AR

MY EMERGENCY RELIEF

DATE: 23 JULY 2021

ASSISTANCE BULLETIN NUMBER: 04-2021

SUBJECT: EXPIRATION OF TEMPORARY LODGING EXPENSE (TLE) AND TEMPORARY LODGING ALLOWANCE (TLA) ENTITLEMENTS

1. REFERENCES.

   a. Army Regulation 930-4, dated 5 May 2019
   
   b. Army Emergency Relief Section Reference Manual (SRM), Chapter 2, dated 15 October 2019

2. APPLICABILITY.

These instructions apply to Headquarters AER, AER Sections, American Red Cross (ARC) and Other Military Aid Society (OMAS) offices.

3. BACKGROUND.

During a typical year, U.S. Transportation Command oversees 325,000 household goods shipments. This year, of the 130,000 moves scheduled so far, there have been 120 "turn-backs" as the result of labor constraints -- incidents in which a moving company has accepted a booking, but cancelled before the moving date because they didn't have the manpower to execute the move. Among the reasons for the delays is a nationwide labor shortage of packers and truck drivers during a period when Permanent Change of Station (PCS) moves for military Families is at its peak. These mover shortages coupled with delayed scheduling and cancellations during PCS season could cause a financial burden on some Soldiers and Families when their Temporary Lodging entitlements expire.

4. PURPOSE.

This AER Bulletin provides guidance to assist in reducing the financial burden on Soldiers and Families during a Permanent Change of Station (PCS) when their Temporary Lodging Expense (TLE) and Temporary Lodging Allowance (TLA) entitlements expire.

5. ELIGIBILITY.

The individuals listed below are eligible for assistance during PCS:

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ARMY EMERGENCY RELIEF

a. Soldiers on **Active Duty** and their eligible Family Members;

b. **Members of the Reserve Component** of the Army (National Guard and Army Reserve **under Title 10 U.S.C**) on Active Guard and Reserve (AGR) tours;

c. **Members of the Reserve Component** of the Army (National Guard and Army Reserve) activated with PCS Entitlements i.e. USASMA or the War College.

6. **GENERAL GUIDELINES.**

a. Assistance should be provided as a **Loan** as this is a normally a reimbursable PCS expenses however, exceptions for **Grants** or **combination of loan/grant** can be considered for unique situations.

b. Soldier must provide a copy of their Permanent Change of Station orders.

c. Invoice from hotel indicating additional nights of lodging are required.

7. **RESPONSIBILITIES.**

a. **HQ AER Assistance Section.**

   1) Establish secure portal instructions for AER Officers to send and receive application information from Leaders and Soldiers.

   2) Receive feedback from AER Sections on any procedural improvements required.

b. **HQ AER Accounting Section.**

   1) Process ARMS ACH requests in a timely manner upon validation of signed AER Form 52, AER Check and Promissory Note in ARMS.

   2) Provide feedback to the Assistance Section of any rejected ACH transactions and reason.

c. **HQ AER Loan Management Section.**

   1) Establish repayment by allotment for cases processed through the American Red Cross.

   2) Ensure repayment ends no later than twenty-four (24) months after repayment begins or sixty (60) days prior to ETS or end of Active Duty commitment (USAR/ARNG), whichever comes first.

   3) Contact applicant, chain of command, and AER Officer for repayment issues (i.e. account closed, payment disputed, etc.).

   4) Monitor and report delinquent loan payments by installation to Director, AER.
5) Execute collections on loans past due thirty (30) plus days.

8. PROCEDURE.

a. Soldiers.

1) If eligible, Soldiers requesting assistance can use Direct Access where, no Chain of Command involvement is required.

2) If not eligible for Direct Access, the Soldier should inform his/her Company Commander or First Sergeant and provided AER application and the supporting documentation listed in Paragraph 9 below for review, validation, and signature as applicable.

b. Spouse.

1) A Spouse can request assistance using a Special Power of Attorney granted by the Soldier.

2) The Spouse should also bring the AER application and the supporting documentation listed in Paragraph 9 below to the AER Officer for processing.

c. Company Commander or First Sergeant.

1) Verifies the amount(s) to meet valid financial needs for lodging, meals and incidental expenses associated with PCS.

