

## CHAPTER 2: Before You Leave Home



*Adélie penguins at Cape Royds, Ross Island. Photo by Mike Lucibella.*

You will travel through at least one foreign country en route to Antarctica, and once there you will be living in a region that does not provide many modern conveniences. Planning ahead is essential and will contribute greatly to your effectiveness and comfort. You will require a passport and you will have to pass physical and dental examinations. Please read the following information carefully. Your supervisor, science team leader, or ASC point-of-contact (POC) will answer any questions you may have.

### PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

#### Medical and Dental Examinations

You must pass rigorous medical and dental examinations before going to the Antarctic. Antarctica is an extreme, remote environment, and medical facilities are limited. USAP stations at McMurdo, South Pole, and Palmer are equipped and staffed to provide the routine ambulatory care that would be expected in a U.S. clinic. They also have the capability to stabilize and manage a range of emergency medical and dental conditions before patients are transported off the continent for further care. However, medical evacuations are costly, take a lot of time and effort, and place others at risk. Weather may make travel impossible for extended periods of time, and evacuations from remote camps and ships present additional difficulties. Therefore, the physical qualification (PQ) process administered by ASC seeks to screen out people with conditions that cannot effectively be managed on the Ice or aboard ship.

The PQ process applies to all grantees, ASC employees, contractors, military personnel, and guests of NSF. The U.S. will accept the PQ determinations of some other National Antarctic Programs. If you are not a U.S. citizen or permanent resident, you should contact NSF to determine the process you will need to follow. If you are PQ'd under the USAP, your PQ is also valid for deployment with the U.S. Arctic program.

Deployment clearance begins when ASC is notified that you are a candidate to deploy to Antarctica, either through the Support Information Package (SIP) for grantees, hiring paperwork for contract employees, or other documents. The medical department is located at the University of Texas Medical Branch (UTMB) in Galveston, Texas. Upon

authorization, UTMB sends each candidate an e-mail containing information on how to access medical forms and instructions online.

Note that the PQ process may change as new information on risks or treatment options arise. Therefore, you should only obtain the tests required in your packet, even if different tests were required for a previous deployment. **The USAP will only reimburse you for the tests and exams that are indicated as necessary in your packet.**

**Please read all of the instructions.** Information in the packet will answer most questions about how to schedule exams and return the completed information to UTMB. If you have further questions or special circumstances, please contact your POC. UTMB contact information is included in your deployment packet.

**ASC Employees:** If participants have their own insurance, they should submit expenses to their insurance first. ASC will reimburse participants for approved out-of-pocket expenses. Receipts must be submitted to the hiring teammate (e.g., PAE, GSC). **NOTE:** ASC employees are required to use Labcorp for testing. Please contact UTMB if you need to have a Labcorp packet sent to you. You can take this packet to your local Labcorp location to have your labs drawn.

**Grantees:** Grantees should also first submit expenses through their own insurance and then may seek reimbursement for their physical and dental examinations from their NSF grant. Work with your principal investigator (PI) for procedures.

**NOTE:** Treatments to resolve medical or dental conditions in order to meet USAP screening criteria are not reimbursable.

You will mail or fax the completed documentation to UTMB. If your medical providers have questions concerning the deployment exam or required labs or tests, direct them to the Dear Doctor and Dear Dentist letters in the packet for detailed instructions. Doctors and dentists may also contact UTMB directly.

Candidates are responsible for scheduling examinations early to ensure all information is provided to ASC **no more than eight weeks** after the PQ packet is received. You should start the process as early as possible, in case additional testing is required for your clearance. Ensure that contacts at UTMB and ASC know how to reach you at all times (via phone and/or e-mail) should additional information be required. **Make sure the information you submit is complete, and submit it early to allow time to resolve any problems that might arise.**

All medical information, laboratory results, X-rays, dental exams, releases, and personal information forms are the property of the USAP and will not be returned to candidates. Make copies of all the paperwork for your own files.

