



# Department of Veterans Affairs

## Financial Policy

### Volume XIV

### Travel

### Chapter 8

### Relocation Packages

Approved:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Jon J. Rychalski", written over a horizontal line.

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Date

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## 0801 Overview

This chapter establishes the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) financial policies and procedures relating to the reimbursement of authorized relocation package expenses for both permanent change of station (PCS) and temporary change of station (TCS). The authorization of PCS and TCS relocation allowances, entitlements, and the discretionary Appraised Value Offer Program (AVO), is governed by Human Resources Administration (HRA) policy. HRA interim guidance on the required approval levels and criteria for authorizing PCS and AVO has been established in [Human Resource Management Letter No. 05-17-01](#), dated January 27, 2017. HRA policy can be found in [VA Directive 5005, Staffing](#) for Non-SES positions, and [VA Directive 5027, Senior Executive Service Handbook](#) for SES, and SES Equivalent Title 38 positions.

The Federal Travel Regulation (FTR) is the Federal Government’s regulation that implements statutory requirements and Executive Branch policies for travel by Federal civilian employees and others authorized to travel at Government expense ([41 Code of Federal Regulations](#), FTR Chapters 300, 301, and 302). The FTR is the final governing regulation for all federal employees.

Union rights and privileges related to travel expenses, as defined in Union agreements, do not supersede the regulations contained in the FTR.

Pursuant to the Inspector General Act of 1978, as amended, Office of Inspector General (OIG) employees shall adhere to travel Directives, policies, procedures, and guidance of the OIG.

## 0802 Revisions

Section	Revision	Office	Reason for Change	Effective Date
Various	Removed all references to Public Law 114-113.	OFP (047G)	Public Law 114-113 statute expired.	January 2018
Various	Removed Appendix A, Chief of Staff Memorandum, “Appraised Value Offer Program” and all references, replacing with HRA HRML 05-17-01 (with link), as interim guidance on PCS and AVO approval level and determination requirements.	OFP (047G)	Publication of HRA HRML 05-17-01, January, 27, 2017.	January 2018

Section	Revision	Office	Reason for Change	Effective Date
080501	Clarified residence transaction eligibility in accordance with <a href="#">FTR §302-11.4</a>	OFF (047G)	General Policy Update	January 2018
Appendices	Re-alphabetized all Appendices and links throughout the chapter with the removal of Chief of Staff Memorandum, “Appraised Value Offer Program”, previously published under Appendix A.	OFF (047G)	Publication of HRA HRML 05-17-01, January, 27, 2017.	January 2018
0801	Modified FTR and Union agreement statement.	OFF (047G)	Provide clarity that regulations supersedes an agreement.	August 2017
080501.04	Replaced per diem entitlement related to TDY at new position with link to Vol. XIV Ch. 2, Travel Per Diem for guidance.	OFF (047G)	Added link to reduce duplication of policy.	August 2017
Various	Reformatted to new policy format and completed 5 year review	OFF (047G)	Reorganized chapter layout.	December 2016
0801	Revised this chapter to focus on financial reimbursement processes. Referenced VA Directives 5005 and 5027, and Chief of Staff memorandum, “Appraised Value Offer Program” for policy on PCS, TCS, and AVO authorization.  Added: FTR supersedes Union agreement statement; authority for OIG employees to follow OIG directives, policy, and guidance.	OFF (047G)	OIG Report 15-02997-526 9/28/15; Office of Internal Controls (OIC) PCS Report; General Policy Update	December 2016
0803	Added: definitions for Appointing Official; Commuted Rate; Relocation Service Company.  Updated Immediate Family incorporating Domestic Partner	OFF (047G)	FTR Amendment 2015-02; General Policy Update	December 2016

Section	Revision	Office	Reason for Change	Effective Date
	with FTR link for accessing current definitions.  Removed: definitions not referenced in the chapter and others deemed not necessary.			
0804	Added roles and responsibilities for: SECVA, Human Resources Admin. (HRA), Hiring Official, Servicing Human Resource (HR) Office, Financial Service Center (FSC) Permanent Change of Station (PCS) Travel Division, Office of Acquisition, Logistics, and Construction (OALC).  Updated Approving Official and Traveler.  Consolidated roles and responsibilities.	OFF (047G)	OIG Report 15-02997-526; OIC PCS Report	December 2016
0805	Reorganized subsections	OFF (047G)	General Policy Update	December 2016
080501	Added: subsections and reorganized guidance; reference to VA Directive 5005 and 5027 for approval of PCS relocation allowance entitlements ; reference to COSVA Memorandum for approval of AVO; Gaining Station, HR, and FSC approval for relocation, AVO, and Home Marketing Incentive (HMI) Award; documentation requirements; travel authorization and travel advance guidance; regulation on fraud during a relocation.  Clarified time limits, reporting	OFF (047G)	FTR 2014-01; OIG Report 15-02997-526; OIC PCS Report	December 2016

Section	Revision	Office	Reason for Change	Effective Date
	dates, waiver approvals, and extensions.			
080502	Improved guidance on Temporary Quarters Subsistence Expenses (TQSE) request, approval, time limit and extensions, and reimbursement requirements	OFF (047G)	OIG Report 15-02997-526 General Policy Update	December 2016
080503	Added: FSC restrictions on initiating HMI award for SES, and SES Equivalent, Title 38 employees unless specifically authorized in AVO memorandum; requirements for assessing home sale programs.  Removed AVO approval guidance.	OFF (047G)	OIG Report 15-02997-526 9/28/15; OIC PCS Report; General Policy Update	December 2016
080504	Added miscellaneous expense requirements for flat fees.	OFF (047G)	General Policy Update	December 2016
080505	Added policy on: household good prepayments; use of ships for international shipping; HHG shipment pre-paid audit requirements; household good and shipping limitations; approving extended storage; determining storage locations; and unaccompanied air baggage shipping.	OFF (047G)	OIC PCS Report	December 2016
080506	Added Property Management Services contracted negotiated rate requirements.	OFF (047G)	OIC PCS Report	December 2016
080508	Added Property Management Services contracted negotiated rate requirements.	OFF (047G)	OIC PCS Report	December 2016
080509	Updated relocation withholding and income tax requirements.	OFF (047G)	FTR Amendment 2014-01	December 2016

Section	Revision	Office	Reason for Change	Effective Date
0806	Updated references and links removed outdated links.	OFF (047G)	General Policy Update	December 2016
0807	Rescinded Relocation Packages chapter.	OFF (047G)	Revised Chapter	December 2016
0808	Updated Point of Contact information.	OFF (047G)	General Policy Update	December 2016
Appendices	Reorganized based on order of occurrence in Chapter.  Removed previous Appendices N and O, on transfers and other Outside of the Continental United States allowances.	OFF (047G)	General Policy Update	December 2016
Appendix A	Added Chief of Staff Memorandum, “Appraised Value Offer Program”, dated November 10, 2016.	OFF (047G)	OIG Report 15-02997-526	December 2016
Appendix B	Added HR and FSC relocation allowance and AVO documentation requirements.  Removed procedures on accessing the PCS Travel Portal, provided link to FSC guidance.	OFF (047G)	OIC PCS Report; General Policy Update	December 2016
Appendix C	Added Property Management Services contracted negotiated rate requirements.	OFF (047G)	OIC PCS Report	December 2016
Appendix E	Added: delegation authority for 50 mile distance waiver, 90 day reporting, 30 day waiver for second year extension; extensions of HHG storage; and unaccompanied air baggage.  Removed relocation approvals.	OFF (047G)	General Policy Update; OIC PCS Report	December 2016
Appendix F	Added guidance on travel advances.	OFF (047G)	OIC PCS Report	December 2016

Section	Revision	Office	Reason for Change	Effective Date
Appendix G	Updated privately-owned vehicle mileage rate and effective date.	OFP (047G)	General Policy Update	December 2016
Appendix H	Updated TQSE maximum daily allowable amounts.	OFP (047G)	General Policy Update	December 2016
Appendix I	Added COSVA authorization requirement to initiate reimbursement of HMI Award to SES, and SES Equivalent, Title 38 employees.	OFP (047G)	Public Law 114 - 113	December 2016

### 0803 Definitions

**080301 Amended Value Sale** If the employee is authorized to participate in the Appraised Value Offer Program and finds a qualified buyer for his or her home, the relocation services contractor will purchase the home from the employee for the negotiated sale price from the third party buyer. The contractor will close the transaction with the buyer and pay the applicable reasonable and customary seller's closing costs (inclusive of the real estate commission).

**080302 Appraised Value Offer Program (AVO)** Homesale program in which a contractor will make the employee an offer based on relocation appraisals. The employee has 60 calendar days after contractor notification of the appraised value offer to accept or decline the contractor's offer, if no third party offer is received from an outside buyer. The employee must meet mandatory marketing and inspection requirements in order to accept the appraised value offer. This program was formerly referred to as the Guaranteed Home Buyout Option Program.

**080303 Appointing Official** A Human Resources (HR) representative, or his/her designee, who has the authority to sign the [VA Form 3918, Intra-Agency Transfer Request](#), Part 1.

**080304 Approving Official (AO)** A manager, or his or her designee, with the authority to approve or direct travel for official Government business.

**080305 Buyer Value Option Program (BVO)** Homesale program in which a relocation appraisal is not completed, nor is an appraised value offer provided. Efforts are concentrated on a contractor providing ongoing marketing assistance to help employees receive a third party offer from an outside buyer. When a bona fide buyer is

found, the contractor purchases the home from the employee for the third party sale price. The contractor then closes the sale with the buyer, paying the applicable reasonable and customary seller's closing costs (inclusive of the real estate commission).

**080306 Commuted Rate** A price rate used to calculate a set amount to be paid to an employee for the transportation and temporary storage of his/her household goods (HHG) ([FTR §300-3.1](#)). It includes the cost of line-haul transportation, packing/unpacking, crating/uncrating, drayage (hauling and related fees incident to moving the HHG) incident to transportation and other accessorial charges and costs of temporary storage within applicable weight limit for storage including handling in/out charges and necessary drayage.

**080307 Direct Reimbursement for Sale of Residence at Departure Duty Station** Reimbursement for reasonable and customary seller's closing costs in accordance with regulation of up to a maximum of 10 percent of the actual sale price of the employee's property.

**080308 Immediate Family** Any of the following named members of the employee's household at the time he or she reports for duty at the new permanent duty station or performs other authorized travel involving family members: Spouse; Domestic Partner; Children of the Employee; Dependent Parents of the Employee; and Dependent Brothers and Sisters of the Employee. Reference [FTR §300-3.1](#) definition of "Immediate Family", "Spouse", "Domestic Partner", and "Marriage", for more specific guidance on each named member.

Note. "Immediate Family" definition is based on current [FTR §300-3.1](#). If the definition in the FTR is updated, the VA definition will default to the FTR.

**080309 Relocation Service Company (RSC)** A third-party supplier under contract with an agency to assist a transferred employee in relocating to the new official station. Services may include: Homesale programs, home inspection, home marketing assistance, home finding assistance, property management services, shipment and storage of household goods (HHG), voucher review and payment, relocation counseling, and similar items.

**080310 Special Properties** Eligible properties which are determined by the contractor and VA to be especially difficult to sell or where the property value is especially difficult to determine, in accordance with the relocation services contract. VA is required to pay a higher fee to the contractor for special handling fees.

**080311 Tour Renewal Agreement Travel** Overseas tour renewal travel refers to travel of the employee and his or her immediate family members returning to their home in Continental United States (CONUS) ([FTR 300-3.1](#)), Alaska, or Hawaii between overseas tours of duty.

## 0804 Roles and Responsibilities

**080401 VA Secretary (SECVA)** SECVA, or designee, is the approving official on Homesale Program listing extension requests beyond the required 90 day period, for all eligible SES and SES Equivalent Title 38 employees (Reference [Section 080503.08](#)).

**080402 Assistant Secretary for Management, and Chief Financial Officer (VA CFO)** The VA CFO oversees all financial management activities relating to the Department's programs and operations, as required by the Chief Financial Officers Act of 1990 and 38 U.S.C. 309. Specific responsibilities include the direction, management and provision of policy guidance, and oversight of VA's financial management personnel, activities, and operations. The CFO establishes financial policy inclusive of travel, systems, and operating procedures for all VA financial entities and provides guidance on all aspects of financial management.

**080403 Office of Financial Policy (OFP)** OFP under the VA CFO's direction provides Department wide financial policy and guidance. OFP is responsible for developing, coordinating, issuing, evaluating, and reviewing VA's financial policies, to include those that impact financial systems and procedures, for compliance with all financial laws and regulations.

**080404 Human Resources Administration (HRA)** HRA is responsible for establishing policy guidelines to determine who may authorize PCS and the discretionary AVO allowance as being in the best interest of the government for all non-SES, and for SES, and SES Equivalent Title 38 positions.

**080405 Hiring Official** The gaining station's or staff office's Hiring Official will:

A. Ensure all PCS relocation allowances, and AVO when applicable, are authorized in accordance with:

1. [Human Resource Management Letter No. 05-17-01](#);
2. [VA Directive 5005, Staffing](#) for all non-SES positions; and
3. [VA Directive 5027, Senior Executive Service Handbook](#) for all SES and SES Equivalent, Title 38 positions.

B. Provide all approval documentation to their respective HR staff office when initiating all recruitment efforts.

C. Ensure funds are available for all authorized PCS allowance expenses.

D. Provide all re-delegated approval memorandums to the FSC PCS Travel Division by email ([vafsc.pcstravelportalinquiry@va.gov](mailto:vafsc.pcstravelportalinquiry@va.gov)), in a timely manner in order for the travel

authorization to be approved. Delays in approval of a travel authorization may result in delaying the employee's reporting date.

**080406 Servicing Human Resource (HR) Office** The gaining station's or staff office's Servicing HR office will:

A. Verify the required approval level for PCS relocation allowances and AVO when

authorized, is obtained from the hiring manager prior to commencing all recruitment actions in accordance with:

1. [Human Resource Management Letter No. 05-17-01](#); or
2. [VA Directive 5005, Staffing](#) for all non-SES positions; and [VA Directive 5027, Senior Executive Service Handbook](#) for all SES and SES Equivalent, Title 38 positions.

B. Attach the approval documentation, referenced in paragraph A. above, in the selected employee's folder in the PCS Travel Portal in order for the FSC PCS Travel Division to process the VA Form 3918, Intra-Agency Transfer Request when it is submitted. The FSC PCS Travel Division **will not** process the PCS relocation if the required approval document is not present; nor will the employee be enrolled in AVO without a signed authorization by the appropriate official, as specified in paragraph A, above.

The absence of valid authorization documents in the employee's PCS Travel Portal folder may delay the employee's ability to relocate, resulting in the HR office changing the Reporting Date.

C. Initiate and submit a completed VA Form 3918 in the PCS Travel Portal in accordance with [Appendix A, Permanent Change of Station Travel Portal](#).

**080407 Financial Service Center (FSC) PCS Travel Division** The FSC PCS Travel Division will:

A. Ensure HR has attached a PDF of the following authorizing documents before processing the VA Form 3918:

- For PCS, a document must be present evidencing a signature by an official who has been properly delegated the authority to authorize relocation allowances for the position. If the PCS relocation approval document is not attached, the FSC will notify HR the relocation will not be processed until the documentation is attached.
- The absence of valid authorization documents in the employee's PCS Travel Portal folder may delay the employee's ability to relocate, resulting in a change required to the Report Date.

Enrollment in AVO, first requires authorization of PCS allowances, and requires AVO approval (reference [Section 080405](#)). The absence of a properly signed AVO memorandum will limit the selected candidate's real estate options to Direct Reimbursement or BVO, unless the required AVO approval documentation is subsequently provided.

B. Ensure AOs approving discretionary allowances in the PCS Travel Portal for each VA Form 3918, Intra-Agency Transfer Request submitted have the delegated authority or a written re-delegation of authority has been received.

C. Provide PCS Allowance Counseling to relocating employees.

D. Prepare the relocating employee's travel authorization (TA) ([FTR §300-3.1](#)) in accordance with [Appendix A, Permanent Change of Station Travel Portal](#).

