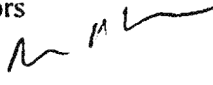




U.S. Immigration
and Customs
Enforcement

AUG 25 2010

MEMORANDUM FOR: Field Office Directors

FROM: Robert P. Helwig 
Assistant Director
Detention and Removal Management

SUBJECT: Guidance Regarding Travel Itineraries, Country Clearances and
Notifications, and Expedited Country Clearance Requests

General

Successful removals depend upon accurate and timely data submission by field offices to the Removal Coordination Unit (RCU). To coordinate repatriation efforts efficiently, RCU requires submission of the specific information listed in this guidance concerning requests for travel itineraries, country clearances and notifications, and expedited county clearance requests. Field office adherence to this guidance will standardize procedures and promote efficiency in conducting detainee removals.

Field offices must designate a Field Office Travel Coordinator (FOTC). The FOTC shall be a Supervisory Detention and Deportation Officer (SDDO) or above. Field offices may designate additional personnel, as determined by the Field Officer Director (FOD), to assist the FOTC in coordinating and carrying out the responsibilities below.

Responsibilities

FOTC

As the approving supervisor, the FOTC oversees the scheduling and conducting of removals by field office staff who:

- prepare requests for itineraries, changes, cancellations, and country clearances accurately and in a timely manner.
- submit change/cancellation forms immediately upon learning of the need for modifying an itinerary,

- enter the FOTC's name and mobile telephone number in the "Field Office Supervisor Point of Contact" block on the Travel Request Form, and
- coordinate the scheduling of officers for escorted removals.

The FOTC must personally:

- review and approve all required documentation for each removal, and
- accept telephone calls from embassy officials regarding removals.

Procedures

A. Itinerary requests

- 1) Field office staff must submit itinerary requests through the travel service provider.

(b)(2), (b)(7)(E)

- 2) The travel service provider will return the itinerary to the field office within 24 hours of submission.
- 3) The field office must accept, revise, or decline the itinerary within 24 hours of receipt from the travel service provider. If the field office does not reply within 24 hours of receiving the itinerary, the travel service provider will consider the itinerary accepted.
 - The travel service provider will return a revised itinerary to the field office within 24 hours of submission.
- 4) The travel service provider will purchase tickets at this point. The itinerary will be considered final and forwarded to RCU for processing.

B. Change or cancellation of a finalized itinerary

The FOTC, or a higher ranking officer, must approve a change or cancellation request for submission to RCU through the travel service provider. Recognized reasons for requesting a change or cancellation include an escorting officer who is:

- unable to travel due to illness or injury, or legal obligations that prevent the escorting officer from conducting the escort, and
- unable to travel due to being on limited, light, or restricted duty.

Additional reasons include:

- litigation that prevents removal of the alien, and
- at the request of the overseas post.

Other extenuating circumstances must be submitted to the RCU Unit Chief by the FOD, Deputy FOD, or Assistant FOD.

RCU will notify the field office and the travel service provider of approval or denial of the request by email. If approved, RCU will notify embassy officials in time to respond appropriately.

Exception: For requests submitted to the travel service provider less than two full business days before a scheduled removal and approved by RCU, the FOTC, not RCU, must make the notifications.

- Staff shall start with the first person or entity on the list below and continue until notification is achieved and shall record the date, time, and name of the person and entity notified:
 - RCU,
 - The U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) Assistant Attaché,
 - The ICE Attaché,
 - National Law Enforcement Communications Center (NLECC) (“X-SECTOR”) (Ask first to be connected to the Assistant Attaché. If the Assistant Attaché is unavailable, ask to be connected to the Attaché),
 - The Department of State (DOS) Regional Security Officer (RSO),
 - The DOS Command Center, and
 - Marine Post One.
- The FOTC shall also notify:
 - the escorting officer’s first line supervisor, and

- the travel service provider (initially by telephone, followed by a change or cancellation request through the travel service provider no later than the first working day after the change or cancellation).

C. Change or cancellation of an itinerary during a scheduled removal

Officers are prohibited from changing or cancelling any part of their itinerary (flight segments or hotel reservations) without obtaining prior approval from RCU through the travel service provider.

D. Country clearance and notification information

(b)(7)(E)

Before submission, field offices shall verify that the following information on the Travel Request Form and the Threat Assessment Form, along with the travel document, match exactly the detainee information contained in the: (b)(7)(E)

- full name,
- gender,
- date and place of birth,
- nationality,
- alien registration number, and
- travel dates.

E. Expedited country clearance requests

Expedited country clearance requests are for exceptional cases only. Field offices shall fully explain the reasons for the expedited request. Exceptional circumstances justifying a request for an expedited removal include:

(b)(7)(E)

The RCU Unit Chief shall consider all other requests on a case-by-case basis. (RCU shall consult with Removal Management Division (RMD) travel document assistance personnel if the reason for the request is a soon-to-expire travel document.)

Field offices are to observe the following procedures when requesting an expedited removal:

(b)(7)(E)

Include the following details for each deportee:

- type of mission (escorted or unescorted removal),
- first and last name,
- alien registration number,
- date of birth,

- country of birth,
- country of citizenship,
- arriving flight number and date,
- (b)(7)(E)
- wants and warrants checks status – positive or negative,
- copy of travel document (attachment), and
- copy of conviction documents for any aggravated felony offenses (attachment).

Requests submitted to RCU after 12:00 p.m. Eastern Standard Time (EST) will be processed the next business day. If submitted after 12:00 p.m. on a Friday, the following Monday shall be considered the next business day. When making a request for an expedited removal request, field offices must factor in foreign holidays, which are not considered business days.

RCU coordinates directly with the receiving and transiting countries (if any). Authorization from the receiving and transiting countries is required to proceed with an expedited request. RCU will ensure that expedited requests are presented properly and justified to facilitate the request for authorization. However, the ultimate decision on any expedited request lies with the receiving and transiting countries. The approval of an expedited request cannot be assumed nor can it be guaranteed in advance.

After country authorities provide approval to proceed with the formal communications, RCU staff officers will authorize the designated RCU travel coordinator to send out the country cable and electronic country clearance request. Electronic country clearance (eCC) requests are only required for escorting officers. At this stage, the expedited removal is authorized. If the expedited removal is an escort mission, country clearance shall be provided through the eCC system. Clearances provided through eCC will be forwarded to the field office to retain. Otherwise, clearances will be noted in the clearance tracking spreadsheet posted on the RCU website.

Authorities/References

Detention and Removal Operations Policy and Procedure Manual (DROPPM), Chapter 16.

Additional guidance

Contact the RCU Duty Officer by telephone at (b)(7)(E)