



Relocation Policy – Bargaining Employees

Handbook F-15-C

January 2016
Transmittal Letter

- A. Purpose.** Handbook F-15-C, *Relocation Policy – Bargaining Employees*, incorporates and revises policy for bargaining employees that was previously included in Handbook F-12, *Relocation Policy*.
- B. Explanation.** Sections of Handbook F-12 have been replaced to update relocation policy in keeping with the Postal Service's strategic transformation initiatives.
- C. Distribution.** Handbook F-15-C is available on the Postal Service Intranet.
 1. Go to <http://blue.usps.gov>.
 2. Under “Essential Links” in the left-hand column, click *PolicyNet*.
 3. Click *HBKs*.
- D. Comments and Questions.** Address any comments and questions on the content of this handbook to:

CORPORATE ACCOUNTING/RELOCATION UNIT
US POSTAL SERVICE
475 L'ENFANT PLAZA SW RM 8831
WASHINGTON DC 20260-5240
- E. Effective Date.** This handbook is effective immediately.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Richard Rosoff".

Richard Rosoff
(A) Vice President, Controller

Contents

Transmittal Letter	i
1 Introduction	1
11 Organization	1
12 Setting Policy, Approving Relocation, and Related Travel	1
121 Role of the Postal Service	1
122 Role of the Relocation-Management Firm	1
123 Role of the Approving Official	1
124 Authorizing Relocation Benefits	2
13 Responsibilities of the Transferee.....	2
131 Relocation Agreement.....	2
132 Commitment to Move and Remain at the New Duty Station	2
133 Liabilities	2
134 Planning Your Travel.....	2
135 Avoid Unnecessary Expenses.....	3
136 Submitting Expense Reports	3
137 Lump Sum Allowance - Expenses	3
2 Relocation Benefits	5
21 What This Chapter Covers	5
211 Benefits	5
22 Definitions	6
221 Approving Official	6
222 Broker/Agent Network.....	6
223 Effective Date of Transfer	6
224 Household Goods.....	6
225 Immediate Family Members	6
226 Mobile Homes	7
227 Modular Homes	7
228 New Duty Station	8
229 Principal Residence.....	8
2210 Relocation E-Mail Address	8
2211 Relocation Consultant.....	8
2212 Relocation-Management Firm.....	8
2213 Report-to-Work Date.....	8
2214 Spouse Employed by the Postal Service	8

2215 Transferred Employee.....	8
2216 Relocation Leave.....	8
23 Eligibility for Relocation Benefits	9
231 Distance Requirements.....	9
232 Requirement for Spouse Employed by the Postal Service.....	9
233 Liabilities	10
24 Limitations on Relocation Benefits	10
241 Maximum Time for Completing a Relocation	10
242 Time Extension for Military Service	10
243 Time Extension for Duty Outside CONUS.....	10
244 Declining the Transfer	10
245 Waiving Repayment of Relocation Expenses	10
246 Exercising Retreat Rights	11
25 Relocation-Related Travel Time	11
251 Advance Round-Trip Travel Time	11
252 En Route Travel Time	12
3 Expense Payments and Reimbursements	13
31 What This Chapter Covers	13
32 Lump-Sum Allowance	13
33 En Route Travel Expenses	14
331 En Route Travel.....	14
332 Expenses for Transportation, Lodging, and Per Diem	14
333 Exclusion for the 12-hour Rule	14
334 En Route Travel Completed in One Day	14
335 Use of a Privately Owned Vehicle for En Route Travel.....	14
336 Minimum-Travel-Distance Requirements	15
337 Computing Per Diem Rates Based on Minimum Driving Distance.....	15
338 Deviating From the Most Direct Route	15
339 Use of Government- or Postal Service-Owned Vehicle	15
3310 Claiming En Route Travel Expenses	15
34 Miscellaneous-Expense Allowance	15
341 Claiming an Allowance Without Supporting Documentation	15
342 Various Allowable Benefits	16
35 Requesting Payment	16
351 Criteria Required for Payment of Miscellaneous-Expense Allowance:.....	16
352 Exception	17
36 Tax Implications of Relocation	17
361 Relocation Expenses Subject to Income Tax	17
361.1 Transactions Reported as Income.....	17
361.2 Reporting Moving Expenses and Withholding Taxes	17
362 Relocation Expenses Not Subject to Income-Tax Withholding	18

Contents

4 Movement and Storage of Household Goods	19
41 Making Shipping Arrangements	19
411 Policy.....	19
412 RMF Services and Your Responsibilities	19
412.1 RMF Services	19
412.2 Your Responsibilities.....	20
42 Renting a Commercial-brand Trailer or Van Rather Than Using RMF Transportation.....	20
421 Documentation and Reimbursement	20
422 Other Incidental Expenses	20
423 Acceptable Documentation.....	21
424 Reimbursement Limitation	21
425 Reimbursement for Temporary Storage.....	21
426 Insuring Property.....	21
427 Expenses for Temporary Storage Within CONUS	21
427.1 Temporary-Storage Expenses.....	21
427.2 Documentation You Must Supply	21
43 Privately Owned Vehicle.....	21
431 What Is Included	21
432 Conditions for Shipping a Privately Owned Vehicle	22
44 Costs Associated With Moving a Privately Owned Vehicle	22
441 Driving a Privately Owned Vehicle to the New Duty Station.....	22
442 Costs of Shipping a Privately Owned Vehicle Outside/Inside CONUS.....	22
45 Receiving an Allowance to Move a Mobile Home	23
451 Computing Distances	23
452 Computing Benefits	23
452.1 How Much You May Claim	23
452.2 Nonreimbursable Items	23
452.3 Transportation by Other Than Commercial Carrier	23
452.4 Mixed-Method Transportation.....	23
5 Residence Transactions and Lease Break	25
51 Conditions and Requirements	25
511 Settlement Expenses	25
512 Conditions for Reimbursement or Payment	25
52 Selling Your Home at the Old Duty Station	26
521 General	26
53 Home-Finding Assistance and Mortgage Counseling	27
531 RMF Marketing Assistance	27
532 Home-Finding Assistance	27
533 Home-Mortgage Counseling.....	27

54	Reimbursable and Nonreimbursable Expenses	27
541	Overall Limitations on Reimbursement	27
541.1	Limit of 10 Percent of Sales Price	27
541.2	Limit of 5 Percent of Purchase Price	27
542	Real-Estate Commissions	28
543	Other Advertising and Selling Expenses	28
544	Costs of Selling or Buying a Home	28
544.1	Costs of Selling or Buying a Home	28
544.2	Closing Costs for Selling a Home at the Old Duty Station	28
544.3	Closing Costs for Buying a Home at the New Duty Station	30
545	Other Settlement Costs	31
545.1	Finance Charges Under the Truth in Lending Act and Regulation Z	31
545.2	Constructing a House	31
546	Expenses of Lease Break	31
546.1	Reimbursement for Lease Break	31
546.2	Claim for Lease-Break Expenses	32
55	Submitting for Reimbursement of Real-Estate Expenses	32
551	How to Apply for Reimbursement and How to Document Expenses	32
551.1	Claims for Reimbursement of Real-Estate Expenses	32
551.2	Documentation Required to Support Real-Estate Expenses	32
552	How Your Claim Will Be Reviewed and Paid	33
6	Deviations From Policy	35
7	Completing Relocation Expense Reports	37
71	Using the RMF Expense Reports Online System	37
711	Supporting Documentation for Expense Reports	37
712	Organizing Receipts	37
713	Receipts for Sale or Purchase of a Residence	37
72	Submitting Expense Reports	38

List of Exhibits

Exhibit 544.2	
HUD-1 Settlement-Statement Reference List — Old Duty Station	29
Exhibit 544.3	
HUD-1 Settlement-Statement Reference List — New Duty Station	30

This page intentionally left blank

1 Introduction

11 Organization

This handbook is organized to help you find information as quickly as possible. In general, procedures follow the typical step-by-step relocation sequence, from receiving authorization of benefits to completing requests for reimbursement of expenses.

