

MILPERSMAN 1746-020

PROCEDURES WHEN AUTHORIZED TO MESS SEPARATELY

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References	(a) DoD 7000.14-R, Department of Defense Financial Management Regulation (DoDFMR), Volume 7A, Military Pay Policy and Procedures Active Duty and Reserve Pay (b) SECNAV M-5210.1 (c) Navy Procedures Training Guide (DJMS PTG), Part 3, Chapter 1
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1. **General Policy.** Enlisted Service members assigned to duty where a Government mess is operated may, under certain conditions, be authorized to mess separately (RATSSEP) and be paid a basic allowance for subsistence (BAS). Refer to [MILPERSMAN 7220-160](#).

2. **RATSSEP Granting Authority and Associated Policies**

a. **Authority.** The responsible commanding officer (RCO) of a shore activity operating one or more general messes is the authority granting RATSSEP.

b. **Applicability.** RATSSEP is authorized to the following:

- (1) Service members under that command,
- (2) Tenant command Service members assigned to subsist in the general mess operated by that RCO and
- (3) Service members assigned in ships who are temporarily required to subsist ashore.

c. **Cancelling RATSSEP.** Authorization for RATSSEP is cancelled upon transfer, including between tenant commands served by the same RCO.

d. **No Retroactive Approval.** RATSSEP cannot be approved retroactively.

e. **Time Payment Starts.** RATSSEP is paid from the time of verbal authorization, if the RCO operating the mess promptly confirms it in writing.

3. Justifying RATSSEP Payment

a. **Guidelines.** RCOs may grant RATSSEP to an enlisted Service member upon determining that two or more of the following factors justify payment:

- (1) Location of the Service member's residence,
- (2) Specialized duties,
- (3) Working hours,
- (4) Dining hall capacity and
- (5) Distance to the dining hall.

b. **Additional Requirement.** Service member must consistently and routinely miss two or more available general mess meals per day in order to qualify for RATSSEP.

c. **Procedures for Prorated BAS.** Reference (a) provides procedures for prorated BAS for Service members who do not meet the above criteria.

d. **Additional Extenuating Factors.** Although not all-encompassing, above factors as well as any additional extenuating circumstances must be taken into consideration, each request must stand on its own merit.

4. Key RCO Consideration in Approving RATSSEP. RCO must consider the necessity of maintaining an economical general mess with fluctuating numbers of patrons before giving RATSSEP with a subsistence allowance. RATSSEP must not adversely impact the economical administration of a general mess.

Note: "Item pricing" in the general mess will not be used as justification for approving RATSSEP.

5. **Pay Grade Based RATSSEP Policy for Enlisted Service Members**

a. **For Pay Grades E-1 through E-6.** RCOs should grant RATSSEP to enlisted Service members in pay grades E-1 through E-6, except basic trainees, who reside with their families.

(1) **Military Couples.** This authorization includes Service members married to other Service members, with no other dependents, who live together at their permanent duty station (PDS). See [MILPERSMAN 7220-180](#) for restrictions when one or both of the Service members are on sea duty.

(2) **Geographic Bachelors.** This authorization does not automatically extend to geographic bachelors in pay grades E-1 through E-6 residing in bachelor enlisted quarters. Policies pertaining to these Service members must conform to the block labeled "Justifying RATSSEP Payment."

b. **For Pay Grades E-7 and Above.** Senior enlisted Service members in pay grades E-7 and above who are not on sea duty, as defined by [MILPERSMAN 7220-150](#), are authorized RATSSEP, regardless of dependency status or guidelines in block labeled "Justifying RATSSEP Payment" of this article.

6. **RATSSEP Entitlement for Enlisted Service Members during Authorized Absences**

a. **Authorized absence includes:**

- (1) on leave,
- (2) hospitalized or
- (3) performing travel.

(a) temporary duty or temporary additional duty (TAD),

(b) permanent change of station or

(c) under orders away from their PDS.

b. **Entitlement:**

(1) Service members are entitled to RATSSEP for the duration of the leave, hospitalization or travel status, regardless of the BAS rate authorized at their PDS,

(2) Service members reporting TAD and not authorized RATSSEP at the PDS may be authorized RATSSEP by the gaining RCO.

7. **Crediting and Terminating RATSSEP**

a. **Requesting Authority to Credit a TAD Period.** If RATSSEP is not credited for a TAD period, the PDS must ascertain whether or not it is payable by requesting authority from the gaining RCO to credit RATSSEP. To ensure accurate payment, the gaining command should endorse orders stating whether Government messing was available with or without charge.

b. **Procedures for Crediting and Terminating RATSSEP:**
Specific procedures are contained in reference (c).

8. **Providing Unit Leave Listing.** Commanding officers of tenant commands having personnel subsisting in a general mess ashore or personnel assigned who have been granted RATSSEP will provide a copy of the commanding officer's monthly unit leave listing to the RCO each quarter.

9. **Fulfilling Subsistence Entitlement in Outlying Areas.**
RATSSEP is not intended to fulfill the subsistence entitlement in outlying areas where it is occasionally impracticable to use a Government mess due to time and distance factors. A prorated or supplemental allowance, or the full BAS rate should be considered in these instances.