E. Assist traveler in completion of PCS travel vouchers for reimbursement, and audit and reimburse PCS travel vouchers in accordance with FTR, U.S. General Services Administration decisions, General Accountability Office Comptroller General decisions, and this chapter.

F. Initiate the Home Marketing Incentive Award, only for eligible employees in accordance with [Section 080503.09](#).

G. Administer VA's PCS relocation services contract including contract negotiation; Contracting Officer Representative (COR) oversight of the contract to ensure compliance by the provider; provide COR monitoring of contract performance and compliance; process homesale initiations to the relocation service provider; and notify contractor to schedule shipment and storage of HHG.

H. Perform an annual review of historical data related to VA's Homesale Program ([Section 080503.10](#)).

I. Perform Relocation Income Tax Allowance (RITA) calculations and reimburse Withholding Tax Allowance to travelers. Submit data to the payroll system of record and report tax data to the Internal Revenue Service and other tax authorities. Notify employees of annual deadline for filing their RITA Claim and Statement of Income and Tax Filing Status form.

J. Process bills of collection to travelers, as necessary, perform obligation reviews to ensure funds are liquidated timely, and certify contractor invoices for payment.

**080408 Office of Acquisition, Logistics, and Construction (OALC)** OALC will ensure the transportation Memorandum of Understanding with a Relocation Services Company will include the requirement to use international shipping companies that are in compliance with [Section 080505.01A](#), in this chapter, and require pre-payment audits

to be completed through and in compliance with the General Services Administration (GSA).

**080409 Travel Approving Officials (AO)** AOs authorized to approve relocation discretionary allowances other than AVO will:

- A. Be knowledgeable and consistent with the FTR ([41 C.F.R. 301-304](#)), and [Vol XIV Travel](#), ensuring all relocation travel is authorized in the most economical and effective manner in advance of expenses being incurred, and only authorized for employees under their jurisdiction.
- B. Ensure adequate funds are available before authorizing travel and complete all Approving Official actions in the PCS Travel Portal, in accordance with [Appendix A, Permanent Change of Station Travel Portal](#).
- C. Ensure travelers under their jurisdiction complete [VA Form 10091, VA-FSC Vendor File Request Form](#) in order to receive travel reimbursement electronically.
- D. Examine travel vouchers within 3 days of receipt to ensure claimed travel expenses do not include expenses unrelated to official travel, or are in excess of the officially authorized amounts, prior to approving reimbursement. Ensure justifications, supporting documentation, and paid-in-full receipts are attached.

**080410 Travelers** Travelers will:

- A. Complete all actions required in the PCS Travel Portal in accordance with [Section 080501.06](#), and [Appendix A, Permanent Change of Station Travel Portal](#). Submit travel vouchers in accordance with [Section 080501.11](#).
- B. Comply with the FTR, [Vol XIV Travel](#) policy, and the FSC PCS Travel Counselor guidance provided, relating to relocation travel expenses, extension requests, and reimbursement. Participate in homesale counseling provided by the Relocation Service Company (RSC) when BVO is elected or AVO is authorized.
- C. Minimize costs of official travel by exercising the same care in incurring expenses that a prudent person would exercise if traveling on personal business and expending personal funds.
- D. Ensure travel authorization is approved prior to incurring any expenses related to the relocation, i.e. house hunting (HH) travel, sale or purchase of residence, etc. **Travel expenses may not be reimbursed if travel expenses occur before final travel authorization.**
- E. For en route travel or temporary quarters subsistence expenses (TQSE), obtain when possible, exemptions of tax imposed on hotel accommodations for locations listed in the General Services Administration (GSA) [GSA SmartPay State Tax Information](#)

website, by providing any required documentation (reference [FTR §301-11.28, §301-11.29](#)).

F. Comply with VA's Travel Charge Card Program guidance contained in [Vol XVI Ch 2, Travel Charge Card](#), and as required in this chapter under [Section 050501.10](#).

## 0805 Policies

**080501 Eligibility and General Rules** General and administrative policy are included in this section. PCS relocation allowance entitlements and the Appraised Value Offer Program (AVO), a discretionary allowance, must be authorized **in advance of recruitment actions**; and when authorized must be stated in all applicable job opportunity announcements or recruitment notices for the position. All recruitment JOA's and notices must include a statement reimbursement of authorized relocation allowances is dependent upon eligibility of the selected candidate, subject to Federal Travel Regulations, Chapter 302 – Relocation Allowances with a hyperlink to FTR 302 - Relocation Allowances. VA policy on relocation allowances can be viewed in [Sections 080502 through 080509](#).

**080501.01 Employee Eligibility Requirements** VA will determine relocation eligibility based on existing regulatory provisions in effect at the time an employee reports to the new official duty station.

A. The following relocating employees are generally eligible for relocation expense allowances ([FTR §302-1.1](#)):

1. An employee newly appointed to his or her first official duty station;
2. An employee transferring in the interest of the Government from one agency or official duty station to another for permanent duty, and the commuting distance between the new official duty station and permanent residence has increased by 50 miles or greater from the old official duty station and the permanent residence (reference [FTR §302-2.6](#));
3. An employee performing travel in accordance with an overseas tour renewal agreement (reference [FTR §§302-3.209 through 302-3.224](#));
4. An employee returning to his or her place of residence after completing a prescribed tour of duty for the purposes of separation from Government service or separation from the overseas assignment for reassignment to the same or different Government agency, which may or may not include PCS relocation benefits;
5. A student trainee assigned to any position upon completion of college work;

6. Assignment under [5 U.S.C. 4109, Government Employees Training Act \(GETA\)](#);
7. A career appointee to the SES, as defined in 5 U.S.C. 3132(a)(4), and a prior SES appointee who is returning to his or her official residence for separation and who will be retaining SES retirement benefits; or
8. An employee who is being assigned to a TDY station in connection with a TCS assignment lasting longer than 6 months but less than 30 months.

B. VA will adhere to the distance requirements for relocation expense entitlement guidelines found in Internal Revenue Service (IRS) Publication 521, Moving Expenses for the applicable tax year ([FTR §302-2.6\(a\)](#)).

The IRS distance test is met when the new official duty station is at least 50 miles farther from the employee's current residence than the old official duty station is from the same residence. For example, if the old official duty station is 3 miles from the current residence, then the new official duty station must be at least 53 miles from that same residence in order to receive relocation expenses for residence transactions.

<b>IRS WORKSHEET 1 – DISTANCE TEST</b>	
<b>PROCESS</b>	<b>MILES</b>
1. Enter number of miles from old home to new work place	XXX
2. Enter number of miles from old home to old work place	YYY
3. Subtract line 2 from line 1; if zero or less, enter -0-	XXX-YYY
<b>IS LINE 3 AT LEAST 50 MILES?</b>	
If YES, you meet the test.	If NO, you do not meet test and cannot deduct your moving expenses.

VA will not reimburse employees for relocation expenses if the employee does not meet the IRS distance test. However, under extenuating circumstances, the Travel Approving Official may submit a request for a waiver of the 50 mile distance requirement for approval ([FTR §302-2.6\(b\)](#)). Travel Approving Officials are cautioned before submitting a waiver request for approval, and to carefully weigh the justification for the waiver against the appearance of impropriety to the public when the distance between the old and new duty station is also less than 50 miles. Reference [Section 080501.09](#) for guidance on submitting waiver requests for approval.

C. Virtual employees who are transferred to another VA station but will continue to work virtually will not be authorized for a PCS move.

D. Some relocation allowances have specific eligibility requirements, which are identified in the respective policy sub-sections of Section 0805 in this chapter, for example [Section 080503, Residence Transaction Allowances](#). Employees relocating

should reference the subsection for each allowance they anticipate receiving to ensure they will meet any specific eligibility requirements. Only allowances authorized on an employee's TA will be reimbursed.

### **080501.02 Employee Allowances for Relocation**

A. For the purpose of this policy, the context of the term “employee” refers to:

1. New appointees (reference [FTR Subpart A – New Appointee](#) for allowances); or
2. Transferred employees (reference [FTR Subpart B – Transferred Employee](#) under the applicable Table for allowances).

VA may grant the following allowances, as specified in the applicable FTR Subparts A and B when an employee is both authorized and eligible:

1. Entitlements. VA will pay or reimburse employees for these relocation allowances; and
2. Discretionary Allowances. VA has discretionary authority to pay or reimburse employees these allowances, when authorized by the delegated approving official.

Relocation allowances for a political appointee is determined based on their status as a new employee (new appointee) or current employee (transferred employee) at the time of their appointment.

B. When an employee is authorized a relocation allowance in addition to the requirements in [Section 080501.01](#), they must also meet any eligibility requirements specific to an allowance.

Refer to [Appendix B, Relocation General Entitlements and Discretionary Allowances](#), for additional information on relocation allowances.

**080501.03 Use of Relocation Services Company (RSC)** VA has vested the employee with the option to elect the Buyer Value Option Program (BVO) instead of the mandatory entitlement of Direct Reimbursement. [Appendix C, Relocation Services Contract](#), provides additional information regarding the Relocation Services Program. All employees who elect BVO or are authorized for AVO, are required to participate in homesale counseling provided by the Relocation Services contractor, and must not list their homes until their travel authorization is approved ([FTR §302-12.109](#)). Within one business day of receiving a completed VA Form 3918, an FSC PCS Travel Counselor will contact the employee to schedule their PCS Allowance Counseling meeting.

The FSC PCS Travel Division will not conduct counseling sessions while an employee is driving a vehicle for safety reasons and in accordance with Executive Order dated October 1, 2009: Federal employees shall not engage in text messaging (a) when

driving a government owned vehicle, a privately owned vehicle, or rental car while on official Government business or (b) when using electronic equipment supplied by the Government while driving (refer to [Vol XIV Ch. 3, Transportation Expenses](#)).

#### **080501.04 Employee's Effective Reporting Date**

A. VA requires the reporting date to be the date on which the employee physically reports for duty at the new or first official duty station. This date will be specified on the VA Form 3918, Intra-Agency Transfer Request. The "reporting date" will be the first day of the one-year time limit allowed to complete all authorized relocation activities and incurred related expenses ([FTR Subpart A – Time Limits](#)). The effective transfer or appointment date will not always coincide with the reporting date. For example, the effective transfer or appointment date at the official duty station may be Sunday, March 1, 20XX, yet the physical reporting date may be Monday, March 2, 20XX.

All employees, virtual or non-virtual, accepting positions requiring them to relocate to new duty stations, must physically report to their new official duty stations on the reporting date. The reporting date assigned must be no later than 90 days from the tentative notification date of the appointment, or for positions requiring credentialing, no later than 90 days from the date the credentialing is signed by the field facility Director. The receiving station's supervisor may authorize transferring employees to remain as temporary virtual employees up to 90 days due to documented verifiable delays related to the sale or purchase of their residences at their current official duty stations or due to delays related to family situations (e.g., school, work, or illness).

B. A request to waive the 90-day reporting requirement in order to extend the reporting date beyond 90 days requires specific approval. Reference paragraph [Section 080501.09](#) for guidance on submitting waiver requests for approval.

C. When an employee is on TDY at a prospective new official duty station and he or she accepts the position, refer to [Vol XIV Ch. 2, Travel Per Diem](#) to determine how to calculate per diem.

**080501.05 Service Agreement (SA)** An SA is a written agreement between the employee and the VA, signed by the employee, stating that the employee will remain in the service of the Federal Government for a specified period of time ([FTR §302-2.13](#)). An SA must be executed on VA Form 3918, Intra-Agency Transfer Request prior to the beginning of any PCS relocation travel. VA will not pay a relocation allowance to any employee who has not signed an agency SA, except in the case of an SES employee who is authorized for "last move home" benefits or for TCS. [FTR §302-2.14](#) identifies the types of relocation travel requiring an SA.

A. The SA will consist of:

1. Employee Name, including additional employee data as reflected in VA Form 3918;

2. Releasing Official Duty Station with location (city and state) or departure home (city and state) if a new appointee;
3. Receiving Official Duty Station with location (city and state);
4. Duration: SAs require a minimum period of service with the Federal Government for Continental United States (CONUS), Outside of Continental United States (OCONUS), and renewal agreement travel. Reference [FTR §302-2.14](#) for minimum periods required. VA requires a 36-month service agreement be signed commencing with the effective date of transfer or reassignment for SES and SES Equivalent Title 38 positions authorized AVO;
5. For OCONUS assignments, the tour agreement, VA Form 3918, SA, and travel authorization should all be consistent in the duration length.
6. Duplicate Reimbursement Disclosure Statement;<sup>1</sup>
7. Signature of employee; and
8. Date of execution.

B. Violation of an SA, other than for reasons beyond an employee's control and approved in accordance with [Appendix D, Delegation of Authority](#), will require an employee to reimburse the Government for all costs reimbursed by the employee's agency, including the Withholding Tax Allowance (WTA) and Relocation Income Tax Allowance (RITA).

1. A new SA cannot void an existing SA that is already in effect. While a relocation allowance SA is transferable within the Federal Government, the relocation allowance is specific to the receiving agency. Each SA is in effect for the period specified in the agreement.
2. The employee must notify the transferring agency of the timeframes remaining on any previous and or current SA. The subsequent agency has the ultimate responsibility for recording the timeframe requirements associated with the employee's prior SA.
3. The employee relocating to an OCONUS location is required to provide the VA HR point of contact with his or her actual stateside place of residence immediately upon notification of the assignment. This information must be documented in the SA.

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<sup>1</sup> The duplicate reimbursement disclosure states the employee and their immediate family has not accepted, and will not accept, duplicate reimbursement for relocation expenses. Refer to [FTR 302-2.21](#) and [FTR 302-2.22](#) for additional information.

### 080501.06 VA Form 3918, Intra-Agency Transfer Request

A. VA Form 3918 initiates the relocation request to the PCS Travel Division for processing. The completed form is required to be submitted within two business days from the date the candidate accepts the tentative notification of appointment offer, or for positions requiring credentialing, from the date the credentialing is signed by the field facility Director. Reference [Appendix A, Permanent Change of Station Travel Portal](#) for specific procedures on processing VA Form 3918.

B. Prior to submitting VA Form 3918, the gaining station's or staff office's servicing HR office is required to attach a PDF of all relocation allowance approval documentation for PCS, and AVO when authorized, in the selected candidate's PCS Travel Portal folder. The FSC PCS Travel Division will ensure the authorizing documents for PCS allowances, and AVO when applicable, have been attached before processing the VA Form 3918. The absence of an authorizing document may delay the employee's ability to relocate, resulting in a change required to the Report Date. Absence of a signed AVO memorandum will limit the selected candidate's real estate options to Direct Reimbursement or BVO, unless the required AVO approval documentation is subsequently provided.

C. [Appendix D, Delegation of Authority](#), identifies the officials delegated the authority to approve PCS and TCS, relocation allowance discretionary expenses, and other actions. When approval functions are re-delegated to another position, the re-delegation memorandum must be provided by email to the FSC PCS Travel Division at [vafsc.pcstravelportalinquiry@va.gov](mailto:vafsc.pcstravelportalinquiry@va.gov) before submitting VA Form 3918.

### 080501.07 Travel Authorization (TA)

A. Relocation expenses may not be incurred until the employee has an approved electronic TA (Form 3036) by the designated travel approving official ([FTR §302-2.1](#)). [Appendix A, Permanent Change of Station Travel Portal](#) identifies the required actions for a TA by the servicing HR staff offices, Approving Officials, employees, and the FSC PCS Travel Division. Once VA Form 3918, Intra-Agency Transfer Request is submitted, each action is required to be **completed within one business day**. Completing these actions in the required time frame will ensure the travel authorization is completed prior to the report date. In the event a travel authorization is not approved in advance of the report date, the Approving Official must contact HR to initiate a change in the report date, which cannot exceed 90 days beyond the original notification date. Reference [Section 080501.04](#), for specific information on the 90-day reporting requirement.

B. The travel authorization will include, but is not limited to:

1. Mandatory entitlements for which the employee is eligible;
2. Authorized discretionary allowances; and

3. Advance of Funds.

Note: Travel advances requested on an SF 1038 – Advance of Funds Application and Account, can only be authorized if an employee is exempt from the use of a Government Travel Charge Card. An approved SF 1038 must be attached in the employee's folder in the PCS Travel Portal. [Appendix E, Advance of Funds](#), provides information on relocation allowances that are eligible for travel fund advances.