12 Setting Policy, Approving Relocation, and Related Travel

121 **Role of the Postal Service**

Title 39, United States Code, section 410, gives the Postal Service™ the authority to establish its own relocation policy. This handbook contains current policy. All Postal Service relocation activities for bargaining unit employees and equivalent grade positions in the Inspection Service must comply with the policies stated in this handbook.

122 **Role of the Relocation-Management Firm**

All relocation services have been outsourced to a relocation-management firm (RMF) to ensure that employees receive uniform information on authorized relocation benefits. The RMF provides guidance to transferring employees on Postal Service policy and processes, disburses expense reimbursement to ensure prompt payment of reimbursable expenses, and assists with arrangements for moving and storing household goods.

123 **Role of the Approving Official**

A Postal Career Executive Service (PCES) employee or designee* must be the approving official for relocation authorizations. As an approving official, you must review this handbook thoroughly in order to discuss relocation benefits when interviewing candidates for vacant positions or reassigning employees. The PCES employee must be aware of his or her obligations and responsibilities and those of the transferees.

*If the designee is the approving official, the PCES manager must be copied on the authorization submission.

124 Authorizing Relocation Benefits

The approving official (PCES executive) at the relocating employee's new permanent duty station authorizes benefits by completing and submitting the relocation template via e-mail, following the instructions in the *Manager's Toolkit*.

13 Responsibilities of the Transferee

Relocation benefits enable transferring employees to physically move to a new principal residence and assume their position responsibilities as quickly as possible by offsetting additional housing expenses for a short period. You must use the same care and prudence as if you were relocating at your own expense.

Postal Service employees should thoroughly review this guide to understand their benefits and responsibilities.

131 Relocation Agreement

Transferring employees will be provided with a login ID to the RMF website. They must accept the agreement online in order to proceed with the relocation process. Employees who do not have Internet access will receive the agreement by mail.

132 Commitment to Move and Remain at the New Duty Station

By accepting the relocation agreement, *an employee is agreeing to:*

- Physically move to the new duty station.
- Remain at the new duty station, within the Postal Service, for at least one year from the report-to-work date.

133 Liabilities

An employee who used relocation benefits but declined to move to the new duty station, did not complete the one-year commitment, or left the Postal Service before completing his or her commitment must repay all relocation expenses incurred by the Postal Service. (See [244, Declining the Transfer](#).) An employee who misrepresents his or her need for any relocation benefit may be required to repay the Postal Service for that benefit. Examples include the misrepresentation of family members or the failure to disclose a home owned in a new duty station.

134 Planning Your Travel

Plan your itinerary to complete the relocation with minimal time and expense. The travel schedule must be approved by both the old and new duty-station officials. Select the least costly transportation option that provides adequate service.

135 Avoid Unnecessary Expenses

Relocating employees may be eligible to receive various relocation benefits under this handbook. Depending on the benefit, relocating employees may be required to submit an expense report for reimbursement of those relocation expenses. The Postal Service gives relocating employees flexibility and will reimburse them for allowable expenses. However, the RMF audits all expense reports, and the Postal Service reserves the right to reduce what it determines to be excessive expenses. “Excessive expenses” refers to expenses that are not allowable under the relocation guidelines of the handbook.

136 Submitting Expense Reports

Do not use eTravel to submit relocation expense reports. The RMF provides an electronic system to submit these reports online. Offices without Internet access may use paper vouchers supplied by the RMF.

The RMF sends transferring employees their payments and reimbursements. The relocation consultant will explain expense-report submission and documentation. See chapter [7](#) for more information. All relocation expenses are charged to the new duty station’s finance number.

137 Lump Sum Allowance - Expenses

Under this handbook, employees may receive a single lump sum allowance which is intended to help offset advance round trip and temporary quarters relocation expenses. The Postal Service does not require employees who receive this lump sum allowance to submit or keep receipts for purchases made with this allowance, and the employee may use the lump sum allowance as he or she sees fit. The lump sum allowance is not subject to [135](#) of this handbook.

This page intentionally left blank

2 Relocation Benefits

21 What This Chapter Covers

This chapter outlines the relocation benefits that are available to eligible Postal Service bargaining unit employees. Bargaining unit employees hired from outside the agency are not eligible for these benefits.

211 Benefits

You may be eligible to receive these relocation benefits.

Benefit	Bargaining	Reference
Pre-calculated lump-sum allowance ¹ includes:	Yes	32
Advance round-trip travel ²	10 consecutive calendar days	Advance Round-Trip Travel Time, 251
Temporary quarters ³	30 days	Subchapter 32
En route travel to new duty station	Yes	En Route Travel Time, 252 and 33
Miscellaneous-expense allowance	\$150 single, \$300 family	34
Tax assistance — federal, state, OASDI tax for breaking lease ⁴	Yes	36
Use of RMF for:		
Household-goods shipment	Yes	Chapter 4
Household-goods storage ⁵	60 days	Chapter 4
RMF marketing assistance	Yes	531
Home-mortgage counseling	Yes	533
Home-finding assistance	Yes	532
Old-home closing costs	Yes	544.2
New-home closing costs	Yes	544.3
Expenses of lease break	Yes	546

1. Lump-sum allowance to help defray travel costs for advance round trip, and temporary-quarters expenses.
2. Travel time for one advance round trip, not to exceed 10 consecutive calendar days. Scheduled work days in this travel period are recorded as work hours. The lump-sum allowance is calculated to include advance round-trip expenses. Benefit not applicable to external hires or if transferring from another government agency.
3. Temporary-quarters allowance is calculated for 30 days and is included in the lump-sum allowance. Benefit not applicable to external hires or if transferring from another government agency. See [32](#).

4. *Federal Insurance Contributions Act for old age, survivors, disability insurance (OASDI) withholding will be tax-assisted. Medicare withholding is not tax-assisted.*
5. *Storage of household goods may be extended to a maximum of 75 days when authorized by the approving official.*

22 Definitions

Unless otherwise specifically provided in these regulations, the following definitions apply to relocation:

221 **Approving Official**

A PCES employee at the new duty station must be the approving official for relocation authorizations.

222 **Broker/Agent Network**

You are encouraged to use the real estate brokers and agents affiliated with the relocation management firm for residence transactions that the Postal Service will reimburse. Those who opt to use an outside broker must agree to pay any fees entitled to the RMF broker/agent.

223 **Effective Date of Transfer**

The date a new position is effective is shown on PS Form 50, *Notification of Personnel Action* (exception to Standard Form 50).

224 **Household Goods**

Household goods are personal property that may be transported legally in interstate commerce and that belong to you or your immediate family at the time you are notified of the transfer before shipment or storage begins. The term includes household furnishings, equipment and appliances, furniture, clothing, books, and similar property. You must use the RMF to move and store your household goods.

Household goods do not include items such as airplanes, recreational vehicles, camper trailers, boats over 14 feet, utility and boat trailers, storage sheds, handguns, ammunition, pets, birds, livestock, plants, building materials, or any collection of property, such as wine, classic or antique cars, food stores, or home-office equipment used to conduct a business, other commercial enterprise, or hobby.

