

LEAVE TRAVEL CONCESSION

(w.e.f.01.05.2010 - CDO/P&HRD-IR/11/2010-11 dt.08.06.2010)

During each block of 4 years, an officer shall be eligible for leave travel concession for travel to his place of domicile once in each block of two years. Alternatively, he may travel in one block of two years to his place of domicile and in another block of two years to any place in India by the shortest route.

Alternatively, an officer, by exercising an option anytime during a 4 year block or two year block, as the case may be surrender and encash his LTC (other than travel to place of domicile) upon which he shall be entitled to receive an amount equivalent to the eligible fare for the class of travel by train to which he/she is entitled upto a distance of 4500 kms (one way) for officers in JMG Scale I and MMGs Scale II & III and 5500 kms (one way) for officers in SMG Scale IV and above. Since the Railways are changing two types of fare – one for peak season (other than February, March and August) which is higher than the lean season fare, it has been decided by the IBA standing committee on HR that for encashment of LFC, banks may consider the applicable railway fare during the month of encashment. (CDO/P&HRD-IR/63/2012-13 dt. 19.12.2012). An officer opting to encash his LTC shall prefer the claim for himself/herself and his/her family members only once during the block/term in which such encashment is availed of. Officers may be allowed the facility of encashing of LTC without the requirement of availing leave for this purpose w.e.f.01.06.2015(CDO/P&HRD-IR/43/2015-16, dt.19.08.2015).The facility of encashment of privilege leave while availing Leave Fare Concession is also available while encashing the facility of LTC.

In case of LFC encashment, IBA has clarified that half of the adult fare can only be claimed by the employees for their dependent children of 5 years above and under 12 years of age as there is no actual journey undertaken in the encashment of LFC(CDO/P&HRD-IR/46/2016-17 dated 21.07.2016).

The mode and class by which an officer may avail of Leave Travel Concession shall be the same as the officer is normally entitled to travel on transfer and other terms and conditions subject to which the Leave Travel Concession may be availed of by an officer, shall be as decided by the Board from time to time. Provided that w.e.f. an officer in Junior Management Grade Scale I while availing LTC will be entitled to travel by air in the lowest fare economy class in which case the reimbursement will be the actual fare or fare applicable to AC 1st class fare by train for the distance travelled whichever is less. The same rule shall apply when an officer in Middle Management Grade Scale II and Middle Management Grade Scale III while availing LTC where the distance is less than 1000 kms.

An officer may also visit a foreign land on the circuitous route while his/her designated place has to be in India. However, visiting the designated place in India is a necessity.

CLARIFICATIONS: (CDO/P&HRD-PM/15/2011-12 dt. 04.05.2011)

A. Submission of Bills:-

i. The cost of inland travel in a foreign country may also be reimbursed subject to the overall ceiling of the entitlement of the officer. The cost of local sightseeing in the foreign country will, however, not be reimbursed as has been the case in the domestic travel. To illustrate the

point, if an officer takes the route of London-Cambridge-London for his foreign part of the travel, the cost of inland travel from London to Cambridge and back may be reimbursed subject to his overall entitlement. However, the cost of sightseeing in London or Cambridge will not be reimbursed.

- ii. The processing of the bill will be done on the basis of certification of the officer concerned and he/she shall be solely accountable for the same.
- iii. Indian travel agencies/ agents who organize the travel are also issuing certificates stating that foreign inland travel has been undertaken and the amount is also stated by them. In such cases the statements made by the travel agencies should be confirmed by the officer concerned. Further, the amount so claimed by the officer will be reimbursed to him/her (subject to bills found in order and are as per his/her entitlement), only if he/she submits valid bills supported by boarding passes (in case of air journey) and tickets if the journey is undertaken by rail/road/water. The submission of boarding pass / tickets, as applicable, is necessary even in case of conducted tours through travel agents. Any case of false claims shall be dealt with strictly in terms of existing instructions and SBI Officers' Service Rules.
- iv. Where payments have been made in a foreign currency for the exchange rate, the date of payment made to travel agency or the service provider should be taken as the date for calculation of the exchange rate.
- v. The officer concerned will have to certify that the foreign inland travel bill does not include local sightseeing.

