COMPENSATORY TIME
FOR
OFFICIAL TRAVEL

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Compensatory Time Off for Travel

- A new form of compensatory time off:
  - Earned by an employee for time spent in a travel status
  - Away from the employee’s official duty station
  - When such time is not otherwise compensable. (Default provision)

- The travel must be officially authorized
  - for work purposes and
  - approved by an authorized agency official or otherwise authorized under established agency policies.

- Interim regulations became effective on January 28, 2005.
Travel Status

Time in travel status includes:

Time spent traveling between

- the official and temporary duty stations
- two temporary duty stations; and
- the “usual waiting time” that precedes or interrupts such travel (e.g., arriving prior to the scheduled departure of an airplane, per DOC guideline):
  - 2 hours – domestic
  - 4 hours – international
Travel Status (cont’d)

- “Usual waiting time” at a transportation terminal is creditable
  - on a case-by-case basis,
  - at the exclusive discretion of the employing agency

- An “extended” waiting period is not considered time in a travel status, i.e., an unusually long wait during which the employee is free to rest, sleep, or otherwise use the time for his or her own purposes.

- Bona fide meal periods are not considered time in a travel status.
Commuting Time  Outside of regular working hours

- Travel is **creditable travel time** when it is:
  - between an employee’s home and a temporary duty station or transportation terminal outside the limits of his or her official duty station
  - However, the agency must **deduct** the employee’s normal home-to-work/work-to-home commuting time from the creditable travel time.

- Travel is **creditable travel time** when it is:
  - between a **worksite** and a transportation terminal
  - no commuting time offset applies

- Travel is **not creditable travel time**:  
  - to or from a transportation terminal within the limits of the employee’s official duty station
  - and is considered equivalent to commuting time
“Compensable”

- Compensatory time-off for travel may be earned only for time in a travel status that is not otherwise “compensable.”

- Compensable periods of time means periods of time that are creditable as hours of work for the purpose of determining a specific pay entitlement.

- For example, hours of travel are not creditable
  - if the hours are compensated by basic pay or under other premium pay provisions,
  - if there are compensation caps that limit the payment of premium pay for those hours (e.g., the 25% cap on availability pay and the biweekly premium pay cap),
  - if the employee changes the method, time, or route of the authorized travel.
Crediting Time

- Compensatory time off for travel is credited and used in 15 minute increments

- NOAA’s procedures for requesting credit:
  - Make request prior to the actual travel or within 10 days of return
  - **Use:**
    - CD-81 – Request for Paid OT or Comp Time
    - Email
    - Memorandum
Documentation: Crediting Time

Provide chronological record (in same time zone) of specific travel information including:

- Duration of normal home-to-work commute
- Regular tour of duty
- Date/time/place of departure
- Actual time spent traveling to/from transportation terminal
- Time spent waiting at the transportation terminal
- Time spent in travel
- Other time spent waiting for connector flights, etc., and how time was spent (eating/sleeping/shopping), and duration of each activity
- Time of arrival at/departure from temporary duty station
Using Time

- Request use of earned time
  - SF-71/OPM-71
  - Email
  - Memorandum

- Kept with timekeeping records for 6 years.

- Employees (and their managers) must judiciously manage/plan use of:
  - annual leave
  - compensatory time
  - compensatory time-off for travel
  - credit hours
  - For example, using compensatory time-off for travel to avoid forfeiture and then not using excess annual leave is not an “exigency of business” for restoration purposes
Forfeiture

Compensatory time-off for travel is forfeited:
- If not used within 26 pay periods after it is credited;
- Upon voluntary transfer to another agency;
- Upon movement to a noncovered position (e.g., SES, or WG);
- Upon separation from the Federal Government.

Exception:
- if employee goes on Military Leave or LWOP in middle of 26 pay periods, the 26 pay-period waiting time starts over upon their return.

Under no circumstances may an employee receive payment for unused compensatory time-off for travel.
Limitations

- **Compensatory time-off for travel may not be considered** in applying the:
  - biweekly cap,
  - annual premium pay cap, or
  - aggregate limitation on pay.

- **There is no limitation** on the amount of compensatory time-off for travel an employee may earn.
OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT
5 CFR Part 550
Pay Administration (General)
AGENCY: Office of Personnel Management.
ACTION: Interim rule with request for comments.

MEMORANDUM FOR HEADS OF EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES
FROM: KAY COLES JAMES, Director
SUBJECT: Compensatory Time Off for Travel
Section 203 of the Federal Workforce Flexibility Act of 2004 (Public Law 108-411, October 30, 2004) authorized a new form of compensatory time off for time spent by an employee in a travel status...

DOC Premium Pay Manual
Chapter 9. Travel Time as Hours of Work
For Additional Pay & Leave Information, go to:

hr.noaa.gov/pay.htm