



Department of the Air Force  
AFAFO- Finance  
Civilian Pay Policy Division  
SAF/FMFSI  
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## AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT OF 2021: EMERGENCY PAID LEAVE

### FM GUIDANCE

The **American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARPA)** authorizes employees emergency paid leave for any of eight specified reasons related to COVID-19. The authorization applies from March 11, 2021 through September 30, 2021.

This DAF FM Guidance document provides information for Customer Service Representatives (CSRs), timekeepers, certifying officials, and civilian employees who may wish to request this emergency paid leave. OPM has published more detailed, all-encompassing guidance concerning this leave, which can be found at: <https://www.chcoc.gov/content/covid-19-emergency-paid-leave>.

The Department of the Air Force is required to have a standardized method of coding this leave. Unfortunately, we cannot simply use the codes previously created for COVID leave. Therefore, CSRs will need to create a new JON "**COVIDLV21**" in ATAAPS to use as a unique identifier for tracking and reimbursement purposes. The policy memo and instructions for creating this new JON are attached. **Note, this JON name must be as directed "COVIDLV21" as it must be consistent for tracking and reimbursement purposes.**

Further, DFAS has issued guidance directing the leave be coded as "**LV-Excused Absence**" for the Type Hours with "**DW**" as the Purpose Code. The DCPS team worked quickly to have the new "DW" code implemented for use with the 21 May DCPS release. ATAAPS will be running their system change on 26 May, making the new "DW" code available for use on the timecard on 27 May. However, the "DW" purpose code *will not* be available on the leave request until another release is scheduled (TBD). Therefore, we must provide interim and long-term guidance for coding the leave request itself.

**27 May – 30 Sep\***

➤ **To authorize Emergency Paid Leave (EPL) the following must happen:**

- Employee must meet one of the 8 qualifying reasons outlined by OPM (see Attch 2 - DAF\_A1 Guidance\_American Rescue Plan Emergency Paid Leave\_Fact Sheet)
- Employee must request EPL in accordance with established leave requesting procedures (as outlined in Fact Sheet)
- Employee must complete the ARPA EPL Determination Calculator with his/her employee type and salary information to ensure the hours requested will not result in a bi-weekly gross pay exceeding the \$2,800 limit

- **Employee must submit the following to supervisor:**

1. COVID-19 Emergency Paid Leave Employee Agreement (Attch 3)
  - Required for the first request of EPL, as the terms of the agreement will continue to apply for any subsequent requests
2. Request to Use COVID-19 Emergency Paid Leave (Attch 4)
  - completed and signed
  - new request form required for each pay period the leave is requested
3. All required documentation for qualifying reason (see Fact Sheet, OPM Guidance, and OPM sample EPL Leave Request Form)
4. ARPA EPL Determination Calculator Screenshot
  - Employee must complete the ARPA EPL Determination Calculator with individual salary information and take a screen shot to submit to their supervisor (see Attch 5 for sample)
  - Calculator is located within DFAS COVID-19 EPL Guidance at <https://www.dfas.mil/CivilianEmployees/COVID-19-Emergency-Paid-Leave/>
  - Select this link to directly access the ARPA EPL Determination Calculator to complete and calculate how to apply Biweekly Limit on Emergency Paid Leave (EPL). **\*If unable to view, right click, copy link location, and paste the link to your browser.\***

- **Supervisor must review all documentation and ensure:**

1. Employee meets eligibility under qualifying reason
  - Signed Employee Agreement (Attch 3)
  - New EPL Notification and Leave Request (Attch 4) is required for each pay period the leave is requested
2. All required documentation for applicable qualifying reason has been provided and reviewed (see Fact Sheet and OPM guidance)

- For qualifying reason #6, supervisor and employee must first seek and obtain OPM approval before conditionally approving the request (see Fact Sheet)
- 3. Hours requested **will not** result in a bi-weekly gross pay exceeding the **\$2,800 limit**
  - Validate by reviewing ARPA EPL Determination Calculator screenshot submitted by employee – calculator should be updated with employee's individual employment type and salary information - sample at Attch 5)
- 4. Hours requested **do not** exceed a total of **600 hours** during the authorized period (11 March – 30 September)

➤ **Any member who qualifies for this leave, must code as follows:**

- **Leave Request** must reflect “LV-Excused Absence” as the Type Hours with the Purpose field “**Other**”, and Remarks section must include verbiage citing the members qualification for the leave under the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 Emergency leave provision
  - *\*This leave request coding workaround only applies until the “DW” purpose code is available in the leave request section of ATAAPS*
  - *A message will be disseminated as soon as we have the anticipated date for the system update*
  - Prior to approving any EPL leave request based upon qualifying circumstance #6, a supervisor must seek and obtain OPM approval. To do so, the supervisor must work through his or her command or organizational headquarters to submit a request for the OPM approval through AF/A1CM (see attached AF/A1CM Fact Sheet and OPM guidance for details)
  - **Prior to approving any EPL leave request supervisor must review and validate**
    - Submission and completion of:
      1. Signed Employee Agreement (Attch 3)
      2. Completed and signed EPL Leave Request (Attch 4)
      3. All required qualifying reason documentation as outlined in attached Fact Sheet and on EPL Leave Request
      4. ARPA EPL Determination Calculator screenshot (Attch 5) completed with individual employment type and salary information