## Waivers

Candidates who do not meet USAP criteria and are determined “Not Physically Qualified” (NPQ) may request a waiver, which triggers a NSF review of their condition. UTMB will provide information on how to apply for a waiver with the NPQ notification. Be aware that any additional testing or treatment needed for a waiver will not be reimbursable. Also note that the waiver process can take up to eight weeks, and your position may be offered to an alternate if you cannot make your deployment date while awaiting the results.

## Immunizations

If you are planning to travel after your deployment, you may need additional immunizations. Consult your physician or the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) at 800-232-4636 or at [www.cdc.gov/travel/default.aspx](http://www.cdc.gov/travel/default.aspx) for current immunization recommendations for the areas where you plan to travel.

If vaccinations or medications (e.g., malaria chemoprophylaxis) are required before your travel, you must purchase them before leaving home and take them to the clinic upon your arrival on station. Any vaccinations will be administered to you at the end of the season. No immunizations are required for return to the United States. Under international health regulations, other countries may require international certificates of vaccination against yellow fever.

## Privacy Act Compliance

All medical information gathered from you by NSF or its contractor is maintained in accordance with the Privacy Act of 1974 (Public Law 93-579). NSF's authority to collect medical, dental, and psychological information is derived from its authority to prescribe rules governing its operations, as set forth in section 1870(a) of title 42 of the U.S. Code. If you do not provide the information requested, you may be disqualified from participating in the USAP.

### First Steps:

1. **PQ e-mail** - print online forms, make and attend medical appointments, mail completed paperwork to UTMB **no later than** eight weeks after receipt.
2. **Deployment e-mail** - print and complete forms, sign papers, mail completed paperwork as soon as possible to ASC Travel.

## DEPLOYMENT PAPERWORK

Once you have been identified as a USAP participant (or alternate), you will receive an e-mail containing a link to the Deployment Packet. It will be sent a few weeks after you receive the PQ e-mail. Please review this paperwork carefully. It includes information you need to know before you get to Antarctica, and it includes forms you will need to fill out and return to ASC Travel.

### Travel Arrangements

ASC Travel begins work on your ticketing and itinerary early in the qualifying process. You may be consulted in advance to establish your deployment date, but your itinerary and tickets will not be released to you

until you have: 1) completed the physical qualification process and been medically approved for deployment, 2) completed and signed all deployment paperwork and mailed it to the ASC Travel office, and 3) provided proof that any necessary visas have been obtained.

You will travel through New Zealand, Chile, or other countries en route to Antarctica, using airline tickets provided by the USAP. The International Air Transportation Fair Competitive Practices Act of 1974 (better known as the Fly America Act) requires the use of U.S. carriers for USAP-supported travel. ASC Travel reserves, purchases, and issues your tickets for direct air travel from your home airport to New Zealand or Chile. This information is taken directly from the travel paperwork you submit. Any deviation from the direct route must be authorized in advance by a NSF program manager or ASC management. To get the best fare, airline tickets are purchased at least three weeks in advance.

Every effort is made to obtain flight dates as requested, but this is not always possible. When ticket information is sent to you, make sure to check the date and time of travel as it may not be what you requested. Also make sure the name on your tickets corresponds to the one in your passport (i.e., no nicknames). If your tickets have discrepancies, contact ASC Travel immediately.

Remember that during the southbound trans-Pacific flight you cross the International Date Line, losing a day. For example, if you leave the United States on a Tuesday, you will arrive in New Zealand on Thursday. On your return, you will leave New Zealand and arrive in the continental U.S. on the same day.

Your **Airport of Departure (AOD)** is the location you designate as your residence on either the SIP or your deployment paperwork, and it is the city to which you will be returned. You will not be able to change your AOD once your tickets have been issued. The only exception would be proof of a change of residence that occurred during your deployment and approved before re-deployment by ASC management.

## Travel Expenses

**Grantees:** Your PI or team leader can give you information on what expenses are covered by your grant and any special training or meetings that may be required.

