

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20250

<b>DEPARTMENTAL MANUAL</b>		<b>Number:</b> 2300-001
<b>SUBJECT:</b> Agriculture Travel Regulation	<b>DATE:</b> October 3, 1994	
	<b>OPI:</b> Office of Finance and Management	

Agriculture Travel Regulation

1 PURPOSE

This Manual provides Departmental policy on travel.

2 SCOPE AND CONTENT

This Manual, commonly referred to as the Agriculture Travel Regulation (ATR), is the primary source of Departmental policy on temporary duty and relocation travel.

It supplements the Federal

Travel Regulation (FTR) at 41 Code of Federal Regulation (CFR) Chapters 301, 302, 303, and 304.

This Manual is in the form of

slipsheets to the FTR and is printed on yellow paper to differentiate its pages from those of the FTR.

The proper use of

the Manual is to file its pages behind each comparable FTR Section.

3

CANCELLATION

This Manual replaces Departmental Manual 2300-1, dated July 30, 1981, and Amendments 1-13. All chapters and parts of the ATR have been renumbered to conform with changes made by the General Services Administration (GSA) to the FTR.

As a general rule, addition of the number "30" in front of the former ATR chapters and

parts identifying numbers will translate the former number to the corresponding chapters and parts in the revised ATR.

For example,

former ATR Chapter 1, Part 1 (cited as ATR Part 1-1) is now renumbered as Part 301-1.

4 MAJOR POLICY CHANGES

The majority of changes contained in this Manual are the result of numerous changes to the FTR.

Other significant changes incorporate previously published policy changes on the use of premium-class air accommodations; the use of Frequent Traveler Benefits; and the strengthening of controls over certain types of travel, for example, travel to resort areas, personal travel combined with business, travel with annual leave taken, etc.

Other policy changes include:

301-1.2. The agency paying for the travel is responsible for processing travel documents.

301-1.3(c)(17). The term, Special Approving Official (SAO), designates a specific approval level, comprised of heads of various field offices when no supervisor is present.

301-3.4(d). Departmental guidelines for the use of supersaver and other penalty fares must be followed, absent any agency- unique policy.

301-6.4(c). Employees who travel more than one night may be reimbursed for a brief long distance call to their residences.

301-7.14(e). Agency Heads may authorize reimbursement of travel expenses for employees and one accompanying individual to a specific award ceremony.

301-10.2(a). Government Transportation Requests may not be used to procure transportation services when the travel management center has a Government Transportation System account.

301-11.3(a). The use of facsimile or electronically produced forms requires special approval. Requests to use such forms should be submitted to the Director, Office of Finance and Management (OFM).

301-17.3(b). For long-term assignments, the per diem rate should be limited to 55 percent of the locality rate.

301-18.3(b). The list of meetings that needed Office of International Cooperation and Development's approval was deleted from this section. Contact the Foreign Agricultural Service's

Passport and Visa Travel Unit for further

302-1.5. Senior Executive Service career employees are not required to sign a service agreement for "last move home" relocations.

## 5 HOW TO USE THIS MANUAL

### a General.

This Manual and other Departmental regulations in the 2300 series are policy oriented. Users should refer also to the various procedural manuals on travel published by the OFM's National Finance Center. The Decisions of the Comptroller General and Titles III and IV of the United

States

General Accounting Office Civilian Personnel Law Manual also contain supplemental information on travel and relocation issues. The GSA Federal Travel Directory lists per diem

rates

for the continental United States and nonforeign areas, city pair contract air fares and schedules, government negotiated rental car rates, and other travel related information. The section and subsection numbers used in the ATR correspond to the numbers used in the FTR. For example, 301-2.3(c)

contains

Departmental policy related to 301- 2.3(c) of the FTR. In some cases, the ATR adds new subsections and sections. For example, in 301-1.3(c), the Department extends the list of 10 definitions by adding 8 more, numbers (11) through (18). Therefore, the ATR contains a subsection number 301-

1.3(c) (11)

which does not appear in the FTR. It is important that travelers and officials responsible for travel familiarize themselves with both the FTR and the ATR.

### b Chapter 301, Travel Allowances.

(1) Chapter 301 of the FTR contains government-wide policy allowances for temporary duty travel. It should be the first source for information on this subject.

on

(2) The major items covered in this chapter of the ATR without a corresponding FTR section are:

Personnel

301-17, Travel Allowances for Intergovernmental Act (IPA) Assignees, and 301-18, Foreign Travel.

### c Chapter 302, Relocation Allowances.

(1) Chapter 302 of the FTR contains government-wide policy allowances for relocation. This should be the first

on

source for information on this subject.

- (2) The major items covered in this ATR chapter without a corresponding FTR section are:

302-15(b). Processing payments for reimbursement on relocation expenses.

begin Figure 302-1. Format for Service Agreement used to the relocation processes.

- d Chapter 303, Payment of Expenses Connected with the Death of certain employees.

on (1) Chapter 303 of the FTR contains government-wide policy allowances for expenses connected with the death of certain employees. It should be the first source for information on this subject.

- e Chapter 304, Payment from a Non-Federal Source for Travel Expenses.

on (1) Chapter 304 of the FTR contains government-wide policy acceptance of payments from a non-Federal source for travel related expenses and on reimbursement allowances for meetings, conferences, and seminars. This should be the first source for information on this subject.

## 6 MAINTENANCE OF MANUAL

a OFM Responsibilities.  
Whenever USDA policy must be included or amended, OFM will issue an amendment to this Manual containing the appropriate replacement pages.

b Agency Responsibilities.  
Agencies must retain all amendment transmittal sheets and must keep their copies of this Manual updated.

a Agencies must use the format of this Manual for their travel instructions (i.e., slipsheets). They may supplement this Manual with agency policy as necessary; however, agencies may not issue supplements on white or yellow paper.

b Agencies may issue interim policies in the form of directives or notices to facilitate dissemination of policy statements. Agencies must incorporate policy changes into the agency supplements as soon as possible.

c Agencies must provide copies of all agency supplements, directives, and notices to the Director, OFM, immediately

after issuance.

8 DISTRIBUTION AND EXTRA COPIES

- a OFM will prepare an initial bulk distribution of this Manual to a central point in each agency. Agencies are responsible for the initial mass distribution. OFM will distribute amendments to this Manual in the same manner.
- b A limited quantity of this Manual will be available in the Office of Operations' Central Supply. Agencies should coordinate their requests for copies through their Directives System Liaison Officers.
- c Agencies are responsible for obtaining copies of the FTR.

Signed by:

**ALAN STRELSER**

AGRICULTURE TRAVEL REGULATION  
CHAPTER 301 TRAVEL ALLOWANCES

PART 301-1 APPLICABILITY AND GENERAL RULES

Subpart A--Authority, Applicability, and General Rules

301-1.1 Authority.

(a) Basic authority. The Department receives authority to pay travel expenses from various laws and regulations. These laws vest authority in the Secretary of Agriculture when the Department has a unique need; for example, Title 7 of the United States Code (U.S.C.) 2229 gives the Secretary authority to prescribe regulations for the payment of travel expenses related to seasonal work in classing or grading agricultural commodities.

(b) Delegation from the General Services Administration (GSA) to the Secretary, USDA. The Federal Travel Regulation (FTR) makes a broad grant of travel authority to the Secretary of Agriculture.

(c) Delegation by the Secretary of Agriculture. The Secretary's travel authority is delegated to General Officers and Agency Heads as specified below:

(###

(1) Delegations to General Officers and their Deputies. Except for travel prohibitions contained in 301-1.101 and 301-16.1, General

Officers and their deputies may authorize all types of travel, regardless of destination, method of reimbursement or cost, for themselves, their employees, and other individuals traveling for the Department. General Officers may not redelegate the authority to approve the following types of travel: premium-class travel, except as provided in 301-3.3(d); certain types of travel to resort areas (see 301-1.105(a)); and travel to meetings outside Washington, D.C., when the majority of attendees are Washington, D.C.-based employees. (See 301-16.4.)

(2) Delegations Agency Heads. Agency Heads may authorize travel, regardless of method of reimbursement, for employees and other individuals traveling for their agencies. This covers all foreign and domestic travel, including travel to meetings (conferences, training sessions, etc.) estimated to cost more than \$5,000, but excludes the travel situations covered in (1) above. See 301-16.1 and 301-16.4 for limitations on approval for certain types of conferences, meetings, e.g., offsite. ### 9/5/95)

(3) Delegations to the Director, Office of Finance and Management OFM.

