

VOLUME 7A, CHAPTER 25: “SUBSISTENCE ALLOWANCES”**SUMMARY OF MAJOR CHANGES**

All changes are denoted by **blue font**.

Substantive revisions are denoted by an asterisk (*) symbol preceding the section, paragraph, table, or figure that includes the revision.

Unless otherwise noted, chapters referenced are contained in this volume.

Hyperlinks are denoted by **bold, italic, blue, and underlined font**.

The previous version dated June 2014 is archived.

PARAGRAPH	EXPLANATION OF CHANGE/REVISION	PURPOSE
2501	Added the Overview and Authoritative Guidance paragraphs.	Addition
250202	Updated subsistence allowance rates effective January 1, 2015.	Revision
Table 25-1	Updated meal collection rates effective January 1, 2015.	Revision
Bibliography	Updated memorandums.	Revision

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CHAPTER 25

SUBSISTENCE ALLOWANCES

*2501 GENERAL

*250101 Overview

Each member of a uniformed service entitled to basic pay is entitled to a Basic Allowance for Subsistence (BAS) subject to the conditions set forth in this chapter.

*250202. Authoritative Guidance

The bibliography at the end of this chapter lists the authoritative references.

2502 BASIC ALLOWANCE FOR SUBSISTENCE (BAS)

250201. Eligibility

Upon completion of initial basic military training, unless otherwise restricted as described in this chapter, a member becomes entitled to one of the following monthly BAS rates based upon their rank and circumstances.

A. Officer BAS. A single rate of BAS applies to all officers.

B. BAS for Enlisted Members. Enlisted members are entitled to one of the BAS rates listed below:

1. Enlisted BAS. This is the standard rate of BAS to be paid enlisted members unless they qualify for, and proper authority approves, a higher rate of BAS.

2. Enlisted BAS II. Enlisted members on duty at a permanent station and assigned to single (unaccompanied) Government quarters, which do not have adequate food storage or preparation facilities, and where a government mess is not available, and the government cannot otherwise make meals available, may be entitled to BAS II. The rate for BAS II is fixed at twice the rate for standard enlisted BAS. Effective February 10, 2006, the Navy authorized the payment of BAS II. Effective October 1, 2010; the Air Force authorized payment of BAS II to members at specific locations.

C. Continuity of Enlisted BAS Entitlement

1. Enlisted members continue their existing BAS entitlement without interruption upon discharge or retirement if reenlistment or recall to active duty is completed at the same station within 24 hours.

2. Enlisted members continue their existing BAS entitlement without interruption during weekends, holidays, administrative absence, pass, or liberty (not including leave).

D. Enlisted BAS in Specific Situations. The following policy will be used in determining the rate of BAS to apply in specific situations:

1. Enlisted BAS rates will be applied uniformly for all enlisted members under similar conditions permanently assigned to the same installation, station, base, or ship. The installation commander/commanding officer will ensure the uniform application of BAS rates for members under similar conditions, whether from a single Service or more than one Service. If there is conflict between Service directives that prevent uniform application of BAS, the commander/commanding officer will report the differences, through appropriate channels, to the Secretaries of the Military Departments concerned, who will confer to ensure uniform determinations on the authorized BAS rate.

2. Enlisted members on authorized leave (including proceed time, authorized delays en route between duty stations chargeable as leave and convalescent leave) are entitled to the standard enlisted BAS rate, regardless of the BAS rate authorized at their permanent station.

3. Enlisted members performing permanent change of station (PCS) travel (including temporary duty travel or temporary additional duty (TDY/TAD enroute)) under orders away from their designated post of duty are entitled to the standard enlisted BAS rate, regardless of the BAS type authorized at their previous or subsequent permanent station.

4. Enlisted members receiving BAS II at their permanent station who are hospitalized or performing regular or permissive TDY/TAD (including field duty, sea duty, essential unit messing, or members traveling together with limited or no per diem travel) under orders away from their permanent station will revert to standard enlisted BAS for the period of absence from the permanent station.

