

NJSPC

RESETTLEMENT HAND-BOOK

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This is a concise guide for individuals and groups interested in the resettlement of Japanese Americans. It deals with only such regulations and procedures pertinent to the subject as desired by those who are ready to take action.

Definitions: (Terms used in this hand-book)

"Japanese Americans", more often called "Niseis" meaning the second generation, refer to American citizens of Japanese ancestry. Niseis involved in the present resettlement efforts are those who are qualified for jobs, anxious to work, loyal to the United States, and whom the Government desires to resettle. Approximately 30,000 are in this group.

"Relocation Centers" are the communities (barracks type camps) to which the evacuees have been removed after the initial military evacuation from the West Coast. These centers are under the supervision of the War Relocation Authority. The chief administrative officer of each of the ten Relocation Centers is called the Project Director.

"Resettlement" means indefinite leave from a relocation center for the purpose of accepting a job and settling in a community where a Nisei may establish himself as an integral part of American democratic life. When a Nisei has a family, his family will be resettled with him, after he has established himself in the community.

"War Relocation Authority" is an independent civil agent of the Federal Government in charge of all aspects of the life of evacuees, including Niseis' leaves. The Headquarters: The Barr Building, 910 17th Street, N.W., Washington, D. C. Officials concerned in resettlement are:

- Dillon S. Myer, Director.
- Thomas Holland, Chief, Employment Division.

"Committee on Resettlement of Japanese Americans" is sponsored by the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America, and the Home Missions Council of North America, in cooperation with the Foreign Missions Conference of North America, to represent the Protestant churches in a program of permanent dispersal resettlement of Japanese Americans in cooperation with the W.R.A. The Headquarters: 297 Fourth Avenue, New York, N.Y. Telephone: Gramercy 5-3475, Extension 48.

George E. Rundquist, Executive Secretary.

Excerpts from Government Document, Title 32 - NATIONAL DEFENSE, Chapter I - War Relocation Authority, Part 5 - Issuance of Leave for Departure from a Relocation Area prescribed pursuant to the provisions of Executive Order No. 9102 of March 18, 1942, issued at Washington, D.C., September 26, 1942, by D. S. Myer, Director of WRA.

5.1 Types of leave. (c) An indefinite leave, for employment, education or indefinite residence outside the relocation area.

Comment: Destination of leave must not be in the areas evacuated (e.g. California, western Oregon and Washington, and southern Arizona,) or east of the Alleghenies.

- 5.2 Application for leave. Any person residing within a relocation center who has been evacuated from a military area or who has been specifically accepted by the WRA for residence within a center may apply for leave.

Comment: Refer to the Definition of Japanese Americans in this hand-book for the type of person for whom the Committee is working.

- 5.3 Proceedings upon application for leave. (a) The Project Director (Chief administrative officer of the camp) may interview an applicant for leave, shall secure the necessary forms for the applicant, and shall obtain such further information concerning the applicant and the proposed leave as may be available at the relocation center.

Comment: This is the first step towards resettlement. A written offer of a job, and all other information mentioned under "Comment" will prove useful to the applicant. Such advantageous preparation on the part of the applicant is possible, of course, when the applicant is known personally to the prospective employer. Directions for persons and groups that lack such personal acquaintance with applicants appear later.

The file on each application for indefinite leave, including the application, will then be forwarded by the Director of a relocation center to the WRA Director, who in turn will secure from the F.B.I. such information as may be obtainable before granting the leave. Quoted herewith from section (e) are considerations affecting the decision.

The Director, upon receipt of such file, will take such steps as may be necessary to satisfy himself concerning the applicant's means of support, his willingness to make the reports required of him under the provisions of this part, the conditions and factors affecting the applicant's opportunity for employment and residence at the proposed destination, the probable effect of the issuance of leave upon the war program and upon the public peace and security, and such other conditions and factors as may be relevant.

Comment: Important things are involved here -

1st. "the applicant's means of support".

