Pre-arrival Guide for New Employees
Education Division, DoDEA HQ

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Welcome Message

Welcome to DoDEA Headquarters (HQ), and congratulations on your position! Whether you are coming from the field or from outside of the agency, your experience and talents are welcome additions to Headquarters.

As members of DoDEA HQ, we have an important role to play in fulfilling DoDEA’s mission to Educate, Engage, and Empower each student to succeed in a dynamic world. As a staff, we represent professionals from all facets of pre-kindergarten through 12th grade education.

Your first few months at Headquarters are naturally a time you will be getting to know your job, your team, and the students we serve. It is also an important time to learn about and enroll in your benefits and learn the ins and outs of working as a civilian employee for the Department of Defense (DoD). As a new or transferring employee, you have a number of resources available to you. This guide is intended to serve as a tool for you as you begin your work here.

Document Overview/Organization

This document is divided into five sections. It is recommended that you review each section in the appropriate timeframe as stated. For example, before you arrive, you should thoroughly review and complete the steps outlined in the Before Arrival Stage. After your arrival, you will spend the first week familiarizing yourself with the procedures for the Mark Center Building and DoDEA HQ. If you have any questions, please contact your Ambassador.

I. Before Arrival
   a. Background Investigation
   b. Required Forms
   c. Information Technology (IT) Considerations
   d. Relocation Information

II. Traveling to the Mark Center Building
   a. Directions and Transportation Options
   b. Shuttle Schedules
   c. Parking
   d. Locating the Visitor’s Control Center (VCC)

III. First Day
   a. Items to Bring When Reporting
   b. When You Arrive: Meeting Your Escort at the VCC

IV. First Week
   a. Develop a Performance Plan
   b. Standard Operating Procedures Guide

V. First 30 Days
   a. Employee Orientation with Ambassador
Before Arrival

Background Investigation/Clearance
If you are new to federal service and do not already have an active security clearance, the Defense Logistics Agency (DLA) will contact you regarding a background investigation. It is important to submit completed paperwork so that the background investigation can be finalized as soon as possible.

Employment Forms
Before you begin, your HR Specialist may send you a number of forms that you will need to complete and send back before your first day. Below is a list of forms you may be asked to complete. However, it is important to note, not all employees may be asked to complete these forms and some employees may be asked to complete additional forms related to benefits and other matters. If you have any questions, please contact your HR Specialist.

- SF 61 Appointment Affidavits
- I-9 - Employment Eligibility Verification
- OF 306 – Declaration for Federal Employment
- DLA Human Resources Associated Forms (Additional Forms)

Requirements for Current DoDEA Employees
All DoDEA employees must complete the Information Assurance (IA) Awareness Training and the Computer User Agreement (Form 6600.1-F1) as prerequisites to accessing the IT systems at their new work location. If you have a current IA training certificate, you are not required to re-take the training. Please email copies of the Completion Certificate and the Computer User Form to your supervisor at least 2 weeks before your start date at your new duty station.

Visit the DoDEA Onboarding Checklist at the link below for additional information.

- [http://www.dodea.edu/onboarding/Onboarding-Checklist.cfm](http://www.dodea.edu/onboarding/Onboarding-Checklist.cfm)
Relocation Information
If relocation was authorized for your position, this section is designed to help you through the process. There are also links to additional resources listed in the Appendix of this document.

Relocating into and within Headquarters is a busy and fast-paced event. The most important thing you can do is to be proactive and ask questions. Your first contact is the Human Resources (HR) Specialist who extended you the offer. The HR Specialist will provide you with several documents that you will be responsible for completing. Take the time to read these documents and ask questions.

For those relocating from within the agency, it is recommended that you contact your local HR Specialist for specifics directly related to you and your move. Two good, comprehensive resources are:

- Defense Travel Management Office (DTMO) Permanent Change of Station (PCS) FAQs at http://www.defensetravel.dod.mil/site/faqpcs.cfm
- Defense Finance and Accounting Service (DFAS) at https://www.dfas.mil/

The bullet list on the next page gives you a broad outline of the sequence of steps involved in your relocation. It is important to note that not all new employees are authorized the same relocation entitlements. Where an employee is hired from (locally, within the US, or overseas) and whether they are currently employed with DoDEA (DoDDS or DDESS) will determine what benefits each new employee is entitled to. Be sure to discuss these steps with the appropriate HR Office to ensure you are authorized to receive all of the applicable benefits.

