



2011

# Guide to Detail Assignments FOR FS EMPLOYEES

KNOW BEFORE  
YOU GO!

## LEARN ABOUT

- ◆ Emergency vs. Preparedness
- ◆ Time and Attendance Rules
- ◆ Work Schedule answers
- ◆ Travel Rules
- ◆ Purchasing Rules
- ◆ Mixed Crew “things to know”

Sponsored by:

**R1 FS Incident Business Group**



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## INTRODUCTION

Often there is confusion and inappropriate use of the suppression pay rules when assigned to a detail that sometimes can look like a fire incident assignment. Just because you can say, "I have a resource order!" does not mean fire suppression rules apply.

Details, as opposed to fire incident assignments, **do not** follow the same rules we are used to as stated in the Interagency Incident Business Management Handbook (IIBMH).

This guide will help differentiate details and fire assignments and the rules for details.

Information provided applies to GS & WG fulltime temporary and permanent employees. Employees who are on a part-time or intermittent work schedule and Law Enforcement may have some differences.

## WARNING!

The information in this guide is simplified for quick reference purposes. Reference the source documents in the References and Authorities section for the specific rules.

Crew leaders: ensure the host agency knows the home unit will enforce these rules.

## UNDERSTANDING THE BASICS

There are distinct differences between a detail assignment and an incident assignment and different rules apply to each. If you are not sure what type of assignment you are about to embark on, ask before you leave so you will be adequately prepared.

Overtime authorizations and resource orders do not allow you to circumvent pay, travel and procurement regulations and laws!



### Define **DETAIL**:

Short term details (under 30 days) are an agreement arranged between an employee and both supervisors (losing and gaining) for the employee to work at a different location/position.



**HINT:** If block 4 of your resource order has a # that doesn't start with **P**, **S** or **F**, you are probably not on an incident assignment!

# Q & A

## EMERGENCIES

### WHAT IS AN EMERGENCY?

- For Forest Service employees, an *emergency* must be presidentially declared and the FS is mandated under ESF4 to respond (separate pay guidance will then be issued at time of event).
- However, **INCIDENTS: an occurrence, either human-caused or natural phenomenon, that requires action or support by emergency service personnel to prevent or minimize loss of life or damage to property and/or natural resources.**
- For incident (IIBMh) rules to apply, the incident must be **Administratively Uncontrollable:** “could not be scheduled or controlled administratively.” Meaning the Forest Service has no influence or control over the event - *i.e. a wildfire*.

### WHO IS AUTHORIZED TO DECLARE AN EMERGENCY IN THE FS FOR FS LANDS (OTHER THAN WILDFIRE)?

- The Chief and the Associate Chief of the FS are authorized to make the determination that an emergency situation exists, and they may delegate this authority only to the Deputy Chief for NFS and to the Regional Foresters.
- State, county, city officials cannot declare an emergency for Federal resources.

## TIME

### WHAT HOURS CAN I WORK ON A DETAIL?

- **Duty Hours:** for detail assignments, duty hours are limited to 12 hours per day unless a justification is written and approved by the gaining units' Unit Manager. In addition to the Overtime authorization, written documentation will be needed for over 12 hrs worked.
- Gaining unit may need to adjust the work schedule for the detail assignment needs.

### WHAT ABOUT DAYS OFF?

- The gaining unit supervisor must manage days off to mitigate fatigue. Guidelines in the IIBMh do not apply.
- **Only the Regional Forester** (NOT the Duty Officer) has the authority to grant extended administrative leave (over 1 hour) during the normal work week.

### WHAT ABOUT OVERTIME, COMP TIME, SUNDAY/NIGHT DIFFERENTIALS?

- Differentials are not applicable unless covered by the established work schedule.
- Overtime, comp time, comp time for travel must be ordered and approved in writing and applicable to the employee's status and schedule.  
Exempt employees' overtime rate is paid at time and a half up to the GS-10/1 overtime rate, but shall not be less than their base hourly rate.

 Do not use prefix 11 with TC21 while on detail assignments

### WHO APPROVES MY TIMESHEET?

- On short term details, normally the time is processed at the home unit. For longer term details, paycheck data may be transferred and the detail supervisor may approve timesheets. In either case the home unit supervisor is ultimately responsible for the accurate approval of the timesheet.
- For some details, crew time reports (CTR's) are completed and signed, which the home unit supervisor may utilize to verify the timesheet. Do not use OF-288s.