225 **Immediate Family Members**

Only immediate family members who belong to your household when you are notified of your assignment and who are moving with you are eligible for relocation benefits. A family member's status determines eligibility. Family members may be any of the following shown in the table below.

Family Member(s)	Details
Your spouse	<p>Refers to a legally married partner in a marriage that took place in any state or foreign jurisdiction that recognizes the marriage, even if the couple resides in a state that does not permit or recognize same-sex marriage.</p> <p>Note: Your spouse may be eligible for certain benefits as a result of your authorized relocation if employed by the Postal Service.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Common law: Common-law spouses are covered by the term "spouse" when the state they are moving from recognizes common-law marriage and verification can be provided that all state requirements have been met. ■ Separation and Divorce: If you are currently separating or divorcing and your spouse is not relocating with you, your spouse is not eligible for benefits. This status can also affect your eligibility for home-sale assistance programs. For detailed information on eligibility for residence transactions, see 512. ■ Fiancée: A fiancée is not eligible for benefits. If the marriage occurs during the relocation process, your spouse may be eligible for financial assistance with certain relocation activities that occur after the date of marriage.
Your children	<p>Refers to your natural offspring, stepchildren, adopted children, grandchildren, legal minor wards, or other immediate-family-member children who are under your or your spouse's legal guardianship. Each of these children must meet one of the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Unmarried and under 21 years of age. ■ Physically or mentally incapable of supporting himself or herself, regardless of age. ■ An unmarried full-time student under 23 years of age. ■ A child born after your effective date of transfer is considered a part of your immediate family.
Your immediate-family-member parents	<p>Refers to your parents or your spouse's parents who are considered part of your immediate family and who receive at least 51 percent of their support from you or your spouse.</p>

226 Mobile Homes

These are manufactured dwellings that are constructed on a metal frame, designed to be mobile, and used as a residence. Manufactured/mobile homes have metal frames that are not removed and may have a vehicle identification number (VIN). If wheels, axles, towing mechanisms, or related mobility hardware features have been removed and the structure has been affixed to a foundation, it is still a mobile home.

227 Modular Homes

Modular or system-built homes that are constructed in a manufacturing facility in sections and then transported to a job site 70 percent to 95 percent complete are not considered mobile homes. The sections are lifted onto the home's foundation by crane. Modular homes are not constructed on frames and are often considered higher quality than stick-built homes because factories have controlled conditions.

228 New Duty Station

The permanently assigned location listed on PS Form 50 is where an employee will regularly report for work.

229 Principal Residence

Principal residence refers to your main home. It does not include other homes that are owned or kept by you or your immediate family members, such as seasonal or second homes (e.g., a beach home). A principal residence is the dwelling you occupy before leaving for the new job location and the new home within the area of your new workplace.

2210 Relocation E-Mail Address

Transferring employees or hiring managers can use e-mail to obtain relocation information. Contact the Relocation Unit by typing RELOCATION into the address line in Outlook or by typing *F47R00@usps.gov* from an outside server. Relocation information may also be obtained by dialing 202-268-8700.

2211 Relocation Consultant

The RMF will assign you a relocation consultant to assist with your move. The relocation consultant will explain available relocation benefits and answer questions about each phase of the move.

2212 Relocation-Management Firm

The RMF is a firm the Postal Service uses to provide counseling on postal relocation policy and services for residential transactions, movement of household goods, and relocation-expense reimbursements.

2213 Report-to-Work Date

This is the date an employee reports to the new duty station.

2214 Spouse Employed by the Postal Service

If you are authorized for relocation benefits and your spouse is also a Postal Service employee, only you may receive benefits. Your spouse will be granted advance round-trip travel time and en route travel time. Spousal travel benefits must be used within your relocation time period.

2215 Transferred Employee

This is an employee who is transferred from one duty station to another for permanent duty.

2216 Relocation Leave

Employees are eligible for paid time off for relocation-related activities, such as packing, delivering, and unpacking household goods. Employees are authorized to use up to five days (eight-hour increments) of relocation leave. These days do not have to be consecutive. If the employee's spouse also

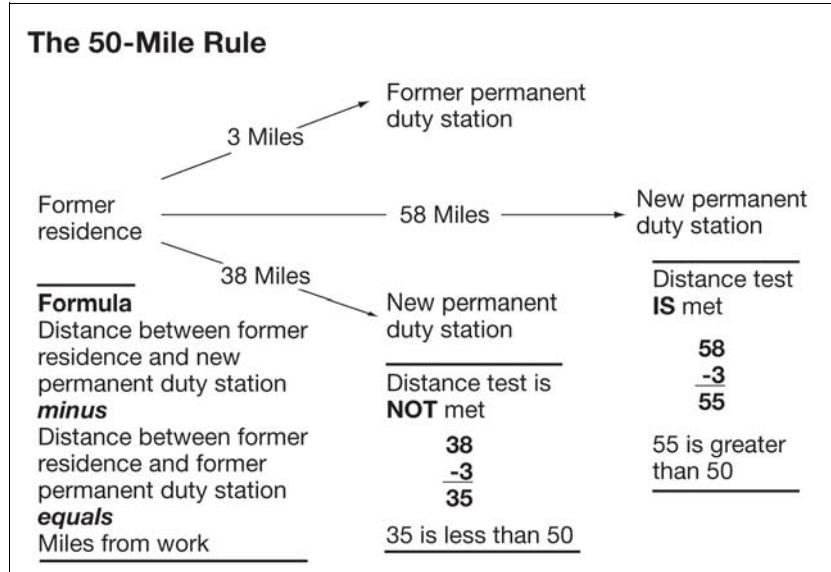
works for the Postal Service, he or she may use this type of leave. Relocation leave is charged to Code 080 in TACS.

23 Eligibility for Relocation Benefits

231 Distance Requirements

To qualify for relocation benefits, employees must meet the following distance requirement:

- a. The distance between the old residence and the new duty station must be at least 50 miles more than the distance between the old residence and the old duty station. This is known as the IRS 50-mile rule. If the distance is less than 100 miles, you must move at least half the distance closer to the new duty station.
- b. The Postal Service also requires you to physically move your household to the new duty station. Postal Service personnel verify distance moved by using Internet mapping tools, and the determination they make is final. The illustration and formula below explain how the rule works.



232 Requirement for Spouse Employed by the Postal Service

If you and your spouse are employed by the Postal Service and are both relocating to the same area, only one of you will receive full relocation benefits. Your spouse is eligible as a family member only if he or she is moving to the new job location. Your spouse is eligible for advance round-trip travel time while searching for a permanent residence and en route travel time when leaving the former residence and traveling to the new duty station. Time spent for these trips are to be charged as work hours.

233 Liabilities

If you do not meet the distance rule as required by policy, do not stay for one year in the new location, or do not physically move your household to the area of the new duty station, you must repay any relocation expenses the Postal Service incurs on your behalf. If you stay at the new duty location for less than one year, the portion you must repay will be prorated based upon the time remaining in the one-year agreement.

24 Limitations on Relocation Benefits

Relocation benefits are provided to help you move quickly to your new duty station. These benefits help offset duplicate housing expenses for a short period. It is to your advantage to complete your move as quickly as possible.

241 Maximum Time for Completing a Relocation

The maximum time to complete your move and receive reimbursement is one year from the date you report to work. All allowable travel and residence transactions must be completed and the employee reimbursed within one year of his or her reporting date to the new duty station. Relocation benefits must not be delayed.

