

13 FAM 260

LANGUAGE TRAINING AT POST

(CT:TPD-001; 05-20-2004)
(Office of Origin: FSI)

13 FAM 261 Responsibilities

13 FAM 261.1 Principal Officer Responsibilities

(CT:TPD-001; 05-20-2004)
(Uniform State/USAID)
(Applies to Foreign Service Employees Only)

The principal officer has the following responsibilities:

(1) To establish and administer, in consultation with the chief officer of each participating agency and the regional language supervisor, if any, such foreign language training as may be necessary or desirable and practicable to meet the needs of the post and of the participating agencies, subject to the provisions of these regulations. Implicit in this responsibility is the judicious use of time and funds devoted to language training;

(2) To be familiar with the language-designated positions (LDPs) at post and the degree to which the post is in compliance with the provisions of the Foreign Service Act regarding LDPs;

(3) To insure that the interest and effort of individual employees in job-related language learning are adequately reflected in performance evaluations. Such indications should be included as part of the work requirements statement and discussed with the employee at the beginning of the rating period. To insure, in cases where an employee occupying an LDP has less than the proficiency required by the position, that the;

(a) Employee's supervisor will include progress toward achievement of the required proficiency in the definition of duties prepared at the beginning of a rating period;

(b) Employee's performance in meeting these goals is reflected in the employee's performance evaluation; and

(c) The supervisors give all practicable support to the employee's efforts to improve proficiency.

(4) To designate a post language officer (PLO) who is responsible for the local administration of the post's language program. To insure that the

post language officer is invested with adequate authority to make the necessary decisions and is given sufficient time to carry out the related duties. The principal officer is responsible for insuring that the PLO is appropriately evaluated in the annual performance rating. Desirable qualifications for the post language officer include:

- (a) Administrative experience;
- (b) Previous intensive language training at M/FSI; and
- (c) An S-3/R-3 proficiency in the language of the post.

13 FAM 261.2 Post Language Officer (PLO) Responsibilities

(CT:TPD-001; 05-20-2004)

(Uniform State/USAID)

(Applies to Foreign Service Employees Only)

Upon authority of the principal officer, the post language officer (PLO) has the following responsibilities:

- (1) To formulate and carry out plans for a single, fully coordinated language training program to meet the needs of all participating agencies;
- (2) To establish new classes;
- (3) To assign students to appropriate classes and make such changes to assignments as may be necessary;
- (4) To control:
 - (a) Instruction schedules for all components of the post language program, under the guidelines for intensity, course length, and attendance requirements established by these regulations;
 - (b) To terminate training when the PLO determines that it has become ineffective or inappropriate; and
 - (c) To establish priorities for access to post language program training in the event of shortage of funds, using the guidelines set forth in these regulations.
- (5) To supervise classes to the extent that time and competence permit;
- (6) To maintain records of attendance, progress of students, and work hours of instructors;

(7) Through established administrative channels at the post:

(a) To select and train candidates for instructor positions, with the assistance of the regional language supervisor when available;

(b) To arrange for employment of instructors and serve as their supervisor;

(c) To procure and maintain, for the benefit of all participating agencies, classrooms, furnishings, and teaching equipment including textbooks, tape recorders, and language tapes; and

(d) To account for teaching equipment loaned to personnel; and

(8) To take such other actions as may contribute to the economical and effective operations of the post language program.

13 FAM 261.3 Local Control Officer

(CT:TPD-001; 05-20-2004)

(Uniform State/USAID)

(Applies to Foreign Service Employees)

When one or more components of the post language program are geographically separated from the central administration of the program, a local control officer is designated for each such component, but overall coordination and reporting continue to be centralized under the authority delegated by the principal officer to the post language officer.

13 FAM 262 Instructional Purposes, Eligibility, Attendance, and Conduct

13 FAM 262.1 Purposes of and Priorities of Instruction

(CT:TPD-001; 05-20-2004)

(Uniform State/USAID)

(Applies to Foreign Service Employees Only)

a. Posts may establish language classes only for one of the purposes shown below. These purposes are listed in order of priority. Training at a post may not be authorized for any of those purposes unless all requirements for training of higher priority have been met.

(1) **Priority 1:** To assist personnel occupying LDPs (see 13 FAM 220) in enhancing language proficiency.

(2) **Priority 2:** To assist other personnel in achieving job-level proficiency (see 13 FAM 262.1 paragraphs b and c below).

(3) **Priority 3:** To assist officers with language limitation in achieving the qualifying level in a primary or primary-alternate language of the post. In unusual cases, officers with language limitation may receive instruction in a language not otherwise authorized at the post upon prior approval by M/FSI/Washington.

(4) **Priority 4:** To assist personnel in meeting general assignment-related needs by attaining a "courtesy" level of proficiency in a primary or primary-alternate language in accordance with the policies stated in 13 FAM 236 and with section 702 of the Foreign Service Act of 1980, as amended (22 U.S.C. 4023) (see 13 FAM 222.2).