- **Hours requested will not result in a bi-weekly gross pay exceeding \$2,800 limit**
- **Hours requested do not exceed a total of 600 hours during the authorized period (11 Mar – 30 Sep)**
- **Time cards** must be coded using Job Order “**COVIDLV21**” with Type Hour “**LV**” and NtDiff/Haz/Oth Purpose Code “**DW**”

➤ **Retroactive Corrections:**

- This leave is authorized for use by qualifying members from 11 March 2021 through 30 September 2021. Therefore, if a member is currently or has been on a qualifying leave status since 11 March 2021, and they have submitted all required documentation to their supervisor (see attached DAF\_A1 Fact Sheet and authorization section above); they must make the retroactive adjustments to their time cards to receive this leave and have their own leave restored. Please note, as indicated in the official guidance, the granting of this emergency paid leave is tentative and conditional upon fund availability. Therefore, all retroactive actions should be taken as soon as possible.
- All time cards reporting leave authorized under the American Rescue Plan Act 2021 must be updated to reflect Job Order “**COVIDLV21**” with Type Hour “**LV**” and NtDiff/Haz/Oth Purpose Code “**DW**” after the systems update to accommodate the new code LV/DW on 26 May
- Please make every effort to complete all necessary retro adjustments by PPE 6-5-21 but NLT PPE 6-19-21 to give employees optimal opportunity to receive this leave, if they choose to request it, as it is applied on a first come, first serve basis pending fund availability

➤ **Monitoring Limitations:**

- **New DCPS Queries** - DFAS will be releasing a SCR to DCPS on 1 June, which will create the following queries under the “Cutback Report”:
  - First Pass – employees who would exceed leave hours over \$2,800 or equivalent
  - Final Pass – employees who did exceed leave hours over \$2,800 or equivalent
  - Monday of Non-Pay Week – employees whose timecards are not corrected
  - Ad Hoc – used leave funds

- **CSRs must**
  - Utilize these new DCPS queries to monitor limitations for their employees
    - **Run First Pass DCPS Query at first availability** to identify any leave reported in excess of prescribed limitation, and take immediate action to correct
  - Immediately notify any employee identified with time reported in excess of prescribed limitations
    - Work with employee to determine correct personal leave balance (LS, LA, etc) to apply in place of the unauthorized portion of the LV/DW
      - If the employee has no leave balance available KA (LWOP) will be applied
  - Ensure corrective action is taken in DCPS before Final Pass if at all possible
  - Ensure all retroactive ATAAPS corrections are made in timely and correctly applying the employee's personal leave balances
- DFAS will be submitting reimbursement request to OPM on behalf of DoD, and will issue notification to the DAF when/if the shared federal fund has been exhausted and if any submissions will not be approved (not reimbursed due to depletion of the fund)
  - Exact method of notification has not yet been finalized
- DFAS will be releasing an SCR to DCPS (date TBD), which will impose the aggregate limit of 600 hours
  - In the meantime, CSRs should monitor total leave hours for each employee reporting "LV/DW" to ensure the 600 hour limitation is not exceeded
- It is ultimately the **employee's responsibility** to track their leave balances and ensure they are not requesting or utilizing leave beyond that to which they are entitled
  - **600 hour aggregate limit and \$2,800 bi-weekly salary cap limitation must be applied and monitored**
    - ARPA EPL Determination Calculator (Link in Employee requirement section, item 4 of page 2 and sample screenshot at Attch 5) and Record of Use (Attch 6) spreadsheets to properly apply and monitor
  - **If overpayment occurs, a debt will be incurred and payment will be collected at a later date**
    - Employees will not receive debt waivers for these debts

- Every effort should be made to ensure leave hours are applied correctly and limitations are not exceeded
  - Employees and Supervisors MUST utilize the ARPA EPL Determination Calculator and Record of Use of EPL spreadsheets to avoid incurring debt by exceeding the prescribed limitations of this leave
- Upon notification of required correction (due to exceeded limitations or lack of available funds), the EPL will be cancelled
  - Employee must take immediate action to correct their timecard by replacing the LV/DW with their own paid leave (LS, LA, etc)
    - If the employee has no paid leave available to use, KA (LWOP) will be applied to portion of time not authorized under EPL limitations, and the employee will be expected to repay the monies received when the EPL was conditionally approved

Among the enclosed attachments, you will find the DAF\_A1 American Rescue Plan Emergency Paid Leave\_May 2021\_Fact Sheet, which serves as a quick reference guide with several FAQs related to this leave. All attachments are outlined below. A one stop shop on the most critical American Rescue Plan attachments, including where OPM plans to give updates on the status of the remaining amount of the fund, can be located here: <https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/pay-leave/ARPA>.

The POC for the DAF FM Guidance portion of this effort is Ms. Sarah Moore, AFAFO-F, [sarah.moore.12@us.af.mil](mailto:sarah.moore.12@us.af.mil).

**Attachments:**

- 1a. ARPA Emergency Leave JON Memo-COVIDLV21 24 May 2021
- 1b. Adding COVIDLV21 Job Order Number in ATAAPS
2. DAF\_A1 Guidance\_ American Rescue Plan Emergency Leave\_May 2021\_FACT SHEET
3. COVID-19 Emergency Paid Leave Employee Agreement\_OPM Template
4. Request to Use COVID-19 Emergency Paid Leave\_OPM Template
5. ARPA EPL Determination Calculator Screenshot Sample
6. Record of Use of EPL – applying aggregate limit
7. DFAS Fact Sheet – American Rescue Plan Act Emergency Paid Leave