompanied status, the Department of State has added the category of partially unaccompanied posts, i.e., only adult EFMs, or adult EFMs and small children, are permitted. If minor children (under the age of 18 years) may not proceed to post and are therefore eligible for ISMA, a parent or step-parent may remain at the separate household to care for them and would also be eligible for ISMA. Questions on unusual circumstances should be sent to the Director of the Office of Allowances at AllowancesO@state.gov.

94. Q: What happens if the family has been on ISMA and the post status changes back to accompanied, but because we are in the middle of the school year it is not advisable for the family to move? Can the employee continue to receive ISMA, or does it shift back to voluntary? If it shifts to voluntary, do I need to fill in another SF-1190?

A: When an unaccompanied post becomes safe enough for EFM's to return and the status changes to at least partially accompanied, the higher ISMA rates will continue for 90 days. Before the 90-day period ends, the employee will need to submit a new SF-1190 (Rev. 07/2009) to continue either ISMA (if partially unaccompanied and the employee's EFM's may not return) or VSMA (if the employee's EFM's could return but choose not to).

95. Q: If a family member fails to get a medical clearance, is the employee eligible for involuntary SMA? Is there a reporting requirement with regard to the medical condition? Do you have to continue to demonstrate the medical need for ISMA? If there is no longer justification for a medical ISMA, would the EFM still be eligible for voluntary SMA?

A: An employee may receive Involuntary SMA for a family member if that family member is prevented from proceeding to post due to a medical condition. The Office of Medical Services or other competent medical authority must certify in writing that the family member's medical condition prevents the family member from going to post. That certification could be a memo, cable or email that is attached to the SF-1190, Foreign Allowances Application, Grant and Report. If the family member's medical condition changes and the family member may proceed to post, but chooses not to, the employee is eligible for Voluntary SMA. The employee must immediately submit the new SF-1190 documenting that the EFM's status has changed. Please note that an employee may only elect VSMA for family members once during a tour of duty and the employee and family member must be separated for at least 90 days. The change of election may not take place during the employee's first or last 90 days during the tour of duty. (DSSR 264.2b).

96. Q: I am assigned to an accompanied post and my family members are with me. Unfortunately, one of my EFM's has developed a medical condition and the Regional Medical Officer (RMO) has stated that he cannot remain at post with me. He will return to the United States to get medical treatment for the remainder of my tour. May I put him on SMA? What type of SMA would he receive - voluntary or involuntary?

A: You should submit an SF-1190 to your post management officer to apply for SMA on behalf of your EFM. Please note on the SF-1190 that you are applying for involuntary SMA because the Office of Medical Services has limited your EFM's medical clearance in such a way that he is not permitted to reside with you at post. Please attach documentation from the RMO or Office of Medical Services indicating that needed medical facilities are not available at post and therefore the EFM's medical clearance is being limited. You would then be eligible for ISMA on behalf of your EFM.

97. Q: What support is available to families on involuntary separation?

A: The Global Community Liaison Office (GCLO) within the Department of State takes the lead on providing support to families on separate maintenance, both voluntary and involuntary, as well as those in evacuation status. GCLO is setting up a network of support for families on involuntary separate maintenance and wants you to contact GCLO with your email address and telephone number. GCLO has developed a resource book and a website for unaccompanied tours on the internet website <https://www.state.gov/global-community-liaison-office/unaccompanied-tours>.

98. Q: How does ISMA relate to travel of separated families?

A: Travel for children of separated families described in 3FAM 3753 does apply to children on involuntary separate maintenance allowance (but not if on *voluntary* SMA). Since children are not allowed to visit an unaccompanied post, travel would have to be to an alternate location.

TSMA & EVACUATION

99. Q: My family and I were evacuated six months ago and I have been leasing a furnished apartment in a high rise building. Now that the evacuation has ended and the post is unaccompanied, I'd like to move my family to a rental house that is less expensive. Can I do this and still receive Transitional Separate Maintenance Allowance (TSMA) for them?

A: Yes, your family can move to a less expensive commercially-leased rental house as long as it is a transition residence prior to occupying their permanent residence. If this move to the less expensive rental house is intended to be their permanent residence, then you will not be eligible for TSMA but only eligible for the regular Involuntary SMA rates in the Department of State Standardized Regulations (DSSR) section 267.1.

