

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

# Employees on the Move

*A Handbook on Travel and  
Transportation Benefits for  
Relocating Employees*



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# A Memo from the Assistant Director, Business Management and Operations

**To:** Employees relocating on behalf of the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

The U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (FWS) wants to make your move as easy as possible. This *Permanent Change of Station Handbook* (handbook) was developed to help you smoothly transition to your new duty station; this guidance pertains to employees reporting to a new duty station January 1, 2017 or later. This handbook explains your entitlements, the basic process for a move, and the documents you must complete when you make a permanent change of station (PCS). Please take some time to familiarize yourself with the handbook so that you can work with your PCS Coordinator to obtain your relocation entitlements in a timely manner.

On October 1, 2016, the Service implemented the PCS Lump Sum Pilot Program. Under this program, some transferring employees are given the option of obtaining relocation entitlements under the traditional PCS program or selecting a lump sum payment. This handbook focuses on the traditional PCS program; the *FWS PCS Payment Options Guidebook* (available on [InsideFWS](#)) is a companion guide focused on the lump sum pilot. Please review Chapter 1 of this handbook to determine whether you qualify for the participation in the pilot program prior to reading the guidebook.

Regardless of payment method, you must complete your move within one year of the date that you report to your new duty station. An extension of up to one additional year is possible if approved by your Supervising Directorate Member for reasons beyond your control. FWS has a counseling program in place to help ensure that relocating employees receive the guidance they need to make informed decisions throughout the PCS process. Your PCS Counselor or Regional PCS Coordinator will reach out to schedule a counseling session with you; please review this handbook and the *FWS PCS Payment Options Guidebook* (if applicable) before that session. Do not incur any relocation expenses until you have completed the counseling process and have a signed *Travel Authorization* in place.

To ensure relocating employees have up-to-date relocation information, this handbook is revised periodically. The latest version is always available online as part of the FWS Service Manual (266 FW) and on the [Division of Financial Management InsideFWS Travel page](#).

If you have any questions about your move or this handbook, please feel free to call your PCS Counselor or Regional PCS Coordinator. A complete list of the Regional PCS Coordinators is provided on the next page of this handbook.

Thank you for relocating on behalf of the Service and congratulations on your new position.

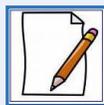
Brian Bloodsworth

Acting Assistant Director, Business Management and Operations

## A Guide to the Symbols in this Handbook:



Reference



Example



Hint

## Regional PCS Coordinator Contact Information



Each relocating employee will be assisted throughout his / her move by a Regional PCS Coordinator or the Service’s centralized PCS Counseling Team, depending on how your gaining region or program administers its PCS program. For the purposes of this handbook, we refer to your main point of contact as your PCS Coordinator. A Regional PCS Coordinator or PCS Counselor will proactively contact you about your move; you are not responsible for determining who will support your relocation.

Your PCS Coordinator will contact you shortly after you accept the offer for your new position. Alternatively, you may use the contact information in **Table 1** to initiate contact. You must establish contact with your PCS Coordinator, complete a counseling session to discuss your relocation, and have an approved *Travel Authorization* in place before incurring any expenses associated with your move. This includes hiring a real estate broker if you are selling your primary residence and are eligible for a relocation services vendor contract.



If you are transferring within the Service, your relocation is managed by your **gaining** region. For example, if you are moving from an official station in Region 6 to a new official station in Region 4, you would contact the Region 4 PCS Coordinator.

Sheree Ross is the Service’s Lead PCS Counselor, and may contact you regarding your relocation if your region uses the shared services model for its PCS program. If you have questions about the PCS process or cannot reach your Regional PCS Coordinator, you can reach Sheree at [PCSCounselor@fws.gov](mailto:PCSCounselor@fws.gov).

Table 1 - Regional PCS Coordinator Contact Information

Regional PCS Coordinator Contact Information As of June 2017			
<b>Region 1</b>	Kathleen Brennan	(503) 231-6820	<a href="mailto:Kathleen_Brennan@fws.gov">Kathleen_Brennan@fws.gov</a>
<b>Region 2</b>	Cecilia Suina	(505) 248-6856	<a href="mailto:Cecilia_Suina@fws.gov">Cecilia_Suina@fws.gov</a>
<b>Region 3</b>	Susan Humphrey	(612) 713-5174	<a href="mailto:Susan_Humphrey@fws.gov">Susan_Humphrey@fws.gov</a>
<b>Region 4</b>	Gerald Elrod Deborah Warren	(404) 679-4165 (404) 679-7109	<a href="mailto:Gerald_Elrod@fws.gov">Gerald_Elrod@fws.gov</a> <a href="mailto:Deborah_Warren@fws.gov">Deborah_Warren@fws.gov</a>
<b>Region 5</b>	Michelle Scarfo	(413) 253-8637	<a href="mailto:Michelle_Scarfo@fws.gov">Michelle_Scarfo@fws.gov</a>
<b>Region 6</b>	Jill Kjellsen Christine LaRue	(605) 487-7603 (620) 486-2304	<a href="mailto:Jill_Kjellsen@fws.gov">Jill_Kjellsen@fws.gov</a> <a href="mailto:Christine_LaRue@fws.gov">Christine_LaRue@fws.gov</a>
<b>Region 7</b>	Sharon Paredes	(907) 786-3416	<a href="mailto:Sharon_Paredes@fws.gov">Sharon_Paredes@fws.gov</a>
<b>Region 8</b>	Kathleen Brennan	(503) 231-6820	<a href="mailto:Kathleen_Brennan@fws.gov">Kathleen_Brennan@fws.gov</a>
<b>Headquarters</b>	Marvin Wilson	(703) 358-1781	<a href="mailto:Marvin_Wilson@fws.gov">Marvin_Wilson@fws.gov</a>

While this handbook should serve as your first source of information, your PCS Coordinator can address any questions or concerns you may have regarding special circumstances. Circumstances that merit contacting your PCS Coordinator immediately include, but are not limited to, the following:

- You discover an error on your *Travel Authorization* or other PCS paperwork.
- You believe you will require an extension of your time in temporary quarters.
- You are traveling to your new official station and become delayed.

## A Few Important Definitions

To apply this handbook to your move, you should be aware of three important definitions:

- The term **Continental United States (CONUS)**, refers to the 48 contiguous states within the United States and the District of Columbia.
- The term **Outside the Continental United States (OCONUS)**, for the purposes of this handbook only, refers to the following non-foreign areas: Alaska, Guam, Hawaii, Pacific Islands, Puerto Rico, American Samoa, and the U.S. Virgin Islands.
- The terms **family members** and **immediate family** refer to any of the following members of your household at the time you report to your new official station:
  - Spouse.
    - In cases of common law marriage, the federal government recognizes common law marriages of partners of opposite and same sex when these unions meet the state-established eligibility requirements.
    - A divorced or legally separated spouse is not an immediate family member and does not qualify for any entitlements.
    - Same-sex domestic partners no longer qualify for relocation entitlements for non-foreign moves; same-sex partners must be married in order to qualify for PCS entitlements.
    - The Department of the Interior (DOI) generally does not require marriage certificates, but may ask for documentation to substantiate common law marriage.
  - Children (to include stepchildren, adopted children, adopted grandchildren, legal minor wards, or other dependent children under your or your spouse's legal guardianship) of you or your spouse that meet one of the following two conditions:
    - Under the age of 21 and unmarried; or
    - Physically or mentally incapable of self-support, regardless of age.
    - Note: Children under age 21 who are away at school (e.g., college) are generally considered dependents as long as the employee or spouse can properly claim them as dependents on his / her taxes. In addition, a child who is under joint legal and physical custody of the employee and former spouse may be considered a member of the employee's household if residing there more than 50% of the time. If there is equal joint custody of a child, determining whether the child is the employee's dependent for PCS purposes would require additional information.
  - Dependent parents (including step-parents and legally adoptive parents) of you or your spouse.
  - Dependent brothers and sisters (including step-siblings and legally adopted siblings) of you or your spouse that meet one of the following two conditions:
    - Under the age of 21 and unmarried; or
    - Physically or mentally incapable of self-support, regardless of age.
  - Same-sex domestic partner (select foreign locations only). Per the Federal Travel Regulation (FTR), if you are moving to a foreign country that does not allow same-sex marriage, then your same-sex domestic partner can qualify for entitlements as a dependent.

# Chapter 1: Identifying Your Entitlements

This handbook is designed to guide relocating employees through the PCS process. In this chapter, we provide guidance on how to determine your relocation type. The figures and tables included in this chapter will help you identify the entitlements that apply to your move so that you can reference the appropriate chapters of the handbook throughout the relocation process.



This handbook supplements, but does not replace, the policy included in the FTR.<sup>1</sup> Employees should contact their PCS Coordinators for guidance on situations not covered in this handbook or access the regulations directly using the following links:

- FTR - [www.gsa.gov/federaltravelregulation](http://www.gsa.gov/federaltravelregulation)
- DOI PCS Handbook - <https://www.doi.gov/pfm/travel/>
- FWS Service Manual Part 266 - <http://www.fws.gov/policy/manuals>

## 1.1 Defining PCS

Before researching your relocation type and entitlements, it is important to define PCS travel as compared to other types of official travel. While this section includes guidance to help you distinguish among the different types of official travel, the handbook as a whole only addresses PCS entitlements. Employees looking for guidance on a temporary change of station (TCS), temporary duty (TDY) travel, or local travel should consult other resources. The table below defines the types of official travel that individuals conduct on behalf of the Service and where employees can find guidance on each type of travel.

Table 2- Types of Official Travel

Travel Type	Definition	Guidance
<i>PCS Travel</i>	Travel required as part of an employee's <u>permanent</u> relocation to a new official duty station, including house-hunting trips and en route travel.  To qualify for PCS entitlements as a transferee, the new duty station must be 50 miles farther from the employee's primary residence than the old duty station.	This handbook <a href="#">PCS Payment Options Guidebook</a> <a href="#">Service Manual Part 266</a> <a href="#">DOI PCS Handbook</a> <a href="#">FTR Chapter 302</a>
<i>TCS Travel</i>	Relocation to a new official station for a temporary period of six to 30 months while performing a long-term assignment and subsequent return to the previous official station after completing that assignment. A TCS is an alternative to remaining in TDY travel status for an extended period of time.	<a href="#">FTR Part 302-3, Subpart E</a>
<i>TDY Travel</i>	Official travel that is 50 miles or farther from both the employee's permanent duty station and commuting residence.	<a href="#">Service Manual Part 265</a> <a href="#">FWS TDY Handbook</a> <a href="#">FTR Chapter 301</a>

<sup>1</sup> The FTR is the regulation contained in 41 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Chapters 300 through 304, which implements statutory requirements and Executive branch policies for travel by Federal civilian employees and others authorized to travel at Government expense.

Travel Type	Definition	Guidance
<i>Local Travel</i>	Travel that does not meet the distance requirement for TDY travel, including government and commercial flights to locations fewer than 50 miles from the permanent duty station and commuting residence.	<a href="#">Memos issued by the FWS Division of Financial Management (DFM)</a>



***A Note on Temporary Change of Station (TCS) Policy***

The TCS relocation option for assignments of six to 30 months was established by the Federal Employee Travel Reform Act of 1995, and the current policy is detailed in [Part 302](#) of the FTR. The employee’s supervisor is responsible for completing a cost comparison to determine whether extended TDY or a TCS is in the interest of the government. There are mandatory and discretionary entitlements available to employees completing a TCS; an Employee Service Agreement is not required. The PCS module in the Financial and Business Management System (FBMS) is used for TCS expenses.

**Mandatory Entitlements:**

1. Travel, including per diem, for employee and immediate family to and from the TCS.
2. Transportation and temporary storage of household goods to and from the TCS.
3. Extended storage of household goods when deemed necessary and approved by the supervisor.
4. Transportation of a mobile home instead of transportation of household goods.
5. A payment to offset miscellaneous expenses moving to and returning from the TCS.
6. Transportation of a privately owned vehicle (POV) to and from the TCS. For a TCS within CONUS, the POV shipment must be at least 600 miles, the employee must have legal title, and the POV must be operable.
7. A Relocation Income Tax Allowance (RITA).

**Discretionary Entitlements:**

1. House-hunting trip expenses.
2. Temporary quarters subsistence expenses.
3. Reimbursement for the cost of storing, or providing for the storage without charge, of one POV when assigned a TCS in support of a contingency operation as defined in 10 U.S.C. 1482a(c)(2).

**The following are additional DOI / FWS policies on TCS beyond the FTR:**

1. Property management services are prohibited as part of a TCS unless a waiver is obtained from the Assistant Secretary for Policy, Management, and Budget (PMB).
2. The distance requirement for a TCS is the same for TDY (i.e., the temporary duty station must be at least 50 miles from both the permanent duty station and the residence). Although a TCS can be issued for long-term training, the distance requirement for training cannot be lowered to 30 miles.
3. Since the employee’s duty station changes as a result of the TCS, the sponsoring region / program must work with both the Human Resources (HR) Office and the Regional Travel Coordinator before issuing the *Travel Authorization*.
4. There is no authority in the FTR to authorize a TDY return trip home during a TCS. If the region / program needs to interrupt the TCS for the employee to travel to another duty station (including the previous permanent duty station) to perform work, a TDY authorization should be issued. If lodging at the TCS location is rented on a weekly or monthly basis, dual lodging can be authorized if cost effective or advantageous to the Service.
5. Volunteers and invitational travelers do not qualify for TCS entitlements.

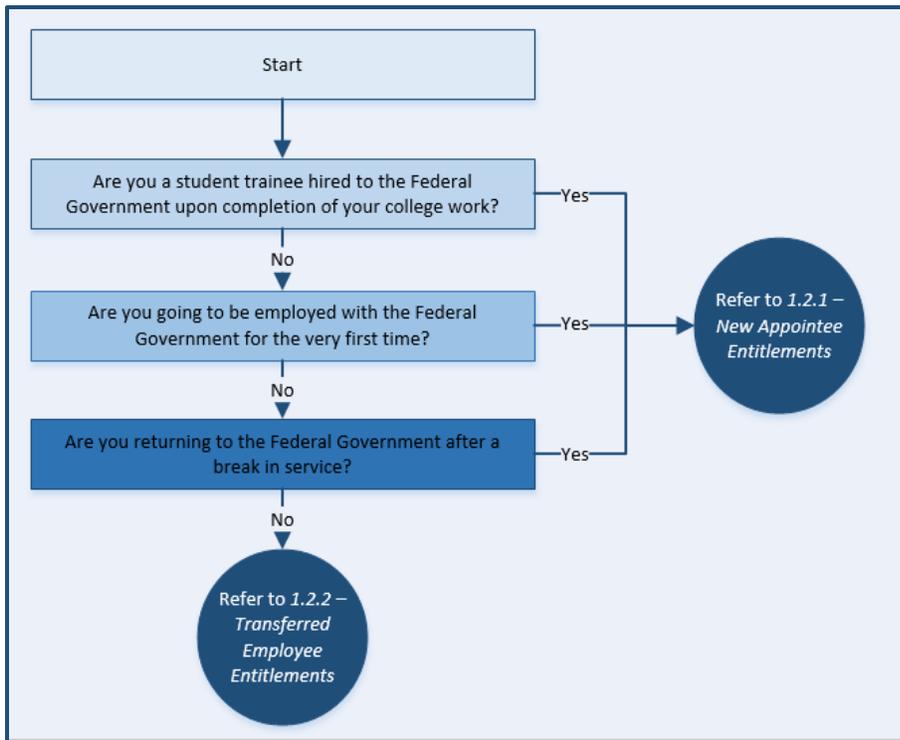
## 1.2 Determining Your Relocation Type and Allowances

Your entitlements and allowances for relocation are determined based on your type of PCS, which the FTR divides into two main categories:

- New Appointee.
- Transferred Employee.

**Figure 1** will assist you in determining your relocation type. Answer each question with either "yes" or "no" until you arrive at an end point specifying your relocation type. Note that your HR Office is the final authority on what constitutes a break in service and whether you qualify as a new appointee or transferred employee. In the absence of a Reduction in Force (RIF) or transfer of function, a weekend or federal holiday between job assignments does not constitute a break in service. Generally, the employee must be continuously on the payroll of the two organizations (with only a weekend and / or federal holiday in between) to qualify as a transferred employee.

Figure 1 - Relocation Type Decision Tree



### 1.2.1 New Appointee Entitlements

A new appointee is an individual employed with the federal government for the very first time, an employee returning to the federal government after a break in service, or a student trainee assigned to the federal government upon completion of college work. **Table 3** outlines the relocation expenses to which you are entitled as a new appointee.



If a chapter includes guidance that applies to new appointees, this symbol appears in the margin next to the chapter title:



Table 3 - New Appointee Entitlements

Reimbursable Items	Reference Section
Transportation for you and your immediate family members to your new official station.	Chapter 8
An allowance for your lodging, meals and incidental expenses while traveling to your new official station. (Expenses incurred by family members are <u>not</u> reimbursable.)	Chapter 8
Transportation for, and temporary storage of, household goods belonging to you and your family members.	Chapter 6
Transportation of a mobile home or boat used as your primary residence instead of transportation of household goods. <sup>2</sup>	Chapter 6
Extended storage of household goods <sup>3</sup> belonging to you and your family members.	Chapter 6

**Table 4** lists a discretionary relocation expense you may be authorized to incur as a new appointee, and a reference to the chapter that will help you determine if you qualify for this expense. Authorization of this additional entitlement requires approval by your new supervisor. Depending on your new region / program's approval process, you may be directed to seek authorization directly from your new supervisor or submit your request through your PCS Coordinator. As part of your request for authorization, you must provide a justification of your need for the additional entitlement. If authorized, the additional entitlement will be documented on your *Travel Authorization* or included as an amendment to your *Travel Authorization*.

Table 4 - New Appointee Discretionary Entitlement

Discretionary Item	Reference Section
Shipment of a POV.	Chapter 7

## 1.2.2 Transferred Employee Entitlements

The FTR distinguishes among the following three categories of transferred employees:

1. **Transfer Between Stations** - Employees that are completing one of the following types of transfers:
  - Transfer between official stations within CONUS.
  - Transfer from a CONUS official station to an official station OCONUS.
  - Transfer from an OCONUS official station to a CONUS official station.
  - Employees transferring between official stations OCONUS.
2. **Return from OCONUS** - Employees transferring from an OCONUS official station to place of actual residence for separation (e.g., retirement).<sup>4</sup>
3. **Senior Executive Service (SES) Last Move Home** - SES career appointees making their last move home for separation (e.g., retirement).<sup>5</sup>

**Figure 2** will assist you in determining your transfer category. Answer each question with either "yes" or "no" until you arrive at an end point specifying your transfer category.



See Section 1.3 for guidance on transfer types that do not fit into one of the three categories described in the FTR and additional requirements and restrictions that apply to these relocations.

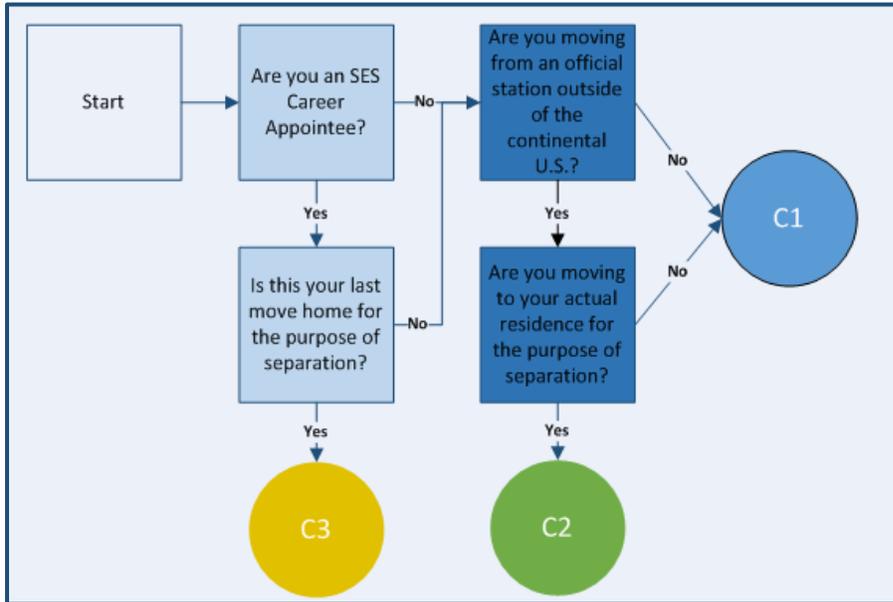
<sup>2</sup> Only when you are assigned to an official station in CONUS or Alaska (per FTR Part 302-10.4).

<sup>3</sup> Only when you are assigned to a designated isolated official station in CONUS or when you are assigned to an OCONUS official station and the Service determines extended storage is cost effective (per FTR Part 302-8.1).

<sup>4</sup> Requires use of the PCS module in FBMS.

<sup>5</sup> Requires use of the PCS module in FBMS.

Figure 2 - Transferred Employee Category Decision Tree



Look for the symbol that corresponds with your transfer category in the margin next to each chapter title to determine if the chapter includes guidance that applies to your move.



= Category 1  
 Transfer Between Stations



= Category 2  
 Return from OCONUS



= Category 3  
 SES Last Move Home

Now that you have identified your transfer category, use **Table 5** below to determine your entitlements.

Table 5 - Transferred Employee Entitlements

Category			Reimbursable Items	Reference Section
1	2	3		
✓	✓	✓	Transportation for you and your immediate family to your new official station.	Chapter 8
✓	✓	✓	An allowance for <u>your</u> lodging, meals, and incidental expenses while traveling to your new official station.	Chapter 8
✓			An allowance for <u>your immediate family members'</u> lodging, meals and incidental expenses while traveling to your new official station.	Chapter 8
✓	✓	✓	Transportation for, and temporary storage of, household goods belonging to you and your family members.	Chapter 6
✓			A payment to offset miscellaneous moving expenses.	Chapter 11
✓			An allowance to cover a portion of the taxes you will incur as a result of your move.	Chapter 12
✓			Reimbursement of certain expenses associated with selling your home. <sup>6</sup>	Chapter 4
✓			Reimbursement of certain expenses associated with settling an unexpired lease.	Chapter 5

<sup>6</sup> Only when the distance between your old residence and your new official station is 50 miles or further (per FTR Part 302-11.2).

Category			Reimbursable Items	Reference Section
1	2	3		
✓			Reimbursement of certain expenses associated with the purchase of a new primary residence.	Chapter 10
✓			Extended storage of household goods <sup>7</sup> belonging to you and your family members.	Chapter 6
✓		✓	Transportation of a mobile home or boat used as your primary residence instead of transportation of household goods. <sup>8</sup>	Chapter 6

**Table 6** outlines discretionary relocation expenses you may be authorized to incur as a transferred employee, and references to the chapters that will help you determine if you qualify for reimbursement of these expenses. Authorization of these additional entitlements requires approval by your new supervisor. Depending on your new region / program's approval process, you will be directed to seek authorization directly from your new supervisor or submit your request through your PCS Coordinator. As part of your request for authorization, you must provide a justification of your need for the additional entitlement(s). If authorized, the additional entitlement(s) will be documented on your *Travel Authorization* or included as an amendment to your *Travel Authorization*.

Table 6 - Transferred Employee Discretionary Entitlements

Category			Discretionary Items	Reference Section
1	2	3		
✓	✓	✓	Shipment of a POV.	Chapter 7
✓			House-hunting trip, including transportation, lodging, meals, and incidentals for you and your spouse only.	Chapter 3
✓			An allowance to cover lodging, meals, and incidental expenses incurred by you and your family members prior to securing a permanent residence at your new official station (i.e., temporary quarters subsistence).	Chapter 9
✓			Use of a relocation services company to assist you in selling your house. <sup>9</sup>	Chapter 4
✓	✓	✓	Use of property management services. <sup>10</sup>	Chapter 5



Note that relocation bonuses / incentives for “hard-to-fill” positions are covered by personnel policies, not this handbook. Contact your HR Office for information on these types of PCS payments.

<sup>7</sup> Only when you are assigned to a designated isolated official station in CONUS or when you are assigned to an OCONUS official station and the Service determines extended storage is cost effective (per FTR Part 302-8.1).

<sup>8</sup> Only when you are assigned to an official station in CONUS or Alaska (per FTR Part 302-10.4).

<sup>9</sup> Departmental policy requires you to list your home price at not more than 105% of its fair market value as determined by the broker market analysis.

<sup>10</sup> Approval must be obtained from the Supervising Directorate Member, FWS Director, and the Assistant Secretary for PMB.



In Fiscal Year 2017, the Service launched a pilot program providing a new lump sum payment option for Category 1 transferring employees. Under the pilot, eligible transferring employees may elect to receive a lump sum payment at the beginning of the relocation process, rather than claiming reimbursement for separate relocation expenses throughout their moves.

The chart below includes guidance to help you determine whether you qualify for the Lump Sum Pilot Program. If you believe that you qualify, please review both this handbook and the [PCS Payment Options Guidebook](#) before your relocation counseling session. Your PCS Coordinator will explain your payment options and help you determine which option is a better fit for your move.