***250202.** Payment

The BAS entitlement is paid as a monthly rate. Effective **January 1, 2015**, the rates for BAS are as follows:

- A. The monthly BAS rate for officers is **\$253.38**.
- B. The monthly BAS rates for enlisted members are:
 - 1. Enlisted BAS (standard) – **\$367.92; and**
 - 2. BAS II – **\$735.84**.

C. Prorated Subsistence Allowances. Military members will not be provided meals or rations free of charge by or on behalf of the Government while entitled to BAS for the same period of service, except when a patient is in a hospital as defined in paragraph 250203.C. 1 and 2.

1. An enlisted member will be entitled to the standard enlisted BAS rate for any day they are under orders for leave or PCS travel. This includes the day of commencement and day of termination of the status under those orders.

2. An enlisted member who changes BAS status at the direction or by permission of a commander, under blanket authority, or at the member's request will have the entitlement change take effect at the beginning of the day specified in writing by the commander.

250203. Restrictions

A. Military members are not entitled to BAS under the following conditions:

1. When undergoing Basic Military Training, including initial officer training (Officer Candidate School, Officer Training School) unless, they have continuous prior enlisted service (active or reserve) at the time they start such training. In such cases, the member will be subsisted-in-kind.

2. When in an excess leave status.

3. When in an absent-without-leave status, in excess of 24 hours, unless the absence is excused as unavoidable.

4. When on an approved educational leave of absence not exceeding 2 years.

5. When a member with no dependents is training for, attending, or participating in Pan American games, Olympic Games, or other specifically authorized international amateur sport competitions and the sponsoring agency subsists them during that period.

6. When serving a court-martial sentence that includes confinement and total forfeiture of pay and allowances. BAS will be stopped on the date the sentence is adjudged, and the member is confined, or when total forfeitures become effective. In such cases, the member will be subsisted-in-kind.

B. Enlisted BAS II is not authorized when a government mess is temporarily closed for less than 14 days or when a member is on leave, TAD/TDY away from the permanent station, or in the hospital.

C. Military members may not be provided meals or rations at no charge by or on behalf of the Government while entitled to BAS for the same period of service, except when a

patient is in a hospital undergoing medical recuperation or therapy, or is otherwise in the status of continuous care, including outpatient care at a medical treatment facility for an injury, illness or disease incurred while the member was on active duty in:

1. Any operation designated by the Secretary of Defense as a combat operation or in an area designated by the Secretary as a combat zone; or
2. Support of:
 - a. Operation Enduring Freedom;
 - b. [Operation Iraq Freedom](#); or
 - c. Operation New Dawn.

250204. Special Provisions

A. Meal Collections. A military member being paid BAS must pay for all meals or rations received from a Government mess or provided on behalf of the government (except when a patient is in a hospital as defined in paragraph 250203.C.1 and 2). This is a personal obligation of the individual. Meals or rations may be paid for with cash tendered to the government mess, by collection/reduction of otherwise entitled subsistence travel per diem (a member under orders for essential unit mission has no entitlement to subsistence travel per diem), or through pay account collection. When payment is made through pay account collection, it is not considered a deduction from or reduction of the entitled BAS; rather it is a collection for a debt owed to the government.

1. Members receiving BAS while in certain situations may have the payment for government-provided meals made by mandatory pay account collection. These are circumstances where it is not feasible to control dining access or collect cash due to operational constraints or where efficiency of operation requires collection for all meals. When a commander/commanding officer requires mandatory collection, the pay account collection will be made for all meals available, whether the meals are actually eaten or not. Mandatory collections are made day-for-actual-day, not a 30-day month basis. Unless the member is receiving a per diem for subsistence, the collection will be at the discount meal rate. Mandatory pay account collection may be required in the following situations:

- a. Field duty.
- b. Sea duty.
- c. Members traveling together with limited or no per diem travel.
- d. Accession Pipeline Military Training.