## SWITCHING BACK & FORTH

### WHAT HAPPENS WHEN WE ARE SWITCHED BACK & FORTH BETWEEN FIRES, PROJECT CODES, AND/OR SEVERITY CODES?

- When on P, F, or S codes, IIBM rules apply. If you intermittently switch between incident codes and project codes, then at the point you are assigned to the project code, normal regulations apply.
- If moved from fire, to a project code, and back to fire, length of assignment rules apply separately to each fire assignment (assignment days start & stop at beginning & end of each fire).
- Mobilization and Demobilization should be charged to the same fund code and appropriate rules apply (if mob on WFSU, demob on WFSU; if mob on project code, demob on project code).

## TRAVEL

### I'M TRAVELLING. WHAT'S COMPENSABLE AND WHAT ISN'T?

- This is where it gets tricky. There are differences in travel compensation dependent on the employee.

#### **BUT FIRST, HERE'S WHAT APPLIES TO EVERYONE:**

- Regular Comp Time and Credit Hours are not appropriate for travel since normally travel is not at employee's request.
- **Driving Regulations: See page 6**
- **Compensable Travel:**
  - Traveling within the days and hours of the established tour of duty is compensable.
  - Travel outside the employee's established tour of duty is compensable if that travel results from an event that COULD NOT be scheduled or controlled administratively.

\*If the Forest Service could schedule or control the event administratively, do not consider the resulting travel outside the employee's regular working hours to be hours of employment – *i.e. project (including details) work*. You may not be paid for this type of travel because its possible to administratively schedule or control the event.

#### **NOW, WHAT'S THE TRICKY PART?**

- Travel outside of your established tour of duty is compensated differently for exempt or non-exempt employees.
- See Options on the next page for how it can all be done.

#### **AM I EXEMPT OR NON-EXEMPT?**

- Generally, exempt/non-exempt has to do with supervisory responsibilities or not and has different authorities (see FLSA & Title 5 in definitions). To find out what you are, check your Paycheck profile and it will tell you.

THERE'S MORE: KEEP READING



# MORE TRAVEL

**EVERYONE IS COMPENSATED FOR THE HOURS WITHIN THEIR ESTABLISHED TOUR OF DUTY, BUT TO GET OVERTIME:**

**EXEMPT EMPLOYEES: TO BE ELIGIBLE -**

- Must be ordered or approved, **and** meet one of the following four conditions.
  - Involves the performance of work while traveling (ex: driving a loaded truck);
  - Is incidental to travel that involves the performance of work while traveling (such as driving an empty truck back to the point of origin);
  - Is carried out under arduous and unusual conditions; or
  - Results from an event that could not be scheduled or controlled administratively
- All other travel may be covered by CompTime for Travel

**NON-EXEMPT EMPLOYEES: TO BE ELIGIBLE -**

- An employee is required to work during travel (*ex: required to drive a government rig*);
- An employee is required to travel as a passenger on a 1-day assignment away from the official duty station; or
- An employee is required to travel as a passenger on an overnight assignment away from the official duty station during hours on non-workdays that correspond to the employee's regular working hours.

**SO HOW DO I REALLY DO THIS? HERE ARE YOUR OPTIONS:**

**Exempt:**

- Regular – employees on flexible schedules (maxiflex) can flex their 01 time, including travel on days off, with the exception of Sunday which must be coded to Comp time for travel (unless employee normally works Sunday).
- OT – normally an exempt employee is not eligible for OT for travel.
- Comp time for travel – any travel outside the employee's regularly scheduled work day/week that is not otherwise compensable.

**Non-Exempt:**

- Regular – employees on maxiflex schedules, can flex their 01 time (including travel on days off) if the travel is outside regularly scheduled work hours. Except if travel is done on Sunday must be OT or CT-travel (unless employee normally works Sunday).
- OT – if a passenger, if the travel is on a regularly scheduled day off, employee can be compensated as OT for hours during the established work schedule.
  - If driving, actual time behind the wheel outside of their regularly scheduled work day/week can be coded to OT.
- Comp time for travel – any time that isn't covered by 01 time and OT, may be coded to comp time for travel.