Type of Move	Eligible for Lump Sum Pilot?	Additional Information / Explanation
Transferee	Yes	Can be transferring within CONUS, CONUS to OCONUS, or OCONUS to CONUS
Short-Distance PCS	Yes	Limited entitlements, see Section 1.3.1 (page 8)
Overseas Assignment and Return	Yes	Transferees only (not new appointees); sale of real estate in a foreign country cannot be included in the lump sum calculation (see FTR Sections 302-11.2 - 302.11.7)
RIF Relocation	Sometimes	Employee must be a transferee and re-employed within one year of involuntary separation
Transfer of Function Relocation	Sometimes	Employee must be a transferee and re-employed within one year of involuntary separation
TCS	No	This is a separate category of travel, not a PCS
Overseas Tour Renewal Travel	No	This is TDY travel, not a PCS; an authorization is created in Concur
New Appointee	No	Not a match for the approach, based on eligible entitlements
Return from OCONUS for Separation	No	Not a match for the approach, based on eligible entitlements
SES Last Move Home	No	Not a match for the approach, based on eligible entitlements
Assignment Under the Government Employees Training Act (GETA)	No	Not a match for the approach, based on eligible entitlements

### 1.3 Understanding Special Relocation Circumstances

While the majority of the PCS moves completed by Service employees fall under one of the relocation types established in the FTR, there are special circumstances that can impact PCS entitlements. In this section, we outline the requirements associated with the following situations; if your relocation does not involve any of these circumstances, skip to Chapter 2.

- Short-distance PCS move;
- Married couple’s transfer when both individuals are employed by the Service;
- PCS move to or from a foreign country;
- SES last move home;
- Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration (WSFR) transfer; and
- PCS move of the family of a law enforcement employee who dies in the line of duty.

### 1.3.1 Short-Distance PCS Move

A short-distance move is one in which the employee's commute does not increase by at least 50 miles. To qualify for a regular PCS move, your new official duty station must be at least 50 miles farther from your primary residence than the old official duty station is from that same residence, keeping in mind the following stipulations:

- Your primary residence is the actual residence from which you commuted to work the majority of the time when you were officially notified of your relocation.
- The distance calculation is made using the shortest of the commonly traveled routes between your residence and duty stations (your PCS Coordinator will use MapQuest or Google Maps to determine available routes).
- The distance requirement does not take into consideration the location of the new residence you will commute from after you PCS.
- Note that although Departmental policy allows a 10% variance on POV mileage, this is the threshold for variance between authorization and voucher that triggers an amendment of the authorization, not an allowable variance for the authorization itself.



If John's old official duty station is three miles from his primary residence, the new official station must be at least 53 miles from that same residence in order for John to qualify for PCS entitlements.

If your move does not meet the distance requirement, your gaining region / program may still provide short-distance PCS entitlements. This requires a Directorate memo, with final approval from the FWS Director, certifying that the change in duty stations results in the following circumstances:

1. The one-way commuting pattern increases by at least 10 miles, but no more than 50 miles;
2. There is an increase in commuting time by at least 30 minutes each way; and
3. The increased commuting costs would cause a financial hardship.

*Note: For the purpose of short-distance PCS entitlements only, "financial hardship" is defined as a situation that puts the employee at risk of significant financial loss due to increased annual commuting costs of at least \$4,000. The Service uses the TDY mileage rate when calculating the cost of commuting by POV.*

If approved for a short-distance PCS, all relocation expense reimbursements paid to the employee will be considered non-deductible and reportable as taxable income to the employee. Real estate (buying and selling) is a mandatory entitlement for transferees in a short-distance move, but the relocation home sale contract is a discretionary entitlement. Employees who qualify for short-distance PCS moves are eligible to participate in the PCS Lump Sum Pilot Program.

The Service cannot offer the following entitlements for short-distance PCS moves:

- House-hunting trip;<sup>11</sup>
- Per diem allowances for en route travel that is less than 12 hours;<sup>12</sup>
- Temporary quarters;<sup>13</sup> or
- Shipment of a POV.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> The distance requirement for house-hunting trips may not be lowered under 75 miles.

<sup>12</sup> Employees may receive compensation for en route transportation costs (e.g. mileage).

<sup>13</sup> The distance requirement for temporary quarters may not be lowered under 50 miles.

<sup>14</sup> The distance requirement for POV shipment may not be lowered under 600 miles unless other special circumstances exist (see Chapter 6 for additional information).



### **Defining a Teleworking Employee's Official Duty Station**

For the purpose of PCS entitlements, an employee's official duty station is the location where he / she would regularly perform official duties in the absence of a telework agreement. The FTR takes precedence over a telework agreement for any PCS entitlements. The location from which the employee normally commutes to / from work takes precedence over the SF-50 or any personnel documents.

Per the General Services Administration (GSA)<sup>15</sup> and the [DOI Telework Handbook](#), a teleworking employee's official duty station and eligibility for PCS entitlements must be determined on a case-by-case basis using the following considerations:

1. If the employee is scheduled to physically report to the same agency worksite at least twice in each bi-weekly pay period, that worksite is the employee's official duty station.
2. If the employee is not scheduled to physically report to an agency worksite at least twice in each bi-weekly pay period (e.g., full-time teleworkers, virtual workers), the alternative (non-agency) worksite is the employee's official duty station (except in certain TDY situations).
3. If an employee's work location varies on a recurring basis (e.g., mobile work), the employee's official duty station is the agency worksite even if he / she does not report at least twice in each bi-weekly pay period. Exceptions may exist when the employee's other recurring work locations are not within the same Office of Personnel Management (OPM) pay entitlement area as the agency worksite.<sup>16</sup>

## 1.3.2 Married Couple's Transfer when Both Individuals are Employed by the Service

If your spouse is employed by the Service and both of you are authorized to perform a PCS to the same official station, you must select one of the following two methods for reimbursement of your PCS expenses:<sup>17</sup>

- Method 1:** Each employee receives separate allowances and may not be claimed as an immediate family member.
- Method 2:** One of the employed family members is designated the head of your household and the other employed family member is claimed as an immediate family member on the "head of household" employee's *Travel Authorization*.

You should consider the following two items before selecting which method to use:

1. The Service will not reimburse duplicate expenses and you must sign a disclosure statement as part of your Employee Service Agreement (see **Attachment 1**).
2. Both transferring employees must provide the PCS Coordinator with the name(s) of the immediate family member(s) who will receive allowances under their *Travel Authorization*. Each immediate family member may only be claimed on one employee's *Travel Authorization*.



John and Jane have a son. John claims relocation allowances for their son under his *Travel Authorization*. Therefore, Jane may not claim any relocation allowances for their son.

Be sure to clearly communicate your preferred method of reimbursement to your PCS Coordinator.

<sup>15</sup> Per GSA <http://www.gsa.gov/portal/mediald/122806/fileName/GSAteleworkpolicy.action>.

<sup>16</sup> Per OPM <https://apps.opm.gov/dsfls/>.

<sup>17</sup> Per FTR Part 302-3.204.

### 1.3.3 SES Last Move Home

SES appointees considering a “last move home” entitlements for retirement should consider the following special circumstances associated with this type of move:

- Your supervisor is your approving official for move-related authorizations and expenses.
- Your supervisor will communicate the eligibility requirements associated with claiming “last move home” entitlements; note that you must be retirement eligible or within five years of retirement eligibility.
- SES appointees completing a “last move home” are not eligible to participate in the PCS Lump Sum Pilot Program.
- You must complete your move within six months of separating from the Service. You can file for an extension for up to two years, but the written request for extension must be submitted within six months of your separation date.
- You may choose any location within the United States as your “moving to” location as long as it is at least 50 miles from the permanent duty station from which you are separating.
- Under the “last move home” option, you are not eligible for temporary quarters, a house-hunting trip, or real estate entitlements.
- You are eligible for transportation and temporary storage of household goods, up to 18,000 net pounds (excluding packing materials); transportation of you and your immediate family to your new residence; and per diem entitlements for you (not immediate family) while en route.
- You may qualify for shipment of your POV. This is a discretionary entitlement subject to some restrictions, including that the shipment must be at least 600 miles for a “last move home” within CONUS.

### 1.3.4 PCS Move to or from a Foreign Country

In general, the entitlements for a PCS to or from a foreign country are the same as those that apply to OCONUS moves, especially as related to shipping household goods and POVs (see Chapters 5 and 6). However, there are some unique circumstances and limitations that apply to a PCS to or from a foreign country:

1. The Service cannot provide reimbursement for foreign real estate transactions (see FTR sections [302-11.2](#) and [302-11.5](#)).
2. If an employee relocates to a CONUS or non-foreign OCONUS duty station from a foreign country, the Service can provide real estate reimbursement for sale of U.S. property associated with the relocation unless the employee is a local hire in a foreign country. The sale of the residence at the previous CONUS / non-foreign OCONUS duty station must occur after the employee is notified of the transfer to the CONUS / non-foreign OCONUS duty station, and the new CONUS duty station must be 50 miles from the old CONUS duty station.
3. Property management services are not allowable unless the employee obtains a waiver signed by the employee’s supervising Directorate Member, the FWS Director, and the DOI Assistant Secretary of PMB. There is a precedent for obtaining such a waiver from DOI because of the financial burden associated with not being reimbursed for sale of the old residence.
4. Due to limitations of the GSA Statement of Work for relocation services, the Service cannot offer a relocation services vendor contract for an employee selling a residence in a foreign country.
5. If the employee receives government housing or a housing allowance while in a foreign country, these entitlements reduce or eliminate eligibility for temporary quarters. The sponsoring region / program must evaluate any government housing or housing allowances as part of drafting the *Travel Authorization* for a PCS to a foreign country and offset or eliminate the temporary quarters entitlement as appropriate.
6. An exception may be made to allow the inclusion of consumable goods as part of the 18,000 pound household goods entitlement (see FTR Part 300) when shipping household goods to a foreign country.
7. If an employee is relocating to a foreign country that does not allow same-sex marriage, the employee may claim PCS entitlements for his / her same-sex domestic partner as a dependent (see the [Federal Register](#) for more information on definitions).

8. When flying en route to or from a foreign country, the employee must use air carriers / flights that comply with the Fly America Act in order to claim reimbursement.
9. Physical examinations, immunizations, and / or inoculations may be required in a PCS to an OCONUS location or a foreign country. If allowable, costs should be claimed on an Official Form (OF) 1164, Claim for Reimbursement for Expenditures on Official Business using Budget Object Class (BOC) 256M; they are not a PCS entitlement and cannot be claimed on a PCS voucher.



Overseas Tour Renewal Agreement Travel (OTRAT) is a specific type of TDY travel that involves the employee and his / her immediate family returning home to CONUS, Alaska, or Hawaii between overseas tours of duty. The Department has determined that OTRAT is necessary for recruitment and retention of employees in a post of duty overseas or in a remote location such as Alaska and Hawaii. The employee and his / her family are eligible to conduct OTRAT travel to the home of record documented by the HR Office when the employee completes the PCS to the foreign duty station.

OTRAT should be documented in Concur following the same processes as other types of TDY travel; see the [FWS TDY Handbook](#) for guidance on documenting TDY travel. See the [FTR](#) for OTRAT entitlements. Check Regional policy on OTRAT, including policy on length of overseas tours.

### 1.3.5 Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Transfer

The Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration (WSFR) Program Improvement Act of 2000 includes a section on relocation expenses the WSFR program must cover for its employees. An employee transferring on behalf of the WSFR program is eligible for PCS entitlements only if:

1. The employee will administer the WSFR program on a full-time basis for at least one year; and
2. The FWS Director certifies the employee will work on a full-time basis for at least one year.

### 1.3.6 PCS Move of the Family of a Law Enforcement Employee who Dies in the Line of Duty

The *Samuel Hicks Families of Fallen Heroes Act* enables the Service to cover transportation and moving expenses for the immediate family of a law enforcement employee who dies in the performance of his / her official duties. To determine if a death qualifies under the Act, the supervisor and HR Office perform a line of duty determination. Families of law enforcement employees who die in the line of duty are eligible for the same PCS entitlements as those offered to a new appointee (see Section 1.2.1). Generally, the PCS Coordinator will work with the HR Office to coordinate outreach to the deceased employee's family regarding the PCS entitlements. Questions about the Act should be directed to Office of Law Enforcement (OLE).



## Chapter 2: Understanding the PCS Process



The guidance in this chapter will help you understand the high-level requirements and expectations associated with obtaining PCS compensation. The “PCS lifecycle” can generally be broken down into the following phases:



1. **Preparation:** Research your entitlements, participate in counseling, and complete the required paperwork.
2. **Relocation:** Complete your move, incurring expenses and filing for reimbursement as appropriate.
3. **Close-Out:** File your RITA and provide feedback on your experience.



While these activities are a part of each employee’s PCS, the process and timeline vary based on the circumstances of each relocation and the policies of each region / program. This is high-level guidance only; your PCS Coordinator will provide more specific information on the timeframes and requirements for your relocation during your counseling session.

### 2.1 Preparing for your PCS Move

During the preparation phase, you should focus on obtaining the guidance you need to make informed decisions about your relocation, and completing the required paperwork prior to incurring any relocation expenses. Reviewing this handbook is a good first step for a successful transition. When your PCS Coordinator reaches out to schedule your counseling session, he / she may also include additional guidance documents or forms for you to review. Be sure to look over all of the information provided before the counseling session so that you and your PCS Coordinator can focus on discussing how the PCS entitlements apply to your move during that meeting.

In order to be eligible for reimbursement of PCS-related expenses under the FTR, you must complete three forms during this phase:

- Employee Relocation Agreement Form;
- Form 3-139 - *Employee Relocation Allowance Data Sheet*; and
- *Request for Contractor Provided Relocation Services* (if applicable).

If you request a travel advance (see Section 2.2.1), which is at the discretion of the Region, you must also complete the following forms:

- Standard Form (SF) 1038 – *Advance of Funds Application and Accounting*; and
- *Travel Advance Repayment Agreement*.

Your PCS Coordinator will notify you if your region / program requires you to complete any additional forms during this phase.



Category 1 transferees who opt into the PCS Lump Sum Pilot Program will complete a different set of forms to obtain their PCS compensation. See the [PCS Payment Options Guidebook](#) for additional information.



As part of your PCS, you will receive and complete many forms. Be sure to retain a copy of each form for your reference and as back up in case your paperwork is lost. You may also be required to reference or submit a number of these forms when you file your taxes.<sup>18</sup>

Once you participate in a counseling session and complete these forms, you will submit them to your PCS Coordinator, who will review them and obligate the funding for your move. Once your forms have been processed, your PCS Coordinator will provide you with your *Travel Authorization*, approved *Employee Relocation Allowance*

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<sup>18</sup> The forms intranet site is <https://fishnet.fws.doi.net/projects/forms/SitePages/Home.aspx>

*Data Sheet*, and any other regional paperwork required for your move. Receipt of the approved *Travel Authorization* marks the end of the Preparation phase of the PCS process; at this point, you are allowed to incur relocation-related expenses in compliance with the approved *Travel Authorization*.

## 2.2 Completing Your Relocation and Paying for PCS Expenses

During this phase, you complete your actual relocation, incurring and obtaining reimbursement for PCS-related expenses as documented in your approved *Travel Authorization*. Guidance on allowable expenses is broken out by entitlement in the later chapters of this handbook.



The Service does not use its TDY travel system (Concur) to process PCS travel expenses. You must create and submit manual Travel Vouchers (OF-1012) for PCS expenses (see **Attachment 6**) within five business days of completion of the transaction; however, no more than one voucher needs to be submitted per month if there are multiple expenses to claim.

In general, it is your responsibility to cover the expenses incurred by you and your family throughout your move using a personal form of payment. Then, within five business days of completing each part of your move (e.g., house-hunting trip, en route travel), you must submit a manual *Travel Voucher* (OF-1012) to claim reimbursement for these expenses.

However, if you have an FWS-issued government charge card, you must use it for the following items:

- Transportation tickets (e.g., airfare, rail, ferry, bus) for yourself only (not family members).  
*Note: You must book transportation by calling the Travel Management Center (vendor contracted for agent-assisted booking); you may not book PCS travel in Concur.*
- Transaction fees (e.g., travel booking fees).
- ATM withdrawals for meals and incidental expenses (M&IE) for house-hunting trip, en route travel, and temporary quarters (if claiming actual expenses only, not allowable for fixed rate / lump sum entitlements). The withdrawal should be no earlier than five calendar days before the expense is incurred and should not exceed 80% of the estimated M&IE cost.
- Lodging for house-hunting trip, en route travel, or temporary quarters (if using the actuals method only).
- Rental car and fuel when specifically authorized for a house-hunting trip, en route travel, or self-shipment of household goods using a rental vehicle / trailer.  
*Note: Use of a rental car or truck for self-shipment of household goods is not covered under the U.S. Government Car Rental Agreement (Agreement). Use of a rental car is covered under the Agreement for house-hunting trips and en route travel. See the FWS TDY Handbook for more information on the Agreement.*
- Airport parking when specifically authorized for a house-hunting trip (not for en route travel).
- Taxi fares.

You may use your government charge card for meals (except hotel room service).

You may not use your government charge card for any of the following items:

- Lodging costs when using the fixed rate method of reimbursement for house-hunting trips or temporary quarters per diem.
- Transportation ticket(s) for your family members.  
*Note: Your PCS Coordinator will use your new region / program's corporate card to purchase these tickets.*
- Charges for hotel room service, mini bar purchases, movies or any similar expenses.
- Fuel for or repairs to your POV.
- Real estate expenses.
- Purchase of goods and services such as clothing, electronics, moving supplies, etc.



You must disclose any centrally billed charge card items related to your PCS on the associated *Travel Voucher* (OF-1012). Your PCS Coordinator can provide additional guidance on the types of items that are centrally billed and how to note them properly.

## 2.2.1 Travel Advances

A travel advance is a cash payment that the Service may issue in limited circumstances to cover costs associated with PCS-related transportation, per diem, and self-shipment and storage of household goods. The advance is a loan that the employee must repay by check or by submitting a *Travel Voucher* (OF-1012) within 90 days of receipt of the advance. Advances are limited to 80% of your transportation costs, self-shipment and storage of household goods, and authorized per diem (i.e., lodging, meals, and incidental expenses) over a maximum period of 30 days per advance.

The Service may provide a travel advance to support an employee in completing a PCS in the following circumstances:

- The employee does not have a government charge card and cannot obtain one in time to cover move-related expenses (i.e., new appointee, employee who does not qualify for a card); and
- Covering PCS expenses out-of-pocket and filing for reimbursement will pose a financial hardship.

Employees should be aware of the following items before requesting a travel advance:

- The Service cannot provide travel advances to cover costs associated with buying or selling real estate.
- Failure to repay a travel advance in a timely manner can result in payroll deductions and will delay payment of TDY vouchers.
- Regional / programmatic policy governs the use of travel advances; your PCS Coordinator can advise on your region's / program's approach to travel advances (i.e., whether the region's policy is to "rush" you a government charge card instead of issuing an advance).

To apply for an advance, complete the SF-1038 and *Travel Advance Repayment Agreement*<sup>19</sup> and submit these forms to your PCS Coordinator. You must also include supporting documentation showing how you calculated the amount of the advance with these forms.

Your PCS Coordinator will review your request for appropriateness and compliance with regional / programmatic policy and submit it to your Regional Budget and Finance Office (BFO) for approval. If approved, your advance will be deposited via an Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) by the Interior Business Center (IBC). The advance should be deposited by IBC no earlier than five calendar days before the expense is incurred. You may only use the travel advance for the specific purposes indicated on the SF-1038.



If you are a new employee not set up in FBMS as a vendor, you must work with your PCS Coordinator to complete and submit the *FBMS Vendor Request Form* to obtain an Employee Identification Number (EIN) before the Service can issue you a travel advance. Please notify your PCS Coordinator that you anticipate needing a travel advance as soon as possible to begin this process. A sample *FBMS Vendor Request Form* is included as **Attachment 7** to this handbook, but the form must be completed online.

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<sup>19</sup> Regions have discretion over the use of this form. If you are requesting a travel advance, your PCS Coordinator can advise as to whether you must complete this form as part of your PCS paperwork.

## 2.2.2 Requesting an Extension of the PCS Process

Generally, employees are required to complete their relocations within one year of their physical report date at the new duty station. The Service may grant an extension for a PCS move when the delay in completing the relocation is for reasons beyond the employee's control and the request is approved by the employee's supervisor and Assistant or Regional Director before the original one-year relocation period ends. The extension may be for a period of up to one additional year; all PCS moves must be completed within two years of the actual report date at the new duty station (i.e., dates on all receipts and documentation must fall within this window).

Situations that may justify an extension beyond one year include the following (other circumstances aligned with these general guidelines may be approved on a case-by-case basis).

- When a combination of TDY travel, military deployments, and / or sick leave total four months or more during the first year of the PCS move, an extension to offset the "lost time" beyond four months may be appropriate. For example, three months of TDY travel and two months of sick leave would justify a PCS extension of one month, at the discretion of the approving official. The sick leave calculation can include time spent for immediate family members under the Family and Medical Leave Act, including unpaid time off.
- Unexpected removal of the employee from government quarters (when permanent quarters were anticipated) after the employee has occupied the government quarters for at least nine months. The PCS extension should be based on providing three months to purchase a new home.
- The employee has a relocation services vendor contract, and the contract requires a modification or amendment to enable successful completion of the home sale. The duration of the extension should be based on the expected contract completion date.
- Natural or man-made disaster resulting in partial (30% or more) or full destruction of the primary residence. The duration of the extension should be based on the amount of time needed to complete repairs or rebuild from the disaster. No extension should be given if the employee merely collects insurance on loss (i.e., chooses not to repair / rebuild). The repairs must be in progress at the time of the original one-year deadline.
- For reasons beyond the employee's control (e.g., natural disaster, lengthy delays, default by the contractor), more time is required to complete construction of the new primary residence at the new duty station. The construction must be in progress at the time of the original one-year deadline.
- A drop in real estate prices results in a delay in selling the primary residence at the old duty station. When the price drop is substantiated by the employee, is at least 5%, and occurs after the employee accepts the position that necessitates the PCS, FWS may provide an extension of up to one year. The employee must be actively attempting to sell the residence at a price not to exceed 105% of its market value.
- Delays occur when purchasing a new residence due to the property being in foreclosure or a short sale. The extension should be based on the additional amount of time needed to complete the purchase.
- The employee does not receive a written PCS authorization until three months or more after he / she reported to the new duty station, due to an error on the part of the organization. In this case, an extension is allowable if it was the original intent of the approving official to provide PCS entitlements.
- Financial hardship (such as a large medical bill) impacting purchasing or selling a residence.
- Delay to support continued attendance of children at a school near the old official duty station.
- Delay to support continued employment of your spouse near the old official duty station.

Situations that do not justify an extension include the following.

- Completing a single extended TDY assignment and / or taking sick leave for less than four months total.
- Inability to purchase a new residence because of housing conditions in the area other than the 5% price drop in housing market or natural / man-made disaster described above.
- Death of the employee or a member of his / her immediate family, unless the death of employee or spouse occurred at least three months into the PCS process.

## 2.3 Closing out your PCS Move

After you have completed your PCS move, you will file your RITA paperwork (see Chapter 12) to true-up the compensation provided to offset the tax implications of your move with your actual tax burden. In addition, you should provide your PCS Coordinator with feedback on your relocation. If you are a transferee, you will receive the *Transferring Employee PCS Satisfaction Survey* after you arrive at your new duty station. If you are a new appointee, or if you do not receive the survey, you can submit feedback to your PCS Coordinator or to [PCSCounselor@fws.gov](mailto:PCSCounselor@fws.gov) at any time.

## Chapter 3: Taking a House-Hunting Trip Before Your Move

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This section will help you determine the answer to the following questions:

- ✓ Do you (and / or your spouse) wish to take a house-hunting trip?
  - ✓ Do you require a cash advance to finance your house-hunting trip?
  - ✓ Do you want to be reimbursed under the fixed rate method or the locality rate method?
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### 3.1 Determining Your Eligibility to Take a House-Hunting Trip

You and / or your spouse may be authorized to take a house-hunting trip before your move to support you in locating a new permanent residence. Some regions offer either a house-hunting trip or temporary quarters. You must contact your new supervisor to determine whether you will be authorized to take a house-hunting trip.<sup>20</sup> If authorized, your new supervisor will determine the number of days allowed for your house-hunting trip. The maximum duration of your house-hunting trip, including travel time, may not exceed ten calendar days. An employee is in duty status, not on leave, during a house-hunting trip; per 225 FW 7, Section 7.19, comp time is not earned during a PCS move.

If you are authorized a house-hunting trip, your *Travel Authorization* will include the approved duration for your house-hunting trip and the maximum amount you will be reimbursed for associated per diem expenses (i.e., lodging, meals, and incidental expenses). Your supervisor may authorize one to ten days for a house-hunting trip. The maximum for which you will be reimbursed is dependent on the per diem method you select, as discussed later in this section.

Prior to deciding whether to take a house-hunting trip, you should consider the following items:

- Reimbursement for house-hunting expenses is considered taxable income by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) and will be included in your gross income on your *Leave and Earnings Statement*.
- Dependents, same-sex domestic partners, and pets are not authorized to travel on a house-hunting trip at the Service's expense. Childcare and pet boarding fees are not reimbursable.

