



DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES AIR FORCE
WASHINGTON, DC

10 July 2002

MEMORANDUM FOR MAJCOM DIRECTORS

FROM: AF/DPDE

SUBJECT: Air Force Educational Leave of Absence (AFELA) Policy Update (No 2002-09)

Effective immediately, the attached updated AFELA policy will replace the AFELA Policy No 2002-07 sent out 22 February 2002. A list of commonly asked questions and answers is attached.

This policy will be incorporated in the next revision of AFI 36-2306.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "James Sweizer".

JAMES M. SWEIZER

Chief, Voluntary Education Branch

Directorate of Personnel Force Development

Attachments:

1. AFELA Policy
2. Frequently asked Questions and Answers

Attachment 1

10. Air Force Educational Leave of Absence (AFELA). HQ USAF/DPDE has overall management of the AFELA program for the Office of the Secretary of the Air Force. The Education Services Officer (ESO) manages the AFELA Program at base level and makes an academic evaluation of each AFELA application. Final approval authority resides with the appropriate command authority (Squadron Commander, etc.) after consideration as to whether arrangements can be made to cover the applicant's duty requirements during the AFELA without endangering the mission performance of the organization.

The AFELA program is intended primarily for career AF military personnel. A leave of absence may be granted for a period not to exceed two years for the purposes of permitting the member to pursue a program of education.

10.1. Upon the academic evaluation and recommendation of the ESO, the unit commander may authorize AFELA, up to two calendar years.

10.2. Individuals on AFELA receive basic pay only. Participants are not eligible to receive BAH, BAS or any other pay and allowance to which he/she would otherwise be entitled during the period.

10.3. AFELA participants must:

10.3.1. In the case of an enlisted member,

10.3.1.1. Have completed at least one term of enlistment and have reenlisted.

10.3.1.2. Have sufficient retainability. Member agrees in writing to extend his/her current enlistment after completion (or termination) of the program of education for which the leave of absence was granted for a period of two months of additional obligated service for each month of educational leave of absence, in addition to any other period of obligated service or active duty to which the member is already committed.

10.3.2. In the case of an officer:

10.3.2.1. Have completed his initial period of obligated service on active duty.

10.3.2.2. Must agree to serve on active duty after completion (or termination) of the program of education for which the leave of absence was granted for a period of two months of additional obligated service for each month of educational leave of absence, in addition to any other period of obligated service or active duty to which the member is already committed.

10.3.3. Carry at least the minimum number of hours required for full-time study as established by the educational institution.

10.3.4. Attend classes as outlined on AF Form 204, **Air Force Educational Leave of Absence (AFELA) Request.**

10.3.6. Complete any extension of enlistment or reenlistment, or any period of obligated service incurred by any previous leave of absence granted under this section.

10.4. AFELA participants may not:

10.4.1. Begin AFELA within 12 months of completing any previous AFELA or education deferment.

10.4.2. Be on a control roster.

10.4.3. Be in pipeline status.

10.4.4. Use Tuition Assistance.

10.5. The length of the AFELA program may not exceed 2 calendar years, including term breaks.

10.6. The ESO processes applications using AF Form 204, **Air Force Educational Leave of Absence Request**, and coordinates with the Military Personnel Flight (MPF) or appropriate agency.

10.6.1. Applicant fills out an AF Form 988, **Leave Request/Authorization**, checking "other" in block 8 and indicating "Air Force Educational Leave of Absence, DFAS Code 1" in the remarks section of block 8.

10.6.2. An officer's application is forwarded through AFIT/CIRS for review and recommendation and to HQ AFPC/DPAPE for review and clearance.

10.6.3. AFELA applications will be cleared through HQ USAF/AFCMOA for colonels or colonels select, USAF/HCP for chaplains, HQ USAFR/RSRP for AF Recruiters and HQ AFOSI/DP for investigators.

Attachment 2

Frequently Asked Questions on AFELA

1. Q. Who has final approval authority for allowing a student to use AFELA?
 - A. The member's commander has final approval authority; the ESO has the responsibility to advise both the student and his commander of the program and responsibilities.
 2. Q. Can a person take AFELA for a DL program?
 - A. Yes, as long as the student is considered a full-time student by the institution.
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3. Q. Can the student take AFELA for just one semester?

A. Yes, AFELA can be used for any period of time up to two calendar years including breaks.

4. Q. Does a member living in military housing have to move out if AFELA is used?

A. No, but the member must work with the local base housing office, since a member on AFELA does not receive BAH or BAS, the housing office will charge the member rent. A new housing policy was developed to accommodate AFELA members in government housing (see below attachment).

17

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5. Q. Does the student have to be a full time student while on AFELA?

A. Paragraph 10.3.4 of the policy states a student needs to be full time.

6. Q. Why does the student on AFELA receive basic pay only?

A. According to 10 U.S.C. 708, participants are not eligible to receive BAH, BAS or any other pay and allowance to which he/she would otherwise be entitled during the period of AFELA.

7. Q. Do any of the other services have a similar program?

A. Although 10 U.S.D. 708 gives each service secretary the authority to use educational Leave of Absence, none have elected to implement Education Leave of Absence programs in voluntary education.

8. Q. Am I eligible to extend my enlistment if approved for AFELA?

A. Member must reenlist prior to applying for AFELA.

9. Q. Can a student pursue a PHD under AFELA?

A. Yes, the law does not limit the degree or program pursued by a student.

10. Q. Does a student return to duty from AFELA during semester breaks?

A. No, AFELA is continuous for the period of time approved. If a student completes or terminates AFELA prior to the initial period of time approved, AFELA is considered complete and all policy and restrictions in AFI 36-2306 will be in affect.