- e. Essential unit messing.
 - f. Essential station messing.
2. Mandatory pay account collections for meals do not apply under the following conditions:
 - a. Members on official leave, in a permanent change of station status, (including travel time and proceed time), in a hospital, or on TAD/TDY other than temporary duty to another situation requiring mandatory pay account collection for meals will be exempt from mandatory collections. In these instances, pay account collections will be suspended or adjusted with a credit and the government mess will be responsible for collecting from the individual for any meals served.
 - b. Members who have missed meals certified by the commanding officer/commanders or their designee are exempt from mandatory collections, and pay account collections will be suspended or adjusted with a credit.
3. Pay account collections will be at 25-percent of the discount meal rate for the first and last day of assignment in situations requiring mandatory collection. A member transitioning directly between two mandatory meal collection situations will be treated as though the collection period were continuous and will not receive the 25-percent reduced charge for the transition. The 25-percent reduced meal charge does not apply for leave periods. Full collections will be made on the duty days before and after the leave period.
4. In circumstances other than those requiring mandatory pay account collection, members receiving BAS will pay for meals obtained from a Government mess or provided on behalf of the government by using cash or by collection/reduction of subsistence per diem from their travel claims. Members on Joint Task Force operations, under per diem travel orders, usually will have the subsistence portion of their per diem withheld or deducted from their travel reimbursement as payment for meals provided in theater. Members deployed on regular TAD/TDY travel, who receive deductible meals (meals at “no cost”), will have the subsistence portion of their per diem reduced as payment for meals provided by or on behalf of the government.
5. The standard meal rate applies unless there is a specific exception allowing application of the discount meal rate. Members actually paid subsistence per diem for meals must pay the standard meal rate unless the per diem is withheld or disallowed as payment for the meals.
6. Members being subsisted by or on behalf of the Government, where no other collection means exists or where normal collections were not made, may have a collection for meals made through their pay account at the appropriate rate upon proper documentation for a debt owed to the Government.

B. Meal Collection Disposition. Collections from individual pay accounts for meals and rations provided by the Government or on behalf of the Government will be credited to the appropriation specified by each Military Service.

C. Specialized Terms. The following definitions apply to specialized terms used in this chapter:

1. Essential Station Messing (ESM). Essential Station Messing is declared by the installation, base, or station commander responsible for the single government quarters that is essential to operate the government mess efficiently and economically, or that are necessary for the health and safety of enlisted personnel permanently assigned to single quarters. Those categories of enlisted members included in ESM will be charged for all meals made available whether eaten or not, except for approved missed meals.

2. Essential Unit Messing (EUM). Essential Unit Messing is declared when members travel together with limited or no per diem. An appropriate authority declares essential for operational readiness, military operations, or effective training where members are required to use a government mess or meals provided on behalf of the government. Members will be in a travel status and are entitled to travel reimbursement for incidental expenses, but not for subsistence. Designation for essential unit messing will apply only to organizational units and to operational elements and detachments, not to individual service members. All members on duty under circumstances where EUM has been declared will be charged for all meals made available whether eaten or not, except for approved missed meals.

3. Field Duty. Field Duty are any maneuvers, war games, field exercises, or similar operations where a member is assigned to a unit being subsisted in a dining facility operated by, or on behalf of the U.S. Government, or with an organization drawing field rations. Members may be on per diem orders. All members on field duty will be charged for all meals made available whether eaten or not, subject to approved missed meals.

4. Government Mess. See the Glossary.

5. Sea Duty. Sea Duty is any service performed in a self-propelled vessel with berthing and messing facilities that is in an active status, in commission, or in service. This term applies to members who are either permanent party or aboard for temporary duty. All members on sea duty not a member of an authorized private mess will be charged for all meals made available whether eaten or not, subject to approved missed meals.

6. Subsisted on Behalf of the Government. Subsisted on behalf of the Government is a condition in which meals or rations are furnished without charge by a Government contractor or a foreign government, or through a fellowship, grant, or intern program, while a member is receiving basic pay, either under the terms of a contract or agreement or on a complimentary basis. Unless a member is entitled to be subsisted-in-kind, subsistence provided on behalf of the Government must be charged to the member.

7. Subsisted-in-Kind. Subsisted-in-Kind are meals or rations furnished by or on behalf of the Government at no charge when BAS or commuted rations are not otherwise payable to a member in a pay status.