242 Time Extension for Military Service

The period for completing a relocation may be extended for time spent in active military service.

243 Time Extension for Duty Outside CONUS

If you are reporting for duty outside of the continental United States (CONUS), you may have the relocation period extended if time is lost as a result of shipping restrictions.

244 Declining the Transfer

If you decline a transfer after receiving relocation funds from the RMF or incur relocation-related expenses that the Postal Service paid on your behalf, you must repay them or a prorated amount that reflects the remaining time in your one-year agreement.

245 Waiving Repayment of Relocation Expenses

If you are transferred to a new duty station for the Postal Service's benefit before completing your one-year commitment, repayment of relocation benefits is waived. You, the employee, are not required to obtain a waiver under this circumstance. Rather, the gaining area controller or functional Headquarters manager must submit a letter waiving repayment of all expenses to the manager of corporate accounting (Headquarters) or the manager of travel and relocation. The letter must be accompanied by an approval of the transfer from the functional vice president. All current fiscal-year costs of the original move will be transferred to the gaining office.

Note: If you are in the process of relocating and choose to accept a new position that requires a move, any unused relocation benefits from the current relocation will end after you receive authorization for new benefits.

246 **Exercising Retreat Rights**

If you are eligible to exercise retreat rights and choose to return to your old duty station, you will not be required to repay the costs of your relocation. However, you must reconcile any funds that were advanced to you that remain outstanding.

Relocation benefits are not provided for the move back to the old duty station.

25 Relocation-Related Travel Time

If you are authorized for relocation benefits, the following relocation-related travel may occur.

251 **Advance Round-Trip Travel Time**

Advance round-trip travel time is provided so employees can find a new residence within the area of their new duty station. The approving official can authorize one trip of no more than 10 consecutive calendar days (including travel time and holidays/scheduled days off).

When circumstances warrant, the Postal Service reserves the right to consider the distances between the old and new duty stations and the mode of transportation being used. The Postal Service may never authorize a trip of more than 10 consecutive calendar days for advance round-trip travel.

The following conditions apply:

- a. You must take the trip before reporting to your new duty station.
- b. Time will be recorded as work hours for scheduled work days while you are absent, and you will not be charged leave.
- c. Trip expenses will be included in the lump-sum allowance (see [32](#)).
- d. You must drive your privately owned vehicle if the mileage from your old residence to your new duty station is less than 300 miles. The most direct route must be taken to limit travel time.
- e. If you own or lease a residence within the commuting area of your new duty station, you are not eligible for the advance round-trip or temporary quarters.

- f. If your spouse also works for the Postal Service and is moving to the new duty location, your spouse may take this trip with, or instead of, you. Your spouse will be paid for work hours on scheduled workdays while on the trip and will not be charged leave. Your spouse, however, must take this trip before your family moves to the new duty station.

252 **En Route Travel Time**

En route travel time refers to a one-way trip from a former residence to a new duty station. Employees should use the en route trip when reporting to work. The following conditions apply:

- a. The travel schedule must be coordinated with both the old and new duty-station officials.
- b. You will be in work status for scheduled workdays while traveling en route and will not be charged leave.
- c. You are required to drive your personally owned vehicle when the mileage to the new duty station is fewer than 800 miles. The most direct route must be taken to limit travel time.
- d. You and accompanying family members must drive at least 300 miles a day. If your travel time exceeds that of the most direct route, or you do not drive at least 300 miles each day, you must charge any additional travel time to annual leave and cover the extra expenses yourself.
- e. If your travel involves departure or destination points other than the old and new residences, the travel time authorized for en route travel cannot exceed that of the most direct route from the old duty station to the new duty station. Any extra travel time will be charged to annual leave.

Note: If your spouse is employed by the Postal Service and is moving to the new work location, he or she will be in work status while traveling en route and will not be charged leave for scheduled workdays.

3 Expense Payments and Reimbursements

31 What This Chapter Covers

This chapter explains the calculation and payment of the lump-sum allowance and daily commuting allowance, expense reimbursement for en route travel, payment of the miscellaneous-expense allowance, and the tax implications of relocation payments.

32 Lump-Sum Allowance

Under this handbook, eligible employees will receive a single lump sum allowance which is intended to help offset advance round trip and temporary quarters relocation expenses. Eligible employees must request payment of this lump sum allowance through the online expense reporting system on the RMF's website.

The lump sum **allowance is calculated** as follows:

- a. A lump sum for a single employee with no dependents equals \$1,640 (add \$615 for each dependent moving with the employee, up to a maximum of \$5,330).
- b. A lump sum for an employee and spouse equals \$2,255 (add \$615 for each dependent moving with the employee, up to a maximum of \$5,330).

Every two fiscal years, the Postal Service will use the CONUS (national) per diem rate as established by the GSA to adjust the lump sum allowance. To do so, the Postal Service will take the average CONUS per diem rate changes from the previous two years and make a percentage change, consistent with the combined rate change, to the lump sum allowance. The percentage determined as a result of the above computation will be applied to the lump sum allowance effective fiscal year 2017 (10/01/2016).

Note: If you already own or lease a home within commuting distance of your new duty location, you will not receive this benefit.

33 En Route Travel Expenses

331 **En Route Travel**

En route travel occurs when you and your family leave your old residence to report to the new duty station. You must use the en route trip to report to work or to accompany your family to the new duty station after they leave your old residence. Family may travel with you or separately.

332 **Expenses for Transportation, Lodging, and Per Diem**

You and your family are eligible for reasonable lodging expenses that do not exceed the standard per diem rate, privately owned vehicle mileage, coach airfare or train fare, and transportation to and from terminals, plus the following:

- a. *For employees:* 75 percent of the standard daily meals and incidentals per diem for the first and last day of travel; full per diem for all other days while in a travel status.
- b. *For spouses:* 75 percent of the employee's per diem rate if traveling with the employee or the same percentage of the daily per diem rate the employee receives for the new duty station if traveling alone.
- c. *For each of the other immediate family members:* 75 percent of the employee's per diem rate.

333 **Exclusion for the 12-hour Rule**

The limitation provision that disallows a per diem for travel of less than 12 hours does not apply to en route travel when the total distance traveled is more than 100 miles.

334 **En Route Travel Completed in One Day**

When en route travel is completed in a day, per diem will be applied as follows:

- a. For employees: 75 percent of the per diem rate for standard daily meals and incidentals.
- b. For spouses and immediate family members: 75 percent of the employee's daily per diem rate.
- c. If a spouse travels alone: 75 percent of the per diem rate of the new duty station for standard daily meals and incidentals.

335 **Use of a Privately Owned Vehicle for En Route Travel**

A privately owned vehicle must be used to travel to the new duty station if the distance from the old residence is fewer than 800 miles. The Postal Service will reimburse mileage at the rates listed on the GSA.gov website.

336 Minimum-Travel-Distance Requirements

You must drive at least 300 miles a day and must use the most direct route when traveling from the old residence to your new duty station or residence. If you do not travel at least 300 miles per day, you will be ineligible for lodging expenses. If you deviate from the most direct route, you will be responsible for extra expenses or time incurred.

337 Computing Per Diem Rates Based on Minimum Driving Distance

The RMF calculates the maximum number of days allowed for travel by dividing the one-way mileage by 300. The per diem percentages found in the En Route Travel Completed in One Day section are applied to the result.

338 Deviating From the Most Direct Route

If the actual travel involves departure or destination points other than the old and new residence, the mileage, lodging, and per diem reimbursement may not exceed the amount paid for the travel from the old duty station to the new duty station.