**Steps in the Process**

1. Acceptance of Offer
2. Preparing to Travel
3. Travel and Claims
4. The First Day at DODEA
General Sequence of Steps

1. Acceptance of Offer
   - Sign acceptance letter and return
   - Contact from new supervisor
   - Provide contact phone numbers and email addresses
   - Negotiate your reporting date with old and new supervisor and HR Specialist

2. Preparing To Travel
   - EXISTING EMPLOYEES
     o Request travel orders through TOPS on the DoDEA Website (important items to include on your orders are family members, travel dates, authorized modes of travel, Miscellaneous Expenses, RITA, TQSA, TQSE, etc.)
       ▪ See Relocation Support Resources for additional information
       ▪ See Glossary for acronyms and definitions
     o Overseas – complete SF 1190 to terminate Living Quarters Allowance (LQA), post allowance and initiate TQSA
     o Make arrangements to pack and ship your belongings (unaccompanied baggage shipment, household goods, automobile, release of household goods from storage, etc., depending on your individual circumstances)
     o Secure your travel reservations
   - NEW EMPLOYEES
     o Upon offer acceptance, you will receive a packet with blank request for travel forms. You will need to complete and return the forms to your HR Specialist

3. Travel and Claims (upon arrival to DoDEA HQ)
   - Travel Voucher (file a DD1351-2)
   - TQSA (through DAPS on the DoDEA Website)
   - TQSE (file a DD1351-2) if returning from overseas
   - RITA (filed with DD1351-2 and certification form during the next tax year)
   - Miscellaneous expenses (file a DD1351-2)

4. The First Day at DoDEA HQ
   - Travel to the Mark Center (drive/metro/bus)
   - Report to the VCC
   - Meet your escort at the VCC
   - Begin in-processing and orientation
   - Ensure you are promptly and correctly placed on the payroll

NOTE: Ensure that you keep receipts for lodging and other travel expenses to be used when filing your claims. Additional forms to assist you with your transition will be provided when you arrive at HQ.
Relocation Support Resources

The relocation support resources below are meant to provide further information for your relocation, it should not be considered exhaustive, as each employee’s relocation has its own particular processes.

**PERMANENT CHANGE OF STATION (PCS)**

PCS moves are impacted by the situation of each employee, so it is critical that you ask questions and know your rights and responsibilities. Some things to consider are:

- Traveling accompanied/unaccompanied
- House hunting
- Non-temporary storage
- Household goods transportation
- Real estate expenses
- Damage claims

**Resources:**
- Joint Travel Regulations Website: [http://www.defensetravel.dod.mil/site/travelreg.cfm](http://www.defensetravel.dod.mil/site/travelreg.cfm)
- DTMO PCS FAQs: [http://www.defensetravel.dod.mil/site/faqpcs.cfm](http://www.defensetravel.dod.mil/site/faqpcs.cfm)
- DFAS Civilian Relocation Travel Pay Entitlements: [https://www.dfas.mil/civilianemployees/civrelo.html](https://www.dfas.mil/civilianemployees/civrelo.html)
- HR Specialist

**TRAVEL ORDERS**

Travel orders will be needed for many of the steps in the relocation process and should be secured as soon as possible.

**Resources:**
- Current employees
  - Request travel orders through Travel Order Processing System (TOPS): [https://webapps.dodea.edu/TOPS/](https://webapps.dodea.edu/TOPS/)
- New Employees
  - You will have access to the TOPS website once you have started and have a CAC card. In the meantime, please contact your HR Specialist with any concerns.

**SHIPMENT OF GOODS**

The Base Transportation Office (or its designee) is generally responsible for the shipment of your personal property. Multiple shipments (unaccompanied, household goods, automobile, the release of household goods from storage, etc.) may be provided.

**Resources:**
- Base Transportation Office
- HR Specialist
TRAVEL VOUCHER
Use a DD1351-2 to file your travel voucher when you reach your new duty station. Include expenses for your transportation, ticketing fees, your travel per diem, and miscellaneous expenses.

Resources:
- DFAS Travel Direct Help Desk
  - Phone: 1-888-332-7411
- HR Specialist

TEMPORARY QUARTERS SUBSISTENCE ALLOWANCE (TQSA)
TQSA is an allowance to assist with temporary lodging, meals, laundry and dry cleaning in a foreign area when an employee is getting ready to depart post permanently and must vacate residential quarters. Make sure you complete:
- File an SF 1190 through DAPS to terminate LQA and initiate TQSA.
- File your TQSA claim through DAPS.