You will not be authorized to take a house-hunting trip under the following circumstances:

- You are assigned to permanent government quarters or another prearranged residence at your new official duty station.
- The distance (via normally traveled routes) between your old and new official station is less than 75 miles. Note that although Departmental policy allows a 10% variance on POV mileage, this is the threshold for variance between authorization and voucher that triggers an amendment of the authorization, not leeway for the purpose of authorizing a house-hunting trip.
- You already reported to duty at your new official station.

You and your spouse are allowed to take house-hunting trips at different times. However, the maximum amount you may be reimbursed is limited to the allowable costs you and your spouse would incur if you traveled together.<sup>21</sup> If your spouse resides at your old duty station for any period after you report to duty at your new official duty station, he / she may still be eligible for a house-hunting trip during that time, even though your eligibility has expired. Be sure to discuss the situation with your PCS Coordinator if you think you and your spouse would like to take separate house-hunting trips.

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<sup>20</sup> Per FTR Part 302-5.5.

<sup>21</sup> Per FTR Part 302-5.9.

## 3.2 Determining Your Allowable Costs

If you are authorized to take a house-hunting trip, allowable expenses include round-trip transportation costs, local transportation costs, and an allowance for lodging, meals, and incidental expenses for you and your spouse. You can depart from a location other than your residence, but reimbursement is limited to what it would cost to depart from and return to your residence.



If you believe you will need a travel advance to help cover the up-front costs of your house-hunting trip, review Section 2.2.1 for information on how to apply for an advance.

### 3.2.1 Transportation

When booking transportation for your house-hunting trip, you should select the mode of transportation that maximizes your time at the new official duty station and minimizes travel time. Generally, you should use common carrier airfare if your new official duty station is located more than 350 miles from your old station. Per DOI policy, a cost comparison (drive vs. fly) is not required if the distance driven by the most common route is less than 250 miles.

If you choose to fly, you must use coach-class accommodations and purchase your ticket using your FWS government charge card. If you do not have a charge card, your gaining region / program can purchase your airfare using its corporate card. If your spouse is traveling with you, you must provide your PCS Coordinator with the details of your travel arrangements. Coach class upgrades and flights above coach class can be authorized for a house-hunting trip for the same reasons and by following the same process as for TDY travel (e.g., need extra legroom). Your PCS Coordinator will purchase your spouse's ticket on the gaining region / program's corporate card.

You must select the most cost effective form of transportation to travel to the airport, unless special circumstances require a specific method. You may claim reimbursement for up to two round-trip taxi rides associated with your house-hunting trip. Contact your PCS Coordinator for additional details if you intend to drive and park your POV at the airport during your house-hunting trip. Note that the PCS en route mileage reimbursement rate applies for mileage between your home and the airport.

If you are authorized to drive a POV to your new official station for your house-hunting trip, you will be reimbursed at the PCS en route mileage reimbursement rate; the rate is \$0.17 per mile in CONUS, as of January 1, 2017. The PCS mileage rates change often and employees should check the GSA website (<http://www.gsa.gov/portal/content/105054>) for the latest rates. During the trip, you may claim mileage reimbursement of up to 50 miles per day at the PCS en route mileage reimbursement rate at your new official station for the purposes of house-hunting.

If you use a common carrier (e.g., commercial airline, train) to travel to your new official station, you may be authorized to rent a car to facilitate your search for a new residence. If you wish to rent a car during your house-hunting trip, you must request approval from your new supervisor. If approved, you may use your FWS government charge card to rent a car and purchase fuel. The U.S. Government Car Rental Agreement applies to these rentals; see the FWS TDY Handbook or 265 FW 4 for additional information. DOI policy prohibits using the pre-pay option for rental car fuel costs; insurance for rental cars is not reimbursable in CONUS and is reimbursable OCONUS only in limited circumstances. You should verify that the modes of transportation that you, your supervisor, and your PCS Coordinator agree upon are documented on your *Travel Authorization*. If you believe that your *Travel Authorization* does not accurately reflect the agreed-upon plan for your travel, contact your PCS Coordinator prior to beginning your house-hunting trip to discuss and resolve the discrepancies.

### 3.2.2 Lodging, Meals, and Incidental Expenses

The following two methods are available for per diem reimbursement (i.e., lodging, meals, and incidental expenses) incurred during a house-hunting trip. You, as the relocating employee, may select between these

methods. If you and your spouse take separate house-hunting trips, you must both use the same method of per diem reimbursement.

**Method 1:** Lump Sum Method.

**Method 2:** Actuals Method (OCONUS locality rate / standard CONUS rate).



Review your *Travel Authorization* to verify that the method you selected for reimbursement is correctly documented on your *Travel Authorization*. Once you have initiated your house-hunting trip, you may not change your per diem reimbursement method.

### 3.2.2.1 Lump Sum Method

If you select the lump sum method (which the Service may authorize for trips to both CONUS and OCONUS locations), you will be reimbursed a fixed amount, regardless of the number of days you take for your house-hunting trip or the actual expenses incurred during your house-hunting trip. The lump sum amount that you and / or your spouse will receive is presented in **Table 3**.

Table 3 - Fixed Rate Reimbursement Calculations

Traveler(s)	Reimbursement calculation
Employee or unaccompanied spouse	5 × locality rate
Accompanied spouse	1.25 × locality rate

The locality rate is determined by the location of your new official station. Current locality rates for CONUS locations can be found on the GSA website ([www.GSA.gov/perdiem](http://www.GSA.gov/perdiem)).



If you select the lump sum method, you do not need to itemize your lodging, meals, and incidental expenses on a *Travel Voucher* (OF-1012). However, if your actual costs exceed the lump sum amount, you are not eligible to seek reimbursement for the difference.



John (a Service employee) and Jane (spouse) are moving from Atlanta, Georgia to Washington, DC and are authorized to take a five-day house-hunting trip. The couple decides they would like to be reimbursed under the lump sum method. John visits the GSA website and determines that the per diem rate for Washington, DC is \$311 (\$242 for lodging, \$69 for M&IE). John calculates their total reimbursement under the lump sum method as follows:

	Employee	Spouse	
Locality Rate	\$311	\$311	
Eligibility Multiplier (see Table 5)	5	1.25	
<b>Trip Total</b>	<b>\$1,555.00</b>	<b>+ \$388.75</b>	<b>= \$1,943.75</b>

Viewed another way, since John and Jane are traveling together, they are entitled to 6.25 times the locality rate (5 + 1.25 = 6.25).

$$\begin{array}{r}
 \$311.00 \\
 \times 6.25 \\
 \hline
 \mathbf{\$1,943.75}
 \end{array}$$

### 3.2.2.2 Actuals – OCONUS Locality Rate

If you are conducting a house-hunting trip to an OCONUS location, you may select between the lump sum method and receiving reimbursement for your actual per diem costs up to the locality rate for the OCONUS location. If you select the OCONUS locality rate method, you will be reimbursed for the actual costs associated with your lodging not to exceed the applicable OCONUS locality rate; you will also receive a daily allowance for meals and incidental expenses at the OCONUS locality rate.

You must submit your lodging receipts with your *Travel Voucher* (OF-1012) to demonstrate that your room rate (excluding room taxes) did not exceed the applicable locality rate. Receipts for meals and incidental expenses are

not required, and you do not need to itemize the costs. You will receive M&IE reimbursement at 75% of the current OCONUS locality rate on the first and last day of your trip (i.e., travel days). **Table 4** demonstrates the maximum amounts of per diem reimbursement you and your spouse qualify for under the OCONUS locality rate method.

Table 4 – OCONUS Locality Rate Per Diem Eligibility

Traveler	Lodging per day	M&IE per day
Employee or unaccompanied spouse	Locality lodging rate	Locality M&IE rate
Accompanied spouse	.75 × locality lodging rate	.75 × locality M&IE rate

Under this method, the applicable OCONUS locality rate is the lesser of the following two rates:

- Locality rate for the location in which you secure lodging.
- Locality rate for the location of your new official duty station.

Current OCONUS locality rates can be found on the Defense Travel Management Office (DTMO) website (<http://www.defensetravel.dod.mil/site/perdiem.cfm>).



John (a Service employee) and Jane (spouse) are moving from Atlanta, Georgia to Honolulu, Hawaii and are authorized to take a five-day house-hunting trip. The applicable per diem rate is based on the Honolulu locality rate of \$271 (\$189 for lodging, \$82 for M&IE). Their eligibility for per diem allowances during the trip is as follows:

	Employee	Spouse	
Day 1 M&IE Rate = \$82 * .75 for Partial Day	\$61.50	\$61.50	
Night 1 Lodging Rate = \$189	\$189.00	\$189.00	
Eligibility Multiplier (see Table 4)	1	0.75	
<b>Day 1 Total</b>	<b>\$250.50</b>	<b>\$187.88</b>	<b>= \$438.38</b>
Days 2-4 M&IE Rate = \$82	\$82.00	\$82.00	
Nights 2-4 Lodging Rate = \$189	\$189.00	\$189.00	
Duration	3	3	
Eligibility Multiplier (see Table 4)	1	0.75	
<b>Days 2-4 Total</b>	<b>\$813.00</b>	<b>\$609.75</b>	<b>= \$1,422.75</b>
Day 5 M&IE Rate = \$82 * .75 for Partial Day	\$61.50	\$61.50	
Eligibility Multiplier (see Table 4)	1	0.75	
<b>Day 5 Total</b>	<b>\$61.50</b>	<b>\$46.13</b>	<b>= \$107.63</b>
<b>Trip Total</b>	<b>\$1,125.00</b>	<b>\$843.75</b>	<b>= \$1,968.75</b>

### 3.2.2.3 Actuals – Standard CONUS Rate

If you are conducting a house-hunting trip to a CONUS location, you may select between the fixed rate (lump sum) method and receiving reimbursement for your actual per diem costs up to the standard CONUS rate. If you select the standard CONUS rate method, you will be reimbursed for the actual costs associated with your lodging not to exceed the standard CONUS rate; you will also receive a daily allowance for meals and incidental expenses at the standard CONUS rate.

You must submit your lodging receipt with your *Travel Voucher* (OF-1012) to demonstrate that the rate of your room (excluding room taxes) did not exceed the standard CONUS rate. Receipts for meals and incidental expenses are not required and you do not need to itemize these costs; however, you must disclose any centrally billed charge card items related to the PCS on your Travel Voucher. You will receive M&IE reimbursement at three-

fourths of the current standard CONUS rate on the first and last day of your trip (i.e., travel days). **Table 5** demonstrates the maximum amounts of per diem reimbursement you and your spouse qualify for under the standard CONUS rate method.

Table 5 – Standard CONUS Rate Per Diem Eligibility

Traveler	Lodging per day	M&IE per day
Employee or unaccompanied spouse	Standard CONUS lodging rate	Standard CONUS M&IE rate
Accompanied spouse	.75 × standard CONUS lodging rate	.75 × standard CONUS M&IE rate

The current standard CONUS rates for lodging, meals, and incidental expenses can be found on the GSA website ([www.GSA.gov/perdiem](http://www.GSA.gov/perdiem)).

## Chapter 4: Selling Your House

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This section will help you determine answers to the following questions:

- ✓ Which expenses are reimbursable in connection with selling your primary residence?
  - ✓ Are you eligible to participate in the relocation services vendor contract?
  - ✓ Will you qualify for a home marketing incentive payment?
- 

### 4.1 Determining Your Eligibility

In some cases, the Service is able to cover certain expenses associated with the sale of a relocating employee's home at the old duty station. To qualify for reimbursement of costs associated with a home sale, the residence you are selling must be your primary residence – the actual residence from which you commuted to work the majority of the time when you were officially notified of your relocation. In addition, the title to the residence must meet one of the following definitions:<sup>22</sup>

1. The title is solely in your name.
2. The title is jointly in your name and the name(s) of one or more members of your immediate family.
3. The title is solely in the name(s) of one or more members of your immediate family (including same-sex domestic partner).<sup>23</sup>
4. The title is with an individual accommodation party (an individual who signs your financing agreement, such as a mortgage, to lend his / her name and credit to the arrangement).

To be considered for reimbursement, all land and buildings must be reasonably related to the residence site. The Service will not reimburse you for expenses related to the sale of non-residential property such as a farm, excess acreage, or a multi-occupancy dwelling. You may be required to provide documentation showing that all aspects of the property are residential in nature, including how the property is zoned. If the property is partially residential and partially non-residential (e.g., commercial, agricultural), you are eligible for pro rata reimbursement based on the percentage of the property that is residential.

Additionally, you must complete the sale to receive reimbursement. If you do not sell the residence, the Service cannot provide any reimbursement for expenses associated with the attempt to sell. All transactions must be completed within one year of the date you reported to your new duty station, unless an extension is given (see Section 2.2.2)

The maximum amount you will be reimbursed for expenses related to the sale of your house is 10% of the actual selling price of the home.

### 4.2 Identifying Reimbursable Expenses

The following list includes expenses that are reimbursable in connection with selling your house:

- Broker's fee, real estate commission, or auctioneer's fee that you pay on the sale of your residence, not to exceed rates that are generally charged in the locality of your old official station. The maximum rate is currently 7% of the sale price of your house. Any broker's fee above 7% can only be reimbursed if you provide satisfactory proof that it is customary in the local area. Note that the 7% rate applies to direct sales only; employees with relocation services vendor contracts should not promise a broker a specific fee or rate.

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<sup>22</sup> Per FTR Part 302-11.100 through 302-11.106

<sup>23</sup> If you sell the residence with an ex-spouse who already has partial ownership of the residence at the time of sale, you are eligible for pro rata reimbursement based on the percentage of the residence that you own. Your ex-spouse does not qualify for reimbursement for his / her share of the residence.

- Cost of advertising in the newspaper and / or other media when you sell your house without the services of a real estate agent.
- Appraisal fee for establishing a suggested sales price for your residence.
- Legal (attorney) and related fees for:
  - Searching for the title, preparing abstracts, and providing a title opinion; or
  - A title insurance policy where customarily furnished by the seller; costs of preparing conveyances, other instruments, and contracts; related notary fees; cost of making surveys; cost of preparing drawings or plats; recording fees and recording taxes (or other charges incidental to recordation); document preparation; and flood certification.
- Owner's title insurance policy when it is a prerequisite to financing or the transfer of property, and / or the cost of other insurance that is a prerequisite to financing or the transfer of property.
- Penalty charge for prepayment of the mortgage on your current residence when provided for on the mortgage instrument (not to exceed three months' interest).
- Escrow agent's fee or settlement fee for closing a real estate transaction.
- State revenue stamps.
- Transfer or mortgage taxes.
- Power of attorney (trustee fee).
- Release fee.
- Title examination.
- Title insurance binder (in lieu of title search).
- Radon and pest inspection, if required by law or the lender. Submit proof of requirement with voucher(s).



Section 4.4 outlines the option to sell your residence with the assistance of the Service's contracted relocation services vendor. If you are eligible for the relocation services program and elect to enroll in the program, the relocation services vendor incurs the vast majority of the expenses listed above on your behalf. Since the Service will pay the relocation services vendor directly for any expenses incurred in association with the sale of your residence, you should not claim them on a *Travel Voucher* (OF-1012). The Service will not pay for duplicate expenses associated with the sale of your residence.

### 4.3 Identifying Non-reimbursable Expenses

The Service will not reimburse you for any of the following expenses:<sup>24</sup>

- Cost of litigation.
- Funding fees (e.g., Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) funding fee).
- U.S. Department of Agriculture rural guarantee fee.
- Mortgage insurance premium (MIP).
- Maintenance and operating costs.
- Property taxes.
- Mortgage discounts, points, or interest on loans.
- Losses on the sale of your residence due to price or market conditions.
- Home warranty.
- Homeowner / condominium fee.
- Any costs such as an appraisal and a tax service fee that are convened under a home sale contract (see Section 4.4)

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<sup>24</sup> Per FTR Part 302-11.202.

- Cost of selling excess acreage or non-residential property not related to the residence site.
- Property management services unless you obtain a waiver signed by your Regional / Assistant Director, the FWS Director, DOI Office of Financial Management (PFM), and the DOI Assistant Secretary – PMB. This is per Departmental policy.
- Fees, costs, charges, or expenses such as an underwriting fee, processing fee, or tax service fee.
- Any expense determined to be part of a finance charge under the *Truth in Lending Act*.<sup>25</sup>



You will need to prepare and submit the following documentation in order to claim reimbursement for expenses associated with the sale of your residence:

1. *Travel Voucher* (OF-1012).
2. *Employee Application for Reimbursement of Expenses Incurred Upon Sale or Purchase of Residence Upon Change of Official Station*.
3. *Settlement Statement*.
4. Purchase or sales contract (a Deed of Trust is not an appropriate substitute).
5. Receipts for any expenses paid outside of direct closing costs (e.g., appraisal costs, credit report fees, attorney's fees) not listed on the *Settlement Statement*.
6. If required by your supervisor or IBC, an explanation that the fees or amounts charged are customary in the local area, in accordance with the following guidelines:
  - a. Federal, state, or local law (e.g., property code) on the item is a key controlling factor. For example, on a VA loan, VA rules may apply. Guidance from the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) may also be relevant. State or local laws may dictate if a particular type of inspection is required, and the employee can be required to produce the state law.
  - b. In the absence of federal, state, or local law, explanations should come from multiple sources such as title companies, lawyers, local realty boards, or the Chamber of Commerce. A single explanation from the employee's realtor or broker carries minimal weight.
  - c. If the fee is negotiable, it is not a customary charge.
  - d. A supervisor or approving official cannot arbitrarily impose a cap or limit on a fee without evidence that the fee is excessive (i.e., burden of proof is on the approving official).
  - e. Appraisals are customary nationwide, but your supervisor or IBC may question the dollar amount.

## 4.4 Considering a Relocation Services Vendor Contract

The Service offers a discretionary relocation services contract for homes not to exceed \$700,000 in value.<sup>26</sup> Your PCS Coordinator will notify you if you are authorized to participate in the relocation services vendor contract; if so, this entitlement should be listed in your *Travel Authorization*. If authorized to participate in the program, you may choose to sell your house through your own efforts (direct sale), by using a real estate agent, or by using the Service's contracted relocation services vendor. Regardless of how you sell your house, the settlement must take place within one year of your actual report date at your new official duty station.<sup>27</sup>

If you choose to participate in the relocation services vendor contract, a 120-day buyer value option (BVO) period begins on the day that you sign the contract with the relocation company (not the day that you list your house). If you do not sell your home within the BVO period, the relocation company will generally make an offer on your home, based on its appraised value, at the conclusion of the 120 days.

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<sup>25</sup> Statute contained in the *Consumer Credit Protection Act*; covered in 12 CFR Part 226

<sup>26</sup> Homes valued over \$700,000 are still eligible for the relocation services contract; however, the employee will be responsible for reimbursing the Service for fees on the residence value that exceed \$700,000. The \$700,000 cap does not apply to direct sale (no relocation service contract).

<sup>27</sup> Per FTR Part 302-11.21

In addition to potentially making an offer on your home, the relocation services vendor also offers the following support during the home sale process:

- Complimentary services at your new official station including mortgage referrals and assistance locating temporary quarters or rental housing.
- You may request an equity advance to assist you with the purchase of a house at your new official station.
- You may be eligible to receive a home marketing incentive payment.<sup>28</sup>



If you use the relocation services vendor contract, FWS pays the vendor directly for the services provided to you; this payment is not considered taxable income.

If you sell your house on your own (without a relocation services vendor contract), any amount reimbursed to you by the Service is considered taxable income and will be included in your gross income on your *Leave and Earnings Statement*. Also, you will not be eligible for a home marketing incentive payment.

### 4.4.1 Limitations on Relocation Services

The relocation services vendor contract is a discretionary entitlement, meaning it will not be offered to every relocating employee. Further, there are limitations on the types of properties that can be accepted into the program.

The following types of properties are not eligible for sale under a relocation services contract:

- Mobile / manufactured home (e.g., trailer home), whether or not affixed to real property owned by the employee, unless the mobile home meets federal, state, and local housing codes.
- Cooperative unit.
- Houseboat.
- Non-residential property (e.g., church, school) converted into a private residence.
- Employee-owned rental property – the residential unit the employee lives in is eligible for direct sale; other units included in the property are not eligible under any type of sale.
- The following types of houses:
  - House that does not meet federal, state, and local housing codes.
  - House that cannot be insured, appraised, and marketed. This includes any home in a remote or inaccessible location where either no comparable sales exist or no sales have occurred in the twelve months preceding the date of the first appraisal. This determination is at the discretion of the relocation services vendor, but must be accompanied by supporting documentation of the factors that contributed to that determination. The vendor may refer such homes for special handling under SIN 653-5 of the GSA schedule.
  - House that cannot be financed (federal or conventional).
  - House still under construction.
  - House without a foundation and / or potable water system, or one where a toxic substance exists.
  - House located outside of the United States and its territories.
  - House such as a condominium where the employee does not own the land – if the employee owns the residence but not the land, the residence qualifies for direct sale only.

In addition, there are some cases in which a relocation services vendor will not make an offer on a property at the end of the 120-day BVO period. For example, if a major structural problem is found that is not repairable (e.g., damage to structure integrity, damage to foundation), if the home is a short sale, or if the property is located in an

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<sup>28</sup> The home marketing incentive award is taxable and will be included as part of your gross income on your Leave and Earnings Statement.

extremely remote location where there are no comparable properties and / or GSA-approved appraisers. In cases where remoteness precludes an appraised value offer, the vendor may still be able to assist with special handling under the buyer value option; this is approved on a case-by-case basis.



It is important that you disclose any issues with your home that could impact the home sale (e.g., potential for the sale to be a short sale, if you do not have full title to the property) during your relocation counseling session. This will help your PCS Coordinator determine whether eligibility for the special handling option must be added to your relocation services contract. Note that the completion of the home sale is not guaranteed under the contract; neither the Service nor the relocation vendor are authorized by law to cover the difference if your mortgage exceeds the value of your residence. By law, the relocation services vendor cannot negotiate with a bank or lender.

#### 4.4.2 Entering into a Relocation Services Vendor Contract

The high-level sequence of events for an employee entering into a relocation services vendor contract is outlined below. Note that the employee should not incur any expenses associated with selling his / her residence (including hiring a real estate broker) until the approved *Travel Authorization* is in place.

1. You will participate in an FWS relocation counseling session, which will include a discussion of your home and whether the relocation services contract is a good option for your move.
2. If you decide to use the relocation services vendor, indicate your decision to use "Relocation Services" on the *Employee Relocation Allowance Data Sheet* (Form 3-139) and complete the *Request for Contractor Provided Relocation Services* form indicating your decision to use relocation services. You must also select the date on which to initiate relocation services.



You may delay the award of a relocation services contract for up to three months after your *Travel Authorization* is signed. Any listing period prior to the relocation contract issuance will not be counted in the 120-day BVO period. Any delay beyond three months requires prior written approval by your Assistant Director or Regional Director because it may require an extension of the PCS beyond one year.

All real estate transactions must be completed within one year of the actual report date at the new duty station, unless an extension is obtained (see Section 2.2.2).

3. In most cases, you will then be permitted to select your own real estate broker (even if prior to the relocation services initiation date). You must be sure to have your real estate broker add the following exclusion clause to the broker's agreement: *"The seller(s) hereby reserve(s) the right (1) to sell the Property directly to [insert relocation vendor name] at any time and, in such event, to cancel this listing agreement with no obligation for commission or continuation of listing hereafter and (2) to turn over an acceptable written offer hereunder to [insert relocation vendor name] for closing and payment of commission which shall be deemed earned and payable only upon closing of title."*
4. You may call the relocation services vendor's pre-transfer line at this time (even if your *Travel Authorization* is not yet approved). Your PCS Coordinator can provide more information on the pre-transfer line, including the phone number, during your counseling session.
5. After your *Travel Authorization* is issued to include a relocation services vendor contract, your new region / program develops a purchase request for the services and begins the contracting process.
6. Once you enroll in the relocation services program and the contract has been awarded, a relocation services representative will contact you within 48 hours and counsel you on the appraisal and offer process. The representative will also provide you with any additional forms you need to complete within five business days of initial contact.



If you are eligible for the relocation services vendor program and you decide not to participate in the program, you must complete the *Request for Contractor Provided Relocation Services* form and indicate you do not wish to use relocation services. A denial of the services is final and may not be changed at a later date.

### 4.4.3 Working with the Relocation Services Vendor

Generally, DOI requires that the Service use the 120-day BVO option for the contract, meaning that your home must be on the market for at least 120 days after the contract award and before the relocation vendor initiates the appraisal to make you an offer. You can generally choose your own real estate broker for the BVO period. DOI and GSA policies require that you market your home at a price not to exceed 105% of its fair market value during the BVO period. Your relocation vendor and real estate broker will have market analysis performed on your home to determine its value.<sup>29</sup> The values from these two analyses are usually averaged to determine your home's fair market value. If one of the parties does not complete a broker market analysis, the lone broker market analysis is used. If the analysis results in a change to your home sale price, the change must be applied within two business days. Reference GSA's website for additional information about the services under SIN 653-1.