(5) **Priority 5:** To assist adult family members of eligible employees, to the extent that funds permit, in attaining sufficient proficiency in a primary or primary-alternate language to enable them to participate in community and representational activities (see 13 FAM 262.2 paragraph b; see also section 704(c) of the Foreign Service Act of 1980, as amended (22 U.S.C. 4024(c)).

b. In general, priority will vary directly with the amount of time remaining in an employee's tenure at post; that is, recent arrivals have the highest priority and those approaching transfer will have the lowest priority. Normally, persons within six months of transfer will have lower priority.

c. There may be cases in which the employing agency has not established proficiency levels required for particular jobs, and it is necessary to apply the above priorities. The post language officer in consultation with the regional language supervisor, when available, and local agency heads and section chiefs, shall determine the proficiency level required.

13 FAM 262.2 Employee Eligibility

(CT:TPD-001; 05-20-2004)

(Uniform State/USAID)

(Applies to Foreign Service Employees Only)

a. To be eligible for enrollment in post language programs, persons must be U.S. citizens assigned or detailed as direct payroll employees of the Department or of a U.S. Government agency with which the Department has a reimbursement agreement for language training, or adult members of the families of eligible employees (see 13 FAM 810.1 paragraph b for definition of "adult"). Unless otherwise notified, posts may assume that satisfactory agreements are in force for all agencies for which training is projected in the annual budget request.

b. Contract employees of the U.S. Government are eligible for enrollment in post language training programs only if the contract for their

employment specifies that language training may be provided at U.S. Government expense. Adult family members of contract employees may receive language training only if so specified in the contract.

13 FAM 262.3 Family Eligibility

(CT:TPD-001; 05-20-2004)

(Uniform State/USAID)

(Applies to Foreign Service Employees Only)

It is the intention of the Department, USAID, and other participating agencies to meet the valid language training needs of adult members of eligible employees' families abroad. Eligible members of families may participate on the same basis as employees subject to such limitation as may be applied by the funding agency and by the following provisions:

(1) When limitations of funds at the post make it necessary for the post to choose between providing instruction for eligible employees and for eligible family members, priority shall be given to employed personnel, in accordance with the priorities stated in 13 FAM 262.1 paragraphs a and b above;

(2) All eligible family members who have no proficiency in an appropriate language upon arrival at post are encouraged to complete 100 hours of training in a primary language of the post of assignment subject to availability of funds;

(3) The post is authorized to extend training up to a total of 240 hours for those family members who have satisfactorily completed 100 hours of instruction, and who have a need for a higher proficiency in a primary language of the post to meet representational requirements and to participate in community activities; and

(4) Separate classes may be established for family members where it is impractical to combine them with employee students and where it is clearly in the interest of training effectiveness. However, training shall not be authorized for the sole purpose of convenience or as a right associated with rank.

13 FAM 262.4 Attendance Requirements and Termination of Training

(CT:TPD-001; 05-20-2004)

(Uniform State/USAID)

(Applies to Foreign Service Employees Only)

a. Sustained effort and progress in language work are essential to maintenance of eligibility for further instruction. To remain eligible for

instruction, personnel must maintain an average attendance of at least 90 percent of the scheduled hours of individual instruction, or at least 80 percent in the case of group instruction, excluding absences due to leave, official travel status, or sickness.

b. A scheduled hour of instruction is an hour for which an instructor is paid to teach the class. Personnel receiving individual instruction must notify instructors and/or post language officers not later than the day preceding a predictable absence, so that the time may be deleted from the instructor's work schedule or utilized otherwise in post language program activities.

c. When the number of eligible employees or family members actively participating in any class falls below three, the class shall be discontinued or combined with other classes no later than the end of the quarter in which the shortage occurs. Then, in consultation with the principal officer, heads of other participating agencies, or the post language officer, language instruction at U.S. Government expense for any student in the language training program does not clearly serve to satisfy a policy set forth herein, the participation of the student is to be discontinued immediately.

13 FAM 262.5 Conduct of Training

(CT:TPD-001; 05-20-2004)

(Uniform State/USAID)

(Applies to Foreign Service Employees Only)

a. **Size of Classes**—Normally, language instruction at field posts is to be authorized only for groups comprising at least three eligible participants and not more than six in all. Up to eight may be enrolled temporarily to meet emergency situations.

b. **Class Frequency**—A minimum of five class hours a week shall normally be required, except at the intermediate and advanced levels, when a minimum of three hours a week may be scheduled.

c. **Place and Time of Classes**—Classes will be conducted at the location and time most convenient to the largest number of all eligible participants, regardless of their sponsoring agency. When this is impractical because of the location of activities at the post or because some personnel are stationed away from the post, separate classes may be organized at other locations under supervision of a local control officer. Classes may not be set up in private residences unless specific arrangements for time and attendance control and adequate supervision are assured by the post language officer.

d. **Individual Tutoring May be Authorized When:**

(1) An employee with a job-related need for training or an officer with language limitation cannot be grouped with other students because of differences in language proficiency level, or because the employee's duties conflict with class schedules, principal officers may authorize individual instruction for as long as these conditions prevail. If instruction in classes or groups of two is feasible, it takes precedence over individual instruction; and

(2) Personnel who are stationed away from the post qualify for individual instruction, such training should be authorized, budgeted, and reported on the same basis as training at the post.