339 Use of Government- or Postal Service-Owned Vehicle

A government- or Postal Service-owned vehicle may not be used for any relocation-related travel.

3310 Claiming En Route Travel Expenses

To request reimbursement for expenses, submit a claim using the RMF's expense-reporting online system. The RMF will give employees who do not have computer access an expense report to complete by hand. You may not use eTravel to be reimbursed for relocation expenses. As part of a claim submission, employees must complete the Household Goods Move Survey and the Relocation Management Firm Survey. Surveys are to be completed using the RMF's expense-reporting online system. The RMF will give employees who do not have computer access the surveys to complete by hand.

A relocation consultant will discuss expense-report submission requirements with you and validate completion of the surveys. Requirements for submitting expense reports and receipts are in chapter [7](#) of this handbook.

34 Miscellaneous-Expense Allowance

341 Claiming an Allowance Without Supporting Documentation

Employees will receive the following flat allowance:

- a. \$150 for a single employee without immediate family.
- b. \$300 for an employee with immediate family.

342 **Various Allowable Benefits**

You are eligible for a miscellaneous-expense allowance if you were authorized a permanent change of station. This allowance is to cover the costs associated with giving up a home and establishing another at a new location. Some of the costs that can be reimbursed under this allowance include the following:

- a. Disconnecting and connecting appliances and utilities (except when these costs are claimed under household goods) and converting appliances so that they can operate on available utilities.
- b. Cutting and fitting rugs, draperies, and curtains moved from one residence to another.
- c. Utility fees or deposits that are nonrefundable.
- d. Forfeiture losses on medical, dental, and food-locker contracts that are not transferable.
- e. Automobile registration, driver's license, use taxes imposed when bringing automobiles into some jurisdictions, emission controls, and state inspection requirements.
- f. Nonrefundable or nontransferable contract costs incurred for private institutional care for handicapped dependents.
- g. Telephone calls in connection with relocation.

35 Requesting Payment

351 **Criteria Required for Payment of Miscellaneous-Expense Allowance:**

You must meet the following criteria to receive the payment allowance for miscellaneous expenses.

- a. The SF Form 50 must be processed by the Greensboro Human Resources Shared Services Center and verified by the relocation unit.
- b. Relocation accounting at Headquarters must have notified the RMF that the SF Form 50 has been processed.
- c. The RMF must notify you that the miscellaneous-expense allowance is available and may be requested through the online expense-reporting system.

In addition, one or more of the following “triggering events” must have occurred:

- a. You have sold your old residence or broken a lease at your old duty station.
- b. You have a completed contract for the purchase or lease of a home at your new duty station.
- c. You have scheduled a move of household goods.

352 Exception

A commission (broker's fee) paid to obtain rental quarters is reimbursable as a miscellaneous expense in areas where such a fee is the established practice, such as New York City. Check with your RMF representative to see if your new location qualifies for this service.

36 Tax Implications of Relocation

For tax purposes, some reimbursements paid to you or payments made on your behalf for relocation expenses are considered part of your taxable income.

The RMF must use the state tax code contained in your master file record in Eagan. You are responsible for ensuring that your correct state code for state income taxes is in your record by filing a PS Form 1198, *Request for State Income Tax Withholding*. Complete and mail the form to the following:

GREENSBORO HR SHARED SERVICES CENTER
PO BOX 970100
GREENSBORO NC 27497-0100

If the state tax code does not match the finance record or a state with reciprocity, the Eagan ASC will change the code to that of the mailing address of your duty station finance number when reporting your state taxes for the year.

361 Relocation Expenses Subject to Income Tax**361.1 Transactions Reported as Income**

The Postal Service will report the following relocation transactions as income on your Form W-2:

- a. En route trip expenses for all meals and a percentage of the mileage reimbursement based on IRS guidelines.
- b. The lump-sum allowance.
- c. Expenses related to the sale of an old residence and the purchase of a new one that may be taxable, as well as broken-lease expenses.
- d. The miscellaneous expense allowance.
- e. The expense of storing household goods for 30-plus days.

361.2 Reporting Moving Expenses and Withholding Taxes

The RMF calculates, and the Postal Service pays, taxes at employees' estimated federal and state tax rate, rounded to the nearest dollar. You, the IRS, and your state tax authority determine the actual tax liability after you file your tax returns. Your relocation payments and all Postal Service-paid tax assistance will appear on the Form W-2, *Wage and Tax Statement*.

Around the time you receive your W-2 forms from the Postal Service, the RMF will provide a courtesy relocation-summary package that itemizes all payments made to you or paid to third parties on your behalf.

362 **Relocation Expenses Not Subject to Income-Tax Withholding**

If a move is considered a qualified relocation by the IRS, the following expenses are not subject to federal income-tax withholding:

- a. Expenses for moving household goods from a former residence to a new one at the new duty station.
- b. Expenses reimbursed for lodging and a portion of the privately owned vehicle mileage allowance that employees and their immediate family incur en route to the new residence.
- c. Expenses for the first 30 days of household-goods storage.

Note: These expenses are subject to income-tax withholding if the relocation is considered to be unqualified by the IRS as described in [231](#).

4 Movement and Storage of Household Goods

41 Making Shipping Arrangements

411 Policy

You must use the RMF's services to move and store your household goods. A relocation consultant will explain what can and cannot be shipped or stored.

412 RMF Services and Your Responsibilities

412.1 RMF Services

The Postal Service has a contract with an RMF to provide relocation services to its employees. The agency pays to transport employees' household goods in one bundle from their old home to their new one at the new duty station.

The RMF will coordinate activities concerning the shipment of household goods to a new duty station. These include the following:

- a. Appointing a consultant to review procedures with the transferee and establishing a moving date.
- b. Selecting a qualified van line or agent.
- c. Determining what can and cannot be shipped or stored.
- d. Monitoring packing, loading, and arrival schedules.
- e. Resolving and processing damage claims.
- f. Shipping household goods of up to a net weight of 18,000 pounds.
- g. Providing \$180,000 (maximum) of current-replacement-value insurance on household goods.
- h. Providing a \$2,000 (maximum) allowance for crating and unpacking items that require this service, as identified by the RMF agent or van line.
- i. Providing a \$350 (maximum) allowance for disassembly and assembly of recreational items, such as pool and other game tables.
- j. Storing household goods for up to 60 days (if necessary).

412.2 Your Responsibilities

You are responsible for the following:

- a. Ensuring that only your immediate family's personally owned household goods are shipped (see [225](#) for a definition).
- b. Paying for and making your own arrangements for shipping airplanes, collectible or antique cars, camper trailers, boats over 14 feet that do not fit in the moving van, utility and boat trailers, storage sheds, handguns, ammunition, pets, birds, livestock, plants, building materials, or any collection of property intended for use in conducting a business, other commercial enterprise, or hobby.
- c. Paying for additional insurance and for all excess charges and special packing, crating, and handling of added weight or household goods beyond the limits the Postal Service authorizes in [412.1](#), RMF Services.
- d. Paying for and making your own arrangements for shipping household goods above the 18,000-pound limit, any household goods obtained en route to the new duty station, or household goods that are not appropriate for shipping as identified by the RMF consultant or van line agent.
- e. Paying for an extra pickup or extra drop-off of household goods within a reasonable distance to authorized departure/destination locations.

