



# ASC PARTICIPANTS

## ANTARCTIC DEPLOYMENT PACKET

Version 26

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[travel@usap.gov](mailto:travel@usap.gov)

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**NOTE** Please review this Deployment Packet carefully. It includes vital information you need before leaving for the Ice and deployment forms to fill out and return to ASC. *You do not have to wait until you physically qualify (PQ).* **All candidates (including alternates and self-tickers) please return the completed forms ASAP.** Thank you!

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\* Do not return forms by email. ASC email servers are not secure

Contact Information		
<b>Antarctic Support Contract</b> 7400 S. Tucson Way Centennial, CO 80112-3938	<b>Travel</b> 800-688-8606 x33202 303-790-8606 x33202 Fax: 303-705-0742 Email: <a href="mailto:travel@usap.gov">travel@usap.gov</a>	<b>Medical – UTMB</b> 855-300-9704 Fax: 409-877-5500 Email: <a href="mailto:polmedpq@utmb.edu">polmedpq@utmb.edu</a>
<b>HR - Amentum</b> 720-201-6529	<b>HR – Gana-A'Yoo (GSC)</b> 800-688-8606 x32303 720-568-2303	<b>HR - GHG</b> 720-201-6529
<b>HR – Leidos</b> 800-688-8606 x32528 720-568-2528	<b>HR – Six Mile</b> 800-688-8606 x32214 720-568-2214	<b>HR – UTMB</b> 409-772-3631

## GRANTEE – ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

### TICKETING

ASC tickets grantees according to their Research Support Plan (RSP).

- For those identified as self-tickers, ticket purchase is the responsibility of the participant and travel costs come out of the science event's grant or sponsoring institution. Ticketing must still follow the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) and limited support services are offered by ASC.
- ASC is contracted to get participants to and from their AOD's and their gateway cities of Christchurch or Punta Arenas. Deviations from contract language must be approved, in writing, by NSF and the Contracting Officers Representative (COR).

### BAGGAGE

#### ICE FLIGHT TO MCMURDO

Ice flight allowances are strictly enforced; excess baggage must be pre-approved.

- 85 lbs (38.5 kgs)+ carry on\*\* (save room for 10 lbs of ECW gear)
- Carry on is limited to 15 pounds that must fit into a standard airline sizing box.
- Please coordinate **any excess baggage** (weight and/or pieces) with your ASC Science Implementer.

#### BAGGAGE REIMBURSEMENT

USAP only has reimbursement agreements with United and Air New Zealand. Charges with any other airlines will need to be reimbursed **through your institution/grant program**.

- Your itinerary/ticket will state that only one bag is paid for. This is not an error. The second bag can be waived if you are flying with United or Air NZ using a memorandum supplied by ASC Travel. That memo will become available to you once you are ticketed.

### ACCOMMODATIONS

- Hotel rooms in Christchurch/Punta Arenas are reserved for, but not paid by ASC; **grantees are responsible for settling the bill at checkout**.
- Shuttle Services between your hotel and the CDC
  - Take a Super Shuttle with your bags to downtown hotels. **USAP arranges the shuttles and grantees pay up front at time of use.**

### DELAYS

In the event of delays in Christchurch or Punta Arenas, grantees are responsible for covering excess nights.

- For delays in Punta Arenas, please email **travel@usap.gov**.
- The Christchurch travel team will make every effort to extend bookings in case of delays, but moving hotels may be necessary based on availability. We understand the financial burden of extra nights, you may reach out to **PTServices@usap.gov** if you have concerns of hotel movements.
  - If you would like to move hotels due to delays, PT Services must be notified with ample time to cancel hotel reservations.
    - Notice that this is often difficult as hotels must have at least 24 hours' notice for cancellations.
    - Should you choose to move hotels without providing notice, or if the notice is under 24 hours of the start of the reservation, you will be responsible for paying the hotel penalty for the hotel booked by PT Services in addition to your new reservation.

### TEAM TRAVEL

We have updated the **Trip Details Form** as part of the deployment packet to include hotel choices and a comment area for stating the group name or any other important group information.

