

DoDEA Official Travel Policy Letter For use of Official Passport

June 9, 2008

MEMORANDUM FOR ALL DODEA/DODDS/DDESS EMPLOYEES

SUBJECT: Use of Official Passports for Official Travel Policy Letter

1. Directives pertaining to this Policy Letter are as follows:

- a. Title 22 of the Code of Federal Regulations, Part 51-3(b).
- b. Department of State cable 032044Z DEC 86, Subject: Criteria for Issuance of Official Passports.
- c. Department of State cable 170442Z JUL 98, Subject: Official Passports for DODDS Teachers.
- d. DoD Directive 4500.54-G, DoD Foreign Clearance Guide (FCG).
- e. DoD Regulation 1000.21-R, Passport and Passport Services Regulation.
- f. Joint Federal Travel Regulation, Volume 1, Para U4520 and/or U5212.

2. Effective immediately, based upon the guidance within the directives provided above, all personnel traveling on behalf of DoDEA for official business will do so on an official passport, unless they are traveling to a country identified in the FCG as high or potential physical threat countries/areas, in which case they may travel on a tourist passport. Employees electing the option of traveling on a tourist passport are responsible for obtaining their own passport and visas. Reimbursement for a tourist passport and visa obtained under these conditions is authorized in accordance with paragraphs 1d and 1f. This policy does not grant everyone an official passport for just in case. Travel must be projected or evident.

3. A passport is an internationally recognized travel document issued under the authority of the Secretary of State of the equivalent official of a foreign country attesting to the identity and nationality of the bearer. A passport indicates that its bearer is entitled to receive the protection and assistance of the diplomatic and consular offices of his or her country while abroad. In essence, it is a request on the part of the issuing government that officials of other governments permit the bearer to travel or sojourn

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in their territories and afford them lawful aid and protection. Hence, State Department issues no-fee official passports to DoD civilian personnel for TDY or PCS and to eligible family members when authorized to accompany or join the official traveler. Exception to this policy is stated in the directive cited in Para 1b.

4. DoD Civilian personnel authorized to proceed abroad on an official assignment to a country which, according to the Foreign Clearance Guide (FCG), requires that civilian personnel enter with an official passport, often question the need for an official passport. Some think that it is acceptable and even safer to travel with a regular tourist passport instead. This is a misconception. There are several reasons why an official passport should be used when traveling on behalf of the U.S. Government:
 - a. **Required Visas:** An official visa cannot be stamped into a tourist passport because a visa will not be granted for entry into a foreign country when the reason for travel to that country is stated as official business and the tourist passport is presented. Most foreign countries don't assess fees for visas in official passports; whereas, they may assess a fee to place a visa in a tourist passport.
 - b. **Foreign Country Entry and Exit:** Some foreign countries will deny entry at the border to someone entering the country on official business that arrives with only a tourist passport and not the official passport.
 - c. **Violation of Sovereignty:** Use of the tourist passport when traveling in an official capacity misrepresents the true purpose for which the traveler has entered the country. This can have a serious and adverse affect on our reciprocal relations with foreign countries.
 - d. **Security Concerns:** Should there be a problem while in the host country; the official passport provides quicker access to officials of the host country government and greater protection.
5. Primary point of contact pertaining to this information is **Kim A. Glasoe, Passport Specialist, Passport and ID Office, (703) 588-3856.**