

“THE LEGAL BRIEF”

Advice to the Guardians of the Great Lakes



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November 2010: TDY Rental Vehicle Rules

Reference (a): *Joint Federal Travel Regulations (JFTR), Chapter 3, Part E*

Reference (b): LSC Car Rental FAQ's (www.uscg.mil/lsc/docs/ISC_CO_Conf_Rental_Cars.pdf)

Scenario:

BM3 I. M. Coastie receives orders to deploy, Temporary Duty (TDY), to Deepwater Horizon for 60 days. After wisely checking his orders to ensure he is authorized a rental car, he calls SATO and reserves one prior to departing for his trip. While filling out the paper work for the car, the rental car office attendant asks him if he would like to insure the vehicle. BM3 Coastie thinks about it for a second and decides it is in the best interest of the Coast Guard and himself to have insurance; after all, better to be safe than sorry, right?

After a successful deployment with no issues involving the rental car, BM3 Coastie returns back to his permanent duty station. Once back, he dutifully files his travel claim within three days, it is promptly approved by his local approving official, and BM3 Coastie is reimbursed shortly after. However, due to the amount of the claim, BM3 Coastie receives a notice of audit. To BM3's shock and dismay, the audit determines that the cost of extra insurance coverage offered by the rental vehicle retailer was not authorized. As a result, BM3 is out over \$1500 with no relief.

This is a true story and could have easily happened to you! See below for how to avoid.

Things you should know:

- Rental cars must be authorized in writing on the traveler's TDY orders.
- If this is your first time renting a vehicle while TDY, ensure you read references (a) & (b).
- If you are a Government Travel Charge Card (GTCC) holder the rental car **MUST** be paid for by using your GTCC.
- The lowest cost rental service/vehicle that meets mission requirements must be selected.
- USCG members renting cars while TDY are automatically insured through approved rental car companies. Additional insurance is not required unless the traveler personally wants the coverage and intends to pay for it themselves.
 - Only reserve a rental car from the travel company under contract with the Travel Management Center, which is currently SATO Travel 866-914-7386 or Century Travel 877-372-4640.
- Travelers will *not* be reimbursed for:
 - Rental car insurance coverage purchased in the United States or in a non-foreign OCONUS location regardless of from whom the rental car is rented.
 - Personal expenditures paid to repair damage sustained by a rented automobile while being used on other than official business.
- Travelers *may* be reimbursed for:
 - Snow tires and similar non-standard equipment, GPS device, and toll collection transponder.
 - Mandatory rental car insurance in foreign countries.
 - **Contact your approving official to determine eligibility prior to making any arrangements!**

What to do in case of an accident:

- Report the accident immediately to the rental car company, the police, your command (both TDY and PDS), and the GTCC provider (this last contact is in case the rental car company refuses to pay the claim).
- Get a copy of the police report if possible.
- Contact the Ninth District Legal Office at 216-902-6010 or the local servicing legal office.
- A claims investigation should be done as soon as possible.
- The investigation should be forwarded along with all pertinent information to the Ninth District Legal Office or the local servicing legal office.

Please contact D9 Legal at 216-902-6010 with any questions. To reach the Duty Attorney after normal working hours, contact the D9 Command Center at 216-902-6117.