B. Entitlement in respect of 'Sectors' where national carrier i.e. Air India does not operate:-

- i. An officer may reach the designated place by a longer/circuitous route or may travel throughout or partly in a higher or lower class, or in a taxi (subject to appropriate approvals for travelling by taxi etc.). He will, however, be reimbursed with the actual fares/hire charges incurred by him/her or the cost of the fare to the designated place by the shortest route by the entitled class, whichever is lower.
- ii. In respect of officers who are eligible for travel by air, their notional monetary entitlement may be determined by their entitled class by national carrier (i.e. Air India) by the shortest route. However, in sectors where the national carrier does not operate, the notional monetary entitlement in respect of eligible officers may be determined by any other airline operative in that sector by their entitled class by the shortest route. In those cases where more than one airline other than national carrier is in operation, for the purpose of notional monetary entitlement in respect of eligible officers, higher fare by shortest and most direct route by entitled class may be taken. However, in respect of JMGS-I, MMGS-II and MMGS-III officers regarding mode and class of travel, instructions contained in our Circular No. CDO/P&HRD-IR/11/2010-11 dated 8.6.2010 shall be meticulously followed. Other instructions shall remain the same.

C. Carry forward of LTC/HTC:

- i. In this context, instructions contained in Rule 44 (5) of SBI Officers Service Rules need to be reiterated, which read as under:
"Where the officer is not able to avail himself of the leave travel concession during a particular two year block because the leave applied for was refused and cannot be granted at any other time during the two year block due to exigencies of service, the concession may be permitted by the competent authority to be carried forward subject to a maximum of two concessions outstanding at any one time."

ii. Competent Authority:- In case the leave applied for by an officer for availment of the above facility is not granted during the biennial/quadrennial period due to exigencies of service and not for personal reasons, the above concession may be extended for not more than six months by the General Manager and beyond six months for genuine reasons by the Chief General Manager subject to the condition that more than two concessions shall not be outstanding at any point of time.

CLARIFICATION:(CDO/P&HRD-PM/64/2014-15, dt.23.12.2014)

Modified provisions in Rule 44(5)-Leave Travel Concession:

“Where an officer is not able to avail himself of the LTC/HTC during a particular two year block, the concession will be carried forward subject to a maximum of two concessions outstanding at any one time.” No separate approval will be required in such circumstances. Further, in cases of carried over LTC/HTC block, the extended LTC/HTC has to be availed first and then usual LTC/HTC due during current block can be availed of.

Where there is a carryover of LTC/HTC block during service period of an officer, subject to stipulation of maximum of two encashment blocks outstanding at any one time, the privilege leave encashment block, if due, may also be carried over alongwith the respective LTC/HTC block period and no separate permission will be required for the purpose(CDO/P&HRD-PM/94/2015-16 dated 09.02.2016).

Incidentally, the above provision for doing away with the requirement of approval of competent authority will not be applicable where extension of LTC/HTC block is required beyond the date of superannuation from the Bank’s service and permission will need to be obtained as per the guidelines contained in our e-Circular No.CDO/P&HRD-PM/47/2010-11 dated 27.10.10.

D. FOREIGN LFC-CLARIFICATIONS: CDO/P&HRD-PM/10/2014 – 15 DT.09.05.2014
Visit to foreign destinations under LTC/HTC may be undertaken by an official till the interim stay order is in force. However, in the event of dismissal of the relevant writ petition concerned official will have to refund the entire amount paid / reimbursed towards journey undertaken in foreign land/centres in terms of the undertaking submitted by the petitioners in the Hon'ble High Court.

In the event of any tax implication for payment of such LTC/HTC bills involving en-route foreign destinations, the tax liability will be passed on to concerned official(s).

CDO/P&HRD-PM/57/2014 – 15, dt. 10.11.2014: It has since been decided by the competent authority to start deducting **TDS on bills paid in connection with LTC/HTC** involving visit to foreign destinations enroute w.e.f. 01.04.2014. In such cases the entire amount including domestic leg en-route to foreign destination will be treated as income and income tax thereon will be recovered as per Income Tax Rules. However, in the event of dismissal of the relevant writ petition on stay of Bank's instruction for withdrawing visit to foreign centres under LTC/HTC and concerned officials requiring to refund the entire amount paid / reimbursed towards journey undertaken in foreign land/centres, the said officials will arrange for appropriation of income tax so deducted at the time of finalization/submission of Annual Income Tax Return at the end of the Financial Year and/or claim refund from IT Department following prescribed procedure.