**ASC employees:** Before deployment, contact your company's Human Resources or Finance department with questions regarding expense reimbursement. Take any previously unreimbursed expense receipts with you to Antarctica, as you will be able to complete expense reimbursement there. Your particular employer will advise you if anything additional is required.

## Meals and Lodging in Antarctica

Meals and lodging are provided at no charge to participants at all USAP stations, aboard the research vessels *Laurence M. Gould* and *Nathaniel B. Palmer*, and in all field camps. If you are traveling with foreign expeditions or private operators, be prepared to pay meal charges aboard their ships.

## PASSPORTS, VISAS, AND PERMITS

### Passports

You must have a valid passport before leaving the United States. Obtaining a passport is your responsibility, and it typically takes at least six weeks. Go to <https://travel.state.gov> for information on how to apply for a passport. If you are a federal employee, your agency must obtain an official passport by contacting the Department of State. **Bearerers of official passports require visas in some countries that may not require visas of regular passport bearers.**

If you already have a passport, make sure that it will not expire during your overseas stay. **Airlines require that your passport remain valid for at least six months beyond your intended stay.**

It is a good idea to keep a photocopy of your passport (including pages containing visas) in a separate place in the event that your passport is lost. Assistance with replacing passports lost in New Zealand or Antarctica can be done via the Christchurch Travel Office. ASC's South American agent, Damco, provides similar assistance for Peninsula-based participants.

### Visas and Permits

The requirements of the four countries through which most USAP travelers pass are explained below. **Any necessary visas should be obtained before leaving the United States by contacting the embassies of the countries to be visited.** Failure to do so will complicate or delay your travel. **The USAP does not pay for nor provide assistance in obtaining visas.** If your New Zealand or Chilean visa application requires an itinerary and letter confirming your participation in the USAP, contact ASC Travel and the required documents will be provided.

**New Zealand:** U.S. passport holders do not need a visa to enter New Zealand. However, a visitor's permit is required. ASC will provide all ASC-ticketed participants with an official letter requesting a 12-month visitor's permit, and the permit will be issued at the airport upon your arrival. Be aware that the total time spent in both New Zealand and Antarctica is recorded by New Zealand Immigration as time spent in New Zealand. See Chapter 5: "Traveling Through New Zealand" for more information.

**Chile:** If you will be traveling with a standard U.S. passport, you do not need a visa to enter Chile. Bearers of official passports need a visa, which is available from the Chilean Embassy, 1732 Massachusetts Ave., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036 (202-785-1746). Send a letter stating the purpose of your visit and enclose your passport and a return envelope. For more information, go to [www.chile-usa.org](http://www.chile-usa.org).

**Argentina:** If you will be traveling with a standard U.S. passport, you do not need a visa to enter Argentina. Bearers of official passports need a visa, which is available from the Argentine Embassy, 1600 New Hampshire Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20009 (202-238-6460). Send a letter stating the purpose of your visit and enclose your passport and a return envelope. For more information, visit [www.embassyofargentina.us](http://www.embassyofargentina.us).

**Australia:** USAP participants with a U.S. passport who have been ticketed by ASC and routed through Australia en route to New Zealand do not need a visa if they are remaining inside the international terminal of the airport. If you plan to leave the airport or plan leisure travel through Australia, you must obtain a visa. Usually, this can be accomplished online, but you may be required to submit an application and send your passport to the Embassy of Australia, 1601 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036 (202-797-3000). For more information, visit [usa.embassy.gov.au](http://usa.embassy.gov.au).

**Marine Crew Visas:** Sea travel requires a Marine Crew Visa (MCV Class 988). If you are embarking or disembarking a ship in Hobart, the MCV must be obtained before you arrive in Australia. The application can take 5-30 days. ASC Travel can assist in this process.