C. Relocation allowances are subject to Relocation Withholding and Income Tax Withholding allowances. Reference [Section 080509](#) for specific guidance.

**080501.08 Time Limits and Extensions**

A. Time Limit. Employees must complete all aspects of their relocations within one year of their reporting date. However, Approving Officials will allow the following exceptions cited in [FTR §302-2.10](#) and [FTR §302-2.11](#). In these two exceptions, the one-year period is exclusive of time spent on active military service and the time lost due to shipping restrictions.

B. Extensions. An extension to incur all relocation expenses may be granted up to one additional year if the employee submits an extension request to their Approving Official no later than 30 calendar days after the expiration date of the initial one-year period

([FTR §302-11.22](#) and [FTR §302-11.23](#)) The Approving Official may authorize an extension beyond the initial one-year, on a case-by-case basis, if an employee can demonstrate they are actively marketing their home, experienced delays related to the sale or purchase of their residence at the official duty stations, or delays due to family situations such as school, work, or illness ([FTR §302-11.421\(a\)](#)). Any request submitted after the 30-day time limit requires an approval waiver request of the 30-day time limit ([FTR §302-11.23](#)). Reference [Section 080501.09](#) for guidance on submitting waiver requests for approval.

When an extension is authorized, the total relocation timeframe cannot exceed two years from the reporting date. The Approving Official must verify an approved waiver and all supporting documentation are uploaded into the employee's folder in the PCS Travel Portal, prior to approving the amended travel authorization.

**080501.09 Waiver Requests** The delegated approval level required to waive the FTR 50 mile distance test requirement, VA's 90-day reporting requirement, and the 30-day time limit for submitting a one-year extension request for completing all relocation transactions can be referenced in [Appendix D, Delegation of Authority](#). A memorandum substantiating a re-delegated authority must be provided to the FSC PCS Travel Division with the approved waiver request if not previously provided.

All waiver requests must be submitted in the form of a memorandum including the applicable extenuating circumstances and attaching all relevant documentation,

background materials, and any additional information as evidence to support the extenuating circumstances. Waiver requests will be submitted to the respective Administration or Staff Office in VA's document processing system to obtain the required level of approval. The travel Approving Official is required to verify the approved waiver memorandum and all supporting documentation is uploaded into the transferring employee's folder in the PCS Travel Portal to meet the six-year record retention requirement, prior to approving the travel authorization.

**080501.10 Use of Government Travel Charge Card for PCS and TCS Travel** A relocating employee may use their Government Travel Charge Card for authorized househunting (HH) and en route travel expenses only.

A. Prior to using their travel card for HH travel expenses, an employee must provide their current station's Travel Card Agency/Organizational Program Coordinator (A/OPC) with a copy of their approved HH travel authorization.

B. In advance of their en route travel, the relocating employee must coordinate and confirm with their losing and gaining station's or staff office's A/OPCs that their travel card has been transferred under their new duty station and their credit limit has been raised to the contracted bank designated amount. The employee is required to provide the gaining station's or staff office's A/OPC a copy of their approved en route travel authorization. Reference [Vol XVI Ch. 2, Government Travel Charge Card Program](#) for guidance on appropriate use of the travel card and required receipts.

C. An employee may only be issued a travel advance for HH and en route travel expenses if they do not have the use of a Government Travel Charge Card. Reference [Appendix E, Advance of Funds](#), in this chapter.

**080501.11 Travel Vouchers** Employees must submit a travel voucher ([FTR §300-3.1](#)) within five business days after completion of each benefit (e.g., HH trip, en route travel, sale or purchase of residence) for official relocation travel. Any claim for reimbursement will be applied to outstanding travel advances, until reconciled. Temporary quarters subsistence expense (TQSE) claims should be filed in accordance with [Section 080502.03](#). Attach or fax all supporting documents and certifications as outlined in this chapter into their folder in the PCS Travel Portal prior to submitting a travel voucher. Receipt requirements for sale or purchase of residence transactions are specified in [FTR §302-11.302](#). VA will only reimburse sale or purchase of residence transactions paid by the employee or a member of their immediate family ([FTR §302-11.303](#)).

**080501.12 Defrauding the Government** [FTR §302-2.7](#) identifies VA's actions for any employee who attempts to defraud the government under any part of the relocation process.

**080501.13 File Retention** VA will retain all relocation files for six years in accordance with the National Archive and Records Administration ([NARA](#)) [guidelines](#), which set forth the governing provisions of file retention for executive agencies.

**080502 Permanent Change of Station Allowances For Subsistence and Transportation Expenses**

**080502.01 Allowances for En Route Travel Subsistence and Transportation**

A. Per Diem.

1. Employees will use the standard Continental United States (CONUS) per diem rates for en route relocation travel between the old and new official duty stations. Employees will be reimbursed in accordance with [FTR §302-4.100](#) and [Vol XIV Ch. 2, Travel Per Diem](#) (see 4. below).
2. Per diem reimbursement is based on the actual number of days used to complete the trip, not to exceed the established authorized travel days. When authorized POV, the number of authorized travel days will be based on an average minimum driving distance of 300 miles per calendar day. Travel is to be continuous via the authorized mode of travel, and the most direct usually traveled route. Per diem will not be paid unless the travel period to the new official duty station is 12 hours or more.
3. Eligible family members will be authorized the following per diem amounts ([FTR Subpart C – Per Diem](#)):

FAMILY MEMBER	MAXIMUM AMOUNT OF REIMBURSEMENT
Spouse or domestic partner who is accompanied by employee	75 percent of employee's daily rate.
Spouse or domestic partner who travels separately (not accompanied by employee)	Same rate as employee.
Family members 12 years or older	75 percent of employee's daily rate.
Children under 12 years	50 percent of employee's daily rate.

NOTE. To be considered “accompanied spouse or domestic partner” for per diem purposes, an employee and spouse or domestic partner are considered to be traveling together on the same days even if the two parties are driving separate POVs.

4. VA will not authorize per diem for employees' immediate family members if employees are:
  - a. New appointees;
  - b. Assigned to posts of duty OCONUS returning to places of their actual residence for separation; or
  - c. Being relocated under GETA (allows per diem payment for employee only).

B. Transportation.

1. The mode of transportation will be authorized as determined necessary for the en route travel, in accordance with the TDY rules in [FTR 301-10 Transportation Expenses \(FTR §302-4.100\)](#).

2. POV mileage is determined based on the actual place of origin. For new employees, the place of residence at origin to the new official duty station will be utilized in determining mileage. For transferring employees, the old and new official duty stations will be utilized. Acceptable evidence for POV ground mileage will include odometer readings of actual and necessary distance traveled for conducting official business. A comparison of actual mileage will be made against the number of miles calculated using MapQuest® used by VA as the principal standard for determining approved reimbursement. Other similar standards (e.g., Rand McNally, Yahoo) may be used if data is not available in Mapquest.com®. When the deviation exceeds 5 percent between the actual and standard (rounded up to the nearest mile), justification must be provided to the authorizing official. VA may consider exceptions ([FTR §302-4.401](#)) for extreme circumstances involving:

- a. Delays beyond the employees' control (e.g., illness en route, road construction, vehicle repairs);
- b. Delays due to an act of God;
- c. Restrictions by Government officials; or
- d. Employees who have been certified as being physically handicapped.

3. Authorization of Multiple POV. VA will allow reimbursement to employees for the driving of more than one POV if the Approving Official determines it is advantageous to the Government. Authorization for one additional POV for the employee's immediate family may be reimbursed if approved for separate travel, or if justified for driving at the same time due to the number of immediate family members and necessary luggage causing one POV not to suffice. The use of more than one POV must be requested by the employee and authorized in writing by the Approving Official. [Appendix F, Privately-Owned Vehicle Mileage Rates](#), provides information on rates.

**080502.02 Allowances for Househunting (HH) Trip Expenses (Discretionary)**

A. HH can only be incurred by the employee and/or spouse to seek a permanent residence, if authorized. New appointees and employees assigned under the Government Employees Training Act (5 U.S.C. 4109) are not eligible for a HH allowance ([FTR §302-5.4](#)). Reference [FTR Subpart A—Employee's Allowance for Househunting Trip Expenses](#) for further guidance.

B. VA may authorize HH to expedite the process of finding a permanent residence. The duration authorized for HH must be reduced from the duration authorized for Temporary Quarters Subsistence Expense (TQSE). The criteria are:

1. Employee’s old and new official duty stations are located within the United States, including OCONUS non-foreign locations;
2. Employee’s old and new official duty stations are 75 or more miles apart. Distance must be measured by map distance and travel must be by a usually-traveled surface route; and
3. Employee is not assigned to Government or other prearranged housing at their new official duty station.

C. VA will only authorize one round trip for an employee and his or her spouse in connection with a specific transfer. If an employee and spouse travel separately for a HH trip, reimbursement will be limited to the cost that would have been incurred if the employee and spouse had traveled together as one round trip.

D. VA may authorize up to 10 calendar days, which includes the trip duration in the travel authorization. Employees may begin travel as soon as their travel authorization is approved for a HH trip.

E. During the PCS Allowance Counseling session on HH, the employee is provided the opportunity to request the type of TQSE they will receive via a Discretionary Request Form submitted to the Approving Official. Approving Officials will make the determination whether the per diem or lump sum method is offered to the employee for HH. In the event the Approving Official offers the lump sum option, the employee must make their final election of either per diem or lump sum method.

F. VA may reimburse eligible employees a HH trip allowance based on the following:

<b>PER DIEM ALLOWANCE METHOD</b>	<b>PER DIEM ALLOWANCE OR LUMP SUM AMOUNT METHOD</b>
<b>Transportation Expenses</b>	
Actual transportation costs for employees and or spouses	Actual transportation costs for employees and or spouses

PER DIEM ALLOWANCE METHOD	PER DIEM ALLOWANCE OR LUMP SUM AMOUNT METHOD
<b>Subsistence Expenses</b>	
<p>Per diem allowance for employees and or spouses, as prescribed under <a href="#">FTR §302-5.13</a></p>	<p>One of the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A per diem allowance at the standard CONUS rate (see <a href="#">GSA Per Diem Rates</a>) for you and or your spouse if you travel separately, or if you both travel together, the standard CONUS rate multiplied by 1.75), for the 10 days or less that your agency authorizes for you; or</li> <li>2. Only if offered by VA and chosen by the employee, a Lump Sum, as follows:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. If you perform an HH trip and your spouse does not, or if your spouse performs an HH trip and you do not, multiply the applicable locality per diem rate by 5.00 (see <a href="#">GSA Per Diem Rates</a>).</li> <li>b. If you and your spouse both perform an HH trip together or separately, multiply the applicable locality per diem rate by 6.25 (see <a href="#">GSA Per Diem Rates</a>).</li> </ol> </li> </ol>

G. Transportation Mode(s). VA will authorize employees to travel by the transportation mode(s) determined to be most advantageous to the Government. Reimbursement will be paid based on the authorized mode(s). A cost comparison must be prepared to determine the costs for alternative modes of transportation unless authorized to use a specific mode of transportation for medical reasons. For trips less than 250 miles, VA considers POV to be most advantageous method of transportation unless there are reasons for not using a POV that are acceptable to the Approving Official (e.g., traveler is physically impaired, does not own or lease a POV, has only one POV that is used for family transportation, or the POV is not roadworthy for such a trip).

**080502.03 Allowances for TQSE**

A. Temporary quarters (TQ) refers to lodging obtained for the purpose of temporary occupancy from a private or commercial source. TQSE is a discretionary allowance intended to reimburse employees for some of the costs incurred for meals, lodging, and other necessities while occupying temporary quarters, when it is determined to be in the best interest of the government. Temporary quarters may be authorized at the old and new duty station in accordance with [FTR §302-6.10](#). New appointees, employees

assigned under GETA, or employees returning from an overseas assignment for the purposes of separation are not eligible for TQSE ([FTR §302-6.5](#)).

An Approving Official may authorize the TQSE allowance only when it will minimize or avoid other relocation expenses such as prolonged temporary storage ([FTR §300-3.1](#)) of household goods (HHG). A determination must be made on the number of days TQSE will be authorized, and limited to only a necessary period of time ([FTR §302-6.3](#)), subject to time limitations, until the employee and or their immediate family can secure and occupy permanent residence quarters. TQSE for the employee and his or her immediate family member is contingent upon establishing occupancy of the temporary quarters. TQSE does not include transportation expenses, such as rental car reimbursement.

B. VA will not authorize TQSE if the distance between the old and new official duty stations is less than 50 miles ([FTR §302-6.4](#)). Factors used to determine whether quarters are temporary include:

1. Duration of the lease (see note below);
2. Movement of HHG into the quarters;
3. Type of quarters;
4. Attempts to secure a permanent dwelling; and
5. Length of time the employee occupies the quarters.

Note: TQ leases signed for more than 6 months when employees do not have a contract to purchase a permanent residence after the 6 month lease, will be considered by VA to be permanent housing. Authorization for temporary quarters ceases when the employee takes full delivery of their HHG regardless of the duration of a lease.

C. The employee may request TQSE Actual Expense (AE) or TQSE Lump Sum (LS) on the Discretionary Request Form during the PCS Allowance Counseling session, but is under no obligation to accept the LS option if offered. If an employee has already entered temporary quarters or incurred TQSE expenses, only the AE method can be authorized and effective the date it is approved. Once an employee elects LS, the decision is final and cannot be changed. The Approving Official may authorize the reimbursement option of LS only if they determine it is more advantageous to the government than AE. Reimbursement of TQSE will commence based on the date authorized by the delegated approving official to occupy temporary quarters. TQSE must be authorized in advance of occupancy and may not be approved retroactively. Any days the employee occupies temporary quarters prior to approval will not be authorized. [Appendix G, Temporary Quarters Subsistence Allowances](#), provides the per diem rates used for calculation.

1. TQSE AE. Approving Officials may authorize AE for a limited time period. VA may authorize reimbursement of AE for a period up to midnight of the day prior to occupying permanent quarters, but no later than midnight of the third business day after the closing date on a purchase of permanent quarters, or lease effective date ([FTR §302-6.108](#)). For example, when an employee completes closing on a home purchase or secures a rental for residency, and occupies the residence on day 25 in a 30 day approved AE period, the last day TQSE will be reimbursed is day 24. If an employee does not occupy the secured residence on day 25 of a 30 day approved AE period, reimbursement of AE will end no later than midnight of the third business day from the date the residence was secured.

VA Approving Officials will not authorize reimbursement of AE beyond the established authorized period for the employee to remain in temporary quarters for the purpose of renovations, delays in furniture or HHG delivery within the employee's control, or for any other reason resulting out of personal preference ([FTR §302-6.7](#)).

An Approving Official may authorize AE in increments of 30 days or less, as he or she determines the number of days necessary for a permanent residence to be secured, but not to exceed 60 consecutive days initially. An Approving Official may extend authorization of TQSE beyond 60 days, up to an additional consecutive 60 days ([FTR §302-6.104](#)), if one of the compelling reasons identified in [FTR §302-6.105](#) applies.

All AE extension requests must be submitted in a timely manner in order to obtain extension approval prior to the expiration date of the originally authorized period. Under no circumstances will VA authorize AE reimbursement for more than a total of 120 consecutive days ([FTR §302-6.105](#)).

Reference [Appendix G, Temporary Quarters Subsistence Allowances](#) for maximum daily AE reimbursement guidance.

2. TQSE LS. The employee is required to certify he or she, and the number of immediate family members that will occupy temporary quarters when requesting LS. When LS is requested, the Approving Official is required to consider possible temporary duty travel the employee may be directed to perform while occupying temporary quarters, and if there are family members who will not be occupying the temporary quarters for the entire period. If authorized by the Approving Official, LS will only be calculated based on the actual number of immediate family members that will occupy the temporary quarters. The Approving Official must weigh the advantage to the VA when considering approval of LS over AE.

LS may be authorized for the number of days determined necessary, up to a maximum of 30 days with no extensions under any circumstances. Requests for approval of LS cannot be authorized to include days when permanent quarters are known to be available. The Approving Official will limit the number of days LS is

authorized when the employee has secured a permanent residence in less than 30 days.

