



**File Code:** 6500

**Date:** August 5, 2021

**Route To:**

**Subject:** Guidance for Payment of Actual Lodging Expenses for IBPA Resources placed on RON

**To:** IBPA Agreement Holders

The USDA Forest Service Leadership and Equipment and Services Branch (ESB) contracting team recognizes the challenges associated with travel costs during continued COVID-19 pandemic protocols. The travel demands in support of Wildland Fire suppression have made securing lodging within the GSA per diem limits and agreement specifications impossible at many locations across the Nation. This guidance will serve as field administration invoice instructions related to IBPA (Contracted Resources) where a fire base camp is unavailable and as a result, the IBPA resources are placed on RON – Remain Overnight Allowance.

Effective July 29, 2021 IBPA agreement holders who are instructed to secure lodging pursuant to D.21.6 – RON may exceed the set per diem lodging limits up to 300% of [standard GSA approved rates](#). For example, GSA standard rate of \$96.00 a night can be increased to \$288.00 a night not including taxes.

Reimbursement of these increased rates are still subject to the locality and inability of the contracted resources to reasonably secure lodging at or below the GSA per diem limits. The IBPA agreement terms and conditions remain. Actual receipts are required before reimbursement will be added to a OF-286 Use Invoice. IBPA agreement holders shall coordinate approved lodging costs with the assigned Incident Management Team (IMT) administering their IBPA.

- **Question:** What if I can't secure lodging at or below the 300% maximum?
- **Answer:** Any lodging costs over 300% are not authorized and will not be reimbursed per Federal Travel Regulations (FTR) 301-11.30.
  
- **Question:** Can I be reimbursed without a receipt?
- **Answer:** No, receipts must be submitted for reimbursement.
  
- **Question:** Does this guidance change the meal and incidental entitlement?
- **Answer:** No, this is only applicable to lodging.

This guidance is issued in line with the USDA Forest Service employee memorandum for allowance of actual expenses for emergency and mission critical travel dated July 29, 2021. We are optimistic this new guidance and flexibility will help to reduce the undue burden of out-of-pocket lodging expenses for our contracted IBPA partners from this point forward. Please address additional questions to Kimberly Luft or Nathan Sabo using the contact information below.

Kimberly J. Luft  
Supervisory Contracting Officer  
Lead – IBPA East Zone  
[Kimberly.luft@usda.gov](mailto:Kimberly.luft@usda.gov)

Nathan D. Sabo  
Supervisory Contracting Officer  
Lead – IBPA West Zone  
[Nathan.sabo@usda.gov](mailto:Nathan.sabo@usda.gov)

CC: WO-FAM, IBPA Contracting Officers, Incident Management Teams and Regional Incident Business Specialists.