100. Q: Even after my family moves, they will have a lot of extraordinary expenses (like furniture rental) until they receive the full Household Effects (HHE) shipment. When will my TSMA payments stop?

A: As stated above, if this residence is considered temporary (transitional) and commercially-leased, then TSMA payments may be paid for up to 60 calendar days awaiting your full HHE shipment. TSMA is intended to help defray the extraordinary expenses your family will experience during this transition period between the end of evacuation and the beginning of Involuntary SMA. The daily TSMA rates are based on percentage of the Standard CONUS per diem rate: for days 1-30 100% Standard CONUS/day for 1-2 family members and 100% (Standard CONUS +\$20) /day for 3 or more family members; for days 31-60 75% Standard CONUS/day for 1-2 family members and 75% (Standard CONUS +\$20)/day for 3 or more family members; for days 61-90 50% Standard CONUS/day for 1- 2 family members and 50% (Standard CONUS+\$20)/day for 3 or more family members. These are not per person rates but per family rates.

101. Q: Even if my spouse or domestic partner, who is still at post, ships some of our HHE right away, it will still probably take more than 60 days to get here. How do I extend the TSMA to 90 days?

A: TSMA may be paid for a maximum of 60 days with an additional 30 days allowed following agency approval based on extreme or unusual circumstances. The employee at post should submit an SF-1190 to the appropriate agency official ahead of the end of the initial 60 day period to request an extension of TSMA payments for the additional 30 days. One example of extreme or unusual circumstances is that the employee has made every effort to get the full HHE shipment to the family but the full shipment has not been delivered due to restrictions or difficulties beyond the employee's control.

102. Q: Are the TSMA amounts different for days 61 through 90?

A: Yes, the TSMA rates for days 61 through 90 are 50% Standard CONUS/day for 1- 2 family members and 50% (Standard CONUS+\$20)/day for 3 or more family members. These are not per person rates but per family rates.

103. Q: Is TSMA taxable?

A: No. TSMA is a type of SMA, which is not subject to federal or state income taxes.

104. Q: What if I get some of our furniture from storage and also have some of our HHE shipped. Would I still be eligible for TSMA after I get the items from storage, but until the HHE arrives?

A: If you are still in temporary commercial lodging, you are eligible for TSMA for up to 60 days or until your full HHE is delivered. However, the maximum days in TSMA cannot exceed 90 days.

105. Q: How do you know when my complete HHE has arrived?

A: The employee should submit an SF-1190 to the appropriate agency official to inform them of the date the family received the complete or full HHE. TSMA must terminate on the date the full HHE is delivered to the family. Please note that the USG is not responsible to move an HHE shipment from a temporary residence to the subsequent (permanent) residence, therefore, it would be good to coordinate delivery of HHE to a permanent residence. Please note that TSMA terminates when the earliest of several possible events occurs (see DSSR 266.4) and therefore could stop even before the complete HHE is delivered if one of those other conditions applies.

106. Q: Is TSMA paid automatically once it commences?

A: Yes. Once an employee has submitted an SF-1190 and it has been processed, payments commenced via the payroll process continue automatically until the employee submits an SF-1190 to the appropriate agency official to terminate the allowance. The employee should submit the form as soon as any of the following occur: date the employee commences travel under transfer orders from the evacuated post or date of transfer when no travel by the employee under the transfer order is involved; date the authorized period for Transitional SMA ends; date the complete Household Effects (HHE) shipment is delivered to family; date the family members occupy non-commercial quarters; or date the family members occupy permanent quarters.

107. Q: Once TSMA is terminated, what are my options?

A: You will submit the SF-1190 to the appropriate agency official requesting Involuntary SMA for each family member and cite in box 18 of the SF-1190 the reason for the request [that the post is unaccompanied and transportation to post has been withheld for family members]. Remember, involuntary SMA extends to children until they reach age 21 (age 18 is the limit for voluntary SMA unless the child is in secondary school). Annual rates for VSMA and ISMA are at DSSR 267.1a.