(i) The Director, OFM, has full responsibility for Departmental travel policy as contained in this regulation.

(ii) Authority to authorize and approve Congressional travel to examine estimates in the field under 31 U.S.C. 1108 is delegated to the Director, OFM.

(d) Redlegation by Agency Heads. In view of the broad grant of authority given to Agency Heads, they must exercise special care to be sure that redelegations of authority are held to a sufficiently high level to ensure proper review and control of travel. Redelegations must be in writing and be contained in agency internal regulations.

(1) Agency Heads may redelegate their authorities, except for the following:

(i) Authority to approve premium-class airline travel when frequent traveler benefits (FTB's) offset the additional costs. All other premium class travel must be approved by General Officers.

(ii) Authority for travel by seasonal inspectors of agricultural commodities under 7 U.S.C. 2229.

(iii) Authority to determine which positions are eligible for limited open and nation-wide travel authorizations. Agency Heads must designate which positions qualify for the limited open and nation-wide travel authorizations.

(iv) Authority to determine when an employee will be allowed evacuation expenses. (See 302-1.16(a).)

(v) Authority to determine when threatened law enforcement or investigative personnel will be paid subsistence and transportation expenses.

(vi) Authority to extend temporary quarters beyond the first 30 days when the employee chooses to use the home purchase portion of relocation services. (See 302-5.2(e).)

(vii) Authority to designate the specific award ceremonies for which employees (and one individual related by blood or affinity of the employee's choosing) may be reimbursed for travel expenses. (See 301-7.14(e).)

(viii) Authority to waive collection of relocation expenses reimbursements when employee does not fulfill the one-year service agreement.

(2) Redelelegation of the following authorities is limited, as follows:

(i) Authority to approve the last move home for retiring Senior Executive Service (SES) employees is limited to deputies for management or similar positions.

(ii) Authority to authorize limited open and nation-wide travel authorizations is limited to deputies and special approving officials.

(iii) Authority to approve reimbursement of actual subsistence expenses in lieu of per diem is limited to deputies and special approving officials.

(iv) Authority to approve special allowances, extension of time limits, etc., that GSA specifically approves for employees relocating to or from Presidentially declared disaster areas is limited to deputy administrators, deputy staff office directors, or equivalent.

(e) Redelelegation by others. All further redelegations will be issued in writing. Redelegations issued by memoranda or notices must be incorporated into the agency slipsheets as soon as possible.

(f) Method of authorizing foreign travel. The Agency Head or other appropriate official must approve foreign travel. (For procedural requirements for foreign travel, refer to Part 18 of this regulation.)

#### 301-1.2 Applicability.

(b) Travel of Departmental employees (including individuals employed as experts or consultants and paid on a when-actually-employed basis and individuals serving without pay or at \$1 a year) is subject to these regulations unless the traveler is on loan or detail to another department, in which case the paying agency's regulations will govern.

When employees travel for another Departmental agency, the agency

paying for the travel is responsible for preparing and controlling the travel documents. The OFM's National Finance Center (NFC) will process the documents through the segment of the travel system used by the paying agency.

### 301-1.3 General rules.

(c) Definitions. (1) Agency. The word "agency" as used in the FTR refers to a Federal Department (for example, USDA), and shall be construed to mean the Department of Agriculture. "Agency," as used in these supplements, means an organizational entity (such as the Forest Service) that ultimately reports to the Secretary of Agriculture, is recognized by the Office of Personnel (OP) as an agency, and is included on the Department's list of agencies.

(11) General Officers. This term refers to Departmental officials in the following positions:

(###

- (i) Secretary of Agriculture
- (ii) Deputy Secretary of Agriculture
- (iii) Under Secretaries
- (iv) Assistant Secretaries
- (v) General Counsel
- (vi) Inspector General
- (vii) Judicial Officer
- (viii) Director, Office of Budget and Program Analysis
- (ix) Executive Assistant to the Secretary
- (x) Chief Financial Officer
- (xi) Chief Economist
- (xii) Director, National Appeals Division
- (xiii) Director, Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization
- (xiv) Director, Communications       ### 9/5/95)

(12) Agency Head. This title refers to USDA officials who are responsible for administering an agency. It includes heads of Departmental Staff Offices reporting to the Assistant Secretary for Administration, but does not include officials identified as "General Officers" above.

(13) Foreign travel. This term applies to travel outside the 50



States, the District of Columbia, the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, the Commonwealths of Puerto Rico and the Northern Mariana Islands, the territories or possessions of the United States, and travel within the United States directly connected with such travel. This definition does not include travel within the country of assignment for employees stationed abroad.

(14) Local travel. Official travel performed in the vicinity of employee's official duty station.

(15) Meeting. A gathering of employees for a conference, seminar, or similar event.

(16) Resort area. For official travel purposes, the term resort area includes named resorts, dude ranches, spas, etc.; gambling centers, golf, and other recreational establishments; ski towns; beach areas; and locations known for their emphasis on tourist type activities. Note: A location may have a number of attractions in or nearby (for example, Orlando, Florida) but the entire city is not considered a resort.

(17) Special Approving Official (SAO). Heads of the following types of offices when no supervisor is present: regional offices, offices serving more than one State, and other major field offices.

(18) High-mileage driver. Employee whose average yearly mileage reimbursement equals or is greater than the cost of operating a Government-furnished vehicle. (See 301-2.2 for method of determining the least costly means of transportation.)

(d) Controls. Each agency is expected to maintain effective controls over travel and travel payments. Essential elements of such controls include but are not limited to:

(###

(1) Realistic travel plans and budgets including a cost-benefit analysis of meeting and conference site locations, especially the use of resort areas. (See guidelines in 301-16.4.)

(2) Obtaining approval for a meeting or conference estimated to cost more than \$5,000.

(3) Obtaining approval from the Immediate Office of the Secretary to conduct offsite meetings/conferences, for overall management, strategic planning, or reorganization that have a total out-of-pocket cost of more than \$25,000.

(4) Establishment of criteria for determining the cost-effectiveness of travel.

(5) Continued monitoring of travel obligations.

(6) Critical review of all proposed travel to determine its necessity.

(7) Proper authorization of all travel and approval of all travel vouchers. Except for General Officers, no travelers may authorize their own travel. Vouchers submitted in connection with authorized travel must be approved for payment by the traveler's supervisor. For General Officers, a subordinate employee such as an administrative officer or deputy may approve the voucher. The official approving the voucher determines that the travel was for official purposes and the voucher claims are in compliance with the FTR, the Agriculture Travel Regulation (ATR), and applicable agency travel policy. In addition, agencies may authorize an appropriate official at a traveler's geographic location to approve travel vouchers for an employee whose supervisor is located at a different geographic location.

(8) A restriction on meetings held outside the District of Columbia metropolitan area for employees stationed within this area. ### 9/5/95)

(e) Travel during nonduty hours. As far as possible, agencies shall plan and schedule travel to prevent employees from having to travel during nonduty hours.

(f) Reimbursable expenses. The Department's policy is to reimburse its travelers promptly, within the limits prescribed by law and this regulation, for expenses necessarily incurred in carrying out their assigned work. Insofar as is practical, uniform mileage and per diem rates will be paid for like conditions of travel.

(g) Acceptance of travel reimbursements from outside sources. Agencies should consult with the Office of the General Counsel and/or the OP to determine the propriety of the arrangements. (See Secretary's Announcement, dated June 30, 1992, for detailed information concerning acceptance of travel expenses from non-Federal sources and FTR 302-4.)

(h) Honoraria. The acceptance of honoraria associated with one's official duty or position is prohibited. (See 7 Code of Federal Regulation. (CFR) Chapter 9.735-13.)

#### Subpart B--Official Government Business Travel

301-1.101 Authorization of travel. Only General Officers may authorize their own temporary duty travel. No one may authorize their own relocation travel or travel performed under the authority of 301-14 (threatened law enforcement and investigative employees).

(b) Agency responsibilities.

(4) When, due to urgency of travel or other extenuating circumstances, it is not possible to issue an AD-202, Travel Authorization/Advance, in advance of travel, an AD-202 must be prepared at the earliest possible date and must contain a statement that the travel is post-approved and the reason why prior approval was not possible.

301-1.102 Guidelines for issuing travel authorizations. All employees or individuals whose work requires them to perform official travel must have that travel authorized on an AD-202. Frequency of issuance of the AD-202 will be determined by the type of authorization held by the employee. Travelers should carry a copy of the AD-202 to be sure that they receive Government rates for common carrier travel, rental cars, and hotel/motel accommodations.