## Visas for non-U.S. citizens.

Foreign nationals residing in the U.S. are responsible for obtaining the appropriate visas before departing for Antarctica. Contact the embassy of the country through which you will pass to learn the requirements. Allow up to eight weeks for the visa to be processed. Remember, no tickets will be purchased until visas are obtained and proof of that provided to ASC Travel.

If you are not a U.S. citizen, you will need a two-entry visa for New Zealand or for South American countries through which you will pass, one for initial entry and one for return from Antarctica. It is your responsibility to check with an official of your country well before the planned departure. The USAP will not act on your behalf.

Resident aliens should determine if there are any other regulations governing absence from the U.S. by checking with the U.S. Immigration & Naturalization Service. Lack of compliance with regulations can cause loss of accrued residence time benefits that are applicable toward citizenship and/or re-entry. It can take several months, and even require a visit to the consulate, for non-U.S. citizens to get a new visa.

U.S. visas for foreign nationals. If you are a foreign national not residing in the U.S. and will be traveling to the U.S. after you have been to Antarctica, please review the Department of State Visa Services internet information at [travel.state.gov](http://travel.state.gov) for visitor visa and student visa information and requirements.

## CUSTOMS

While in transit through foreign countries, your luggage will be inspected by Customs officials and may be screened by dogs that are trained to detect controlled substances and agricultural products. In fact, thorough searches of luggage, as well as body searches, are routinely conducted by Customs authorities at the time of entry. Importation and possession of controlled substances without prescriptions, marijuana, weapons (especially firearms and switchblade knives), pornography, and certain animal/agricultural products without special approval are strictly prohibited when entering New Zealand and Chile. In New Zealand, violators will be instantly fined NZ\$400 or more. Transportation of the above-mentioned items aboard U.S. military vessels and aircraft is also prohibited by federal law.

New Zealand has strict limits on what may and may not enter the country. Items are restricted if they are known to carry pests or diseases that could endanger native plants and animals. Travelers must declare all restricted items when entering New Zealand. Restricted items will be examined on arrival and if found to comply with current requirements will be permitted to enter. People who knowingly bring restricted items into New Zealand without declaring them will be prosecuted and are subject to severe and immediate penalties. For more information, visit [www.mpi.govt.nz](http://www.mpi.govt.nz).

Customs regulations require that prescription drugs be hand-carried and not placed in checked baggage. Carry a copy of each prescription provided by your personal physician. See Chapter 3 for further information on prescription medications.

There are limits on the quantities of tobacco and alcohol that can be brought into many countries. Please refer to these websites for current customs regulations:

**New Zealand:** [www.customs.govt.nz](http://www.customs.govt.nz)

**Chile:** [www.aduana.cl](http://www.aduana.cl)

**Australia:** [www.homeaffairs.gov.au/trav/ente/duty-free-concessions](http://www.homeaffairs.gov.au/trav/ente/duty-free-concessions)

**Argentina:** [argentina.visahq.com/customs](http://argentina.visahq.com/customs)

In addition to personal effects, each passenger is entitled to the Visitor Concessionary Entry of items that a visitor normally carries, such as a laptop computer, cameras, and a smartphone. These goods must be for personal use, and they must be taken with the passenger when he or she leaves the country. There are heavy penalties for concealing dutiable goods (e.g., cameras, electronics, binoculars) from Customs or for making false declarations. It is against the law to sell or give away dutiable goods without paying duty. In addition, taxes may apply to items that are staying in New Zealand. The New Zealand Customs Service does not assess a tax or duty for items going to Antarctica.

If you plan on carrying any single item worth more than US\$1,000, excluding personal items such as laptops and cameras, please indicate that on the Trip Details form in the deployment paperwork you will receive from ASC.

Note: ASC does not provide personal property insurance.