108. Q: Is there anything else available following termination of TSMA?

A: For your school age children (grades K through 12), according to DSSR 276.23, the employee may request the applicable away from post education allowance [for the employee's post of assignment] for his/her child in lieu of involuntary SMA. The restrictions are that (1) a parent (natural, adoptive, step) cannot reside in the United States if the child will attend school in the United States (this restriction does not apply if the child and parent live in the same foreign country); and (2) the child cannot have traveled under the educational travel authority within the previous 12 months.

109. Q: What if my family is at an alternate approved foreign safehaven at the end of the evacuation. Can I get TSMA for my family members in the foreign area?

A: If your family members are occupying temporary commercial quarters then they are eligible to receive TSMA. However, if they are in non-commercial quarters they are not eligible for TSMA. If they are not eligible for TSMA, they are eligible for either involuntary SMA or away from post education allowance. Note: Although family members are officially considered to reside in the U.S. on Involuntary SMA, if an employee has extenuating family circumstances, s/he may ask the appropriate agency official to officially designate a foreign area for Involuntary SMA. If a foreign area is officially designated for Involuntary (as opposed to voluntary) SMA, an education allowance (based on the DSSR 920 at post rate for the designated SMA location) may be paid for a child on Involuntary SMA at that location. (For State Department, the agency official would be the Executive Director of the appropriate bureau).

110. Q: Can you give me examples of non-commercial quarters?

Non-commercial quarters are considered private residences such as living with family, friends or others in a location which is not commercially leased or rented.

111. Q: I understand you're not supposed to receive regular SMA unless you will be in that status for at least 90 days. I expect my spouse or domestic partner to be reassigned in a month or so. Am I still eligible for TSMA?

A: Your family is eligible for TSMA as long as they are in temporary commercial lodging. However, if the employee is going to be transferred shortly to the U.S., you may wish to weigh the immediate benefit of TSMA versus the subsistence expense portion of the Home Service Transfer Allowance for family and employee once the employee gets back to the U.S. If TSMA is used, the family will not be eligible for HSTA unless official transportation was authorized permitting those family members to join the employee at the new post of assignment in the U.S. (DSSR 252.8).

The following FAQs associated with the 2020 Global Authorized Departure (G/AD) are shown here in case reference needs to be made to that period.

[Education FAQs - 2020-21 school year advance payment.pdf](#)

New Evacuation Order as outlined in 20 State 89358 dated September 9, 2020

Q.1. Can other agencies with staff and/or eligible family members (EFMs) on Global Authorized Department (G/AD) utilize the new evacuation order authorizing G/AD for an additional 30 days, as outlined in 20 State 89358?

A.1. The new evacuation order was authorized by the Under Secretary for Management (who has the authority delegated by the Secretary) consistent with 5 USC 5522(a)(2) and following consultations with OPM, based on the finding that the COVID-19 pandemic creates imminent danger, thereby enacting a 30-day evacuation period for those who were away from post on Global Authorized Departure (G/AD) orders. Other agencies must still choose to authorize these payments pursuant to their own internal policies, but they may rely on the Department's finding that individuals on G/AD were evacuated due to the imminent danger created by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Q.2. What are the maximum payments under this New Evacuation Order and who are eligible?

A.2. Both the employee and EFM who are currently on G/AD can be under this new evacuation order and receive Subsistence Expense Allowance (SEA). All employee and EFM units currently on G/AD will transition to payments under this authority as of September 10. SEA for official as well as approved alternate U.S. safehavens will continue to be based on percentages of the locality per diem rate. Approved alternate foreign safehavens will continue to be based on percentages of the Standard CONUS rate.

The SEA under this new evacuation order for up to 30 days will not be according to the Simplified Method as under the G/AD but will be calculated the same as the DSSR 632 rate paid on days 31-180 and based on percentages of the appropriate per diem rate (either locality or Standard CONUS as mentioned in the preceding paragraph). If in commercial lodging, the following will apply. If in non-commercial lodging, only the M&IE portions will apply.

--First evacuee: actual expense for lodging reimbursed up to 100% or up to 150% for special family composition; plus 80% M&IE;

-All other evacuees 18 and older 80% M&IE; and

-All other evacuees under 18 40% M&IE.