If you do not sell your home during the 120-day BVO period, the contract is converted to the appraised value option. While the vendor will provide you with detailed guidance on the process, the following is a high-level overview of the appraisal and offer process:

1. The relocation services vendor sends you a list of independent appraisers (if you have not received this list one week prior to the end of the 120-day BVO period, follow up with your PCS Coordinator). You select two appraisers and one alternate from the list in order of your preference (speak with your PCS Coordinator for guidance on selecting appraisers). The two appraisers complete their appraisals of your home. The two appraisals are averaged if they are within 5% of each other. If they vary by 5% or more, a third appraisal is done and the two appraisals closest in value are averaged. An average of all three appraisals can be used if there is a large variance in the high and low appraisal amounts; this must be included in the task order. Administrative leave may be granted to be present for home appraisals, subject to supervisor approval and compliance with Regional / local personnel policies.
2. The relocation services vendor orders an independent appraisal of your property, title search, and any required inspections. Note that timing of inspections varies by vendor; your utilities must be turned on at the time of inspection. If your relocation vendor cannot find any qualified appraisers (e.g., remote areas) contact your PCS Coordinator (do not pay for them out of pocket).
3. Within two work days of completion of the appraisal, inspection, and title process, the relocation services vendor will provide an oral or written offer to purchase your home. The offer may be sent via email.



The vendor's offer may be contingent upon you completing repairs to the property. The scope of work for the repairs shall be limited to the minimum work required to bring the home up to standards set up by the applicable law, ordinance, regulation, or code. You may request that the vendor write up the request for repairs to your home in accordance with the code. If you believe your vendor is requiring excessive repairs, consult with your PCS Coordinator.

The vendor is responsible for obtaining one estimate of repair and re-inspection costs for each job from an established, reputable, independent contractor. At your discretion, you may arrange for the estimate without the vendor's help. If the estimated repair costs exceed \$1,000, and you and the vendor cannot come to agreement on the estimate you obtained, the vendor will order a second estimate.

If you elect to complete any repairs and re-inspections, you must complete these repairs within 30 calendar days of receiving the vendor's offer, and prior to accepting the offer.

4. You have 60 calendar days to accept or reject the relocation services vendor's offer. During this period of considering the offer, you may request a 75% equity advance payment (see Section 4.4.4). You may react to the offer in any of the following ways:
  - a. **Appeal the offer within 15 calendar days of receipt.** A request to re-evaluate the appraised value offer may be initiated by the employee within 15 calendar days of receipt of the written offer if there is a variance of more than 5% in the appraisals. The vendor will complete the re-evaluation within the 60-day acceptance period.

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<sup>29</sup> The broker's market analysis applies only to the fair market value during the BVO period, not the appraisal period at the end of the BVO period.

- b. **Accept the offer.** Once you accept the relocation services vendor's offer, 95% of your home's equity will be paid within five business days. The relocation services vendor will pay the remaining 5% after you vacate the residence. If you accept the relocation services vendor's offer (or the vendor accepts an offer from a third party), no additional expenses may be reimbursed in association with the sale of your property.
- c. **Ask the vendor to consider an offer from an outside party.** If you receive an offer from an outside party during either the BVO or appraised value periods, you must only verbally accept the offer and turn it over to the relocation services vendor. The vendor will review the offer to determine whether it is acceptable. If the offer is found to be acceptable, you may be eligible for an amended value sale. Under an amended value sale, since an outside party purchases your property, the Service pays the relocation services vendor a reduced fee and you may qualify for a home marketing incentive payment (see Section 4.4.5).



If you receive an offer from an outside party prior to accepting the relocation services vendor's offer, fail to turn the offer over to the relocation company, and the offer does not result in the successful sale of your home, your participation in the relocation services vendor contract will be cancelled and you will not be eligible for a home sale incentive. The Service will reimburse the relocation services vendor for any services provided to you until your participation in the program was cancelled. You will be responsible for selling your home through your own efforts and will not be reimbursed for any services previously rendered by the relocation services vendor.

- d. **Reject the offer / cancel your relocation services request.** You have the right to cancel your relocation services request any time prior to accepting an offer, or to reject the contractor's offer. By doing so, you are canceling your participation in the relocation services vendor contract. The Service will pay the vendor for all inspection fees, title search costs, and appraisal costs incurred up to the point of cancellation. You are entitled to copies of any document(s) prepared by the relocation services vendor and paid for by the Service that would be of use to you in selling your house. If you cancel your participation in the relocation services program and sell your house through your own efforts, you will not be reimbursed for any services previously provided under your relocation services vendor contract.



You cannot receive dual compensation for a real estate expense. Any services such as an appraisal provided by a relocation services vendor cannot be reimbursed to you on a voucher claim. If the vendor did not provide a service, request a statement from them to support your claim.



If you do not sell your home under the first relocation services contract, you may be eligible to participate in a second contract. However, the Service will only cover the costs associated with one agreement. In order to enter into a second agreement, you must reimburse the Service for all costs associated with the first contract. The Service will only grant you a second contract once you issue payment for all billed costs of the first contract and your new region / program approves the second agreement.



You cannot be reimbursed for losses due to market fluctuations in housing prices. It is important that you provide your PCS Coordinator and your relocation services vendor with periodic updates on the status of your home sale.

#### 4.4.4 Home Equity Advance Loan

Once the relocation services vendor makes an offer on your house, or you have received an offer from a third party and turned it over the relocation services vendor, you may request an advance equity payment from the vendor. You may request to be advanced up to 75% of the appraised value offer made by the relocation services vendor to assist you in the purchase of a house at your new official duty station. If you are interested in receiving a home equity advance, you should contact the relocation services vendor to discuss the requirements, which include signing an equity note with the lender.

## 4.4.5 Earning a Home Marketing Incentive Payment

If awarded a relocation service contract, you are eligible for a home marketing incentive payment if all of the following circumstances apply to the sale of your house:

- You list your house with a realtor and include the exclusion clause in your listing agreement prior to initiating the relocation services with the vendor.
- You complete the *Request for Contractor Provided Relocation Services* form to indicate your intent to use relocation services.
- You find a buyer for your house, and the relocation services vendor determines the buyer is qualified and has made a bona-fide offer.
- You transfer your house to the Service's relocation services vendor.
- The Service pays a reduced fee (i.e., amended value fee or BVO) to the relocation services vendor for the sale of your house.

If you sell your home during the 120-day BVO period, the incentive payment is the least of the following three amounts:

- 3% of the price the Service's relocation services vendor paid for your residence.
- The government savings resulting from a BVO value sale.
- \$10,000.

If you sell your home after the 120-day BVO period (i.e., amended value option), the incentive payment is the least of the following three amounts:

- 1.5% of the price the Service's relocation services vendor paid for your residence.
- The government savings resulting from the amended value sale.
- \$5,000.

Note that if you sell your home after the 120-day BVO period, but the vendor purchases the home at the BVO rate, the incentive payment is 3%.

Once the sale of your residence to the new buyer is complete, your PCS Coordinator determines the amount of your incentive award and works with IBC to enter the award into the payroll system. You cannot receive the incentive award until the relocation services vendor sends its final invoice to your new region / program and the invoice is processed for payment. Your region / program may choose to delay your incentive award payment up to two months after receiving the invoice to mitigate the risk of repayment – if the sale between your relocation services vendor and the third party buyer falls through, you are not eligible for the incentive award.



You should be aware that incentive payments are considered taxable income and are not covered by the Withholding Tax Allowance (WTA) or the RITA. Any payment received will be included in your gross income on your *Leave and Earnings Statement*.

## Chapter 5: Resolving Your Unexpired Lease

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This section will help you determine answers to the following questions:

- ✓ How do you settle an unexpired lease?
  - ✓ What costs are reimbursable when settling an unexpired lease?
- 

You are eligible for reimbursement for certain expenses associated with the settlement of your unexpired lease if the dwelling was your actual residence at the time you were officially notified of your transfer, and one of the following three situations applies to the lease agreement:

- The lease is solely in your name.
- The lease is jointly in your name with one or more members of your immediate family.
- The lease is solely in the name(s) of one or more members of your immediate family.

If the lease is shared with one or more non-family members, you will be reimbursed on a pro-rata basis.

Reimbursable expenses include broker's fees for obtaining a sublease, forfeited rent payments after you vacate the residence, forfeited security deposit, utility charges for vacated property, and charges for advertising an unexpired lease.

The following eligibility conditions must be met to qualify for reimbursement:

- Terms of the lease provide payment of settlement expenses that cannot be avoided by sublease or other arrangement. You must take reasonable actions to avoid the unexpired lease charge such as attempting to sublet, if the contract permits it, and by doing the appropriate maintenance, cleaning, and repairs as called for in the lease.
  - If subletting is not allowed, the employee must provide a copy of the portion of the lease stating that he / she may not sublet.
  - If subletting is allowed, the employee must provide copies of documentation proving attempts to sublet in order to qualify for reimbursement. This can include advertisements posted to online rental sites (e.g., Trulia) or in the local newspaper, copies of flyers posted to bulletin boards, and photos of signs posted to advertise the property as "available to rent."
  - The employee must advertise the opportunity to sublet by at least three methods to qualify for reimbursement. For example, posting the property to Trulia, putting a sign near the property, and a flyer on an apartment building's bulletin board are three methods.
- Expenses were not incurred due to failure to give timely lease termination notice after you had definite knowledge of your transfer. The landlord should be notified as soon as you receive your signed, written PCS Authorization.
- Broker's fees or advertising charges are not in excess of those customarily charged for comparable services in your locality.
- Forfeited rent payments in which the lease terms do not exceed three months are payable without additional review. If you claim forfeited rent payments over three months, the request must include documentation that the lease arrangement and property owner's request are in accordance with state and local law, and the request must be forwarded to the PCS Coordinator for review.
- The lease cannot be for land or a purchase installment contract.

You must complete a *Travel Voucher* (OF-1012) and itemize each expense associated with the settlement of your unexpired lease in order to receive reimbursement. In addition, you must include a receipt for each expense claimed and a copy of the signed lease agreement.

Note that if the unexpired lease is at the new duty station (e.g., you signed a lease while on extended TDY prior to being notified of your permanent transfer), it impacts your temporary quarters eligibility.

# A Chapter 6: Transporting and Temporarily Storing Your Household Goods

## C1

C2  
C3

This section will help you determine the answer to the following questions:

- ✓ How will you be reimbursed for the shipment of your household goods?
  - ✓ Who is responsible for disassembling and reassembling your household goods?
  - ✓ Who will pack and inventory your household goods?
  - ✓ How will your household goods be insured during transport?
  - ✓ How long may your goods remain in temporary storage?
- 

## 6.1 Determining Your Eligibility

An employee only qualifies for reimbursement associated with shipment and temporary storage of household goods when those goods are shipped from the residence from which he / she commutes to work the majority of the time. If your family lives in a residence other than the one from which you commute, you are not eligible for shipment or storage of household goods from that residence. This rule applies to all relocation types, including new appointees transferring into public service from the private sector.

The maximum weight allowance you are authorized for household effects and personal goods is 18,000 net pounds. You must pay for any shipping and temporary storage charges in excess of the 18,000-pound limit.

You may also be authorized 2,000 pounds of packing material if using ground shipment (as opposed to air shipment, which is sometimes used for OCONUS moves). The packing material allowance will be reduced proportional to the reduction in the household goods if you move into government quarters or do a partial self-shipment.

If both you and your spouse are employed by the Service and are transferring to the same official station on separate *Travel Authorizations*, you may be authorized up to 36,000 pounds. Prior to shipping your goods, you should contact your PCS Coordinator to verify that your situation qualifies you for the additional weight.



GSA offers a handbook with information about household goods shipments at <http://www.gsa.gov/graphics/fas/HHGGuide2002.pdf>.

## 6.2 Selecting a Shipment Method

If you are completing a CONUS move, you may ship your household goods using either of the following two methods:

- Method 1:** Shipment by Commercial Carrier.
- Method 2:** Self-Shipment.

Employees completing moves to, from, and within OCONUS areas must use the Shipment by Commercial Carrier method, per FTR 302-7.401.

## 6.2.1 Shipment by Commercial Carrier

Under this method, your PCS Coordinator will initiate a *Bill of Lading* with the Service's contracted commercial carrier, who will contact you after receiving and processing the *Bill of Lading*. The commercial carrier will pack, ship, store, deliver, and unpack your goods in one lot. Under this method, FWS pays the commercial carrier directly and you incur no up-front costs. As long as you stay within the 18,000-pound weight limit, the Service will also cover additional carrier charges (e.g., winch to pull a piano) or a surcharge added by the carrier if you live in a remote location that the carrier cannot access by truck.

If you need to schedule time off or take leave to be at your residence when the carrier picks up your household goods, you must contact your supervisor or local Human Resources office to make arrangements. Administrative leave is generally granted for pickup and delivery of household goods, subject to supervisor approval and compliance with Regional and local personnel policies.

## 6.2.2 Self-Shipment

Reimbursable costs under the self-shipment method include those associated with the following items:

- Truck rental.
- Trailer rental required to ship authorized household goods (not unauthorized items such as POVs or motorcycles).
- Fuel for rental vehicle (not POV).
- Packaging materials.
- Toll charges.
- Insurance of your household goods.
- Labor (excluding labor of employee and family members). A formal contract is not required, but there must be a labor receipt, such as a cleared check with notation "labor for packing household goods."
- Allowable air baggage, which counts towards the 18,000-pound limit and includes the following:
  - Accompanied air baggage (beyond the authorized number of checked bags when the employee travels en route to the new duty station). A cost comparison is required for accompanied air baggage.
  - Unaccompanied air baggage sent via a carrier contracted by the employee.



Unaccompanied air baggage sent via government-contracted carrier is not allowable for moves within CONUS. It is allowable for OCONUS moves without a cost comparison. The weight is limited to 350 pounds for the employee and family members ages 12 or older, and 175 pounds for family members under age 12; the weight counts toward the 18,000-pound limit.

Under this method, you must obtain advance approval from your supervisor and itemize the costs associated with the full or partial self-shipment on a *Travel Voucher* (OF-1012). When you submit your *Travel Voucher* (OF-1012), you must include the following documents:

- The weight certificates from the nearest weigh stations before and after loading the vehicle. If you are hauling goods in multiple trips, weight certificates must be provided for each trip. Estimated weights are used for accompanied baggage if the airline does not weigh the baggage.
- A copy of your *Travel Authorization* stating that you may use the self-shipment method.
- Receipts substantiating all expenses for which you are requesting reimbursement.
- A cost comparison, signed by your unit Household Goods Coordinator, showing what the cost would be if the government shipped your household goods. Reimbursement is limited to actual costs incurred, up to the constructed cost of what the government would have paid to ship the goods.

## 6.3 Determining What Types of Items You May Ship

You are permitted to transport household goods, including furniture, appliances, clothing, books, equipment, snowmobiles, and vehicles with two or three wheels (e.g., motorcycle, moped) that belong to you and your immediate family.

The Service will pay a special handling charge, if necessary, to ship any of the following items as long as the total weight of your shipment remains under 18,000 pounds and you identify the item(s) during pre-inventory:

- Regular and riding lawn mowers, motorcycles, mopeds, all-terrain vehicles, snowmobiles, and golf carts.
- Jet skis.
- Boats, kayaks, canoes, and boat trailers that can easily fit into the moving van. This should be verified with the PCS Coordinator prior to shipment, especially shipments to remote locations requiring reconfigurations (e.g., van to air).
- Pianos, grandfather clocks, and other large furniture-type items.
- Spare parts of a POV, including spare tires.
- Ultralight vehicles (aircraft) as defined in 14 CFR part 103.
- Unaccompanied air baggage (UAB) in CONUS-OCNUS or OCNUS-CONUS moves, limited to 350 pounds for employee and family members age 12 and older and 175 pounds for family members under age 12.

### 6.3.1 Shipping Professional Books, Papers, and Equipment

If you believe you exceed the maximum weight of 18,000 pounds due to personally-owned books, papers, and equipment that you use to perform your job, you may be authorized an additional shipment for these goods. To obtain approval for a shipment of these professional items, you must notify your PCS Coordinator and submit a written inventory of the goods and the *Approval Form for Professional Books, Papers, and Equipment* (PBP&E) (see **Attachment 9**) for review by your new supervisor. Your new supervisor will decide whether or not to authorize the shipment.<sup>30</sup>

The goods listed on the inventory should be divided into the following three categories:

1. Professional books.
2. Papers.
3. Equipment.

Generally, items should be listed individually, but may be grouped if appropriate (e.g., encyclopedia set). For goods listed as a group, you must provide an estimate of the number of items contained in the group (e.g., encyclopedia set - 10 books). You must also provide a justification of your need for the goods included in each category. Your new supervisor will review your inventory and determine whether the items listed are necessary for the successful completion of your duties at your new official station.

If items are deemed necessary and your supervisor authorizes the shipment, the commercial carrier will pack the professional items listed on your approved inventory separately from your household goods. Your *Bill of Lading* must contain separate weight readings and costs associated with your professional items in order for you to be fully reimbursed. Notify your PCS Counselor if the carrier failed to weigh the PBP&E separately from the rest of your household goods.

### 6.3.2 Transporting Mobile Homes

The term 'mobile home' includes traditional trailer homes as well as boats. You are permitted to transport your mobile home as your household goods shipment, if you certify it is currently used as your primary residence and will be used as your primary residence at your new official duty station.

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<sup>30</sup> Per FTR Part 302-7.4 and memorandum FWS / DFM / 028766.

If you wish to move your mobile home to your new official station in lieu of household goods, you must contact your PCS Coordinator and request a GSA cost comparison of the estimated cost of moving 18,000 pounds of household goods to your new official duty station and temporarily storing the goods for 90 calendar days at that location. Reimbursement for the transportation of your mobile home is limited to that constructed cost of moving 18,000 pounds of household goods in the GSA estimate.

If you select a commercial carrier to move your mobile home, you will be reimbursed for the actual costs associated with the following items, up to the GSA cost comparison amount:

- Carrier's charge for actually transporting your mobile home.
- Ferry fares.
- Bridge, road, and tunnel tolls.
- Taxes, charges, and fees charged by the state or another government authority for transporting the mobile home in or through its jurisdiction.
- Charges for flag car or escort service (when required by state or local law).
- Carrier's service charge for obtaining permits.
- Costs of preparing your mobile home for movement.

You will not be reimbursed for any of the following expenses:<sup>31</sup>

- Maintenance.
- Repairs.
- Storage.
- Insurance for homes above carrier's maximum liability.
- Charges designated in the tariffs as "Special Service."

If you tow or drive your mobile home on your own, you will be reimbursed \$0.11 per mile in addition to the POV reimbursement rate of \$0.17 per mile (as of January 1, 2017 for CONUS transit), plus any ferry fares or bridge, road, and tunnel tolls.

### 6.3.3 Property Not Transportable at Government Expense

The following items do not meet the legal definition of household goods, and you may not include them in your shipment, regardless of whether the carrier permits them and / or your supervisor is willing to pay for special handling.

- Automobiles, trucks, vans, mobile homes, camper trailers, and similar motor vehicles.
- Farm vehicles.
- Live animals (e.g., birds, insects, reptiles).
- Cord wood and building materials.
- Property for resale or commercial use.
- Firearms or weapons.
- Flammable or explosive materials (e.g., fireworks, propane gas).
- Personal baggage when carried free on tickets.
- Consumables / perishable items, including frozen food except for shipments under 150 miles or 24 hours to a foreign country (See FTR section 300-3.1).
- UAB in CONUS to CONUS moves.

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<sup>31</sup> Per FTR Part 302-10.207

You must also familiarize yourself with your commercial carrier's policy that may include additional prohibited items. Contact your commercial carrier regarding any items you are unsure about including in your household goods shipment.



Limited exceptions to the prohibition of shipping consumables may be made when relocating to a foreign country. See Section 1.3.3 for additional information and discuss with your PCS Coordinator if you think your move qualifies for an exception.

## 6.4 Completing the Pre-Inventory List, Weight Estimate, and Scheduling

Prior to shipping your household goods, the commercial carrier will either visit your home to complete a pre-inventory of your items, or conduct a phone interview in order to develop a pre-move weight estimate. Exceptions to the 18,000-pound weight limit established in the FTR are very rare. Consider the following items and consult your PCS Coordinator if you have any concerns regarding the weight limit to avoid paying out-of-pocket for any overage.

1. Check that all of the items you intend to move are accounted for on the pre-inventory list prepared by the carrier. A complete pre-inventory list supports an accurate weight estimate and assists in identifying items that will result in special handling charges.
2. If your weight estimate is close to or exceeds 18,000 net pounds, you may decide to personally move or leave behind some items. You should maintain a record of items that you eliminated from the pre-inventory list and provide the revised list to the commercial carrier and your PCS Coordinator.
3. Weight estimates are not official; they are only planning tools. If the weight of items packed, shipped, or stored exceeds the weight allowance, the Service is required to collect the excess cost from you, even if the carrier made an erroneous estimate. If you believe the commercial carrier grossly erred in the pre-move estimate, you should discuss the situation with your Household Goods Coordinator and PCS Coordinator immediately. Variances of more than 15% between the pre-move estimate and the final weight require carrier justification.

When scheduling your household goods shipment, keep in mind that the Service will cover the cost associated with a commercial carrier performing one pick-up of your household goods (maximum weight of 18,000 pounds). While the commercial carrier may allow you to arrange extra pick-ups for your personal convenience, the Service will not pay for any of the associated costs.<sup>32</sup> You will be billed for the cost associated with any additional pick-ups.

### 6.4.1 Carrier Packing, Inventory, and Loading

If you opt to have a commercial carrier ship your household goods, do not pack anything on your own. You should wait and pack all household goods with the assistance of your commercial carrier to ensure items are packed correctly, avoid delays in the packing process, and avoid additional packing charges. Before the carrier arrives, clearly mark any household items that you do not intend to move. Items shipped unintentionally will count as part of your weight allowance total.

You should watch the commercial carrier pack, inventory, and load your household goods and obtain a copy of the carrier's inventory form. You must review the inventory form to verify that you agree with the carrier's evaluation of the condition of your household goods. If you disagree with an item's evaluation, note your comments on the inventory prior to signing the form.

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<sup>32</sup> Per FTR Part 302-7.3.



You are responsible for disassembling the items listed below for pick-up and reassembling them after delivery:

- Refrigerator and / or ice maker;
- Outdoor playground equipment;
- Television, radio antenna, and / or satellite dish;
- Storage shed;
- Gas dryer;
- Desk;
- Pool table;
- Hot tub;
- Waterbed; and
- Dog kennel or dog run.

If you are unable to disassemble or reassemble any of these items, you may hire a qualified technician and claim the cost as part of your miscellaneous expense allowance (see Chapter 11 for more information).

## 6.5 Insuring Your Household Goods

Insurance coverage of your household goods begins at the time of pick-up and covers your items during transport and temporary storage until delivery. If using the commercial carrier method, you must choose one of two methods by which to insure your household goods against loss or damage:

**Method 1:** Full Value Protection.

**Method 2:** Excess Full Value Protection.

If you are self-shipping your household goods, you are responsible for purchasing insurance if desired; you may claim reimbursement for reasonable insurance costs as outlined in Section 6.2.2.

### 6.5.1 Full Value Protection Method

If you ship your household goods using the Service's contracted commercial carrier, this method of protection is automatically provided to you at no additional cost. Full value protection insures your household goods at the full replacement value for individual items or covers the loss of your entire shipment at \$6.00 per pound.



John ships 10,000 pounds of household goods to his new official station. The moving truck transporting his goods is involved in an accident that results in the loss of all of John's household goods. At a maximum, John will receive \$60,000 to replace his belongings.

### 6.5.2 Excess Full Value Protection Method

Excess full value protection insures your household goods based on your dollar valuation of the belongings being shipped. You should select this method if you wish to ensure full coverage of your goods in the event of damage or loss of your shipment. If you select this method of protection, you will be billed for the additional cost to the Service, as compared to the full value protection method.

## 6.6 Unpacking Your Household Goods

You will be reimbursed for the expenses associated with a commercial carrier performing one delivery of your household goods. While the commercial carrier may allow you to arrange additional deliveries for your personal convenience, you will be billed for the cost associated with any extra deliveries.

Your commercial carrier will unpack your household goods at your new residence upon request. Unpacking refers to removing your goods from the shipping boxes; placing your items on counters, tabletops, and the floor; and removing all trash associated with the unpacked items. You may direct your commercial carrier to place your furniture one time in your new residence; your commercial carrier is not responsible for re-positioning furniture multiple times while you decide how to arrange a room.

You should watch carefully as the commercial carrier unpacks your goods to verify their condition and note any damage or loss on the delivery receipt prior to signing. Your commercial carrier's driver must co-sign the receipt. If the driver refuses to sign the receipt, or you notice the loss or damage after the delivery truck leaves, you must contact your carrier's representative and your PCS Coordinator immediately. For each lost or damaged article, document the following items:

- Number on carrier's inventory form.
- Description of item.
- Description of damage or statement of loss.
- Estimated purchase date and cost.
- Repair or replacement cost.

You must submit your claim to the commercial carrier in writing, with the information outlined above and a copy of the carrier's inventory form, within 30 calendar days of identifying the loss or damage. The carrier has 120 calendar days to respond to your claim. If you do not receive a response from your carrier within 120 calendar days, contact your PCS Coordinator for assistance.

## 6.7 Defining Temporary Storage of Your Household Goods

You are entitled to store your household goods in temporary storage for up to 60 calendar days when relocating within CONUS, and up to 90 days when relocating to or from an OCONUS location. Storage of household goods in excess of 30 calendar days is treated as taxable income and will be included as gross income on your *Leave and Earnings Statement*.