**WHAT IS COMP TIME FOR TRAVEL?**

- A new form of comp time under Title 5 for time spent in travel status away from your official duty station when such time is not otherwise compensable.
- These new regulations cover all GS and WG employees, regardless of whether the employee is exempt or non-exempt.
- Its limited to time actually spent traveling between the official duty station and the temporary duty station or between two temporary duty stations and the usual waiting time that precedes or interrupts such travel.
- It must be used by the end of the 26<sup>th</sup> pay period or will be forfeited.
- **Comp time for travel will be coded on the employee's timesheet by using TC 32 with Prefix 78. It is then used by coding the timesheet as TC 64 with Prefix 78.**

## DRIVING

### WHAT'S THE DEAL WITH DRIVING?

- Forest Service safety regulations govern the amount of time employees can spend driving in a duty day.
- No driver will drive more than 10 hours (behind the wheel) in a 15 hour duty-day followed by 8 hours of rest. Drivers are expected to take a minimum 10 minute break per 2 hours of drive time. Drivers of vehicles carrying 16 people or more (including the driver) will take a 10 minute break every hour.
- Multiple drivers in a single vehicle may drive up to the duty day limitations provided no driver exceeds the individual 10 hour driving limitations.

## HAZARD PAY

### HOW DO I GET H-PAY ON DETAILS?

- You will only get hazard pay if you are performing one of the duties for which hazard pay is authorized: Exposure to Hazardous Weather or Terrain, Flying, Ground Work Beneath Hovering Helicopter, Tree Climbing.
- Felling of trees does not qualify for hazard pay.
  -  ONLY OPM or the HEAD OF THE AGENCY can authorize Hazard Pay for actions other than identified.
- Hazard pay is only paid for hours in pay status.

## INTERAGENCY / MIXED CREWS

### I HAVE AD'S AND/OR STATE EMPLOYEES ON A CREW. WHAT DO I NEED TO KNOW IN REGARD TO THEM?

- State resources are not allowed to work on FS project (detail) assignments so if your mixed crew started on a suppression code and is getting reassigned to a project (detail), those state resources must return home (or have specific project agreement).
- State resources can work on severity.
- The AD hiring authority only covers emergency work and work related to emergencies (training, preparedness meetings, etc). Project (detail) work is not included for the FS.



**State and AD employees:**  
Cannot work on FS details /  
project assignments.

## PURCHASE CARDS

### WHEN CAN I USE MY PURCHASE CARD?

- Meals and lodging for employees on non-emergency travel may only be procured on a purchase card by a warranted procurement official (not a micro-purchaser) when administrative barriers exist.
- Employees (crew bosses, engine captains, etc.) can only use their agency issued purchase cards to procure meals and lodging for crew members who do not have government travel cards when on emergency assignments.

## EQUIPMENT / SERVICES

### WHAT ABOUT AGREEMENTS?

- If you need equipment or services for a prescribed fire or other project you must hire it through your normal procurement channels, i.e., your zone acquisition team. EERAs cannot be utilized for project.