(a) Types and use of travel authorizations.

(1) Unlimited open authorization (Type A).

(i) This authorization permits General Officers to perform temporary duty travel for any purpose, without further authorization. General Officers may establish their own unlimited open authorization by issuing an AD-202. (Note: While not required for authorization purposes, but because of the various per diem rates involved in foreign travel, it is advisable that holders of unlimited open authorizations have a separate AD-202 for each trip involving foreign travel.)

(ii) In addition, General Officers may issue Type A travel authorizations to heads of agencies under their authority.

(###

(iii) General Officers may determine the frequency of renewal of Type A authorizations in accordance with FTR 301-102(1). ### 9/5/95)

(2) Limited open authorization (Type B). Agency Heads will determine which positions are eligible for Type B authorizations and may redelegate to their deputies and SAO's the authority to issue Type B travel authorizations.

(i) This authorization permits an employee to perform frequent, routine, repetitive travel within a work-related geographic area (foreign or domestic). The AD-202 may have more than one person on the authorization if each person is specifically identified.

(ii) While routine, repetitive travel is usually considered to be travel between the same geographic locations on a frequent basis, it may also be travel to different locations for the same type of travel (for example, meat inspections). Work-related geographic limitations apply to both situations. The geographic boundaries for routine, repetitive travel will be limited to five states or (for agencies whose field office structure is on a regional basis) one region plus four additional states. All locations, whether regions or states, must be specifically identified on the travel authorization. The use of general terminology such as "within Continental United States" (CONUS) is inconsistent with limited open travel authorizations.

(iii) Coverage by a limited open authorization does not preclude the need for issuing a trip-by-trip authorization for the travel situations listed in 301-1.104 or whenever the employee performs travel outside the parameters of the limited open authorization, nor does it exempt the traveler from complying with the procedural requirements for travel requiring special justification as described in 301-1.105.

(iv) Agency Heads may grant an exemption to the requirements in (i) and (ii) above to SAO'S.

(###

(v) Agencies may determine the frequency of renewal for Type B authorizations in accordance with requirements of FTR 301- 102(2). ### 9/5/95)

(vi) The AD-202 may have more than one person on the authorization if each person is specifically identified.

(3) Nation-wide travel authorization (Type N). Agency Heads will determine which positions are eligible for Type N authorizations and may redelegate to their deputies and SAO's the authority to issue Type N authorizations.

(i) This authorization may be issued to employees who qualify for limited open authorizations and who hold positions of such broad ranged responsibility that the geographic restrictions of limited open travel authorizations would severely impede the performance of the employee.

(ii) The AD-202 may have more than one person on the authorization if each person is specifically identified.

(###

(iii) Agencies may determine the frequency of renewal for Type N authorizations in accordance with requirements of FTR 301-102(2). ### 9/5/95)

(4) Trip-by-trip authorization (Type C). This authorization permits an individual or group of individuals to take one or more specific trips that are identified as to purpose, schedule, and estimated costs. All travel, except that covered in (1), (2), and (3) requires a trip-by-trip authorization on an AD-202. Travel situations listed in 301- 1.104 must be specifically approved on the authorization.

Authority to approve trip-by-trip authorizations may be delegated to appropriate administrative levels.

(5) Local travel authorization (Type)

(i) This authorization permits an employee who does not have access to imprest funds to receive reimbursement for local travel and other such expenses (for example, mileage, tolls, and parking but not per diem) normally reimbursed on Standard Form (SF) 1164, Claim For Reimbursement For Expenditures On Official Business. Claims for travel under Type L authorizations must be made on the AD-616, Travel Voucher.

(ii) Local travel authorizations are issued annually and must be

renewed at the beginning-of each fiscal year. The AD-202 will cover all employees within the issuing office, without specific identification.

(c) Purpose(s) of travel.

(11) Pre-employment travel. Travel is performed for a preemployment interview. This type of travel is used for temporary duty travel only.

(12) First post of duty. Travel is performed by a new appointee for allowable relocation expenses for reporting to their first duty station. Allowable relocation expenses include travel expenses for the employee, transportation expenses of the immediate family, and transportation expenses for the shipment of household goods.

(e) Allowances. When travel is performed under any of these types of travel authorizations, reimbursement may be allowed as provided in the FTR and the ATR.

301-1.103 Instructions/guidelines for travelers.

(a) Traveler's potential liability notice. Every AD-202 must contain the following statement: "Traveler is liable for the value of the tickets issued until all tickets or coupons are properly accounted for on the travel voucher." This policy on liability also applies to holders of Government Transportation Requests (GTR).

(b) Promotional materials received in connection with official travel from common carriers, rental car companies, or other commercial source. Comptroller General decisions (B- 212559, B-210717, B-210717.2, and B-212236 all dated February 24, 1984; B-220542, B-220542.2, B-220542.3, B-220542.4, and B- 220542.5 all dated November 16, 1987) clarify issues not specifically addressed in 41 CFR 101-25.103-2. The following Department policy statements incorporate the decisions' restrictions:

(1) Items of nominal intrinsic value or items which, by their nature, cannot be used by the Government may be kept for the employee's use. These include coupons for free drinks or headsets, membership in executive clubs, etc.

(2) Even though a travel bonus is nontransferable and the Government is unable to take advantage of the bonus, it may not be returned to the employee as it would be tantamount to an illegal supplement to the employee's salary.

(3) FTB's remain the property of the Government when employees retire or leave Government service. This applies even if the FTB's are not transferrable.

(4) Employees must ensure that personal and official bonus items are not commingled. Should an employee receive a free ticket or other

bonus item based on intermingled bonus points, etc., the value of the entire bonus is due the Government. There will be no proration based on percentage of official and personal travel.

(5) The responsibility for returning bonus goods rests with the employee, not with the agency.

(6) The employee shall redeem immediately coupons or other items that carry only a cash surrender value and deposit the proceeds to miscellaneous receipts. Coupons that carry a discount for future travel should be integrated into agency travel plans to increase their benefit to the Government. When a coupon is used, the appropriation shall be charged only the net amount required to cover the travel (full fare less the coupon value). If agency travel plans will not absorb all coupons held, the agency should forward the surplus to the Director, OFM, for disposition.

(###

(7) The employee may not use FTB's for upgrades to premium-class other than first-class accommodations unless specifically authorized or approved by the Agency Head. FTB's will be used in the following order of precedence: (1) to offset Government travel costs by obtaining free or reduced cost tickets; (2) to offset the cost of premium-class travel when the travel would be authorized in accordance with FTR 301-3(d)(4); and (5); and (3) to upgrade any official travel to premium-class other than first-class accommodations. ### 9/5/95)

(g) Billing information for ticket exchanges. The proper "bill charges to" address for transportation purchased with a GTR or on the Government Transportation System (GVTS) is:

USDA - OFM, NFC  
P.O. Box 60000  
New Orleans, LA 70160

(See the NFC Voucher and Invoice Payments Manual, Chapter 2, Travel Vouchers, paragraph 5.C.3.) For transportation purchased with Government contractor-issued charge cards, refunds will be made to the cardholder.

301-1.104 Special travel situations. Specific authorization for the situations listed below is required on a trip-by-trip authorization. Holders of limited open and nation-wide authorizations need approval on a trip-by-trip authorization for all special travel situations, except (d), which can be authorized on an amended AD-202. Holders of unlimited open authorizations are exempt from the requirements of this section in all situations except their own relocation and travel performed under 303-14 (threatened law enforcement and investigative employees).

(a) Special allowances - All travel performed under the authority of Chapter 301, Part 12 (emergency travel due to illness or

personal emergency) and Part 14 (threatened law enforcement and investigative employees) requires specific approval.

(b) Relocation allowances - All employees who are to be reimbursed for allowances for permanent change of station must have specific authorization.

(c) Change in allowances - When travelers are authorized actual subsistence allowance or when a reduced per diem rate is authorized based on the circumstances of the travel, a separate authorization is required. Although actual subsistence may be post-approved on a travel voucher, a reduced per diem rate must be established before travel starts.

(d) GSA contract transportation - Special authorization must be given before employees may use a noncontract carrier for air travel between designated city pairs.

(###

(e) Employee organization representatives - Before authorizing such travel, contact the OP. ### ###

(f) Attendance at meetings - Travel to attend these functions must be authorized at a sufficiently high level to ensure review by a policy-making official at or above the level that relocation travel is authorized. (See 301-16.1 and 16.4 for restrictions.) ### 9/5/95)

(g) Training - Travel for long- or short-term training, except local travel in or near official duty station, must be specifically authorized on an AD-202.

