

PAY & LEAVE PAY ADMINISTRATION

## Fact Sheet: Official Worksite for Location-Based Pay Purposes

Certain location-based pay entitlements (such as locality payments, special rate supplements, and nonforeign area cost-of-living allowances) are based on the location of the employee's official worksite associated with the employee's position of record. The official worksite generally is the location where the employee regularly performs his or her duties. If the employee's work involves recurring travel or the employee's work location varies on a recurring basis, the official worksite is the location where the work activities of the employee's position of record are based, as determined by the employing agency, subject to the requirement that the official worksite must be in a locality pay area in which the employee regularly performs work. An agency must document an employee's official worksite on the employee's Notification of Personnel Action (Standard Form 50 or equivalent). (See "Duty Station" blocks 38 and 39 of the Standard Form 50 showing the city/county and state in which the official worksite is located.)

### Temporary Changes in Work Location

An employee's work location may change on a temporary basis. Such a change may or may not affect the employee's official worksite, as explained in the following paragraphs:

- If an employee is in temporary duty travel status away from the official worksite for his or her position of record, the employee's official worksite and associated pay entitlements are not affected.
- If an employee is temporarily detailed to a position in a different location, the employee's official worksite and associated pay entitlements are not affected.
- If an employee is authorized to receive relocation expenses under 5 U.S.C. 5737, in connection with an extended assignment resulting in temporary change of station, the worksite associated with the extended assignment is the official worksite. (See 41 CFR 302-1.1.)
- If an employee is temporarily reassigned or promoted to another position in a different geographic area, the temporary work location is considered the official worksite for pay purposes.

### Teleworkers

An agency must determine and designate the official worksite for an employee covered by a telework agreement on a case-by-case basis using the following criteria:

- The official worksite for an employee covered by a telework agreement is the location of the regular worksite for the employee's position (i.e., the place where the employee would normally work absent a telework agreement), as long as the employee is scheduled to report physically at least twice each biweekly pay period on a regular and recurring basis to that regular worksite.

- In the case of a telework employee whose work location varies on a recurring basis, the employee need not report at least twice each biweekly pay period to the regular worksite established by the agency as long as the employee is performing work within the same geographic area (established for the purpose of a given pay entitlement) as the employee's regular worksite. For example, if a telework employee with a varying work location works at least twice each biweekly pay period on a regular and recurring basis in the same locality pay area in which the established official worksite is located, the employee need not report at least twice each biweekly pay period to that official worksite to maintain entitlement to the locality payment for that area.
- The official worksite for an employee covered by a telework agreement who is not scheduled to report at least twice each biweekly pay period on a regular and recurring basis to the regular worksite is the location of the telework site (i.e., home, telework center, or other alternative worksite), except in certain temporary situations, as explained under "Temporary Telework Arrangements," below.

### **Temporary Telework Arrangements**

In certain temporary situations, an agency may designate the location of the regular worksite as the official worksite of an employee who teleworks on a regular basis at an alternative worksite, even though the employee is not able to report at least twice each biweekly pay period on a regular and recurring basis to the regular worksite. The intent of this exception is to address certain situations where the employee is retaining a residence in the commuting area for the regular worksite but is temporarily unable to report to the regular worksite for reasons beyond the employee's control. The fact that an employee may receive lesser pay or benefits if the official worksite is changed to the telework location is not a basis or justification for using this temporary exception. A key consideration is the need to preserve equity between the telework employee and non-telework employees who are working in the same area as the telework location. Also, the temporary exception should generally be used only in cases where (1) the employee is expected to stop teleworking and return to work at the regular worksite in the near future, or (2) the employee is expected to continue teleworking but will be able to report to the regular worksite at least twice each biweekly pay period on a regular and recurring basis in the near future. Examples of appropriate temporary situations include:

- Recovery from an injury or medical condition;
- Emergency situations preventing an employee from regularly commuting to the regular official worksite, such as a severe weather emergency or a pandemic health crisis. (For instance, in the aftermath of a hurricane or flood, an employee may be forced to temporarily relocate, making commuting to the regular worksite twice each biweekly pay period on a regular and recurring basis not possible. If the employing agency sets up telework arrangements for the employee, a temporary exception to the twice-a-pay-period requirement would be appropriate.);
- An extended period of approved absence from work (e.g. paid leave);
- A period during which the employee is in temporary duty travel status away from the official worksite; or
- A period during which an employee is temporarily detailed to work at a location other than a location covered by a telework agreement.

An exception is not appropriate in all time-limited situations. For example, assuming there are no additional circumstances such as those described above that would make an exception appropriate, an agency should designate the employee's telework site as the official worksite in situations such as the following:

- The agency hires an employee under a temporary or time-limited appointment and authorizes the employee to telework, but the employee is never scheduled to work at, or report at least twice each biweekly pay period to, the regular worksite (or expected to do so in the near future); or
- An employee changes his or her place of residence to a distant location where commuting at least twice each biweekly pay period on a regular and recurring basis to the regular worksite is not possible (i.e., the employee no longer has a residence in the commuting area for the regular worksite and thus cannot reasonably be viewed as being part of the local labor market for the regular worksite).

## **Other Benefits**

The location of an employee's official worksite may affect other benefits. Information on an employee's travel, transportation, and relocation benefits and entitlements based on his or her "official duty station" (as defined by the General Services Administration (GSA)) may be obtained from at [GSA's website](#). Information on an employee's entitlements to overseas allowances and benefits may be obtained from the [Department of State's website](#).

## **References**

- Guide to Processing Personnel Actions - Chapter 23
- Locality-based comparability payments - 5 CFR part 531, subpart F
- Special rate schedules - 5 CFR part 530, subpart C
- Cost-of-living allowances and post differentials, nonforeign areas - 5 CFR part 591, subpart B
- [Pay and Hours of Work Fact Sheets](#)

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