

VOLUME 7A, CHAPTER 68: “COST OF LIVING ALLOWANCE OUTSIDE THE CONTINENTAL UNITED STATES (OCONUS COLA) AND TEMPORARY LODGING ALLOWANCE (TLA)”

SUMMARY OF MAJOR CHANGES

Changes are identified in this table and also 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 [February 2021](#) is archived.

PARAGRAPH	EXPLANATION OF CHANGE/REVISION	PURPOSE
All	Verified and updated references, hyperlinks, and formatting to comply with current administrative instructions, and made clarifying editorial changes.	Revision
3.1.6.	Clarified the Cost of Living Allowance Unique Expense process in accordance with Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense, Manpower and Reserve Affairs memorandum AB 019-20 dated March 22, 2021.	Revision

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CHAPTER 68

**COST OF LIVING ALLOWANCE OUTSIDE THE CONTINENTAL UNITED STATES
(OCONUS COLA) AND TEMPORARY LODGING ALLOWANCE (TLA)**

1.0 GENERAL

1.1 Purpose

The **OCONUS COLA** is a non-taxable allowance that offsets the higher prices of goods and services, excluding housing, in foreign countries, U.S. territories, Alaska, and Hawaii. OCONUS COLA equalizes purchasing power so that a Service member can purchase the same level of goods and services OCONUS as he or she could if stationed inside the continental United States (CONUS). In addition to OCONUS COLA, station allowances in Chapter 68 include the TLA. The TLA partially offsets the cost of lodging and meals and incidental expenses incurred while occupying temporary lodgings OCONUS.

1.2 Authoritative Guidance

This chapter includes policy previously cited in the Joint Travel Regulations (**JTR**), Chapter 9. The statutory requirements for the chapter are provided by Title 37, United States Code (U.S.C.), section 405 (**37 U.S.C. § 405**). The specific statutes, regulations, and other applicable guidance that govern each individual section are listed in a reference section at the end of the chapter.

2.0 STANDARD ALLOWANCES

2.1 Definitions Specific to OCONUS COLA and TLA

2.1.1. **Vicinity**. The “vicinity” is the entire country, U.S. territory or possession, or state when in Alaska or Hawaii where the Service member’s permanent duty station (PDS) is located. When a Service member resides with a dependent and commutes to the PDS, the dependent is considered to be residing at or in the vicinity of the PDS even if in an adjacent country or state. If the Service member transfers to a new PDS in the same country, state, or U.S. territory or possession as the designated place, and the Service member is required to maintain two separate households (for example, the Service member cannot commute daily from the dependent’s location to the PDS), then a second station allowance may be authorized or approved through the Secretarial Process. In this case, the dependent is not considered at or in the vicinity of the Service member’s PDS even though located in the same country, state, or U.S. territory or possession.

2.1.2. Government Dining Facility. Government dining facilities operate using appropriated funds and provides meals to Service members with or without charge under an agreement between the facility and the Government. Common terms for Government dining facilities include: Government mess, general mess, dining hall, dining activity, mess hall, galley, field kitchen, flight kitchen, or similar terms. Activities operated by non-appropriated funds, such as an officer's mess, club, organized mess and other similar terms are not considered Government dining facilities.

2.1.3. Government Quarters. "Government quarters" include individual quarters provided with or without charge under agreement with the Government. For COLA purposes, barracks are considered Government quarters, including dormitory and quarters aboard a ship. See Definitions for more information.

2.1.4. OCONUS COLA Index. The OCONUS COLA index represents how much more expensive it is to purchase goods and services OCONUS compared to the same level of goods and services available in an average location within the CONUS. For example, an OCONUS COLA index of 110 indicates that the prices in the area OCONUS are overall 10% more expensive than in the CONUS. An index of 100 indicates that the overall cost of the goods and services surveyed is approximately the same at the location OCONUS as in the CONUS and no COLA is warranted.

2.1.5. Service Member With-Dependent. A Service member is considered with-dependent if any of the following criteria apply:

2.1.5.1. The Service member is authorized to have a dependent reside at or in the vicinity of the Service member's PDS OCONUS and the dependent resides there;

2.1.5.2. The Service member was married to another Service member on effective date of the permanent change of station (PCS) order. If one Service member is later released from active duty or separated or retired from the Service, then he or she becomes a dependent if he or she remains near the active duty Service member's former PDS; or

2.1.5.3. The Service member is joined by a dependent or acquires a dependent while serving OCONUS and the dependent is one of the following:

2.1.5.3.1. Command sponsored and residing with a Service member at an OCONUS location at which an "accompanied by dependents" tour is authorized, the Service member is authorized to serve that tour, and the dependents are authorized by the appropriate authority to be at the Service member's PDS;

2.1.5.3.2. A bona fide resident of the same area as the Service member's non-foreign PDS OCONUS; or

2.1.5.3.3. An officer or civilian employee of the United States stationed in the same area as the Service member's non-foreign PDS OCONUS.

2.1.6. Service Member Without Dependent. A Service member is considered to be without dependent if any of the following criteria apply:

2.1.6.1. The Service member has no dependents;

2.1.6.2. The Service member does not have a dependent who resides at or in the PDS vicinity;

2.1.6.3. The Service member is joined by a dependent or acquires a dependent while serving OCONUS and the Service member is not a Service member with-dependent as defined in subparagraph 2.1.5;

2.1.6.4. The Service member has a dependent residing at or in the PDS vicinity who is not command sponsored; or

2.1.6.5. The Service member does not have legal custody and control of a dependent ([Comp Gen B-131142, June 3, 1957](#)). For the purposes of COLA or TLA, a Service member paying child support is without a dependent unless the Service member has a command sponsored dependent at the PDS other than the dependent on whose behalf the Service member pays child support.

2.2 Eligibility for OCONUS COLA and TLA

2.2.1. Service Member Married to Another Service Member. When a Service member is married to another Service member who is on active duty, the spouse on active duty is not considered a dependent.

2.2.2. Unaccompanied Tour and “Unusually Arduous Sea Duty.” When a Service member is assigned to an unaccompanied tour or “unusually arduous sea duty” and a dependent remains at the Service member’s old PDS OCONUS or is at an approved designated place OCONUS, then the Service member is not considered to have a dependent at the unaccompanied or sea duty PDS. The Service member is eligible for OCONUS COLA or TLA at the with-dependent rate for the dependent’s location.

2.2.3. Command Sponsored. A dependent must be command sponsored for the Service member to receive OCONUS COLA or TLA based on the dependent’s presence unless the Service member is eligible for these allowances as specified under subparagraphs 2.1.5.2, 2.1.5.3 and/or the JTR, paragraphs 050809, 050814, 050903, or 050907.

2.3 Special Circumstances Affecting OCONUS COLA or TLA

2.3.1. Dependents Travel Before or After the Service Member Travels. Authorization or approval by either the Secretary concerned or the Secretarial Process may be made for the following:

2.3.1.1. Advance Travel. When dependents are command sponsored and authorized to travel before the Service member and arrive at the new PDS OCONUS before the Service member, housing allowance changes can be based on the advance arrival at the PDS OCONUS under Chapter 26, paragraph 10.7. If advance travel of dependents has been authorized or approved by the selected process, COLA payment is also authorized or approved, without separate action based on the number of dependents at the new PDS;

2.3.1.2. Delayed Travel. When dependents are authorized (or required) to travel after the Service member and arrive at the new PDS OCONUS after the Service member, housing allowance continuation can be based on delayed dependents' travel from the old PDS OCONUS under Chapter 26, paragraph 10.7 and also authorizes continuation of COLA for the same time period without separate action;

2.3.1.3. Deferred Travel. When dependent travel to the new PDS OCONUS is deferred pending housing availability, COLA at the old PDS OCONUS or designated place continues until the dependents depart or for 60 days after dependent travel to the new PDS is authorized. The Secretarial Process may extend the 60-day period (see Chapter 26, paragraph 10.6); or

2.3.1.4. Other Circumstances. Authorization or approval of housing allowance continuation under Chapter 26, paragraph 10.2 (e.g., training or a Service member's pending retirement), authorizes COLA continuation for the same time period without separate action.

2.3.2. Foreign-Born Dependent Returned to Country of Origin. If the Secretary concerned authorizes the return of a foreign-born dependent to the country of the dependent's origin, as specified in the JTR, paragraph 050804, including when the Service member is stationed in the same country, the Service member is authorized OCONUS COLA or TLA, as appropriate, at the with-dependent rate based on the dependent's location OCONUS. OCONUS COLA or TLA payments on behalf of the dependent's location begin on the day a dependent arrives at that location. See the DoD Instruction [\(DoDI\) 1315.18](#) (Procedures for Military Personnel Assignments) for the return of foreign-born dependents.

2.3.3. Observer to United Nations (UN) Peacekeeping Organization on a PCS. A Service member assigned on a PCS as an observer to a UN peacekeeping organization who receives a UN mission subsistence allowance is also authorized OCONUS COLA or TLA as specified in this chapter. The OCONUS COLA and TLA amount combined with the UN mission subsistence allowance is limited to the OCONUS COLA and TLA of a Service member permanently assigned to other than a UN Peacekeeping Organization in the same area. This paragraph does not authorize a reduction in the UN mission subsistence allowance.