## Customs and Your Equipment

All scientific and technical equipment should be shipped, either from the U.S. or from Antarctica, as cargo. Cargo is designated NSF and hence is exempt from duty and taxes. If you decide to ship or carry technical equipment to Antarctica through another country as accompanied baggage, you must prepare in advance in order to avoid two possible costs: 1) paying import duty or posting bond to a foreign country (even though your equipment is only transiting through), and 2) paying duty when you bring the equipment back into the U.S. There are several methods of protecting against payment of unwarranted duty (for which you would not be reimbursed):

- 1. Registry with U.S. Customs.** Before leaving the U.S., you can register scientific and technical equipment (including cameras, personal computers, spare parts, or other equipment) with U.S. Customs by completing U.S. Customs Form 4457. Contact Customs at any U.S. international airport. Also, Coastal Customs Registration Centers are located in the World Trade Center in Los Angeles. Should you wish to register your items with Customs, you must do so in person, and you must possess the articles and serial numbers to be registered. Prepare a list of items (with serial numbers and/or appropriate documentation) before your arrival at the registration center. If you do not have a receipt, or the item was a gift, Customs will determine the value. Registering your items will ease re-entry into the U.S.
- 2. Letter from your institution.** When carrying scientific equipment as accompanied baggage, list it on your institution's stationery and include a statement that the material will be used for research at a U.S. government Antarctic station. Keep the list with the material to ease clearance through Customs in Argentina and Chile. This letter is not sufficient for transiting through New Zealand.
- 3. Temporary importation of your equipment into New Zealand.** There is a customs law for non-military, USAP participants entering New Zealand. Grantees, contractors, and other visitors carrying high-tech and scientific equipment (not including laptop computers) as part of their luggage must carry a New Zealand Customs form that lists the equipment and its value and which states 1) that the goods will not be left, sold, or disposed of in New Zealand without the written permission of New Zealand Customs; and 2) that the goods listed will be exported from New Zealand within 12 months of their first landing. Appropriate forms must be obtained from ASC Travel in Denver before you depart for New Zealand, and they must be returned to ASC Travel upon your return to your home institution.

**NOTE:** Technical event participants fall into a special category. Contact ASC Travel.

- 4. Carnet de Passage.** Visitors from the media and other non-grantee organizations are not issued NSF letters for their professional equipment. To avoid paying customs duty, anyone carrying professional equipment, including cameras and other recording devices, must have a carnet. NSF representatives will not help you get a carnet and will not pay customs duty for you. Obtain the Carnet de Passage for Temporary Admission before you leave for Antarctica. If you have a carnet, you do not need to register items with U.S. Customs. In the United States, the U.S. Treasury has appointed the U.S. Council for International Business to issue carnets: [www.uscib.org/ata-carnet-export-service-ud-718/](http://www.uscib.org/ata-carnet-export-service-ud-718/).

## PERSONAL MATTERS

Before you leave for Antarctica, take care of your personal affairs. Designate someone you trust as your stateside representative. It can be difficult to handle financial or other personal affairs from Antarctica. Because mail delivery to Antarctica is not always reliable or timely, you should NOT forward your mail or change your address to Antarctica. You will be able to communicate with your stateside representative by telephone and e-mail.

## Power of Attorney

You may wish to establish a general or special power of attorney before leaving home. A general power of attorney permits your agent to act for you in ordinary business and commercial transactions: to endorse and write checks, to sign documents and bills of sale on your behalf, and so forth. A special power of attorney restricts the agent's

authority to functions specifically described. For example, you might empower your agent only to sell a particular piece of property for not less than a stated price.

Some institutions, such as savings banks, may not accept a power of attorney document. They may require you to make special arrangements with them before others may withdraw your funds. Individuals may be reluctant to communicate with your agent under a general power of attorney if the authority for a particular transaction is not specifically set forth, or if your agent's authority is otherwise in doubt. Consult a lawyer before drafting a power of attorney.

A power of attorney automatically expires at the time of your death and defers to information contained in your will. A will ensures distribution of your estate as you desire and not arbitrarily, as state laws require if there is no will. You are urged to consider having a will prepared before you deploy to Antarctica.

## Notary Services

No universally recognized notary services are available in Antarctica. Therefore, you cannot count on being able to execute or revoke legal documents requiring notarization. Settle legal matters before leaving for Antarctica.