LS will be based on the applicable official duty station's locality rate in effect when the LS offer is accepted by the employee, and is paid in a lump-sum payment. Refer to [Appendix G, Temporary Quarters Subsistence Allowances](#), for the per diem rates used for calculation.

D. Travel vouchers for TQSE will be submitted as follows:

1. AE: An employee will submit travel voucher claim for TQSE in 30 day increments unless the employee's total duration in temporary quarters is less than 30 days. If waiting the 30 day period to submit for reimbursement is a hardship, the employee can contact their FSC PCS Travel Counselor to request an advance ([Appendix E, Advance of Funds](#)). All expenses must be itemized, including meals. Expenses that do not accrue daily (e.g., laundry expenses, etc.) may be averaged over the number of days your agency authorizes AE. Receipts are only required for lodging and dry cleaning (not coin operated dry cleaning), regardless of amount, and for any individual meal or other individual expense when the cost exceeds \$75. All other meal expenses do not require receipts. ([FTR §301-11.306](#)). VA will review the itemized expenses and receipts provided and exclude from the employee's reimbursement any non-reimbursable expenses (e.g., alcohol, or entertainment expenses), making a notation of the exclusion on the itemized document or receipt for audit purposes.

2. LS: Payment for LS will be issued to the employee in the form of a settlement, not an advance. The employee will complete a travel voucher requesting LS payment. VA will make the LS payment as close as is reasonably possible to the time that the employee will begin occupancy of the temporary quarters. Receipts or settlement travel vouchers are not required for LS payments. VA may at any time request proof that you actually occupied TQ, even if not for the full length of time on which the lump sum calculation was based. In the absence of sufficient proof of TQSE occupancy, VA may demand repayment of the TQSE lump sum payment in accordance with [FTR §302-6.305](#).

Note: Taxes are withheld and a RITA may be filed on this payment in the following year.

### **080503 Residence Transaction Allowances**

#### **080503.01 General Conditions and Limitations for Eligibility**

A. Service Agreement (SA). An SA must be in place to be eligible for all relocation allowances. Reference [Section 080501.05](#) for specific guidance on SAs.

B. Eligible Employees. Eligible employees include all VA employees and other Federal Government employees who join the VA without a break in service and who are transferring for the benefit of the Government, subject to [FTR §302-11.2](#) (eligible) and [FTR §302-11.4](#) (not eligible).

C. Eligibility for Benefits for Sale of a Residence at the Departure Official Duty Station. To be eligible for benefits for sale of a residence at the departure official duty station on of the following must apply:

1. The dwelling must be the employee's actual residence from which he or she commuted to and from work at the time of official notification of transfer ([FTR §302-11.100](#));
2. The employee or member of the Immediate Family must have acquired title interest in the dwelling, consistent with time requirements in [FTR §302-11.104](#); or
3. One of the three [FTR §302-11.101](#) situations applies to the title of the residence (or the interest in a cooperatively-owned dwelling on a pro rata basis).

The VA will determine who holds title to the property based on [FTR §302-11.102](#). The employee must demonstrate "equitable title interest" on various types of title scenarios in accordance with [FTR §302-11.105](#).

If the above title requirements are not fully met, the employee will be reimbursed on a pro rata basis to the extent of their verified title interest. Refer to [FTR 302, Subpart B, Title Requirements](#) for additional information on eligibility for this benefit.

NOTE:

- All land and buildings must be reasonably related to the residence site. Non-residential property is ineligible.
- For relocation services, additional eligibility requirements will be determined by the contractor in accordance with contract guidelines.

**080503.02 Direct Reimbursement or Buyer Value Option Program (BVO)** An employee authorized sale and purchase residence transaction allowances has the option to select Direct Reimbursement or BVO for reimbursement. Direct Reimbursement is an entitlement, where BVO is a discretionary allowance option the VA has vested with the employee to elect under the Homesale Program. Employees are required to participate in homesale counseling provided by the RSC if BVO is elected.

### 080503.03 Direct Reimbursement of Real Estate Expenses

A. Real Estate expenses for both the sale and purchase of a residence are mandatory entitlements for transferring employees. For direct reimbursement on the sale or purchase of primary residences at the departure and destination official duty stations, VA will reimburse expenses that are considered allowable in [FTR §302-11.200](#). Additional clarification on reimbursable FTR §302-11.200 expenses are provided:

- The maximum rate for a broker's fee or real estate commission is currently six percent of the sale price of your house;
- Escrow settlement fee or agent's fee for closing a real estate transaction;
- Power of Attorney (trustee fee);
- Release fee; and
- Title insurance binder (in lieu of title search).

B. Non-Reimbursable Expenses. VA will not reimburse employees for the expenses in connection with residence transactions listed in [FTR §302-11.202](#) including:

- Cost of litigation;
- Funding fees (e.g., VA funding fee); and
- Down payments;

C. Expired Leases.

1. VA will reimburse employees for certain expenses associated with the settlement of an unexpired lease if the dwelling was the actual residence the employee commuted to and from work at the time he or she was officially notified of the transfer, and one of the following three situations applies to the lease agreement:

- a. The lease is solely in the employee's name; or
- b. The lease is jointly in the employee's name with one or more members of their immediate family; or
- c. The lease is solely in the name of one or more members of the employee's immediate family.

If the above title requirements are not met, the employee will be reimbursed on a pro rata basis.

2. VA will reimburse expenses, including broker's fees, for obtaining a sublease or charges for advertising an unexpired lease, when the following additional conditions are met:
  - a. Terms of the lease provide payment of settlement expenses that cannot be avoided by sublease or other arrangement;
  - b. Expenses were not incurred due to failure to give timely lease termination notice after the employee had definite knowledge of their transfer; and
  - c. Broker's fees or advertising charges are not in excess of those customarily charged for comparable services in the locality.
3. Employees will submit a completed expense claim (travel voucher) in the PCS Travel Portal and itemize each expense associated with the settlement of the unexpired lease. In addition, receipts will be included for all expenses claimed showing paid in full. A copy of the signed lease agreement, letter notifying termination of lease, and document identifying any penalty for lease termination are also required. All required receipts and documents can either be faxed into or attached to the completed travel voucher. The expenses can be submitted as a lump sum payment or on a monthly basis depending on the terms of the lease settlement agreement with the rental agency.

**080503.04 Direct Reimbursement for Sale of Residence at Departure Official Duty Station** When an employee elects Direct Reimbursement, the employee may be eligible for reimbursement for reasonable and customary seller's closing costs in accordance with [FTR §302-11.200\(a\)](#), for up to a maximum of 10 percent of the actual sale price of his or her property. If the employee elects Direct Reimbursement for the sale of his or her residence, that decision is irrevocable. The employee cannot convert to AVO if originally offered, or BVO.

The employee will attend closing (either in person or virtually), will pay out-of-pocket for closing costs, and will submit for reimbursement. Under this program, the employee must sell and close on the property within one (1) year of his or her effective reporting date unless granted an extension for up to one additional year. The Home Marketing Incentive (HMI) Award is not applicable under Direct Reimbursement.

**080503.05 BVO for Sale of Residence at Departure Official Duty Station** Refer to [Appendix C, Relocation Services Contract](#), for information on BVO.

A. BVO is a discretionary allowance when relocation expenses have been authorized. Reimbursement of BVO is an employee vested option when authorized PCS, but is dependent upon the employee meeting eligibility requirements in [Section 080503.01](#), and reimbursement must be in accordance with [FTR Chapter 302 – Relocation Allowances](#) and the policy in this chapter. If an employee elects BVO and subsequently decides to opt out of the program they will be limited to Direct Reimbursement.

B. Employees are required to participate in the BVO homesale counseling provided by the RSC.

C. All properties entering BVO must meet the terms of the current relocation services contract. Properties found ineligible will not be transacted through this contract. If found ineligible, the employee is limited to Direct Reimbursement.

D. Employees must meet the time limit for listing their home for sale under [Section 080503.08](#).

**080503.06 Direct Reimbursement for Purchase of Residence at Destination Official Duty Station** To be eligible for reimbursement, employees must purchase and close on their property within one (1) year of his or her effective reporting date unless granted an extension for up to one additional year. The new home must be the home that the employee commutes to and from work on a daily basis in order to be authorized for reimbursement, and meet title requirements specified under [Section 080503.01C](#). If the title requirements are not met, the employee will be reimbursed on a pro rata basis. The employee will be reimbursed reasonable and customary buyer's closing costs not to exceed 5 percent of the actual new home purchase price.

**080503.07 Authorized AVO (Discretionary)** For a description of the features of AVO reference [Appendix C, Relocation Services Contract](#).

A. When AVO has been authorized, participation in the program is dependent upon the employee meeting eligibility requirements in [Section 080503.01](#), and reimbursement must be in accordance with [FTR Chapter 302 – Relocation Allowances](#) and the policy in this chapter.

B. Employees not authorized, or authorized but ineligible for AVO, will be limited to reimbursement under Direct Reimbursement or BVO.

C. Employees are required to participate in the AVO homesale counseling provided by the RSC.

D. All properties entering AVO must meet the terms of the current relocation services contract. Properties found ineligible will not be transacted through this contract.

E. Employees must meet the time limit for listing their home for sale under [Section 080503.08](#).

F. An employee approved for AVO must market his or her home for at least 60 days before accepting an appraised value offer.

G. Reference Section 080503.09 below for guidance on the Home Marketing Incentive Program allowance.

**080503.08 Sale of Residence Listing Requirement** VA employees enrolled in AVO and BVO must list their homes for sale within 90-days from the date of initiation with the relocation services contractor. Only SES and SES Equivalent Title 38 employees are eligible to seek an extension to the 90-day deadline. Employees must submit their extension requests of this listing requirement with adequate justification to the SECVA, or designee, for approval.

**080503.09 Home Marketing Incentive Program (HMIP)** The HMIP provides a cash incentive award of 2 percent of the selling price of their homes, not to exceed \$8,000, to VA employees enrolled in AVO only and who have successfully found qualified buyers for their residences (referred to as the “amended sale”). Employees who sell their homes and are not enrolled in AVO are not eligible for HMIP. Employees enrolled in BVO and employees enrolled in AVO with homes considered Special Properties are not eligible for HMIP.

Reference [Appendix H, Home Marketing Incentive Program](#) for further information.

**080503.10 Review of Homesale Program** The FSC will conduct an annual review of historical data related to VA’s Homesale Program prior to exercising any homesale contract options or procuring relocation services for new contract awards. The data analyzed will examine the number of employees who participated in each program, homesale transaction costs, and median homesale values.

Contract requirements in the Statement of Work will be reviewed for cost avoidance and program efficiencies contributing to employees quickly achieving sales on their properties resulting in lower program costs. Throughout the contract year, the designated Contracting Officer Representative will monitor the contract for compliance and analyze all data related to the Homesale Program.

#### **080504 Miscellaneous Expense Allowances**

A. VA will reimburse employees who have no immediate family member(s) a \$650 flat amount, or if the expenses are itemized, an amount up to one week basic compensation, whichever is the lesser amount.

B. VA will reimburse employees who have one or more immediate family member(s) a \$1,300 flat amount, or if the expenses are itemized, an amount up to two weeks basic compensation, whichever is the lesser amount.

C. When miscellaneous expenses exceed A or B above, supporting documentation of miscellaneous expenses must be attached in the PCS Travel Portal ([FTR §302-16.103](#)). The maximum miscellaneous expense allowance authorized must not exceed the highest basic salary for a GS-13, step 10 provided in [5 U.S.C. 5332, The General Schedule](#), at the time the employee reported for duty at his or her new official station.

Refer to [Appendix I, Miscellaneous Expense Allowance Guidelines](#), for additional information.

## **080505 Transportation and Storage of Property**

**080505.01 HHG Shipment** Reference [FTR §300-3.1](#) for a definition of HHG. An employee may elect shipment by commercial carrier or self-shipment methods for the shipment of HHG within CONUS. Employees transferring to, from, and within OCONUS areas are required to use shipment of HHG by the commercial carrier method.

A. Shipment by Commercial Carrier Method. Under this method, the FSC PCS Travel Counselor will initiate a Bill of Lading with VA's contracted commercial carrier, who will contact the employee once the Bill of Lading has been received and processed. The commercial carrier will pack, ship, store, deliver, and unpack your goods in one lot. Under this method, VA will pay the commercial carrier directly and the employee will not incur any associated upfront costs. If the employee lives in a remote location that the commercial carrier is unable to access by truck, VA will pay the commercial carrier for additional costs incurred in order to reach the residence, as long as the 18,000-pound limit is not exceeded, and up to an additional 2,000 pounds if the additional weight was as a result of uncrated packing materials.

VA will ensure the RSC utilized is a GSA qualified pre-payment auditor for VA household goods (HHG) shipments and conducts pre-payment audits prior to making payment to transportation providers. The RSC will send monthly pre-payment audit reports to GSA post audits, Washington, DC to ensure VA is in compliance with audit requirements.

VA will ensure vendor contracts for international HHG shipping by water require the use of ships registered under the laws of the United States whenever such ships are available ([The Cargo Preference Act of 1904](#), 10 United States Code [U.S.C.] 2631, and [The Cargo Preference Act of 1954](#), 46 U.S.C. 55302).

B. Self-Shipment Method. Under this method, employees will itemize the costs associated with moving their HHG on the travel voucher. If an employee elects to move his or her goods using this method, approval must be obtained from the Approving Official and documented on the travel authorization. Self-shipment reimbursement is limited to the actual cost incurred, not to exceed what the Government would have incurred under the method selected by VA ([FTR §302-7.16](#)). Reimbursable costs under the self-shipment method may include the following items:

- Truck rental (Expenses for other types of vehicles may be reimbursed when deemed appropriate to accomplish a smaller self-shipment move of HHG (e.g., SUV or trailer). Reimbursement will not exceed the reasonable constructive cost of a truck rental, and will be in accordance with self-shipment requirements in this chapter,

- Fuel;
- Packaging materials;
- Toll charges;
- Weight tickets; and
- Insurance on HHG.

C. Employees will not charge any expenses under the self-shipment method to their Government Travel Charge Card if the expenses are associated with moving their HHG. Instead, employees will prepare a claim for reimbursement for all expenses within the PCS Travel Portal. Employees will attach the following documents to their travel vouchers:

- Weight certificates from the nearest weighing station before and after loading the vehicle. [Note: If hauling goods in multiple trips, before and after loading weight certificates must be provided for each trip. If there were two trips; then two separate before loading and two separate after loading certificates must be provided. The same before and after loading certificate cannot be utilized for more than one trip. Reference paragraph C3 below for separate weight certificates required for professional items];
- Copy of the travel authorization limiting the reimbursement of the self-shipment method to the cost of the shipment by the Commercial Carrier Method;
- Inventory of goods being shipped; and
- All associated paid-in-full receipts for which reimbursement is requested.

Refer to [Appendix J, Items Allowed and Not Allowed To Be Shipped With Household Goods](#).

**080505.02 Shipment of POVs Within CONUS** Approving Officials may authorize the shipment of a POV within CONUS ([FTR 300-3.1](#)), a discretionary allowance not an entitlement. VA will generally limit the authorization to one POV per employee. Under extenuating circumstances, however, Approving Officials may authorize one additional POV for shipment, when shipment is more cost effective to VA ([FTR §302-9.301](#)). Approving Officials will consider the following when authorizing the shipment of a POV:

- The POV is in operating order and legally titled and tagged for driving; and
- The distance the POV is to be shipped is greater than 600 miles.

VA may authorize employees to transport only the number of POVs equal to the number

of people on the relocation travel orders, who are licensed drivers, not to exceed two, while relocating within CONUS at Government expense.

#### **080505.03 Shipping Professional Books, Papers, and Equipment (PBPE)**

A. VA may authorize shipment of PBPE if the weight will not exceed the maximum weight of 18,000 pounds. PBPE includes professional or specialized items owned by employees, but used to perform their jobs (e.g., periodicals, magazines, reference materials, specialized clothing, technician and mechanic tools or instruments). When authorized, shipping PBPE is considered an administrative cost to VA. However, for ease of administration in calculating this allowance, PBPE should be included as part of the HHG shipment, if possible.