MODIFIED CLARIFICATION:CDO/P&HRD-PM/90/2014-15, DT.26.03.15.

Persuant to the Court Order dated 16.02.2015 issued by the Hon'ble High Court of Judicature at Madras, Income Tax will not be deducted on or after 16.02.2015 on the amount paid/reimbursed to the employee of the Bank in respect of LTC/HTC availed where the employee has visited a foreign city/Country, irrespective of the fact whether the LFC bills were submitted and paid prior to or after 16.02.15. This will remain valid till the relative interim stay is in force.

6.1 DEFINITION OF FAMILY

- For the purpose of medical facilities and for the purpose of leave fare concession, the expression 'family' of an officer shall mean an officer's spouse, wholly dependent unmarried children (including step children and legally adopted children), wholly dependent physically and mentally challenged brother/sister with 40% or more disability, widowed daughters and dependent divorced/separated daughters, sisters including unmarried/divorced/abandoned or separated from husband/widowed sisters as also parents ordinarily residing with and wholly dependent on the officer.
- The term wholly dependent family member shall mean such member of the family having a monthly income not exceeding Rs.10000/- per month. If the income of one of the parents exceeds Rs.10000/-p.m. or the aggregate income of both the parents exceeds Rs.10000/- p.m., both the parents shall not be considered as wholly dependent on the officer.
- A married female employee may include her natural parents or parents-in-law under the definition of family, but not both, provided that the parents/parents-in-law are wholly dependent on her.

Note: for the purpose of medical expenses reimbursement scheme, for all employees, any two of the dependent parents/parents-in-law shall be covered.

6.2 MISCELLANEOUS INFORMATION ON LFC/HTC

- The concession may be availed of when on leave of any kind including casual leave.
- While an officer may reach the designated place (place of domicile in case of HTC) by a longer/circuitous route by a higher or lower class both onward and return journey, he will, however, be reimbursed with the actual fares/hire charges incurred by him or the fare to the designated place by the shortest route by the entitled class, whichever is less. Officer may also travel to a foreign land enroute to his designated place.
- The Head Quarters or the designated place cannot be touched more than once.
- The members of the family of an officer may also be permitted to avail of LFC without the attendance of the officer. Further the officer and/or his family may be permitted to visit same or different places within the permissible distance (This facility is not available in case of HTC). The time gap between the commencement of onward journey by a member of the family and that of the officer should not be more than 3 months and the onward journeys by the officer as well as the family members start with the block concerned.
- Advance upto the eligible fare may be obtained ordinarily upto 30 days before the journey.

CLARIFICATIONS REGARDING PAYMENT OF LFC/HTC BILLS (CDO/P&HRD-PM/58/2012-13 dt.29.11.2012)

It has now been decided that in case the tickets are booked through travel agents, clear evidence of payment made to the travel agent by means of a draft/cheque/credit card/internet banking should be produced. Accordingly with a view to establishing distinct recognizable payment trail so as to avoid any future litigation and to protect interest of the staff members following procedure should be followed while purchasing tickets under LFC / HTC through travel agents.

- i) For purchasing the tickets under LFC / HTC through travel agents, payment should invariably be made through account payee Cheque / drafts / RTGS / NEFT/ Internet Banking/ Credit Card.
- ii) Evidences/confirmation of receipt of such payment by the travel agent should appear on the Money Receipts, issued by the concerned travel agents.

FURTHER CLARIFICATIONS (CDO/P&HRD-PM/41/2013-14 DT.29.10.2013)

An officer undertaking journey under LTC is eligible for reimbursement of 'travelling expenses' i.e. air/rail/steamer/road fare by the entitled class for the permissible distance, or the actual cost of travelling, whichever is lower. Further, the employee while travelling on a circuitous route to his place of domicile/designated place has to necessarily visit his place of domicile or designated place in India and reimbursement may be made to him of actual charges for his entire journey or his eligibility to his hometown/designated place, by the shortest route, by the entitled class, whichever is lower.

- ii) Only travel expenses are reimbursable and other facilities, if any, provided by travel agents are not reimbursable.

iii) Processing of LTC/HTC bills are to be made on the basis of certification of the officer concerned for which he/she shall be solely accountable and only if he/she submits valid bills supported by boarding passes (in case of air journey) and tickets/bills if the journey is undertaken by rail/road/water.