(h) Medical examinations - Travel expenses of USDA employees for medical examinations may be authorized when administratively determined to be in the best interest of the Government.

(i) Detailed or loaned employees - Travel by employees in connection with work for which they are detailed or loaned to another Federal agency may be authorized. Typically, the receiving agency pays the travel expenses, but the lending agency may make the payment subject to reimbursement from the receiving agency. Budgetary impact should be weighed in the latter case.

(j) Private individuals and collaborators - Travel of these persons may be authorized when it benefits the work of the Department.

(k) Public advisory committees - Members of these committees may be paid travel expenses under the FTR as persons serving without compensation. (See 301-1.2.)

(###

(l) Rural Housing and Community Development (RHCD) Committee Members - These individuals may be paid an allowance instead of travel expenses when performing service for RHCD under the rates established by

the Administrator, RHCD. ### 9/5/95)

(m) Enrollees under special programs - Enrollees under special work or economic opportunity programs, such as those authorized by the Manpower Development and Training Act of 1962, the Economic Act of 1964, or the Volunteers in the National Forests Act of 1972, who are non-Government persons performing work for the Department, shall be paid travel allowances under the FTR.

(n) Witnesses at Departmental hearings - See Departmental Regulation (DR) 1530-1 for rules covering travel expenses of witnesses at hearings the Department is authorized by law to hold. Non-Government witnesses may be paid travel expenses under the FTR if the presiding officer determines that their personal testimony is necessary or that subpoenas are appropriate.

(o) Employees testifying in judicial proceedings - For travel expenses of employees appearing as witnesses before U.S. courts, see 5 U.S.C. 5741. These employees are entitled to travel expenses under the FTR. They are not entitled to witness fees.

(p) Travel for pre-employment interviews - Travel expenses may be paid for individuals who are requested to appear for preemployment interviews for certain positions. In all cases, an effort must be made to have an official near the individual perform the interview. (See FTR, 301-1, Subpart C.)

(q) Congressional travel - Agencies must inform the Director, OFM, of all proposed travel by members or employees of Congress who will be reimbursed directly from USDA agency funds. OFM will prepare the travel authorization and travel voucher for signature by the Director, OFM. Only travel paid under the authority of 31 U.S.C. 1108 is covered by this subsection. (See 301-1.1(c) (3) (ii).)

(r) Presidentially declared disaster areas - When authorizing additional expenses, time extensions, etc., for relocations to or from Presidentially declared disaster areas, as determined and authorized by GSA, these expenses or time extensions must be identified by a statement on the travel authorization or an amended authorization. A copy of the authorization for this type of travel must be sent to the Director, OFM.

(s) Infrequent events - Events that have specific exceptions, e.g., official representation at funerals, award ceremonies, etc. (See Comptroller General decisions B-239887 and B-241987.)

301-1.105 Travel which requires special justification. Certain types of travel require special justification. These are trips that involve:



- (1) a combination of business and personal travel;
- (2) annual leave taken during the official trip;
- (3) deviations for personal convenience from the normal mode of transportation or itinerary; and
- (4) travel to resort areas.

(###

- (5) certain offsite meetings and conferences;  
### 9/5/95)

These travel situations require written approval on a case-by- case basis. Except for the restrictions mentioned below involving certain travel to resort areas, agencies may determine the format, procedures, and delegations of authority for travel situations requiring special justifications.

- (a) Travel to resort areas.

(###

- (1) To attend meetings, conferences, or seminars. Guidelines in 301-16.4 control site selection for agency sponsored meetings, conferences, and seminars, and they address specifically the use of resort areas. When employees attend meetings that are not under their agencies' administrative control, the fact that their attendance is considered necessary for the conduct of official business is sufficient justification. ### 9/5/95)

- (2) Travel to named resorts. Travel to a named resort or to establishments such as dude ranches, spas, golf, and other recreational establishments must have Under or Assistant Secretary level approval unless it meets the criteria in (1). Documentation for the approval of this type of travel must be attached to the travel authorization. Authorization for travel to these areas must be on a case-by-case basis.

- (3) Other administratively controlled travel. Since agencies may have offices located in "resort areas," travel to these areas should have sufficient information on the travel authorization to indicate the purpose of the travel and the timing of that travel.

- (b) Travel which combines official and personal travel, including deviations from authorized method or itinerary. The AD-202 should show only the official travel. Personal deviations from the official itinerary should not be shown on the AD-202. Doing so may cause personal travel to be mistakenly considered a part of the official travel.

Travelers need justification when they stop enroute to, from, or between points of official business for personal preference. This is true whether leave is involved or not. We recommend a memorandum from the traveler to the approving official with the official's approval

annotated on the document. The employee needs to justify and receive approval for these travel situations regardless of the type of travel authorization issued for the official trip.

(c) Travel during which an employee takes annual leave. Employees need special approval and justification outside the normal leave-approving process when the amount of leave for the trip is greater than one-half of the number of hours in the employee's work day and the leave time is after official travel commences or before it ends.

Documenting the beginning and ending of leave must comply with FTR 301-7.15. (See also 301-11.3 of this regulation for travel voucher procedures.) The use of annual leave during travel should be noted on the AD-202. For employees traveling on Type A, B, or N authorizations, leave should be noted on a copy of the authorization and attached to the travel voucher for that particular trip.

Agency procedures must ensure detailed justification for the official travel when the number of days of annual leave exceeds the number of days of official business, when the travel is to a resort area, or when the employee is deviating from the authorized itinerary or mode of transportation.

(###

(d) Offsite meetings or conferences. Proposals for certain offsite meetings and conferences with a total out-of-pocket cost of more than \$25,000 need special approval. (See 301-16.1.) ### 9/5/95)

#### Subpart C--Pre-employment Interview Travel

301-1.201 Authorization of travel.

(b) Eligibility determination. To determine the qualifications for the payment of pre-employment interview travel expenses, refer to Departmental Personnel Letter 572-1, Payment of Travel and Transportation Expenses for New Appointees and Hirees, dated March 5, 1991.

### CHAPTER 301 TRAVEL ALLOWANCES

#### PART 301-2 TRANSPORTATION ALLOWABLE

301-2.2 Methods of Transportation.

(a) Authorized methods. When aviation needs (airplane or helicopter) cannot be met by scheduled carriers or may be more economical on a charter basis, the GSA has arranged for a simple, cost-effective means of obtaining these services through the Department of Interior's Office of Aircraft Services. (### ### 9/5/95)

(b) (### ### 9/5/95)

(d) Presumptions as to most advantageous method of transportation.

(2) Government-contract rental or Government-furnished automobiles. The Department's policy is that a high-mileage driver shall use Government-furnished vehicles. However, because of fluctuations in the cost factors involved in this decision process, each agency must determine and use the least costly means of transportation. At a minimum, consideration must be given to current commercial lease costs, fuel costs, expected mileage charges, and privately owned vehicle (POV) reimbursement rates. Therefore, employees who will drive more miles per month than the number of miles for which reimbursement would equal lease and operating costs shall use Government-furnished vehicles.

(3) Privately owned conveyance. The use of a POV shall be authorized only when such use is advantageous to the Government. The use of a POV instead of a Government-furnished automobile is considered advantageous to the Government when:

(i) An employee is a high-mileage driver committed to use a Government-furnished automobile but must use a POV until a Government vehicle is available.

(ii) An employee, other than a high-mileage driver, needs a vehicle on a trip basis and the time and cost involved in obtaining and returning a Government vehicle are not warranted.

(iii) An unmarked vehicle is required because of investigative work or special circumstances and an appropriate Government vehicle is not available.

(iv) An assigned vehicle to which the employee normally has access is not available.

(4) Special conveyance. Several major rental car companies have agreed to make special flat rates negotiated by the Military Traffic Management Command available to Government employees. (### ### 9/5/95) Currently, these negotiated flat rates include unlimited free mileage with the customer paying for gas used. To avoid additional refueling charges, employees should return cars with the same amount of gas as when dispatched. Employees normally must return the cars to the renting locations for the discounted rates to apply. However, in metropolitan areas, it is often possible to pick up at one airport and drop at another with no additional charge (travelers are advised to confirm this when making reservations). Proof of eligibility for these special rates will be required, for example, travel authorization forms, Government ID cards, or car rental company ID cards. ### 9/5/95)

The Government's car rental agreement includes full comprehensive and collision coverage for employees on official travel only when the traveler uses the negotiated rates from participating companies. Travelers are reminded that the Government will not reimburse charges for the extra insurance options available such as collision damage waiver (CDW) and personal liability coverage. For further discussion on damage waiver and insurance costs see FTR 301-3.2(c).