2.3.4. Service Member Assigned to Unaccompanied Tour or "Unusually Arduous Sea Duty." The OCONUS COLA or TLA payment for the dependent's location begins on the day he or she arrives at that location.

2.3.4.1. Requirements. Table 68-1 specifies OCONUS COLA and TLA when a Service member with a dependent serves an unaccompanied tour or is on “unusually arduous sea duty.”

2.3.4.1.1. If the location is a designated place in a non-foreign area OCONUS and the Service member is assigned to an unaccompanied tour, a dependent-restricted tour, or “unusually arduous sea duty,” one of the following conditions must apply:

2.3.4.1.1.1. The Service member was a legal resident of that area before entering active duty;

2.3.4.1.1.2. The Service member’s spouse was a legal resident of that area when they married,

2.3.4.1.1.3. The Service member was called to active duty from that area,

2.3.4.1.1.4. It is the Service member’s home of record,

2.3.4.1.1.5. The relocation of the Service member’s dependent was authorized or approved through the Secretarial Process, or

2.3.4.1.1.6. The dependent remained at his or her current location prior to the Service member’s assignment.

2.3.4.1.2. If the Service member is scheduled to serve an accompanied tour immediately after completing an unaccompanied tour or “unusually arduous sea duty,” OCONUS COLA or TLA for a location OCONUS may be authorized. The Service member must have sufficient time in Service remaining as specified in the JTR, paragraph 050806 for an unaccompanied tour or as specified in the JTR, paragraph 050814 for a dependent-restricted tour or “unusually arduous sea duty.”

2.3.4.1.3. If the Service member is serving a dependent-restricted tour or “unusually arduous sea duty,” a location OCONUS may be justified under unusual conditions or circumstances if authorized or approved by the Secretary concerned.

2.3.4.2. Payment of Allowances to Service Member at Unaccompanied Tour or “Unusually Arduous Sea Duty” Station. While a Service member is authorized station allowances for a dependent’s location, the Service member is also authorized the OCONUS COLA and TLA, if any, at the “without dependent” rate at the new PDS.

2.3.4.3. Subsequent Reassignment to an Accompanied Tour Area. Upon a subsequent PCS order to an accompanied tour area to which dependent transportation is authorized, OCONUS COLA and TLA stop the day before the Service member departs due to the PCS order or the day before the effective date of the home port change from OCONUS. See paragraph 3.2 for OCONUS COLA exceptions.

2.3.4.4. Dependent Relocates From a Designated Place at Personal Expense. If a dependent relocates from a designated place at personal expense, station allowances must stop or be reduced by the number of dependents departing the day before the dependent departs the designated place. Station allowances are not authorized at the dependent's new location because that location is not a designated place.

3.0 OCONUS COLA

An OCONUS COLA is authorized for a Service member assigned to a PDS OCONUS to help maintain the equivalent purchasing power of the discretionary portion of spendable income as the Service member's counterparts based in the CONUS. This allowance compensates for the higher cost of goods and services OCONUS. To calculate the OCONUS COLA, the goods and services purchased in an area OCONUS, excluding housing, are compared to the cost of goods and services purchased in the CONUS. See paragraph 2.3 for special circumstances affecting OCONUS COLA.

3.1 Factors That Affect OCONUS COLA Rates

3.1.1. Geographic Location. The geographic location of the PDS governs the OCONUS COLA payable unless otherwise authorized or approved through the Secretarial Process. See COLA Information for current geographic information.

3.1.2. COLA Indexes. See [OCONUS COLA Calculator](#) for specific locations OCONUS. COLA rates are based on a Service member's PDS. Paragraph 3.3 provides the rates when any of the following occur:

3.1.2.1. A ship's home port is the PDS for OCONUS COLA purposes;

3.1.2.2. A dependent resides at a location other than the PDS in connection with an unaccompanied assignment; or

3.1.2.3. A dependent is evacuated.

3.1.3. Calculating OCONUS COLA Indexes. See Calculation of OCONUS COLA Index.

3.1.4. Surveys. The two surveys conducted to determine prices OCONUS are the Living Pattern Survey (LPS) and the Retail Price Schedule (RPS). See the Defense Travel Management Office ([DTMO Survey Instruments](#)) for more detailed information about the LPS and RPS data surveys. Data from these surveys help determine the OCONUS COLA indexes.

3.1.5. Foreign Currency Exchange Rates. The Office of the Undersecretary of Defense, Personnel and Readiness (OUSD (P&R)) reviews and adjusts exchange rates when necessary for countries where Service members are assigned. OUSD (P&R) adjusts OCONUS COLA based on currency fluctuations as frequently as twice monthly. See the [DTMO Currency Adjustment](#) for more information.

* 3.1.6. COLA Unique Expenses. In some areas OCONUS, a Service member or dependent incurs mandatory and excessive expenses that a Service member based in CONUS **does not normally incur**. Since the expenses are not incurred **by every Service member OCONUS**, they cannot be a part of the ordinary COLA index calculation. For these expenses, payment is a **lump-sum** dollar-for-dollar reimbursement for a specifically authorized expense at a designated authorized location.

3.1.6.1. Authorization. All requests to authorize a COLA Unique Expense must be submitted **from a** Major Command to OUSD (P&R) through the applicable Service representative listed at **Uniformed Services Contact Information**. OUSD (P&R) **specifically authorizes or approves the expense for reimbursement according to the DoD Overseas Station and Housing Allowance Process Guide**. OUSD (P&R) does not accept requests from individual Service members **to authorize a** COLA Unique Expense.

3.1.6.2. Reimbursement. The Secretary concerned may reimburse a COLA Unique Expense if Table 68-2 authorizes the location and expense. **Services may alternatively use the Secretarial Process to reimburse an authorized expense or expenses. Once a COLA Unique Expense has been authorized for a location, no further examination may be made to compare the spendable income of the claimant to the amount of the expense claimed. Any claim based on a valid receipt for an authorized COLA Unique Expense may be reimbursed in a lump sum, dollar-for-dollar, through Service payment procedures.** The Service concerned is not required to recover any amount refunded to a Service member by a foreign government agency.

3.1.6.3. Authorized Locations and Expenses. Table 68-2 specifies the authorized locations and expenses for a COLA Unique Expense reimbursement.

3.1.7. OCONUS COLA Report Submission. See Part 2 of the DoD Overseas Station and Housing Allowance Process Guide.

3.2 Start and Stop OCONUS COLA

3.2.1. Start OCONUS COLA. Generally, OCONUS COLA starts on the day a Service member reports to a new PDS, the effective day of a home port change, or the day his or her dependent arrives before the Service member at either the new PDS or the new home port, as specified in paragraph 3.3. However, if the Service member is authorized a monetary allowance in lieu of transportation plus per diem (MALT Plus) on the reporting day, OCONUS COLA starts on the day after the Service member's reporting day.

3.2.2. Stop OCONUS COLA. OCONUS COLA stops the day before a Service member departs from OCONUS on a PCS order or the day before the effective date of a ship's or unit's home port change unless any of the following occur:

3.2.2.1. An extension is authorized through the Secretarial Process;

3.2.2.2. OCONUS COLA is authorized during a PCS between PDSs in close proximity, when at the new PDS the member continues to commute from the residence occupied

at the old PDS. OCONUS COLA continues during temporary duty (TDY) en route. If the COLA rate differs, the rate for the old PDS is paid through the day prior to the member's report date. COLA for dependents is paid as specified in paragraph 3.3; or

3.2.2.3. A Service member without a dependent undergoes a home port change. In that circumstance, the Service member is authorized OCONUS COLA based on the old home port until the day he or she moves back aboard the ship under the following conditions:

3.2.2.3.1. The ship does not depart from the old home port before or on the effective date of the home port change; and

3.2.2.3.2. Quarters on board the ship are not available, such as when the ship is in dry dock.

3.3 OCONUS COLA for Service Member With a Dependent

A Service member with a dependent is authorized OCONUS COLA based on the number of command sponsored dependents at the PDS vicinity, regardless of Government dining facility availability. This includes when the Service member has a dining facility aboard ship available. Table 68-3 specifies exceptions. A Service member is authorized OCONUS COLA for all command sponsored dependents, including a Federal employee who is a spouse or child and eligible for a post allowance in his or her own right. Paragraph 3.5 specifies OCONUS COLA authority for a Service member married to another Service member.

3.3.1. Home Port Change. If a Service member is currently assigned to a ship or other fleet unit with an announced home port change (or receives a PCS order to a ship or other fleet unit with an announced home port change) and a dependent is authorized to travel to the new home port, the new home port is the Service member's PDS for COLA purposes ([65 Comp Gen 888 \(1986\)](#)).

3.3.2. PCS Order Amendment Changes the PDS. When a Service member receives a PCS order amendment that names a different PDS before he or she joins a dependent who has already arrived at or in the vicinity of a new PDS OCONUS, and on whose behalf OCONUS COLA was authorized, OCONUS COLA at the original PDS rate ends on the dependent's departure day for the newly designated PDS. OCONUS COLA at the initial PDS can extend more than 60 days after the amended order effective date only if specifically authorized or approved through the Secretarial Process. OCONUS COLA at the new PDS rate based on the number of command sponsored dependents begins on the dependent's arrival day.

