

FDA Staff Manual Guides, Volume III – General Administration

Financial Management - Budget

Permanent Change of Station - Civilian Employees

Effective Date: 12/18/2024

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1. Purpose.

This Staff Manual Guide (SMG) establishes the policy for relocation allowances for an eligible Civilian employee or newly appointed employee in accordance with Federal Travel Regulations (FTR) § 302-1. Relocation is executed through an Interagency Agreement (IAA) between FDA and Department of Treasury, Bureau of Fiscal Services, Treasury Administrative Resource Center (TARC).

2. References.

- A. 41 CFR Part 302 of the Federal Travel Regulations (FTR)
(<https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-41/subtitle-F/chapter-302>)
- B. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) Travel Manual
(<https://intranet.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/2023-01/hhs-travel-policy-manual.pdf>)

3. Definitions.

- A. **Relocation Incentive:** An incentive paid to a current federal employee who must relocate to accept a position in a different geographic area (at least 50 miles or more) if it has been determined that the position is critical to the mission of the organization and is likely to be difficult to fill in the absence of such an incentive.
- B. **Relocation Allowances or “Expenses”:** Costs incident to the permanent change of assigned work location (for a period of 12 months or more) of an existing employee or upon recruitment of a new employee. *Note: Relocation*

allowances or “expenses” may be paid in accordance with General Services Administration, Federal Travel Regulation, Chapter 302, Relocation Allowances.

4. Policy.

A. General

1. FDA follows the FTR (Part 302) and DHHS Travel Manual when authorizing/approving all FDA relocation entitlements and allowances.
2. All entitlements and allowances being offered must be approved by the appropriate Center/Office Approving Official(s).
3. Relocations are processed using [moveLINQ](#), a relocation system.
4. Any changes (e.g., amendments) that increase the cost of the relocation, after the initial approval, will be routed back to FDA, and must be reviewed by the appropriate Center/Office Approving Official for approval or denial.
5. Authorizations, amendments, and vouchers that are routed to FDA from TARC must be signed by the appropriate Approving Officials within three (3) days of receipt.

B. Mandatory and Discretionary Expenses by type of relocation (41 CFR 302-3.101)

1. As a relocated employee, there are mandatory and discretionary relocation expenses. Once the FDA has decided to pay or reimburse relocation expenses, all the mandatory allowances must be paid or reimbursed, unless otherwise stated, for that type of relocation. The discretionary relocation allowances indicated for that type of relocation may or may not be paid. Decisions on whether or not to offer discretionary expenses to relocating employees are made by their Center/Office.

C. Transportation and Temporary Storage of Household Goods (HHG) and Professional Books, Papers, and Equipment

1. Below is the list of items that are included in the HHG Shipment costs, and do not require an additional, separate approval (unless above the thresholds listed).
 - a. Additional Transportation Charge (ATC)

- b. Parking permits
- c. All long carry charges at origin and at destination
- d. All stair carries
- e. One-time elevator charges
- f. All charges associated with heavy or bulky items (weight additive and hoists may be billed separately)
- g. All charges associated with pianos/organs to include tying the keys and removal of legs
- h. Extra labor for gun safes up to \$1,000 per government bill of lading (GBL) (any amount above this must have prior approval)
- i. Shuttle service
- j. Crating/Uncrating up to \$1,000 (any amount above this must have prior approval)
- k. Servicing of appliances, such as refrigerators and washing machines, to include all fees associated with servicing front load washers/dryers and pedestals
- l. Debris pickup
- m. Disassembly/Assembly of all types of beds

5. Responsibilities.

A. Responsibilities of the Office of Talent Solutions (OTS)

1. Manage the FDA's Recruitment, Relocation, and Retention Incentives (3R's).
2. Ensure the pre-consultation checklist, vacancy announcement (if applicable), and advertisement include a relocation benefit is approved.
3. Establish and maintain documentation and records containing the justification and service agreement. If applicable, for each issuance of an incentive payment, make such documentation available for review and analysis upon request by the OTS, HHS' Office of Human Resources (OHR) or Office of Personnel Management (OPM).

4. Ensure compliance with regulatory and policy requirements prior to processing the incentive request for payment.

B. Responsibilities of the Office of Financial Management (OFM)

1. Provide accounting structure requirements to TARC.
2. Provide the amount of each relocation level expected each year to TARC.
3. Post accounts receivable in Unified Financial Management System (UFMS) and seek reimbursement from debtors.

C. Responsibilities of the Center/Office Approving Official

1. Upon completion of all necessary administration (i.e., paperwork) required for the relocation, including execution by the employee of required service agreements, act as the designated Approving Official for the purpose of authorizing travel associated with the relocation.
2. Access and submit requests for relocations and approve/reject documents in the [moveLINQ](#) Agency Contact Portal.
3. Review and provide determination for unusual accessorial charges within one (1) business day.

D. Responsibilities of the Center/Office

1. Ensure adequate source funding based on proper application of appropriation rules.
2. Determine if relocation benefits will be offered to an employee as part of job offer.
3. Ensure the recruitment checklist and vacancy announcement (if applicable) or advertisement and job offer document the approval for payment of this benefit.
4. Determine if any discretionary relocation expenses will be offered to an employee.
5. Ensure appropriate points of contact are designated as Approving Officials and communicate needed routing and system access changes to TARC.

E. Responsibilities of the TARC

1. Assign a coordinator to each relocatee that will contact and counsel employee on entitlements and processes.
2. Ensure allowances are authorized and calculated in accordance with federal regulations related to travel and customer Agency relocation policy.
3. Prepare travel authorization forms.
4. Procure and make arrangements for home sale services through a third-party provider on a GSA schedule, when authorized.
5. Make carrier arrangements using GSA's Transportation Management Services Solution (TMSS) based on best value to the government, as determined by factors such as cost, availability, quality of service, and prior experience.
6. Approve all normal accessorial charges.
7. Forward Relocation Income Tax Allowance (RITA) Certificate Statement to the employee for RITA Claims.
8. Serve as the Certifying Officers for home sale services and Transportation Officer for carrier invoices.
9. Identify any accounts receivable and forward the information to the FDA's accounting office for collection.
10. Provide detail level reporting for all relocation travel activity.
11. Maintain relocation records in accordance with federal retention requirements.

F. Responsibilities of the Relocates/Employees

1. Access, submit vouchers and receipts, and sign/reject documents in the [moveLINQ](#) Employee Portal.
2. Submit necessary documentation for reimbursement.
3. Upload necessary approvals required for processing.

6. Effective Date.

The effective date of this guide is 12/18/2024.

7. Document History – SMG 2310.6, “Permanent Change of Station – Civilian Employees”.

Status (I, R, C)	Date Approved	Location of Change History	Contact	Approving Official
Initial	12/13/2024	N/A	OO/OFBA/OFM	Evan Chiverton, Acting Director of the Office of Financial Management (OFM)

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