B. Approving Officials will review, certify, and approve the shipment of these professional items. A written inventory of goods to be shipped will be reviewed by the employee's new supervisor. The inventory of goods should be separated into the following three categories:

- Professional Books;
- Papers; and
- Equipment.

C. Items should generally be listed individually, but may be grouped if appropriate (e.g., encyclopedia set). For goods listed as a group, the employee will provide an estimate of the number of items contained in the group (e.g., encyclopedia set of 10 books). A justification will also be provided in support of the need for the goods included under each category. If items are deemed necessary and authorized for shipment, the commercial carrier will pack the professional items listed on the employee's approved inventory separately from your HHG. The Bill of Lading will contain separate weight readings and costs associated with the employee's professional items in order to be fully reimbursed as an administrative expense of the station or staff office separate from the relocation funds.

#### **080505.04 Temporary Storage of HHG**

A. VA will provide up to 60 calendar days temporary storage ([FTR §300-3.1](#)) of HHG for shipments within CONUS and up to 90 calendar days for shipments that include an OCONUS origin or destination. Storage of goods in excess of 30 calendar days is treated as taxable income to the employee and will be included as gross income.

B. Employees may request to extend temporary storage of their goods beyond the applicable 60 or 90 day original period in 30 calendar day increments, but not to exceed a maximum of 90 additional calendar days ([FTR §302-7.9](#)), by submitting a memorandum to their Approving Officials and the FSC PCS Travel Counselor. All requests for extensions must be submitted prior to the expiration of the original

applicable 60 or 90 day period. If the extension is approved, the authorization must be documented as an amendment to the travel authorization and the Approving Official must verify the signed memorandum is uploaded into the transferring employee's folder in the PCS Travel Portal before approving the amendment. Circumstances beyond the employee's immediate control that could justify additional storage time may include those listed in [FTR §302-7.10](#).

C. Under no circumstances may goods be stored in temporary storage for a period of more than 150 calendar days total (60 days initial authorization plus up to 90 days extended storage if authorized) for shipments from CONUS to CONUS locations, or more than 180 calendar days total (90 days initial authorization plus up to 90 days extension) for shipments that include OCONUS origin or destination.

**080505.05 Extended Storage of HHG** Reference [FTR §300-3.1](#) for definition of extended storage.

A. Approving Officials may approve a period necessary for extended storage, not to exceed 90 days beyond the initial temporary storage 60 days period, under the following documented circumstances if the extensions apply to the employee's transfer ([FTR §302-8.102](#))

1. Employee is assigned to an isolated official duty station within CONUS; or
2. Employee is assigned to an OCONUS official duty station and VA determines extended storage is cost effective; or
3. Employee is assigned to an overseas location where VA limits the amount of HHG the employee may transport to that location; or
4. It is necessary for a TCS.

Extended storage of HHG is not permitted for a career SES employee eligible for last move home benefits. The Approving Official will verify the supporting documentation is uploaded to the transferring employee's folder in the PCS Travel Portal before approving the extension.

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

1. The quarters to be occupied at the new official duty station will not accommodate the HHG; or
2. Quarters that would accommodate the HHG are not available within 50 miles of the new official duty station.

C. VA will provide extended storage at either of the following, as determined by the RSC vendor:

1. Available Government-owned storage space; or
2. Suitable commercial storage space if:
  - a. Government-owned space is not available; or
  - b. Commercial storage space is more economical or suitable because of location, transportation costs, or for other reasons.

#### **080505.06 Limitation on Shipment and Storage of HHG**

A. Government's Liability. The Government's liability for loss of damage to HHG is determined by VA under title 31 U.S.C. 3721-3723 and VA implementing rules and regulations issued pursuant to the law, ([FTR §302-7.12](#)).

B. Reimbursement Limitation. Employees may pursue other methods for transportation and temporary storage of HHG and PBPE in accordance with [FTR §302-7.401](#); however, your reimbursement is limited to the actual cost incurred by the Government, not to exceed the method selected by the RSC Vendor ([FTR §302-7.16](#)).

#### **080505.07 Insurance Coverage on Shipment and Storage of HHG**

A. Full Value Protection Method. VA will provide full value protection of HHG at no cost to the employee when using the contracted commercial carrier. Full value protection insures HHG at the full replacement value for individual items not to exceed the maximum of \$5 per pound for the entire shipment weight. For example, an employee ships 10,000 pounds of HHG to his or her new official duty station. If the moving truck transporting the goods is involved in an accident that results in the loss of all of the employee's HHG, the employee will receive a maximum of \$50,000 to replace his or her belongings.

B. Excess Full Value Protection Method. Employees may elect the excess full value protection to insure their HHG based on the dollar valuation of their belongings being shipped. Employees should select this method if they want to ensure full coverage of their goods in the event of damage or loss of the shipment. If this method is selected, the employee will be billed for the additional cost to VA.

#### **080505.08 Weight Allowances and Unaccompanied Air Baggage (UAB)**

A. VA will authorize shipment and storage of employee household goods (HHG) up to the maximum weight allowance of 18,000 pounds ([FTR §302-7.2\(A\)](#)), and may establish a lower net weight allowance and a lower allowance for packing materials in special circumstances, such as transferring an employee into government-furnished quarters

([FTR §302-7.2\(B\)](#)). For uncrated or van line shipments, a 2,000 pound allowance is added to the 18,000 pounds net weight allowance to cover packing materials for the shipment. In no case may a shipment weigh over 20,000 gross pounds (the 18,000 pounds net weight of the uncrated HHG plus the 2,000 pound allowance for packing materials). The employee is responsible for payment of any shipping in excess of the 18,000 pounds uncrated or 20,000 pounds for uncrated and packing materials, and temporary storage ([FTR §300-3.1](#)) charges in excess of the 18,000-pound maximum weight allowance. VA will issue a bill of collection for payment of charges for shipping and storage in excess of the allowable limits.

B. An Approving Official may authorize a UAB shipment in accordance with [FTR §302-7.300](#). UAB for CONUS to CONUS shipments is not allowed under the FTR.

The travel Approving Official may authorize UAB shipment when deemed necessary, or may authorize the shipment of UAB by expedited means in accordance with [FTR §302-7.303](#).

The UAB shipment is part of, not in addition to, the 18,000 pounds net weight allowance for HHG. Reference [FTR §302-7.302](#) for the maximum weight allowance for a UAB shipment.

#### **080505.09 Mobile Homes**

The term "mobile home" refers to traditional trailer homes as well as boats. Employees will be permitted to transport a mobile home provided they certify that it is being used as the current residence and will be used as the permanent residence at the new official duty station. Refer to [FTR Part 302-10](#) and [Appendix K, Shipment Of Mobile Homes](#) for reimbursement guidance.

#### **080505.10 Emergency Storage of POV**

The approving official may authorize storage of a POV which has been shipped at the expense of the Federal Government when the Federal Government or a specific State declares a national or local emergency, respectively, and evacuation is required.

#### **080506 Outside of Continental United States Relocations**

For a definition of OCONUS Foreign and Non-Foreign areas reference [FTR 300-3.1](#).

##### **080506.01 Outside of Continental United States (OCONUS) Foreign Relocations**

A. VA may authorize the following relocation allowances for OCONUS Foreign relocations:

1. Transportation of employee and family;

2. Shipment of POV;
3. Property Management Services, not to exceed VA's contracted negotiated rate with the third party vendor (refer to [Appendix L, Property Management Services](#));
4. Extended Storage of HHG ([FTR §302-8.200](#)) when:
  - a. The official station is one to which you are not authorized to take, or at which you are unable to use, your HHG; or
  - b. Your Approving Official authorizes it as being in the public interest; or
  - c. Your Approving Official determines the estimated cost of storage would be less than the cost of round-trip transportation (including temporary storage) of the HHG to your new official station.
5. Temporary Quarters Subsistence Expenses (TQSE):
  - a. Prior to CONUS departure, or
  - b. Upon arrival at OCONUS location; or
6. TQSE (upon return from OCONUS assignment).

Refer to the Department of State Standardized Regulations (DSSR) for additional allowances that VA may authorize for foreign OCONUS relocations. Refer to [Vol XIV Ch. 6, International Travel](#), for Passport and Visa information needed for travel to foreign countries.

#### **080506.02 OCONUS, Non-Foreign Relocations**

- A. VA may authorize the following relocation allowances for OCONUS non-foreign locations:
1. Transportation of employee and family;
  2. Shipment of POV;
  3. TQSE;
  4. Relocation Services Program; or
  5. Allowances for expenses incurred in connection with residence transactions.
- B. Employees are eligible for an allowance for expenses incurred in connection with residence transactions when authorized relocation expenses.

Authorized expenses may include the following:

1. Sale of employee’s residence at the old official duty station from which the employee commutes daily, and or the purchase of a residence at the employee’s new official duty station in the United States;
2. Residence or mobile home lot, considered as the employee’s permanent residence at the old official duty station; or
3. Purchase of a new residence in the United States after completion of an overseas tour of duty. The return move is to a different official duty station in the United States. The new official duty station must be at least 50 miles from the previous official duty station in the United States.

C. VA Approving Officials may authorize extended storage of HHG for the duration of the assignment, including up to 30 days before the tour begins and up to 60 days after the tour has been completed. Extensions may be authorized for subsequent service or tours of duty at OCONUS locations but only if requests for the extension are submitted prior to the end date of the authorized initial time period.

When a tour of duty is terminated, the employee’s storage costs will be paid at the Government’s expense until the end of the month. The following example demonstrates time limitations for extended storage of HHG for OCONUS tours of duty:

BEFORE TOUR	DURING TOUR	AFTER TOUR
30 days	Not to exceed tour duration (12-36 months)	60 days

D. Once the OCONUS assignment has been completed, VA will pay for relocation costs back to actual stateside place of residence as indicated on the SA. If the employee accepts a position with no relocation entitlements or accepts a position at another Government agency with relocation entitlements at a location other than the place of residence on the SA, VA will pay for relocation costs back to the actual stateside place of residence, as indicated on the SA. The employee or receiving Federal agency is responsible for any additional relocation costs.

**080507 Senior Executive Service Separation Relocation Allowance**

A. Senior Executive Service (SES) employees must meet the conditions as defined in [FTR Subpart D – Relocation Separation](#) to be eligible for separation relocation allowance (also known as “last move home”). The employee must reside in a different geographical area which is at least 50 miles from his or her last official duty station.

GSA granted VA a waiver, effective December 19, 2003, to the “50 mile rule” due to hardships caused for some VA employees. This waiver remains in effect from the December 19, 2003 effective date, until either a permanent citation is made in Federal regulations or until the GSA’s Office of Government -wide Policy rescinds the waiver. To qualify under the waiver for reimbursement of HHG moving expenses, SES members must:

- Reside in Government-furnished housing on VA facility grounds;
- Be required to vacate Government-furnished housing upon separation from Federal service; and
- Meet the qualifications for SES “last move home” benefits.

B. Before receiving reimbursement for moving expenses, the employee must submit a request to VA for authorization and approval of his or her moving expenses with the tentative moving dates and the origin and destination location of the employee’s planned move. All travel and transportation of HHG must begin no later than six months after the employee’s date of separation.

C. Relocation allowances are as follows:

<b>“LAST MOVE HOME” FOR SES CAREER APPOINTEES UPON SEPARATION</b>	
<b>RELOCATION ALLOWANCES VA MUST PAY OR REIMBURSE</b>	<b>RELOCATION ALLOWANCES VA HAS DISCRETIONARY AUTHORITY TO PAY OR REIMBURSE</b>
Transportation for employee and immediate family member(s) ( <a href="#">FTR Part 302-4</a> ).	Shipment of POV ( <a href="#">FTR Part 302-9</a> ).
Per diem for employee only ( <a href="#">FTR Part 302-4</a> ).	
Transportation and temporary storage of HHG ( <a href="#">FTR Part 302-7</a> ).	
Transportation of a mobile home or boat used as a primary residence in lieu of the transportation of HHG ( <a href="#">FTR Part 302-10</a> ).	

### 080508 Temporary Change of Station Allowances

A. VA will authorize a Temporary Change of Station (TCS) in accordance with [FTR §302-3.404](#). An employee must meet the distance requirement of 50 miles or more, as prescribed in [Section 080501.01B](#). A service agreement is not required for TCS travel.

B. Duration of a TCS. A TCS will not be shorter in duration than 6 months nor last longer than 30 months.

1. If the assignment is cut short of the 6 months for reasons other than separation, TCS expenses will be reimbursed.
2. If the TCS lasts longer than 30 months, VA:
  - a. Must permanently assign the employee to the temporary official duty station or return the employee to the previous official duty station;
  - b. May not pay for extended storage or property management services past the 30<sup>th</sup> month; and
  - c. Must pay the expenses of returning the employee, his or her immediate family members, and the HHG to the previous official duty station unless permanently assigned to the temporary official duty station.

C. VA will pay for the following expenses in connection with the employee's departure and return to the official duty station:

- Travel, including per diem, for employees' and their immediate families (refer to [Section 080502](#));
- Transportation and temporary storage of HHG (refer to [Section 080505.01](#));
- Transportation of a mobile home instead of transportation of HHG (refer to [Section 08050509](#));
- TQSE (refer to [Section 080502.03](#));
- Miscellaneous expense allowances (refer to [Section 080504](#));
- Property management expenses, not to exceed the VA's contracted negotiated rate with the third party vendor ([FTR § 302–15.70\(b\)](#), and reference [Appendix L, Property Management Services](#));
- Transportation of a POV (refer to [Section 080505.02](#));

- Lease break at permanent official duty station location and lease break after completion of TCS at TCS location (if applicable); and
- A relocation income tax allowance for additional income taxes incurred on payments (refer to [Section 080509](#)).

D. VA will authorize the following expenses if employees are permanently assigned to TCS official duty stations:

1. Travel, including per diem, for one round trip between the temporary official duty station and the previous official duty station, for employees and members of their immediate family who relocated to the temporary official duty station. VA may also pay the same expenses for a one-way trip from the previous official duty station to the new permanent official duty station for any immediate family member who did not accompany the employee to the temporary official duty station;
2. Residence transaction expenses;
3. Relocation services;
4. Temporary quarters subsistence expenses (TQSE);
5. Transportation of HHG not previously transported to the temporary official duty station;
6. Transportation of a privately-owned vehicle(s) not previously transported to the temporary official duty station; and
7. If the employee changes his or her residence as a result of the permanent assignment to the temporary official duty station, VA may pay for transporting the HHG, subject to the weight limit per FTR, between the residence the employee occupied during the temporary assignment and the new residence.

E. The following individuals are not eligible for a TCS:

1. A new appointee;
2. An individual employed intermittently in the Government service as a consultant or expert and paid on a daily when-actually-employed (WAE) basis;
3. An individual serving without pay or at \$1 a year; or
4. An employee assigned under GETA.

Refer to [Appendix M, Temporary Change of Station Allowances](#), for additional information.

## 080509 Withholding Tax Allowance and Relocation Income Tax Allowance

A. Purpose of Withholding Tax Allowance (WTA) and Relocation Income Tax Allowance (RITA). The WTA and the RITA assist employees with the additional Federal, State, or local income tax liability incurred as a result of a move. The allowances are developed by GSA in conjunction with IRS. These allowances are based on the assumption that relocated employees will itemize their deductions, rather than take the standard deductions on their income tax returns. VA employees should review IRS publications in [Appendix N, Internal Revenue Service Publications Associated With Relocation Expenses](#), and [FTR §302-17](#) (Taxes on Relocation Expenses), and consider seeking professional tax advice to determine how their relocation affects their personal tax situation.

B. Employees Eligible for WTA and RITA. VA Employees are eligible for the WTA and RITA when the VA transfers the employee from one permanent duty station to another, in the best interest of the Government, and VA reimburses the employee for relocation expenses resulting in the employee being liable for additional taxes ([FTR §302-17.5](#)).

Note: If a VA employee violates the 12-month SA under which they were relocated, VA will not pay WTA or the RITA, and the employee must repay any relocation benefits paid prior to the violation.

C. Employees Ineligible for WTA and RITA. [FTR §302-17.6](#) identifies which relocating employees are not eligible for WTA and RITA.