3.3.3. OCONUS COLA Due to Evacuation of the Service Member's PDS. If a Service member's PDS is evacuated, OCONUS COLA at the with-dependent rate stops on the dependent's departure date due to the evacuation. Until the dependent returns to the Service member's PDS, the Service member is considered "without a dependent" for OCONUS COLA purposes. When a dependent is evacuated from OCONUS or from a location in the CONUS to reside at an authorized or approved designated place OCONUS, the Service member is authorized OCONUS COLA at the with-dependent rate for the designated place beginning the day after per diem stops. Station allowances are not payable for a dependent who is not command sponsored at the Service member's PDS OCONUS.

3.4 OCONUS COLA for Service Member Without a Dependent

3.4.1. Reduced OCONUS COLA. When both Government quarters and a Government dining facility are available, a Service member is paid a reduced OCONUS COLA. Reduced OCONUS COLA is calculated using a fixed percentage of the COLA rate for a Service member with no dependents living in private-sector housing.

3.4.2. Government Dining Facility Availability. The decision to authorize OCONUS COLA for a Service member without a dependent is based on whether the dining facility is actually available to the Service member, whether he or she is expected to purchase food for preparation in Government quarters, and whether the Government quarters have facilities to keep and prepare meals.

3.4.2.1. For OCONUS COLA purposes, if a permanently assigned Service member purchases meals or receives meals at no cost at a Government dining facility, or receives meals using a Government-provided meal card, then a Government dining facility is available.

3.4.2.2. Table 68-4 specifies the conditions for determining OCONUS COLA authorization for a Service member without a dependent.

3.4.3. Leave Periods. If a Service member without a dependent takes leave away from the PDS vicinity OCONUS, OCONUS COLA continues for the first 30 days and stops on day 31. If OCONUS COLA is stopped, it starts again the day the Service member returns to the PDS from leave.

3.5 Service Member Married to Another Service Member

Table 68-5 specifies OCONUS COLA for a Service member married to another Service member. See Table 68-4 for COLA when both Service members are grade E-5 or below, are serving on sea duty, and have no other dependents.

3.6 Non-Command Sponsored Dependent in PDS Vicinity

A Service member who is serving an unaccompanied tour at a PDS OCONUS is not authorized with-dependent OCONUS COLA when a non-command sponsored dependent accompanies or joins the Service member, even if the Service member chooses not to use an

available Government dining facility. The Service member is authorized the same OCONUS COLA as any other Service member without a dependent under the same conditions (see subparagraph 3.4.1). If the Service member changes the tour election and agrees to serve the tour as accompanied, with-dependent, OCONUS COLA as specified in paragraph 3.3 starts on the day the dependent becomes command sponsored.

3.7 Fractional Cost of Living Allowance for a Service Member Without a Dependent

3.7.1. Eligibility. This paragraph applies only to a Service member receiving the reduced OCONUS COLA. The PDS includes a ship or other unit having an assigned home port OCONUS as opposed to an assigned PDS OCONUS.

3.7.1.1. The Service member's duty, as distinguished from a travel status, must require his or her absence from the PDS during one or more meals.

3.7.1.2. The commanding officer, or an officer designated by the commanding officer for that purpose, must validate that the meals are not furnished.

3.7.2. Allowances

3.7.2.1. The COLA is for the PDS, or in the case of a Service member assigned to a ship or other unit having an assigned home port OCONUS, the place where the Service member takes meals. Calculate the fractional COLA amount payable by applying the percentages specified in Table 68-6 for the meals involved to the daily COLA at the "0 dependent" rate for the PDS.

3.7.2.2. A Service member without a dependent receiving the reduced OCONUS COLA rate is authorized a percentage of the "0 dependent" COLA rate for each meal not provided in a Government dining facility in addition to the reduced OCONUS COLA.

3.8 Service Member Assigned to Ship or Fleet Unit

3.8.1. Delayed Travel. Secretarial authorization or approval of the housing allowance for a dependent continuing during the delayed departure from a PDS OCONUS, as specified in Chapter 26, also authorizes COLA continuation for the same time period without a separate authorization or approval. Subparagraph 4.8.3 applies whether the Service member's new PDS is in the CONUS or OCONUS.

3.8.2. Service Member Assigned to Duty Aboard a Two-Crew Nuclear Submarine. The ship's home port is the Service member's PDS for station allowances.

3.8.2.1. When a Service Member Reports to the Home Port Before Reporting Aboard. When a Service member is assigned to a two-crew nuclear submarine and reports to the ship's home port before reporting aboard because the ship is deployed, the Service member is authorized station allowances the day after he or she arrives at the home port, and no further travel is required by the order before reporting aboard the submarine ([57 Comp Gen 178 \(1977\)](#)).

3.8.2.2. Service Member Without a Dependent Ordered to a TDY at Home Port (OCONUS COLA Only). OCONUS COLA is authorized for a Service member without a dependent while the Service member is performing a TDY ashore if all of the following conditions are met:

3.8.2.2.1. The Service member is assigned to a two-crew nuclear submarine,

3.8.2.2.2. The Service member has reported aboard, and

3.8.2.2.3. The training and rehabilitation is for a period of 16 or more days at the ship's home port OCONUS.

3.9 Reserve Component (RC) Member

3.9.1. Eligibility. An RC member called or ordered from a residence OCONUS to active duty or active duty for training (ADT) may be authorized OCONUS COLA. Command sponsorship is not required when a Service member is authorized OCONUS COLA at the with-dependent rate for the place last entered (or called to) active duty (PLEAD). The Service member must reside permanently in the area concerned at the time called or ordered to active duty ([55 Comp Gen 135 \(1975\)](#)).

3.9.2. Allowances. An RC member is authorized OCONUS COLA for the tour duration as specified in Table 68-7 unless he or she is called or ordered to active duty for any of the following reasons:

3.9.2.1. Training for 140 or More Days. The initial OCONUS COLA rate ends on the day before the Service member reports at the duty location specified in the active duty order. Authority for OCONUS COLA for the PDS location begins the day the Service member reports at that location. A Service member called or ordered to ADT from a location in the CONUS for 140 or more days at one location is authorized OCONUS COLA in the same manner as a Service member already on active duty;

3.9.2.2. Other Than Training for 181 or More Days With PCS Allowances. A Service member called or ordered to active duty for other than training from a location in the CONUS for 181 or more days at one PDS location OCONUS is authorized OCONUS COLA as of the day he or she reports at that location except as in subparagraph 3.9.2.3. The initial rate for the primary residence OCONUS stops the day before the Service member reports at the PDS duty location specified in the active duty order. OCONUS COLA authority for the PDS location begins the day the Service member reports at that location; or

3.9.2.3. Other Than Training for 181 or More Days But Not Authorized HHG Transportation. When HHG transportation is not authorized, an RC member called or ordered to active duty for other than training for 181 or more days at one location, away from his or her primary place of residence OCONUS at the time called or ordered to active duty, is assigned to duty at that residence and paid OCONUS COLA at that location rate. HHG transportation under a TDY order does not affect this authority. OCONUS COLA authority begins on the first active duty day.

3.10 Calculations for OCONUS COLA

Calculate a Service member's OCONUS COLA payment using data from three individual sources and tables: the Annual Compensation Table, the Spendable Income Table, and the COLA Index Table. OCONUS COLA is specified as a daily rate. The annual COLA is calculated by multiplying the Service member's annual spendable income by the authorized COLA index. For OCONUS COLA, spendable income is that portion of the Service member's annual compensation used to purchase items in the RPS. Use Table 68-8 to calculate annual OCONUS COLA and Table 68-9 to calculate monthly OCONUS COLA. See [Overseas COLA Computation Example](#).

4.0 TLA

TLA is intended to partially pay a Service member for higher than normal expenses incurred by a Service member or dependent while occupying temporary lodging OCONUS. OCONUS TLA is available when it is necessary for a Service member or dependent to occupy temporary lodging upon arrival at, or immediately before leaving, a PDS OCONUS, or during other periods as specified in this section. Personal inconvenience to a Service member or dependent is never a determining factor. TLA is not intended, and must not be used, for the personal enrichment of a Service member, including authorization or approval of TLA Special (see paragraph 4.10).

NOTE: Organizations are expected to take appropriate disciplinary action when TLA is provided for inappropriate reasons.

4.1 TLA Authority

The senior commander of the Service in the country or area is the TLA Authority. In countries or areas where more than one Service is represented, the senior commander of all of the Services is the TLA Authority. The TLA Authority may delegate authority as determined appropriate to judiciously administer TLA. TLA may be authorized when a Service member or dependent needs to occupy temporary lodging at personal expense. The TLA Authority authorizes or approves TLA only for the number of days needed to prevent undue financial hardship to the Service member during that period.

4.2 TLA Authority Responsibilities

The TLA Authority must issue written TLA guidance for the country or area under his or her responsibility. Effective guidance and management at all levels should minimize TLA costs by preventing the need for TLA, shortening the authorized period, and reducing the amount payable.