D. Advance Payments. Specific circumstances for advance payment of BAS are contained in Chapter 32, section [320205](#).

E. Effect on Overseas Station Allowances. BAS will be paid in conjunction with the overseas cost-of-living allowances authorized by [Joint Travel Regulations](#).

250205. Service Instructions

A. Navy

1. General. [MILPERSMAN 7220.140](#).
2. Specialized Terms. [MILPERSMAN 7220.150](#).
3. General Policies. [MILPERSMAN 7220.160](#).
4. Emergency Conditions. [MILPERSMAN 7220.170](#).
5. Sea Duty. [MILPERSMAN 7220.180](#).
6. BAS II. [MILPERSMAN 7220.182](#).
7. Supplemental and Prorated Subsistence Allowance: [MILPERSMAN 7220.190](#).

B. Air Force. [AFMAN 65-116 Vol. 2, Chapter 6 Section 6B](#).

C. Marine Corps. [Marine Corps Order 10110.47](#).

2503 FAMILY SUBSISTENCE SUPPLEMENTAL ALLOWANCE (FSSA)

250301. General Provisions

The Family Subsistence Supplemental Allowance (FSSA) program was established to supplement an individual's basic allowance for subsistence to a level sufficient to remove that member's household from or obviate the need for benefits under the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), formerly known as the food stamp program. Officer and enlisted members entitled to BAS may also qualify for FSSA. FSSA is payable at a monthly rate as determined by the Military Service concerned under the guidance provided by the Secretary of Defense, and may not exceed \$1,100. FSSA is a nontaxable allowance payable in addition to, all other pays and allowances.

250302. Eligibility

FSSA is payable to any officer or enlisted member of the Armed Forces who meets all of the following criteria:

- A. Is serving on active duty and receiving BAS.
- B. Has a gross household income that would make the member eligible for assistance under the USDA SNAP program for a given household size.
- C. At least one person in the Service member's household is a military dependent.
- D. Has made an application for and been certified, at a specific payment level, by the appropriate office.

250303. Entitlement

FSSA is a monthly entitlement payable in whole dollar amounts not to exceed \$1,100. It is not payable to any member, otherwise entitled, during periods in a non-pay status.

- A. FSSA is payable in an amount that would bring the member's gross household income to 130 percent of the Federal poverty line as established by the USDA.
- B. For periods of less than a full month of entitlement, the FSSA will be prorated at 1/30 for each day of entitlement.
- C. If an eligible member is receiving SNAP benefits, the amount of the FSSA entitlement will be equal to the calculated FSSA or the SNAP allotment, whichever is higher, not to exceed \$1,100 per month.

250304. Military Income

For the FSSA program, the sources of revenue that will be counted as "military income" are basic pay, BAS, basic allowance for housing, or cash equivalent for those that are living in Government-provided housing; overseas housing allowance, all bonuses, and all special and incentive pays except those that are excluded in subparagraph B.

- A. The monthly amount of military income attributable to a bonus will be the amount of the bonus, prorated over the period of time to which bonus is applicable. When a Service member lives in Government quarters while stationed overseas, the amount of the housing allowance to count as income for that member is the overseas housing allowance ceiling for the local area.

B. The following sources of revenue will not be counted as military income: Hostile Fire/Imminent Danger Pay, Continental United States Cost of Living Allowance

(COLA), overseas COLA, Family Separation Allowance, all travel, and transportation related allowances, entitlements, and clothing allowances.

250305. Application and Certification

Individual members must make application to the appropriate organizational element as designated by their respective Service. The appropriate Service organization will make all decisions regarding eligibility and the amount of entitlement and will provide final certification for payment to include the entitlement start date.