D. Limitations on WTA and RITA. Both the employee and VA must know the limitations on which reimbursements and direct payments to vendors are taxable and which are nontaxable in the employee's specific circumstances ([FTR §302-17.8](#) thru [FTR §302-17.13](#)).

Note: The tax calculations involve potential Federal, state, and local income taxes that may be incurred as a result of a relocation and is considered a good faith effort to reimburse substantially all additional income taxes the employee may incur ([FTR §302-17.4](#)).

1. Taxable Expense Types. For the purpose of determining WTA, [FTR §302-17.21](#) provides a list of reimbursements considered taxable when paid to the employee. Reimbursement for all of the listed expenses are included in the gross income reported on an employee's W-2 for the tax year in which reimbursement is paid, including WTA and RITA reimbursements.

2. Non-Taxable Expense Types. The following are not considered taxable reimbursements. A complete list can be found in [FTR §302-17.22](#).

E. Withholding Tax Allowance (WTA). VA will reimburse and add a WTA allowance to travel vouchers to defray an employee's out-of-pocket expenses if the employee selects

to apply WTA. WTA is optional for the employee. The WTA is actually an advance estimate of the RITA.

1. Each time covered taxable moving expenses are paid to the employee, the FSC will determine the amount of the WTA in accordance with [FTR §302-17.24](#) and add it to the travel voucher.
2. The WTA only covers the estimated Federal withholding tax amount. The reimbursement amount the employee will receive will be the amount claimed less deductions for non-reimbursable items and the estimated amounts withheld for State taxes, OASDI, and Medicare ([FTR §302-17.20](#)).
3. The WTA is considered taxable income and is subject to tax withholding ([FTR §302-17.2](#)). The total amount of an employee's WTA paid during a calendar year, as well as the total of all other allowable moving expenses, is included on the W-2 as wages, tips, and other compensation.

F. Relocation Income Tax Allowance (RITA).

1. VA pays employees a RITA when the reimbursement to employees for any taxes owed were not adequately reimbursed by the WTA ([FTR §302-17.30](#)).
2. VA uses the two-year process for RITA ([FTR §302-17.32](#)). Employees will submit a RITA travel voucher the year following in which the employee receives payment of covered taxable moving expenses.
  - a. The difference between the WTA and the RITA is that the WTA is an estimate of the Federal withholding taxes due and the RITA uses actual figures provided by the employee to determine the Federal, State, and local tax effects from the move.
  - b. The RITA is calculated the year after the reimbursements involving taxable moving expenses along with a WTA, are received.
  - c. The RITA uses actual figures provided by the employee to calculate the proper amounts that should have been reimbursed for Federal, State, and local taxes.
3. To file a RITA claim, the employee must submit to the FSC or log into the PCS Travel Portal and fill out the FSC RITA Questionnaire form ("Statement of Income and Tax Filing Status"). Copies of all taxable income forms received to complete the employee's IRS Tax Return are required. Forms include, but are not limited to W-2 forms and SE 1040 self-employment forms (if applicable) for the employee (and for spouse, if filing jointly). Forms 1099 are not applicable since the RITA is based only on earned income, except for 1099R forms for military retirement pay.

4. The WTA is an advance on your income tax expenses, thus if you don't file the "Statement of Income and Tax Filing Status", or RITA claim in a timely manner, your agency will require you to repay the entire amount of the withholding and WTA (if any) that the agency has paid on your behalf ([FTR §302-17.65](#)). Employees are required to file a RITA claim in accordance with the annual deadline established by the PSC Travel Office. Failure to file the RITA claim by the deadline allows VA to close the file without paying the RITA ([FTR §302-17.66](#)). The FSC PCS Travel Division will notify affected employees by email of the deadline for filing. Employees who fail to file in a timely manner will receive a final written warning by email to file within 60 days or amend their "Statement of Income and Tax Filing Status", or VA will declare the WTA already paid on his/her behalf forfeited and due as a debt to the Government ([FTR §302-17.102\(b\)](#)).

5. If the employee has been reimbursed more WTA than the RITA allowed, the employee will receive a bill of collection for the overpayment of the WTA. If the employee did not receive enough WTA for the moving expenses, the employee will receive a payment to make up the difference. Like the WTA, the RITA is considered taxable income and is subject to tax withholding, reportable to the IRS on the W-2. Employees who are relocating should be aware that the IRS considers certain expenses and allowances to be reported as income. Those that are not taxable generally may be deducted when filing the annual tax return. Refer to [Appendix N, Internal Revenue Service Publications Associated with Relocation Expenses](#), for publications that may be helpful to the relocating employee.

G. VA will withhold taxes directly from travel voucher payments. Any taxable payments that are made to a third-party service on the employee's behalf are still considered taxable income and could impact the income reported on the employee's W-2.

H. An employee may request a recalculation of their RITA, provided he or she filed their "Statement of Income and Tax Filing Status", or RITA claim and amended it, if necessary, in a timely manner. Once he or she has completed all Federal, state, and local tax returns, and believes the RITA should have been significantly different from the RITA VA has calculated, he or she may ask VA to recalculate the RITA ([FTR §302-17.33](#)).

## 0806 Authority and References

**080600** [41 Code of Federal Regulations](#), Federal Travel Regulations Chapters 300, 301, and 302

**080601** [28 U.S.C. 2514](#), Title 28 – Judiciary and Judicial Procedure, § 2514. Forfeiture of fraudulent claims

**080602** [18 U.S.C. 287](#), Title 18 – Crimes and Criminal Procedure, § 287. False, fictitious or fraudulent claims

**080603** [VA Directive 5005, Staffing](#)

**080604** [VA Directive 5027, Senior Executive Service Handbook](#)

**080605** [National Archives and Records Administration \(NARA\), General Records Schedule 1.1: Financial Management and Reporting Records](#)

**080606** [5 U.S.C. 4109, Government Employees Training Act](#)

**080607** [5 U.S.C. 5332, The General Schedule](#)

**080608** [Department of State Standardized Regulations \(DSSR\)](#)

**080609** [The Cargo Preference Act of 1904](#), 10 United States Code [U.S.C.] 2631

**080610** [The Cargo Preference Act of 1954](#), 46 U.S.C. 55302

**080611** [5 U.S.C. 5707, Travel, Transportation and Subsistence](#)

**080612** [5 U.S.C. 5724, Travel and Transportation Expenses of Employees Transferred; Advancement of Funds; Reimbursement on Commuted Basis](#)

**080613** [5 U.S.C. 5753, Recruitment and Relocation Bonuses](#)

**080614** [FTR Amendment 2014-01](#)

**080615** [FTR Amendment 2015-02](#)

## **0807 Rescissions**

**080701** Vol XIV Ch. 8, Relocation Packages, dated August 2017

**080702** Vol XIV Ch. 8, Relocation Packages, dated December 2016

**080703** Vol XIV Ch. 8, Relocation Packages, dated November 2011

## **0808 Questions**

Questions concerning these travel policies and procedures should be directed as follows:

**Department of Veterans Affairs  
Relocation Packages**

**January 2018  
Volume XIV – Chapter 8**

VHA  
VBA  
NCA  
OIT  
FSC PCS Travel Division  
All others

[VAFSCtravelpolicy@va.gov](mailto:VAFSCtravelpolicy@va.gov)  
[TRAVEL.VBACO@va.gov](mailto:TRAVEL.VBACO@va.gov)  
[NCABudgetService@va.gov](mailto:NCABudgetService@va.gov)  
[vacoittravel@va.gov](mailto:vacoittravel@va.gov)  
[vafsc.pcstravelportalinquiry@va.gov](mailto:vafsc.pcstravelportalinquiry@va.gov)  
[travelpolicy@va.gov](mailto:travelpolicy@va.gov)

## Appendix A: Permanent Change of Station Travel Portal

### A. Overview.

The Financial Services Center (FSC) developed the Permanent Change of Station (PCS) Travel Portal to streamline the process for initiating and approving documents required by relocating employees authorized PCS relocation allowance reimbursements. This application automates the process to prepare and submit a, [VA Form 3918, Intra-Agency Transfer Request](#); discretionary requests and approvals; budget requests; and a Travel Authorization for Permanent Duty (TA), VA Form 3036c, for the traveler. This process applies to transferring employees and new appointees.

Effective December 31, 2010, all VA Form 3918(s) for relocation including reimbursements must be initiated and completed through the PCS Travel Portal. Relocations involving no reimbursement may be processed on a VA Form 3918 in the PCS Travel Portal or may be processed using a manual VA Form 3918.

### B. Defining Station Users for PCS Travel Portal.

Each station will assign points of contact to serve as primary or alternate for each required function. These individuals will be responsible for accessing the application, completing their function, and signing the document using their digital signature (use the link provided, [PCS Travel Portal](#), for guidance on accessing). Once authenticated, the document will flow automatically to the appropriate designated point of contact to perform the next step in the process.

The following is a list of the station POCs and their roles:

1. HR Office personnel: complete VA Form 3918, and attach a PDF of the supporting signed approval documentation for PCS relocation allowances, and Appraised Value Offer Program (AVO) when authorized, in the PCS Travel Portal, prior to submitting VA Form 3918;
2. Budget Officer: provides budget information;
3. Approving Official: approves discretionary requests, travel authorizations (TA), electronic requests to add or delete station users from the PCS Travel Portal, and verifies all required documentation is attached in the PCS Travel Portal prior to approving the TA;
4. Traveler (employee): completes VA Form 3918, Part 2, service agreement, and if requesting Temporary Quarters Subsistence Expense (TQSE) lump sum method must provide certification of family members occupancy for the entire period if authorized;

5. FSC PCS Travel Division Staff: ensures the servicing HR office has attached the required approval documentation in the employee's folder for PCS, and AVO when authorized, in accordance with [Section 080501.06B](#), prior to processing; provides PCS Allowance Counseling; coordinates discretionary and budget requests, the travel authorization, travel authorization amendments; updates user information in the PCS Travel Portal; and [VA Form 10091, FSC Vendor File Request Form](#) is submitted; and
6. Super User: HR or Budget contact that will facilitate electronic requests for additions or deletions of station users.

### C. Process Steps (Status) in the PCS Travel Portal.

The following list outlines the various statuses that exist within the PCS Travel Portal. The status will reflect the current step for the PCS move from the creation of the VA Form 3918 in the PCS Travel Portal through the approval of the Travel Authorization.

NOTE: Steps 1 – 5 below must be completed within two business days from the date the employee is offered and accepts the position. All subsequent steps below have a one business day completion requirement.

1. VA Form 3918 Creation – Gaining station's or staff office's servicing HR office creates and completes Part 1.
2. VA Form 3918 -- Awaiting HR office Approval Signature – HR signer will access the VA form and sign Part 1 as the Appointing Official. HR will attach a PDF of the supporting signed approval documentation for PCS, TCS, and AVO when authorized in the employee's folder in the PCS Travel Portal, prior to submitting VA Form 3918.
3. FSC -- Awaiting Review User information – FSC PCS Travel Division staff will receive an email from the PCS Travel Portal to validate that the traveler does not already have an existing PCS Travel Portal profile. If the user already exists, the existing user profile will be updated to reflect the new information.
4. VA Form 3918 -- Awaiting Traveler Signature – The traveler will receive a welcome email from the PCS Travel Portal with their username and instructions to access the portal, change their password, and complete and electronically sign the VA Form 3918, Part 2, and service agreement.
5. VA Form 3918 -- Awaiting Releasing Station HR Approval Signature – Releasing station (if current VA employee) will receive notification to complete and electronically sign the VA Form 3918, Part 3.
6. FSC – When VA Form 3918 is submitted, FSC will verify the servicing HR office has attached the PCS and AVO approval documentation in the employee's PCS Travel Portal Folder, in accordance with [Section 080501.06B](#), prior to processing.

7. FSC -- Awaiting Set Initial Contact with Traveler – FSC PCS Travel Division will make initial contact with the employee within 24 hours of receiving notification.
8. FSC -- Awaiting FSC PCS Travel Counselor Assignment – Upon contact with employee, a counsel call will be scheduled with an assigned Counselor.
9. FSC -- Awaiting Completion of Counseling – FSC PCS Travel Counselor will provide counseling to employee and facilitate requests for discretionary items.
10. [VA Form 3036c](#) -- Awaiting Approval Discretionary Items – Approving Official will approve or deny discretionary requests.
11. VA Form 3036c -- Awaiting Completion of Counseling – FSC PCS Travel Counselor will update PCS information based on discretionary approvals and submit request for budget information.
12. VA Form 3036c -- Awaiting Approval Funds from Funding Station – Budget Official will provide funding information through the PCS Travel Portal.
13. VA Form 3036c -- Awaiting travel authorization Completion – FSC PCS Travel Counselor will make final updates to information in PCS Travel Portal and submit request for Travel Authorization approval.
14. VA Form 3036c -- Awaiting Supervisory Review – FSC PCS Travel Counselor Supervisor will review Travel Authorization for accuracy and either reject back to Counselor for corrections or route to Approving Official for approval.
15. VA Form 3036c -- Awaiting Traveler Signature – If relocation services have been requested, the traveler will be prompted to sign the Relocation Services Authorization form.
16. Awaiting Signature of Approving Official – Approving Official will review the travel authorization, verify the relocation allowance approval documentation is in folder as required, and electronically sign the Travel Authorization.
17. VA Form 3036c -- Awaiting Release of Obligation to Financial Management System (FMS) – FSC PCS Travel Counselor will receive notification of approved Travel Authorization and send obligation to FMS.
18. VA Form 3036c -- Awaiting Review FMS Obligation – The following day, the FSC PCS Travel Counselor will confirm funds are obligated correctly in FMS and electronically sign the Travel Authorization. If obligation not successful, Counselor will first work with station to resolve rejects prior to signing.
19. VA Form 3036c -- Awaiting Completion of Claims – Travel Authorization is now complete and this status will remain unless an amendment is made to the Travel Authorization. If an amendment is created, the status will revert to VA Form 3036c – FSC -- Awaiting Travel Authorization Completion; follow the status steps involved through VA Form 3036c – Awaiting Completion of Claims.

**Appendix B: Relocation General Entitlements and Discretionary Allowances**

ENTITLEMENTS	DISCRETIONARY ALLOWANCES
Transportation of employee and immediate family member(s)	Shipment of a Privately Owned Vehicle(s)
Per diem for employee and or immediate family	Temporary Quarters Subsistence Expense not authorized in a foreign area
Transportation and temporary storage of household goods (HHG)	Home Marketing Incentive Program (see Note 3)
Transportation of a mobile home or boat used as a primary residence in lieu of transportation of HHG	Househunting per diem and transportation, employee, and spouse only
Extended storage of HHG	Property management services (see Note 4)
Miscellaneous moving expenses	Use of relocation services companies (see Note 5)
Sale and purchase of residence expenses or lease termination expenses	
Relocation income tax allowance	

**Notes:**

1. New appointees are authorized allowances in accordance with [FTR §302-3.2](#).
2. Relocation entitlements are based on the “type of transfer” and not subject to negotiation.
3. For HMIP eligibility reference [Section 080503.09](#).
4. Reimbursement to the employee for property management services will not exceed VA’s contracted negotiated rate with the third party vendor ([FTR § 302–15.70\(b\)](#)).
5. All employees have the option to participate in the Buyer Value Option Program, if eligible. Appraised Value Offer Program remains a discretionary allowance requiring advance approval (reference [Section 0801](#)).

## Appendix C: Relocation Services Contract

A. Relocation Services. This appendix is not applicable to new appointees and employees assigned under the Government Employees Training Act as they are not authorized the use of a relocation services contract. Relocation services are services provided by a private company under a contract to assist the employee in relocating to a new official duty station. Government contracted relocation companies provide assistance to employees by:

- Making the employee an offer based on the appraised value of the home via the Appraised Value Offer Program (AVO);
- Providing marketing assistance at reduced rates through the Buyer Value Option Program (BVO) or AVO; and
- Offering some services at the new station for renters or buyers at no cost to the employee or the agency.

