



**USAID**  
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# New Home Leave Policy for 12-Month Overseas Assignments

A Mandatory Reference for  
ADS Chapters 436 and 480

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On June 15, 2006, the Congress passed and the President signed an amendment to the Foreign Service Act of 1980, as amended, that allows home leave following completion of 12-month overseas assignments. The intent of this new authority is to provide a home leave benefit for employees serving at the most difficult and dangerous posts, where the official tour of duty is 12 months. Such a benefit will afford employees an opportunity not only to be reoriented to the U.S., but also to decompress and reunite with their family members before moving on to their next assignment.

USAID is implementing this new home leave policy jointly with the Department of State, effective July 20, 2006, when the Department issued State 119416, announcing the new authority. USAID employees who complete their 12-month assignment at one of the qualifying posts on or after July 20, 2006, may be eligible for home leave under this new provision.

For USAID, qualifying posts at this time include all posts in Iraq, Afghanistan, and Pakistan. Juba, Sudan is also expected to be a 12-month posting, and USAID employees assigned there would also be eligible for the new home leave benefit. In the future, the Agency may designate other additional posts for 12-month assignments, and employees who complete their assignment at such posts may be eligible for this new home leave benefit.

If an eligible employee elects to take home leave, he or she must take a minimum of ten workdays of home leave. There is no requirement that an eligible employee take home leave after serving 12 months at a designated post. It is only an option. However, the statutory requirement for an employee to take home leave after serving three years of continuous overseas service still remains in effect.

The new home leave policy is also extended to Foreign Service employees serving on temporary duty status at posts in Iraq and Afghanistan for at least 12 months. Employees serving on a limited non-career Foreign Service appointment in Iraq or Afghanistan followed by another overseas assignment may also qualify for home leave under this new authority. Limited non-career Foreign Service appointees who served at posts in Iraq and Afghanistan and returning to an assignment in the U.S. are not eligible to take home leave. However, if they served for at least 12 months at posts in Iraq and Afghanistan, they may be granted ten days of administrative leave (see 3 FAM 3464.3, Transition Leave).

The new home leave policy will be incorporated in 3 FAM 3400 and ADS 436, Foreign Service Assignments and Tour of Duty, in the near future. In the interim, the Agency is adhering to State's interim regulations as outlined in State 119416.

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