You may request to extend temporary storage of your goods in 30-day increments for an additional period of no more than an additional 90 calendar days by submitting a memo to your new supervisor and PCS Coordinator.<sup>33</sup> If your new supervisor approves the extension, the authorization must be documented as an amendment to your *Travel Authorization*. The additional storage days are treated as taxable income and will be included as gross income on your *Leave and Earnings Statement*. Circumstances beyond your immediate control, which could justify additional storage time, include the following:

- A TDY or long-term training assignment while your household goods are in storage.
- The unavailability of suitable, affordable housing within 25 miles of the duty station.
- A delay in constructing a new residence.
- The serious illness of an employee or illness / death of an immediate family member.
- Acts of nature beyond the control of the employee.

Under no circumstances may the Service provide reimbursement for temporary storage of household goods for a period of more than 150 days for moves within CONUS or 180 days for moves to / from an OCONUS location.

## 6.8 Considering Extended Storage of Your Household Goods

You may be authorized to store your household goods for an extended period if you are assigned to an OCONUS duty station and extended storage is more cost effective than shipping your goods, or if you are assigned to an isolated duty station within CONUS. The extended period of time is at the discretion of your Region. It is generally for the duration of your assignment, not to exceed three years in CONUS. In OCONUS locations, it is for the

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<sup>33</sup> Per FTR Part 302-7.9.

duration of the assignment plus 30 days prior to the time your assignment begins and 60 days after the tour is completed.

An official station must meet one of the following two criteria to be classified as an isolated duty station:

- The quarters you are required to occupy at your new official duty station will not accommodate your household goods.
- Quarters that would accommodate your household goods are not available within 50 miles of your new official duty station.

If either of these circumstances applies to your transfer and you would like to store your household goods for an extended period, you must contact your PCS Coordinator and obtain authorization from your Supervising Directorate Member. If approved, your authorization for extended storage must be documented on your *Travel Authorization*.

## A Chapter 7: Shipping a Privately Owned Vehicle

C1

This section will help you determine answers to the following questions:

- ✓ Are you eligible to ship your POV?
- ✓ Under what circumstances is shipment permitted?

C2

C3

### 7.1 Shipping a POV for a CONUS Move

Shipment of a POV is a discretionary entitlement that is generally not approved for CONUS moves, unless the shipment is necessary to expedite your arrival to the new official duty station, the distance is at least 600 miles, and the vehicle is operable and legally titled. If you believe your new official station will benefit from the shipment of your POV, you must obtain approval from your new supervisor and have the entitlement documented on your *Travel Authorization*. Once you have completed en route travel by any means and arrived at your new permanent duty station, you cannot ship a POV.



Note that the Service may provide reimbursement for shipment and storage of leased vehicles. Regardless of whether you are authorized to ship a vehicle or not, the Service cannot provide reimbursement for any costs associated with breaking a vehicle lease agreement.

If you are authorized to ship a POV, your PCS Coordinator will initiate a *Bill of Lading* for the shipment. The vehicle will not be included as part of your household goods shipment. You must also familiarize yourself with the carrier's policy, which may require you to make additional preparations prior to shipping your POV (e.g., draining excess fuel). The carrier will need details on the vehicle, such as the make and model, estimated weight, and vehicle identification number (VIN).

If you want to self-ship your vehicle instead, you must obtain approval from your supervisor at your new official station. Your supervisor will determine whether it is in the interest of the Service to authorize your request. If authorized, approval must be documented on your *Travel Authorization*.

You will not be reimbursed for any of the following expenses incurred as a result of shipping your POV:

- Shipping expenses associated with additional personal items.<sup>34</sup>
- Excess baggage fees.
- Rental car or fuel expenses.
- Taxi charges.

It may take several weeks for your POV to arrive at your new duty station. During this time, you are responsible for any costs associated with your daily commute to and from your new duty station. The Service cannot provide a government or rental vehicle for commuting while you wait for your POV to arrive, even if the government or its contractor is responsible for the delay.

The cost of shipping a second POV is allowable only if you are able to provide a cost comparison that shows that shipping the second vehicle and paying for you and your family to travel to the new duty station by common carrier is less costly to the Service than mileage and per diem cost associated with driving the POV to your new official duty station. If the employee does not ship a POV for expedited arrival at the new duty station, the spouse can ship a POV only if it is cost-effective for the government (cost comparison is required). Under no circumstances may the Service authorize shipping three POVs at the expense of the government. An employee relocating without a spouse or family members may only be authorized shipment of one POV for expedited arrival.

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<sup>34</sup> If you are transferring from CONUS to an OCONUS duty station, or from an OCONUS to CONUS duty station and you are authorized to ship your POV, you may be authorized a shipment of goods and excess baggage. For more information, contact your PCS Coordinator.

## 7.2 Shipping a POV for an OCONUS Move

If you and your immediate family are moving to or from an OCONUS official duty station, you may be authorized to ship one operable, legally titled POV to your new official duty station at least 600 miles away. Shipment of two or more vehicles is not permitted.

If you wish to ship a vehicle to your new official duty station, you must notify your new supervisor and PCS Coordinator. Authorization is subject to whether the use of your POV at your new official station is warranted, will contribute to you performing your duties effectively, and is suitable under the local conditions. If your new supervisor approves the shipment of your POV, the approval must be documented on your *Travel Authorization*. If you fail to obtain appropriate approval, there is a chance you will not be reimbursed for the cost associated with shipping your POV.

## 7.3 Shipping a Replacement POV at a Remote OCONUS Location

At the discretion of the Region HQ and / or the gaining office approving official, a replacement POV may be authorized and shipped to the employee after every five years of continuous service from the date the employee first had use of the POV that is being replaced. The approving official should consider the condition of the employee's current vehicle (i.e., whether it is in working order) and the availability of vehicles for purchase at the OCONUS official duty station prior to authorizing the shipment of a replacement POV to an OCONUS duty station. Situations that could warrant replacement include theft, serious damage, or deterioration due to the conditions of the duty station. If approved, the expense does not require a travel authorization, only a government bill of lading.

The five year period is per Departmental policy that supplements the FTR (see section 302-9.172). Additionally, the POV must have been originally shipped to the OCONUS location at government expense under a PCS travel authorization, issued either by the Service or another federal organization. Any PCS move in which the lump sum payment option was selected by the employee does not qualify for this entitlement.

Regions with OCONUS duty stations should have a written policy on this entitlement defining what areas qualify and the criteria for replacement. For example, the Regions may determine that vehicles are available for purchase in Hawaii, Guam, and Puerto Rico; therefore, no replacement vehicles are authorized. It may be determined that weather conditions in a remote area of Alaska cause vehicle deterioration but the POV shipment is not in the interest of the Service in a particular case since GOVs are available for work use and the employee has only a fourth of a mile walking commute.

A

## Chapter 8: Traveling to Your New Duty Station

C1

This section will help you determine answers to the following questions:

- ✓ What mode of transportation will you use to travel to your new official station?
- ✓ How much will you be reimbursed for lodging, meals, and incidental expenses while traveling to your new official station?

C2

C3

You are eligible for reimbursement of certain expenses associated with your transportation, lodging, meals, and incidental expenses while traveling to your new official duty station. Additionally, you may be eligible for reimbursement of certain expenses associated with your immediate family's transportation, lodging, meals, and incidental expenses. Costs associated with transporting your pets are not reimbursable.

You and your immediate family members may travel to your new official station by POV or common carrier, as authorized by the Service. When deciding how to travel to your new official station, be aware that, for moves within CONUS, you are not entitled to the shipment of a POV if you drive en route (e.g., shipment of your second POV). Your new supervisor must authorize shipment of a POV separately (when you do not drive en route).



### A Note on Completing TDY Travel while En Route to a PCS

It may be necessary for an employee to participate in training or orientation prior to reporting to his / her permanent duty station. Employees must log all TDY travel in Concur, including TDY travel conducted while en route to a PCS. When an employee attends training, such as at the National Conservation Training Center (NCTC) or the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center (FLETC), the training location is not a permanent duty station, even if it is listed on the *Notification of Personnel Action* (SF-50) as a duty station.

When an employee conducts TDY travel en route to a PCS, the trip must be noted as such in both the TDY and PCS authorizations and the two orders must be in agreement. The key rule is that an employee cannot claim both PCS and TDY entitlements on the same day. Other guidance on completing en route TDY travel includes the following items.

- When an employee drives 350 miles en route, he / she may either:
  - **Claim the day as an en route PCS travel day.** In this case, the employee cannot claim any TDY allowances for that day, even if he / she completed eight hours of work.
  - **Claim the day as a TDY day if he / she completed at least a half day of work.** In this case, the employee must use the per diem rate for the location where he / she spent the most time that day (i.e., cannot claim partial per diem in multiple locations).
- When an employee is authorized to spend a day completing work from a hotel, on a refuge, or from another FWS work location, it is a TDY day. The employee must spend at least half of the day working (not on leave) in order to claim TDY allowances.
- If an employee is driving en route to a PCS and conducts an official deviation to drive to a refuge or other FWS work location for TDY travel, the employee should consider which activity (driving en route or completing TDY duties) comprised the majority of the workday when deciding whether to claim TDY or PCS allowances. If the employee is driving a POV, he / she must use one rate for all mileage driven during the day.
- If the employee is flying to the new permanent duty station and is working over half the workday on the flight (e.g., on a laptop), see the below per diem rates:

Type	Per Diem Rate
CONUS to CONUS	Standard CONUS Rate
CONUS to OCONUS	Locality Rate of New Duty Station
OCONUS to OCONUS	Locality Rate of New Duty Station
OCONUS to CONUS	Standard CONUS Rate

## 8.1 Traveling by Common Carrier

If you would like to travel to your new official station by common carrier (e.g., commercial airline service, train), you must list the request on your *Employee Relocation Allowance Data Sheet* (Form 3-139), notify your PCS Coordinator, and obtain approval. The authorization to travel by common carrier must be documented on your *Travel Authorization*. Once you receive approval to travel by common carrier, you must reserve coach-class accommodations and purchase your ticket using your FWS government charge card. If you do not have a government charge card, your gaining region / program can purchase your ticket on its corporate charge card.

If your immediate family is also traveling by common carrier, you must provide your PCS Coordinator with the details of your travel arrangements. Your PCS Coordinator will contact the Travel Management Center (TMC) to purchase your family's tickets on the gaining region / program's corporate charge card. Coach class upgrades and flights above coach class can be authorized for en route PCS travel for the same reasons and by following the same process as for TDY travel (e.g., extra legroom).

Authorization for checked baggage for en route PCS travel is the same as for TDY travel. If you want to count additional checked bags as a partial self-shipment of household goods, you must obtain pre-approval prior to beginning the en route travel.



When deciding how to travel to your new official duty station, you should consider the implications on your daily commute. The Service may not authorize the use of a government owned vehicle or rental car or reimburse you for any commuting costs while you wait for a POV to arrive at your new duty station.

## 8.2 Traveling by POV

If you are authorized to travel to your new official station using your POV, you will be reimbursed for mileage at the PCS mileage reimbursement rate. If you and your immediate family wish to travel to your new official station using more than one POV, you must obtain approval from your new supervisor in order to claim mileage reimbursement for both vehicles and ensure the expense is authorized on your *Travel Authorization*. A "drive vs. fly" cost comparison is not required, but mileage for a second POV cannot be authorized simply to move an additional vehicle. Your supervisor will evaluate your request to drive two POVs based upon whether you qualify for one of the following exceptions:

1. Your vehicle cannot reasonably accommodate you, your immediate family, and luggage.
2. Special accommodations are necessary to transport a member of your immediate family due to age or a physical condition.
3. You must report to your new official station before your family, who has delayed their travel for acceptable reasons (e.g., completion of school term, sale of property, settlement of business affairs).
4. Your immediate family must travel to your new official station before you for acceptable reasons (e.g., enrollment of children in school at the beginning of the term).



The Service uses MapQuest or Google Maps to determine distances and estimate travel time to your new official station. The PCS mileage reimbursement rate is adjusted annually; use the GSA website at <http://www.GSA.gov/mileage> to check the current rate.



John, his wife Jane, and their two children drive to John's new official station. The distance between John's old and new stations is 350 miles. To determine the amount he will be reimbursed for mileage, John performs the following calculation:

350 (Distance between old and new stations)  
x \$0.17 (PCS mileage reimbursement rate in CONUS, as of January 1, 2017)  
**\$59.50** (Total PCS mileage reimbursement)

## 8.3 Traveling by Rental Car

En route travel by rental car is authorized only if a cost comparison shows that it is less costly than en route travel by common carrier. Per diem costs and one-way drop off fee (if applicable) must be included in the cost comparison. Insurance for travel within CONUS is not an allowable expense, and should not be included in the cost comparison. The employee is not limited to a compact size car; he / she should select the smallest size car that can reasonably transport the travelers and personal goods. The minimum daily driving distance for a rental car is the same as a POV (350 miles).



If you are authorized to travel by rental car, the U.S. Government Car Rental Agreement applies to your rental. See the FWS TDY Handbook or 265 FW 4 for information on the agreement.

## 8.4 Traveling by Privately-Owned Aircraft

If authorized to travel by privately-owned aircraft, the employee will be reimbursed at the PCS mileage reimbursement rate (not the TDY aircraft mileage rate). The employee is not required to complete a cost comparison between commercial airfare and privately-owned aircraft.

## 8.5 Identifying Allowable Per Diem Expenses for En Route Travel

C1

This section applies to Category 1 transferring employees only. If your relocation does not fall into this category, disregard any references to the eligibility of family members to receive per diem allowances (due to your transfer type, you may only claim per diem allowances for yourself).

You and your immediate family may be eligible to claim lodging costs and receive a daily allowance for M&IE during travel to your new official station. Lodging reimbursement is provided for the actual amount incurred up to the standard CONUS rate; M&IE is reimbursed at the standard CONUS rate (75% on the first and last days of travel). You must include lodging receipts with your *Travel Voucher* (OF-1012); receipts are not required for M&IE.

In order to be eligible for these per diem allowances, you and your immediate family's travel to the new official station must meet the following two conditions:

1. Total travel time exceeds 12 hours.
2. Average travel distance is 350 miles per day.

If your total travel time is less than 12 hours, you and your family members will not receive any per diem allowances. If you do not meet the average daily driving distance requirement of 350 miles, you will not receive per diem allowances during the excess travel time. The only exception to this rule is the first day of travel to your new official station, when you are only required to travel 50 miles in order to be eligible for per diem allowances. Stopping to perform work-related duties does not eliminate the requirement to meet the minimum daily driving distance in order to claim PCS per diem allowances. Note that employees do not earn comp time during PCS moves, per 225 FW 7, Section 7.19; this applies even if you drive more than eight hours in a day.

To determine the maximum number of days you are authorized for travel by POV to your new official station, divide the distance between your old and new official duty stations by the 350-mile daily driving average. If the result is a whole number, that is the number of days of M&IE that you are authorized. Subtract 1 to determine the number of nights of lodging that you are authorized. If the result is not a whole number, round up to the next whole number to determine the number of days of M&IE that you are authorized. Round down to the previous whole number to determine the number of nights of lodging that you are authorized.



Shawna is driving to her new official duty station, which is located 2,000 miles from her old official duty station. She performs the following calculation to determine the number of days she is allotted for travel:

$$\begin{aligned} & 2,000 \text{ (Number of miles between old and new stations)} \\ \div & \underline{350 \text{ (Minimum required daily distance)}} \\ & \mathbf{5.71 \text{ (Actual number of travel days authorized)}} \end{aligned}$$

Shawna is authorized **6** days of M&IE and **5** nights of lodging.

In very limited circumstances, the Service may make an exception to the daily minimum driving average. The following are reasons that may qualify for an exception to the daily minimum driving average:

- Unsafe weather conditions (e.g., icy roads, hurricane).
- Transportation of a family member with a physical disability who requires frequent stops as a result of this disability. In this case, the employee should establish an alternate approved minimum daily driving distance in advance of travel.
- Authorized stops to perform official duties, as documented on your *Travel Authorization*.

The following are reasons for delay that do not qualify for an exception to the daily minimum driving average:

- Choosing to interrupt travel for weekends and / or holidays.
- Interrupting travel on regular business days without prior authorization from your new supervisor.
- The POV breaks down.
- You or a member of your family becomes ill.<sup>35</sup>

**Table 9** lists the per diem allowances available to you and your family members during en route travel. You receive 75% of the M&IE amounts listed in the table on the first and last days of travel.

Table 9 - Eligibility for Lodging and M&IE during travel to the new official station

Traveler	Maximum lodging per day	M&IE per day
Employee or unaccompanied spouse	Standard CONUS lodging rate	Standard CONUS M&IE Rate
Accompanied spouse	.75 × standard CONUS lodging rate	.75 × standard CONUS M&IE rate
Children age 12 and over	.75 × standard CONUS lodging rate	.75 × standard CONUS M&IE rate
Children under age 12	.5 × standard CONUS lodging rate	.5 × standard CONUS M&IE rate

GSA establishes the standard CONUS rate annually and independent of the location in which you secure lodging. The current standard CONUS rate can be found on the GSA website ([www.GSA.gov/perdiem](http://www.GSA.gov/perdiem)).

<sup>35</sup> If you or a member of your family becomes ill, you should contact your new supervisor and take sick leave.



Jill, Matt, and their two children (ages 14 and 10) are traveling 1,050 miles en route to Jill's new duty station. Jill calculates the authorized number of travel days (1,050 miles / 350 miles = 3 days) and determines that the family is entitled to three days of M&IE and two nights of lodging. The family will complete their travel using one car. The family's PCS mileage reimbursement is calculated as follows:

1,050 (Number of miles between old and new stations)  
 x \$0.17 (PCS mileage reimbursement rate → as of January 1, 2017)  
**\$178.50** (total PCS mileage reimbursement)

Jill visits the GSA website and determines that the current standard CONUS lodging rate is \$91 and the standard CONUS M&IE rate is \$51. The reimbursement for the first and last travel days is 75% of the M&IE reimbursement rate. The family's total maximum reimbursement for their three days of travel is as follows:

	Employee	Spouse	Child, Age 14	Child, Age 10	
Day 1 M&IE Rate = \$51 * .75 for Partial Day	\$38.25	\$38.25	\$38.25	\$38.25	
Night 1 Lodging Rate = \$91	\$91.00	\$91.00	\$91.00	\$91.00	
Eligibility Multiplier (see Table 9)	1	.75	.75	.5	
<b>Day 1 Total</b>	<b>\$129.25</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>\$96.94</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>\$96.94</b>
					<b>+ \$64.63 = \$387.75</b>
Day 2 M&IE Rate = \$51	\$51.00	\$51.00	\$51.00	\$51.00	
Night 2 Lodging Rate = \$91	\$91.00	\$91.00	\$91.00	\$91.00	
Eligibility Multiplier (see Table 9)	1	.75	.75	.5	
<b>Day 2 Total</b>	<b>\$142.00</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>\$106.50</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>\$106.50</b>
					<b>+ \$71.00 = \$426.00</b>
Day 3 M&IE Rate = \$51 * .75 for Partial Day	\$38.25	\$38.25	\$38.25	\$38.25	
Eligibility Multiplier (see Table 9)	1	.75	.75	.5	
<b>Day 3 Total</b>	<b>\$38.25</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>\$28.69</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>\$28.69</b>
					<b>+ \$19.13 = \$114.75</b>
<b>Trip Total</b>	<b>\$309.50</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>\$232.13</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>\$232.13</b>
					<b>+ \$154.75 = \$928.50</b>

## 8.6 Adjusting Per Diem Rates for OCONUS Moves

If you and your immediate family are moving to or from an OCONUS official duty station, you are entitled to reimbursement based on the standard CONUS rate, as indicated in **Table 9**, while traveling through the continental United States. Once you and your family begin travel outside the continental United States (e.g., Hawaii, Canada, Alaska), you are entitled to reimbursement based on the applicable OCONUS locality rate instead of the standard CONUS rate.

If you and your immediate family are moving between two OCONUS duty stations, you are entitled to reimbursement based on the applicable OCONUS locality rate.

The applicable OCONUS locality rate is determined by the location of your new official station. Current OCONUS locality rates can be found on the Defense Travel Management Office website (<http://www.defensetravel.dod.mil/site/perdiem.cfm>).



Per DOI policy, en route per diem on the Alaska Marine Highway (i.e. ferry system) will be at the highest CONUS rate established by GSA. In FY2017, the highest CONUS rate was the winter seasonal rate of \$463 per day for Telluride, CO (\$362 lodging, \$74 M&IE). Staterooms for lodging on the Alaska Marine Highway are considered part of the transportation cost and the cost of lodging is not reimbursable.

You should also note that the PCS mileage reimbursement rate for OCONUS travel is 150% of the CONUS rate. You must document your odometer readings in order to claim the OCONUS rate of reimbursement. You will be taxed on the difference in cost between the CONUS and OCONUS rates of reimbursement.

## Chapter 9: Staying in Temporary Quarters

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This section will help you determine answers to the following questions:

- ✓ Are you eligible for reimbursement of temporary quarters expenses?
  - ✓ How long may you stay in temporary quarters?
  - ✓ What expenses are reimbursable in connection with temporary quarters?
  - ✓ What amount will you be reimbursed for your stay in temporary quarters?
- 

You may be eligible for reimbursement of certain expenses associated with staying in temporary quarters if the distance between your old residence and new duty station is 50 miles or more.<sup>36</sup> Temporary quarters refer to any lodging obtained from private parties (e.g., friends, family) or commercial sources (e.g., hotel, temporary housing) that you and your immediate family temporarily occupy at either of the following locations:

- Your old official station, before you begin travel to your new official station.
- Your new official station, until you move into your new permanent residence.

Reimbursement for non-conventional lodging (including Airbnb and Trovit) does not require Directorate Member approval and does not require a cost comparison to conventional lodging. Lodging at a non-commercial source (e.g., with family or a friend) is limited to the net additional cost directly attributable to your occupancy, and the provider must document this cost. In most cases, lodging with family or friends does not result in a net additional cost for the host. One acceptable exception would be if your host normally rented the room out to the public, but you occupied the room instead.

You will not be authorized for reimbursement of expenses associated with staying in temporary quarters under the following circumstances:<sup>37</sup>

- You plan to occupy government-owned or controlled quarters at your new official station.
  - If the government-furnished quarters are later determined to be inadequate or unavailable by the supervisor due to lack of furniture or other criteria, your *Travel Authorization* can be retroactively amended and temporary quarters can be provided for the days associated with the inadequate or unavailable quarters.
  - In the case of a retroactive addition of the temporary quarters entitlement, eligibility and restrictions are governed by quarters management policies (e.g., 371 FW 1), not travel policies. For example, quarters management policies may stipulate that your family be required to share common areas with others residing in the temporary quarters.
- You were aware of your upcoming PCS move and had adequate opportunity (i.e., more than 60 calendar days) during an extended TDY assignment within three months of your PCS report date to arrange for permanent quarters at your new official station.

If you receive approval to stay in temporary quarters, you will be authorized allowable expenses for an initial period of up to 30 consecutive calendar days. Your supervisor may reduce the period below 30 days if he / she can reasonably expect you to find permanent quarters in a shorter period of time (e.g., you will move into government quarters two weeks after arrival, your closing date on a new residence and arrival of household goods will occur three weeks after arrival). You must submit a written request as soon as you become aware that you will need an extension, and the extension must be associated with circumstances beyond your control. The maximum number of days allowed by law is 120.

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<sup>36</sup> As noted at in the chapter heading, this entitlement applies only to transferees (C1 relocations). See FTR Section §302-6.5 "New appointees, employees assigned under the Government Employees Training Act (5 U.S.C. 4109), and employees returning from an overseas assignment for the purpose of separation are not eligible for a Temporary Quarters Subsistence Expense (TQSE) allowance."

<sup>37</sup> Per FTR Part 302-6.303.

Be aware that your authorized period in temporary quarters expires once you or a member of your immediate family moves into your new permanent residence. You will not be reimbursed for any additional temporary quarters expenses past this date, regardless of whether your authorized period has expired or not. Per DOI policy, occupancy of temporary quarters must be completed within one year from the actual report date at the new official duty station unless an extension is obtained (see Section 2.2.2).

Temporary quarters are often rented, and can become a permanent residence once converted to a longer term lease or sale. In this case, it is important to determine the date when the arrangement changed from temporary quarters to a permanent residence. When determining when to end the temporary quarters entitlement, the Service considers factors such as the duration of the lease, movement of household effects into the quarters, the type of quarters, the employee's expressions of intent, attempts to secure a permanent dwelling, and the length of time the employee occupies the quarters. The burden of proof is on the employee to provide documentation, such as an agreement with a real estate broker, to show that the arrangement should be considered temporary quarters because the employee was actively looking for a new permanent residence.

You will be reimbursed for allowable expenses related to your time in temporary quarters using one of the two following methods:

- Actual Expense.
- Lump Sum Amount.<sup>38</sup>



The method you select must be documented on your *Travel Authorization*. Selecting a reimbursement method is a binding decision that cannot be adjusted during your move. Once you have incurred expenses associated with travel to your new official station, the method cannot be adjusted due to legal limits on retroactive amendments to PCS travel orders.