There are two programs associated with relocation services for the sale of a residence at the departure official duty station:

1. AVO. If the employee is authorized to participate in AVO and is unable to find a qualified buyer for his or her home, the contractor will make the employee an appraised value offer based on relocation appraisals. The employee has 60 calendar days after contractor notification of the appraised value offer to accept or decline the contractor's offer. The employee must meet mandatory marketing and inspection requirements in order to accept the appraised value offer. If the employee chooses to accept the contractor's offer, VA will pay an increased fee based on the home's sale price for the service. The contractor maintains the home in its inventory and pays carrying costs until a qualified buyer is found.

It is in VA's best interest to encourage employees to find a qualified buyer for the home because of the higher fee associated with AVO. If the employee receives a bona fide offer from a qualified buyer while participating in AVO, the contractor will amend the appraised value offer amount to the negotiated sale price from the buyer. The contractor will purchase the home, close the transaction with the buyer, and pay the applicable reasonable and customary seller's closing costs (inclusive of the real estate commission). VA will be billed the applicable fee for an amended value sale. Employees are not required to be at the closing. Employees are responsible for expenses related to their residences until the contractor has acquired the home and the employee has vacated the property. An employee is eligible for a Home Marketing Incentive if an offer from a buyer is obtained and the contractor successfully closes with the buyer. If an employee opts out of AVO their decision is final, they cannot re-enter the program later or be authorized for BVO.

2. BVO. If the employee is not authorized to participate in AVO, they may use the services of BVO in lieu of direct reimbursement. Relocation appraisals are not completed when using BVO, and efforts are concentrated on the contractor providing ongoing marketing assistance to help employees receive fair market value for their homes. When a bona fide buyer is found, the contractor purchases the home and then closes the sale with the buyer, paying the applicable reasonable and customary seller's closing costs (inclusive of the real estate commission). Employees are not required to be at the closing. Employees are responsible for expenses related to their residences until the contractor has acquired the home and the employee has vacated the property. There is no appraised offer or guaranteed buyout associated with BVO. The Home Marketing Incentive is not applicable under BVO. If an employee opts out of BVO, they cannot re-enter the program later or be authorized for AVO.

B. Owned and Occupied Residence. In order to be eligible, the employee's home must be the actual residence owned and occupied by the employee at the time he or she was first informed of the transfer. The residence must be the place from which the employee regularly commuted to and from work when the employee received the official notice to relocate. Relocation services are available to transferring employees who are eligible for reimbursement of real estate expenses and have been authorized the use of relocation third party services program. All homes may not qualify or be accepted into the program.

The FSC PCS Travel Counselor will advise on available services through the relocation services provider and will include the applicable service on the employee's travel authorization. Once the travel authorization is approved and funded, the employee will be initiated with the relocation services contractor. The relocation services contractor will confirm that the employee is aware that he or she will be required to market the home independently, by listing the home with a network real estate broker, in order to be eligible for the homesale service portion of the contract.

An employee has the right to cancel the request for relocation services or to reject an offer received from the contractor at any time prior to acceptance of the offer. If the services are canceled or rejected, the contractor will be paid by the Government for all inspection fees, title search costs, and appraisal costs that were incurred up to the point of cancellation or rejection up to a maximum defined in the contract. The employee is entitled to copies of any document(s) paid for by the Government that would be usable by the employee in selling the home on a reimbursement basis.

If during the appraisal process or the 60-day appraised value offer period under AVO, the employee receives an offer from an outside party that is equal to or more than the Government-contracted company's offer, the employee should not enter into a contract or sign any agreement document with the potential outside buyer. The contractor will review the terms and conditions of the offer to ensure it is bona fide. If the employee chooses not to work with the contractor and enters into their own agreement with the

third party buyer (signs the contract offer), this will automatically cancel participation in the program. The employee will not be reimbursed for any fees already incurred and billed by the relocation services contractor.

C. Contractor-Provided Services. Marketing strategies, recommendations, and advice furnished by the contractor will be provided in writing upon request of the employee. The contractor will advise the employee that any listing agreement must contain the following exclusion clause: “The seller(s) hereby reserve the right to sell the Property directly to (Contractor Name) at any time and, in such event, to cancel this listing agreement with no obligation for commission or continuation of listing hereafter and to turn over an acceptable written offer hereunder to (Contractor Name) for closing and payment of commission which will be deemed earned and payable only upon closing to title”.

An employee can delay the start of the authorized homesale program for up to 90 days from the date of initiation with the contractor. This applies to both AVO and BVO. If approved for AVO, appraisals may be delayed an additional 30 days from the listing date. Extensions may be approved only for SES and SES equivalent employees. Employees are required to list their home with a network real estate agent, and their list price must be within the contract specified guidelines. If the employee decides to use the relocation services but delays initiation, and in the meantime sells the house through a real estate agent without going back to the relocation contractor, the employee will not be eligible for the homesale incentive program. In the case of the above situation, the Contracting Officer Representative (COR) should be notified in order to cancel the order with the relocation contractor and de-obligate the funds.

Following is a brief summary of the relocation services eligibilities and processes. This is clearly a complex area and not all scenarios may be addressed. The employee should contact their FSC PCS Travel Counselor with any questions.

D. Ineligible Property. Properties not eligible for the Relocation Services Program include (as defined in the contract with the RSC):

- Mobile homes;
- Cooperative Units;
- Houseboats;
- Non-insurable homes;
- Homes that cannot be financed (Federal or conventional);
- Homes on which construction has not been completed;

- Homes that do not comply with State and local codes;
- Contaminated homes - Urea foam formaldehyde insulation, radon, etc.;
- Homes without foundations;
- Employee owned rental properties;
- Homes located outside the United States and its territories; and
- Homes that cannot be valued through the relocation appraisal process, such as homes in remote and inaccessible locations that lack comparable sales, or are otherwise deemed unmarketable. The determination of such a home is at the discretion of the contractor. Contractor may refer to such homes as “Special Properties”.

E. Special Properties. Special properties are eligible properties which are determined by the contractor and VA to be especially difficult to sell or where the property value is especially difficult to determine, in accordance with the relocation services contract. VA is required to pay a higher fee to the contractor for special handling fees. Special Property designation requires higher level approval, pursuant to the guidelines stipulated for AVO approval. Properties referred as special under BVO will be deemed ineligible and cancelled from the homesale program (the employee would be eligible to sell their home under the Direct Reimbursement option).

F. Eligible Properties. Properties eligible for the Relocation Services Program:

1. Must be the primary residence owned and occupied by employee at the time of the initial official notification of transfer.
2. Must be the place from which transferee commutes to and from work on a daily basis.
3. Title requirements:
  - a. The title is solely in the employee’s name; or
  - b. The title is jointly in the employee’s name with one or more members of his or her immediate family; or
  - c. The title is solely in the name of one or more members of the employee’s immediate family; or
  - d. The employee must demonstrate “equitable title interest” (Reference [FTR §302-11.105](#) for requirements on various types of title scenarios).

Note: If the title does not meet one of the identified requirements above, reimbursement may be prorated based on the percentage of ownership of the property being bought or sold. Employees subject to pro rata will not be eligible for home sale services unless they can demonstrate, to VA and the RSC, their willingness and ability to pay the proportional share of the contractual costs directly to the RSC.

4. If the employee's residence is a duplex or other type of multiple occupancy dwelling and is only partially occupied by the employee, the employee would be subject to a prorated reimbursement based on percentage of the residence occupied as the primary residence. [NOTE: This restriction is not applicable to a case where an employee owns a condominium unit.] Duplexes and multi-family dwellings are considered Special Properties and as such are deemed ineligible for the BVO program.

5. Excess acreage is land that does not reasonably relate to the residence site, as determined by the relocation company. Sale of excess acreage will be at the employee's expense; only the land reasonable and typical for the residence site will be eligible.

G. Pre-Decision Counseling. The RSC offers a comprehensive pre-decision assistance service for employees applying for a position with VA when a PCS move is authorized. With real estate markets still facing unprecedented challenges, this optional counseling provides valuable information about the market conditions and estimated home values at the departure and destination duty stations. The RSC will assign realtors to complete two Broker Market Analyses of the employee's current residence so the RSC can conduct an analysis of the real estate conditions to pinpoint market data. This detailed information allows the employee to complete a financial and life style assessment prior to accepting a PCS move. This service can also be utilized post acceptance of the position but must be requested prior to completion of the travel authorization. Pre-decision counseling gives an employee the opportunity to make an informed decision, considering the economic impact a move could potentially cause.

NOTE: Refer to [Appendix M, Property Management Services](#), for additional information.

Appendix D: Delegation of Authority

Relocation Travel Approval Levels	Deputy Secretary; Under Secretaries; Assistant Secretaries; and other key officials	Under Secretaries; Assistant Secretaries; and other key officials*	Deputy Secretary; Chief of Staff; Deputy Chief of Staff; Under Secretaries; Assistant Secretaries; Deputy Assistant Secretaries or Written Re-delegation of Authority**	VHA Network Directors; VBA Area Directors; NCA Network Directors or Written Re-delegation of Authority**	Field Facility Directors or Medical Directors or Written Re-delegation of Authority**
1. Making determination of place of actual residence in connection with tours of duty OCONUS.			X	X	X
2. Making determination on round trip travel to new official station to seek permanent residence quarters.			X	X	X
3. Waiver of the 50-mile distance test requirement.	X				
4. Waiver for reporting after 90 days from the notification date.		X			

Relocation Travel Approval Levels	Deputy Secretary; Under Secretaries; Assistant Secretaries; and other key officials	Under Secretaries; Assistant Secretaries; and other key officials*	Deputy Secretary; Chief of Staff; Deputy Chief of Staff; Under Secretaries; Assistant Secretaries; Deputy Assistant Secretaries or Written Re-delegation of Authority**	VHA Network Directors; VBA Area Directors; NCA Network Directors or Written Re-delegation of Authority**	Field Facility Directors or Medical Directors or Written Re-delegation of Authority**
5. Making determination on allowance of subsistence expenses while occupying temporary quarters, and extensions in certain cases, as provided in FTR.			X	X	X
6. Transportation of immediate family.			X	X	X
7. Making determination whether transportation of HHG will be accomplished by Government bill of lading or the commuted rate system.			X	X	X
8. Transportation of mobile home used as a residence.			X	X	X

Relocation Travel Approval Levels	Deputy Secretary; Under Secretaries; Assistant Secretaries; and other key officials	Under Secretaries; Assistant Secretaries; and other key officials*	Deputy Secretary; Chief of Staff; Deputy Chief of Staff; Under Secretaries; Assistant Secretaries; Deputy Assistant Secretaries or Written Re-delegation of Authority**	VHA Network Directors; VBA Area Directors; NCA Network Directors or Written Re-delegation of Authority**	Field Facility Directors or Medical Directors or Written Re-delegation of Authority**
9. Transportation of privately owned motor vehicles at Government expense.			X	X	X
10. Emergency storage of privately owned motor vehicles at Government expense.			X	X	
11. Making determination in cases of violations of agreement to remain in the service of Government for a certain period, whether or not separation was beyond employee's control.			X	X	X

Relocation Travel Approval Levels	Deputy Secretary; Under Secretaries; Assistant Secretaries; and other key officials	Under Secretaries; Assistant Secretaries; and other key officials*	Deputy Secretary; Chief of Staff; Deputy Chief of Staff; Under Secretaries; Assistant Secretaries; Deputy Assistant Secretaries or Written Re-delegation of Authority**	VHA Network Directors; VBA Area Directors; NCA Network Directors or Written Re-delegation of Authority**	Field Facility Directors or Medical Directors or Written Re-delegation of Authority**
12. Making determination with respect to delays or other considerations where minimum average mileage distance is not met.			X	X	X
13. Extension of up to 90 additional days for CONUS temporary storage of HHG, and OCONUS extensions of HHG			X	X	X
14. Unaccompanied Air Baggage			X	X	X
15. Extension of one additional year for completion of real estate transactions.			X	X	X

Relocation Travel Approval Levels	Deputy Secretary; Under Secretaries; Assistant Secretaries; and other key officials	Under Secretaries; Assistant Secretaries; and other key officials*	Deputy Secretary; Chief of Staff; Deputy Chief of Staff; Under Secretaries; Assistant Secretaries; Deputy Assistant Secretaries or Written Re-delegation of Authority**	VHA Network Directors; VBA Area Directors; NCA Network Directors or Written Re-delegation of Authority**	Field Facility Directors or Medical Directors or Written Re-delegation of Authority**
16. Waiver on extension of one additional year for completion of real estate transactions, requested after 30 day allowable time frame.		X			
17. SES Last Move Home Allowances.			X		
18. Temporary Change of Station.			X	X	X

\* This authority may be re-delegated to no lower than an SES or SES equivalent level. \*\*

\*\* Written Re-delegation of Authority must be provided to FSC PCS Travel Division by email at [vafsc.pcstravelportalinqury@va.gov](mailto:vafsc.pcstravelportalinqury@va.gov) (reference Directive 0000, Delegation of Authority, effective September 9, 2009).

**Appendix E: Advance of Funds**

Requests for an advance are to be submitted on an SF 1038 – Advance of Funds Application and Account. Authorized advance of funds must be stated on the travel authorization. The Approving Official may or may not authorize an advance of funds depending on the specific item, as follows ([FTR §302-2.24](#)):

<b>AUTHORIZED FUND ADVANCES – Not to Exceed 75%</b>	
Househunting Trip	VA may advance funds not to exceed the anticipated sum of: transportation costs, maximum per diem allowable for duration of the trip, or Fixed amount payment, whichever is applicable ( <a href="#">FTR 302-5.16</a> ). If the employee has the use of a Government Travel Charge Card, then an advance is not authorized.
Subsistence and Transportation	VA may authorize an advance of funds for per diem and mileage allowances for en route travel ( <a href="#">FTR 302-4.600</a> ). If the employee has the use of a Government Travel Charge Card, then an advance is not authorized.
Temporary Quarters Subsistence Expense (TQSE)	VA may advance funds necessary to cover estimated TQSE for up to 30 days. If deemed necessary, VA may authorize advance of funds for 30 additional days ( <a href="#">FTR 302-6.15</a> ). An employee may not use their Government Travel Charge Card for this expense.
Transportation of mobile home and boats used as a primary residence	VA may authorize advance of funds for employees responsible for arranging and paying commercial carriers to transport their mobile homes and boats. Advance may not exceed the estimated amount allowed ( <a href="#">FTR 302-10.300</a> ). An employee may not use their Government Travel Charge Card for this expense.
Transportation and temporary storage of household goods (HHG)	VA may authorize an advance of funds when the transportation of HHG and temporary storage is authorized under the commuted rate method ( <a href="#">FTR 302-7.105</a> ). An employee may not use their Government Travel Charge Card for this expense.
Shipping and emergency storage of a Privately Owned Vehicle (POV)	VA will limit advances to the estimated amount of the expenses authorized for transportation and emergency storage of a POV ( <a href="#">FTR 302-9.12</a> ). An employee may not use their Government Travel Charge Card for this expense.

<b>FUND ADVANCES NOT AUTHORIZED</b>	
Miscellaneous Expenses Allowance (MEA)	VA will not advance funds for MEA ( <a href="#">FTR 302-16.101</a> ). An employee may not use their Government Travel Charge Card for this expense.
Extended storage of household goods (HHG)	VA will not advance funds for extended storage of HHG ( <a href="#">FTR 302-8.4</a> ). An employee may not use their Government Travel Charge Card for this expense.
Residence transaction expenses	VA will not advance funds for residence transaction expenses ( <a href="#">FTR 302-11.307</a> ). An employee may not use their Government Travel Charge Card for this expense.
Relocation Income Tax Allowance (RITA)	VA will not advance funds for RITA Allowance ( <a href="#">FTR 302-17.12</a> ). An employee may not use their Government Travel Charge Card for this expense.

**Appendix F: Privately Owned Vehicle Mileage Rates**

<b>Per Privately Owned Vehicle (POV)</b>	<b>MALT MILEAGE RATE effective January 1, 2017<sup>1</sup></b>
Employee only	\$0.17
Spouse or domestic partner and immediate family members, if travelling separate from employee.	\$0.17

NOTE: The Monetary Allowance in Lieu of Transportation (MALT) rate is a payment for official PCS travel performed by an eligible traveler based on the official distance between authorized locations. The number of travelers in the POV has no bearing on the amount paid under MALT.

POV mileage will not be authorized for overseas tour renewal travel ([FTR §302-4.301](#)).

