

Antarctic Deployment Packet for ASC Participants

2024-2025

Please review this Deployment Packet carefully. It includes information you need to know before you leave for the Ice and some forms to fill out and return to ASC. You do not have to wait until you physically qualify, please return the forms ASAP. All candidates please, including alternates, and self-tickers. Thank you!

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Return Forms to ASC Travel

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

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

ADDRESS

ASC Travel

7400 S. Tucson Way

Centennial, CO 80112-3938

SCAN VIA BOX (PREFERRED METHOD)

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

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

FAX

303-705-0742

DOCUMENTS

1. Trip Details (ASC-Travel-0090)
2. Passport Details (ASC-Travel-0025)
3. Extreme Cold Weather Clothing Sizes (ASC-Travel-0089)
4. Antarctic Lodging Request Worksheet (ASC-Travel-0092)

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



CONTACT INFORMATION

ANTARCTIC SUPPORT CONTRACT

7400 S. Tucson Way
Centennial, CO 80112-3938

TRAVEL

800-688-8606 x33202
303-790-8606 x33202
Fax: 303-705-0742
Email: deploy@usap.gov

MEDICAL - UTMB

855-300-9704
Fax: 409-877-5500
Email: medical@usap.gov

HR - AMENTUM

720-201-6529

HR - GANA-A'YOO (GSC)

800-688-8606 x32303
720-568-2303

HR - GHG

800-688-8606 x32138
720-568-2138

HR - LEIDOS

800-688-8606 x32528
720-568-2528

HR - SIX MILE

800-688-8606 x32214
720-568-2214

HR - UTMB

409-772-3631



What's New in 2024-2025

PRE-DEPLOYMENT ZOOM MEETINGS

This season deployment information via Zoom meetings will not be conducted. Videos with information will be available to participants via Bridge. Access to videos, documents, and other content will be available once you have been ticketed (or if you are self-ticketing, after you provide your itinerary to the Travel department). Your 12-month visa letter will also be available via Bridge in your Deployment Readiness Journey via the same method.

COVID

- To McMurdo and South Pole, expect to leave your AOD up to five days before your Ice date, though this is subject to change.
- To Palmer Station and the vessels, expect to leave your AOD up to seven days before boarding the ship, though this is subject to change.
- You will not be COVID screened at McMurdo or Punta Arenas unless you self-identify or are exhibiting symptoms
- Chilean entry requirements with regard to COVID are subject to change at any time, but we expect them to be relatively relaxed this season.
- Vaccines: Yes, you still need to be fully-vaccinated against COVID.
- Bring a record of your COVID vaccination(s) when you travel. It should be carried with your passport.
- COVID is still a risk. Please continue to practice safe COVID measures, especially as deployment approaches.

LATAM: 1 PIECE OF LUGGAGE

- LATAM has changed its international baggage allowance from two pieces of checked baggage to one. This is worldwide and applies to everyone, including USAP passengers.
- Expect to pay at check-in for the second bag. Both ways, southbound and northbound. Reimbursable.

NZ TRAVELLER DECLARATION

- The NZ Traveller Declaration, previously required for COVID but suspended, is back and revamped.
- Its new purpose is to collect customs, immigration and biosecurity information from travelers before arrival in NZ.
- Instructions on how to apply along with the visa letter will be available via Bridge once you have been ticketed, or provide your itinerary to Travel (travel@usap.gov) if you are a self-ticketer.

Please keep checking email (spam too) as your deployment approaches.



Important USAP Deployment Information

PASSPORTS

- Passports must be valid for three months after your return for New Zealand and six months for Chile, 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 take the time to 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.
- **If you do not possess a U.S. passport**, check entry requirements with the consulate of the countries to be transited/visited. Allow plenty of time; you must obtain the necessary visas and provide a copy to ASC Travel in advance of the 21 day ticketing deadline. It is your responsibility to obtain the necessary visas. Failure to do so could delay or even prevent your deployment. See the *Customs and Immigration* page, in this packet, for more information.

FORMS IN THIS PACKET

- Do not wait until after you physically qualify to return the forms in this packet. Fill them out and return them ASAP. (All candidates please, including alternates, and self-ticketers.)
- Do not return forms via email. Box is preferred. Fax and U.S. Mail are also acceptable.
- 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.
- Keep copies of your travel forms in case anything is lost in transit.

TRAVEL COSTS

- ASC contractors and full-time employees are ticketed directly by ASC. Grantees who are not identified as self-ticketers are also directly ticketed by ASC.
- ASC tickets **grantees** according to their Support Information Package (SIP). For those identified as self-ticketers, ticketing is the responsibility of the science event and travel costs come out of the grant. Ticketing must still follow FAR regulations, 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 international 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 might or might not be supportable, depending on flight availability and deployment requirements.
 - The goal is to ticket 21 days before you leave your AOD. You must submit your HR (if applicable) and travel paperwork and be physically qualified before tickets can be purchased. 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 maybe holidays.
- All travel arrangements are made in accordance with Federal Acquisition Regulations (FAR) and in the best interest of the U.S. Government.
- ASC does not allow or arrange pre-deployment personal travel en route to Antarctica.