## 9.1 Using the Actual Expense Method

Under the actual expense method, you receive reimbursement based on the actual allowable costs you and your family incur during your time in temporary quarters, not to exceed the maximums provided in Section 9.1.1. You must itemize your actual costs for your lodging, meals, and incidental expenses on a daily basis using the *Employee and Immediate Family Subsistence Expenses while Occupying Temporary Quarters* form. Under this option, you do not receive any compensation prior to occupying temporary quarters, and you and your family members must occupy temporary quarters at the same time.

Allowable costs for which you may claim reimbursement include the following:

- Lodging.
- Meals.
- Groceries (including non-edible items).<sup>39</sup>
- Laundry / dry cleaning.

Non-allowable costs for which you cannot claim reimbursement include the following:

- Additional costs due to pets.
- Parking fees charged by the hotel.

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<sup>38</sup> Not available for moves to Alaska, per Region 7 policy. Temporary quarters per diem for moves to Alaska is paid using the Actual Expense method up to the Alaska locality rate.

<sup>39</sup> Groceries should be entered on one line of the *Employee and Immediate Family Subsistence Expenses while Occupying Temporary Quarters* form, on the day the groceries were purchased, for the total amount on the receipt. Allowable items include: laundry items (detergent, bleach, dryer sheets, starch, etc.) and food preparation / storage items (paper plates, paper towels, napkins, plastic baggies, plastic wrap, dish washing liquid, etc.). Durable / permanent houseware items such as pots, pans, silverware, and dishes are not allowable.

- Transportation to commute to work.

En route travel status ends upon arrival at the new duty station. If you elect to claim lodging on the night of arrival, the lodging may only be reimbursed as temporary quarters. In this case, the 30-day period of temporary quarters eligibility begins upon check-in that night. Temporary quarters M&IE may never duplicate en route (or any other) M&IE allowances. Since you will claim en route M&IE that day (75% travel day per diem), you are eligible for 25% of temporary quarters M&IE that night.

Your eligibility for M&IE allowances ends at midnight on the earlier of the following days:

- The day preceding the day that you and / or any member of your family occupies your permanent residence at the new duty station.
- The day your authorized period for temporary quarters expires.

Unallowable costs for which you will not be reimbursed include, but are not limited to, the following items:

- Telephone charges not related to performing official duties.<sup>40</sup>
- Lodging payment to relatives and / or friends (unless you can provide acceptable evidence that an extra cost was incurred as a direct result of providing housing for you and your family).
- Lodging taxes. However, if the lodging cost plus lodging taxes is below the standard authorized rate, the lodging tax can be paid, both for CONUS and OCONUS locations.
- Rental car or fuel expenses.
- Taxi fees.



While telephone charges are not reimbursable under your temporary quarters entitlement, they are reimbursable under your miscellaneous expense allowance (see Chapter 11).

### 9.1.1 Maximum Reimbursement Amounts

The daily maximum reimbursement allowed is calculated using the standard CONUS rate, not the locality rate for the place where you secure temporary quarters (unless moving to an OCONUS location – see Section 9.1.4). **Table 10** presents the calculations used to determine the daily maximum amount you may be reimbursed for the first 30 consecutive calendar days under the actual expense method. Note that the calculations must split out lodging and M&IE and must separate each incrementally-authorized period.<sup>41</sup>

Table 10 - Maximum Daily Reimbursement Amounts – Days 1-30, actual expense method

Traveler	Maximum daily amount
Employee or unaccompanied spouse	Standard CONUS rate
Accompanied spouse	.75 × standard CONUS rate
Children age 12 and over	.75 × standard CONUS rate
Children under age 12	.5 × standard CONUS rate

GSA establishes the standard CONUS rate annually and independent of the location to which you are traveling. The current standard CONUS rate can be found on the GSA website ([www.GSA.gov/perdiem](http://www.GSA.gov/perdiem)).

<sup>40</sup> Reference DOI Financial Administration Memorandum (FAM) 2003-17.

<sup>41</sup> Reference Civilian Board of Contract Appeals (CBCA) 5404-RELO, December 14, 2016.



Jill, Matt, and their two children (ages 14 and 10) are in the process of transferring to Dallas, TX. Jill's new official station authorizes her for 30 days of temporary quarters using the actual expense method. The family will arrive at temporary quarters following their last day of en route travel. As a result, they are eligible for 25% temporary quarters M&IE on the night of check-in, and for M&IE allowances for the 29 full days that they will reside in temporary quarters. Per the GSA website, the current standard CONUS rate is \$91 for lodging and \$51 for M&IE. The family's maximum eligibility for temporary quarters subsistence is as follows:

	Employee	Spouse	Child, Age 14	Child, Age 10	
Day 1 M&IE Rate = \$51 * .25 for Partial Day	\$12.75	\$12.75	\$12.75	\$12.75	
Eligibility Multiplier (see Table 10)	1	.75	.75	.5	
<b>Day 1 M&amp;IE Total</b>	<b>\$12.75</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>\$9.56</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>\$9.56</b>
					<b>+</b>
					<b>\$6.38</b>
					<b>= \$38.25</b>
Day 2-30 M&IE Rate = \$51	\$51.00	\$51.00	\$51.00	\$51.00	
Night 1-29 Lodging Rate = \$91	\$91.00	\$91.00	\$91.00	\$91.00	
Duration	29	29	29	29	
Eligibility Multiplier (see Table 10)	1	.75	.75	.5	
<b>Days 2-30 Total</b>	<b>\$4,118.00</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>\$3,088.50</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>\$3,088.50</b>
					<b>+</b>
					<b>\$2,059.00</b>
					<b>= \$12,354.00</b>
<b>Maximum Allowable</b>	<b>\$4,130.75</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>\$3,098.06</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>\$3,098.06</b>
					<b>+</b>
					<b>\$2,065.38</b>
					<b>= \$12,392.25</b>



The previous example calculated the maximum amount Jill and her family were eligible to receive; however, under this method, reimbursement is based on your actual expenses.

You must always list the actual expenses you and your family incur on the *Actual Expenses While Occupying Temporary Quarters* form, regardless of whether you spend more or less than your daily maximum per diem allowances. This form is included as **Attachment 10** of this handbook.

## 9.1.2 Extensions

In general, actual expenses for temporary quarters will be authorized for a period not to exceed 30 consecutive days. If no house-hunting trip was authorized or taken, the Service may grant a request for an extension of up to 30 additional days, not to exceed 60 consecutive days total.

If the employee and / or spouse take a house-hunting trip, the only allowable extension is up to 15 additional days for extenuating circumstances only, for a total of up to 45 days. The employee must submit the written request for the extension through the region / program's established approval process prior to the end of the first 30-day period.

Extensions beyond 45 days (if a house-hunting trip was taken) or 60 days (if no house-hunting trip was taken) will only be authorized in situations where the employee can demonstrate that the circumstances are beyond his / her control. If you believe your circumstances warrant an extension, you must provide a written justification of the need to your PCS Coordinator and new supervisor, with final approval from your Assistant / Regional Director. If approved, the extension must be documented as an amendment to your *Travel Authorization* and the revised document must be provided to your PCS Coordinator.

Situations that may justify an extension include the following:

- Shipment and / or delivery of your household goods was delayed due to acts of nature (e.g., hazardous weather, floods, fire).
- Occupancy of temporary quarters is interrupted due to TDY travel, military service, or hospitalization of employee (when family is not in temporary quarters).
- Illness, injury, or death of the employee or a member of his / her immediate family.
- Ongoing home sale or marketing, only when the employee documents that housing prices recently dropped significantly and have not recovered.

- Examples of such documentation would be real estate tax assessments or realtor assessments demonstrating general market collapse, impact of natural disaster, impact of military base closure, or impact of a plant or factory closure.
- The price drop must be at least 10% of the home value within the year preceding the PCS or at least 5% of the home value in the previous six months.
- The employee must have the house on the market, at a price within 105% of current market value, during the selling period.
- Relocation services vendor has not taken or sold the employee’s home within the 120-day BVO period (up to 120 days at the discretion of the approving officials).
- Inability to occupy the new permanent residence because of unanticipated problems beyond the employee’s control, such as delays in settlement or cases in which the former owner / tenant has not vacated the residence.

Situations that do not justify an extension include the following:

- Failure to locate a new residence (rental, lease or purchase), if it is determined that the employee did not make a sufficient effort to secure permanent housing.
- Failure to locate a new residence (rental, lease or purchase), in an area of moderate housing availability, due to personal preferences and decisions.
- Continued employment of a spouse at your old official duty station, which delays the family's move to the new official duty station.
- Continued attendance of children in school at the old official station, which delays the family's move to the new official station.
- Decision to build, rather than purchase, a home in an area of moderate or high housing availability (construction typically requires 90 business days or longer).
- Acceptance of an extended possession date at the time of signing the contract for the new permanent residence.
- Delays in delivery of household goods due to employee inactivity.

If you are granted a temporary quarters extension, the daily maximum reimbursement allowed is calculated using the standard CONUS rate, as outlined in **Table 11**.

Table 11 - Maximum Daily Reimbursement Amounts – Days 31 and on, actual expense method

Traveler	Maximum daily amount
Employee or unaccompanied spouse	.75 × standard CONUS rate
Accompanied spouse	.5 × standard CONUS rate
Children age 12 and over	.5 × standard CONUS rate
Children under age 12	.4 × standard CONUS rate

### 9.1.3 Interruptions

If your time in temporary quarters is interrupted for reasons outside of your control (e.g., military duty, TDY travel, hospitalization), and your family is not staying with you, you should pack your belongings and check out of the temporary quarters if it is cost effective to do so. Include any cost associated with storage of your personal belongings in the cost analysis, if applicable.

If your lodging agreement / lease does not permit early departure, or penalizes it to the point that it is not a cost effective option, document this in your *Travel Voucher* and seek approval for dual lodging if required. Taking annual leave or sick leave when hospitalization is not required does not qualify as an interruption of temporary quarters.

If the interruption is for TDY travel, you should claim M&IE under TDY policy and suspend your temporary quarters M&IE for the duration of the interruption. If you have to perform TDY and your family is in temporary quarters under the actual expense method, you claim TDY per diem allowances and your family claims temporary quarters allowances.

### 9.1.4 Additional Guidance for OCONUS Moves

If you and your immediate family are moving to or from an OCONUS official duty station, you are entitled to reimbursement based on the applicable OCONUS locality rate, instead of the standard CONUS rate. The locality rate is determined by the location of your new official duty station. Current OCONUS locality rates can be found on the DTMO website ([www.defensetravel.dod.mil/site/perdiem.cfm](http://www.defensetravel.dod.mil/site/perdiem.cfm)).



Note that the lump sum method for temporary quarters reimbursement outlined in Section 9.2 is not available for OCONUS moves. Temporary quarters reimbursement for OCONUS moves must be paid based on actual expenses up to the applicable OCONUS locality rate.

## 9.2 Using the Fixed Rate Method

Under the fixed rate method (also known as the lump sum method, but distinct from the PCS Lump Sum Pilot), you are paid a fixed amount up front based on the number of days your supervisor anticipates you will be in temporary quarters, regardless of the actual expenses you incur or the number of days you spend in temporary quarters. Your decision to use the fixed rate method must be documented on your *Travel Authorization* and may not be changed later. Reimbursement eligibility is outlined by family member in **Table 12**. Under this method, the employee and family members do not have to occupy temporary quarters at the same time.

Table 12 – Daily Reimbursement Amounts – Fixed Rate Method

Traveler(s)	Daily amount
Employee	.75 × locality rate
Spouse	.25 × locality rate
Children (regardless of age)	.25 × locality rate

You can receive your fixed rate per diem in advance of occupying temporary quarters based on certification on a *Travel Voucher* (OF-1012) that you intend to occupy temporary quarters. The locality rate is determined by the location of your new official station. Current locality rates for CONUS locations can be found on the GSA website [www.GSA.gov/perdiem](http://www.GSA.gov/perdiem).

Under this method, you do not need to provide any receipts or itemize your per diem costs with your *Travel Voucher* (OF-1012). You do not need to return funding if you spend less than the fixed rate amount while in temporary quarters; however, you will not be reimbursed for any additional costs you and your family incur in excess of the fixed rate amount. Additionally, if the family occupies temporary quarters on different dates and the per diem rates are different, the entire family is paid at the per diem rate that is in effect when the Travel Voucher is filed, as long as it is within a year of the PCS order issuance. The entire payment for all family members should be claimed on one Travel Voucher even if the occupancy dates differ.

Under no circumstances are extensions beyond the initial 30 days allowed under the fixed rate) method. You may decide to extend your stay in temporary quarters, but you will not be reimbursed for the additional time.



Jill, Matt, and their two children (ages 14 and 10) are transferring to Dallas, TX. Jill's new official station authorizes her 30 days of temporary quarters using the fixed (lump sum) amount method. To determine the fixed amount Jill will receive for her family's time in temporary quarters, she first visits the GSA website to identify Dallas' locality rate. Jill determines, using GSA's website, that the daily locality rate for Dallas is \$199 (\$135 for lodging, \$64 for M&IE). The family's total reimbursement is calculated as follows:

	Employee	Spouse	Child, Age 14	Child, Age 10
M&IE Rate = \$64	\$64.00	\$64.00	\$64.00	\$64.00
Lodging Rate = \$135	\$135.00	\$135.00	\$135.00	\$135.00
Duration	30	30	30	30
Eligibility Multiplier (see Table 12)	.75	.25	.25	.25
<b>Fixed Amount</b>	<b>\$4,477.50</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>\$1,492.50</b>	<b>+</b>
			<b>\$1,492.50</b>	<b>+</b>
				<b>\$1,492.50</b>
				<b>= \$8,955.00</b>

Jill secures housing for her family after only 25 days in temporary quarters. Jill is reimbursed \$8,955.00, even though she and her family stayed in temporary quarters less than the 30 days authorized.

## Chapter 10: Purchasing a New House

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This section will help you determine answers to the following questions:

- ✓ What expenses are reimbursable in connection with purchasing a house at your new official station?
  - ✓ What is the maximum amount you will be reimbursed?
- 

You are eligible for reimbursement of certain expenses associated with the purchase of a new primary residence at your new official duty station. To be eligible, you must purchase your new house within one year of the actual report date at your new duty station,<sup>42</sup> and the home must be purchased in your name or the name of one of your immediate family members. The total allowable reimbursement amount is limited to 5% of the purchase price of your new house; you may not receive an advance of funds to cover costs associated with the purchase of your new house.

### 10.1 Identifying Reimbursable Expenses

The following expenses are reimbursable when directly related to the purchase of a new primary residence at your new duty station:

- Appraisal fee for purchase of a new house.
- Legal (attorney) and related fees for searching the title, preparing abstracts, and providing a title opinion; costs of preparing conveyances, other instruments, and contracts; related notary fees, cost of making surveys, cost of preparing drawings or plats; recording fees and recording taxes (or other charges incidental to recordation); document preparation; and flood certification.
- Inspection (environmental and property) when required by the mortgage lender to obtain financing or when required by federal, state, or local law. Submit proof of requirement with voucher(s).
- Credit report (when required for financing).
- Lender's title insurance policy (if paid for by employee, on a residence purchased by the employee for the protection of property, and required by the lender).
- Escrow agent's fee or settlement fee for closing a real estate transaction.
- State revenue stamps.
- Transfer or mortgage taxes.
- Loan origination, loan assumption, or loan transfer fees, generally limited to 1% of the amount of the new loan. Reimbursement may exceed 1% only if you prove that the higher rate does not include prepaid interest, points, or a mortgage discount and that the higher rate is customarily charged in the locality where the residence is located. Proof of a higher customary rate must include a source other than your lender / broker and is subject to verification by IBC.
- Federal Housing Authority (FHA) or VA application fee.
- Expenses in connection with construction of a new residence, which are comparable to expenses reimbursable in connection with purchase of an existing residence.
- Power of attorney (trustee fee).
- Title examination.
- Title insurance binder.
- Bridge loan and second mortgage fees.

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<sup>42</sup> Assistant / Regional Director may grant an extension of up to one year on a case-by-case basis for reasons beyond your control.

## 10.2 Identifying Non-reimbursable Expenses

The following expenses are not reimbursable:

- Costs of litigation.
- Broker's fees or commissions, or an auctioneer's fee.
- Funding fees (e.g., VA funding fee).
- Mortgage insurance premium (MIP).
- Administrative fee (part of loan origination fee).
- The cost of owner's title insurance, "record title" policy, or mortgage insurance against damage or loss of property for one's own protection.
- Maintenance and operating costs.
- Property taxes.
- Mortgage discounts, points, interest on loans, and losses in connection with purchase of a residence due to price or market conditions.
- Hazard insurance.
- Flood insurance.
- Home warranty.
- Amortization schedule, if you claim reimbursement for the loan origination fee.
- Warehouse fee.
- Fees, costs, charges, or expenses such as underwriting fees, processing fees, or tax service fees.
- Any expense determined to be part of a finance charge under the *Truth in Lending Act*.
- Homeowner / condominium fee.
- Locksmith charge to change the locks.



You must prepare and submit the following documentation in order to claim reimbursement for expenses associated with the purchase of a new residence:

1. *Travel Voucher* (OF-1012).
2. *Reimbursement of Expenses Upon Sale or Purchase of Residence* (**Attachment 8**).
3. *Settlement Statement*. The title or other company should issue the Closing Disclosure form developed by the Federal Consumer Financial Protection Bureau ([www.consumerfinance.gov](http://www.consumerfinance.gov)). If another form is provided instead, the employee should request the proper form (a fee for the form is reimbursable).
4. Purchase or Sales contract (a Deed of Trust is not an appropriate substitute).
5. Receipts for all expenses paid outside of direct closing costs (e.g., appraisal costs, credit report fees, attorney's fees) not listed on the *Settlement Statement*.
6. If required, an explanation that the fees or amounts charged are customary in the local area, in accordance with the following guidelines:
  - a. Federal, state, or local law (e.g., property code) on the item is a key controlling factor. For example, on a VA loan, VA rules may apply. Guidance from the HUD may also be relevant.
  - b. In the absence of federal, state, or local law, explanations should come from multiple sources such as title companies, lawyers, local realty boards, or the Chamber of Commerce. A single explanation from the employee's realtor or broker carries minimal weight.
  - c. If the fee is negotiable, it is not a customary change.
  - d. A supervisor or approving official cannot arbitrarily impose a cap or limit on a fee without evidence that the fee is excessive (i.e., burden of proof is on the approving official).

# C1 Chapter 11: Obtaining Your Miscellaneous Expense Payment

This section will help you determine answers to the following questions:

- ✓ What costs are reimbursable as miscellaneous expenses?
- ✓ Under which method will you receive your payment?
- ✓ What amount are you eligible to receive?

## 11.1 Identifying Allowable Expenses

The miscellaneous expense payment is authorized to help you offset the various unavoidable costs associated with moving out of your old residence at your old official station and into your new residence at your new official station. Examples of reimbursable expenses are listed in **Table 13**.

Table 13 – Allowable Miscellaneous Expenses

Category	Reimbursable Expenses
Appliances	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Connecting and disconnecting appliances and equipment (e.g., washer, antenna system, icemaker, and refrigerator).</li> <li>• Converting appliances so they are operable under available utilities at the new location.</li> <li>• Adjustments to old appliances (e.g., washer cycle check, adjustment to refrigerator).</li> </ul>
Furniture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adjustments to old furnishings (e.g., grandfather clock tuning, piano tuning).</li> <li>• Cutting and fitting rugs, draperies, and curtains moved from one permanent residence to another.</li> </ul>
Utilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fees, deposits, and relocation expenses that will not be offset by eventual refunds.</li> <li>• Connecting and disconnecting utilities.</li> </ul>
POVs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Registration, driver's license, and use tax imposed for bringing automobiles and mobile homes into a new jurisdiction.</li> </ul>
Telephone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Calls and telegrams concerning otherwise allowable expenses, such as long distance telephone calls made in connection with the sale of your residence at your old official duty station.</li> </ul>
Transportation of Pets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Costs associated with transportation and handling of dogs, cats, rabbits, and regular house pets only. Fish, birds, reptiles, rodents (including hamsters), horses, and livestock are excluded.</li> </ul>
Contracts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Forfeited purchase deposit when the PCS prevented you from completing a planned purchase of property at the old official station.</li> <li>• Forfeiture losses on private institutional care contracts (e.g., for care of elderly family members or those with disabilities) that are not transferable, due to early contract termination.</li> <li>• Forfeiture losses on medical and dental contracts that are not transferable, due to early contract termination.</li> <li>• Forfeiture losses on food locker contracts that are not transferable, due to early contract termination.</li> </ul>



Physical examinations, immunizations, and / or inoculations may be required for a PCS to an OCONUS location, especially a foreign country. If allowable, costs should be claimed on the OF-1164 Claim for Reimbursement for Expenditures on Official Business; they are not a PCS entitlement and cannot be claimed on a PCS *Travel Voucher* (OF-1012).

## 11.2 Identifying Unallowable Expenses

The miscellaneous expense payment is not intended to cover the following types of costs:

- Costs or expenses exceeding maximums provided by statute or regulations;
- Costs reimbursed under other laws or regulations;
- Costs not specifically required by the move and incurred due to personal preferences;
- Losses covered by insurance;
- Fines or other penalties;
- Judgments, court costs, and similar expenses from civil actions; or
- Any other expenses caused by circumstances, factors, or actions in which the move to the new official station was not the proximate cause.

The following items are examples of non-reimbursable expenses:

- Losses from selling or buying real and personal property, and expenses related to such transactions.
- Cost of additional insurance on household goods while in transit to the new official station, or cost of loss or damage to such property.
- Cost of moving household goods in excess of the maximum allowable weight.
- Cost of purchasing or installing new household goods such as rugs or draperies.
- Increased income, real estate, sales, or other taxes as the result of relocating your residence.
- Fines imposed for traffic infractions while en route to the new official station.
- Losses on the sale or disposal of personal property you decide not to move.
- Expenses associated with the damage or loss of clothing, luggage, or other personal effects while traveling to the new official station.
- Medical expenses due to illness or injury of you or your family members while en route to the new official station, or while living in temporary quarters at the government's expense.
- Costs incurred in connection with structure alterations, remodeling, or modernizing of living quarters, garages, or other buildings to accommodate POVs, appliances, or equipment.
- Cost of replacing or repairing worn-out or defective appliances, or equipment shipped to your new official station.
- Costs incurred to meet air carriers' regulations when moving pets (e.g., inoculations, examinations, boarding quarantine).
- Costs associated with moving animals other than dogs and cats (e.g., horses, fish, birds, various rodents).<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> These animals are excluded because of their size, exotic nature, restrictions on shipping, host country restrictions, and / or special handling difficulties.

## 11.3 Selecting a Reimbursement Method

You are entitled to obtain compensation for your miscellaneous expenses under one of the following two methods (the method does not have to be chosen by the employee at the beginning of the PCS move):

**Method 1:** Lump Sum.

**Method 2:** Itemized.

### 11.3.1 Fixed Rate Method

Under this method (also known as the lump sum method), you receive a fixed rate amount to cover your miscellaneous expenses. You are not required to provide any supporting documentation substantiating how you spent the payment.

- If you are moving without any immediate family members, you are entitled to the lesser of either **\$650 or one week of basic pay**.
- If you are moving with your immediate family, you are entitled to the lesser of either **\$1,300 or two weeks of basic pay**. Family members must physically relocate in order to qualify for the entitlement. If your spouse and / or dependents are relocating to the new duty station after you, the entitlement will be split into two equal payments, with the second payment issued after their arrival.

### 11.3.2 Itemized Method

If you feel that your miscellaneous expenses will exceed the amount available to you under the flat amount method, you may claim your expenses under the itemized method. Under this method, all of your claims must be itemized and supported by receipts justifying your allowable expenses. The maximum you will be reimbursed, regardless of your actual miscellaneous expenses, is one week of basic pay if you are moving without immediate family or two weeks of basic pay if you are moving with immediate family.

This allowance may never exceed the maximum two week basic pay (i.e., gross pay) rate for Grade 13 Step 10, as provided in 5 U.S.C. 5332.

C1

## Chapter 12: Understanding the Tax Implications of Your Move

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This section will help you determine answers to the following questions:

- ✓ What is the withholding tax allowance (WTA)?
  - ✓ What is the relocation income tax allowance (RITA)?
  - ✓ How will moving impact my taxes?
- 

As discussed throughout this handbook, reimbursement of certain expenses is considered taxable income by the IRS. The IRS considers the expenses associated with the following activities taxable throughout your move:

- Taking a house-hunting trip (transportation, rental car, and per diem).
- En route travel M&IE.
- Storing your household goods at a storage facility after 30 calendar days.
- Non-temporary storage of household goods.
- Selling your residence without the assistance of a relocation services vendor.
- Receiving a home marketing incentive payment.
- Staying in temporary quarters (i.e., lodging and M&IE).
- Closing on your new residence.
- Incurring miscellaneous expenses associated with your move.
- WTA and RITA.

The following expenses are non-taxable:

- Shipment of household goods.
- First 30 days storage of household goods.
- Shipment of a POV.
- En route transportation and lodging.
- Relocation service vendor contract.



If you completed a short-distance PCS with a waiver of the 50-mile requirement, all of your PCS benefits are considered taxable income.

