

# **UNDERSTANDING TLA/TQSA**

## **(Temporary Lodging Allowance for military Temporary Quarters Subsistence Allowance for civilians)**

**Regulations:** The regulations governing TLA is the Joint Travel Regulation (JTR), AFI 32-6001-USAFESUP\_1 and USAFE-USAF 65-104, *Providing Temporary Lodging Allowance in USEUCOM*. These publications define your allowance. Moving is a stressful event and the misunderstandings of this allowance simply adds to that stress; therefore, USAFE sent out the “Top Ten Questions and Answers” found on pages **3-5** of this section. In addition, the 31FW has set TLA policy that can be found on page **6-7** of this section. The regulations governing TQSA are in DoDI 1400.25, Civilian Personnel, Volume 1250 and DSSR, Department of State Standardized Regulation, Section 031.1; TQSA rules are in DSSR Section 120.

**Overview:** When you arrive at Aviano Air Base, you will be living in temporary quarters until you occupy permanent housing. To help you offset the cost for living in temporary accommodations, military personnel will be reimbursed by receiving TLA and civilian personnel will be reimbursed by receiving TQSA.

**Eligibility:** You must be assigned to Aviano on official travel orders to be authorized TLA. You are authorized to use the Government Travel Card (GTC) to pay for TLA/TQSA. If you stay with a friend, you may only claim meals, not accommodation expenses. Please contact the Military Pay Office (DSN 632-7409) to find out your authorized TLA amount.

**TLA vs TDY:** TLA is not authorized during TDY/Leave/Emergency leave status unless you have authorized dependents staying in the temporary accommodations. Maintaining temporary accommodations and claiming TLA while you are TDY due to personal convenience is not authorized.

**SPECIAL NOTE for Dormitory Occupants:** If you are assigned to a dormitory you are not authorized TLA unless you are waiting for dormitory bed space to become available. Please discuss your situation with the dormitory management staff.

**Civilian Employees:** If eligible for Living Quarters Allowance (LQA), you are authorized TQSA for up to 90 days for temporary quarters (including meals and laundry/dry-cleaning expenses). Please contact Civilian Personnel Office for TQSA processing at DSN 632-7291. You need to extend your Lodging reservations every 30 days. Don't do this on the 30<sup>th</sup> day as you will be getting a “checkout” notice on that day, plan in advance.

**Military Members:** USAFE guidance requires military members to aggressively search for and secure quarters in the initial 30 days— view a minimum of 12 houses. After the initial 30 days, you must have TLA extensions approved in ten-day increments by 31 CES/CC. Any search taking over 60 days, requires Wing Commander Approval. Additional TLA will be granted only if adequate housing is unavailable (which is highly unlikely) or for reasons beyond the member's control, i.e. illness, mission, etc. For TLA extensions, it is imperative that you document your search on the Quarter's Visited form (see **Packet 2, Section 1**) and have adequate justifications (refer to DoD Community Housing Acceptability Criteria **Packet 2, Section 1**).

If a service member chooses to initiate a rental contract for a home that is not readily available, TLA may be terminated if the Housing Manager determines a sufficient number of adequate

homes are available for immediate occupancy. In addition, if service member's efforts appear deficient he/she be reminded of their responsibilities in aggressively searching for and securing quarters. Unexcused failure to comply with the diligent search requirement could result in TLA termination.

**How to file a TLA Claim/Extension:** Refer to **Packet 2, Section 2** since this is not a "Getting Started" action item.

**Assistance:** If you have not secured community housing at the end of the second TLA increment (20 days), you **must** get assistance from a Housing Counselor.

**Short Term Lease Contract Option:** This is a unique option available in the event you decide to wait for a particular unit to become available outside of your 30-day TLA period or you cannot justify a TLA extension. You will be advised to initiate a "short term lease". DO NOT wait until day 29 to start this process, you need to timely work this option with a housing counselor to ensure a smooth transition is maintained. This short-term lease option allows you to continue the search for housing that meets your personal preference or awaiting other permanent housing options, i.e. waiting for a house to become available. With this option, your Overseas Housing Allowance (OHA) at the rental amount or your OHA cap, whichever is lower, plus your utility allowance will start to offset the short-term lease cost. Reimbursement of meals is not authorized while receiving OHA. You should not incur any out-of-pocket expenses. Shop around for best price. Refer to **Packet 3, Section 5** for more detailed information.

## TLA Top 10

- 1) How many TLA days can a Service Member (SM) receive when outbound?

Reference USAFE Inst 65-104, par. 11.a.2. Temporary lodging allowance on departure is an allowance generally authorized for no more than the last:

- 10 days before a PCS when the SM occupies private rental housing.
- 3 days before a PCS when the SM occupies Government quarters cleaned by a Government contractor.

- 2) Can a SM receive OHA and TLA concurrently (at the same time)?

Reference JTR, chap. 9, par. 9150 GENERAL, NOTE 4: "A member may be paid COLA, BAH and/or OHA, if applicable, when paid TLA."