Lodging tax is reimbursed in addition to allowable lodging amount in the U.S., however, not for the approved alternate foreign safehaven. Lodging receipts will be required. As stated in 20 STATE 89358 if this 30 day evacuation order is extended past October 9, the SEA will be reduced for subsequent 30 day increments.

GLOBAL AUTHORIZED DEPARTURE (G/AD)

Effective March 14, 2020, the Under Secretary of State for Management (M) approved the Global Authorized Departure (G/AD) for Individuals at Higher Risk from COVID-19 for 60 days. Source: 20 State 28418.

Per 20 State 45036 dated May 7, 2020, the G/AD was extended another 30 days commencing May 13 and terminating on June 11, 2020 for USDH and EFM who are currently enrolled in G/AD. G/AD authority expires as of the date of this cable for new enrollees, i.e. no individual who is not already participating in G/AD will be authorized to avail themselves of G/AD. Individuals who have G/AD travel orders to depart post that were approved prior to the date of this cable will be permitted to travel and participate in G/AD, even if the date of travel occurs up to 10 days after this date.

Per 20 State 53050 dated June 5, 2020, the G/AD was extended another 30 days commencing on June 12 and terminating on July 11, 2020. Total time receiving Subsistence Expense Allowance (SEA) while in evacuation status may not exceed 180 days. For those who departed post on AD/OD prior to G/AD and later converted to G/AD, the 180-day clock begins the day the evacuee departed post on AD/OD. If the evacuee converted from post-specific AD/OD to G/AD or started on G/AD, their SEA payments cannot extend beyond either the 180-day clock which began on the day they departed post on AD/OD or the day the G/AD

terminates whichever comes first.

Per 20 STATE 65104 dated 7/8/2020, the G/AD was extended another 30 days commencing on July 12 and terminating on August 10, 2020. Per 20 STATE 72626 the G/AD has been extended another 30 days terminating on September 9, 2020.

Under this G/AD section are Education FAQs (9-24) that apply to both the G/AD as well as post-specific authorized/ordered departures. Following the G/AD FAQ section, see also FAQs 15, 45, 46 and 47 pertaining to Educational Travel and School Away from Post Education Allowance.

G/AD 1. Q: Who is eligible to request departure under this G/AD?

G/AD 1. A: U.S. Direct Hire (USDH) employees and eligible family members (EFMs) who, after confidential consultation with Medical Services (MED), have determined they are at higher risk of a poor outcome if exposed to COVID-19, or who have requested departure based on a commensurate justification in foreign areas. This may also include a USDH employee and/or other EFMs who may need to accompany them.

G/AD 2. Q: What if a single parent with a minor EFM or both parties of a tandem couple with a minor EFM are determined by post to be emergency personnel?

G/AD 2. A: Round-trip transportation is authorized for one employee to accompany their minor EFM(s) to the designated safe haven location. Management officials at post may authorize, from post funds, reimbursement of travel expenses, including transportation costs, per diem, and authorized miscellaneous expenses. Time in travel status should be minimized to the extent possible. Posts should use e2 TDY travel orders to authorize this travel, not Evacuation Management System (EMS).

G/AD 3. Q: How long will this G/AD last?

G/AD 3. A: This departure was authorized for a period not to exceed 60 days, was extended for an additional 30 days and may be extended if approved by the Under Secretary of State for Management (M) for up to an additional 90 days. SEA under the G/AD cannot exceed a total of 180 days, however, the Secretary of State can extend an evacuation order past 180 days.

G/AD 4. Q: What is the designated official safehaven for EFMs and employees?

G/AD 4. A: The designated official safehaven for EFMs is the United States. Effective April 10, 2020 the Under Secretary of State for Management (M) approved on an interim basis For purposes of DSSR 600, 'U.S. safehaven' shall refer to a safehaven in the fifty United States, District of Columbia or non-foreign areas (U.S. territories, possessions, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands). Source: DSSR 610 I. For Department of State employees the designated safehaven is Washington, DC. Other agency employees may be evacuated to the location of their agency headquarters.