4.2.1. Submit Written Guidance. An electronic (Word) copy of the required written guidance and changes to or re-issuances of the written material implementing this authority must be provided, via the Service Compensation Chief, to the Allowances [Division](#), OUSD (P&R). This written material must be coordinated with the Uniformed Services present in the country or area, consistent with the general payment conditions listed in this chapter, and designed to uniformly authorize TLA to each Service member.

4.2.2. Establish Efficient Policies. To ensure economical TLA administration, the OCONUS TLA Authority's written guidance to help the Service member locate permanent quarters should emphasize all of the following:

4.2.2.1. A Service member and any dependents should use existing Government transient facilities to the fullest extent possible upon PDS arrival or departure. The Service member must be advised of and encouraged to use recommended temporary lodging;

4.2.2.2. A Service member in a TLA status should be given priority over other potential occupants of transient facilities;

4.2.2.3. A Service member uses, when practical, leased quarters furnished and equipped for temporary occupancy by a family;

4.2.2.4. Promote the use of temporary lodging with facilities for preparing and consuming meals;

4.2.2.5. Maintain contact with the local, private-sector market for permanent housing and provide incoming families with reliable, realistic, and current information concerning location, availability, description, and cost;

4.2.2.6. Maintain an up-to-date list of approved, regularly inspected temporary lodging;

4.2.2.7. Inform the Service member of Government furniture available upon arrival at the new PDS for temporary loan while occupying permanent Government quarters or private-sector housing before the household goods (HHG) arrive. Before departure from the PDS, inform the Service member of Government furniture available for temporary loan after the HHG has been picked up for shipment;

4.2.2.8. The Service member should occupy permanent Government quarters or private-sector housing as soon as possible upon arrival and should not vacate sooner than necessary

upon departure on a PCS order. This should ensure that TLA ends the day before the Service member could reasonably occupy permanent Government quarters or private-sector housing upon arrival at the PDS OCONUS, even if he or she does not occupy permanent Government quarters or private-sector housing;

4.2.2.9. Requirements for dependent travel should contain advice to the Service member about appropriate household items to include in unaccompanied baggage; and

4.2.2.10. Any additional TLA period will not be authorized or approved when a Service member is not expected to incur any excess costs or suffer undue financial hardship.

4.2.3. Advise Service Members. It is the TLA Authority's responsibility to ensure that a Service member is advised of all of the following responsibilities and requirements:

4.2.3.1. The Service member must aggressively seek permanent Government quarters or private-sector housing upon arrival. When the Service member will be assigned Government quarters, the provision to seek private-sector housing is not applicable;

4.2.3.2. The Service member must register with an official upon arrival and keep that official informed of progress in obtaining permanent Government quarters or private-sector housing at intervals of 15 or fewer days, as determined by the TLA Authority;

4.2.3.3. The Service member must provide a statement to the official indicating the beginning and end of TLA;

4.2.3.4. The limitations on the number of authorized TLA days for arrival or departure and of any requirement for a written justification to extend TLA to the maximum number of days;

4.2.3.5. The requirement to relocate as soon as practical to other permanent Government quarters or private-sector housing, or to reoccupy the Government quarters or private-sector housing formerly occupied;

4.2.3.6. The amount of the TLA payment depends on the expenses incurred at the temporary lodging;

4.2.3.7. The Service member must obtain and keep receipts for lodging expenses to support TLA payment; and

4.2.3.8. Lodging expenses are not allowed while staying with friends or relatives, but the meal and incidental expense rate (M&IE) is payable for the eligible TLA period.

4.3 Applicable Situations for a TLA

4.3.1. Situations That Require Temporary Housing. TLA may be authorized during any of the following periods:

4.3.1.1. Upon initial arrival or reporting at a PDS OCONUS either while waiting for Government quarters or while completing arrangements for other private-sector housing when Government quarters are not available. This includes reporting for a TDY at an activity within the limits of the new PDS OCONUS ([Comp Gen B-208740, January 31, 1983](#));

4.3.1.2. Immediately preceding departure for a PCS from a PDS OCONUS after a Service member vacates Government quarters or private-sector housing in connection with a PCS order. This includes reporting for a TDY at a location within the limits of the old PDS OCONUS (Comp Gen B-208740, January 31, 1983);

4.3.1.3. While a Service member without a dependent is seeking permanent Government quarters or private-sector housing following a TDY assignment of 90 or more days when he or she vacated permanent Government quarters or private-sector housing before beginning the TDY ([59 Comp Gen 486 \(1980\)](#));

4.3.1.4. During a Service member's hospitalization when a dependent must use temporary lodging OCONUS because the Service member was hospitalized en route between PDSs;

4.3.1.5. While house hunting after the Service member arrives at the new PDS and reports for duty in connection with a PCS; or

4.3.1.6. When the appropriate official determines that TLA is necessary for a Service member, once he or she is established in, must vacate, or is waiting to reoccupy permanent Government quarters, private-sector housing, or privatized housing for reasons beyond the Service member's control. This does not include a ship entering any type of maintenance availability. The appropriate official must base the determination on the OCONUS TLA Authority's written guidance.

4.3.1.6.1. TLA begins the day temporary lodging is first used and ends on the day before permanent Government quarters, private-sector housing, or privatized housing is reoccupied, or when the OCONUS TLA Authority determines TLA is no longer justified.

4.3.1.6.2. TLA does not include any expenses incurred before the TLA period begins or after it ends, except for extra lodging charges authorized as specified in section 6.0.

4.3.1.6.3. TLA ends if the OCONUS TLA Authority determines that TLA is no longer necessary due to any of the following reasons:

4.3.1.6.3.1. There are no excess costs,

4.3.1.6.3.2. The Service member failed to accept adequate permanent Government quarters; or

4.3.1.6.3.3. The Service member stopped diligently searching for permanent private-sector housing.

4.3.2. Additional TLA

4.3.2.1. In addition to the responsibilities in paragraph 4.2, the OCONUS TLA Authority's written guidance is used to determine whether undue financial hardship can result if an additional TLA period is not authorized or approved. The guidance must be used before authorizing or approving additional TLA periods upon initial arrival, delayed departure, or early termination of either permanent Government quarters or private-sector housing.

4.3.2.2. Applications for additional TLA periods must establish the need for TLA.

4.3.2.3. The OCONUS TLA Authority must direct consideration of the daily amount of all of the following payments and expenses before authorizing additional TLA:

4.3.2.3.1. The amount of TLA the Service member has received or will receive;

4.3.2.3.2. Current and estimated expenses for temporary lodging;

4.3.2.3.3. The housing allowance for a Service member. However, the housing allowance is not considered when paid for a dependent at a place other than the Service member's PDS, or for a Service member receiving TLA at the with-dependent rate for the Service member only; and

4.3.2.3.4. Family Separation Housing.

4.4 General Payment Conditions

4.4.1. Service Member Responsibilities. The Service member must either meet the requirements in subparagraph 4.2.3 or submit acceptable reasons for noncompliance before TLA payment. TLA payment or further TLA authority must be denied if the Service member has not complied with those TLA requirements in accordance with the OCONUS TLA Authority's written guidance or if he or she failed to submit acceptable reasons for noncompliance.

4.4.2. Government Quarters. When Government quarters are available and other lodging is used, lodging reimbursement is limited to the cost of Government quarters as specified in the JTR, subparagraph 020303.C. If Government quarters are not available, the Service member should provide written certification to support any voucher documentation submitted to comply with finance regulations.

4.4.3. Non-Occupancy. If the temporary lodging is not occupied during a portion of the TLA period, reimbursement is allowed for the other days when it is occupied during the authorized TLA period.

4.4.4. TLA Periods. There may be a break between an initial TLA period and any additional authorized TLA period.

4.4.5. Unaccompanied Tour. A Service member serving an unaccompanied tour is not authorized TLA when he or she chooses not to use an available Government dining facility or available Government quarters because a non-command sponsored dependent is in the PDS vicinity.

4.4.6. PCS Order Canceled or Revoked. When the Service member's PCS order is canceled or revoked after he or she occupies temporary lodging, the Service member may receive TLA reimbursement up to the maximum number of days allowed by the OCONUS TLA Authority.

4.4.7. Advance Payment. An advance may be paid for the number of authorized TLA days, after authority is provided, based on the appropriate directive issued as specified in the OCONUS TLA Authority's guidance.

4.4.8. Old and New PDS in Close Proximity or in the Same Country. When a Service member's old and new PDSs are in close proximity to each other or in the same country, the TLA authority does not change. However, when a Service member's new PDS is within commuting distance of the Government quarters or private-sector housing occupied while at the old PDS, the Service member may not be authorized TLA unless the Service member's commanding officer approves temporary lodging based on a necessary residence change for reasons beyond the Service member's control.

4.4.9. Certification Confirming Military Necessity. The following situations require that a Service member's order be annotated with or include an attached certification that retaining TLA lodging was due to military necessity and not due to the Service member's personal choice or convenience:

4.4.9.1. When a Service member receiving TLA is ordered on a TDY while away from the PDS;

4.4.9.2. When a Service member receiving TLA before his or her PCS departure is ordered on deployment from the PDS, including the home port or permanent duty location of a ship, staff, or afloat unit; or

4.4.9.3. When a Service member receiving TLA is hospitalized after arrival at a new PDS or before a PCS departure.

4.5 Receipt of Multiple Allowances

Duplicate payment for the same expense is not authorized.