42 Renting a Commercial-brand Trailer or Van Rather Than Using RMF Transportation

421 Documentation and Reimbursement

If you choose to personally transport belongings by renting either a commercial-brand trailer or vehicle, the Postal Service will reimburse you on a cost-comparison basis (you will receive the lesser of the two amounts). You must submit receipts from the rental company and, where applicable, receipts for fuel and tolls. Packing materials and other customary services and equipment the vehicle-rental agency supplies are reimbursable but must be clearly stated on the rental agency's invoices. If you obtain packing materials or equipment from other places, you must also submit receipts. Submit documentation to the RMF.

422 Other Incidental Expenses

If you obtain advance written approval from the official who will approve the relocation voucher(s), the Postal Service will reimburse incidental expenses, such as reasonable mileage driven to obtain the trailer/truck, or loading assistance provided by a commercial establishment (or elsewhere). In this case you must submit acceptable documentation to the RMF. The Postal Service will not reimburse any costs you incur for services performed by you, your immediate family members, or business organizations substantially owned or controlled by you or your immediate family members, as well as by someone with whom you have a close personal relationship.

423 Acceptable Documentation

Provide documentation in the form of canceled checks or signed receipts and submit them to the RMF.

424 Reimbursement Limitation

The total reimbursement for these charges may not exceed the cost of commercial moving services.

425 Reimbursement for Temporary Storage

The Postal Service will reimburse you for the cost of temporarily storing household goods for 60 or fewer days. The agency may allow you an extra 30 days when you return to your home for leave before serving a new tour of duty outside CONUS at a different duty post.

426 Insuring Property

When property is shipped or stored, a small amount of insurance is usually included in the basic charges, though you can get extra insurance if you cover the cost of it.

427 Expenses for Temporary Storage Within CONUS**427.1 Temporary-Storage Expenses**

The Postal Service will reimburse you for the cost of temporarily storing household goods for 60 or fewer days.

427.2 Documentation You Must Supply

You must provide a copy of the paid bill of lading, including a copy of any attached weight certificate (if one was issued). If there was no bill of lading, you must submit other evidence showing the point of origin, the destination, and the goods' weight. You also have to submit a copy of the paid storage bill. Submit documentation to the RMF.

43 Privately Owned Vehicle

431 What Is Included

A privately owned vehicle includes a passenger automobile, light truck, or other similar vehicle that is used primarily for personal transportation to and from work. Excluded is any vehicle intended for commercial or recreational use, including automobiles classified as collectible or classic.

432 Conditions for Shipping a Privately Owned Vehicle

Authorization for shipping a privately owned vehicle by car carrier will be considered only if you owned the vehicle before learning that you would be assigned to a new duty station. The following conditions must be met:

- a. One privately owned vehicle may be shipped by car carrier if it is more than 800 miles from the old residence to the new duty station.
- b. Two privately owned vehicles may be shipped by car carrier if the distance is more than 800 miles and there is more than one licensed driver among the immediate family members moving with you.
- c. Under no circumstances will shipment by car carrier be authorized for more than two privately owned vehicles.

If either the old or new duty station is outside the continental United States (i.e., Alaska, Hawaii, Guam, Puerto Rico, U.S. Virgin Islands), only one privately owned vehicle may be authorized for shipment, regardless of the number of licensed drivers in your immediate family.

44 Costs Associated With Moving a Privately Owned Vehicle

441 Driving a Privately Owned Vehicle to the New Duty Station

A privately owned vehicle must be used to travel to the new duty station if the distance from the old residence is less than 800 miles. The most direct route must be taken when driving to the new duty station. When you or a member of your immediate family drives an authorized privately owned vehicle to the new duty station, mileage for each vehicle will be reimbursed at the rate listed for the vehicle type on the [GSA.gov](#) travel website.

Employees without immediate family moving with them may claim reimbursement for driving one privately owned vehicle to a new duty station.

Employees with immediate family may claim reimbursement for driving as many privately owned vehicles as there are licensed drivers moving with them.

442 Costs of Shipping a Privately Owned Vehicle Outside/Inside CONUS

When a privately owned vehicle must be shipped from outside CONUS to the mainland and vice versa, the Postal Service will allow all necessary and customary preparation expenses, including crating, packing, shipping, and port charges for readying the vehicle to be shipped. Customary preparation expenses at the port of debarkation, including unpacking, will also be allowed. If you must drive the vehicle to a port that is not the origin or destination point, the Postal Service will authorize reimbursement of the one-way transportation or one-way mileage costs.

Note: The cost of shipping the privately owned vehicle will be considered, rather than the vehicle's actual Blue Book value.

45 Receiving an Allowance to Move a Mobile Home

If you are eligible for an allowance to ship household goods, you may choose to take an allowance for moving a mobile home to use as a new residence (within CONUS only). The RMF does not arrange for the shipment of mobile homes; you must make your own arrangements. Benefits for moving mobile homes are in lieu of shipment of household goods and in addition to payment of en route travel.

Note: To receive this allowance, your RMF file must state that you (and your immediate family) will live in the mobile home at the new duty station.

451 Computing Distances

If you choose to move a mobile home either by commercial carrier or by towing it with a privately owned vehicle, the mileage reimbursement will be calculated based on the mileage via the most direct route from the old residence to the new one.

452 Computing Benefits

452.1 How Much You May Claim

The total amount authorized for moving a mobile home will be no more than the maximum amount that would have been allowed for moving up to 18,000 pounds of household goods and storing them for 60 or fewer days. The RMF will help make this determination.

452.2 Nonreimbursable Items

Benefits do not include the costs of maintenance, repairs, storage, insurance for valuing a home above the carrier's maximum responsibility, or certain charges designated in the tariffs as special service (these include services such as packing and unpacking, which are necessary or desirable but which, unlike pilot cars required by state law, are not essential to transport a mobile home).

452.3 Transportation by Other Than Commercial Carrier

If you tow the mobile home with a privately owned vehicle, the Postal Service will pay 11 cents per mile above the IRS mileage rate to cover all transportation costs. Thus, you would not claim the costs of bridge, road, and tunnel tolls; ferries; and other charges as separate expenses.

452.4 Mixed-Method Transportation

If you use a commercial carrier and towing for transportation, you must follow the rules in [452.1](#), How Much You May Claim, and [452.2](#), Nonreimbursable Items, to determine reimbursement.

This page intentionally left blank

5 Residence Transactions and Lease Break

51 Conditions and Requirements

511 Settlement Expenses

Postal Service policy allows for reimbursement of the following authorized settlement expenses:

- a. Certain fees for selling a principal residence at an old duty station.
- b. Certain fees for buying or constructing a principal residence at a new duty station (related to obtaining financing only).
- c. Certain fees for breaking a lease on a principal residence at an old duty station.
- d. Certain fees for obtaining rental quarters as a principal residence at a new duty station (certain high-cost metropolitan areas as determined by the Postal Service). Check with an RMF consultant to determine if your new location qualifies for this benefit.

512 Conditions for Reimbursement or Payment

To be eligible for reimbursement or payment on your behalf, you must meet all of the following conditions:

- a. The title to the residence (which may be a mobile home) at the old or new duty station, or the interest in a cooperatively owned dwelling or an unexpired lease, meets one of the following criteria:
 - (1) Is in your name alone.
 - (2) Is jointly in your name and in the name of one or more immediate family members (as described in [225](#)).
 - (3) Is solely in the name of one or more immediate family members.
- b. The title cannot be held in a trust.
- c. For disposition of property at the old duty station, you or your immediate family must have acquired the title or interest in the property before you were informed of the transfer.
- d. For acquisition of property at the new duty station, you or your immediate family must acquire title or interest after you were informed of the transfer.