Any taxable reimbursements you receive within a given calendar year for relocation-related activities will be included on your Wage and Tax Statements (W-2s) as wages, tips, and compensation (i.e., gross income). The Service uses two allowances to help offset the additional federal taxes you will owe as a result of these activities: the WTA and RITA. Essentially, the WTA is an estimate of the federal withholding taxes you will owe, whereas the RITA is based upon the actual amount you owe. Specific questions regarding your personal tax liability should be addressed by a professional tax preparer, not your PCS Coordinator.

### 12.1 Applying the Withholding Tax Allowance

In 2015, the Department adopted a tiered approach to the WTA to minimize the occurrence of negative RITAs. During your counseling session, your PCS Counselor will explain your options and help you select between the WTA calculated at the full tax rate (25%) or the reduced tax rate (15%). Then, when you submit taxable moving expenses, IBC will automatically calculate the WTA applicable to your reimbursement. You do not need to claim

the WTA on your *Travel Voucher* (OF-1012). Be aware the WTA is only an estimate of the federal income taxes you will owe on the expenses for which you are requesting reimbursement. Any other tax liabilities, such as Social Security taxes, state income taxes, and local income taxes are not accounted for in the WTA. You will receive the amount you claimed on your Travel Voucher, less deductions for non-reimbursable items and estimated amounts withheld for Social Security taxes, state income taxes, and local income taxes.

For tax purposes, the WTA itself is considered taxable income and is subject to income tax withholding. The total amount of WTA paid to you during a calendar year, as well as the total of all other taxable moving expenses, will be included on your W-2 as wages, tips, and other compensation.

## 12.2 Completing the Relocation Income Tax Allowance Process

The RITA is calculated the year after you have been reimbursed for taxable moving expenses that included a payment of WTA. For each calendar year in which you receive a payment of WTA, you must submit a RITA *Travel Voucher* (OF-1012) in the following calendar year. IBC calculates the RITA using actual figures from your W-2 and incorporates state and any applicable local tax liabilities.

IBC's PCS section sends requests for RITA documentation in February or March for the previous tax year. To file your RITA claim, submit a *Travel Voucher* (OF-1012), the *RITA Certification* form, copies of your W-2 and your *Self-Employment Tax* (1040, Schedule SE) form. If you are filing jointly, you must also include your spouse's W-2 and *Self-Employment Tax* (1040, Schedule SE) form.

For tax purposes, the RITA is considered taxable income, and is subject to tax withholding. The total amount of RITA paid to you during a calendar year will be included on your W-2.

Since the WTA is calculated using the 25% Federal tax bracket regardless of your actual bracket, it is possible you may be reimbursed more via WTA than allowed by RITA. If this is the case, you will receive a *Bill of Collection* for the overpayment of the WTA. If the RITA calculation determines you did not receive enough WTA, you will receive a payment for the difference.



You will need to prepare and submit the following documentation as part of your RITA claim:

1. *Travel Voucher* (OF-1012).
  - Sign and date the Travel Voucher.
  - Leave the 'Amount Claimed' field on the front page blank.
  - On the back page, write "*RITA claim covering calendar year 20XX.*"
2. *Relocation Income Tax Allowance Certification* (**Attachment 11**)
  - Complete this form with your spouse if you are filing jointly.
3. Copies of all W-2s you received during the calendar year.
  - If filing jointly, include any W-2s received by your spouse.
  - Do not include copies of any Form 1099s.
4. Copies of all *Self Employment Tax* (Form 1040, Schedule SE) forms.
5. A copy of your *Travel Authorization* and amendment if the cost structure was changed during your PCS.

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## Appendix A: Acronyms

This table defines the acronyms used in the FWS PCS Handbook.

Acronym	Definition
BFO	Budget and Finance Officer
BVO	Buyer Value Option
CBCA	Civilian Board of Contract Appeals
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
CONUS	Continental United States
DFM	Division of Financial Management
DOI	Department of the Interior
DTMO	Defense Travel Management Office
EFT	Electronic Funds Transfer
EIN	Employee Identification Number
FAM	Financial Administration Memorandum
FBMS	Financial and Business Management System
FHA	Federal Housing Authority
FTR	Federal Travel Regulation
FWS	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
GETA	Government Employees Training Act
GOV	Government-Owned Vehicle
GSA	General Services Administration
HR	Human Resources
HUD	Department of Housing and Urban Development
IBC	Interior Business Center
IRS	Internal Revenue Service
M&IE	Meals and Incidental Expenses
MIP	Mortgage Insurance Premium
OCONUS	Outside the Continental United States
OF	Official Form
OLE	Office of Law Enforcement
OPM	Office of Personnel Management
OTRAT	Overseas Tour Renewal Agreement Travel
PBP&E	Professional Books, Papers, and Equipment

<b>Acronym</b>	<b>Definition</b>
PCS	Permanent Change of Station
PMB	Office of Policy, Management, and Budget
POV	Privately-Owned Vehicle
RIF	Reduction in Force
RITA	Relocation Income Tax Allowance
SES	Senior Executive Service
SF	Standard Form
TA	Travel Authorization
TCS	Temporary Change of Station
TDY	Temporary Duty Travel
TMC	Travel Management Center (Duluth or El Sol)
TV	Travel Voucher
UAB	Unaccompanied Air Baggage
VA	Department of Veterans Affairs
VIN	Vehicle Identification Number
WSFR	Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration
WTA	Withholding Tax Allowance

## Appendix B: PCS Paperwork

These forms are samples included to help relocating employees become familiar with the paperwork required during a PCS. Do not fill out these sample forms – obtain the current version of each form from your PCS Coordinator.

- Attachment 1: Employee Service Agreement
- Attachment 2: Relocation Allowance Data Sheet (Form 3-139)
- Attachment 3: Request for Contractor Provided Relocation Services
- Attachment 4: Advance of Funds Application and Account (SF-1038)
- Attachment 5: Travel Advance Repayment Agreement
- Attachment 6: Travel Voucher (OF-1012)
- Attachment 7: FBMS Vendor Request Form
- Attachment 8: Reimbursement of Expenses Upon Sale or Purchase of Residence
- Attachment 9: Approval Form for PBP&E
- Attachment 10: Actual Expenses While Occupying Temporary Quarters
- Attachment 11: Relocation Income Tax Allowance Certification
- Attachment 12: PCS Entitlement Computation Form
- Attachment 13: Guidelines for Human Resources Offices and PCS Coordinators



## United States Department of the Interior

### Employee Relocation Agreement and Disclosure Statement – Continental United States (CONUS) Move

**Conditions of Eligibility and Employee Attestation Statements:**

As a condition of my eligibility for relocation benefits, and in consideration of payment by the Federal Government for travel, transportation, real estate transactions, storage of household goods, and/or other moving expenses, as may be allowable under the Administrative Expenses Act of 1946, Public Law 89-516, and any regulations issued there under by the General Services Administration, the Department of the Interior, and its Bureaus and/or Offices; I hereby agree to remain in the Federal Government Service for twelve months following the effective date of transfer.

I attest that all verbal or written statements made by me as to my eligibility for relocation reimbursement are correct. I agree that at any time after I have relocated and claimed reimbursement the Department of the Interior, and its Bureaus and/or Offices, may require me to provide additional documentation to substantiate my claims.

I attest that neither I nor any member of my immediate family has or will receive duplicate relocation reimbursement as a result of either my or their move to my new duty station. I further attest that no third party has or will accept duplicate payment of relocation expenses that are related to my or an immediate family members move to my new duty station.

**Employee Liability for Each Agreement:**

The agreement to remain in the service of the Federal Government for twelve months following the effective date of transfer is not voided by a subsequent transfer whether such subsequent transfer is at the employee's request or in the interest of the Government, nor is such agreement voided by another service agreement made in connection with a second transfer. The liability of the employee for any monies expended by the United States for his/her travel, transportation, and relocation allowances are a separate liability for each service agreement. The liability in each instance is effective for the full twelve month period in connection with the transfer for which the service agreement is made. (41 CFR 302-2.14)

In the event that I fail to remain in the Federal Government service for a period of 12 months following the effective date of my transfer, unless separated for reasons beyond my control and acceptable to the Agency, and its Bureaus and/or Offices, relocation costs reimbursed both to me and on my behalf to a third party services provider, shall be recoverable from me as a debt due to the United States (28 U.S.C. 2514).

I am Relocating for the Federal Government as a:  New Appointee (41 CFR 302-3.1)  Transferring Employee (41 CFR 302-3.100)

Address of Old Duty Station:

Street Address:

City:

State:

Zip:

Address of Old Residence:

Street Address:

City:

State:

Zip:

I am Married:

Yes

No

Name of Spouse:

I am in a Committed Relationship and Claim Same Sex Domestic Partnership:

Yes

No

Name of Domestic Partner:

**Note: This service agreement must be executed before travel orders can be authorized.**

Names, relationship, and age (if children) of eligible immediate family members who will be moving with the transferee to the new duty station:

Name		Relationship		Date of Birth	
1.		1.		1.	
2.		2.		2.	
3.		3.		3.	
4.		4.		4.	
5.		5.		5.	
6.		6.		6.	
7.		7.		7.	
8.		8.		8.	
9.		9.		9.	
10.		10.		10.	

Signature of Employee:

Date:

Typed or Printed Name:

Signature of HR Specialist:

Date:

Typed or Printed Name:

**Note: This service agreement must be executed before travel orders can be authorized.**



# United States Department of the Interior

## Employee Relocation Agreement and Disclosure Statement – Outside Continental United States (OCONUS) Move

### Conditions of Eligibility and Employee Attestation Statements:

As a condition of my eligibility for relocation benefits, and in consideration of payment by the Federal Government for travel, transportation, real estate transactions, storage of household goods, and/or other moving expenses, as may be allowable under the Administrative Expenses Act of 1946, Public Law 89-516, and any regulations issued there under by the General Services Administration, the Department of the Interior, and its Bureaus and/or Offices; I hereby agree to remain in the Federal Government Service for twelve months following the effective date of transfer.

I attest that all verbal or written statements made by me as to my eligibility for relocation reimbursement are correct. I agree that at any time after I have relocated and claimed reimbursement the Department of the Interior, and its Bureaus and/or Offices, may require me to provide additional documentation to substantiate my claims.

I attest that neither I nor any member of my immediate family has or will receive duplicate relocation reimbursement as a result of either my or their move to my new duty station. I further attest that no third party has or will accept duplicate payment of relocation expenses that are related to my or an immediate family members move to my new duty station.

### Employee Liability for Each Agreement:

The agreement to remain in the service of the Federal Government for a period of  months following the effective date of transfer is not voided by a subsequent transfer whether such subsequent transfer is at the employee's request or in the interest of the Government, nor is such agreement voided by another service agreement made in connection with a second transfer. The liability of the employee for any monies expended by the United States for his/her travel, transportation, and relocation allowances are a separate liability for each service agreement. The liability in each instance is effective for the full twelve-month period in connection with the transfer for which the service agreement is made. (41 CFR 302-2.14)

In the event that I fail to remain in the Federal Government service for a period of 12 months following the effective date of my transfer, unless separated for reasons beyond my control and acceptable to the Agency, and its Bureaus and/or Offices, relocation costs reimbursed both to me and on my behalf to a third party services provider, shall be recoverable from me as a debt due to the United States (28 U.S.C. 2514).

I am Relocating for the Federal Government as a:  New Appointee (41 CFR 302-3.1)  Transferring Employee (41 CFR 302-3.100)

Address of Old Duty Station:

Street Address:

City:

State:

Zip:

Address of Old Residence:

Street Address:

City:

State:

Zip:

I am Married:  Yes  No

Name of Spouse:

I am in a Committed Relationship and Claim Same Sex Domestic Partnership:  Yes  No

Name of Domestic Partner:

Note: This service agreement must be executed before travel orders can be authorized.

**U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE**  
**FORM 3-139 – RELOCATION ALLOWANCE DATA SHEET**

Attachment 2 - SAMPLE ONLY

**SECTION A: EMPLOYEE INFORMATION**

<b>Employee Name (Last, First, MI)</b>				
<b>Email</b>		<b>Phone</b>		
<b>Location</b>	<b>Street</b>	<b>City</b>	<b>State</b>	<b>ZIP</b>
<b>Current Home Address</b>				
<b>Current Duty Station Address</b>				
<b>Post-Relocation Address<sup>1</sup></b>				

**INDIVIDUALS ACCOMPANYING EMPLOYEE IN RELOCATING (MAY TRAVEL / ARRIVE ON A DIFFERENT DATE THAN THE EMPLOYEE)**

I do not have a [spouse or any dependents](#) accompanying me  
 My spouse is accompanying me  
 Dependents are accompanying me (list in table below; attach additional sheets if needed)

<b>Dependent Name</b>	<b>Relationship</b>	<b>Age (as of actual report / separation date)</b>

**SECTION B – PCS ELIGIBILITY AND ESTIMATED EXPENSES**

*Employees should fill this section out with the assistance of a PCS Counselor.*

<b>Relocation Category<sup>2</sup></b>		<b>Employee EIN<sup>3</sup> (8 digits)</b>	
--	--	--	--

**EN ROUTE TRAVEL (213C, 213D, 213P, 213R)**

**1. Authorized en route transportation costs (employee and immediate family):**

<b>Individual(s)</b>	<b>Common Carrier Airfare (213C)</b>	<b>POV (213P)</b>	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> POV (213P)</b>	<b>Rental Car (213R) (attach cost comparison)</b>
<b>Employee</b>				
<b>Spouse</b>				
<b>Dependents</b>				
<b>TOTAL</b>				

**2. Authorized en route per diem costs (employee only):**

<b>Individual Claiming Per Diem</b>	<b>Number of Days</b>	<b>Max Lodging</b>	<b>Max M&amp;IE</b>	<b>Not to Exceed (213D)</b>
<b>Employee</b>		<i>Full Lodging Rate</i>	<i>Full M&amp;IE Rate</i>	

<sup>1</sup> For new appointees, list the gaining duty station address. For separating employees, list the new home address.  
<sup>2</sup> The FWS PCS Handbook includes guidance on determining relocation categories. Employees transferring between stations (Category 1 Transferees) do not complete this form; they complete Form 3-139A during relocation counseling to select a PCS payment option.  
<sup>3</sup> Employees must have an EIN in order to receive PCS compensation. New appointees should work with their PCS Coordinators to complete the *FBMS Vendor Request Form* to obtain an EIN as soon as possible after accepting a position requiring relocation.

**U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE**  
**FORM 3-139 – RELOCATION ALLOWANCE DATA SHEET**

Attachment 2 - SAMPLE ONLY

**TRANSPORTATION & STORAGE OF HOUSEHOLD GOODS (224F, 224G, 257P)**

**3. Method of shipping / storing household goods:**  
*Employee assumes all risk when self-shipping household goods. The Service is not liable for damage or loss of self-shipped household goods, and cannot assist with arranging the move, contacting vendors, etc.*

The government will ship the household goods and store them if needed  
 The employee would prefer to ship his / her own household goods and store them if needed  
 The employee will self-ship a portion of the household goods and have the government ship the remaining portion  
 The employee would prefer to transport a mobile home in lieu of household goods<sup>4</sup>

**4. Storage of household goods authorized?**  
 No, not required Yes, storage authorized for \_\_\_\_\_ days

**5a. Estimated cost – self-shipment**

Expense	Estimated Cost
Shipment of HHG (224G)	
Rental Vehicle (224G)	
Storage up to 30 Days (224F)	
Storage over 30 Days (257P)	

**5b. Estimated cost – government shipment**

Expense	Estimated Cost
Shipment of HHG (224F)	
Storage up to 30 Days (224F)	
Storage over 30 Days (257P)	

**POV SHIPMENT (224L – DISCRETIONARY ENTITLEMENT – SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES ONLY)**

**6. Is shipment of a POV authorized?**  
 No  
 Yes – Shipment of 1 POV authorized for special circumstances at estimated cost of \$\_\_\_\_\_ (224L)

**SECTION C – SIGNATURES**

*Regional / programmatic policy dictates who is required to sign this form. Employees should discuss signatories with the PCS Coordinator. Electronic signatures are acceptable unless the region's / program's policy stipulates otherwise.*  
*By signing below, the individuals are indicating that, to their knowledge, the information in this form is accurate and correct.*

**RELOCATING EMPLOYEE**

<i>Print Name</i>	<i>Title</i>
<i>Signature</i>	<i>Date</i>

**PCS COORDINATOR**

<i>Print Name</i>	<i>Title</i>
<i>Signature</i>	<i>Date</i>

**AUTHORIZING OFFICIAL**

<i>Print Name</i>	<i>Title</i>
<i>Signature</i>	<i>Date</i>

<sup>4</sup> This entitlement not available to Category 2 Transferees.

PCS – Request for Contractor-Provided Relocation Services

**SECTION A: EMPLOYEE INFORMATION**

Name (First, Middle Initial, Last):

Old Duty Station Address (Street, City, State):

Home Phone:

Cell Phone:

Current Work Phone:

Reporting Date at New Duty Station:

Date Employee Agreement Signed:

**SECTION B: HOME SALE INFORMATION**

Estimated Value of Home (maximum eligibility is \$700,000):

*I have been informed of the coverage of the relocation services which are available to me through a third party relocation contractor. I or a member of my immediate family has full title (or equitable title interest as defined in the Federal Travel Regulation) of the property being sold. I request the following services and understand that the fees paid to the contractor will void my entitlement to direct reimbursement of these fees.*

Home Sale Services to be initiated on \_\_\_\_\_

I wish to delay initiation for the following reasons (if applicable):

\_\_\_\_\_

I do not desire the services offered in the contract

*This decision may not be changed upon issuance of the Travel Authorization.*

Will property be a short sale in which you owe more on the mortgage than the home’s estimated value? Note: Short sale requires special handling in the relocation contract.

Yes

No

**SECTION C: REQUIRED SIGNATURES** (Electronic signatures acceptable unless Regional policy requires hard copy signatures on PCS forms)

*I understand this request may not be changed at a later date to add additional services for which the Government incurs a cost. I also understand that I may request the contractor services be terminated at any time I desire.*

*The expenses and fees paid to the contractor for the services requested will be reimbursed to the Government if I fail to fulfill the requirements of my Service Agreement.*

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Printed Name**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Signature**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**



**TRAVEL ADVANCE REPAYMENT AGREEMENT**

During your Permanent Change of Station (PCS) move you may receive travel advances to assist you with the expenses you will incur for certain parts of the move. These advances are due back to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service within 90 days from the date the advance is issued. After the 120 day period expires, the advance begins to age. Once the advance ages 60 days, it is considered outstanding and a notice is sent notifying you that the advance must be repaid within 30 days. After the advance ages 90 days, a lump sum payroll deduction is initiated. Should this happen, you are notified by letter when the deductions will start and how much will be deducted per pay period. At this point, a payment plan may not be negotiated.

To avoid payroll deductions, a travel voucher should be filed five days after each part of your PCS move.

Travel advances are not to be used for anything other than what is stated on the travel advance request form.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Employee Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Employee Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

<b>TRAVEL VOUCHER</b> <small>(Read the Privacy Act Statement on the back)</small>		<b>1. DEPARTMENT OR ESTABLISHMENT, BUREAU, DIVISION, OR OFFICE</b>		<b>2. TYPE OF TRAVEL</b> <input type="checkbox"/> TEMPORARY DUTY <input type="checkbox"/> PERMANENT CHANGE OF STATION		<b>3. VOUCHER NUMBER</b>		
				<b>4. SCHEDULE NUMBER</b>				
5. TRAVELER (PAYEE)	a. NAME (Last, First, Middle Initial)			b. SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER		<b>6. PERIOD OF TRAVEL</b> a. FROM _____ b. TO _____		
	c. MAILING ADDRESS (Include ZIP Code)			d. OFFICE TELEPHONE NUMBER		<b>7. TRAVEL AUTHORIZATION</b> a. NUMBER(S) _____ b. DATE(S) _____		
	e. PRESENT DUTY STATION		f. RESIDENCE (City and State)		<b>10. CHECK NUMBER</b>			
<b>8. TRAVEL ADVANCE</b> a. Outstanding _____ b. Amount to be applied _____ c. Amount due Government Attached: <input type="checkbox"/> Check <input type="checkbox"/> Cash d. Balance outstanding _____				<b>9. CASH PAYMENT RECEIPT</b> a. DATE RECEIVED _____ b. AMOUNT RECEIVED _____ c. PAYEE'S SIGNATURE _____		<b>11. PAID BY</b>		
<b>12. GOVERNMENT TRANSPORTATION REQUESTS, OR TRANSPORTATION TICKETS, IF PURCHASED WITH CASH</b> <small>(List by number below and attach passenger coupon; if cash is used show claim on reverse side.)</small>		I hereby assign to the United States any right I may have against any parties in connection with reimbursable transportation charges described below.						Traveler's Initials <span style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">▶</span>
		<b>AGENT'S VALUATION OF TICKET</b>  (a)	<b>ISSUING CARRIER (Initials)</b>  (b)	<b>MODE, CLASS OF SERVICE, AND ACCOMMODATIONS</b>  (c)	<b>DATE ISSUED</b>  (d)	<b>POINTS OF TRAVEL</b> FROM _____ TO _____ (e) _____ (f) _____		
13. I certify that this voucher is true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief, and that payment or credit has not been received by me. When applicable, per diem claimed is based on the average cost of lodging incurred during the period covered by this voucher.								
<b>TRAVELER SIGN HERE</b> <span style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">▶</span>				DATE _____		<b>AMOUNT CLAIMED</b> <span style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">▶</span>		
<small>NOTE: Falsification of an item in an expense account works a forfeiture of claim (28 U.S.C. 2514) and may result in a fine of not more than \$10,000 or imprisonment for not more than 5 years or both (18 U.S.C. 287; i.d. 1001).</small>								
14. This voucher is approved. Long distance telephone calls, if any, are certified as necessary in the interest of the Government. <b>(NOTE: If long distance telephone calls are included, the approving official must have been authorized in writing by the head of the department or agency to so certify (31 U.S.C. 680a).)</b>  <b>APPROVING OFFICIAL SIGN HERE</b> <span style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">▶</span>				<b>17. FOR FINANCE OFFICE USE ONLY COMPUTATION</b> a. _____ DIFFERENCES, IF ANY _____ <small>(Explain and show amount)</small>				
								<b>15. LAST PRECEDING VOUCHER PAID UNDER SAME TRAVEL AUTHORIZATION</b> a. VOUCHER NUMBER _____ b. DISBURSING OFFICE SYMBOL _____ c. MONTH AND YEAR _____
<b>16. THIS VOUCHER IS CERTIFIED CORRECT AND PROPER FOR PAYMENT AUTHORIZED CERTIFYING OFFICIAL SIGN HERE</b> <span style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">▶</span>				DATE _____		b. TOTAL VERIFIED CORRECT FOR CHARGE TO APPROPRIATION  Certifier's Initials: _____		
						c. APPLIED TO TRAVEL ADVANCE (Appropriation symbol): _____		<b>NET TO TRAVELER</b> <span style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">▶</span>
<b>18. ACCOUNTING CLASSIFICATION</b>								

<p><b>SCHEDULE OF EXPENSES AND AMOUNTS CLAIMED</b></p>	<p><b>INSTRUCTIONS TO TRAVELER (Unlisted items are self-explanatory)</b>                  Column (c): If the voucher includes per diem allowances for members of employee's immediate family, show member's names, ages, and relationship to employee and marital status of children (unless information is shown on the travel authorization.)</p> <p>Column (d) thru (g) Show amount incurred for each meal, including tax and tips, and daily total meal cost.                  (h) Show expenses, such as laundry, cleaning and pressing of clothes, tips to bellboys, porters, etc. (other than for meals).                  (i) Complete for per diem and actual expense travel.                  (j) Show total subsistence expense incurred for actual expense travel.                  (m) Show per diem amount, limited to maximum rate, or if travel on actual expense, show the lesser of the amount from column (j) or maximum rate.                  (n) Show expenses, such as taxi/timousine fares, air fare (if purchased with cash), local or long distance telephone calls for Government business, car rental, relocation other than subsistence, etc.</p>	<p>Complete this information if this is a continuation sheet.</p> <p>PAGE _____ OF _____ PAGES</p> <p>TRAVEL AUTHORIZATION NUMBER _____</p> <p>TRAVELER'S LAST NAME _____</p>
--	--	---

DATE	TIME (Hour and am/pm)	DESCRIPTION (Departure/arrival city, per diem computation, or other explanations of expense)	ITEMIZED SUBSISTENCE EXPENSES							MILEAGE RATE: NUMBER OF MILES (k)	AMOUNT CLAIMED							
			MEALS			MISCELLANEOUS SUBSISTENCE	LODGING	TOTAL SUBSISTENCE EXPENSE (j)	MILEAGE		SUBSISTENCE	OTHER						
			BREAKFAST	LUNCH (e)	DINNER (f)								TOTAL (g)	(l)	(m)	(n)		
(a)	(b)	(c)																
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<b>TOTALS</b> ▲																		

*If additional space is required, continue on another Optional Form 1012 BACK, leaving the front blank.*

In compliance with the Privacy Act of 1974, the following information is provided: Solicitation of the information on this form is authorized by E.O. 11609 of July 22, 1971, E.O. 11012 of March 27, 1962, E.O. 9397 of November 22, 1943, and 26 U.S.C. 6011(b) and 6109. The primary purpose of the requested information is to determine payment or reimbursement to eligible individuals for allowable travel and/or relocation expenses incurred under appropriate administrative authorization and to record and maintain costs of such reimbursements to the Government. The information will be used by officers and employees who have a need for the information in the performance of their official duties. The information may be disclosed to appropriate Federal, State, local, or foreign agencies, when relevant to civil, criminal, or regulatory investigations or prosecutions, or when pursuant to a requirement by this agency in connection with the hiring or firing of an employee, the issuance of a security clearance, or investigations of the performance of official duty while in Government service. Your Social Security Number (SSN) is solicited under the authority of the Internal Revenue Code (26 U.S.C. 6011(b) and 6109) and E.O. 9397, November 22, 1943, for use as a tax payer and/or employee identification number; disclosure is MANDATORY on vouchers claiming travel and/or relocation allowance expense reimbursement which is, or may be, taxable income. Disclosure of your SSN and other requested information is voluntary in all other instances; however, failure to provide the information (other than SSN) required to support the claim may result in delay or loss of reimbursement.