4.5.1 COLA and Housing Allowances. A Service member may be paid a COLA, a Basic Allowance for Housing, or an Overseas Housing Allowance (OHA), if applicable, when paid TLA.

4.5.2 Evacuation Allowances. TLA is not payable due to an evacuation.

4.5.3 Temporary Quarters Subsistence Expenses (TQSE) or Temporary Quarters Subsistence Allowances (TQSA). A Service member married to a civilian employee may be authorized TLA while the civilian employee receives TQSE or TQSA, (see the JTR, section 0542) as long as the TLA and TQSE or TQSA payments cover different expenses.

4.5.4 Dependent Receives Basic Pay. A Service member may not be paid allowances on behalf of a dependent for any period while that dependent is entitled to basic pay as specified in [37 U.S.C. § 204](#) and [37 U.S.C. § 421](#).

4.6 TLA for Initial Assignment

4.6.1. Authorization Period. TLA authorization for a PDS assignment OCONUS requiring a residence change ordinarily should not exceed 60 days, which do not have to be consecutive. The initial 60-day period begins on the same date as the COLA. The OCONUS TLA Authority's Authorizing Official (AO) may authorize or approve a period in addition to the initial 60-day maximum to follow immediately after the first 60 days or begin at some later date after the initial period expires. The additional period may be authorized or approved in increments of 15 or fewer days for any of the following reasons beyond the Service member's or dependent's control:

4.6.1.1. HHG does not arrive;

4.6.1.2. Service requirements cause a delay in the availability of or assignment to Government quarters;

4.6.1.3. Acts of God, fire, flood, earthquake, riot, civil unrest, or other disturbances that make normally available or anticipated Government quarters or private-sector housing temporarily or permanently uninhabitable or unavailable;

4.6.1.4. A landlord withdraws the private-sector housing from the market;

4.6.1.5. The Service member is unable to secure private-sector housing that the housing officer considers suitable to the Service member's needs, in an acceptable location, and comparable to and within the price range of housing that other Service members in the area are currently using. The lease cost for housing can exceed the OHA ceiling; or

4.6.1.6. Either the Service member or dependent is hospitalized or the Service member's duties require the Service member to be away from the PDS (or home port, if attached to a ship) limiting opportunities to arrange for permanent Government quarters or private-sector housing.

4.6.2. Review of Effort to Find Permanent Housing. At the end of the first TLA period of 15 or fewer days, or a longer period authorized under extenuating circumstances, the OCONUS TLA Authority's AO should review the Service member's progress in obtaining permanent housing.

4.6.2.1. If the Service member's efforts appear deficient, the OCONUS TLA Authority's AO must remind the Service member of his or her responsibilities. A Service member who does not comply, without an acceptable reason, will lose authorization for TLA unless the Service member is awaiting assignment to Government quarters.

4.6.2.2. The Service member's absence from the PDS due to a TDY, maneuvers, being aboard ship, sickness, hospitalization, serious illness of dependents, or other acceptable reasons, excuses the Service member from aggressively seeking permanent housing during the absence and postpones the date for submitting the required information. This applies when evaluating the Service member's progress toward obtaining permanent Government quarters or private-sector housing and in determining TLA authorization or approval during each succeeding period.

4.6.3. TLA Authorization. TLA authorization that starts upon initial arrival continues until a Service member occupies permanent Government quarters or private-sector housing unless TLA is terminated earlier for an acceptable reason specified in this chapter. The allowance stops accruing on the day before a Service member occupies the permanent housing. With the exception of allowed extra lodging charges, no expenses incurred on the permanent Government quarters or private-sector housing occupancy day are used in computing TLA (see section 6.0). In any case, TLA must stop the day HHG is delivered.

4.7 TLA for Initial Assignment When New PDS is a Ship

4.7.1. Reporting Day. On the actual reporting day aboard a ship, the lodging cost for lodging jointly occupied by the Service member and a dependent is not divided between the Service member and the dependent. The entire lodging cost is included as a TLA expense.

4.7.2. Period While Awaiting the Ship's Arrival

4.7.2.1. When a Service member is in a TDY status at the home port OCONUS awaiting arrival of his or her assigned ship, he or she is eligible for per diem. Therefore, the Service member is ineligible for TLA during the waiting period. The waiting period begins on the arrival day at the home port and continues through the day before the actual reporting day aboard the ship. During this waiting period, the ship is the Service member's new PDS for personal travel. For TLA purposes, the Service member has not reached the new PDS until reporting to the ship. TLA can begin after the Service member reports to the ship and meets the other criteria in this chapter.

4.7.2.2. The number of dependents occupying temporary lodging in the PDS area or the home port when the new PDS is a ship determines the amount to authorize for meals, which is used to compute the TLA rate payable on behalf of any dependents for days when a Service member is authorized per diem.

4.7.2.3. When a Service member receiving per diem is also receiving TLA for a dependent, and both are at the home port, lodging costs for jointly occupied lodging are

apportioned 50% for the Service member and 50% for all dependents combined for all days except on the reporting day to the ship, regardless of the number of family members.

4.7.3. TLA During Home Port Change for Initial Assignment. If a Service member is currently assigned to a ship or other fleet unit with an announced home port change, or is in receipt of a PCS order to a ship or other fleet unit with an announced home port change, and the dependent is authorized to travel to the new home port as the new home port is the Service member's PDS for TLA purposes (65 Comp Gen 888 (1986)).

4.8 Service Member Arrives or Departs at a Different Time Than a Dependent

4.8.1. Service Member Arrives Before Dependent. When a Service member arrives at a PDS OCONUS before a dependent, the Service member may be authorized TLA if the conditions specified in section 4.0 are met. Upon the dependent's arrival, TLA may also be authorized or approved for the Service member and dependent. If the dependent arrives after the initial 60-day period expires, an additional TLA period may be authorized as specified in subparagraph 4.8.3 whether or not TLA was paid during the initial 60-day period.

4.8.2. Dependent Arrives at or in the PDS Vicinity OCONUS Before the Service Member. Authorization or approval through the Secretarial Process is required for the dependent's arrival in advance of the Service member as specified in Chapter 26 before TLA payment. Once advance travel is authorized or approved, and a dependent arrives at or in the PDS vicinity OCONUS, the dependent's TLA starts the day TLA is authorized for the Service member provided the dependent is command sponsored.

4.8.3. Dependent Departs the PDS Vicinity OCONUS After the Service Member. Before TLA payment, authorization or approval through the Secretarial Process is required for the dependent's delayed travel as specified in Chapter 26. Once delayed travel is authorized or approved, TLA for the dependent is authorized under the same conditions as applicable to a Service member when a dependent departs the PDS vicinity OCONUS after the Service member.

4.9 TLA Upon Departure

4.9.1. Time Limitation. The TLA period cannot start more than 10 days before the Service member leaves the PDS in compliance with a PCS order, except in the following situations:

4.9.1.1. One or more dependents remain in the old PDS vicinity as specified in Table 68-10. TLA may be authorized up to 10 days immediately preceding the day the last dependent leaves the PDS. This is regardless of the effective date of the PCS order from that PDS;

4.9.1.2. A longer TLA period is authorized due to delayed departure or the early termination of permanent Government quarters or private-sector housing; or

4.9.1.3. The Service member or dependent is hospitalized or the Service member's duties require the Service member to be away from the PDS or home port, if attached to a ship.

4.9.2. Departure From PDS. Table 68-10 specifies the TLA authorization upon departure from a PDS under certain circumstances.

4.10 Special TLA Requests (TLA Special)

TLA requests for a higher lodging factor (TLA Special) under special or unusual circumstances may be authorized only before the dates required and by the Allowances [Division Director's](#) issued determination. See TLA Special computation examples [at the DTMO Computation Examples web page](#).

4.10.1. TLA Special Warranted. When lodging costs escalate due to a special event and TLA is insufficient for lodging, a TLA Special may be warranted for a specific period.

4.10.2. Request Requirements. Commands must submit requests before the days that the higher rate is needed. The request must include all of the following:

4.10.2.1. The event dates and the dates when a TLA Special is required;

4.10.2.2. Hotel prices before the event and anticipated prices during the event stated in U.S. currency from at least five and preferably seven different hotels located in the affected area;

4.10.2.3. The number of authorized travelers and the ages of any dependents;

4.10.2.4. Locations affected;

4.10.2.5. Recommended lodging amount; and

4.10.2.6. Documentation indicating when the forthcoming special event will occur ([47 Comp Gen 127 \(1967\)](#) and [Comp Gen B-161396, May 3, 1976](#)).

4.10.3. Submission Process. The Service member's command may request TLA Special authority before the requested dates by email to:

E-Mail: dodhra.mc-alex.dtmo.mbx.allowances-branch@mail.mil

4.10.4. Limitations. Allowances [Division](#), OUSD (P&R) will not take action on a TLA Special request received after the dates the TLA Special rate was needed, regardless of the circumstances.

4.10.4.1. TLA Special is not authorized for a Service member who is in a TDY status and receiving per diem at a home port OCONUS awaiting arrival of the assigned ship. The Allowances [Division Director](#) may authorize TLA Special for an accompanying dependent.