G/AD 5. Q: Why is a Simplified Methodology for calculating Subsistence Expense Allowance (SEA) payments being applied under this Global Authorized Departure?

G/AD 5. A: As explained in 20 State 31352, The current methodology [under DSSR 630] is based on actual lodging expenses, estimates advanced with subsequent manual reconciliation, reduced M&IE after 30 days, and a transportation allowance. It is a manual and labor-intensive process requiring numerous interactions with evacuees and recalculations. While this process has worked for the limited number of annual evacuations historically undertaken by the Department, it cannot facilitate the number of evacuations currently being managed in addition to the anticipated number in the coming weeks. The Bureau of the Comptroller and Global Financial Services (CGFS) is committed to making every effort to ensure timely SEA payments. Given the unprecedented number of evacuees, this simplification will help to expedite these payments, which are provided *'to help offset direct added expenses which are incurred by the evacuee as a result of an evacuation order.'*

G/AD 6. Q: What is the Simplified Methodology for calculating SEA payments under this G/AD?

G/AD 6. A: The simplified methodology seeks to be fair to the evacuees while closely conforming with the current methodology yet streamlining the process, leveraging a flat rate for commercial lodging, and a single rate for M&IE thereby minimizing interactions and recalculations. Key components of this simplified methodology include:

Flat Rate Commercial Lodging: The First Evacuee at an official U.S. safehaven will be paid 100% of the Lodging Portion of the official U.S. safehaven per diem rate with additional taxes calculated at a flat 10% rate. Individuals will need to provide self-certification that commercial lodging is being used for the evacuation period. Random post payment audits will be used as a compensating control solely to validate the self-certification that commercial lodging was in fact used (i.e., it will not be used to check actual lodging rates). Therefore, though evacuees will not need to provide lodging receipts when applying for SEA, evacuees will be required to retain lodging receipts in case they are selected for post payment audit. Self-certification of commercial lodging will be ascertained by selection of Commercial within Section VI-Accommodations at safehaven on the DS-4095 or comparative form. Incorrect self-certification, whether intentional or inadvertent will require repayment. Use of a foreign alternate safehaven will continue to require approval from the Under Secretary of State for Management (M) and be paid at a flat rate (plus taxes calculated at a flat 10% rate) based on the lodging portion of the standard CONUS per diem rate (during FY20 lodging is \$96). Self-certification of commercial lodging as well as possible random post payment audit to confirm the use of commercial lodging applies as well to foreign alternate safehavens.

Commercial Lodging: For the purpose of this simplified SEA methodology, commercial lodging is considered commercial hotel, motel, or commercially leased house or apartment, or other transient-type commercial establishment. In some cases, AirBnB and VRBO may be used if approved by the regional bureau in accordance with appropriate procedures (see 14 FAM 572.3-2). The rate should be consistent with the normal advertised rate. Renting property from oneself or from friends and family which is not regularly available to the public and regularly rented will not be considered commercial lodging. Note: the corporate housing companies that participate in the PCS Lodging Program have agreed to accept bookings

directly from evacuees. Such bookings would not be under the PCS Lodging Program but would be priced at the contract rates the Department receives. Any such bookings would be made directly with the companies and payment would be made by the employee to the company. The full list of companies and contact information is available on Diplopedia at http://diplopedia.state.gov/index.php/PCS_Lodging_Temporary_Quarters_%26_Ineligibility.

Non-Commercial Lodging: The usual methodology outlined in DSSR 632 will be used for non-commercial lodging. This rate is a flat amount of 10% of the lodging portion of the official U.S. safehaven per diem rate for the First Evacuee. If at an approved alternate foreign safehaven the amount would be 10% of the lodging portion of the CONUS per diem rate for the First Evacuee. No receipts are required and this amount is for days 1-30 only.

M&IE: There will be no reduction in the M&IE rate for any evacuee after the first 30 days. M&IE will be paid at a fixed flat rate for the entire G/AD. The rates are set at 100% for the First Evacuee (may be the employee or EFM); 80% for additional EFM evacuees 18 years of age and older; and 50% for additional EFM evacuees 17 years of age and younger.

Transportation Allowance: Will continue to be paid at a flat rate of \$25 a day per family when there is not a privately owned vehicle (POV) available to the family. No change from current methodology.

