

MS 218 Travel Stipend Calculation Procedures

Effective Date: April 30, 2018

Responsible Office: Office of Management/Office of Administrative Services; Office of Global Operations – Africa Region/EMA Region/IAP Region

Supersedes: 03/22/17; 04/14/14

1.0 Cash Payment Travel Stipend

- (a) Under section 4.10.3 of MS 218 Volunteers may elect to receive a travel stipend in lieu of a Peace Corps provided return ticket. There is no legal entitlement to this cash amount in lieu of a Peace Corps issued ticket for return transportation. However, because the Peace Corps considers travel a valuable adjunct to the total Volunteer experience, as a matter of policy, Volunteers who have completed their service may elect to receive a cash payment instead of a Peace Corps provided return ticket.
- (b) These funds may be used to cover the cost of transportation by any means or for any other purpose elected by the Volunteer. Volunteers should carefully plan their return travel before choosing the Travel Stipend option as the amount of the Travel Stipend may not fully cover the cost of return travel.
- (c) Fly America requirements do not apply to Travel Stipend payments.
- (d) A Volunteer who is transferring to a Peace Corps Response (PCR) assignment in a different country may be authorized a Peace Corps issued ticket to the Volunteer's home-of-record or is eligible for a Travel Stipend upon completion of the Volunteer's original service. At the completion of the Volunteer's PCR service, the Volunteer may be authorized a Peace Corps issued ticket to the Volunteer's home-of-record or is eligible for a Travel Stipend. (See Peace Corps Response's Standard Operating Procedures for further guidance.)

2.0 Equivalent Ticket Cash Payment

Volunteers with a COS after September 30, 2014, will no longer receive cash payment equivalent in amount to the cost of the ticket that would have been provided by the Peace Corps.

3.0 Travel Stipend in Lieu of Peace Corps Issued Ticket

- (a) Volunteers with a COS after September 30, 2014, may elect to receive a cash payment in the form of a Travel Stipend in lieu of a Peace Corps provided ticket and no longer may elect the equivalent ticket cash payment in-lieu of a Peace Corps issued ticket.
- (b) The Travel Stipend is established annually and is reflective of the cost of a government ticket that the Peace Corps would have provided from each post to Chicago's O'Hare

airport. This amount won't necessarily reflect a full fare government ticket or the cheapest Internet only airfare. The proposed amount will be compared with average cost of return Volunteer tickets from the previous year to identify anomalies.

4.0 Procedures for Setting Annual Travel Stipend

- (a) The Office of Management, in consultation with the Office of Global Operations, will establish the amount of Travel Stipend for each country annually in June. Since the Regional CAO's are aware of country specific travel situations that may affect pricing, the Chief of Transportation will consult with them in establishing realistic travel Stipend amounts.
- (b) Every May the Travel and Transportation Division will prepare an airfare comparison report that provides the U.S. government fares, lowest U.S. carrier fares, European Union carrier fares, if appropriate, and Internet fares from each post to Chicago's O'Hare airport using the last Saturday of August as the travel date. Chicago was chosen because of its central point in the United States for travel. The Chief of Travel and Transportation will provide the list to the Regional CAOs by June 1st.
- (c) Based on an analysis of the airfare comparison report, the Chief of Travel and Transportation will propose to the Regional CAOs for their concurrence the Travel Stipend amounts for each post that approximately reflect the cost of a government ticket that the Peace Corps would have provided from each post to Chicago's O'Hare airport. This amount won't necessarily reflect a full fare government ticket or the cheapest internet only airfare. The proposed amount will be compared with average cost of return Volunteer tickets from the previous year to identify anomalies.
- (d) Since the Regional CAO's are aware of country specific travel situations that may affect pricing, their input and concurrence is vital to establishing realistic travel stipend amounts. The Regional CAOs will provide the final list to the Chief of Travel and Transportation by June 15th.
- (e) The Office of Management's Associate Director of Management will approve the Travel Stipend amounts which will be effective for the entire upcoming fiscal year by July 1. After the stipends are set for the Fiscal Year, the Associate Director of Management may approve adjustments to the travel stipends amounts only if unforeseen emergency conditions significantly affecting travel costs are documented. This change authority is not intended for individual emergency situations.