When a commercially rented vehicle is used for a combination of official business and personal use, the charges must be prorated accordingly.

#### 301-2.6 Use of Government-furnished vehicles.

(d) Use of Government aircraft. Policy on the use of Department-owned, leased, or chartered aircraft for administrative support purposes is contained in Departmental Regulation (DR) 5400-4, Aircraft Management and the Office of Management and Budget Circular No. A-126, Improving the Management and Use of Government Aircraft.

### CHAPTER 301 TRAVEL ALLOWANCES

#### PART 301-3 USE OF COMMERCIAL TRANSPORTATION

##### 301-3.1 Taxicabs.

(a) Approval requirement. It is the Department's policy that employee convenience alone is not sufficient justification for use of a taxicab.

##### 301-3.3 Travel policy and class of service authorized.

(d) Airline accommodations.

(3) Authorization or approval of the use of premium-class airline accommodations.

(i) Authorization or approval. Only General Officers of the Department may approve premium-class travel. However, the head of an agency may approve premium-class other than first-class travel when the use of FTB's offsets any additional costs. In instances where one agency is paying the expenses of a traveler from another agency and the approval for the use of premium class is under the auspices of the employing agency the employing agency's General Officer is responsible for approval.

(###

(ii) Requirements. Documents justifying the use of first-class and premium-class other than first-class accommodations must include a summary sheet containing the following information:

A.

Name, grade, and position or title of traveler.

B.  
Origin and destination points.

If only segments of the trip  
were premium-class, show the travel points of the segments.

C.  
Beginning date of travel.

D.  
Actual cost of premium-class fare.

E.  
Actual cost of coach-class fare.

F.  
Circumstances justifying the use of premium-class travel.

a                    If the approval is based on a physical disability, attach  
                      medical certificate.

G.  
Name of air carrier if foreign travel was involved.

H.  
Purpose of travel (e.  
g.  
, site visit).

(e)     Agency reporting requirements for first-class travel.  
Agencies are required to submit an annual report to the Director, OFM,  
no later than October 31 of each year. Where possible, please submit  
the information in the format prescribed by the FTR as well as in hard  
copy.    ### 9/5/95)

#### 301-3.4 Special fares.

(b)     Reduced rates.

(1)     Use of special lower fares.    (### ### 9/5/95)    Use of  
noncontract carriers must be authorized on the traveler's AD-202 or, in  
emergency situations, post-approved on the AD-616. Holders of Types B  
and N travel authorizations may have the use of noncontract carriers  
approved on an amended AD-202.

(2)     Reduced group or charter fares offered by travel agents.

(i)     When charter services are ordered from a common carrier,  
the

terms of the charter must be in writing and signed by Government and carrier representatives. On the basis of the signed agreement, the agency should issue a GTR. Carriers should be instructed to attach a copy of the charter agreement to the SF-1113, Public Voucher for Transportation Service, submitted to the NFC for payment.

(ii) Approval of a one-time use of a noncontract travel agent may be granted by General Officers or their deputies or Agency Heads. This authority may be redelegated in writing as appropriate. The traveler may only be reimbursed for the travel costs that would have been incurred had a GVTS or Government contractor-issued charge card been used.

(iii) Department travelers may use noncontract travel agents only when procuring individual accommodations at group or charter rates for foreign travel or when traveling to a meeting, conference, or similar event where cost effective travel arrangements for attendees have been made by the sponsoring organization.

(c) Unequal fares available. The use of extra-fare planes and trains must be specifically authorized or approved. When extra-fare planes, trains, or other accommodations that exceed those authorized are used for personal reasons, the GTR must be issued for the regular fare, and the traveler must pay excess costs. If the traveler's use of extra-fare services for personal reasons results in cost savings to the Government in other areas (for example, per diem), the traveler may claim these savings to the amount of excess cost paid.

(d) Use of supersaver fares. Providing it meets with GSA's requirements, agencies may authorize the use of restricted or nonrestricted supersaver fares. Agencies must comply with the following Departmental supersaver guidelines if they have not established an agency policy:

(1) Supersaver fares with cancellation penalties should only be authorized for temporary duty (TDY) travel situations which are not likely to be canceled or rescheduled.

(2) Authorization for use of supersaver fares should be maintained at a high agency level to prevent abuse.

(3) The AD-202 must state that the use of the fare complies with GSA policy on exemptions to the use of contract carriers. A cost comparison must be attached to the AD-202.

(4) Employees exchanging Government-issued tickets to schedule personal travel in conjunction with official travel must pay all penalties if the trip is canceled for business or personal reasons. If official travel is canceled, the employee is responsible for reimbursing the full amount paid by the Government, including any penalties incurred.

301-3.5 Unused, downgraded, canceled, or oversold transportation services.

(a) Unused or downgraded tickets or canceled reservations. Employees must return tickets for unused or partially used accommodations (including those obtained from a GSA Travel Management Center (TMC) promptly. For tickets procured with an individual's personal Government contractor issued traveler's charge card, employees are responsible for returning them to the airline or the TMC from which the tickets were purchased. Tickets obtained from a TMC using a centralized GVTS account are returned to the TMC. Tickets purchased by GTR are returned to the NFC as specified in the NFC Procedures Manual, Title II, Chapter 2, Travel and Transportation, Section 2, Travel Vouchers.

(b) Oversold reserved accommodations (denied boarding). When an air carrier fails to provide reserved accommodations, the carrier may be liable for a penalty payment. The traveler must have the carrier's check made payable to the Treasurer of the United States and must forward the check to the NFC with an explanation of the circumstances. This is true regardless of the method of payment used to procure the transportation.

(d) Agency responsibilities. Procedures for unused or downgraded transportation services are contained in the NFC Procedures Manual, Title II, Chapter 2, Travel and Transportation, Section 2, Travel Vouchers.

(1) Coupons. Coupons or other items that carry only a cash surrender value shall be redeemed immediately and the proceeds deposited to the Treasury's miscellaneous receipts account. The agency should integrate coupons that carry a discount for future travel into agency travel plans to increase their benefit to the Government. When a coupon is used, the appropriation shall only be charged the net amount required to cover the travel (full fare less the coupon value). If agency travel plans will not absorb all coupons held, the agency should forward the surplus to the Director, OFM, for disposition.

(2) Other bonus goods. Agencies shall follow procedures contained in 41 CFR 101-25.103 for other merchandise received as bonus goods. This regulation requires that such merchandise be sent to the nearest Government medical facility for its use. Merchandise received that is of no value to a medical facility should be disposed of or used under 41 CFR 101-43, 44, 45.

(3) Frequent travelers benefits. The following is the order of precedence for use of FTB'S:

(i) To offset Government travel costs by obtaining free or reduced cost tickets;

(###

(ii) To offset the cost of premium-class travel when the travel would be authorized in accordance with paragraph 301- 3(d)(4) and (5) of the FTR;

(iii) To upgrade any official travel to premium-class other than first-class accommodations. ### 9/5/95)

## CHAPTER 301 TRAVEL ALLOWANCES

### PART 301-4 REIMBURSEMENT FOR USE OF PRIVATELY OWNED CONVEYANCES

#### 301-4.1 Basic rules.

(a) Mileage payments.

(1) No mileage may be paid between an employee's home and official duty station except for the day of departure and the day of return from travel which includes at least one night away from the duty station.

(2) Agencies have the discretionary authority to limit allowable mileage payments for travel between employees' residences and alternate duty points in the vicinity of their official duty stations.

(3) Except as otherwise provided in these regulations, an administrative determination must be made before use of a POV conveyance may be authorized or approved.

#### 301-4.2 When use of a privately owned conveyance is advantageous to the Government.

(a) Authorized mileage rates. The mileage rates in this section do not apply to relocation. Paragraph 302-2.3(b) of the FTR addresses the rates used during relocations.

301-4.3 Use of a privately owned conveyance instead of common carrier transportation. Approval for use of a POV in lieu of common carrier transportation is required when such use is advantageous to the Government. If the POV is used as a personal preference, reimbursement is limited to the costs by approved method of transportation and leave should be charged for additional travel time during normal working hours. Agencies have the authority to determine the procedures for this type of deviation from authorized mode of travel.

301-4.4 Use of a privately owned conveyance instead of a Government-furnished automobile.