Special Family Composition: Payment for cases that meet the existing criteria for up to 150% lodging of the safehaven lodging rate will continue to be reimbursed on actual receipts up to the maximum allowed for that location. No change from current methodology. See FAQ 26 below for the Special Family Compositions.

G/AD 7. Q: Which evacuations does the simplified payment method apply to?

G/AD 7. A: The simplified SEA payment methodology has been approved for the Global Authorized Departure (20 State 28418), for individuals at higher risk of a poor outcome if exposed to COVID-19, subsequent COVID-19 related post-specific evacuations, as authorized, and retroactively authorized for prior COVID-19 evacuations, beginning with Consul General Wuhan, 20 State 7502. Note: For Mission China and Hong Kong evacuations, where substantial numbers of SEA payments have already been made for initial evacuation periods, the simplified methodology will only apply to payments made under new evacuation extensions.

G/AD 8. Q: Does the simplified methodology apply to a country-specific evacuation?

G/AD 8. A: Employees and EFMs evacuated under a country-specific authorized evacuation will continue to evacuate under their designated country evacuation authorization and receive SEA under the stated methodology in DSSR 630 unless that evacuation order is amended to authorize use of this simplified method.

The following Education-related FAQs apply to both the Global Authorized Departure as well as specific post-designated authorized/ordered departures:

G/AD 9. Q: If the employee is at post but Eligible Family Members (EFMs) are on Authorized Departure in the United States ♦ AND the international school at post is offering an online learning platform (or hybrid classroom/online platform) for the start of school year 2020-2021, may Post sign off on the SF1190s and initiate tuition payments for the EFM children? It will allow continuity of learning for the student for the school year.

G/AD 9. A: See Education FAQs - 2020-21 school year advance payments at the top of these Evacuation FAQs

G/AD 10. Q: If an employee has PCSed but has been on AD with their family since March/April AND the employee is not considered an essential employee to come to Post as Post moves through Phase 1 and 2, may Post still sign off on the SF-1190 and initiate tuition payments for EFM children? It will allow continuity of learning for the student for the school year.

G/AD 10. A: The short answer is no, if it is not certain when or if the employee will arrive at post then based on DSSR 273 After the employee, or a family member, has arrived at the post, an application may be filed... When the children are in the US with one of the parents then they should enroll in school in the US.

G/AD 11. Q: AD Employees are being permitted to telework in the US for post. Pending further PCS guidance from GTM, it could be conceivable that new PCS intended employees will be permitted to remain in the US and telework for their new post ♦ especially if the post is still moving through the Phase 1 and Phase 2 steps. If this scenario happens, the person is working for post ♦ would this then allow for education allowances to be granted on a one-time exceptional basis?

G/AD 11. A: Education allowances by law are based on a physical presence at the post of assignment ♦ It is not foreseen that any education allowances will be available if employees are virtually PCS'd to post. School in the US would be the default.

G/AD 12. Q: The COVID-19 outbreak in certain regions is happening later than the rest of the world. If an employee wants their child to begin school online with the local international school, they are hoping that this will be taken into account --- rather than viewing this issue from too wide or global lens. It may only impact certain posts. Could there be such an exception for only certain posts?

G/AD 12. A: No. It would have to be for the entire world or not at all.

G/AD 13. Q: International schools are non-profit entities with few reserves. If our students may not enroll for next year and pay tuition, seats may not be available for them in January or later when they may be permitted to come to post♦ which would be devastating for our employees and families. In addition, the school is already discussing whether it must break contracts with teachers, offer sabbaticals, etc - which means its capacity will be far reduced without a financial commitment from our students.

G/AD 13. A: From Overseas Schools: the impact to schools and staffing are 'spot on and this will be a very delicate balance of providing schools with some level of assurance that we do indeed plan to have our families return just not knowing when - our office will need to work our relationships with schools and boards to emphasize there needs to be flexibility with some degree of understanding that we'll pay eventually - (once children arrive).

G/AD 14. Q: I am scheduled to PCS to post this summer. Can school fees for my children be paid in advance (prior to my arrival) to ensure that a slot is being held for my children at our school of choice?