- e. The expenses of selling a home or settling a lease are for the principal residence at the time you were informed of the transfer.
- f. The settlement dates for the sale and purchase, or for terminating the lease, are not later than one year after the report-to-work date at the new duty station.
- g. You paid the expenses and occupied the home.
- h. If the residence is a multiple-occupancy dwelling and you occupy only part of it, expenses will be reimbursed or paid on a prorated basis. In addition, expenses will be limited to a reasonable amount required for the residence.
- i. Expenses will not be reimbursed or paid for the purchase or sale of more than five acres.
- j. The maximum home value for which allowable closing costs will be reimbursed is \$800,000. Any costs attributable to homes valued above this amount will be paid by the transferring employee and not be reimbursed.
- k. The Postal Service will not reimburse you for concessions you make, such as paying the buyer's closing costs.

Note: Noncompliance with the above conditions may result in an adjustment to your reimbursable settlement costs.

52 Selling Your Home at the Old Duty Station

521 General

You are encouraged to use the RMF's network of brokers/agents at both the old and new duty stations. However, you may select your own agent and still be eligible for closing-cost reimbursement if the outside agent agrees to pay the broker/agent fee to the RMF.

Direct Reimbursement allows you to sell your home without inspections, aside from those a potential buyer requires. To be eligible for reimbursement of closing costs, you must list your home with a broker/agent. After the sale is closed, you must submit a reimbursement request through the RMF's online expense-reporting system. Those without computer access may submit expenses by filling out a PS Form 4877, *Reimbursement of Real Estate Expense – Change of Official Station*.

This reimbursement will create taxable income for you that is reflected on your year-end W-2.

53 Home-Finding Assistance and Mortgage Counseling

531 RMF Marketing Assistance

Marketing assistance is available to bargaining employees and can start as soon as they contact the RMF. The RMF will provide home-marketing advice to employees and their broker/agent, with the goal of helping employees get the best price for their home in a reasonable period of time.

532 Home-Finding Assistance

An RMF consultant will provide you with contacts from the RMF network of broker/agents in the area to which you are relocating. You should interview the brokers before selecting one and then notify your consultant. A broker will provide information on the real-estate markets and comparative conditions in the new location. The broker also will take you on neighborhood tours.

533 Home-Mortgage Counseling

You may find your own mortgage lender or may receive mortgage-counseling assistance through the RMF. The RMF's mortgage-counseling program includes counseling, information on available mortgages and kinds of mortgages (rates, fees, and lender requirements), prequalification, and a referral to at least three lending sources.

54 Reimbursable and Nonreimbursable Expenses

You are eligible to be reimbursed for certain costs when buying a home at the new duty station or selling your home at the old duty station.

541 Overall Limitations on Reimbursement

541.1 Limit of 10 Percent of Sales Price

The Postal Service will reimburse you for allowable expenses incurred when you sell a residence at your old duty station. The amount of the reimbursement, however, cannot be more than 10 percent of the actual sales price, based on a maximum home price of \$800,000, up to a reimbursement limit of \$80,000.

541.2 Limit of 5 Percent of Purchase Price

The Postal Service will reimburse you for allowable expenses incurred when you buy a home at your new duty station. The amount of this reimbursement, however, cannot be more than 5 percent of the purchase price, based on a maximum home price of \$800,000, up to a reimbursement limit of \$40,000.

542 Real-Estate Commissions

The Postal Service will reimburse a real-estate commission that you paid after selling a home, as long as the commission does not exceed customary rates for that locality. No such commission or broker's fee is reimbursable when you buy a home at a new duty station. If you or an immediate family member receives any compensation for performing broker/real estate services, you must deduct that compensation from the claim amount.

543 Other Advertising and Selling Expenses

The Postal Service will reimburse the costs of advertising (newspaper, bulletin board, multiple-listing services, etc.) to sell a residence at an old duty station if you haven't paid for those services as part of a real-estate commission.

544 Costs of Selling or Buying a Home**544.1 Costs of Selling or Buying a Home**

The Postal Service may reimburse certain costs of selling or buying a home. The costs must meet all of the following conditions:

- a. They have not been included in expenses claimed elsewhere.
- b. They are customarily paid by the seller in the area of the old duty station or by the buyer in the area of the new duty station.
- c. They are not more than the amounts customarily charged in the locality of the residence.

544.2 Closing Costs for Selling a Home at the Old Duty Station

Certain closing costs related to the sale of a home at an old duty station may be reimbursed if they are customarily paid by the seller. These costs must appear on Form HUD-1, *Settlement Statement*, and are included in the maximum reimbursement of up to 10 percent of the selling price, up to a maximum of \$80,000. Some costs may not be reimbursed.

[Exhibit 544.2](#) contains the HUD-1 settlement-statement reference, a description of costs that may be reimbursed within authorized limits and costs that may not be reimbursed.

Exhibit 544.2
HUD-1 Settlement-Statement Reference List — Old Duty Station

HUD-1 Reference	Description	May Be Reimbursed
700/703	Sales/Broker's commission	Yes
800	Items payable in connection with loan	No
900	Items required by lender	No
1000-1008	Reserves deposited with lender for hazard insurance, mortgage insurance, city/county taxes, assessments	No
1101	Settlement or closing fee	Yes
1102	Abstract or title search ¹	Yes
1103	Title examination	Yes
1104	Title insurance binder	No
1105	Document preparation	Yes
1106	Notary fee	Yes
1107	Attorney/closing agent fees ²	Yes
1109	Title insurance — lender coverage	No
1110	Title insurance — owner coverage ¹	Yes
1201	Recording/filing fees — deed/mortgage/releases ³	Yes
1202	City/county tax/stamps: deed/mortgage ⁴	Yes
1203	State tax/stamps: deed/mortgage ⁴	Yes
1206	Grantors tax	No
1301	Survey	No
1302	Inspections — pest only	Yes
	Other Costs	
1303	Home warranty	No
1304	Transfer fees	No
1305	Express Mail and messenger fees ⁵	Yes

1. Seller normally furnishes an abstract or title opinion. In some areas, the seller provides title insurance-owner coverage. If you paid both the abstract/title opinion and title insurance — owner coverage, the Postal Service will reimburse the greater of the two charges, not both.
2. Attorney services required at settlement must appear on the closing statement and will be reimbursed up to \$500. Attorney services of more than \$500 or attorney services not on the closing statement must be accompanied by (a) an itemized breakdown of the services provided, (b) the fees for each item of service, and (c) a statement indicating why an attorney was required for each service provided. Litigation and negotiation costs are not reimbursed.
3. Seller normally pays to record release of deed, and the buyer pays for recording the mortgage and tax/stamps.
4. Seller normally pays for customary fees as directed by the state, and the buyer pays mortgage tax/stamps.
5. Maximum reimbursement is \$60.

544.3 Closing Costs for Buying a Home at the New Duty Station

Certain closing costs you incur when purchasing a home at the new duty station may be reimbursed if the buyer customarily pays them. These costs are included in the maximum reimbursement of up to 5 percent of the purchase price, up to a maximum of \$40,000, and must appear on the HUD-1 settlement statement. See [Exhibit 544.3](#) for a list of settlement costs.

