

USAP DEPLOYMENT INFORMATION

for ASC Employees

- Please direct job-specific questions, and questions about your Ice dates, to your Hiring Manager.
- Passports must be valid for six months *after* your return; undamaged beyond normal wear and tear, with a blank page for each country to be visited. Please take the time to check it now. Airline carriers will not allow you to board, and some countries will not allow entry, if these requirements are not met.
- Check the expiration of your ATM and credit cards, too, before you deploy. Palmer Station is cashless.
- Fill out the forms in this packet and return them within eight weeks, or ASAP if your deployment date is sooner. (All candidates please, including alternates.) Blank forms are available at <http://www.usap.gov/travelAndDeployment/contentHandler.cfm?id=765>. You do not have to wait until you physically qualify.
- Do *not* return forms via email; fax and U.S. Mail are more secure.
- Be sure ASC has your current contact info! ASC uses the email and mailing address you give us on your travel forms. Let ASC Travel know if your situation changes. Also:
 - The name on your ticket *must* match your passport and if it does not, the airlines will stop you at check-in. “Name exactly as it appears on passport” means exactly that.
- **Once you submit your paperwork, you cannot change your Airport of Departure (AOD).** The AOD is the closest major airport to your home address. If you wish to depart from another city, you’ll be returned to that same location.
- You must submit your HR and travel paperwork and be physically qualified before tickets can be purchased. Late submittal might jeopardize your deployment or even your employment.
- Keep copies of your travel forms in case anything is lost in transit.
- Please check regularly for USAP emails. Check spam folders too.
- Your Ice dates are determined by your job and your supervisor. Changes are coordinated through your Hiring Manager. Be prepared to travel on weekends and maybe holidays. ASC Travel is unable to change your Ice dates so please do not ask them.
- Orientation for McMurdo and South Pole is partly in Christchurch, partly on the Ice. There isn’t a lot of free time in Christchurch. Orientation for Palmer and vessels is in Denver.
- All travel arrangements are made in accordance with the Federal Acquisition Regulations (FAR) and in the best interest of the U.S. Government. Contract employees are not allowed pre-deployment personal travel en route to Antarctica. Please do not ask ASC Travel to consider special routing or layovers, which can be considered misuse of government funds.
- Review airline baggage policies before departure for prohibited items, especially if traveling on more than one airline.
- Be prepared to pay baggage fees at check-in and if/when you change carriers. **The USAP allows two normal-size 50lb/23kg checked bags on commercial flights to New Zealand and Chile.** If you travel within these allowances and are still charged baggage fees, you may expense them with receipts. However, charges for oversize bags, that is, any bag larger than 62 inches (158 cm) overall (length + width + height), are not reimbursable.



- USAP baggage allowances do not apply to personal travel. If you elect anything other than FAA during redeployment, you are responsible for all airline baggage fees.
- For the Ice flight between Christchurch and McMurdo, the baggage allowance is 85lb/38.5kg for all participants, strictly enforced. (Save room for about 10lbs of extra Extreme Cold Weather gear.) The number of bags is not limited but the maximum weight for a single piece is 70lb/32kg. Hand carry is limited to 15 pounds that must fit into a standard airline sizing box.

On board the vessels, there are no weight restrictions but space is limited.

- Some airlines charge for preferred seating and special meals. ASC Travel tries to honor your preferences but cannot pre-pay or reimburse airline surcharges. Most seats on international flights aren't assigned until check-in.
- Travel documents are emailed after you return the forms in this packet, about a month before deployment. These include a 12-month visa for New Zealand or a USAP participation letter for Chile, but *not* your ticket which is emailed separately.
- Tickets are e-tickets. Your final itinerary is emailed 14-21 days before deployment; you'll want to print it and bring it with you. Please check your email (including SPAM folders) frequently as deployment approaches.
- Once you're ticketed, further details about your time in New Zealand or Chile (hotel, clothing issue, etc.) will be emailed from the Christchurch or Punta Arenas Travel office. Room and taxes are direct billed to ASC but the hotel will swipe a personal credit card for incidentals.
- Package mail to the Ice is limited after Thanksgiving, so holiday packages should be mailed via U.S. Mail no later than October 15th. (Tell your friends and families, too.) Even so, there are no guarantees with package deliveries. First Class mail is not restricted so it might be wisest to mail essential items to the Ice as First Class flat/envelope mail.
- For other information about life on the Ice, consult the online [USAP Participant Guide](#). For example:
 - Bring (extra) sunglasses.
 - Bed linens are provided but not towels.
 - No skyping, no drones.
 - Bring your own long underwear.
- Any TDY in Christchurch must be pre-approved.
- If there are changes to your medical or dental health after you physically qualify, you *must* notify medical@usap.gov before you deploy.
- All wintering females of child-bearing age are screened for pregnancy one to two weeks before station close. Pregnancy is a "Not Physically Qualified" condition for Antarctic deployment.
- Redeployments are processed on the Ice and are coordinated with your supervisor or MPC.

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