G/AD 14. A: School fees cannot be paid by the post in advance of the employee or family member's arrival at the foreign post of assignment. Once the employee or family member arrives at post, the employee may file for reimbursement once the SF-1190 confirms the arrival of the family member(s) benefitting from the At Post education allowance. If the child is under the Away from Post education allowance and has gone directly to school and not arrived at post yet, there should be explanation in SF-1190 box 18 (Remarks) and proof that the child is enrolled in the school away from post.

G/AD 15. Q: How can I ensure school fees be paid to hold slots for students currently on AD (in the U.S. or otherwise) who are planning to re-enroll at the international school at post?

G/AD 15. A: Under an AD/OD the DSSR 600 (Payments During an Ordered/Authorized Departure) allows for the At Post and Away from Post education allowance to only go through the end of the current school year unless a child is at an official (not alternate approved) foreign safehaven and there is not currently (as of May 2020) an official foreign safehaven ♦ only an official U.S. safehaven. Per DSSR 633.3 there is no special education allowance provided at a foreign alternate approved safehaven.

With only an official U.S. safehaven it is understood children on AD/OD in the U.S. will be able to attend U.S. public schools free of charge. If an AD/OD extends into a new school year and the employee is not at the foreign post of assignment the employee is responsible for any payments to the international school at post until the AD/OD has terminated and the employee and family members are allowed to go back to post. Sometimes the post becomes unaccompanied following an AD/OD and family members cannot return to post so there is caution advised with advanced payments by the employee that will not be reimbursed if the child cannot come to post. For additional information on advance payment of the at post and away from post education allowances when the employee is at the foreign post of assignment and the family members are in the U.S. on AD/OD see Education FAQs - 2020-21 school year advance payments at the top of these Evacuation FAQs.

G/AD 16. Q: How can I ensure school fees be paid so that students on AD can continue online schooling until they are able to join their international schools at post?

G/AD 16. A: If a school at post commences the 2020-21 school year virtually not allowing children to attend class in person, virtual expenses and other allowable expenses under DSSR

277.1 (School at Post) may be reimbursed, however, cannot exceed the maximum allowance for the school at post under DSSR 920 for the post of assignment.

Scenario 1: Child on AD/OD at the beginning of the 2020-21 school year in either the U.S. or foreign area and employee is physically at his/her foreign post of assignment. See Education FAQs - 2020-21 school year advance payments at the top of these Evacuation FAQs.

Scenario 2: Child on AD/OD at the beginning of the 2020-21 school year in either the U.S. or foreign area and employee is virtually at his/her foreign post of assignment. The employee must pay any required deposit or tuition payment for the 2020-21 school year from personal funds and will be reimbursed once the employee and child are physically present at the foreign post of assignment. The child and employee must arrive at the foreign post prior to end of the 2020-21 school year in order for the employee to be reimbursed for 2020-21 school year expenses.

Scenario 3: Child and employee are physically at the foreign post of assignment and the school at post starts the 2020-21 school year virtually not allowing children to attend class physically. Allowable expenses may be paid based on the SF-1190 submitted by the employee not to exceed the maximum at post education allowance for the post at DSSR 920.

G/AD 17. Q: Do students on AD/OD have access to the supplementary instruction allowance to assist with online instruction?

G/AD 17. A: Supplementary instruction to assist in online instruction may be allowed in addition to the "at post" education allowance for only the reason(s) under DSSR 276.9a through e. If the employee is in the U.S. on AD/OD and not at his/her foreign post of assignment the employee is responsible for any costs incurred prior to the child's arrival at the employee's foreign post of assignment. The child must arrive at the employee's post of assignment prior to the end of the 2020-21 school year in order for the employee to be reimbursed for supplementary instruction expenses. If the employee is at his/her foreign post of assignment see Education FAQs - 2020-21 school year advance payments at the top of these Evacuation FAQs

G/AD 18. Q: Will school allowances be paid for the next school year if an employee is on AD/OD (and receiving SEA) and children are learning remotely with the school at post?