## Absentee Ballot

If you wish to vote in any local, state, or federal elections by absentee ballot, you must arrange to receive an absentee ballot from your election authorities. However, keep in mind the uncertainties of mail in and out of Antarctica. Voting regulations are frequently updated, and the most current information for U.S. citizens interested in voting from an overseas location can be found at [www.fvap.gov](http://www.fvap.gov). Be sure to check the absentee voting requirements of your home precinct before you leave for Antarctica.

## Personal Finances

Paychecks are not sent to Antarctica. All employees are required to have a U.S. bank account for the electronic direct deposit of payroll funds. ASC employees should refer to the paperwork received from their employer for detailed information about travel funds, marine compensation, and other pay-related issues.

When you deploy, take enough money with you to meet all eventualities. You should plan to have a minimum of \$500 for your trip to Antarctica. This amount will vary with personal spending habits, length of stay and travel delays. Ensure you plan for the purchase of personal items (e.g., soap, toothpaste, souvenirs) in Antarctica. Most foreign banks will not cash personal checks or cashier checks drawn on your home bank. Neither NSF nor ASC representatives in New Zealand will advance funds, nor will they accept a personal check.

There is an ATM at McMurdo Station but none at the other Antarctic stations or onboard the research vessels. Palmer is 100% cashless (including checks). Bring a credit or debit card. Conversely, South Pole accepts ONLY cash.

International credit cards (e.g., MasterCard, Visa) are generally accepted in New Zealand and South American countries. NOTE: Make sure that your ATM and credit cards do not expire while you are away from home. Notify your bank(s) that you will be traveling internationally before you leave the U.S.

**Banking in New Zealand.** Banks in New Zealand will exchange U.S. cash and travelers checks for New Zealand currency. You can also withdraw funds from banks using your credit cards if you have previously established a personal identification number (PIN) with your bank. ATMs marked with "Plus" or "Cirrus" (located in both the Auckland and Christchurch airports) accept credit cards with a PIN, as well as ATM and debit cards.

**Banking in Chile.** In Santiago, money exchange is available only in the international terminal (not the domestic terminal). There are ATMs located throughout the airport, but be aware that there may not be time to exchange money between your arrival in Santiago and your departure to Punta Arenas. However, U.S. currency can be used for taxes and fees. Banks in Punta Arenas are closed half of Saturday and all of Sunday, so plan accordingly. There are ample ATMs throughout Punta Arenas. ATMs marked with "Plus" or "Cirrus" accept credit cards with a PIN, as well as ATM and debit cards.

**Joint bank accounts.** If funds need to be drawn from a bank account while you are in Antarctica, you may wish to have the account established jointly with another person to permit the other person to withdraw the funds as required. The joint tenant of the account can legally withdraw any and all funds.

**Debt payments.** Arrange for the regular payment of insurance premiums and any other term debts that you may have while in Antarctica. Mail service to McMurdo and Palmer Stations during the austral winter is limited, and it is not available at all at South Pole Station (February to November). Mail delivery to all stations in the austral summer is erratic. DO NOT rely on the mail service to pay bills from Antarctica (see Postal Services in Chapter 6).

## Income Tax

It is each participant's responsibility to ensure that U.S. taxes are filed each year. For federal income tax returns, you may request a filing extension from the district director of the Internal Revenue Service. However, interest is charged on the unpaid balance of your tax, beginning on April 15.

You can file your income taxes online (federal, state, and local) or, if you have arranged for someone to have a special power-of-attorney, he or she may file for you. IRS district directors have forms for this purpose, or you may have a lawyer draw up the document. Remember that if your agent fails to file, you are still responsible for paying any penalties.

The IRS does not consider Antarctica extraterritorial, so U.S. tax law applies. For further information, you can contact the IRS ([www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov)). District directors are in each state at the same address where you normally file tax returns.

