GENERAL

army regulation leaves and passes

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Army Regulation Leaves and Passes: A Complete Guide for Soldiers and Their Families

In the United States Army, the concept of **leaves and passes**is more than just a vacation schedule. It is a carefully structured system that balances the operational readiness of the force with the personal needs and well being of its soldiers. Whether you are a newly commissioned officer, an enlisted soldier, or a family member trying to understand the Army's leave policies, this guide will walk you through every detail—from the basic definitions to the step by step application process, the relevant regulations, and practical tips to make the most of your entitlements.

What Are Leaves and Passes in the Army?

In Army terminology, **leaves** are authorized absences from duty that allow soldiers to rest, attend to personal matters, or visit family. **Passes** are short term authorizations that permit a soldier to leave a duty station for a specific purpose, often for a single day or a few days, without requiring the full leave approval process. Both leaves and passes are governed by Army regulations, primarily *AR 600-8-10, "Leave and Pass"* and *AR 600-8-25, "Deployment and Mobilization"*.

Key Differences Between Leaves and Passes

- Duration: Leaves can range from a few days to several weeks; passes are typically one day or a few days.
- Approval Process: Leaves require a formal application and approval chain; passes often need a quick sign off from a supervisor.
- Documentation: Leaves require a DA Form 2805 or DA Form 2806; passes are recorded on a DA Form 2805 but may also be noted on a DA Form 2803 (Pass Request).
- Leave Balance: Leaves draw from a soldier's accrued leave balance; passes do not affect leave balances.

Types of Leaves in the Army

The Army offers several categories of leave, each designed to address specific circumstances. Understanding these categories helps soldiers plan and apply for the correct type of leave.

Annual Leave

Annual leave is the most common type of leave. Soldiers accrue leave at a rate of 2.5 days per month of active service, totaling 30 days per year. This leave can be used for vacation, family visits, or other personal reasons.

Sick Leave

Sick leave is granted for the soldier's own illness or injury, or to care for an immediate family member who is ill or injured. It is typically paid at the soldier's current pay rate.

Emergency Leave

Emergency leave is available for unforeseen circumstances such as the death or serious illness of an immediate family member. The Army recognizes the emotional toll of such events and allows up to 10 days of emergency leave per year.

Family Leave

Family leave is granted when a soldier's immediate family member is hospitalized, injured, or needs care. Soldiers can request up to 10 days of family leave in a 12 month period.

Special Leave

Special leave is reserved for unique circumstances that do not fit into the other categories. Examples include attending a significant family event (e.g., a wedding or graduation) or participating in a community service project. This leave must be approved by the chain of command and often requires a justification.

Deployment Leave

When a soldier is deployed, leave is handled differently. Deployment leave may be granted before, during, or after deployment, but it must align with operational requirements and the soldier's leave balance.

Types of Passes in the Army

Passes are typically short term and used for non combat travel or specific events. The most common types include:

Travel Pass

A travel pass allows a soldier to leave the duty station for a specific event, such as attending a family member's funeral or a medical appointment. It usually covers a single day or a few days.

Family Pass

Similar to a travel pass, a family pass is granted for urgent family matters that require the soldier's presence outside the duty station. It does not affect the soldier's leave balance.

Medical Pass

A medical pass is issued when a soldier needs to attend a medical appointment or treatment that cannot be scheduled during standard duty hours.

Army Regulations Governing Leaves and Passes

Understanding the legal framework behind leaves and passes ensures that soldiers comply with Army policy and avoid administrative errors.

AR 600-8-10 – Leave and Pass

This regulation outlines the policies, procedures, and responsibilities for leaves and passes. It covers everything from accrual rates to the chain of approval.

AR 600-8-25 – Deployment and Mobilization

During deployments, AR 600-8-25 provides guidance on how leave is managed, including the allocation of deployment leave and the impact on the soldier's leave balance.