This refers to applicants who may have sufficient funds to maintain themselves and their families outside the centers. This consideration is necessary from the standpoint of everyone interested, because all possibilities of an evacuee becoming an object of public charge must be avoided lest he be branded an undesirable "immigrant". Usually the only practical alternative for an evacuee without his own funds for support is employment.

2nd. "his willingness to make the reports".

This has misled some people. A Japanese American is as free as any other American citizen once he is resettled, except that under the terms of his leave he is required to keep the Government informed of any change of address and employment in order to keep the authorities' files up to date. This requirement is not to be considered as a

measure of surveillance over an evacuee.

3rd. "the conditions and factors affecting the applicant's opportunity for employment and residence at the proposed destination". The answer to this is essential, but simple. Your letter, addressed directly to the applicant (such applicant will be recommended to you by the Committee on Resettlement), offering a job and residence (either at your expense or at the evacuee's) is all that is necessary. What the Government is interested in is whether the applicant after accepting a job will be stranded without a place to live. Experience has shown that where there is enough good will to offer a job, there is a friend who will provide or arrange for an abode for an evacuee. But you must show such evidence in writing.

4th. "the probable effect of the issuance of the leave upon the war program and upon the public peace and security". The War Relocation Authority will investigate and make this determination.

It is suggested that you or someone who is willing to do so will act as the evacuee's sponsor. This is not a requirement, but both the Government and the evacuee believe such an arrangement may often be helpful.

Such sponsor's job will include meeting the evacuee at the station, making him at home in the new locality, introducing him to the new employer, and generally assisting him in his efforts to adjust himself to the new community in which he is relocated.

It is further suggested that an evacuee be invited to affiliate himself with the local church as soon as he is settled and start his social acquaintance with a religious group where sympathy and understanding may be found readily.

- 5.5 Transportation and reports during leave. (a) The Project Director shall provide transportation for the applicant to whom a leave has been issued to the most convenient railroad or bus station. All other necessary transportation shall be arranged for by the applicant.

Comment: Many of the evacuees will not have sufficient funds to transport them to the place of resettlement. If you could advance the necessary amount, it will mean that the evacuee may depart upon the issuance of leave. This is, of course, entirely an individual matter, and if you can let us know of such a possibility on your part, it will help facilitate the evacuee's departure.

- (b) Every indefinite leave shall require the person to whom such a leave has been issued to report his arrival, his business and residential addresses, and every change of address, to the Director.

Comment: This regulation has been already referred to. Evacuees will be supplied with special postcards by the W.R.A. before they leave the relocation centers so that they may supply this information.

- 5.8 Restrictions on leave.

- (b) An indefinite leave may permit travel unlimited except as to restrictions imposed by military authorities with reference

to military areas or zones, or may permit only travel within designated states, counties, or comparable areas.

Comment: This is something that you and/or the evacuee's sponsor want to keep in mind. But do not confuse it with the restrictions imposed upon aliens of enemy nationalities. An evacuee will not be permitted to return within the area which was evacuated, e.g. California, western Oregon and Washington, and southern Arizona. But after his proper resettlement he is, we repeat, as free as any other American citizen.

An indefinite leave, like all other leaves, is subject to cancellation at the discretion of the national Director. The policy of the War Relocation Authority is not to cancel indefinite leaves unless very unusual circumstances require it. An evacuee whose leave has been revoked must return to his original relocation center.

General Comments

Let us check the main points again, the points we raised in the "Community Preparation for Resettlement" as well as those in this hand-book.

Is your area outside the prohibited zones, i.e., the Pacific Slope?

Is the wage promised the prevailing wage?

Is your community ready to accept a newcomer?

Do you have a place to accommodate him (and his family)?

Is the evacuee who is coming the type that is qualified for the job?

Answer: Yes.

Has he been cleared by the Government, and his loyalty proved?

Answer: Yes.

Are we helping the Government as well as the Americans of Japanese ancestry by doing this?

Answer: Yes.

Can we discharge him if his services are not satisfactory, and can he quit his job if he wants to?

Answer: Yes.

Is the employer responsible for the evacuee's conduct outside his work?

Answer: No.

When the principal points are cleared and you have a bona fide offer of employment in a friendly community and suitable housing is available, write -

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