4.10.4.2. TLA Special stops the day after a Service member voluntarily refuses adequate Government quarters for personal convenience.

5.0 OTHER SITUATIONS FOR TLA

5.1 Service Member Married to Another Service Member

If two Service members married to each other maintain separate households at or in the vicinity of their PDS or PDSs OCONUS, each Service member is authorized TLA based on whether the Service member concerned has a dependent at or in the vicinity of the PDS OCONUS. See computation examples [at the DTMO Computation Examples web page](#).

5.2 Period of TDY or Deployment While Away From PDS

A Service member receiving TLA who is ordered on a TDY (whether after arrival at the new PDS or before his or her PCS departure) or who is ordered on deployment from the home port of a ship, staff, or afloat unit, is authorized to continue to receive TLA on his or her own behalf. The temporary lodgings must be retained because of the Service member's military assignment. This may include the lodging cost at the TLA location while the Service member is on TDY.

5.3 Converted Tour

A Service member whose tour is converted to an accompanied tour may be eligible for TLA for him or herself and any command sponsored dependent who was a dependent on the effective date of the PCS order to the PDS OCONUS if the conditions specified in the TLA Authority's written guidance are met. The Service member must make every reasonable effort to find suitable permanent Government quarters or private-sector housing for a dependent before the dependent arrives. TLA may be authorized or approved for the Service member and dependent only if the Service member is unable to find suitable housing before the dependent arrives for reasons beyond the Service member's control.

5.4 Service Member Acquires a Dependent

A Service member serving a tour OCONUS who has no dependents on arrival but who acquires a dependent during that tour is ineligible for TLA for the dependent when the dependent arrives at the PDS because the Service member was without a dependent on the effective date of the PCS order ([Comp Gen B-186628, September 17, 1976](#)). A Service member may be authorized TLA for him or herself, when eligible, or for a dependent acquired while serving at a PDS OCONUS if the dependent is command sponsored at the PDS from which the dependent departs.

5.5 Hospitalization Period

A Service member receiving TLA who is hospitalized after arrival at a new PDS or before a PCS departure may continue to receive TLA on his or her own behalf. This may include the Service member's share of the temporary lodging cost as a TLA expense when, due to the hospitalization, temporary lodging must be retained at the PDS. The Service member's order must be annotated or have certification attached that states the TLA lodging was retained due to military necessity and not due to the Service member's personal choice or convenience.

5.6 Leave or Permissive Travel

5.6.1. Leave or Permissive Travel in the PDS Vicinity. After a Service member has reported for duty, TLA may be paid for any day he or she is on leave or permissive travel in the PDS vicinity and seeking private-sector housing or awaiting assignment to Government quarters. This enables a Service member to complete PCS travel and be placed on leave so that station allowance eligibility is established by reporting to the new PDS.

5.6.2. Leave or Permissive Travel Away From the PDS Vicinity. TLA is not payable for any day a Service member is on leave or permissive travel away from the PDS vicinity unless one or more dependents remain in the PDS vicinity to continue to seek private-sector housing or while awaiting assignment to Government quarters. In that case, the number of dependents who continue to occupy temporary lodging determines the rate payable. In either case, postponement of TLA pending return is not authorized. This provision helps ensure that TLA is paid only in connection with the PDS.

5.7 Dependent Assigned to Government Quarters

When a dependent is assigned to Government quarters in connection with advance arrival at a Service member's PDS OCONUS, during delayed departure from a Service member's PDS OCONUS, or "other circumstances" as specified in Chapter 26, a decision is made by either the Secretary concerned or through the Secretarial Process at the Service's discretion to pay or continue station allowances. When a dependent resides in Government quarters, a housing allowance is not authorized.

5.8 TLA for RC Member

An RC member called or ordered to ADT for 140 or more days or active duty for other than training for 181 or more days who is authorized PCS allowances is authorized TLA as specified in this chapter. When an RC member is authorized TLA at the with-dependent rate for the PLEAD, command sponsorship is not required. The RC member must reside permanently in the area concerned at the time called or ordered to active duty (55 Comp Gen 135 (1975)). COLA authorization begins on the first active duty day.

5.9 Retirement or Separation From Service

A Service member who retires or separates from service, stays in the PDS area, and then moves at a later date or moves OCONUS to either a home of record or home of selection chosen by the Service member is ineligible for TLA or TLA Special.

6.0 TLA CALCULATIONS

6.1 TLA Rates Payable and Calculation Procedures

6.1.1. TLA Computation. Apply TLA accrual provisions for the standard TLA computation specified in paragraph 6.2 when computing TLA upon arrival and departure.

Expenses incurred on the departure day are not considered. However, when lodging expenses are incurred on the day of departure, calculate TLA as specified in this section. See TLA and TLA Special computation examples.

6.1.2. Extra Room-Charge Payment. When the Service member or a dependent checks into or out of temporary lodging at a time of day that results in the payment of room charges for an extra day, calculate the lodging rate at 1.5 times the percentage rates specified in Table 68-11 for that extra day, except as specified in paragraph 6.3.1. M&IE remains at the specified percentages.

6.1.3. Number of Persons Occupying Temporary Lodging. When determining the number of persons occupying temporary lodging, do not count the Service member for any day that he or she is not authorized TLA on his or her own behalf.

6.1.4. TLA Authorized on the Reporting Day

6.1.4.1. When TLA is authorized on the reporting day, per diem is 75% of the locality M&IE rate for the new PDS OCONUS as determined in the JTR, paragraph 020310 when the Service member or dependent travels on a PCS order by commercial air, train, bus, ship, Government transportation, or Government-procured transportation. See the JTR, paragraph 050202 for reimbursement for commercial transportation and per diem. The lodging expense on the reporting day is reimbursed as TLA. See TLA computation examples.

6.1.4.2. TLA is not payable on the reporting day when MALT Plus is payable. The Service member may be authorized TLA when he or she, or a dependent, occupies temporary lodging on the reporting day to the new PDS and MALT Plus is not payable.

6.2 Standard TLA Computation

6.2.1. Time Limit. TLA is calculated in increments of 15 days, except when more than one TLA rate applies within the computation period. If the final lodging period is greater than 15 days, but less than 30 days it may be processed as a single payment.

6.2.2. Currency Conversion Fees. When determining the lodging expense in connection with TLA, add the International Transaction Fees, also known as currency conversion fees, charged by the Government Travel Charge Card (GTCC) to the actual daily lodging cost along with any lodging tax or value-added tax (VAT) relief certificate cost, and other authorized lodging costs. When using a personal charge card instead of the GTCC while not formally exempt from having a GTCC, International Transaction Fees charged by the credit card company are not part of the calculation.

6.2.3. TLA Calculation. Steps 1-3 explain how to calculate standard TLA using Table 68-11. When calculating TLA, use the actual amount without rounding.

6.2.3.1. Step 1: Calculate the daily M&IE and lodging ceiling by multiplying the percentage specified in Table 68-11 by the applicable locality per diem rate. Exceptions to this

ceiling are specified in paragraph 6.3. Use the percentages specified in Table 68-11 for both lodging and M&IE except when any of the following circumstances apply:

6.2.3.1.1. A TLA Special has been authorized for lodging;

6.2.3.1.2. Temporary lodging is not available at the PDS;

6.2.3.1.3. Permanent Government quarters are being renovated or lack adequate cooking and eating facilities;

6.2.3.1.4. Temporary quarters contain adequate cooking facilities;

6.2.3.1.5. The Service member or dependent stays with friends or relatives. In that case, reimbursement of lodging cost is not authorized, but the TLA M&IE is paid;

6.2.3.1.6. A Service member is authorized a temporary lodging cost at the new PDS as specified in paragraph 5.2 as a TLA expense during a TDY or deployment period. In that case, the Service member is included in the number of persons for lodging, but not for M&IE. Determine the TLA amount payable by subtracting the Service member's share of the meal allowance from the total M&IE. To calculate the Service member's share, divide the M&IE amount by the total number of persons in the Service member's family, including the Service member, occupying the temporary lodging; or

6.2.3.1.7. The applicable percentage is 100% for the Service member and (non-service member) spouse. Add the percentage in Table 68-11 for the rest of the dependents. When calculating the percentage for a family without the spouse, use the Service member and one (the oldest) dependent at the 100% rate. Add the percentages in Table 68-11 for the rest of the dependents.

6.2.3.2. Step 2: Determine the payable lodging cost by comparing the actual daily lodging cost, including lodging tax or VAT relief certificate cost, International Transaction Fees charged by the GTCC, and other authorized lodging costs, as specified in subparagraph 6.2.2, with the lodging cost ceiling calculated using Table 68-11. Select the lesser amount:

6.2.3.2.1. Itemized lodging receipts, invoices, or vendor statements are required to verify lodging expenses; or

6.2.3.2.2. When the Service member is in a TDY status at the TLA location, regardless of the per diem amount received, reduce the lodging expense by the lodging cost used to determine the Service member's per diem rate.

6.2.3.3. Step 3: Determine the daily TLA amount by adding the payable lodging to the M&IE rate calculated as specified in Table 68-11. See TLA computation examples.

