

DOI CASUAL HIRE TRAVEL PROCESS

CASUAL HIRE TRAVEL EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENT CLAIMED ON THE INCIDENT TIME REPORT (OF-288)

All temporary duty travel for casual hired employees will be governed and processed in accordance with the General Service Administration (GSA), Federal Travel Regulations (FTR), and the DOI TDY Travel Policy:

- Federal Travel Regulations (FTR) Chapters 300–General and 301–Temporary Duty (TDY) Travel Allowances
- DOI Decision Memorandum for the Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary – Policy, Management and Budget (Waiver of E-Gove Travel Services [ETS] Requirements for Casual Hires)
- Department of Interior Office of Wildland Fire (OWF) Travel Policy Memorandum 2016-04

*Non-compliance with these regulations may result in a bill for collection issued to the casual employees.

TRAVEL REIMBURSEMENT METHODS

There are two methods for casual employees to claim allowed travel expenses; on the Incident Time Report, also called the OF-288, or the official electronic travel vouchering system.

TRAVEL REIMBURSEMENT PROCESS

Under the terms of OWF travel waiver, hiring units should process casual travel for incident assignments utilizing the OF-288 whenever possible (this process does not apply for travel associated with casuals attending training or Rx assignments). The following items should be reimbursed utilizing the OF-288:

- Privately Owned Vehicle (POV) Mileage
- Per Diem - M&IE, no receipts (limit 15 meals per incident)

The official electronic travel system (ETS) **must** be used for casual reimbursement under the following circumstances:

- Travel related lodging, baggage fees, parking, tolls, and laundry expenses
- Rental Car rented by Casual Employee
- All training and non-emergency related travel that can be planned and authorized in advance
- Any unusual or complex travel reimbursement claims (privately owned airplane mileage, RV rental space fees, extended duration, etc.)

A copy of the employees OF-288 is required to be uploaded, with other documents and receipts, into the official electronic travel system for the period of travel.

Casual Employee Pay on the OF-288 will not be held for more than five business days at DOI Casual Pay Support Desk for pending travel reimbursement issues. When travel issues cannot be resolved after initial contact, and one follow up by CPC; travel claims will be removed from the OF-288 and payment for work time will be processed. Home/hiring units will be notified in writing, and travel will need to be claimed through one of the two systems when resolved by hiring unit.

When a casual has reimbursable expenses that are not approved for reimbursement on the OF-288, the entire travel reimbursement *must* be processed through the electronic travel system. Travel reimbursement *cannot* be split between the two systems; one or the other must be utilized for the complete trip or assignment.

RATES OF REIMBURSEMENT

- Rates of reimbursement for per diem lodging and meals and incidental expenses (M&IE) will correspond to the current rates posted on the GSA website at www.gsa.gov/perdiem. The location of the incident determines the maximum per diem reimbursement rate. Use the Standard Rate for

Incident Camps located in unlisted counties.

- First and last day reimbursements will be made at 75% of the applicable M&IE rate and must be adjusted for meals furnished to the casual by the Government.
 - When meals are available at government expense, such as from a caterer, they must be deducted whether they are consumed or not including first and last days at 75%.
- The following table shows the calculation for 75% of the per diem rates, as well as examples of calculating first and last day when meals are provided.

2026 M&IE Breakdown - STANDARD CONUS RATES

M&IE Total	\$68.00	\$74.00	\$80.00	\$86.00	\$92.00
Breakfast	\$16.00	\$18.00	\$20.00	\$22.00	\$23.00
Lunch	\$19.00	\$20.00	\$22.00	\$23.00	\$26.00
Dinner	\$28.00	\$31.00	\$33.00	\$36.00	\$38.00
Incidentals	\$5.00	\$5.00	\$5.00	\$5.00	\$5.00
75% M&IE Total (first and last day)	\$51.00	\$55.50	\$60.00	\$64.50	\$69.00

EXAMPLES

First Day - less breakfast provided

M&IE Total	\$51.00	\$55.50	\$60.00	\$64.50	\$69.00
Breakfast	\$16.00	\$18.00	\$20.00	\$22.00	\$23.00
REVISED PER DIEM	\$35.00	\$37.50	\$40.00	\$42.50	\$46.00

Last Day - less dinner provided

M&IE Total	\$51.00	\$55.50	\$60.00	\$64.50	\$69.00
Dinner	\$28.00	\$31.00	\$33.00	\$36.00	\$38.00
REVISED PER DIEM	\$23.00	\$24.50	\$27.00	\$28.50	\$31.00

****NOTE: Revised per diem rates in tables above INCLUDE the \$5.00 incidental rate.**

- Rates of reimbursement for POV mileage must correspond to the current posted GSA rate at <https://www.gsa.gov/plan-book/transportation-airfare-pov-etc/privately-owned-vehicle-pov-mileage-reimbursement>. Mileage rates (2026) are \$0.725 (subject to change January 1st of each year).
- Lodging will be reimbursed at actual expenditure rates, not to exceed current GSA rates, and must be accompanied by a receipt.

PROCEDURES

The type of expenses incurred will determine how the employee will be reimbursed for travel costs. If the casual has only travel expenses not requiring a receipt, it is mandatory for the reimbursement to be made through the OF-288. Hiring Officials/Units should process travel reimbursement requests on the OF-288 whenever possible. Hiring Officials/Units will process travel expenses that require a receipt (e.g., lodging, gas, etc.) through ETS. All receipts must be attached to the casual’s OF-288 and submitted to and processed by the hiring unit.

PROCESSING TRAVEL WHEN NO RECEIPTS ARE REQUIRED

When a casual incurs only M&IE and/or POV mileage, the travel will be processed by the Hiring Unit. Reimbursement will be included with the payment of the OF-288 for Time and Attendance (T&A).