- Hotel stays expensed without pre-authorization from ASC Travel will not be reimbursed.
- Please do not ask ASC Travel to consider special routing or layovers on your way to the Ice, which can be considered misuse of government funds. ASC cannot use government funds for personal travel.
- 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.
 - More often than not, you will 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 ASC Travel will be unable to assist with travel issues en route or during redeployment, and ...
 - All changes en route and at redeployment become your financial 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@tlcorporate.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, too. Palmer Station is cashless. McMurdo accepts cash or credit, and South Pole is cash only.
- TDY (temporary duty) 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.
- 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.



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.

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, 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. **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. As far as Customs and Immigration is concerned, you will be entering and departing Chile twice.
- If you need a letter identifying you 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.

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.

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.

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, or
- 50 grams of cigars or loose tobacco, or
- A mixture of all three weighing not more than 50 grams.



WEBSITES

New Zealand Customs home page: www.customs.govt.nz

Visas: www.immigration.govt.nz/new-zealand-visas

NZeTA: www.immigration.govt.nz/new-zealand-visas/visas/visa/nzeta

Duties and allowances: www.customs.govt.nz/personal/duty-and-gst/whats-my-duty-estimator

Prohibited and restricted items: www.customs.govt.nz/personal/prohibited-and-restricted-items

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.

There are likely to be other entry requirements. ASC will coordinate with each traveler as needed.

WEBSITES

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

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.

A scheduled layover longer than eight hours requires an electronic visitor's visa (ETA subclass 601). Passengers with ETAs are allowed to leave the terminal. When/if you are routed through Australia, ASC Travel will send you instructions to apply for an ETA; there is a small fee which is reimbursable. Participants from ETA-ineligible countries should apply for a visitor's visa at least eight weeks before deployment.

When unscheduled flight delays create a layover longer than eight hours, the airline generates an ETA for you before you land. If you are delayed through your own fault, be prepared to purchase the ETA yourself.

Sea travel also requires a Maritime Crew Visa (MCV subclass 988). If you're boarding a ship, the MCV must be obtained before you arrive in Australia and the application can take up to five days.

WEBSITES

Australian Department of Home Affairs home page: <http://www.customs.gov.au/>

Visas: <http://www.border.gov.au/Trav/Visa>

Electronic Visitor's Visa (ETA subclass 601): <https://immi.homeaffairs.gov.au/visas/getting-a-visa/visa-listing/electronic-travel-authority-601>

Maritime visas (MCV subclass 988): <https://immi.homeaffairs.gov.au/visas/getting-a-visa/visa-listing/maritime-crew-988>

Duties and allowances: <https://www.abf.gov.au/entering-and-leaving-australia/duty-free>

Prohibited and restricted items: <https://www.abf.gov.au/entering-and-leaving-australia/can-you-bring-it-in>

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.'"

[Information on this page is subject to change.](#)



USAP Baggage Allowance

SOUTHBOUND

If your luggage is within the USAP 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 other airlines. If you 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.

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

NORTHBOUND

If you elect first available air (FAA) when redeploying, normal USAP baggage allowances apply.

For personal travel, the USAP baggage allowance applies only from Christchurch or Punta Arenas/Santiago on United and Air New Zealand. Even so, be prepared to pay baggage fees. Baggage fees incurred during personal travel on other airlines and other routes are the responsibility of the participant and are not reimbursable. ASC baggage rules still apply, that is, two bags up to 50 lbs/23 kgs each, no oversized bags.

MCMURDO/SOUTH POLE

SUMMER PARTICIPANTS

COMMERCIAL FLIGHTS AOD TO CHRISTCHURCH

- 2 BAGS* 50 lbs (23 kgs) each + carry on**

ICE FLIGHT TO MCMURDO

- Ice flight allowances are strictly enforced; excess baggage must be pre-approved.
 - **Grantees** - Please coordinate any excess baggage (weight and/or pieces) with your ASC Science Implementer.
- 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.

WINTER PARTICIPANTS

COMMERCIAL FLIGHTS AOD TO CHRISTCHURCH

- 2 BAGS* 50 lbs (23 kgs) each + carry on**

ICE FLIGHT TO MCMURDO

- 85 lbs (38.5 kgs) (South Pole winterovers = 100lbs) + 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.

PALMER/VESSELS

ALL PARTICIPANTS

COMMERCIAL FLIGHTS AOD TO PUNTA ARENAS

2 BAGS* 50 lbs (23 kgs) each + carry on**

ON BOARD SHIP

No weight restrictions but space is limited

NOTES

**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*



Extreme Cold Weather Gear

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.



Want to 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).

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 2024-2025 Antarctic Deployment Packet.

SENDING FORMS

- Fax the completed forms to ASC Travel at 303-705-0742. **(**Just the forms please, keep the informational pages for reference.**)**
 - Trip Details
 - Passport Details
 - Extreme Cold Weather Clothing Sizes
 - Antarctica Lodging Request Worksheet
- Do not wait until you physically qualify.
- Do not send travel forms to Medical (UTMB), or vice versa.
- Is your name on each page?
- Box is the preferred option. Fax is the next best option.

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

SCAN VIA BOX

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

MAILING ADDRESS

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

FAX

303-705-0742

CONFIRMATION

You will receive email confirmation once your packet is reviewed. Please do not call to ask if we received your fax. These calls reduce our ability to move people efficiently through the system during peak times.

Your forms contain personally-identifiable information.

DO NOT EMAIL YOUR FORMS

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