6.3 TLA Computation in Non-Standard Circumstances

6.3.1. TLA for Lodging Contracted by the Government or Under Government Jurisdiction. When the Service member or a dependent checks into or out of lodging at a time of day that results in the payment of a lodging, rental, or service charge for an extra day, add the extra amount paid to the daily TLA amount for the check in day or the day before check out. TLA is computed according to standard TLA computations in either of the following situations:

6.3.1.1. A Government contractor furnishes temporary lodging; or

6.3.1.2. The temporary lodging is a guesthouse, exchange hotel, temporary lodging facility, or transient facility (such as visiting officer's quarters) under Government jurisdiction, whether operated with appropriated or non-appropriated funds.

6.3.2. Temporary Lodging Not Available at PDS. When neither Government nor commercial temporary lodging is available at the PDS and the Service member must obtain lodging nearby, determine the maximum daily TLA amount by multiplying the lodging location per diem rate by the percentage in Table 68-11. If the per diem rate for the lodging location is lower than that for the PDS, use the PDS locality per diem rate. Finance regulations may require a statement from the Service member's commanding officer or designee that the lodging used was the nearest suitable accommodations available to the Service member's PDS.

6.3.3. TLA Authorized for Limited Kitchen Facilities

6.3.3.1. A Service member may be authorized TLA to cover the cost of restaurant meals when kitchen facilities are limited and any of the following apply:

6.3.3.1.1. The Service member or dependent occupies Government quarters while the kitchen is being renovated;

6.3.3.1.2. The Service member or dependent occupies Government quarters or private-sector housing during utility loss; or

6.3.3.1.3. The Service member or dependent initially occupies permanent Government quarters or private-sector housing without a stove or refrigerator and meals cannot be prepared.

6.3.3.2. Calculate TLA for meals by multiplying the applicable percentage in Table 68-11 by the meals portion of the locality M&IE per diem rate.

6.3.4. Temporary Quarters Contain Facilities for Preparing and Consuming Meals. The presence of a stove and oven, counter or table top space, refrigerator, sink, water, table, chairs, and cooking and eating utensils is evidence of adequate cooking and eating facilities; however, the absence of one or more of these amenities does not automatically constitute inadequate cooking and eating facilities for TLA purposes.

6.3.4.1. When temporary lodging has adequate cooking and eating facilities, the daily TLA rate for lodging does not change, but the M&IE amount is reduced by one half. That reduced M&IE amount based on adequate cooking facilities does not apply when a friend or relative provides lodging or to the first and last days of TLA.

6.3.4.2. When the Service member shows the official designated in the local TLA regulations that the facilities for preparing and consuming meals are inadequate or, for other reasons, may not be used for all or part of the period involved, the Service member may be authorized TLA without the M&IE reduction.

Table 68-1. OCONUS COLA and TLA for a Service Member With a Dependent Serving an Unaccompanied Tour or on “Unusually Arduous Sea Duty”

R U L E	If...	and...	then the applicable station allowance is authorized...
1	station allowances are authorized or approved by the same level of Secretarial approval as required for dependent travel,	a dependent relocates in connection with the Service member’s PCS,	at the with-dependent rate based on the dependent’s location OCONUS.
2	station allowances are authorized or approved by the same level of Secretarial approval as required for dependent travel,	a dependent does not relocate in connection with the PCS,	at the with-dependent rate based on the old PDS.
3	it is the Service member’s first PDS,	the dependent’s location is approved through the Secretarial Process,	for the dependent’s location.
4	a Service member is transferred between unaccompanied tours or “unusually arduous sea duty” assignments,	a dependent remains at the Service member’s prior PDS OCONUS or previously designated place and is authorized station allowances,	during the second tour.
5	a Service member is transferred between unaccompanied tours or “unusually arduous sea duty” assignments,	a dependent relocates to a new designated place in connection with the Service member’s transfer,	for the new designated place as otherwise specified in this table.
6	a dependent is residing at or in the Service member’s PDS vicinity (home port for “unusually arduous sea duty”) when the PDS is declared an unaccompanied tour area,	a dependent moves to a designated place,	as otherwise specified in this table.
7	a dependent is residing at or in the Service member’s PDS vicinity (home port for “unusually arduous sea duty”) when the PDS is declared an unaccompanied tour area,	the dependent’s initial move from the PDS was under evacuation conditions,	as specified in paragraph 3.3.4.

Table 68-1. OCONUS COLA and TLA for a Service Member With a Dependent Serving an Unaccompanied Tour or on “Unusually Arduous Sea Duty” (Continued)

R U L E	If...	and...	then the applicable station allowance is authorized...
8	a dependent is en route to a Service member’s PDS OCONUS or to a designated place to which transportation at Government expense has been authorized,	the new PDS (or home port for “unusually arduous sea duty”) is declared an unaccompanied tour area,	based on the place to which the dependent is diverted, starting on the dependent’s arrival date and stopping on the dependent’s departure date from that location. A statement from the Service member’s commanding officer, or an officer designated by the commanding officer, should support that the dependent was notified that permission to complete travel was withdrawn and that the dependent was directed to proceed to a specified place to await further instructions.
9	a dependent is en route to a Service member’s PDS OCONUS or to a designated place to which transportation at Government expense has been authorized,	an amendment to the initial order or a new PCS order is issued assigning the Service member to another unaccompanied tour area or “unusually arduous sea duty” assignment,	based on the place to which the dependent is diverted, starting on the dependent’s arrival date and stopping on the dependent’s departure date from that location. A statement from the Service member’s commanding officer, or an officer designated by the commanding officer, should support that the dependent was notified that permission to complete travel was withdrawn and that the dependent was directed to proceed to a specified place to await further instructions.

Table 68-2. Authorized Locations and Expenses for COLA Unique Expense Reimbursement

Location	Expense	Effective Date
Singapore	1. Mandatory and excessive road tax for one POV.	June 6, 2006
	2. Mandatory and excessive registration and transfer fees for one POV.	June 6, 2006

NOTE: For the most current approved locations and expenses, see [the appropriate drop down box on the OCONUS COLA landing page of](#) on the DTMO website.

Table 68-3. OCONUS COLA for a Service Member With a Dependent

R U L E	If...	then...
1	a Service member is on leave away from the PDS vicinity for 31 or more days and is accompanied by all command sponsored dependents,	OCONUS COLA is not authorized beginning on the 31st day.
2	a command sponsored dependent departs the PDS vicinity for a period of 31 or more consecutive calendar days,	OCONUS COLA payment beginning on the 31st day is reduced to the rate for the number of command sponsored dependents remaining at the PDS.
3	a command sponsored dependent departs the PDS vicinity to attend school,	OCONUS COLA payment is reduced the day after the dependent's departure to the rate for the number of command sponsored dependents remaining. For early return of dependents (ERD), the rate is reduced the day after the dependent's departure or on the date the order was issued, whichever is later.
4	one or more, but not all, command sponsored dependents depart the PDS vicinity for early or advance return,	OCONUS COLA payment is reduced the day after the dependent's departure to the rate for the number of command sponsored dependents remaining. For early return of dependents (ERD), the rate is reduced the day after the dependent's departure or on the date the order was issued, whichever is later.
5	all the command sponsored dependents depart the PDS vicinity for early or advance return,	the Service member becomes a Service member "without a dependent" and the OCONUS COLA at the with-dependent rate terminates the day before the command sponsored dependent departs the Service member's PDS or the day before the date an ERD order is issued, whichever is later.*
6	a Service member is in a confinement status due to disciplinary action,	OCONUS COLA is authorized only at the rate for the number of command sponsored dependents who continue to reside in the PDS vicinity.
*See paragraph 2.3 for early or advance return of a foreign-born, command sponsored dependent authorized to travel to his or her native country.		

Table 68-4. Determining OCONUS COLA for a Service Member Without a Dependent

R U L E	If...	then...
1	a Service member has Government quarters available but does not have a Government dining facility available for three meals a day at the PDS,	the Service member is authorized OCONUS COLA at the “0 dependent” rate.
2	the commander authorizing OCONUS COLA expects the Service member to cook and eat meals in Government quarters,	the Service member is authorized OCONUS COLA at the “0 dependent” rate.
3	a Service member has Government quarters available, but the commanding officer, installation commander, or delegated designee, provides a statement that using the Government dining facility is impractical due to mission or operational needs,*	the Service member is authorized OCONUS COLA at the “0 dependent” rate.
4	an enlisted Service member does not have Government quarters available and is authorized to mess separately,	the Service member is authorized OCONUS COLA at the “0 dependent” rate.
5	a Service member is authorized to mess separately and maintains a joint residence with a spouse who also is a Service member,	the Service member is authorized OCONUS COLA at the “0 dependent” rate.
6	a Service member in grade E-7 or higher who has no dependent chooses to occupy private-sector housing instead of Government quarters,	the Service member is authorized OCONUS COLA at the “0 dependent” rate.
7	a Service member in grade E-6 who has no dependent chooses to occupy private-sector housing instead of inadequate Government quarters,	the Service member is authorized OCONUS COLA at the “0 dependent” rate.