## DEFINITIONS AND FURTHER INFORMATION

- ◆ **Administratively Controllable:** The phrase “could not be scheduled or controlled administratively” means that the Forest Service has no influence or control over the event - *i.e. a wildfire*.
- ◆ **Assignment:** An assignment is defined as the time period (days) between the first full operational period of the first assignment or reporting location on the original resource order and commencement of return travel to the home unit.
- ◆ **Detail:** may be short term (under 30 days) or long term (over 30 days). An SF-52 is submitted through the SF-52 tracker for long term details. A termination of detail must also be done at the end of the detail. Short term details may be arranged through agreement between the employee and the supervisors (losing and gaining). For details within the FS normally the job codes may be entered on the time sheet with the appropriate override code. Some units may request a FS-6500-46 be completed to outline the detail and who is paying for what. Other agency details are done through an Agreement and will need to be coordinated through Grants and Agreements. Details may also be initiated utilizing ROSS (through Dispatch). These types of details are not considered fire emergency assignments and pay provisions of the Incident Business Management Handbook are not applicable. While on a detail assignment, the employee is still considered the home unit’s responsibility.
- ◆ **FLSA** is the legal authority that nonexempt employees are paid under
- ◆ **Title 5** is the legal authority that exempt employees are paid under. Nonexempt employees may be paid under Title V if there is a benefit to the employee.
  - An FLSA exempt employee** is one who *is not covered* by the minimum wage and overtime provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA or Act) and is paid under Title 5 provisions only.
  - An FLSA nonexempt employee** is one who *is covered* by the minimum wage and overtime provisions of the FLSA Act.
- NOTE: Reference your SF-50/EPP/Paycheck to find if you are exempt/non-exempt
- ◆ **Hours of duty:** for detail assignments, duty hours are limited to 12 hours per day unless a justification is written and approved by the gaining units’ Unit Manager.
- ◆ **Incident:** An occurrence, either human-caused or natural phenomenon that requires action or support by emergency service personnel to prevent or minimize loss of life or damage to property and/or natural resources.
- ◆ **Supervisor:** Home unit supervisor has ultimate responsibility for the employee, unless other arrangements are made between supervisors.



### WHAT THE IIBMH SAYS ABOUT DETAILS



Personnel on a detail assignment are compensated under normal regulations including pay for travel, overtime, and per diem. Personnel are under their normal tour of duty, unless this has been changed between agreement of the requesting unit and home unit. Personnel are not considered to be on an incident assignment and are not compensated for normal days off if not performing work. - IIBMH 12.1-3

## REFERENCES AND AUTHORITIES MATRIX

EMERGENCIES		
	ADMINISTRATIVELY CONTROLLABLE	Pay & Leave Handbook (P&L) 12.31d
	ASSIGNMENT	IIBMH - Definition 12.7-2
	<b>Interagency Incident Business Management Handbook (IIBMH)</b> 01 Objectives -This handbook was developed to assist participating agencies of the NWCG to constructively work together to provide effective execution of each agency's incident management program...	NWCG - <a href="http://www.nwcg.gov/pms/pubs/large.html#iibmh">www.nwcg.gov/pms/pubs/large.html#iibmh</a>
TIME	Pay & Leave Handbook (P&L), FSH 6109.11, Chpt 10 5 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Sections 550.112g, 5514019(h), 551.422,630 Time and Attendance Instructions (TNAINST) Title 1, Chapter 7	
	Administrative Days Off (Authority) DR = 1 hour, RF = extended	FSM 6104.1 exhibit 01 - 6160 #11 & 13
	Administrative workweek / Regularly Scheduled Day or Week	5 USC 6101(a) FSH 6109.11 21.1
	Comp Time, Comp Time for Travel	P&L 12.42 & TNAINST pg 105
	Differentials	P&L 22.13(3)
	Hours of Duty	P&L 22.03
	OVERTIME: OT pay provision does not apply to personnel involved in prescribed fire, other fuels management activities, implementation of fire rehabilitation plans, or to overtime incurred in conjunction with any other activity not specified (above), e.g., hurricanes, floods, non-fire FEMA incidents or other all hazard assignments.	Public Law 106-558 and Public Law 107-20 FLSA 5 CFR 551-208(d)
	Timesheet Approvals	TNAINST pg 9
	Work Schedule	P&L 21.23
SWITCHING BACK & FORTH		
	Ordered Standby	5CFR 551.431(a)(1)
TRAVEL	FSH 6109.11, Chapter 10	
	Compensatory time off for Non-Compensable Travel under Title 5	WO memo 6150-3-1 (2/7/2005)
	Gaining Credit or regular Comp hours for travel: <a href="http://opm.gov/oca/worksch/HTML/Cred_hrs.htm#travel">http://opm.gov/oca/worksch/HTML/Cred_hrs.htm#travel</a>	5USC 6121(4)
DRIVING	FSH 6709.11 Chpt 12.31	
HAZARD PAY	OPM 5 CFR 550.901-550.907	
INTERAGENCY/MIXED CREWS		
	Authority to hire AD employees	AD Pay Plan FSH 5109.34
PURCHASE CARD (AUTHORITY)	"Reminder of Prohibition to buying travel related items with Purchase card"	R1/R4 RF Memo 6300 (4/14/11)



### FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:

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