<sup>1</sup>The [PCS Travel Portal](#) main page provides the current MALT rate. The PCS Travel Portal will automatically apply the current MALT mileage rate.

**Appendix G: Temporary Quarters Subsistence Allowances**

A. Temporary Quarters Subsistence Expense (TQSE) Actual Expense (AE) Method. A sample<sup>1</sup> of a maximum daily allowable amount is:

<b>FISCAL YEAR 2016 RATES</b>	<b>EMPLOYEE AND OR UNACCOMPANIED SPOUSE OR DOMESTIC PARTNER</b>	<b>EMPLOYEE'S ACCOMPANIED SPOUSE, DOMESTIC PARTNER OR IMMEDIATE FAMILY MEMBERS 12 YEARS OR OLDER</b>	<b>IMMEDIATE FAMILY MEMBERS UNDER 12 YEARS OF AGE</b>
First 30 days of temporary quarters	Standard CONUS rate (e.g., <b>\$140.00</b> )	0.75 times standard CONUS rate; <b>\$105.00</b>	0.50 times standard CONUS rate; <b>\$70.00</b>
Any additional days of temporary quarters	0.75 times standard CONUS rate; <b>\$105.00</b>	0.50 times standard CONUS rate; <b>\$70.00</b>	0.40 times standard CONUS rate; <b>\$56.00</b>

NOTES:

1. The maximum allowable amount is the “maximum daily amount” multiplied by the number of days an employee incurs TQSE.
2. Rates will change after the first 30 days in temporary quarters.
3. The “maximum daily amount” is determined by adding the rates in the table for the employee and or spouse or domestic partner and each immediate family member authorized to occupy temporary quarters.
4. If a spouse or domestic partner occupies temporary quarters in lieu of the employee, or in a location separate from the employee, temporary quarters must be taken concurrently.
5. On the day TQSE begins and ends, meals and incidental expenses (M&IE) will be 75 percent of the applicable M&IE allowance.
6. For OCONUS, the applicable per diem rate is the locality rate established by the Secretary of State under [FTR §301-11.6](#).

<sup>1</sup>Per diem rates are subject to change based on GSA guidelines. Current CONUS per diem rates are available at [GSA Per Diem Rates](#).

B. TQSE Lump Sum (LS) Method. LS is based on the new official duty station locality rate in effect when the LS offer is accepted by the employee, and is paid in a lump sum. LS may be authorized for the number of days determined necessary, up to 30 days, with no extensions under any circumstances. If offered, the employee must choose between LS and AE methods, but is under no obligation to accept the LS option. Once the TQSE method is selected, it may not be changed. Payment of LS is based on the total number of individuals actually moving to the new permanent duty station, who will occupy temporary quarters ([FTR §302-6.10](#)). The maximum daily rate the employee may be paid is 75 percent of the maximum per diem rate; whereas the maximum the immediate family members may be paid is 25 percent of the maximum per diem rate.

The following is an example of LS for the first 30 days of temporary quarters, based on a family consisting of the employee, spouse, domestic partner, one child over 12 years of age, and one child under 12 years of age moving to a new locality with a per diem rate of \$131 per day. **No further days will be authorized and no receipts are required.**

<b>FAMILY ENTITLEMENT (Sample<sup>1</sup> LOCALITY RATE = \$131.00)</b>			
<b>FAMILY MEMBER</b>	<b>NUMBER OF DAYS</b>	<b>FACTOR</b>	<b>FIXED AMOUNT (Days x Adj. Rate)</b>
Employee	30	0.75 times Locality Rate = <b>\$98.25</b>	\$2,947.50
Spouse or domestic partner	30	0.25 times Locality Rate = <b>\$32.75</b>	\$982.50
Child Over 12	30	0.25 times Locality Rate = <b>\$32.75</b>	\$982.50
Child Under 12	30	0.25 times Locality Rate = <b>\$32.75</b>	\$982.50
<b>Total Entitlement</b>			<b>\$5,895.00</b>

<sup>1</sup>Per diem rates are subject to change based on GSA guidelines. Current CONUS per diem rates are available at [GSA Per Diem Rates](#).

## Appendix H: Home Marketing Incentive Program

The purpose of HMIP is to encourage employees to find a qualified buyer for their home while enrolled in the Appraised Value Offer Program (AVO). This program rewards Federal employees who, through their own initiative, save the agency money by finding a qualified buyer for their homes while enrolled in AVO, and when relocating in the interest of the Government. VA's AVO provides employees with assistance in selling their homes at their old official duty stations when transferring for the benefit of the Government and when authorized PCS allowances.

A. Homesale Options. Employees participating in AVO may sell their homes in one of two ways:

1. Amended Value Sale. If the employee is authorized to participate in AVO and finds a qualified buyer for the home, the Relocation Services Contractor (hereafter referred to as Contractor) will purchase the home from the employee for the negotiated sale price from the third party buyer. The contractor will close the transaction with the buyer and pay the applicable reasonable and customary seller's closing costs (inclusive of the real estate commission). VA will be billed the appropriate fee for an amended value sale. The closing with the buyer must be successfully completed for the employee to qualify for the HMI. For this service, VA pays a reduced fee on the home's sale price.
2. Appraised Value Sale. If the employee is authorized to participate in AVO and is unable to find a qualified buyer for the home, the contractor will make the employee an offer based on relocation appraisals. The employee has 60 calendar days after contractor notification of the appraised value offer to accept or decline the contractor's offer. The employee must meet mandatory marketing and inspection requirements in order to accept the appraised value offer. If the employee chooses to accept the contractor's offer, VA will pay an increased fee on the home's sale price for the service. The contractor maintains the home in its inventory and pays carrying costs until a qualified buyer is found. It is in VA's best interest to encourage employees to find a qualified buyer for the home because of the higher fee associated with AVO.

B. Requirements. When AVO is authorized in accordance with HR policy and an employee elects AVO, the employee must choose whether to participate or not to participate in HMIP.

1. The amount of the award is limited to 2 percent of the selling price of the residence, not to exceed \$8,000.
2. The HMI Award will be paid from the savings achieved by the lower fees incurred. The employee's new official duty station may fund the award to approved and qualifying employees.

3. Stations will review the results of the HMIP annually to determine if the program continues to result in a cost savings to the Department. If it is determined that the continuation of the program is not cost effective, the Department will provide a notice 30 days prior to discontinuing the program.

C. Procedures.

1. To participate in the HMIP, the employee must:

- a. Meet the requirements identified in paragraph B above;
- b. Elect to use AVO;
- c. List his or her residence with a network broker that participates in the Contractor's Relocation Services Program;
- d. Find a qualified buyer for the home while enrolled in AVO; and
- e. Have the sale of his or her home closed by the Relocation Services Contractor.

2. Exclusions. The following employees are not eligible for the HMIP:

- New hires or appointees;
- Employees not approved to use AVO;
- Employees who elect to sell their residences without enrolling in the Department's Relocation Services Program;
- Employees whose homes do not qualify for AVO portion of the Relocation Services Program;
- Cases where the buyer fails to close on the purchase of the home, and the Contractor provides an appraised value buy-out offer to employees for their homes;
- Employees whose homes are classified as a Special Property; or
- Employees participating in the Buyer Value Option Program (BVO).

3. Award Limitation. Employees are eligible for an award of two percent of the selling price of the home, not to exceed \$8,000.

4. Tax Implications. Awards made under the HMIP constitute taxable income to the employee and taxes will be withheld from the award.

5. Processing the Award:

a. The employee's FSC PCS Travel Counselor will initiate and complete the HMI Award Worksheet and Justification. The Counselor will have the eligible employee sign the certification on the HMI Award Worksheet and Justification document. Once signed, the Counselor will forward to the servicing HR staff office for completion and submission to the employee's authorizing official for approval (i.e., the official who authorized the employee's official change of station). The Counselor will maintain the copy of the worksheet in the employee's relocation file.

b. Upon receipt of the HMI Award Worksheet and Justification, the authorizing official will complete the [VA Form 4659, Incentive Awards Recommendation](#) . For guidance on processing VA Form 4659 reference [VA Directive 5017, Employee Recognition and Awards](#). The authorizing official must sign the VA Form 4659 and submit it along with the supporting documentation through the station's HR office.

6. Funding the Award. The gaining station or staff office will fund the HMI Award.

**Appendix I: Miscellaneous Expense Allowance Guidelines**

The Miscellaneous Expense Allowance (MEA) is to help defray some of the costs incurred due to relocating. The MEA is related to expenses that are common to living quarters, furnishings and household appliances, and to other general types of costs inherent in relocation of a place of residence. MEA can be used to cover expenses that cannot be easily categorized, such as carpet cleaning, replacement of window treatments, painting, automobile registration fees, connecting and disconnecting appliances, non-refundable utility fees and deposits, etc. Allowable expenses include, but are not limited to, the items listed below:

GENERAL EXPENSES	FEES AND DEPOSITS	LOSSES
Appliances	For connecting and disconnecting appliances, equipment, utilities or conversion of appliances for operation on available utilities.	
Rugs, draperies, and curtains	For cutting and fitting such items, moved from one residence quarters to another.	
Utilities (See <a href="#">FTR 302-10.204</a> for mobile homes)	Fees and deposits not offset by eventual refunds.	
Medical, dental, and food locker contracts		Losses that cannot be recovered by transfer or refund and are incurred due to early termination of a contract.
Private Institutional care contracts (such as that provided for handicapped or invalid dependents only)		Losses that cannot be recovered by transfer or refund and are incurred due to early termination of a contract.
Privately-owned automobiles	Registration, Driver's License, and use taxes imposed when bringing vehicles into certain jurisdictions.	

GENERAL EXPENSES	FEES AND DEPOSITS	LOSSES
Transportation of pets	Only costs associated with dogs, cats, and other house pets, as well as costs due to stringent air carrier rules are included. Other animals (horses, fish, birds, various rodents, etc.) are excluded because of their size, exotic nature, or restrictions on shipping, host-country restrictions, and special handling difficulties. Not included are inoculations, examinations, boarding quarantine, or other costs in the moving process.	

## Appendix J: Items Allowed, and Not Allowed To Be Shipped With Household Goods

A. Property Transportable Unless Prohibited. The following items may be included in the shipment of household goods (HHG), unless the commercial carrier prohibits such inclusion:

- All-Terrain Vehicles;
- Riding lawn mowers;
- Jet skis;
- Golf carts;
- Boats that easily fit into the commercial carrier's moving van; or
- Pianos.

Note: If any of these items are included in the shipment of HHG, their weight will be factored into the 18,000-pound limit. The employee should indicate their intention to ship any of the above items on their pre-inventory so that the commercial carrier can plan accordingly.

B. Property Not Transportable at Government Expense. The following items will not be included in the shipment of HHG:

- Automobiles, trucks, vans, and similar motor vehicles;
- Boats that do not easily fit into the commercial carrier's moving van;
- Airplanes or gliders;
- Farm vehicles;
- Major vehicle parts (e.g., engines);
- Live animals (e.g., birds, fowl, insects, reptiles);
- Cord wood and building materials;
- Alcoholic beverages;
- Property for resale or commercial use; or

- Flammable and or explosive materials (e.g., fireworks).

Note: The employee should contact the commercial carrier regarding any items owned that he or she is not sure whether to include for shipment as part of HHG.

## Appendix K: Shipment of Mobile Homes

The term "mobile home" refers to traditional trailer homes as well as boats. Employees will be permitted to transport a mobile home provided they certify that it is being used as the current residence and will be used as the permanent residence at the new official duty station.

The FSC PCS Travel Counselor will be contacted to obtain a GSA cost comparison. The GSA cost comparison will be calculated based on the estimated cost of moving 18,000 pounds of household goods (HHG) and temporarily storing the goods for 90 calendar days. The employee will not be reimbursed for any costs associated with moving the mobile home that exceed the amount of the GSA cost comparison.

If employees select a commercial carrier to move their mobile homes, reimbursement will be the incurred expense for the following items, but not to exceed the GSA cost comparison amount:

- Carrier's charge for transporting the mobile home;
- Ferry fares, and 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; and
- Costs of preparing the mobile home for movement.

The following expenses will not be reimbursed:

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

If employees tow or drive their mobile homes on their own, they will be reimbursed \$0.11 per mile in addition to the current privately owned vehicle reimbursement rate (for CONUS transit), plus any ferry fares and bridge, road, and tunnel tolls.

## Appendix L: Property Management Services

“Property Management Services” are programs provided by private companies for a fee, which help an employee to manage his or her residence at the old official duty station as a rental property. These services typically include, but are not limited to, obtaining a tenant, negotiating the lease, inspecting the property regularly, managing repairs and maintenance, enforcing lease terms, collecting the rent, paying the mortgage, and other carrying expenses from rental proceeds and/or funds of the employee, and accounting for the transactions and providing periodic reports to the employee.

A. Property Management Services. These services are discretionary expenses which the VA may offer to eligible employees. Reimbursement to the employee for property management services will not exceed VA’s contracted negotiated rate with the third party vendor ([FTR § 302–15.70\(b\)](#)). Eligible employees include:

- Transfers to locations outside the United States, and
- Employees under a TCS assignment.

B. Title. Employees and/or a member(s) of the employee’s immediate family must hold title to a residence which the employee is eligible to sell at Government expense.

C. Employee Options. Employees have the option to either utilize the property management services program facilitated by the relocation services contractor, or to secure their own property management company and pay for any applicable fees to the company of their choice. An employee is not obligated to use an authorized property management services allowance. The employee may choose to sell his or her residence at their own expense instead of retaining the property.

1. VA will pay property management services for the duration of the foreign post assignment until the employee has transferred back to an official duty station in the United States for the duration of the TCS assignment or until separated from Government service.
2. If participating in the relocation services contractor property management program, the contractor will bill VA for the contracted service fees. The employee will not need to seek reimbursement for property management fees.

D. Election of Employee to Secure Their Own Property Management Company. Employees opting not to use the property management program with the contractor will be required to pay for all fees for property management and seek reimbursement for customary and reasonable fees related to property management services and allowable under regulation. The fees should be clearly specified in the contract with the property manager. The employee will submit an expense form accompanied by all paid-in-full

receipts and the property management contract to the FSC for review and reimbursement.

E. Reimbursement and Taxes. When VA reimburses the employee directly for property management services, the employee will be taxed on the amount of expenses that VA pays for property management services, whether VA reimburses the employee directly or whether VA pays a relocation services company to manage the employee's residence. VA must pay the employee a relocation income tax allowance (RITA) for the additional Federal, State, and local income taxes the employee incurs on property management expenses for which VA reimburses the employee or pays on the employee's behalf.

**Appendix M: Temporary Change of Station Allowances**

<b>TEMPORARY CHANGE OF STATION (TCS)</b>	
<b>RELOCATION ALLOWANCES VA MUST PAY OR REIMBURSE</b>	<b>RELOCATION ALLOWANCES VA HAS DISCRETIONARY AUTHORITY TO PAY OR REIMBURSE</b>
Transportation and per diem for employee and immediate family member(s)	Househunting trip expenses
Miscellaneous expense allowances	Temporary Quarters Subsistence Expense
Transportation and temporary storage of HHG	
Transportation of a mobile home or boat used as a primary residence in lieu of the transportation of HHG	
Transportation of a Privately Owned Vehicle	
Relocation income tax allowance (RITA)	
Property management services Lease break expenses	

**NOTES:**

1. VA will fully fund both the initial relocation and subsequent return associated with a TCS at the time the employee is issued a TCS authorization.
2. The TCS refers to the relocation to a new official duty station and subsequent return. As it is one assignment, and one set of orders, funding needs to be obligated for the entire relocation.
3. In a 1984 Comptroller General decision (64 Comp. Gen. 45) regarding properly obligating funds for relocation, the Comptroller General ruled that the transfer of the employee is a bona fide need of the year in which he is ordered to transfer and the expenses must be charged against funds current in that year.

**Appendix N: Internal Revenue Service Publications Associated With Relocation**

- Publication 463 - Travel, Entertainment, and Gift Expenses
- Publication 521 - Moving Expenses
- Publication 525 - Taxable and Nontaxable Changes
- Publication 553 - Highlights of Current Tax Changes