Policy Guidance: TLA is payable when a person vacates (goes on TLA) a house so they can clean/clear the house. After they are done cleaning the house, they then terminate the lease if it is an off base house or terminate government quarters. Vacate does not mean that they have to terminate the lease before they are eligible for TLA. Depending on size of the house the SM may need several days of TLA/OHA to get the house ready for final inspection/termination of lease.

- 3) Can a SM collect additional TLA days for reasons beyond the control of the member and/or dependents if they are required to terminate permanent housing more than 10 days before the estimated departure date?

Reference JTR—chap. 9, par. 9170 TLA UPON DEPARTURE, D., "Early Permanent Housing Termination. When, for reasons beyond the control of the member and/or dependents, permanent Gov't Qtrs/private sector housing must be relinquished more than 10 days before the estimated departure date, the authorizing/approving official (see par. 9150) may authorize/approve TLA beginning the day the permanent Gov't Qtrs/private sector housing is relinquished." USAFE Inst 65-104, par. 11.d. further clarifies, "Departing SMs or dependents of SMs who are forced to vacate Government quarters early for the Government's convenience may receive TLA. An alternate household should not be established before the SM or the SM's dependents depart if this is not in the best interest of the Government and the SM."

Policy Guidance: In cases where Housing authorities require the SM to vacate permanent Government quarters more than 10 days before the estimated departure date for the convenience of the Government (government funded move), additional TLA days are authorized without a specific request to the OCONUS TLA-extension approval authority. It is a redundant action because the additional TLA days are based on a government requirement for the member to move.

- 4) Who is my OCONUS TLA-Extension Approval Authorities?

Reference USAFE Inst 65-104, Appendix A. establishes OCONUS TLA-Extension Approval Authorities for countries and geographic areas in USEUCOM for instances where a member wishes to request TLA on arrival for a period beyond 60 days or TLA on departure for a period beyond 10 days. Paragraph 4.b.1. of this document establishes 31 FW/CC as the approval authority and that this authority must not be delegated below the extension-authority staff.

Policy Guidance: TLA-extension approval authority staff is to be considered Vice/Deputy or Director of Staff of the TLA-extension approval authority and cannot be further delegated. Example: MSG/CC would not be considered part of a Wing level TLA-extension approval authority staff.

- 5) What is the authorized number of days for in bound TLA?

Reference JTR, chap. 9, par. 9160 INITIAL ASSIGNMENT, A.1., "TLA authority for an OCONUS PDS assignment requiring a residence change ordinarily should not exceed 60 days."

Policy Guidance: The first 60 days is not automatic. JTR, chap. 9, par. 9160, A.2 requires a follow-up/review at 15 or fewer days. However, for EUCCOM, IAW 65-104, par. 7.a.3.a., a follow-up/review at 10 or fewer days is required. Additionally, the USAFE Supplement chap. 11, par. 11.3.1.4. requires TLA requests over 30 days and up to 60 days be approved by Base Civil Engineer (BCE). The intent is not to limit in bound TLA to 30 days. The intent is to provide another level of oversight to the TLA program.

- 6) Can personal inconvenience to a member/dependent(s) ever be a determining factor in extending TLA? (This includes knowingly selecting a place to live that is not readily available when there are other choices available.)

Reference: USAFE Supplement, AFI 32-6001, chap. 11, par. 11.3.1.2 makes it clear that personal convenience can never be an applicable factor, stating: If a SM refuses to occupy available government-controlled quarters, TLA is terminated the first date Furnishings Management Section (FMS) can deliver loaner furnishings based on the date quarters are available. Likewise, if a SM chooses to initiate a rental contract for a home that is not readily available, TLA may be terminated if the Housing Manager or BCE determines a sufficient number of adequate homes are available for immediate occupancy.

- 7) Why do we have the JTR, USAFE Inst 65-104, and United States Air Forces in Europe (USAFE) Supplement to Air Force Instruction 32-6001 Family Housing Management that addresses TLA Management?

Reference JTR chap. 9, par. 9150 GENERAL, B.1-2. In both countries/areas where only one Service is represented and countries/areas where more than one Service is represented, the senior commander/designee (i.e., the OCONUS TLA Authority) must issue written guidance for all Services in the country/area. In addition, the OCONUS TLA Authority may delegate authority as determined appropriate to judiciously administer TLA.

Policy Guidance: This JTR paragraph requires AE Regulation 37-4 (USAFE Inst 65-104) to be created providing all Services within the USEUCOM Area of Responsibility (AOR) with further clarification and guidance that must be adhered to in administering TLA entitlements. The USAFE Supplement provides the AF with further clarification and guidance that must be adhered to in administering TLA entitlements. Per the JTR chap. 9, par 9150 GENERAL, C.3., TLA costs should be minimized by effective OCONUS TLA Authority guidance and management attention at all levels to: (1) Preclude the need for TLA, (2) Shorten the authorized period, and (3) Reduce the amount payable. DOD requires each Service in USEUCOM to manage TLA prudently. Each Service must issue specific procedural guidance.

