

DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY  
Office of the Secretary  
Washington, DC 20350-1000

SECNAVINST 7220.82  
OP-134  
31 July 1987

**SECNAV INSTRUCTION 7220.82**

**From: Secretary of the Navy**  
**To: All Ships and Stations**

**Subj: VARIABLE HOUSING ALLOWANCE (VHA)**  
**BASED ON DEPENDENT LOCATION**

**Ref: (a) Title 37 U.S. Code, Section 403a**  
**(NOTAL)**  
**(b) Joint Federal Travel Regulations, Volume**  
**1 (NOTAL)**  
**(c) SECNAVINST 4650.19B**

**1. Purpose.** To establish policy and procedures for authorizing the payment of VHA based on the location of dependents rather than the servicemember's permanent duty station, as authorized in reference (a) and paragraph U8005-B2a of reference (b).

**2. Background.** VHA is paid to assist servicemembers in acquiring adequate quarters in the vicinity of the permanent duty station. Before 1 January 1985, VHA could be paid based on the location of dependents rather than the permanent duty station only when the servicemember served an overseas tour unaccompanied by dependents. Reference (a) now allows payment of VHA based on location of dependents when military necessity causes the servicemember and dependents to maintain separate residences.

**3. Policy.** Department of the Navy policy is to authorize payment of VHA to members stationed in the United States based on location of dependents in another area of the United States when the servicemember maintains a separate residence for dependents and military necessity causes the separation and payment based on the permanent duty station location would be inequitable. The necessity to reside separately must be caused by conditions at the new duty station, not the personal desires of servicemembers or dependents.

**4. Guidelines for Making Determinations**

**a.** Determinations to pay VHA based on dependent location can be made only when the member is not able to commute daily between the duty station location and the dependent's residence. Assigned military duties, including deployment and transportation interruptions, do not constitute an inability to commute.

**b.** The following duty assignments within the fifty states are determined to be assignments which military necessity makes it necessary for dependents to reside at a location other than the member's duty station:

(1) Assignment/orders to a new permanent duty station when relocation of dependents is delayed because of a critical housing shortage as designated in the member's official permanent change of station (PCS) orders issued by Chief of Naval Personnel (CHNAV-PERS)/Commander, Naval Military Personnel Command (COMNAVMIIPERSCOM) for Navy personnel or Commandant of the Marine Corps (CMC) (MM) for Marine Corps personnel. The old VHA rate may be paid until the dependents establish a residence at the new duty station or until 60 days after the duty station has been removed from the list of housing critical duty stations, whichever occurs first. A termination date of 60 days after removal from the list of housing critical duty stations will not be applied to members within 12 months of planned rotation date.

(2) Assignment/orders to unusually arduous sea duty, as designated in reference (c), when dependents reside at or relocate to a designated place as defined in reference (b).

(3) Assignment/orders to ships entering overhaul involving a homeport change and dependents are not relocated incident to the homeport change.

(a) If unit was designated unusually arduous sea duty before the effective date of the overhaul, VHA may be paid at the rate set for the dependent location.

(b) If unit was not designated unusually arduous sea duty before the effective date of overhaul, VHA may be paid at the rate set for dependent location only if the dependents reside at the pre-overhaul site. Following overhaul, the VHA rate will be shifted to the rate for the new homeport when the dependents relocate to that site or by 60 days after the effective date of the homeport assignment, whichever comes first.

(4) Assignment/orders to vessels under construction when conditions at the building site make it necessary for dependents to reside separately. VHA based on dependent location may be paid for members who leave dependents in the vicinity of the old permanent duty station or for members who relocate dependents to the vicinity of the location that will be the homeport of the ship when it is commissioned as reflected in the Chief of Naval Operations (CNO) homeport issuance or as indicated in PCS orders.

(5) Assignment/orders to a unit with an issued change of homeport or duty station when dependents relocate to the announced homeport (or designated place, when appropriate) before the effective date of the change.

**SECNAVINST 7220.82**

**31 July 1987**

(6) Assignment/orders to indeterminate temporary duty or temporary duty pending further orders.

c. Determinations to pay VHA based on dependent location may be appropriate in circumstances other than those in paragraph 4b. These determinations will be made only in cases when the necessity to reside separately is caused by conditions at the duty station and paying VHA based on the servicemember's permanent duty station would be inequitable.

d. Circumstances specifically precluded from consideration in a determination to pay VHA based on dependent location are:

- (1) Continuity in dependent's education.
- (2) Selling a dwelling.
- (3) Waiting list for government housing.
- (4) Dependent employment.
- (5) Desire to retire at the prior permanent duty station or return there on next assignment.
- (6) Financial burden of relocating dependents.
- (7) PCS funds conserved by not relocating dependents.
- (8) Medical treatment at the older permanent duty station except when the commanding officer at the new permanent duty station obtains medical certification that needed medical care is not available.

e. The effective date of determinations will be the date the member reports to the new permanent duty station, the date dependents establish a residence, or the effective date of a homeport change for ships entering overhaul, as appropriate.

**5. Applications.** Individual servicemembers may request payment of VHA based on dependent location under one

or more of the conditions of paragraph 4 provided the limitation on commuting in paragraph 4a applies. Requests under paragraph 4b will be submitted to the member's commanding officers. Requests under paragraph 4c will be submitted via the servicemember's commanding officer to COMNAVMILPERSCOM (NMPC-462) for Navy personnel and to CMC (MM) for Marine Corps personnel. The member must provide justification of the need for different residences, state the date the member was assigned to the duty station, the date the residence for dependents was established, and provide information to show that the dependent residence is not within reasonable commuting distance. Commanding officers may forward requests for which the commuting distance is verified.

**6. Responsibility**

a. COMNAVMILPERSCOM, under guidance from CNO (OP-01) and CMC (MM), are delegated the authority to make determinations to pay VHA based on dependent location under paragraph 4c. This authority may be redelegated within their headquarters.

b. Commanding officers may authorize payment of VHA based on dependent's location if the condition of paragraph 4a is met and one or more of the conditions of 4b are met. For the Marine Corps, this delegation of authority is limited to commanders with manpower reporting responsibilities through the Joint Uniform Military Pay System (JUMPS)/Manpower Management System (MMS). Commanding officers may not redelegate this authority.

**7. Entitlement Approval.** The entitlements portion of this instruction has been reviewed by the Per Diem, Travel, and Transportation Allowance Committee per Section DI of DOD Directive 5154.13 as case P863284.

CHASE UNTERMEYER  
Assistant Secretary of the Navy  
(Manpower and Reserve Affairs)

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