2) Ensures Soldier completes AER Form 101, Application for Financial Assistance itemizing specific valid needs in Block 17.

3) Ensures Soldier completes AER Form 575, Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) Authorization Form for ACH transactions, if applicable.

4) If under bankruptcy, ensures Soldier obtains a Trustee approval letter.

5) If the Soldier is not available and the Spouse is requesting assistance on the Soldier’s behalf, ensures Spouse has a Special Power of Attorney (AER Form 53 or civilian equivalent) or Allotment Authorization (AER Form 55).

6) Contacts the nearest AER Section or other Military Aid Society (Air Force, Navy/Marine Corps or Coast Guard) within a fifty (50) mile commuting radius for application processing instructions.

7) Forwards AER application with supporting documentation listed in Paragraph 9 below to the nearest AER Section or other Military Aid Society Office for review, evaluation, and assistance consideration.
8) If outside the fifty (50) mile commuting radius of any military installation, contact the American Red Cross at 1-877-272-7337 and select Option 1 for financial assistance. The American Red Cross will provide a secure link to transmit application information listed in Paragraph 9 below, conduct case intake on behalf of AER and forward case information to HQ AER for review, evaluation, and assistance consideration/decision.

**NOTE:** Unit Leaders, Soldiers and Family members will ensure documents containing Personally Identifiable Information (PII) are only transmitted electronically through a secure means, i.e. encrypted email, DoD Safe secure portal or other secure means. A secure link can be requested from the local AER Officer or HQ AER to securely transmit documents containing PII.

d. **AER Officers.**

1) Receive, evaluate, and process assistance requests in accordance with these guidelines.

2) Ensure widest dissemination of these guidelines to Soldiers and Families near their respective Posts, Camps, or Stations.

3) Provide instructions on how to process AER assistance request(s) electronically in accordance with these guidelines when “face to face” interaction is restricted for AER Staff members.

4) When Soldiers and Leaders request a secure link, send secure DoD safe portal links to allow them to SEND and RECEIVE application data securely.

5) Assist Soldiers and Leaders as necessary to validate needs.

6) Input the following case information in ARMS on the “**Assistance Tab**”:

   a) Under “**Special Event Code**” select “**Temporary Lodging TLE/TLA Exception (2021)**”.

   b) Under “**Program**” select “**COVID Assistance Program.**”

   c) Under “**Assistance Reasons**” select “**Unforeseen / Unbudgeted / Known PCS expenses.**”

   d) On the “**Transaction Tab**” under “**Add Disbursement Itemizations and Categories**” select “**Coronavirus (COVID 19)**” as the Disbursement Category and only select “**Temporary Lodging**, “**Food**” or “**Gas**” as a Disbursement Sub-Category.
7) Verify client banking information is correct on AER Form 575 when the funds will be disbursed via ACH.

9. **NECESSARY DOCUMENTS.**

   a. AER FORM 101, Application for AER Assistance.
   
   b. AER Form 57, Budget Planning Sheet (BPS).
   
   c. AER Form 575, Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) Authorization Form for ACH transactions, as applicable.
   
   d. Leave and Earning Statement (LES) and other earning statements for Soldier and/or Spouse, as applicable.
   
   e. Documentation to support and validate the financial need, as required in paragraph 6 above.
   
   f. Trustee approval letter (if under bankruptcy).
   
   g. Special Power of Attorney (AER Form 53 or civilian equivalent) or Allotment Authorization (AER Form 55) when Soldier is not available.

10. **This bulletin will remain in effect until rescinded by HQ AER.**

11. Points of contacts for this bulletin are as follows:

   - Assistance Section - SGM(R) Glen Wellman or CSM(R) Charles Durr at (571) 389-7137/Extension #1 or via email at assistance@aerhq.org.
   
   - Loan Management Section - SGM(R) William Hagzan at (571) 389-7137/Extension #2 or via email at repayments-allotments@aerhq.org.

12. If additional guidance is required during non-business hours, please contact an HQ AER caseworker through the Army Operations Center at (703) 697-0218.

C. Eldon Mullis

C. ELDON MULLIS
COL, USA, Retired
Deputy Director and Chief Operating Officer