Resources:
- Request reimbursement through the DoDEA Allowance Processing System (DAPS):
  - https://webapps.dodea.edu/daps/index.cfm
- HR Specialist

TEMPORARY QUARTERS SUBSISTENCE EXPENSE ALLOWANCE (TQSE)
TQSE is an allowance for lodging, meals (meal prep), and laundry for the first 30 days of an employee’s move at their new location. Points to remember:
- TQSE can be extended on a case-by-case basis, if certain conditions are met.
- TQSE can be authorized for actual expense or lump sum payment. This will be annotated on your travel orders.
- The TQSE can change; check with Resource Management or your HR POC to verify your per diem and reimbursement entitlement.
- Use a DD2912 form to itemize your TQSE expenses, and submit it with a DD1351-2 to file your claim.

Resources:
- DFAS Check Voucher Status: https://www.dfas.mil/checkvoucherstatus.html
- Resource Management, 5th Floor Mark Center
- HR Specialist

RELOCATION INCOME TAX ALLOWANCE (RITA)
The reimbursement(s) for TQSE and PCS moves are taxed. The employee pays an increased portion for Federal Insurance Contributions Act (FICA) and Medicare. RITA allows the employee to recoup some of these tax losses. In the next calendar year after your move, you will get a separate W2 to file for TQSE/PCS reimbursement(s). You can file for RITA after you have filed and paid your previous year’s taxes, using a DD1351-2 and a RITA Certification Form.

Resource:
- DFAS RITA: https://www.dfas.mil/civilianemployees/civrelo/relocationincometax.html
Glossary of Terms Used in the Relocation Information

**Miscellaneous Expenses: A payment for miscellaneous expenses**
A Miscellaneous Expense Allowance (MEA) is payable to you when a Permanent Change of Station (PCS) is authorized or approved, provided an appropriate transportation agreement has been signed. You must have discontinued and established a residence in connection with such change of station, regardless of where the old or new duty station is located. You are required to certify on the voucher that you have discontinued your residence at the old permanent duty station (PDS) and have established a residence at the new PDS in connection with the PCS. When you report to the new PDS but your dependent(s) remain at the old PDS or other location without discontinuing the residence, reimbursement is limited to that for an employee without dependents until such time as the old residence is discontinued and relocation of residence is accomplished by the dependents.

**NOTE:** Transferring employees (those currently working for the U.S. Government) are entitled to the Miscellaneous Expense Allowance under Chapter 5, Part B, of the Joint Travel Regulations, and must use a travel voucher or sub-voucher (DD Form 1351-2) to apply for reimbursement.

**RITA: Relocation Income Tax Allowance**
When you relocate, most entitlements received are reported as taxable income to the Internal Revenue Service. Mandatory Federal Withholding Tax and applicable FICA and Medicare taxes are withheld from taxable entitlements. A Civilian Relocation W-2 showing entitlement (income) and taxes withheld will be issued for each calendar year that payment is received. You may also have to pay state and local taxes applicable to the old and new permanent duty stations. To offset this burden, you should apply for a RITA. This allowance is designed to reimburse you for much of the additional federal, state, and local income taxes paid because of the relocation. RITA is not automatic; you must apply for it. If the only payment you received in a single tax year was a RITA payment, then you are not entitled to file a RITA on that RITA payment.

**TQSA: Temporary Quarters Subsistence Allowance**
The purpose of TQSA is to assist with temporary lodging, meals, laundry and dry cleaning in a foreign area when an employee first arrives at a new post and permanent quarters are not yet available, or when an employee is getting ready to depart post permanently and must vacate residential quarters. An employee cannot receive the post (cost of living) allowance when receiving the TQSA. An employee may receive TQSA and LQA at the same time when departing post only with agency permission for unusual circumstances described at DSSR 124.1 and DSSR 132.41a and DDI 1400.25, Volume 1250.

**TQSE: Temporary Quarters Subsistence Expense**
TQSE is allowance for lodging and meals (meal prep) for the first 30 days of an employee’s move. TQSE can be extended on a case-by-case basis, if certain conditions are met. TQSE can be authorized for actual expense or lump sum payment and is tied to the local per diem rate, so it may change. Check with resource management or your HR POC to verify your per diem and reimbursement entitlements.