## IMPORTANT ASC DEPLOYMENT INFORMATION

### TRAVEL COSTS

- ASC contractors and full-time employees are ticketed directly by ASC. Grantees who are not identified as self-tickers are also directly ticketed by ASC.
  - ASC tickets **grantees** according to their Support Information Package (SIP) and Research Support Plan (RSP). For those identified as self-tickers, ticket purchase is the responsibility of the participant and travel costs come out of the science event's grant or sponsoring institution. Ticketing must still follow the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) and limited support services are offered by ASC.
- Technical Events vary. The responsibility for purchasing deployment tickets is defined in the Statement of Work (SOW) between ASC and the sub-contractor.

### TRAVEL

- Expect to depart from a major U.S. or Canadian international airport.
  - The Airport of Departure (AOD) is the major airport closest to your home address. If you wish to depart from another city, please indicate that on the *Trip Details* form in this packet.
  - Regional airports may not be supported, depending on flight availability and deployment requirements.
  - ASC begins the ticketing process 21 days before you depart your AOD (given that all requirements have been met) but may also happen closer to your scheduled departure if there are delays in ticketing. For more details about where you are in the process, please contact your HR representative or Science Implementer.
  - Be prepared to travel on weekends and potentially holidays.
- All travel arrangements are made in accordance with Federal Acquisition Regulations (FAR), Federal Travel Regulation (FTR), and in the best interest of the U.S. Government.
- Hotel stays expensed without pre-authorization from ASC Travel will not be reimbursed.
- ASC Travel will not consider special routing or layovers on your way to the Ice.
- Increasingly, airlines are restricting the number of seats that can be pre-assigned.
  - ASC Travel does not have the ability to pre-select your seat. You may need to wait until check-in to select a seat.
- It is not recommended to upgrade your ticket, or any part of your ticket. ***If you do:***
  - ASC may lose control of the ticket and may be unable to assist with travel issues en route or during redeployment
  - All changes en route and at redeployment may become your responsibility, with no reimbursement.
- Travel documents are made available via Bridge when you are ticketed by the USAP. An email is sent to your email on file with instructions on how to access the documents. They can be found in the Deployment Readiness Journey in Bridge. These include a 12-month visa

letter 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 approximately 7-21 days before deployment from antarcticagents@altour.com; you'll want to print it and bring it with you. Please check your email (including SPAM folders) frequently as deployment approaches.
- ASC normally issues one-way tickets. Return tickets are purchased upon redeployment.
- Once you're ticketed, further details about your time in New Zealand or Chile (hotel, ECW, etc.) will be emailed from the Christchurch or Punta Arenas Travel office. Room and taxes are direct billed to ASC but the hotel will require a personal credit card for incidentals.
  - **Grantees** - Your hotel room is reserved by ASC but not paid for; you are responsible for settling the bill at checkout.

## ICE DATES

- Your Ice dates are determined by your job, supervisor, or PI. ASC Travel is unable to change your Ice dates; Changes must be coordinated with your employer or ASC Science Implementer.
- Please direct job-specific questions to your Hiring Manager.

## MISCELLANEOUS

- For other information about life on the Ice, consult the online [USAP Participant Guide](#).
- Check the expiration of your ATM and credit/debit cards.
  - Palmer Station is cashless.
  - McMurdo accepts cash or credit.
  - South Pole is cash only.
- TDY (temporary duty) in Christchurch must be pre-approved.
  - A Non-Deployment TRW must be provided to ASC travel.
- If there are changes to your medical or dental health after you physically qualify, you must notify [polmedpq@utmb.edu](mailto:polmedpq@utmb.edu) before you deploy.
- Redeployments are processed on the Ice and are coordinated with your supervisor or MPC.
- Please check your email (including SPAM folders) frequently as deployment approaches.

## ASC BAGGAGE ALLOWANCE

### SOUTHBOUND

If your luggage is within the ASC baggage allowance (two bags up to 50 lbs/23 kgs each), you should not have to pay baggage fees on United Airlines or Air New Zealand. Be prepared to pay baggage fees on all other airlines. If you are an ASC contract or full-time employee, travel within these allowances, and are still charged baggage fees, ASC will reimburse *with receipts*. Submit your receipts to your employer or institution with your expense report for reimbursement.

Review airline baggage policies before departure for prohibited items and baggage dimensions/weight, especially if traveling on more than one airline.