Casuals away from point of hire will document daily POV mileage on their Crew Time Report (CTR). Reimbursable miles driven during the assignment must be itemized per day. Return mileage will be

posted to the last date of the assignment at the same number of miles as arrival unless the casual is reassigned to a different incident. The return mileage will be documented on the casual's final CTR. If necessary, miles can be determined using Google Maps or other mapping software. Mileage over 350 miles one way must have a cost comparison attached to the OF-288 as with POV mileage in ETS.

Incidental expense allowances, separate from meals, may be posted as an individual entry for each calendar day, or as a lump sum combination of days. Incidental expense included in the M&IE total allowance do not need to be posted as a separate entry.

When ETS is not used to record time and adjustments for a casual, the hard copy form OF-288 (Box 18 Commissary and Travel section), the Approving Official Batch Memo, or Travel Worksheet should be completed to include reimbursement for these expenses. Go to <https://www.nifc.gov/programs/casual-payment-center/cfc-forms> for DOI CPC forms.

Upon return or completion of assignment, hiring units will be responsible for processing travel for casuals using the electronic travel system or the OF-288. Hiring Units will continue to submit all original OF-288s to DOI CPC.

OF-288 EXAMPLE

- Commissary and Travel – In box 18, indicate incidentals with the range of dates and POV mileage.

18. Commissary and Travel						For Payment Center use only
18a. Month	18b. Day	18c. Category (e.g., commissary, meals, lodging, mileage, medical, etc.)	18d. Reimbursement	18e. Deduction	18f. Firecode	
5/28-6/01		Incidentals \$5/day	25.00			
5	28	POV Mileage 90 Miles @ .725/mile	65.25			
6	1	POV Mileage 90 Miles @ .725/mile	65.25			
Total			\$ 155.50	\$		
19. Remarks						20. Employee Signature <i>unavailable for signature</i>
						21. Time Officer Signature <i>Sandra Timekeeper</i>
						<small>NOTE: The above items are correct and proper for payment from available appropriations.</small>
Department of the Interior Department of Agriculture (U.S. Forest Service)						OPTIONAL FORM 288 (REV. 2/2016)

APPROVING OFFICIAL BATCH MEMO

- Starting and ending dates for reimbursement can be completed by Approving Official on the Batch Memo. If there are casuals who joined the crew late or departed early, indicate those individuals by name and indicate to use specific dates listed on their OF-288s.
- CPC will add dates and totals to each OF-288 based on the fire codes used for specific dates.

Attached are the forms necessary for processing casual hire payrolls as follows:	
Number of OF-288s in Batch:	
Number of Casual Names submitted (attach list):	10
(For Crews attach Crew Manifest)	
Incidental Expenses: Pay \$5 a day for all casuals listed. Starting Date 06/01/26 Ending Date 06/12/26	
*** Provide only if no other travel costs are incurred *** **use dates on OF-288 for Smith and Lange.	

If for any reason the original OF-288 was sent to the CPC for salary payment without travel indications, the casual's copy of the original timesheet will be used to prepare a supplemental for travel reimbursement on the OF-288. On the copy write "Travel Reimbursement Only" across the top and add travel reimbursement notations as outlined above. Hiring Unit will sign off as the Time Officer if travel reimbursement was not included by the Hiring Unit on the *original* OF-288.

TRAVEL WORKSHEET

- Travel worksheets can be used for a single casual resource or multiple casuals (if reimbursement amounts are the same for all casuals).
- List casual names at the top. Add the ECI next to names if name is common.
- Indicate Dates of Travel and Type of Travel.
- List dates and city/state where the casual spent the night and the 4-digit fire code for reimbursement of M&IE.
- Indicate which meals were *not* provided by the government.
- Ensure POV mileage is calculated at the rate of \$0.725 per mile.
- Add Approving Official signature to the bottom.

Print Traveler First and Last Names with Signatures and ECI Numbers	CANTON, ANDREW	EISNER, LEON	EDDY, PAUL							
	SMITH, NED (12345)	MIESSNER, KATE	THOMAS, CARL							
	THURMAN, MARK	VALDEZ, ED (23456)								
Dates of Travel (From/To):	6/11-6/18	Start Location (city, state):	CASCADE, ID	End Location (city, state):	CASCADE, ID					
Type of Travel:	<input type="checkbox"/> Mission (Fire)	<input type="checkbox"/> All-Hazard								
Date mm/dd/yy	Location (City/State)	Charge Code (for Fire only 4 digit FireCode required)	*PER DIEM ALLOWANCE				POV MILEAGE			
			Meals NOT PROVIDED by the GOVERNMENT (mark "X")			Incidental Rate	Total Allowance	# Miles	Mileage Rate	Total
Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner	(Limit of 15 meals per incident)							
6/11/2X	CASCADE, ID	J7PW	X	X		5.00	\$23.00	115	0.725	\$83.38
6/12/2X	CASCADE, ID	J7PW				5.00	\$5.00			
6/13/2X	CASCADE, ID	J7PW				5.00	\$5.00			
6/14/2X	CASCADE, ID	J7PW				5.00	\$5.00			
6/15/2X	CASCADE, ID	J7PW				5.00	\$5.00			
6/16/2X	CASCADE, ID	J7PW				5.00	\$5.00			
6/17/2X	CASCADE, ID	J7PW				5.00	\$5.00			
6/18/2X	CASCADE, ID	J7PW		X	X	5.00	\$35.00	115	0.725	\$83.38
TOTAL							\$88.00		TOTAL	\$166.75
I am certifying that all travel costs are true and correct, and meet the requirements of the Federal Travel Regulations.								TOTAL TRAVEL	\$	254.75
Approving Official signature: <i>Minnie Mouse</i>										
Comments:										