**Travel Voucher: A DD1351-2**
The DD1351-2 form is used to claim travel expenses including the actual travel expenses, miscellaneous expenses, TQSE, and the RITA. A completed and signed travel voucher with all proper documentation should be submitted online at HQpcsratvouchers@hq.dodea.edu.
Traveling to the Mark Center

On the day you report to duty, you will need to get to the Visitor’s Control Center at the Mark Center Building. You will be provided with the time to be at the Mark Center and an escort, either your Ambassador or someone from your team, will meet you.

Address To The Mark Center

Mark Center Building
4800 Mark Center Drive
Alexandria, VA 22350-1400

Directions and Transportation Options

- For transportation options to the Mark Center, click [Mark Center Transportation Options](#) (PDF).

Visitor Parking

As a new employee to DoDEA HQ at the Mark Center building, you are eligible for visitor parking. New employees are eligible for up to ten days of visitor parking at the Mark Center within your first calendar month at DoDEA HQ. After your first calendar month, you are eligible for up to five days per month.

- For new employees who intend to park at the Mark Center, please contact Roderick Dunston, Parking Specialist, at (571) 372-1409 or email [MarkCenterParking@hq.dodea.edu](mailto:MarkCenterParking@hq.dodea.edu) to request the Temporary Parking Form and directions to the visitor parking garage at the Mark Center.
- Keep in mind that all requests require a 24 hour notice, and must be submitted to the Mark Center Parking Specialist by 2 PM. Any request submitted after 2 PM, will be processed the next business day. Please notify your sponsor if approved or disapproved.

Permanent Parking

Permanent parking for employees at the Mark Center is available by permit only. It is likely that you will be placed on a wait list for permanent parking. Your Ambassador help will guide you through the parking application process when you arrive.

E-mail [MarkCenterParking@hq.dodea.edu](mailto:MarkCenterParking@hq.dodea.edu) if you have any parking-related questions at the Mark Center.

Additional Parking: Colonial Parking & Hilton Hotel

- Hilton Hotel is across the street from the Mark Center and charges $24 a day for parking.
- Colonial Parking operates a parking garage about two blocks from the Mark Center. For more information on Colonial Parking, see [http://www.ecolonial.com/](http://www.ecolonial.com/).

Mark Center Entrances

- All entrances to the Mark Center are controlled electronically. A pre-registered Common Access Card (CAC) or visitor’s card issued on site is required for authorized entry.
- Visitors without a valid CAC (or a CAC that has not been registered with the Mark Center) will be required to enter as a visitor.
Locating the Visitor’s Control Center (VCC)

**From the Transportation Center (Bus Bays):**
1. After exiting the bus, turn right, and then walk to the Transportation Center entrance.
2. Proceed up the escalator and follow signs to the VCC.

**From the Parking Garage:**
1. Look for signs leading to the elevators or the VCC, which is located on the fifth floor.

**At the VCC:**
1. Enter the VCC, which is to the left of the turnstiles.
2. Obtain your badge and proceed to security screening.
3. Clear the screening area and exit.
First Day

Items to Bring When Reporting

**Birth Certificate or U.S. Passport**
You must bring your certified birth certificate or an acceptable alternate as proof of citizenship (see below). **DO NOT BRING YOUR HOSPITAL BIRTH RECORD; IT IS NOT ACCEPTABLE.** Information will only be taken from your birth certificate (or alternate document); it will not be kept.

**Social Security Card**
You must bring your social security card with you when you report for duty. If you do not have a social security card, apply for one at the nearest Social Security Office for your permanent number.

**Documents Acceptable For Proof of U.S. Citizenship**

1. **BIRTH CERTIFICATE:** To be acceptable, the certificate must show the birth record was filed shortly after birth and must be certified with the registrar's signature and a raised, impressed or multi-colored seal of the office. **UNCERTIFIED COPIES OF BIRTH CERTIFICATES AND HOSPITAL RECORDS ARE NOT ACCEPTABLE.**
   a. **A DELAYED BIRTH CERTIFICATE** (a record filed more than one year after the date of birth) is acceptable, provided it shows the report of birth was supported by acceptable secondary evidence of birth as described in 1.b. below.
   b. If such primary evidence is not obtainable, a notice from the registrar stating no birth record exists should be submitted. The notice shall be accompanied by the best combination of secondary evidence obtainable. Such evidence may include a baptismal certificate, a certificate of circumcision, a hospital birth record, affidavits of persons having personal knowledge of the facts of the birth, or other documentary evidence such as early census, school or family bible records, newspaper files or insurance papers. Secondary evidence should be dated as close to the time of birth as possible.