8) Where do suitable/adequacy standards/rules come from?

Reference: USAFE Inst 65-104, par. 14.b. establishes TLA must be terminated when a SM refuses to occupy suitable or adequate Government quarters or private rental housing. This instruction further defines suitable or adequate housing (Section II, Terms) as either permanent government quarters that meet or exceed the standards prescribed by applicable service directives or private rental housing that:

- Having enough bedrooms to meet family size and composition as outlined in Service directives.
- Is within commuting distance of the duty station as outlined in Service directives.
- Has an average total monthly cost that does not exceed the maximum allowable housing-cost criteria.
- Is structurally sound and does not pose a safety or health hazard.
- Has hot and cold potable water, a shower or bath, at least one flushing toilet, electrical service, and a heating system (where the climate requires one).

Policy Guidance: Housing adequacy standards as found in the regulations focus on facility condition and criteria. Therefore, USAFE Supplement to AFI 32-6001, chap. 11, par. 11.3.1.2 further clarifies and establishes that TLA is terminated the first date the Furnishings Management Section (FMS) can deliver loaner furnishings based on the date quarters are available. Quarters are not adequate until a member is actually able to occupy the house, regardless of any conditional aspect of the facility that might be considered. Having some sort of furnishings, either the SM's household goods or FMS loaner furnishings is a minimum for occupancy. It is not expected that SMs and/or their families should occupy quarters with no access to minimal required furnishings.

9) If a SM has a pet and is aggressively looking for housing that can accommodate the pets, can they be given an extension past 30 days?

Reference: USAFE Supplement, AFI 32-6001, chap. 11, par. 11.3.1.3. Personal preference issues such as pets, furniture limitations, school districts, etc. are not justification for an extension beyond 30 days.

Policy Guidance: We have had the pet challenge on many occasions throughout USAFE and that is why it is spelt out in the regulations. Unfortunately, having pets is not a valid reason to extend TLA. If it is that hard to find accommodations that allow pets in a specific location, you should state so in your sponsor packages telling SMs not to bring pets. The supporting housing office can help with getting that information out.

10) USAFE Supplement to AFI 32-6001, chap. 11, par. 11.3.1.4. sets the BCE as extension authority from 31-60 days; however, is there anything prohibiting that 31-60 days extension authority from being delegated further down to the member's Sq or Gp/CC in cases of not being co-located with the BCE?

Policy Guidance: There are no provisions to delegate the 31-60 days extension authority from being delegated to another. The BCE is in the direct chain of command of the housing office and ultimately is responsible for the TLA program administered by the housing office.



DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE  
31ST FIGHTER WING (USAFE)



MEMORANDUM FOR ALL 31ST FIGHTER WING PERSONNEL

FROM: 31 FW/CC

SUBJECT: Wing Policy on Temporary Lodging Allowance (TLA)

1. This memo provides clarification of the TLA policy for both accompanied and unaccompanied personnel and ensures fair application of this allowance from Joint Travel Regulations (JTR), USAEUR Regulation 37-4/USAFE Instruction 65-104/USNAVEUR Instruction 7210.2G, *Providing Temporary Lodging Allowance in USEUCOM*.
2. TLA is authorized for the purpose of partially reimbursing a service member for more than normal expenses while occupying temporary lodging OCONUS. TLA is not intended and must not be used for the personal enrichment of a member.
3. To meet this intent, service members must maintain a documented search for leased housing. Within the first 10 days, the service member should view a minimum of two houses. During the subsequent 10-day increments, the service member should view at least five additional listings. If permanent housing has not been secured necessitating a third 10-day increment, the service member must meet with a Housing Management Specialist to justify additional TLA claims or to make plans for a short term lease of interim housing.
4. Inbound TLA is limited to 30 days and will not normally be extended. If circumstances beyond the member's control require a TLA extension, the service member is required to submit a written request for a TLA extension to include the number of additional days and the housing search documentation. 31 CES/CC is the approval authority for extensions between 30 and 60 days in 10-day increments. TLA beyond 60 days requires Wing Commander approval.
5. Outgoing TLA is limited to 10 days, if residing on the economy. If residing in government controlled housing (GHRP) outgoing TLA is limited to 3 days. Outgoing TLA extensions require Wing Commander approval.
6. Beyond 30 days, when circumstances do not support additional TLA days, the member should initiate a short-term lease which will start their OHA. A list of off base short-term lease accommodations is available at Housing Office for members use. This allows members to continue the search for housing meeting their personal preference or awaiting other permanent housing options. TLA ends when a service member occupies private short-term or long-term housing.

**BREAKING BARRIERS...SINCE 1947**

IN COORDINATION

7. For questions or additional information, please contact the Aviano Housing Office at DSN 314-632-2272 or +39-0434-30-2272.

LANCE K. LANDRUM  
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