250306. Termination and Recertification

Certain events will cause the termination of entitlement unless reapplication and recertification are made. An eligible member may make reapplication up to 30 days prior to termination when an event that will require recertification is known in advance. Additionally, a member may make reapplication up to 30 days after an event that requires recertification without loss of continuity of entitlement. When reapplication is made within 30 days of an event that would cause termination, the recertification will have an effective date of the day following the event and any change in entitlement rate will be effective on that date. A reapplication will be treated as an initial application if more than 30 days lapse before the reapplication is made following the date of an event requiring recertification. In such cases, continuity of entitlement will be lost, and the date for termination of the entitlement will be the date of the event requiring recertification. Each of the following events requires reapplication and recertification or termination of entitlement:

A. When the monthly household income increases by \$100 or more as compared to the household income used as the basis of the member's current certified entitlement.

B. When there is any decrease to household size.

C. When the member is promoted. In the case of a promotion, the entitlement ends the day prior to the effective date of promotion.

D. When executing PCS move. In the case of a PCS move, the entitlement ends the day prior to the date the member officially reports for duty at the new duty station.

E. Annually on February 1.

250307. Recoupment

The difference between the amount of the current entitlement and the amount being recertified (if less) will be recouped if, during recertification, it is determined that the member's gross household income increased by greater than \$100 more than 30 days prior to reapplication. The amount to be recouped will be calculated on a pro rata basis for each day following the date the increased income exceeded \$100 through the effective date of the recertification.

*Table 25-1. Meal Collection Rates

Effective January 1, 2015 (Notes 1 & 2)

R U L E	A	B	C
	When a member receiving BAS also receives subsistence (meals or rations) from a government mess or provided on behalf of the Government at the	and the meal received is	then the collection rate is (note 2)
1	discount meal rate (note 3)	breakfast	\$2.60
2		lunch	\$4.20
3		dinner	\$3.65
4		daily total	\$10.45
5	standard meal rate (note 4)	breakfast	\$3.45
6		lunch	\$5.55
7		dinner	\$4.85
8		daily total	\$13.85

NOTES:

1. Collections from a member's pay account will be made when the member has not otherwise paid for meals provided by or on behalf of the Government (i.e., by cash, a personal check or charge, or by deduction/reduction of per diem). Collections from pay will be deducted from the member's pay account and credited to the appropriation specified by the Military Service concerned.
2. For the prior year rates, see: [Office of Secretary of Defense \(Comptroller\)](#) website.
3. The discount meal rate applies to meals and rations provided by or on behalf of the U.S. Government to a member not paid per diem or other travel reimbursement for subsistence who is performing duty in a U.S. Government vessel, a U.S. Government aircraft, on maneuvers, war games, field exercises, or similar operations, members traveling together with limited or no per diem travel status, under essential unit messing or assigned essential station messing. The discount meal rate also applies to meals and rations provided to a member assigned to Joint Task Force operations (for other than training) at temporary U.S. installations, or through a temporary dining facility.
4. The standard meal rate applies to meals and rations provided to any member not authorized the discount meal rate. This includes any member being paid per diem for subsistence, except those on Joint Task Force operations as described in note 2. Generally, when the standard meal rate is applicable, it will be collected, in cash from the member, by the dining facility.

*BIBLIOGRAPHY

CHAPTER 25 – SUBSISTENCE ALLOWANCES

*2501 – GENERAL

37 U.S.C. 402

2502 – BASIC ALLOWANCE FOR SUBSISTENCE (BAS)

250201	DoD Directive 1418.05, October 6, 2003
250201.B.2	MILPERSMAN 7220-182 Air Force Memo, June 8, 2010.
* 250202	OUSD(P&R)(MPP) Memo, December 1, 2014
250202.B.2	DoD Directive 1418.05, October 6, 2003
250203.A.5	37 U.S.C. 420(c)
250203.A.6	10 U.S.C. 857, 858b
250203.C	37 U.S.C. 402(h)
250204	37 U.S.C. 1011 DoD Directive 1418.05, October 6, 2003 10 U.S.C. 2603 5 U.S.C. 5536

2503 – FAMILY SUBSISTENCE SUPPLEMENTAL ALLOWANCE (FSSA)

	37 U.S.C. 402a DoD Instruction 1341.11, March 4, 2008
* Table 25-1	OUSD(C) Memo, FY15 Reimbursable Rates , Tab G