Table 68-4. Determining OCONUS COLA for a Service Member Without a Dependent (Continued)

R U L E	If...	then...
8	a Service member has no dependent, is assigned to permanent duty aboard a ship, and occupies private-sector housing,**	the Service member is authorized OCONUS COLA at the “0 dependent” rate.
9	each Service member of a married Service member couple is in grade E-5 or below, has no other dependent, is assigned to permanent duty aboard a ship, and chooses to occupy private-sector housing instead of assigned Government quarters aboard a ship,	the Service member is authorized OCONUS COLA at the “0 dependent” rate.
10	the Service member has Government quarters available and eats, or is expected to eat, the majority of meals in a Government dining facility because meal preparation in the Government quarters is not expected or permitted,	the Service member is authorized the reduced OCONUS COLA rate.
11	a Service member has both a Government dining facility and Government quarters available at the PDS, including aboard a ship,	the Service member is authorized the reduced OCONUS COLA rate.
12	a Service member has Government quarters available and routinely eats two or more meals a day in a dining facility,	the Service member is authorized to receive only the reduced OCONUS COLA rate, not the “0 dependent” rate.
13	a Service member has Government quarters available but his or her non-command sponsored dependents live at or near the PDS,	the Service member is authorized to receive only the reduced OCONUS COLA rate, not the “0 dependent” rate.

Table 68-4. Determining OCONUS COLA for a Service Member Without a Dependent (Continued)

R U L E	If...	then...
14	a Service member without a dependent is in a confinement status and serving a sentence due to disciplinary action,	the Service member is not authorized OCONUS COLA.
<p>*Personal convenience is not a determining factor. **If the Service member is in grade E-6 or above, he or she may choose not to occupy assigned Government quarters aboard a ship. A member in grade E-4 or E-5 may be authorized to not occupy assigned Government quarters aboard a ship.</p>		

Table 68-5. OCONUS COLA for Two Service Members Married to Each Other

R U L E	If two Service members married to each other...	then...
1	maintain separate households at or in the vicinity of their PDS or PDSs OCONUS,	each Service member is authorized OCONUS COLA, based on whether the Service member concerned has a dependent at or in the vicinity of the PDS OCONUS.
2	maintain a joint household at or in the vicinity of their PDS OCONUS,	one Service member is authorized to receive OCONUS COLA at a rate based on the number of dependents present, if any. The other Service member is authorized to receive OCONUS COLA at the "0 dependent" rate.

Table 68-6. Fractional COLA Rates by Meal

Meal	Applicable Percentage
Morning	7
Noon	15
Evening	15

Table 68-7. OCONUS COLA for RC Member Called or Ordered to Active Duty From OCONUS

Number of Days Called or Ordered to Active Duty	OCONUS COLA
31 or More	OCONUS COLA for the primary residence OCONUS at the time called or ordered to active duty, whether for a TDY or a PCS, beginning on the first active duty day.
30 or Fewer	OCONUS COLA if the call or order to active duty is in support of a contingency operation or whenever there is no per diem authority. The Service member is authorized OCONUS COLA at the rate for his or her principal place of residence at the time called or ordered to active duty (55 Comp Gen 135 (1975)).

Table 68-8. Calculate Annual OCONUS COLA

Step	Procedure
1	Determine the Service member's annual compensation.
2	Determine the Service member's average annual spendable income: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Locate the dollar range for the appropriate annual compensation amount, as determined in Step 1. b. Find where this dollar range intersects with the number of command sponsored dependents on the annual spendable income table. c. This number is the Service member's average annual spendable income.
3	Find the Service member's COLA index based on the PDS.
4	Subtract 100 from the prescribed COLA index. Divide the difference by 100 to change it to a percentage (for example, 20 becomes 0.20 or 20%).
5	Multiply the Service member's average annual spendable income, in Step 2, by the percentage in Step 4. The result is the Service member's annual OCONUS COLA.

Table 68-9. Calculate Monthly OCONUS COLA

Step	Procedure
1	Divide the annual OCONUS COLA amount by 360 (days) (see Table 68-8).
2	Carry the result to five digits to the right of the decimal to get the daily amount.
3	Multiply the result by the number of days in the month for which the allowance is payable.
4	Round the amount to the nearest cent to get the monthly OCONUS COLA.

Table 68-10. TLA When Departing a PDS

R U L E	Departure	TLA Authorization
1	Dependent Departs before the Service Member	When a dependent departs a PDS OCONUS before the Service member, TLA may be authorized for the Service member and dependent when eligible. TLA due to the dependent's departure is limited to 10 days immediately preceding the day the last dependent departs, and must not begin earlier than the issue date of the PCS order or official alert notice. Upon departure of the Service member at a later date, TLA may again be authorized or approved for the Service member.
2	Delayed Departure	When the authorized TLA period has begun and actual departure is delayed through no fault of the Service member or dependent, TLA may be authorized or approved by the AO, in increments of 10 or fewer days, for the entire period that temporary lodging is required. This includes a dependent's delay due to the Service member's death.
3	Early Permanent Housing Termination	When, for reasons beyond the control of the Service member or dependent, permanent Government quarters or private-sector housing must be relinquished more than 10 days before the estimated departure date, the AO may authorize or approve TLA beginning the day the permanent Government quarters or private-sector housing is relinquished. Acceptable reasons include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Transportation Officer determines it necessary to ship HHG after considering anticipated leave; necessary travel time; HHG shipment transit times; compliance with requirements of local packing, crating, and shipping agencies; meeting shipping schedules; and other requirements related to HHG shipments. b. Expiration or termination of lease or rental agreement occurs after a Service member receives the PCS order or alert notice. c. A landlord withdraws the private-sector housing from the market. d. The AO determines that an Act of God, civil unrest, or other disturbance makes occupancy of permanent housing inadvisable. e. The Service member is required by lease, custom, or law to surrender housing at a fixed date more than 10 days before the scheduled departure or before a lease's expiration to permit inspection, finalization of utility bills and deposits, redecoration, or adjudication of damage claims. f. Housing authorities require the Service member to vacate permanent Government quarters for the Government's convenience. g. The OCONUS TLA Authority determines that permanent Government quarters or private-sector housing must be relinquished.

Table 68-10. TLA When Departing a PDS (Continued)

R U L E	Departure	TLA Authorization
4	Service Member Detaches from a Ship Away from Home Port	When a Service member detaches on a PCS from a ship in a home port OCONUS while the ship is away from its home port and he or she returns to the home port, then TLA may be authorized unless he or she receives per diem. If per diem is authorized at the home port, the Service member can receive TLA only if a dependent occupies temporary lodging at the home port.
5	TLA before PCS Order Issuance	A Service member may be authorized TLA before a PCS order is issued. The PCS AO, or the designated representative, must provide a written statement that the Service member was advised that the order would be issued before the PCS order is actually issued. The Service member must provide this statement if required by finance procedures. Information, such as the date of eventual release from active duty, expiration of term of service, retirement eligibility, or expected rotation from duty OCONUS, is not notification of intent to issue an order (52 Comp Gen 769 (1973)). The length of time between when the Service member receives written advice that a PCS order will be issued and when the order is issued may not exceed the relatively short period between when a PCS order determination is made and when the order is actually issued.

Table 68-11. Daily M&IE and Lodging Percentages

Number of Eligible Persons Occupying Temporary Lodging	Lodging Percentage	M&IE Percentage
Service member or one dependent (total one person)	100*	65
Service member couples (total two persons - percentage each when lodging together)	65	65
Service member and one dependent, or two dependents (total two persons - percentage together)	100	100
Each additional dependent age 12 and older	35	35
Each additional dependent under age 12	25	25
*Prior to October 1, 2020 the one-person lodging rate was 65 percent.		

NOTE: For the most current rates, see [*Temporary Lodging Allowances – Calculation Percentages*](#) on the DTMO website.

REFERENCES

CHAPTER 68 - COST OF LIVING ALLOWANCE OUTSIDE THE CONTINENTAL UNITED STATES (OCONUS COLA) AND TEMPORARY LODGING ALLOWANCE (TLA)

1.0 – GENERAL

1.1 37 U.S.C. § 405

2.0 – STANDARD ALLOWANCES

2.1.6.5. Comp Gen B-131142, June 3, 1957

3.0 – OCONUS COLA

3.3.1. 65 Comp Gen 888 (1986)

3.8.2.1. 57 Comp Gen 178 (1977)

3.9.1. 55 Comp Gen 135 (1975)

4.0 – TEMPORARY LODGING ALLOWANCE (TLA)

4.3.1.1. Comp Gen B-208740, January 31, 1983

4.3.1.3. 59 Comp Gen 486 (1980)

4.5.4. 37 U.S.C. § 204

4.5.4. 37 U.S.C. § 421

4.7.3. 65 Comp Gen 888 (1986)

4.10.2.6. 47 Comp Gen 127 (1967)

4.10.2.6. Comp Gen B-161396, May 3, 1976

4.10.4.3. Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense,
Manpower and Reserve Affairs Memo, dated
September 23, 2020

5.0 – TLA CALCULATIONS

5.4 Comp Gen B-186628, September 17, 1976

Table 68-3

Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense,
Manpower and Reserve Affairs Memo, dated
May 19, 2020

Table 68-7

55 Comp Gen 135 (1975)

Table 68-10

52 Comp Gen 769 (1973)

Table 68-11

Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense,
Manpower and Reserve Affairs Memo, dated
September 23, 2020