2. **A CERTIFICATE OF NATURALIZATION** should be submitted if you claim citizenship by naturalization.

3. **A CERTIFICATE OF CITIZENSHIP** issued by the Immigration and Naturalization Service shall be submitted if citizenship was acquired by birth abroad to a U.S. citizen parent or parents. **A REPORT OF BIRTH ABROAD OF A CITIZEN OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA (Form FS-240), a CERTIFICATION OF BIRTH (Form FS-545 or DS-1350), or a CERTIFICATE OF CITIZENSHIP** is acceptable if citizenship was acquired by birth abroad to a U.S. citizen parent or parents.

4. **A U.S. PASSPORT,** or one in which you were included, will be acceptable as proof of citizenship.

**Defense Logistics Agency (DLA) Associated HR Forms**
You will receive a Welcome Message e-mail from a DLA Specialist congratulating you on your new position at DoDEA HQ. In this Welcome Message, you will receive several important attachments and a list of required DLA HR forms. Please click the link below to download the forms as specified from your DLA specialist. You are required to bring the completed forms on your first reporting date to DoDEA HQ. If you have any questions about the required DLA HR forms, please contact your DLA specialist.

When You Arrive: Meeting Your Escort
Before your first day, you will be contacted by an HR Specialist to arrange for your in-processing. When you arrive, you will meet your escort at the Visitor’s Control Center and proceed through security. Your escort will be someone from your team, or an assigned Ambassador. Your escort will take you to HR for in-processing and swearing in. From there, you will be escorted to your supervisor, who will walk you through the rest of your first day. Your assigned Ambassador will come to your desk and give you a short presentation on what you will need to know to navigate the Mark Center and will be generally available to you if you have any questions.

Common Access Card (CAC)
The Department-wide Common Access Card (CAC), a smartcard technology, serves as the standard ID card for active-duty members of the Uniformed Services, Selected Reserve, Department of Defense civilian employees, and eligible contractor personnel. The CAC will also be the principal card used to enable physical access to buildings and controlled spaces and for logistical access to the Department's computer networks and systems. The CAC platform will contain the mandatory identification, physical and logical access capabilities, public key infrastructure authentication, encryption, digital signing certificates, and may also contain Department-wide and/or component-specific applications, such as manifesting, deployment readiness, food service, and medical/dental. Your escort or assigned Ambassador will assist you with the CAC process at the Mark Center.
Appendix

Enclosure 1: DoDEA Additional Resources

Frequently Asked Questions from DFAS
DFAS provides Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) about a variety of topics for civilian relocation.


Expedited Airport Security Screening for DoD Personnel
As a civilian DoD employee, you are entitled to participate in the TSA Pre Check Program that allows participants to use dedicated Pre Check security lanes where they can keep on their shoes, belts, and light jacket, and leave laptops and 3-1-1 compliant liquids in their carry-on bags.


MyPay
MyPay allows you, as a DoD Military Member, Civilian Employee, Military Retiree or Annuitant, to make certain changes to your pay information, as well as view online leave and earnings statements and travel vouchers. Employees can also print W2 forms online.


MyBiz
MyBiz is a resource for employee information, including documents such as employment verification.

- https://compo.dcpds.cpms.osd.mil/

Mark Center Parking
For questions regarding parking at the Mark Center, please email MarkCenterParking@hq.dodea.edu or call (571) 372-1360. Upon arrival, your Ambassador will assist you with the parking process.

DoDEA Website
The link to the DoDEA homepage is http://www.dodea.edu/. Please browse our website to learn about our comprehensive pre-kindergarten through 12th grade curriculum that is dedicated to attaining highest student achievement for all students. To view the DoDEA Community Strategic Plan (CSP), please visit, http://www.dodea.edu/CSP/index.cfm. To learn about the DoDEA Director’s top two Priorities, please visit the links below.

- Priority 1: College and Career Ready (CCR)
  - http://www.dodea.edu/collegeCareerReady/index.cfm
- Priority 2: Restructuring for Student Achievement (RSA)
  - http://www.dodea.edu/Restructuring/index.cfm

DoDEA Onboarding Checklist
For additional onboarding checklists and information, please visit the website below.

- http://www.dodea.edu/onboarding/Onboarding-Checklist.cfm