Enter the total of columns (l), (m), and (n) below and in item 13 on the front of this form.

**TOTAL AMOUNT CLAIMED** ▲

# FBMS Vendor Request Form

To request a new vendor or an update to an existing vendor, complete this form.

Remedy Issue ID \_\_\_\_\_

## Requestor Information

Date (Enter MM/DD/YYYY)	Bureau	Request Type Routine (within 48 hrs) <input checked="" type="radio"/> Emergency (Notify VMM helodesk by phone) <input type="radio"/>
Requestor Name	Phone Number	E-mail Address

## Action(s) Requested

<input checked="" type="radio"/> Create a new vendor	<b>Manual -</b> Non-CCR Vendors, Cashiers, Non- Federal, CCR exempt <input checked="" type="radio"/>	<b>Foreign</b> <input type="radio"/>	<b>Invitational Traveler -</b> These may be employees of one bureau but considered invitational to another <input type="radio"/>	<b>Employee-</b> Generally interfaced from FPPS <input type="radio"/>	<b>Federal</b> <input type="radio"/>	<b>POD Vendor</b> <input type="radio"/>
<input type="radio"/> Change						
<input type="checkbox"/> Link to corresponding customer						
<input type="checkbox"/> Vendor needed in Prism Contracts		Indian Tribal Identifier <input type="text"/>				
<input type="checkbox"/> Vendor needed in Prism Grants						
<input type="checkbox"/> Vendor needed as Real Estate Business Partner						

## Vendor Information

Last Name (Business Name)	First Name	Middle Initial
Address		
City	State	Postal Code
Country United States		

## Vendor Contact for Request (This is the contact information for Vendor's POC, not the contact information of any DOI Personnel)

Name	Phone	E-mail Address
------	-------	----------------

## Business Information

Social Security Number (DO NOT ADD DASHES OR SPACES)	Taxpayer Identification Number (DO NOT ADD DASHES OR SPACES)
DUNS	<input type="checkbox"/> CASHIER

## Financial Institution Information

<input type="checkbox"/> Select if Bank Data is not required or do not select if Bank Data is required (for refunds, etc.)	Bank Name	ABA Number	Account Number	Account Type <input checked="" type="radio"/> Checking <input type="radio"/> Saving
--	-----------	------------	----------------	--

## Wire or International Banking Information

Alternate Payment Method <input type="text"/>
--

**Other Special Instructions**

--

PCS – Reimbursement of Expenses Upon Sale or Purchase of Residence

**SECTION A: EMPLOYEE INFORMATION**

Name (First, Middle Initial, Last):

Current Mailing Address (Street, City, State):

Cell Phone:

Current Work Phone:

Type of Transaction:

Purchase

Sale

**SECTION B: INFORMATION & CERTIFICATION FOR HOME SALE**

Complete address of residence:

Price:

Date of Closing or Settlement:

Amount Claimed:

*I hereby certify that the amount claimed in connection with the above sale represents only amounts actually paid by me. Additionally, I certify that title to the property was in my name and/or the name of a member of my immediate family, and was my residence when I was initially definitively informed of my transfer.*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Employee Signature*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Date*

**SECTION C: INFORMATION & CERTIFICATION FOR HOME PURCHASE**

Complete address of residence:

Price:

Date of Closing or Settlement:

Amount Claimed:

*I hereby certify that the amount claimed in connection with the above purchase represents only amounts actually paid by me. Additionally, I certify that title to the property is in my name and/or the name of a member of my immediate family, and is my residence.*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Employee Signature*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Date*

U.S. FISH & WILDLIFE SERVICE

Attachment 8 - SAMPLE ONLY

PCS – Reimbursement of Expenses Upon Sale or Purchase of Residence

<b>SECTION D: CLAIM FOR REIMBURSEMENT</b>			
<b>Sale or Purchase</b>	<b>Reimbursable Item</b>	<b>Settlement Statement Line Item</b>	<b>Amount Incurred</b>
S	Total sales commission (NTE 7% of sale price)		
	Price Percentage		
S	Title insurance (owner’s coverage)		
S	Recording (releases)		
P	Loan origination fee (NTE 1% of loan amount)		
P	Credit report		
P	Lender’s inspection fee		
P	Flood certificate		
P	Document preparation fee for title work		
P	Title insurance (lender’s coverage)		
P	Recording (deed + mortgage)		
P	Inspections (only reimbursable if required by lender or the law)		
S/P	Appraisal		
S/P	Settlement / closing fee		
S/P	Abstract or title search		
S/P	Title exam		
S/P	Survey		
S/P	City / county / state stamps		
S/P	Sales / transfer taxes		
S/P	Pest inspection		
S/P	Attorney’s fees		
S/P	Other 1:		
S/P	Other 2:		
S/P	Other 3:		
S/P	Other 4:		
<b>Total Expenses Claimed</b>			

APPROVAL FORM FOR PBP&E

As authorizing official at this transferred employee's new duty station, I have carefully reviewed the attached itemized inventory of "professional books, papers, and equipment" provided. This term refers to professional or specialized items and other materials that are personally owned by the employee for use in the performance of official duties. The term does not include sports equipment or office, household, or shop fixtures and furniture; e.g., bookcases, file cabinets, desks, and racks of any kind even though used in connection with the professional books, papers, and equipment.

I hereby certify that all items listed are necessary for the employee's duties at the new station, and if these items were not transported, the same or similar items would have to be obtained at Government expense for the employee's use at the new official station. On that basis, I approve shipment of these items as a separate lot from the transferring employee's household goods.

Employee's Estimated PBP&E Weight \_\_\_\_\_ pounds

Approving Official Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

<b>EMPLOYEE and IMMEDIATE FAMILY SUBSISTENCE EXPENSES WHILE OCCUPYING TEMPORARY QUARTERS</b>							NAME OF EMPLOYEE:					
							Per Diem in Travel Status Ended:					
							Date:		Time:		AM/PM	
							Entered Temporary Quarters					
Date:		Time:		AM/PM								
Vacated Temporary Quarters												
Date:		Time:		AM/PM								
DAY #	DATE 20__	COST OF MEALS			FEES & TIPS	COST OF GROCERIES	LAUNDRY AND DRY CLEANING	TOTAL	COST OF LODGING	TOTAL EXPENSES FOR THE DAY		
		BREAK-FAST	LUNCH	DINNER								
1								0.00		0.00		
2								0.00		0.00		
3								0.00		0.00		
4								0.00		0.00		
5								0.00		0.00		
6								0.00		0.00		
7								0.00		0.00		
8								0.00		0.00		
9								0.00		0.00		
10								0.00		0.00		
11								0.00		0.00		
12								0.00		0.00		
13								0.00		0.00		
14								0.00		0.00		
15								0.00		0.00		
16								0.00		0.00		
17								0.00		0.00		
18								0.00		0.00		
19								0.00		0.00		
20								0.00		0.00		
21								0.00		0.00		

DAY #	DATE 20__	COST OF MEALS			FEES & TIPS	COST OF GROCERIES	LAUNDRY AND DRY CLEANING	TOTAL	COST OF LODGING	TOTAL EXPENSES FOR THE DAY
		BREAK-FAST	LUNCH	DINNER						
22							0.00		0.00	
23							0.00		0.00	
24							0.00		0.00	
25							0.00		0.00	
26							0.00		0.00	
27							0.00		0.00	
28							0.00		0.00	
29							0.00		0.00	
30							0.00		0.00	

Actual  
Expenses  
TOTAL

0.00

**NOTE:** TQ M&IE may never duplicate TDY M&IE. Please indicate below any TDY performed during dates of TQ claimed:

Dates of TDY

Voucher No. #

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

#### INSTRUCTIONS

1) Eligibility Conditions and Limitations. Subsistence expenses of employee, for whom a permanent change of station is authorized or approved, and each eligible member of the immediate family for a period of not more than sixty (60) days, (additional sixty (60) days may be allowed when justified) while necessarily occupying temporary quarters. Use of temporary quarters must begin within thirty (30) days after date employee reports for duty, at new official station, or if not begun during this period, then not later than thirty (30) days from date family vacates residence at old station, but not beyond the maximum time for beginning allowable travel and transportation. Time begins from date employee, spouse or any member of immediate family occupies such quarters and shall run concurrently.

2) Allowable items. Reimbursement is allowed only for actual and necessary subsistence expenses incurred which are directly related to occupancy of temporary quarters and are reasonable as to amount and duration. Allowable subsistence

expenses include only charges for meals, lodging, fees and tips incident thereto, laundry, cleaning and pressing of clothing. Expenses for local transportation incurred for any purpose during occupancy of temporary quarters will not be allowed. Amounts claimed for lodging must be supported by receipts. In addition, receipts are required for allowable cash expenditures in excess of \$75 (301-11.3(c)). Vouchers must be submitted every 30 days at a minimum.

3) Limitations. Reimbursements for occupancy of temporary quarters are allowable for actual subsistence expenses incurred, as defined above, but not in excess of amounts derived from applying the basic formula to the per diem rate afforded by the tabulations for each 30-day period that temporary quarters are necessarily occupied.

**A separate form must be prepared for each 30-day period for which reimbursement is being claimed.**

## RELOCATION INCOME TAX ALLOWANCE CERTIFICATION

Please verify that your new job location is at least 50 miles farther from your former residence than your old job location was from your former residence.

(    ) YES    or    (    ) NO

To verify the IRS distance test, please use the following example:

If your old job was 3 miles from your former home, your new job must be at least 53 miles from that former home.

The above information is true and accurate to the best of my (our) knowledge. I (We) agree to notify the Denver Administrative Service Center of any changes to the above (i.e., from amended tax returns, tax audits, etc.) so that appropriate adjustment to the RITA can be made. The required supporting documents (*W-2s* and *Schedule SE*) are attached. Additional documentation will be furnished if requested.

**IF EMPLOYEE AND SPOUSE FILED A JOINT RETURN, BOTH MUST SIGN BELOW.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Employee's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Spouse's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

PCS – Computation Form for Employee Estimate of Total Relocation Costs

EMPLOYEE NAME:				PCS COORDINATOR:		
Object Class	Expenses		Total Costs	Notes	Taxable Amt.	
<b>En Route Travel</b>						
<b>213CE - Airfare</b>				Estimate; centrally billed.		
<b>213D - M&amp;IE</b>  Rate =	Employee	days @	=	Based on actual travel days at the Standard CONUS rate		
	Accompanying Spouse	days @	=			
	Unaccompanied Spouse	days @	=			
	Dependent > 12 x x	days @	=			
	Dependent < 12 x x	days @	=			
<b>213D - Lodging</b>  Rate =	Employee	days @	=	Based on actual travel days at the Standard CONUS rate		
	Accompanying Spouse	days @	=			
	Unaccompanied Spouse	days @	=			
	Dependent > 12 x x	days @	=			
	Dependent < 12 x x	days @	=			
<b>213P Transportation</b>	1st POV	miles @	=	Estimate only. Employee must claim actual miles traveled from old duty station to new duty station.		
	2nd POV	miles @	=			
	Taxable Mileage	miles @	=			
	Taxi	Parking				
<b>House-hunting Trip</b>						
<b>213W Transportation</b>	POV to/from	miles @	=	Estimate only. Employee must claim actual miles from old duty station to new duty station (round trip).		
	POV around (50/day)	miles @	=			
	Rental Car + Fuel	Airfare				
	Taxi	Parking				
<b>213V Per Diem</b>	<b>Actuals</b>		<i>Actual Sub Rate =</i>	Standard CONUS rate is always used for actual expenses for house-hunting trips.		
	Employee	days @	=			
	Accompanying Spouse	days @	=			
	Unaccompanied Spouse	days @	=			
	<b>Lump Sum / Fixed Rate</b>		<i>Locality Rate =</i>			
Employee and Spouse	x 6.25	=				
Employee or Spouse	x 5	=				
<b>Temporary Quarters</b>						
<b>1212 Actuals</b>  Rate =	Employee	days @	=	Actual expense method provides reimbursement for actual expenses incurred. Repetitive amounts claimed or daily claims based on maximum allowable rates are not actual expenses.		
	Accompanying Spouse	days @	=			
	Unaccompanied Spouse	days @	=			
	Dependent > 12 x x	days @	=			
	Dependent < 12 x x	days @	=			
<b>1212 Lump Sum / Fixed</b>	Employee	1 x .75 x	days @ =			
	Family	x .25 x	days @ =			
<b>Miscellaneous Expense Allowance</b>						
<b>1216</b>	Employee without immediate family			Misc. expenses are costs related to a PCS not covered by other relocation benefits.		
	Employee with immediate family					
	Claim actual expenses					
<b>Shipment &amp; Storage of Household Goods</b>						
<b>224F - Govt.</b>	lbs. / GBL		=	Paid to moving company.		
<b>224G - Self</b>				Estimate only.		
<b>257P Storage</b>	days up to 30		= (non-taxable)	Paid to moving company.		
	days over 30		= (taxable)			
<b>224L - POV</b>				Paid to moving company.		
<b>Real Estate</b>						
<b>1213</b>	Sale	home value	x .07	Estimate only. Employee must claim actual expenses.		
	Purchase	home value	x .03			
	Relocation Services Vendor Contract					
	Unexpired lease / lease break					
<b>Relocation Income Tax Allowance (RITA)</b>						
<b>1215</b>				33.33333% of Total Costs		
<b>TOTAL ESTIMATED COSTS (amount obligated)</b>						

## **FWS PCS Program Guidelines for Human Resources Offices and PCS Coordinators**

### **Addressing Eligibility for PCS Entitlements**

#### **Benefit of the Employee vs. Interest of the Government**

Voluntary assignments are either: “primarily for the employee’s convenience and benefit, and at his / her request,” or “in the interest of the government.” This distinction impacts eligibility for PCS entitlements as follows:

- Voluntary transfers deemed to be primarily for the benefit of the employee are not authorized reimbursement for relocation expenses.
- Voluntary transfers that are in the interest of the government are authorized reimbursement of relocation expenses.
- Employees must have relocation expenses paid if the assignment is in the interest of government and not voluntary. However, discretionary entitlements are not required (e.g., relocation services vendor contract, house-hunting trip).

Organizations should review [DOI PCS Handbook](#) Section 1.2 *Involuntary and Voluntary Transfer Eligibility for Relocation Expense Allowances* for guidance on how to determine whether the transfer is primarily for the benefit of the employee or the government.

Organizations must require an individual to sign a declaratory statement when the individual submits an unsolicited application for placement consideration. A voluntary transfer that is “primarily for the convenience or benefit of the employee or at his / her request” resulting from the selection of an employee for transfer whose primary interest is in relocation, rather than in placement in a specific position, and who has signed the following statement will not be eligible for relocation benefits.

*I voluntarily request consideration for assignment to a position in another commuting area [[or describe the particular position]]. I am making this request primarily for my personal convenience or benefit. I understand that, if selected, I will be responsible for all travel, transportation, and relocation expenses associated with reporting for duty in that position.*

#### **Addressing Eligibility in Vacancy Announcements**

Vacancy announcements should not be silent as to whether or not relocation expenses will be paid. Further, vacancy announcements should not say that a PCS will be “partially funded.” Vacancy announcements should include one of the following statements on relocation expenses:

1. Relocation expenses will not be paid. Any travel, transportation, and relocation expenses associated with reporting for duty in this position will be the responsibility of the selected employee.
2. Relocation expenses will be paid.
3. Relocation expenses will be paid; discretionary entitlements will not be paid.
4. Relocation expenses will be paid; relocation contract for home sale will not be paid.
5. Relocation expenses will be paid, including home sale contract. Contract will include a four month period before appraisals are initiated; maximum home value is \$700,000.

A determination that offering relocation benefits is not in the interest of the government does not prohibit authorized officials from offering an incentive payment; this program is managed by Human Resources.

#### **Defining Permanent Duty Station for Teleworking Employees**

The permanent duty station is not always defined by what is listed on the employee’s SF-50 or personnel paperwork. The permanent duty station is where the employee works from the majority of the time. The official station listed on the SF-50 may be an administrative headquarters and not necessarily the employee’s permanent

duty station. See Section 1.3.1 for additional information on defining a teleworker's permanent duty station. This guidance applies to training assignments (e.g., NCTC, FLETC) as well as teleworking.

Impacts of teleworking include the following. These stipulations apply regardless of what the employee's personnel documents (e.g., SF-50) list as the permanent duty station:

- If the employee currently teleworks less than 90% of the time (i.e., physically reports to a duty station at least twice per biweekly pay period), then the telework arrangement has no impact on the PCS.
- If the employee currently teleworks 90% or more of the time from his / her residence (i.e., physically reports to a duty station no more than once per biweekly pay period), then the residence is the permanent duty station for purposes of a PCS.
- If the employee will complete a PCS, then begin teleworking 90% or more after the move, the supervisor should evaluate the need for the PCS move in advance and consider TCS or TDY with reduced per diem as alternatives.

The following examples illustrate the impacts of telework on PCS entitlements:

- Carl's residence is Raleigh, NC and he teleworks over 90% of time, conducting TDY travel to physically report to his alternate duty station in Falls Church, VA once every three months. Carl's SF-50 lists his permanent duty station as Falls Church, VA. Due to changes in circumstances, his supervisor determines that he should stop teleworking and move to Falls Church, VA. Since Carl's permanent duty station is Raleigh, NC (despite what is listed on his SF-50), a PCS authorization can be issued for a transfer from Raleigh, NC to Falls Church, VA.
- Sam's residence is Richmond, VA. Sam teleworks three times per week, and physically reports to his permanent duty station in Falls Church, VA two days per week. Due to changes in circumstances, his supervisor determines that he should stop teleworking and move to Falls Church, VA. Since Sam's permanent duty station is already Falls Church, VA, a PCS authorization cannot be issued for a transfer from Richmond, VA to Falls Church, VA. Sam must relocate at his own expense or commute the extra days at his own expense.

Addressing Telework Eligibility in the Vacancy Announcement (use one of these statements):

- FWS has determined that the duties in this position are suitable for telework, and the selectee may be allowed to telework with supervisory approval.
- FWS has determined that the duties of this position are suitable for telework only during an emergency or natural disaster.
- FWS has determined that telework is required for this position and thus a condition of employment. The selectee is expected to telework \_\_\_ days a week. Selectees must be eligible to telework under the 2010 Telework Act.

### ***Providing Adequate Time to Report***

An employee who is eligible for relocation expense reimbursement must be given 45 calendar days from the date he / she formally accepts the position to report to his / her new duty station. The delayed report date gives the employee time to get affairs in order at the old duty station and is required by the Federal Travel Regulation. Failure to provide a delayed report date will adversely affect the employee's productivity and may cause significant impacts to the employee both financially and emotionally. It will also increase the risk to the bureau, as there is a stronger probability of incurring costs associated with shipment of household goods and relocation services. The employee can voluntarily report within the 45 day window.

### ***Developing Effective Purchase Requests for Relocation Services Vendor Contracts***

Here are the items an organization should include in the Purchase Request for a relocation services vendor contract:

- Recommended or preferred vendor, if one exists. If you have experience with the vendor, you can ask for a preferred counselor. (Note: If the DOI Blanket Purchase Agreement provides conflicting guidance in this area, follow the DOI guidance.)
- An indication that BVO 120 is the primary option, and whether the agreement should be automatically converted to option one or another option if the employee does not locate a home buyer within the 120 day period. The recommended automatic conversion is to option one. As a reminder, BVO 120 means that the appraisal and subsequent home purchase offer by the relocation services vendor will not be made until after 120 days have elapsed on the contract.
- May include language that payoff from the vendor is mandatory; this is generally understood if option one is selected.
- Details regarding any issues that necessitate special handling.
- An indication of any other services you want the vendor to provide (e.g., shipment of household goods).
- A statement that appraisals will not be done until 120 days have elapsed on the contract. You may also note that inspections will not be done until 120 days have elapsed on the contract.
- A statement that if the appraisal comes in over the DOI-established cap of \$700,000, the contractor should immediately notify the FWS PCS point of contact (PCS Counselor).
- The “remit to” address and point of contact for invoices. (Note: These invoices are not paid via Internet Payment Platform).
- The end date for the period of performance which, initially, should not exceed one year from the employee’s actual report date to the new duty station. If the employee is subsequently approved for an extension of the PCS, the contract can be amended to reflect the extension if required.

### ***Notifying the PCS Coordinator of an Upcoming Move***

Once an employee eligible for relocation entitlements formally accepts a job offer, the HR Office has three business days to notify the PCS Coordinator of the upcoming move and provide the following information:

- Employee name, address, phone number, and email.
- For a PCS move to an OCONUS location, the home of record that should be used for separation entitlements.
- Hiring official’s name, phone number, and email.
- Relocating employee’s expected actual report date.
- Determination of eligibility for PCS entitlements. Temporary (term), seasonal, and part-time employees are eligible for a PCS move as a transferee as long as there is no break in service (generally, meaning that the employee is continuously on the payroll of the two organizations with only a weekend and / or federal holiday in between). A PCS move can only be given to someone taking a term or temporary assignment if that assignment is for at least one year; the one year service agreement requirement cannot be waived.

The PCS Coordinator will then provide the relocating employee with a link to this handbook and counseling on PCS entitlements. During the initial counseling session, the PCS Coordinator should address whether a relocation service contract will be provided and, if so, whether the employee can select his or her own real estate broker and the BVO 120 day requirement.

### ***Amending a PCS Authorization***

Once the PCS *Travel Authorization* is issued, the Service cannot arbitrarily retroactively change it to add or reduce entitlements unless one of the two following circumstances applies:

- There is an error or omission in the original order.
- There is a major change in circumstance, including the two following examples:

- Death of the employee. Note that if the employee dies during the PCS move, his / her spouse and / or dependents are still eligible to receive the authorized entitlements and the one year service requirement is waived. The PCS Authorization may need to be amended.
- Employee anticipated staying in government-furnished quarters that are not available, for reasons outside of the employee's control. In this case, the PCS authorization can be amended to provide the temporary quarters entitlement.
- The employee fails to complete training or complete a security requirement. In this case the PCS authorization can be amended (e.g., to send the employee to an alternate location or back to the original duty station), but it cannot be cancelled unless the employee is terminated.

Financial hardship of the employee and budget constraints of the organization are not valid reasons to retroactively amend a PCS Travel Authorization.

If the organization fails to create the PCS Travel Authorization in a timely manner, the PCS Coordinator can create it with a retroactive effective date, as long as there was original intent to provide PCS entitlements. PCS orders cannot be issued if the one year period has expired (i.e., orders cannot be issued one year or longer after the employee's actual report date at the new duty station).

### ***Honoring the One Year Service Agreement***

Generally, the relocating employee must serve for at least one year following the PCS or reimburse the Service for the cost of the relocation. The one-year service agreement cannot be modified to add or reduce time, and the requirement to stay in the federal government cannot be adjusted or limited to the Department or the Service.

- If the employee voluntarily retires, resigns, or is terminated for proper cause during the one year service agreement, he / she must pay back the full cost associated with the PCS entitlements. The employee does not receive a "pro rata" credit for any time served (i.e., even if the employee serves for 11 months, the entire PCS cost must be paid back).
- Termination for proper cause can include failure to complete training. However, if an employee fails to complete training but is not terminated, the PCS authorization cannot be revoked. The PCS authorization should be amended if the employee is reassigned to another location or returned to the original duty station.
- A disability retirement or claim accepted by the Service, death of the employee, and loss of job due to RIF are considered outside the employee's control; in these case, the employee would not have to pay back the PCS costs.
- The employee not completing the one year service agreement because his / her spouse accepts a new job or becomes ill is considered within the employee's control; in this case, the employee would have to pay back the PCS costs.
- If the employee is a military reservist and is called to active duty, he / she must complete one year service as a federal civilian upon completion of the active duty or pay back the PCS costs. For example, if an employee serves FWS for eight months, then deploys on military duty for six months, the employee must serve FWS for at least another four months upon his / her return.

### ***Pathways Interns***

When a Pathways intern successfully completes his / her degree internship program requirements and is converted into a competitive position outside of the local commuting area of the internship, this move is in the interest of the government. Therefore, the former Pathways Intern is eligible for PCS entitlements as a new appointee.

United States Department of the Interior  
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service  
<http://www.fws.gov>

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