



From the Inspector General

“Holding the Line...on Military Event Attendance”

Actual case studies for navigating the sometimes not so bright line defining senior official misconduct

The Complaint: This edition covers a problem we’ve seen recently and consistently—violations of the rules related to attending military ceremonies and other common events. The rules important here are specific to TDYs and Permissive TDYs (PTDYs).

This issue of “Holding the Line” deviates from our usual format of case studies illustrating a “not substantiated” finding (“holding the line”), a “substantiated” finding (“crossing the line”), and one somewhere in the middle (“walking a fine line”). Instead, here we cite common ceremonies and professional events to illustrate the two options for administrative absences—**TDY** for official military reasons deemed essential to the needs of the AF; and **PTDY** for activities of an official nature that benefit the AF or DoD mission that may include “permissive travel” that incurs no cost to the government and is not chargeable toward your leave allowance.

And, while the following examples reflect the general principles, **always check the guidance for your specific situation and consult your SJA when appropriate.**

The applicable guidance: DoDI 1327.06, *Leave and Liberty Policy and Procedures*; AFI 36-3003, *Military Leave Program*; AFMAN 65-605, v1, *Budget Guidance and Technical Procedures*; GO Handbook; SAF/GCA *Air Force Guidance on Travel for Event Attendance* (10 Jan 20).

RETIREMENT CEREMONIES

Holding the Line

— TDY is allowable for AD members or current Federal civilian employees to *officiate* or *substantially participate* (present an award/decoration, do the invocation, etc.) but it *must* be paid for by the hosting unit or organization’s travel approval authority. (TDY funded by this authority is available to Guard/Reserve members only when on AD status)

— PTDY--outside the above TDY situations--is allowed only for a member *officiating*

Crossing the Line

— TDY is not allowed to merely *attend* retirement ceremonies

— PTDY is not allowed to merely *attend* retirement ceremonies

PROMOTION CEREMONIES

Holding the Line

— TDY is allowable for CSAF to **officiate** at O-10 promotions and CSAF, or an O-10, to **officiate** at O-9 promotions

Crossing the Line

— PTDY is not allowed to **officiate** or **attend**

OTHER CEREMONIES

PME Graduations

— TDY is allowable as part of a Commander’s, First Sergeant’s, and Command CMSgt’s (or their designated representative’s) duty requirement to represent the unit or the Command

— PTDY is allowable for the graduate’s immediate supervisor or a designated representative

Changes of Command

— TDY is allowable only for those who must be present to satisfy change of command protocol requirements, *i.e.*, officiating officer and others with clearly official roles

— PTDY is not allowed to merely attend the ceremony

Funerals

— TDY is allowable as part of a Commander’s duty to represent the unit at funerals for military members within his/her organization if the funeral is held away from the member’s home station

— PTDY is allowed to attend the funeral of 1) an immediate family member who died on AD; 2) a member who died while serving under your command; and 3) a military member if you are serving as an official participant, *e.g.*, pallbearer

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT & SPORTING EVENTS

Holding the Line

— PTDY is allowed to attend annual conferences if the event is in furtherance of professional development or enhances your understanding and value to the AF, *e.g.*, AFA or NGAUS

— PTDY is allowed to attend non-Federal technical, scientific, or professional organization events that have a direct relationship to your professional background or primary military duty and clearly enhance your value to the AF, *e.g.*, American Bar Association conference for JAGs

Crossing the Line

— PTDY is not allowed to attend a sporting event conducted or sponsored by the AF or DoD unless you are participating or have a training/coaching role

More ...

- ❖ PTDY is not allowed to conduct official business for which funded TDY is appropriate
- ❖ PTDY is not allowed just because your unit does not have TDY funds available
- ❖ **Caution:** Be extra careful and consult your SJA when combining an official TDY with attendance at a ceremony for which official travel is not authorized

If you have any ethics-related questions, contact your servicing SJA or local ethics officer.