- LATAM has changed its international baggage allowance from two pieces of checked baggage to one, so *do* expect to pay for (and expense) the second bag to/from Chile. Both ways, southbound and northbound.
- Charges for oversized bags, that is, any bag larger than 62 inches (158 cm) overall (length + width + height), are not reimbursable.
  - **Exception** – Silver trunks used for business purposes to and from Punta Arenas

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

### MCMURDO/SOUTH POLE

	Commercial Flights AOD to Christchurch	Ice Flight to McMurdo
<b>Summer Participants</b>	2 BAGS* 50 lbs (23 kgs) each + carry on**	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ice flight allowances are strictly enforced; excess baggage must be pre-approved.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ <b>Grantees</b> - Please coordinate any excess baggage (weight and/or pieces) with your ASC Science Implementer.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• 85 lbs (38.5 kgs)+ carry on** (save room for 10 lbs of ECW gear)               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Carry on is limited to 15 lbs that must fit into a standard airline sizing box.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Winter Participants</b>	2 BAGS* 50 lbs (23 kgs) each + carry on**	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 85lbs (38.5kgs) (South Pole winterovers = 100 lbs) + carry on** (save room for 10 lbs of ECW gear)               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Carry on is limited to 15 lbs that must fit into a standard airline sizing box.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

### PALMER/VESSELS

	Commercial Flights AOD to Punta Arenas	On Board Ship
<b>All Participants</b>	2 BAGS* 50 lbs (23 kgs) each + carry on**	No weight restrictions but space is limited

\*any bag larger than 62 inches (158 cm) overall (length + width + height) is considered oversized and is subject to extra (non-reimbursable) baggage fees

\*\*must fit into a standard airline sizing box

# CUSTOMS AND IMMIGRATION

## PASSPORTS

Regardless of nationality, your passport must be valid for **six months after your return** to enter Chile and valid for **three months after your return** to enter New Zealand, undamaged beyond normal wear and tear, with a blank page for each country to be visited.

- Airlines will not allow you to board, and some countries will not allow entry, if these requirements are not met. Please check it now.
- Do not wait to apply for or renew your passport. ASC Travel needs the new passport details **six weeks** before travel commences.

## VISAs – U.S. Citizens

U.S. citizens are granted visas at the port of entry for New Zealand and Chile. It is not necessary to obtain a visa before travel commences.

## VISAs – Non U.S. Citizens

***If you do not possess a U.S. passport***, it is your responsibility to obtain the necessary visas. The U.S. Antarctic Program does not, and cannot, provide advice about obtaining visas. Check entry requirements with the consulate of the countries to be transited/visited. Any necessary visas should be applied for at least eight weeks before deployment. Allow plenty of time; you must provide a copy to ASC Travel before ASC can ticket you.

**Failure to do so could delay or even prevent your deployment.**

- For Australia and New Zealand, request a visitor's visa.
- For Chile, request a multiple-entry tourist visa. In regards to customs and immigration, you will be entering and departing Chile twice.
- If you need a letter identifying yourself as a USAP participant in order to obtain a visa, please contact ASC Travel.

## NEW ZEALAND

All participants receive a letter that identifies them as a USAP participant, to whom New Zealand grants an extended visitor visa valid for 12 months. The 12 months start the day you arrive in New Zealand and Ice time is included in your New Zealand "trip."

U.S. citizens require an Electronic Travel Authority (NZeTA) to enter New Zealand. ASC will obtain these on your behalf if 1) you are a citizen of the United States or one of the 60 countries that do not require a visa to New Zealand, and 2) you have a valid passport in your possession and have submitted the passport details to ASC Travel a minimum of six weeks before travel commences. If you are not a US citizen and need a visa to enter NZ, the NZeTA is included with your visa. New Zealand and Australian citizens are exempt from the NZeTA.

If you are deployed longer than 12 months, the Christchurch Travel Office will assist in your coordination New Zealand Immigration to extend your visa until after your redeployment date.

## Websites

Visas: [www.immigration.govt.nz/new-zealand-visas](http://www.immigration.govt.nz/new-zealand-visas)

NZeTA: [www.immigration.govt.nz/new-zealand-visas/visas/visa/nzeta](http://www.immigration.govt.nz/new-zealand-visas/visas/visa/nzeta)

## NZ Traveller Declaration

The NZ Traveller Declaration is a requirement to enter New Zealand. ASC will send instructions on how to apply with the visa letter, emailed prior to deployment.