(a) Planning for use of Government-furnished automobiles. Annually, by May 15, all employees designated as high-mileage drivers (see 301-2.2(d) for policy on how to determine which employees qualify) will make a written commitment covering the following fiscal year. The commitment will state whether the employees will drive Government-furnished automobiles specifically assigned for their individual use or their POV. While the commitment is normally intended to cover a fiscal year period, the date of Government vehicle availability may require that 12 months other than a fiscal year be used. The actual commitment period begins when the vehicle is delivered and runs for 12 months thereafter. The commitment will be the basis for reimbursement to the employee for the commitment period.

## CHAPTER 301 TRAVEL ALLOWANCES

### PART 301-5 BAGGAGE

#### 301-5.3 Payment of costs for baggage.

(a) Transportation charges for excess baggage. Receipts are required for cash payments and must show the weight of the baggage and the points between which it was shipped.

301-5.6 Lost or damaged baggage. When not adequately reimbursed by a carrier for lost or damaged property, the traveler may file a claim under the Military Personnel and Civilian Employees Claims Act of 1964. When the transportation costs have been charged to either Government contractor-issued individual charge cards or GVTS, the traveler is eligible for lost and delayed baggage insurance. In those circumstances, a claim must be filed against the Government contract charge card company before submitting claims to the Government. (See DR 2250-1, Claims against the Government).

## CHAPTER 301 TRAVEL ALLOWANCES

### PART 301-6 COMMUNICATIONS SERVICES

#### 301-6.4 Official Communications.

(c) Use of Government telephone systems during official travel. See DR 2300-3, Authorized Telephone Calls of a Personal Nature During Official Travel, May 3, 1990, for Departmental policy.

## CHAPTER 301 TRAVEL ALLOWANCES

### PART 301-7 PER ALLOWANCES

#### 301-7.2 Employee and agency responsibilities.

(b) Agency responsibilities for authorizing/approving rates. If, due to extenuating circumstances, an employee retains lodging at two locations, dual lodging costs may be paid if an administrative determination is made that shows that the employee acted reasonably. The lodging actually occupied will be reimbursed as a subsistence expense. The other lodging cost will be considered an allowable travel expense that may be claimed as a miscellaneous expense on the AD-616. However, reimbursement for the unoccupied lodging is limited to the amount payable had the temporary assignment not been changed.

301-7.3 Maximum per diem rates. The total reimbursement to the employee plus subsistence expenses paid by the Government for the employee (for example, lodgings paid for under a purchase order) may not exceed the stated maximum rate.

301-7.4 Rate adjustment requests for travel within CONUS.

(a) All requests must be fully documented and forwarded to:

Director  
Office of Finance and Management  
U.S. Department of Agriculture  
Washington, D.C. 20250

301-7.5 General rules affecting entitlement to per diem.

(a) No allowance at official station. The FTR precludes payment of per diem within the corporate limits of the official duty stations. The Department further restricts per diem eligibility as shown below. Entitlement to per diem is based on meeting both FTR and Departmental requirements.

(1) Travel within one calendar day. Per diem may not be paid for travel within one calendar day when the travel is performed within a 25-mile radius of either the employee's official duty station location or residence (place from which the employee commutes daily to the official station).

(2) Travel of more than one calendar day. Per diem may not be paid for travel of more than one calendar day when the travel is performed within a 35-mile radius of the employee's official duty station location. (Note: Travel status ends upon return to either your official duty station location or residence. Therefore, this rule covers employees who remain overnight at TDY point, not employees who return to their residence each night.)

Agency Heads may deviate from this policy when the location of either the temporary duty point or the official duty station is not geographically suited to these restrictions. However, in the absence of a site-specific deviation, the criteria in (1) and (2) above will be

used.

Agency Heads may request from the Director, OFM, authority to pay per diem within the prescribed mileage radius for unique agency program requirements, for example, when it is advantageous to keep employees at fire camps or other emergency locations.

(3) Meals while at official duty station. No meals may be provided to employees at Government expense while at their official duty station except:

(i) If provided as part of an official training session within 5 U.S.C. 4109, or

(ii) If provided as part of a formal meeting or conference that includes substantial functions that take place separately from the meal. The meals must be incidental to the meeting, and attendance at meals is necessary for full participation. The employees must not be free to take meals elsewhere without missing essential formal discussions, lectures, or speeches related to the purpose of the meeting (Comptroller General Decisions B-198471, May 1, 1980; 64 CG 406; B-200650, April 23, 1986; B-224995, December 11, 1987; B-232742, March 28, 1989; B- 230576, August 14, 1989). Refer to 68 CG 604 and 68 CG 606 for discussions on meals at meetings under agencies' administrative control.

301-7.6 Lodgings-plus per diem system.

(b) Elements of per diem allowance.

(1) Maximum lodging expense allowance. Travelers who incur no lodging costs while in official travel status may be reimbursed transportation expenses to and from a place of free lodging, up to the maximum allowable daily lodging cost or \$50 per day, whichever is the lesser amount. Travel by POV under these conditions will be reimbursed at the rate applicable when use of a POV is advantageous to the Government.

(2) Meals and incidental expenses (MI&E) allowance. If the registration fee for a meeting or conference includes meals, deduct the amount specified in FTR 301-7.12(a)(2) for each meal provided. This applies to meals furnished by non-Government organizations through arrangement with the Government or through registration fees paid by the Government. If the registration fee does not include a meal, but the employee's presence at the meal is necessary for full participation in the meeting, deduct the appropriate amount from the per diem claim but reimburse the employee for the cost of the meal by including it as a separate item in the miscellaneous expense block on the AD-616 with an explanation of the circumstances.

301-7.9 Lodging--location, receipt requirements and allowable expenses.

(b) Receipt requirements.

(2) Receipts lost or impractical to obtain. Unless exempted under this paragraph, employees must obtain copies of lost or destroyed receipts from the lodging establishment. However, agency approving officials may waive this requirement in situations where it would be difficult or impossible for the employee to obtain the copies. In those instances, a statement will be provided that complies with the requirements of FTR 301- 7.9(b) (2).

301-7.12 Reductions in maximum per diem rates when appropriate.

(b) Extended stays. A per diem rate of 55 percent of the locality rate should be established for extended stays. If reduced lodgings and/or meals cannot be obtained, a higher rate may be established as justified by the anticipated costs. When the per diem rate is adjusted downward, the AD-202 must show the reduced rate (see 301-1.104(c)). Unless arrangements are made prior to the start of travel, the traveler may be allowed full per diem until long-term accommodations can be found (usually no more than 30 days). If the specific reduced rate is not known at the time the AD-202 is prepared, state that an amended AD-202 will be issued during the first 30 days of the assignment which will authorize a lower rate for the remainder of the stay.

301-7.14 Per diem allowance computations for special situations.

(e) Reimbursement for travel expenses of individuals attending awards ceremonies. The Agency Head may determine which specific awards ceremonies employees and one accompanying individual may attend. See Departmental Personnel Letter 451-7 for specific policies on who may accompany the employee at Government expense.

301-7.15 Interruptions of per diem entitlement.

(b) Return to official station for nonworkdays.

(3) Authorized return incident to extended temporary duty. Agencies must formulate internal policies on nonworkday return travel, addressing specific employee situations within their authority. Employees may be ordered to return to their official stations on nonworkdays when the cost of returning is outweighed by savings from increased efficiency and productivity, as well as by reduced costs for employee recruitment and retention. This cost analysis shall be conducted no less frequently than every other year. However, employees may return to their official stations at intervals of not less than 2 weeks, if the TDY assignment will continue for at least 1 more week, unless the returns are authorized under FTR 301-7.15(b) (1) or (2).

(e) Travel away from temporary duty station on nonworkdays. When employees on temporary duty travel on nonworkdays to a location other than their permanent duty station or residence, entitlement to per diem continues. The employee is not entitled to transportation costs instead of per diem. This provision applies only when returning to permanent duty location or residence. (Note: "Residence" is the place from which employees commute daily to their official duty stations.)

CHAPTER 301 TRAVEL ALLOWANCES

PART 301-8 REIMBURSEMENT OF ACTUAL SUBSISTENCE EXPENSES

301-8.1 General.

(b) Delegation of authority. Agency Heads have the authority to approve actual subsistence reimbursements. To comply with GSA's regulatory intent, delegation of this authority is limited to Deputy Agency Heads and SAO's (see 301-1.3(c)(17) for definition).