Exhibit 544.3

HUD-1 Settlement-Statement Reference List — New Duty Station

HUD-1 Reference	Description	May Be Reimbursed
801	Loan origination fee ¹	Yes
802	Loan discount fee	No
803	Appraisal	Yes
804	Credit report	Yes
805	Lender's inspection fee ²	Yes
806	Mortgage-insurance application fee	No
807	Assumption fee /buy-down	No
808	Commitment fee	No
809	Loan-processing fee	Yes
810	Flood certification	Yes
811	Underwriting fee	Yes
812	Tax-service fee	Yes
902	Mortgage insurance (PMI)/escrow	No
904	Flood insurance	No
1003	Taxes due/escrow	No
1101	Settlement or closing fee	Yes
1102	Abstract or title search ³	Yes
1103	Title examination/other statutory title fees ³	Yes
1104	Title insurance binder	Yes
1105	Document preparation	Yes
1106	Notary fee	Yes
1107	Attorney/closing agent fees ⁴	Yes
1109	Title Insurance — lender coverage	Yes
1110	Title Insurance — owner coverage ³	Yes
1111	Escrow fee	Yes
1201	Recording fees: mortgage/releases ⁵	Yes
1202	City/county tax/stamp: deed/mortgage ⁶	Yes
1203	State tax/stamps: deed/mortgage ⁶	Yes
1301	Survey ⁷	Yes
1302	Inspections — pest only	Yes
1302	Inspections — all other ⁸	No

HUD-1 Reference	Description	May Be Reimbursed
	Other Costs:	
	Transfer fees	No
	Express Mail and messenger fees ⁹	Yes
	Loan-assumption fee	No
	VA Funding fee ¹	Yes
	Loan-application fee	Yes

1. *Maximum reimbursement is 1% of the purchase price for either the loan origination fee or 1% of the VA funding fee. If you paid both of these fees, you will be reimbursed for one fee, with a maximum reimbursement of 1%.*
2. *Maximum reimbursement is \$100.*
3. *Reimbursement is available for the greater of either title examination/title search/abstract/other statutory title fees or title insurance — lenders and owner coverage. You cannot claim both.*
4. *Attorney services required at settlement must appear on the closing statement and will be reimbursed up to \$500. Attorney services of more than \$500 or attorney services not on the closing statement must be accompanied by (a) an itemized breakdown of the services provided, (b) the fees for each item of service, and (c) a statement indicating why an attorney was required for each service provided. Litigation and negotiation costs are not reimbursed.*
5. *The buyer normally pays for recording the mortgage and the deed, and the seller pays to record the release.*
6. *The buyer normally pays for mortgage deed tax/stamps, and the seller pays for customary fees as directed by the state.*
7. *Maximum reimbursement is \$500.*
8. *Inspections required by the lender or required by federal, state, or local statute/ordinance may be reimbursed. You must provide documentation stating the inspection was required.*
9. *Maximum reimbursement is \$60.*

545 Other Settlement Costs

545.1 Finance Charges Under the Truth in Lending Act and Regulation Z

The Postal Service will not reimburse any fee, cost, charge, or expense it determines is part of the finance charge under the Truth in Lending Act and Regulation Z.

545.2 Constructing a House

For employees who are building a house, the Postal Service will reimburse expenses comparable to those that would be reimbursable for the purchase of an existing home.

546 Expenses of Lease Break

546.1 Reimbursement for Lease Break

You may be reimbursed for certain charges that you must pay for breaking a lease (including month-to-month rental) on a residence you occupied at an old duty station. These expenses include broker's fees for obtaining a sublease or the cost of advertising an unexpired lease. Expenses are reimbursable up to six months' rent if all of the following conditions are met:

- a. You did not contribute to the cost by failing to give prompt and appropriate notice that you were terminating the lease after finding out about your transfer to a new duty station.
- b. The applicable laws or lease terms permit payment for breaking the lease.
- c. The costs cannot be avoided by subleasing or other arrangements.
- d. The broker's fees or advertising charges do not exceed those typically charged for comparable services in that locality. You must itemize these expenses and enter the total amount on an expense report.

546.2 **Claim for Lease-Break Expenses**

You must submit an expense report separately from the claim you make for expenses related to buying a home. Each item must be accompanied by a copy of the lease agreement and proof of payment. Acceptable proofs of payment are a canceled check, a copy of a money order, bank evidence of a cashier's check, or a credit-card statement and acknowledgment from the lessor of payment. Cash cannot be used for a lease-break payment. You should not pay more than one month at a time on a canceled lease. Submit all documentation to the RMF.

55 Submitting for Reimbursement of Real-Estate Expenses

You may submit a claim to be reimbursed for authorized expenses that you paid to sell your home at an old duty station or to purchase a home at a new duty station.

551 **How to Apply for Reimbursement and How to Document Expenses**

551.1 **Claims for Reimbursement of Real-Estate Expenses**

Use the RMF's online expense reports unless your new office does not have access to the Internet, in which case the RMF will supply paper expense reports. You must submit documents or receipts showing that you paid the expenses. The RMF consultant will discuss expense-report submission and receipt requirements with you. Reimbursement requests must be made within one year of your report-to-work date.

551.2 **Documentation Required to Support Real-Estate Expenses**

Each item claimed must come with documents that show the expense was paid. These documents include a copy of the following:

- a. A fully executed purchase agreement, including addendum pages.
- b. A fully executed sales agreement, including addendum pages.
- c. A signed HUD-1 settlement statement for the sale of a home at the old duty station or the purchase of a home at the new duty station.

- d. Invoices or receipts for expenses paid that are not included on the HUD-1 statement.
- e. A disclosure statement—required by Regulation Z and issued by the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System and the Truth in Lending Act, Title I, Public Law 90-321—for all charges from the lending institution for the purchase of a new home.

A disclosure statement as stipulated under the Truth in Lending Act is not required when assuming the loan from the seller. You must add a statement to this effect to your expense report.

552 **How Your Claim Will Be Reviewed and Paid**

You must submit supporting documents for an online expense report or a hard-copy report to the RMF at the address provided in [72](#). The Postal Service will not cover expenses claimed that are not authorized by this handbook.

This page intentionally left blank

6 Deviations From Policy

No relocation policy can or should cover all the expenses or remove all the inconveniences that might be involved in a move. The assumption is that you understand this and weigh the professional and personal options involved when you accept relocation. Based on this premise, there are no deviations from the policy.

This page intentionally left blank

7 Completing Relocation Expense Reports

71 Using the RMF Expense Reports Online System

The RMF's online system enables you to submit expense reports electronically for payment of authorized relocation benefits, to review previously submitted expense reports, and to update or review your personal profile. You must use this system unless your office does not have Internet access. An RMF consultant will explain how the online system works or provide instructions for submitting a paper expense report if your office does not have Internet access.

711 Supporting Documentation for Expense Reports

712 Organizing Receipts

Attach receipts to 8 1/2- by 11-inch paper with tape for ease in handling. Make sure you have all required receipts before you submit your expense reports. Submit original receipts as indicated in [71](#). You may submit copies of documents pertaining to the sale or purchase of a residence.

713 Receipts for Sale or Purchase of a Residence

Each expense you claim must be supported by documents showing you paid the expense. These documents may include a copy of the following:

- a. A fully executed purchase agreement, including addendum pages.
- b. A fully executed sales agreement, including addendum pages.
- c. Signed Form HUD-1, *Settlement Statement*.
- d. Invoices or receipts for authorized expenses that do not appear on the settlement statement.
- e. Disclosure statements (required by Regulation Z and the Truth in Lending Act) as specified in [551.2](#).

72 Submitting Expense Reports

Submit electronic expense reports through the expense-reports online system on the RMF's website. Submit original receipts, other supporting documents, and paper expense reports as instructed by your RMF consultant. The RMF will provide a mailing address.

Keep a copy of all expense reports, receipts, and documents.