(3) Individual tutoring may not be authorized solely for the convenience of the employee or as a right associated with rank.

e. Accelerated Training for New Arrivals—Sporadic class attendance seldom produces a worthwhile result. On-and-off attendance for an hour a day stretched out over several months delays achievement of the purpose for which the training is authorized and, correspondingly, reduces the period during which the outcome is useful to the U.S. Government. To avoid conflicts between language training demands and the demands of other duties and to insure the prescribed minimum attendance (13 FAM 262.2 paragraph c), it is strongly recommended that training be concentrated at the beginning of the tour of duty.

It is the desire of the Department and USAID, that personnel assigned to foreign language posts achieve the minimum proficiency goals (see 13 FAM 222.2) as early as possible during their tours. Therefore, the Department and USAID encourage any schedule of accelerated training designed to assist newly arrived personnel in achieving these goals expeditiously either during or outside of office hours without undue interference with other normal operations. Both strongly recommend a minimum of two hours of formal class a day until 100 hours of attendance are achieved. Where feasible, posts are authorized to accomplish an initial concentration of training on a full-time basis.

f. Which Languages—Training in primary-A and primary-alternate languages will normally take precedence over training in primary-B languages. Training in secondary or any other non-primary languages is not authorized except with prior approval of the principal officer.

Simultaneous training in more than one language must have prior approval of the principal officer.

g. Authorization—Expenditure of appropriated funds for language training is justifiable only when it is clearly demonstrable that the training meets a need of the U.S. Government, and is otherwise legally authorized.

Except for the specific purposes for which instruction may be authorized (see 13 FAM 213 and 13 FAM 262.1), no language may be studied at U.S. Government expense which is not useful at the post. Study of a non-primary language may precede attainment of the minimum proficiency goals in one of the primary or primary-alternate languages only in cases where personnel have an immediate need for a higher level of skill in that language to perform their jobs. Such study requires prior approval by the principal officer.

Decisions pertaining to training assignment at post may be made by the principal officer or the chief representatives of other participating agencies where training is less than full-time or full-time for less than 12 weeks (see also 13 FAM 250.2-3 paragraph h below).

h. Full-Time Training—Designation of Department or USAID personnel for full-time language instruction for periods of 12 weeks or more at Foreign Service posts will be made only on personnel actions issued by the Department or USAID.

Posts wishing to nominate personnel for full-time language instruction of 12 weeks or longer, at field posts, should address requests to the agency of the nominee showing a clear and immediate need and stating when the employee or employees can be relieved of other duties to participate in training.

i. Informal Self-Study and Training Materials—In certain restricted cases, language training materials are provided to posts for use by employees and departments on an informal, self-study basis with the understanding that there is no expense to the U.S. Government other than the cost of these materials. Because of the high costs of preparing and shipping unrestricted quantities of these materials, their issuance is, normally, limited to cases where an immediate job-related need exists. An employee's long-range career interests or unsupported expectation of being assigned to a given language area in the future does not meet this criterion.

(1) Requests from post for self-study materials should include the following information:

(a) The name of the employee requiring materials;

(b) A statement of the job-related need; and

(c) An explanation of the circumstances which make self-study at the post more practical than the usual pattern of a period of intensive training at M/FSI/Washington before proceeding to post.

(2) Language tapes and materials sent to the field should not be returned to M/FSI, but retained in the post's language library for future use.

Alternatively, they may be taken by an employee who transfers to a new post, and turned over to that post's language officer for use in that post's language program.

13 FAM 263 Proficiency Goals

13 FAM 263.1 Minimum Goals

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(Uniform State/USAID)

(Applies to Foreign Service Employees)

The post language training policy of the Department and USAID is, minimally, satisfied when an employee reaches the level of language proficiency specified above for the employee's grade and position in a primary or primary-alternate language of the post.

13 FAM 263.2 Beyond Minimum Goals

(CT:TPD-001; 05-20-2004)

(Uniform State/USAID)

(Applies to Foreign Service Employees)

It is the intent of the Department and USAID that officers continue training in a primary or primary-alternate language at the post. The principal officer is urged to permit other personnel to continue language learning activities beyond minimum proficiency goals on a space-available basis and to the extent that work schedules and available funds permit.

13 FAM 264 THROUGH 269 UNASSIGNED