(d) Relationship to per diem. Except as provided in FTR 301-8.2(b), when the Federal Government furnishes meals to the employee without charge, the M&IE portion of the actual subsistence amount will be reduced by the same percent assigned to each meal in FTR 301-7.12(a)(2)(i). These are as follows:

	Base rate-\$26	Base rate-\$30	Base rate-\$34	Base rate-\$38
Breakfast	20%	20%	21%	21%
Lunch	20%	20%	21%	21%
Dinner	52%	52%	52%	53%
Incidentals	8%	8%	6%	5%

301-8.2 Conditions warranting authorization or approval of actual expenses.

(b) Situations requiring reimbursement for occasional lodgings and/or meals. Agency Heads shall establish internal procedures for travel under these provisions. If these special situations are known in advance, authorization for reimbursement and the amount reimbursable for each meal or lodging expense should be on the AD-202. Otherwise, post-approval is permitted under 301-8.4 below.

301-8.3 Maximum daily rates and reimbursement limitations. The AD-202 must state the maximum amount authorized per calendar day. If the trip includes travel under both actual subsistence and per diem, the AD-202 must clearly specify the portion of the trip that will be on actual subsistence.

(b) Reimbursement limitation.

(2) Specific meals and incidental expenses limitation. At their discretion, approving officers may require itemization, but this requirement must be noted on the AD-202 before travel begins.

(c) Travel to an area within CONUS where special or unusual circumstances result in an extreme increase in subsistence costs for a temporary period.

(2) All requests must be sent to the Director, OFM, for review and forwarded to the Administrator, GSA, for increases to actual

subsistence reimbursements from 150 to 300 percent of the established rate.

#### 301-8.4 Authorization or approval.

(c) Approval after travel is completed. Post approval of actual subsistence is limited to emergency situations or to travel where unusual, unforeseen circumstances caused actual and necessary subsistence expenses (usually lodging costs) to be significantly greater than that allowed under per diem. Post approval must be noted on the face of the AD-616 by adding the statement "reimbursement of actual subsistence expenses post approved" above the approving officer's signature. The specific amount approved, up to 150 percent of the locality's per diem rate, will be noted in the remarks section of the AD-616. If only the lodging amount is increased, the employee will claim the appropriate M&IE rate with no itemization for meals required (see 301-8.3(b) (2) above).

#### 301-8.6 Mixed travel (per diem and actual subsistence expense) reimbursement.

(b) Transition between reimbursement systems normally occurs at midnight. Each day is treated separately depending upon the specific circumstances of that day's travel.

### CHAPTER 301 TRAVEL ALLOWANCES

#### PART 301-9 MISCELLANEOUS EXPENSES

##### 301-9.1 Expenses Allowable.

(c) Travelers checks, money orders, certified checks, or automated-teller-machine (ATM) services. Employees who receive travel advances from Departmental imprest funds in the form of travelers checks are reminded that the fee may be claimed as a miscellaneous expense.

Employees who receive travel advances from the contractor-provided ATM Travel Advance Program may claim the transaction fee and network fee as miscellaneous expenses.

Telephone calls authorized under FTR 301-6.4 should be claimed as a miscellaneous expense on the AD-616.

### CHAPTER 301 TRAVEL ALLOWANCES

#### PART 301-10 SOURCES OF FUNDS

### 301-10.1 General Policy.

(c) Government contractor-issued charge cards. The designated contractor will provide charge cards to Government employees for use during official travel. These cards will be issued to individuals by an appropriate agency official. When issued, the cards are to be used for all transportation and, to the maximum extent possible, other official travel-related payments. Holders of charge cards will only be eligible for a reduced travel advance. (See 301-10.3(b).)

### 301-10.2 Procurement of common carrier transportation.

(a) U.S. Government transportation requests (GTR's).

(1) Regulations governing use. The NFC is responsible for providing GTR's to agencies on request. Departmental procedures for control and preparation of GTR's are specified in the NFC Procedures Manual, Title II, Chapter 2, Section 3.

(i) Agency Heads or their designees may appoint designated agents to control and sign GTR's instead of individual travelers when they determine that this procedure will result in more economical and efficient procurement of transportation service.

(ii) Designated agents may procure transportation for travelers of other USDA agencies when such service is requested in writing by the Agency Head or designee authorizing the travel. This service may be requested on an individual trip basis or a blanket basis for all travel of a certain type (for example, foreign travel).

(2) Use of the GTR.

(v) The Department's policy is that employees may not use GTR's to procure common carrier transportation services costing \$100 or less or transportation of any amount when the employee holds a Government contractor-issued credit card.

(vi) GTR's may not be issued to travel agents unless the travel agency is under contract to GSA and the USDA agency has arranged to obtain transportation services from said agency. Travel agents under GSA contract will be issued GTR's (normally one per billing period) and will bill the agency on an SF-1113 under agreed upon procedures cleared with the NFC. (See, also, 301-3.4(b)(2) and 301-3.5.) The GTR will cover transportation for employees who do not have Government contractor-issued charge cards.

However, when a GVTS account has been established for the travel agency, GTR's may not be used in lieu of the GVTS account.

(3) Lost or stolen GTR. When a GTR is lost, stolen, voided, or mutilated beyond use, the traveler or accountable employee must notify the NFC immediately, using Form AD-497, Request for TR Action, as specified in the NFC Procedures Manual, Title II, Chapter 2, Section 3. The employee is liable for transportation charged to a lost or stolen

GTR unless an AD-497 has been submitted on a timely basis or the employee is relieved of accountability by a Board of Survey or other agency authority.

(4) Charter and contract service. GTR's must be used to purchase all official charter and contract service from common carriers.

(5) Review of GTR usage.

(i) Travelers must submit the buff copy of their GTR's to appropriate officials or employees for review and approval.

(ii) These individuals shall verify that the travel shown on the GTR was actually performed or that unused or partially used tickets are attached to the AD-616.

(iii) Agencies shall ensure that the NFC Monthly Report of Travel is reviewed by the appropriate individual to verify that all travel was for official business.

(b) Cash payments for procurement of common carrier transportation services.

(iii) When cost of transportation exceeds \$100. The use of cash (or non-Government provided travel charge card) to procure emergency transportation services costing over \$100 must be approved by General Officers or their deputies or Agency Heads. This authority may be redelegated in writing as appropriate. Nonemergency use of cash (or personal charge card) for more than \$100 must be approved by the Director, OFM. (Transportation purchased with a Government contractor-issued charge card has been exempted from these requirements by the Administrator, GSA.)

#### 301-10.3 Advance of funds.

(a) Authority. DR 2300-2, Advance of Funds for Official Travel, contains Departmental policy on advances of funds for travel.

(1) Approval of advances. Approving officers are responsible for ensuring that advances are not requested until needed and that the amount requested is commensurate with the travel to be performed. With the exception of the two categories listed below, an individual may not approve his or her own travel advance. Employees exempted from this policy include: (i) holders of unlimited open travel authorizations, and

(ii) those employees affected by unique circumstances, e.g., an employee stationed at remote CONUS locations or at foreign duty stations where no approving officials are present. Agencies must maintain specific documentation detailing the unique circumstances and the specific employees authorized to approve their own travel advances.

(2) Receipt of travel advances. Where available, employees will



be issued advances in the form of travelers checks. Employees should convert cash to travelers checks for their financial protection. The travelers checks fee is a reimbursable miscellaneous expense on the AD-616.

(3) New employees and non-USDA employees. Funds may be advanced to new employees who are eligible to receive reimbursement for travel to the first post of duty. Funds may be advanced to non-Government individuals or to employees of other Federal agencies when traveling for the Department and when the advance is justified.

(b) Limitation. The cash advance shall not exceed the sum of the cash transaction expenses anticipated during authorized travel (including travel incident to permanent change of station) that an employee cannot charge using a Government contractor-issued charge card. Generally, cash transaction expenses include but are not limited to the M&IE allowance, expenses covered by mileage reimbursements, local transportation costs, and other authorized miscellaneous expenses which cannot be charged.

For travel covered by Types A, B, or N authorizations, advances should be limited to the estimated out-of-pocket expenses for no more than a 45-day period from the date of the advance authorization and for subsequent 45-day increments.

(c) Exceptions to travel advance limitations

(5) Maximum advances allowed. With the proper justification, an agency may approve the following maximum amounts, including any advance currently outstanding:

(i) The limit for a normal cash travel advance from an imprest fund is \$500.

(ii) The combined amount of outstanding travel advances for temporary duty and relocation may not exceed \$5,000 (exclusive of Government travelers check fees).