AR 700-1 – Personnel Management System

This regulation offers supplemental guidance on personnel management, including how leaves and passes are recorded in the Army's personnel system (e.g., AIMS).

How to Apply for Leave or Pass

Applying for leave or a pass involves several steps, each with its own documentation and approval chain. Below is a

step by step guide.

Step 1: Determine the Type of Leave or Pass Needed

Identify whether you need annual leave, sick leave, emergency leave, or a pass. This will dictate the form you use and the approval process.

Step 2: Check Your Leave Balance

Use the *Army Personnel Management System (AIMS)* or *Personnel Information Management System (PIMS)*to verify your available leave days. If you are applying for a pass, this step is optional.

Step 3: Complete the Appropriate Form

- DA Form 2805: Used for most leave requests.
- DA Form 2806: Used for emergency leave.
- DA Form 2803: Used for pass requests.

Fill in the required information, including dates, purpose, and any supporting documentation (e.g., a doctor's note).

Step 4: Submit the Form to Your Immediate Supervisor

Your first line of authority (usually a company or squad leader) will review your request. They will verify that the requested dates do not conflict with unit readiness.

Step 5: Obtain Chain of Command Approval

Once approved by your immediate supervisor, the request moves up the chain of command—company commander, battalion commander, and so on. Each level must sign off to confirm that the leave or pass will not jeopardize mission readiness.

Step 6: Record the Leave or Pass in the Personnel System

Upon final approval, the soldier's leave balance is updated in the Army's personnel system. For passes, the record is noted but does not affect the leave balance.

Step 7: Prepare for Your Absence

Ensure that your duties are covered during your absence. This may involve delegating tasks or briefing a colleague.

Common Mistakes and How to Avoid Them

Even experienced soldiers can make errors in the leave or pass application process. Here are some pitfalls and tips to stay on track.

Not Checking Your Leave Balance

Failing to verify your available leave days can result in an automatic denial. Always confirm your balance before submitting a request.

Submitting the Wrong Form

Using DA Form 2805 for emergency leave can delay approval. Know which form is appropriate for each situation.

Ignoring Operational Readiness

Leaves that clash with training schedules or operational requirements can jeopardize mission success. Coordinate with your chain of command early.

Failing to Provide Supporting Documentation

For sick or emergency leave, a doctor’s note or death certificate may be required. Without proper documentation, the request may be denied.

Leave Accrual and Balance Management

Understanding how leave accrues helps soldiers plan their vacations and manage their balances effectively.

Accrual Rate

Soldiers accrue leave at 2.5 days per month of active service. This rate applies to both enlisted soldiers and officers.

Maximum Accrual

Leave balances can accumulate up to a maximum of 30 days. Once this cap is reached, additional leave earned will be forfeited unless the soldier takes leave.

Carry Over Rules

Unused leave can be carried over to the next fiscal year, but only up to a certain limit. For example, a soldier may carry over up to 20 days of leave. Any days beyond that must be used or will be forfeited.

Leave Balance Management Tools

Soldiers can use the Army’s *Personnel Information Management System (PIMS)* or *Army Personnel Management System (AIMS)* to view their leave balances and track usage.

Leaves and Passes During Deployment

Deployment introduces additional complexities to leave management. The Army has specific policies to ensure soldiers can maintain family ties while meeting operational demands.

Deployment Leave

Soldiers may be granted deployment leave before, during, or after deployment. The amount of leave is based on the length of deployment and the soldier’s leave balance.

Leave During Deployment

During active deployment, leave is generally restricted. Soldiers may request leave only if it does not interfere with mission-critical activities.

Post Deployment Leave

Upon returning from deployment, soldiers often receive a significant amount of leave to recover. This is typically scheduled in coordination with the unit commander.

Passes During Deployment

Passes are rarely granted during deployment unless for emergencies. Even then, the request must be justified and approved by the deployment commander.

Benefits of Leaves and Passes for Soldiers and Families

Leaves and passes are not just

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