Further, with a view to establishing distinct recognizable payment trail, for purchasing the tickets under LFC / HTC through travel agents following stipulations should be ensured:

a) Payment is made through account payee Cheque / drafts / RTGS / NEFT/Internet Banking/ Credit Card. Payments made to the travel agents in cash will not be eligible for reimbursement even if supported by money receipt, issued by travel agents.

b) Evidences/confirmation of receipt of such payment by the travel agent should appear on the Money Receipts, issued by the concerned travel agents.

Further, any deviation from the above provisions as well as submission of false claims or submission of forged tickets/bills will be viewed seriously and is to be dealt with strictly in terms of existing provisions of SBI Officers' Service Rules.

6.3 AVAILMENT OF LTC/HTC AFTER RETIREMENT

Where an officer is not able to avail LTC/HTC in the last block of service before superannuation (which at present is 60 years of age) for any reason, LTC/HTC may be permitted to be carried forward for **4 months** beyond retirement and the retiree may be allowed to avail of the facility within that period as per the existing rules relating to the serving officers of the Bank. The facility of Home Travel Concession can be availed of only in such cases when the officer intends to settle down after retirement at a place different from his place of domicile, as declared by him. A declaration has to be given by the officer concerned in this regard that the place where he intends to settle down after retirement and his place of domicile are different. Further, where both LTC and HTC are due, only one of the facilities will be carried forward.

- The competent authority to permit the carryover of LTC beyond retirement will be the same authority who has been authorized to allow the carryover facility to serving officers. Such carryover may be permitted due to official exigencies or any other genuine reason.
- In exceptional circumstances for genuine reasons, the LTC/HTC may be permitted to be carried forward upto 6 months beyond the date of superannuation, subject to the conditions mentioned above. The competent authority to permit will be one grade higher than the authority who has been authorised to allow carryover facility for serving officers.
- Where such carryover is permitted and where advance is availed from the Bank, the amount equivalent to advance taken should be tendered by way of STDR of SBI for 9 months by the officer in his name and lien should be marked on it by the Bank. The lien should be released only after the LTC/HTC bill is fully and finally settled. Where no advance is taken there is no need for insisting on tendering of STDR as security.

- The relative LTC/HTC bill must be submitted by the officer at the branch/office concerned within 15 days of completing the last journey undertaken by him/his family members under the facility and not later than 9 months of his date of retirement.
- The officer, after retirement but within the period he/she has been allowed carry forward of LTC, may surrender and encash his/her LTC (**other than travel to place of domicile i.e., the officer will not be eligible to surrender and encash HTC**) upon which he shall be entitled to receive an amount equivalent to the eligible fares upto a distance as per entitlement as an officer on the last day of his service in the Bank. However, the facility of encashment of privilege leave shall not be allowed after retirement, under any circumstances.
- The mode and class of travel shall be the same as he was entitled to as an officer on the last day of his service in the Bank.
- The facility shall not be extended to such retired officers on whom Rule 19(3) has been invoked.
- The facility will not be allowed to employees who seek voluntary retirement, are dismissed, removed or compulsorily retired from Bank's service.
- Since the privilege leave in the account of any officer is either encashed or lapses on retirement, there is no question of grant of leave encashment with the facility of LTC after retirement.(CDO/P&HRD-PM/47/2010-11 dt.27.10.2010)

6.4 CHANGE IN PLACE OF DOMICILE

While declaration of home town or place of domicile once made should ordinarily be treated as final, there may be exceptional cases warranting a change. Accordingly, it has been decided that while each case will have to be examined on merits, the following criteria will apply:

- The place declared as home town should be the place where the employee would normally reside but for the exigencies of service in the Bank, or it should be one which requires his/her physical presence at intervals for discharging various domestic or social obligations and accordingly, the employee should have been visiting that place regularly.
- The employee should own a residential property in that place or be a member of joint family having such property.
- The facility of changing the place of domicile is to be extended only once in the employee's service in the Bank.
- Competent Authority for approving change in place of domicile: Officers upto SMGS IV – DGM (B&O); Officers SMGS V – Reporting Authority not below the rank of DGM.

(CirDO/HR/49/2008-09 dt.10.07.2008)