**ASC Employees:** Federal and state income taxes are withheld from all ASC employee paychecks.

## Insurance

**Personal Baggage Insurance.** Baggage insurance is provided if ASC purchases your airline ticket. If a claim needs to be processed, it is your responsibility to contact the airlines and complete the required paperwork. Notify ASC Travel and keep them posted on the situation. Loss protection is limited and is only provided during commercial flight segments.

**Personal property and cargo insurance.** To protect against loss that occurs during transit to or from the airport, while in a hotel, or during your stay in Antarctica, it is your responsibility to retain personal property insurance coverage. The U.S. government normally does not assume liability for damage to or loss of personal property unless there is clear evidence of negligence by government personnel acting within the scope of their employment. Although every effort is made to care for cargo (personal and scientific), the USAP is not responsible for any damage that may occur.

## Grantees

Make sure you have adequate insurance for your stay in Antarctica. An NSF grant for work in Antarctica does not provide insurance coverage. Check with your employer or a financial consultant to find out what insurance you have and determine what you should have.

- 1. Health insurance.** Although medical personnel are available at each U.S. Antarctic station, the medical clinics are for urgent care and emergency needs only. The clinic physician is not to be considered your primary care physician. You will be responsible for any costs of hospitalization, medical care, laboratory fees, and other charges incurred outside of Antarctica. Before leaving the United States, examine your health coverage and purchase additional insurance if you need it.
- 2. Life insurance.** Federal employees' Civil Service policies remain in effect during Antarctic duty. However, NSF does not provide life insurance for its grantees in Antarctica. Therefore, you are urged to examine your life insurance coverage before departure to ensure you are adequately covered. You should also check with your institution to see whether its group policies provide coverage or exceptions for travel and work in remote regions. In making arrangements for insurance, keep in mind that Antarctic flights are generally considered non-scheduled military airplane operations.



3. **Travel insurance.** Some insurance companies offer air travel insurance for scheduled commercial and Air Mobility Command flights. This insurance is available at most commercial airports and Air Mobility Command terminals. It generally does not cover you during flights to Antarctica or during flights in Antarctica.
4. **Equipment insurance.** You should also have insurance for project equipment, as determined by the project's principal investigator (PI).
5. **Worker's Compensation.** If you will be working for a PI as a volunteer, worker's compensation coverage may not be provided.

## ASC Employees

Employees may be eligible to enroll annually in various insurance options offered by their employer (e.g., Leidos, PAE, GSC).

1. **Health insurance.** If you are required to leave Antarctica for medical treatment, as approved by the ASC Medical organization, you are responsible for your medical bills unless the injury or illness is deemed work-related. However, the cost of extracting you from Antarctica is borne by your employer.

**NOTE:** It is highly recommended that you carry a form of medical insurance that provides coverage if you travel internationally after deployment. If you have enrolled in your employer's medical insurance, COBRA will be available upon completion of your contract. If medical insurance was not elected, COBRA will not be available.

2. **Worker's Compensation.** Any ASC employee who is injured while in Antarctica may be covered by worker's compensation. Within one day of the incident (regardless of the severity), a Medical Report Form must be completed by the medical staff and submitted to the designated person at the station or vessel. If you feel you will need treatment after redeployment from Antarctica, you should contact your employer's human resources office to establish a claim before leaving Antarctica or before disembarking a vessel. If the injury cannot be treated on station or on the vessel (as determined by ASC Medical), you may be transported off the continent or vessel to be evaluated. Keep in mind that worker's compensation covers only injuries. Medical issues that are pre-existing or are not work-related in nature (e.g., appendicitis, kidney stones) are not covered by worker's compensation. Your insurance policy through your employer or through an outside carrier may cover different conditions.

**Notification of Injuries and Evacuations.** If you are injured while working in Antarctica, or if you are taken to New Zealand or South America for a medical consultation or evacuation, USAP management will not notify your family of the injury if you are physically capable of contacting them on your own. In the event you are physically unable to do so, USAP management will notify your emergency contact.

