

USE OF GOVERNMENT VEHICLE WHILE ON TDY

The use of government vehicles is regulated by DoD 4500.36-R, Management, Acquisition, and Use of Motor Vehicles, 16 March 2007, and AR 58-1, Management, Acquisition, and Use of Motor Vehicles. **Government vehicles may be used for official purposes only.**

The use of Government vehicles is always limited to official purposes and shall always be predicated on need, distance, and other conditions that justify their use. DoD 4500.36-R, AR 58-1.

Official use of a vehicle while on TDY includes:

- Transportation between places where the member's presence is required for official business and between such places and temporary lodging. AR 58-1, para. 2-3-i-3.
- When public transportation is unavailable or its use is impractical, travel to restaurants, drugstores, place of worship, barbershops, cleaning establishments, and similar places required for the subsistence, comfort, or health of the member. AR 58-1, para. 2-3-i-3.
- Travel to or from Residences. Personnel who are in receipt of TDY orders who are authorized to travel by Government owned or controlled vehicles to/from the temporary duty location, may be authorized overnight retention (for a next day departure) of a Government vehicle at their residence under certain circumstances. This might be authorized if it has been determined that it is more cost effective to the Government to allow the employee to retain the vehicle for next day departure. The basic consideration will be that the individual would have to travel a long distance to pick up the vehicle and then turn around and drive back in the same direction to proceed to the TDY site. Authorization will be in writing and approved by order issuing authorities and/or Commanders of Primary and Secondary Level Field Activities. AR 58-1, para. 4-3-e.
- Transportation to or from commissaries, post exchanges (including all concessions), bowling alleys, officer and noncommissioned officer clubs, or any nonappropriated fund activity. AR 58-1, para. 2-4c.

Official use of a vehicle while on TDY does **NOT** include:

- Transportation to or from commercial entertainment facilities,(i.e. professional sports, concerts, etc.) AR 58-1, para. 2-3-i-3.

ETHICAL FAILURES: (Case #1) A group of interns used a Government rental vehicle to attend a 5-day Defense Acquisition University (DAU) class in Alabama. However, after the class was over they decided to drive to Nashville for a little weekend vacation, ultimately dropping the car off with an empty tank of gas. They charged the Government an extra two days for the weekend car rental and the \$5/gallon gas refill. They were also improperly paid for an extra day of per diem during their boondoggle to Music City. The original vouchers claimed days that were not part of the interns' official TDY, but were subsequently corrected. The intern group was counseled, received training on filing travel vouchers, and was made to contact DFAS regarding reimbursement to the government for the improper expenditures. **(Case #2)** A NASA employee on official business arranged to have his return date extended so that he could remain in the area for personal reasons. During his extended stay, he retained his Government-leased rental vehicle. While on his way to the airport to return home, the employee was involved in a car accident when an elk ran into his vehicle. The employee reimbursed the rental car company for more than \$2500 in repair costs, and then submitted a reimbursement request to NASA. NASA refused payment as the employee was not on official business at the time of the accident. The Federal Travel Regulation mandates that an agency may pay only those expenses essential to the transaction of official business. Specifically, employees may be reimbursed for deductibles paid to rental car companies only if the damage occurs while the employee is performing official business. After the NASA employee's temporary duty ended, the rental car became both his expense and his responsibility.

ARNORTH/FSH ETHICS COMPASS is an information resource rather than a definitive source to your specific ethics question(s). The answer to an ethics question depends on the specific facts involved and the laws and regulations in effect at the time the action is occurring. If you have a specific question about the use of government vehicle while on TDY contact our office.