G/AD 18. A: If a school at post commences the 2020-21 school year virtually not allowing children to attend class in person, virtual expenses and other allowable expenses under DSSR 277.1 (School at Post) may be reimbursed not to exceed the maximum allowance for the school at post under DSSR 920 for the post of assignment once the employee and children have arrived at the foreign post of assignment. If the employee is at his/her foreign post of assignment see Education FAQs - 2020-21 school year advance payments at the top of these Evacuation FAQs.

When a child is on AD/OD at the beginning of the 2020-21 school year in either the U.S. or foreign area and employee is virtually at his/her foreign post of assignment, the employee must pay any required deposit or tuition payment for the 2020-21 school year from personal

funds and will be reimbursed once the employee and child are physically present at the foreign post of assignment. The child and employee must arrive at the foreign post prior to end of the 2020-21 school year in order for the employee to be reimbursed for 2020-21 school year expenses.

G/AD 19. Q: Payment for schooling on the onward assignment is contingent on a finalized Travel Authorization (TA). Can a Permanent Change of Station (PCS) TA be prepared for this purpose?

G/AD 19. A: DSSR 273 states that after the employee or a family member has arrived at the post, an application may be filed including estimates of costs for an education allowance grant on behalf of a child. Education expenses incurred prior to arrival at the onward post of assignment are the employee's responsibility with reimbursement once the employee arrives at the onward post of assignment.

G/AD 20. Q: If an employee is on temporary duty (TDY) prior to arrival at a new post of assignment, can children benefit from the education allowance and enroll in distance learning at a school at the new post? What if the school at the new post has opened but the post is not accepting employees on PCS orders?

G/AD 20. A: DSSR 276.6 addresses an employee delayed enroute to a new post of assignment. Education expenses on behalf of a child may cover the period of temporary duty. The grant is not to be made until the employee or a family member arrives at the post of assignment. In order to be reimbursed education allowance expenses the employee and child benefitting from the education allowance would need to be physically present at post prior to the end of the 2020-21 school year.

G/AD 21. Q: I'm concerned about not getting to post in time to enroll my child in school. What should I do?

G/AD 21. A: An employee can enroll his/her child in a school at post prior to arriving at the post, however, school fees cannot be paid by the post in advance of the employee or family member's arrival at the foreign post of assignment. Once the employee or family member arrives at post, the employee may file for reimbursement once the SF-1190 confirms the arrival of the family member(s) benefitting from the At Post education allowance.

G/AD 22. Q: I am currently on AD/OD and my child is scheduled to begin boarding school this fall. Will payments be made to ensure that my slot is held?

G/AD 22. A: If an AD/OD extends into a new school year the employee is responsible for any payments to the boarding school. The employee should seek reimbursement for allowable School Away from Post expenses (DSSR 277.2) once s/he returns to post. Sometimes the post becomes unaccompanied following an AD/OD and family members cannot return to post. If the other parent resides in the U.S. and the boarding school is also in the U.S., per DSSR 276.3 an education allowance cannot be paid. If the employee is at his/her foreign post of assignment see Education FAQs - 2020-21 school year advance payments at the top of these Evacuation FAQs.

G/AD 23. Q: I am currently on AD/OD and my child is scheduled to continue online instruction with his/her boarding school this fall. Will school fees be paid for my child to re-enroll?

G/AD 23. A: If an AD/OD extends into a new school year the employee is responsible for any payments to the boarding school. The employee should seek reimbursement for allowable School Away from Post expenses (DSSR 277.2) once s/he returns to post. Sometimes the post becomes unaccompanied following an AD/OD and family members cannot return to post. If the other parent resides in the U.S. and the boarding school is also in the U.S., per DSSR 276.3 an education allowance cannot be paid. If the employee is at his/her foreign post of assignment see Education FAQs - 2020-21 school year advance payments at the top of these Evacuation FAQs.

G/AD 24. Q: I homeschooled my child(ren) prior to AD/OD and plan to continue homeschooling my child(ren) at post when we are allowed to return. May I order materials and request reimbursement before heading back to post?

G/AD 24. A: Once the employee or family member arrives at post, the employee may file for reimbursement once the SF-1190 confirms the arrival of the family member(s) benefitting from the Home Study/Private Instruction education allowance.

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