- Tobacco Products
  - You are entitled to bring the following quantities of tobacco into New Zealand duty-free. Anything more is subject to Customs Duty and Goods and Services Tax (GST). These restrictions do not apply to electronic cigarettes.
    - 50 cigarettes, 50 grams of cigars or loose tobacco, or a mixture of all three weighing not more than 50 grams.

## CHILE

U.S. citizens with a valid passport can enter Chile for up to 90 days on a tourist visa, reset at each port of entry. If you do not sail on the vessel, you cannot remain in Chile for more than 90 days on a tourist visa.

### Websites

Visas (unofficial but in English): <http://chile.travisa.com/Common/TVSVisalInstructions.aspx?countryid=cl>

## HIGH VALUE GOODS

If you plan on carrying any single item worth more than US \$1000, excluding personal items such as laptops and cameras, please indicate that on the *Trip Details* form in this packet.

## AUSTRALIA

U.S. citizens transiting through Sydney do not need a visa, however, you must stay inside the transfer area of the international terminal. "Transiting" is defined as changing flights/traveling through the airport for less than eight hours. Leaving the terminal is a violation of Australian law.

If your layover is more than eight hours, ASC Travel will provide you with more information for a transit visa.

## UNITED STATES

### ESTA

**IF** you do not possess a U.S. passport, **and**:

- **IF** your travel originates in a foreign country (excluding Canada), **and** you are transiting through the U.S. en route to Antarctica, you must register with ESTA (Electronic System for Travel Authorization) at <https://esta.cbp.dhs.gov/esta> before you leave home. This is a requirement of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security and applies even if you are only in the U.S. to connect to another flight.

### From the U.S. Customs and Border Protection website:

"If a traveler is only planning to transit through the United States en route to another country, when he or she completes the ESTA application, the traveler should enter the words 'In Transit' and his or her final destination in the address lines under the heading 'Address While In The United States.'"



## EXTREME COLD WEATHER CLOTHING

**USAP participants must supply their own socks and base layer insulation clothing to fulfill the Extreme Cold Weather (ECW) clothing requirement.**

The following ECW items are **required** to deploy to Antarctica, including both USAP- and participant-provided clothing. Ask your supervisor or science implementer if you have questions about appropriate clothing.

### USAP-PROVIDED ECW CLOTHING

- Parka (continental) or windbreaker jacket (peninsula)
- Boots
- Windpant with fleece pant liner
- Fleece jacket
- Hat
- Gloves
- Neck gaiter
- Goggles
- Rain jacket and rain pants (peninsula only)

### PARTICIPANT-REQUIRED ECW CLOTHING

The following items must be supplied by the participant.

- Socks
  - Mountaineering, winter-weight, non-cotton
  - Fabric suggestions: Merino wool or nylon/lycra blend
  - An additional, lightweight, liner sock to be worn underneath is suggested to assist in wicking sweat away from the foot (e.g., merino wool or polypropylene)
  - Suggested quantity is 2-4 pairs each
- Base layer, lightweight (thermal, long underwear - tops and bottoms)\*
  - This insulation layer is worn directly next to skin to wick moisture away from the body
  - Fabric suggestion: synthetics (e.g., polypropylene, polyester, branded materials) or natural fibers (e.g., silk or merino wool)
  - Non-cotton
  - Density approximately 140-200 grams per square meter
    - The clothing label or website might list this as "140 weight" or another number within this range
- Base layer, mid-weight (thermal, long underwear - tops and bottoms)\*
  - This insulation layer can be worn independently or over base layer
  - Helps protect against cold and wicks moisture from the body
  - Non-cotton
  - Fabric suggestions are synthetics (e.g., polyester, nylon, non-bulky fleece, branded materials such as PolarTec) and natural fibers (e.g., merino wool, down)
  - Density approximately 260-320 grams per square meter
    - The clothing label or website might list this as "260 weight" or another number within this range

\*An Internet search for light and mid-weight base layers and mountaineering socks will yield recommendations in several price ranges.

## BRING YOUR OWN ECW

If this is your first deployment, you cannot bring your own ECW gear. If you have deployed with another program to the Antarctic and/or Arctic and have your own gear and/or are working with an experienced PI/Field Lead, you can email Field Risk Manager, Kate Koons, to discuss bringing your personal gear ([katherine.koons.contractor@usap.gov](mailto:katherine.koons.contractor@usap.gov)).

Returning participants have the option to bring their own ECW, use the gear provided by the USAP, or a combination of both. The option to bring your own ECW only applies to participants returning to locations and seasons with which they have previous experience (e.g., McMurdo at WINFLY, summer at Dome C, sea ice summer, South Pole winter, etc.).

South Pole winterovers may bring their own ECW but must also accept USAP-provided items regardless if they are a repeat traveler.

ECW clothing is an area of personal responsibility, one that requires participants to maintain awareness of the conditions they are likely to encounter during certain activities.

If you elect to bring your own ECW, items **MUST** meet the technical specifications below.

### PARKA (EXPEDITION/BELAY WEIGHT INSULATED JACKET)

- 800+ cubic inches of synthetic or down fill (loft of the insulation - "puffiness")
- 250+ grams of insulation (weight of the insulation itself)
- Windproof outer shell
- Attached hood
- Fitted closures at cuffs and bottom, to prevent drafts
- Longer than waistline, especially when bending over, to prevent drafts
- Must keep you warm when inactive for 12 hours, in case of aircraft delays or other field situations

*Examples: Rab Positron Jacket 800 fill/275 grams, Patagonia Fitz Roy Down Hoody 800 fill*

### BOOTS

- 1000+ grams of insulation
- Removable liner-insert style boot
- Enough additional liner inserts so as to always have a dry liner available
- For summer deployments to Palmer Station, McMurdo Station and the Dry Valleys, temperature rated for -40C/F
- For South Pole and all other continental field locations and seasons, temperature-rated for -100C/-148F
- Must keep your feet warm and dry when standing on snow or ice while inactive for 12 hours, in case of aircraft delays or other field situations

*Examples: Baffin Impact, Baffin Apex, Sorel Caribou*

### PANTS

- Layered system consisting of a windproof outer shell (Gore-Tex or Schoeller equivalent), worn with insulating long underwear of puffy layers underneath
- Or, Carhartt quilted pants/bibs, Level 4 Extreme Warmth Rating (this is the newer version of the 400 gram insulation)
- Note: Carhartt Level 4 Extreme Warmth Rating quilted items are the only products utilizing cotton that are acceptable
- Must keep you warm when inactive for 12 hours, in case of aircraft delays or other field situations

*Examples: Arctic Cat Advantage bib, Canada Goose Tundra bib overall, Ski-Doo Expedition highpants*

## RETURN FORMS TO ASC TRAVEL

Thank you for completing the 2025-2026 Antarctic Deployment Packet.

### SENDING FORMS

**PLEASE ONLY SUBMIT THE FOLLOWING FORMS:**

1. Trip Details
  2. Passport Details
  3. Extreme Cold Weather Clothing Sizes
  4. Antarctica Lodging Request Worksheet
- Ensure your name is on each page of the forms.
  - Do not send travel forms to Medical (UTMB), or vice versa.
  - Do not wait until after you physically qualify to return the forms in this packet. Fill them out and return them ASAP. (All candidates including alternates and self-tickers)
  - Be sure ASC has your current contact info. ASC uses the email and mailing address you give us on your travel forms. Update ASC Travel with any changes.
    - The name on your ticket must match your passport and if it does not, the airlines will stop you at check-in.
  - Keep copies of your travel forms in case anything is lost in transit.

**DO NOT RETURN FORMS BY EMAIL; ASC EMAIL SERVERS ARE NOT SECURE.**

### OPTION 1 (PREFERRED): SCAN VIA BOX

<https://nsf-usap.app.box.com/>

### OPTION 2: FAX

Fax the completed forms to ASC Travel at **303-705-0742**.

### OPTION 3: U.S. MAIL

ASC Travel  
7400 South Tucson Way  
Centennial, CO 80112-3938

### CONFIRMATION

You will receive email confirmation once your packet is reviewed. Please do not call to ask if we received your packet.

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**NOTE** USAP records are maintained in accordance with NSF Privacy Act Regulations.

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