(iii) Agency Heads may authorize an amount not to exceed \$7,500 if the traveler uses the commuted rate method for the movement of household goods and the estimated costs require substantially all of the travel advance, the employee's allowable costs for a 30-day period of temporary quarters exceed the \$5,000 maximum amount, or the employee is detailed for longer than 30 days to an area where receipt of additional advances and filing of vouchers would be difficult.

(iv) If a traveler requires an advance in excess of the amount stated in (4)(iii), the agency must submit the employee's request for the advance, including a justification statement, to

the Director, OFM, for approval.

(d) Control and recovery of advances.

(1) Deduction from vouchers.

(i) Each agency must have internal financial controls and procedures to review monthly reports identifying travelers with outstanding travel advances, to notify travelers with outstanding travel advances of any delinquencies in filing vouchers, and to ensure the prompt repayment of outstanding advance balances.

(g) Traveler's responsibilities. Travelers are personally liable and responsible for travel advances and must:

(1) safeguard funds;

(2) spend funds for authorized purposes only;

(3) account for all funds advanced;

(4) promptly submit AD-616's; and

(5) promptly repay any advance that is not needed for official needs.

(h) Departmental controls. Policies and procedures on travel advances can be found in DR 2300-2, which provides more detailed policy on travel advances and NFC Procedures Manual, Title 11, Chapter 2, Section 1, which contains procedural information.

## CHAPTER 301 TRAVEL ALLOWANCES

### PART 301-11 CLAIMS FOR REIMBURSEMENT

#### 301-11.3 Travel vouchers and attachments.

(a) Use of authorized form. The AD-616 must be used for all USDA travel. The NFC does not process the SF-1012, Travel Voucher. The Department has authority to use the AD-616 as a multiperson travel voucher for certain non-employee group travel; contact OFM for assistance or information.

All AD-616's must show the purpose of travel.

If the voucher covers travel for more than one purpose, show only the predominant purpose.

The AD-616 must have original (not photocopied) signatures of claimant and approving official. Use of a facsimile or electronically generated version of the AD-616 needs special approval. Contact OFM for procedures on obtaining approval.

(b) Evidence of authorization. All travel by USDA employees is covered by one of five types of authorizations (see 301-1.102(a)). Send copies of Types A, B, and N travel authorizations to the NFC as soon as they are issued. Attach a copy of the AD-202 to the first related AD-616.

(c) Receipts required. The Department requires receipts for expenses over \$25, exclusive of any applicable taxes or tips, including expenditures for taxicabs and meals. Receipts for meals under per diem are not required. Lodging receipts, regardless of amount, are required under per diem and actual subsistence. However, when a reduced rate per diem is authorized under FTR 301-7.10, no receipts for lodging expenses are required.

301-11.4 Submission and review of travel vouchers. See the NFC Procedures Manual, Chapter 2, Travel and Transportation, Section 2, Travel Vouchers, for instructions on preparation and submission of travel vouchers and related documents. Travel vouchers may not be paid through the imprest fund.

(b) Supervisory/administrative review. No one may approve his or her own travel voucher. Except for General Officers, all vouchers must be approved by the traveler's supervisor. In the case of General Officers, a subordinate employee such as a deputy or administrative officer may approve the voucher.

301-11.5 Preparation of voucher.

(a) Itemization.

(2) Leave of absence. Whenever any leave is taken while in official travel status, the word "leave" must be written on the top of the AD-616 and the exact time of departure from and return to duty status must be shown. All such vouchers must be sent directly to the NFC Travel Unit, marked "special handling." The NFC will audit all of these vouchers to ensure that they comply with the FTR.

(i) See 301-1.105(c) for special approvals required when employee takes leave during official travel.

(c) Transportation expenses.

(1) Transportation requests, unused tickets. The traveler shall manually enter the statement required by FTR 301- 11.5(c) (1) on the voucher and initial it. The term "change in itinerary" for this paragraph applies only to travel changes that result in a refund or an additional charge.

301-11.6 Administrative approvals.

(a) Administrative approval of the voucher. Agencies and the NFC may administratively correct travel vouchers with underclaims not exceeding \$30. Overclaims in any amount may be administratively reduced.

CHAPTER 301 TRAVEL ALLOWANCES

PART 301-12 EMERGENCY TRAVEL OF EMPLOYEE DUE  
TO ILLNESS OR INJURY OR A PERSONAL EMERGENCY SITUATION,  
WITHIN OR OUTSIDE CONUS

301-12.2 Agency responsibility/delegation of authority.

Agency Heads may delegate their authority under this section; however, such redelegation shall be held to as high an administrative level as possible.

When approval for travel under this part is given, a separate AD-202 will be prepared confirming the approval and specifying the circumstances that caused the emergency travel and the extent to which the Government will reimburse the employee. The claim for emergency travel expenses will be on the AD-616 separate from the one prepared for the official travel interrupted due to illness or personal emergency.

CHAPTER 301 TRAVEL ALLOWANCES

PART 301-13 (RESERVED)

CHAPTER 301 TRAVEL ALLOWANCES

PART 301-14 PAYMENT OF SUBSISTENCE AND  
TRANSPORTATION EXPENSES FOR THREATENED  
LAW ENFORCEMENT/INVESTIGATIVE EMPLOYEES

301-14.2 Agency responsibility/delegation of authority.

The authority to approve travel reimbursements under this part is delegated to Agency Heads with no further redelegation permitted (see 301-1.1(d)(5)). The Office of Inspector General (OIG) must be notified of all instances where threatened individuals are moved into temporary living accommodations either at or away from the official duty station. (See, also, DR 1710-2, OIG/Investigations Organization and Operations.)

CHAPTER 301 TRAVEL ALLOWANCES

PART 301-15 TRAVEL MANAGEMENT PROGRAMS

Subpart A--Use of Travel Agents and Travel Management Centers (TMC's)  
by

Federal Executive Agencies

301-15.7 Agency responsibilities. Agencies must use TMC's wherever available.

301-15.8 Employee responsibilities. All employees whose agency participates in the TMC program must use the specified TMC for all

official travel.

Subpart C--Travel and Transportation Expense Payment System:  
Contractor-Issued Charge Cards, Centrally Billed Accounts, Travelers  
Checks, and Automated-Teller-Machine (ATM) Services

301-15.40 Scope of subpart. Agencies interested in using the ATM feature of the system need to request approval from OFM. The request should include a cost benefit analysis, proposed implementing policies and procedures, and a statement signed by the Deputy Administrator for Management (or equivalent official) that ATM use by the agency is expected to be advantageous to the Government.

(###

## CHAPTER 301 TRAVEL ALLOWANCES

### PART 301-16 CONFERENCE PLANNING

#### 301-16.1 Policy.

(a) Basic policy. It is Department policy that the number of employees attending a meeting or conference shall be kept to the minimum necessary to ensure that the USDA or the Executive Branch will be appropriately represented.

All proposals to conduct offsite meetings or conferences for overall management, strategic planning, or reorganization that have a total out-of-pocket cost of more than \$25,000, including travel, must be submitted to the Deputy Secretary for approval. Proposals must include specific justification for the function, location, expected number of USDA attendees, and an estimate of costs, including travel and subsistence costs of USDA attendees.

An AD-202 must be used to specifically authorize all travel to attend meetings, conferences, seminars, and similar events. Local travel within the vicinity of employee's official duty station is exempt from this requirement.

#### 301-16.4 Selection of conference site.

(a) Agency responsibilities. (1) Agency policy. (i) All conferences, meetings, and seminars shall be held at the most cost-effective location (considering such factors as meals, lodgings, transportation, and rental of conference rooms), unless programmatic considerations dictate otherwise. A resort area may be used only if it satisfies the above noted requirements. (See 301-1.3(c)(16) for definition of resort area.)

(ii) Meetings or conferences where a majority of the attendees will be Washington, D.C.-based personnel must be held at a location within the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area. Only General Officers or their Deputies may authorize an exception to this rule.

(iii) Consideration must be given to less costly alternatives to meetings and conferences (for example, conference calls) whenever possible.

(iv) For USDA-sponsored meetings, conferences, seminars, and similar events, the following order of preference must be followed:

- (A) Local USDA facilities.
- (B) Other local Government facilities.
- (C) Facilities outside the employee's official duty station.

(v) If meeting attendees are from more than one official duty station, a site shall be chosen that results in the lowest overall cost to the Department, unless programmatic considerations dictate otherwise.

(vi) If a meeting of seven or more employees requires the payment of transportation expenses, a cost-benefit analysis must be made and kept on file by the approving official. At a minimum, this analysis shall contain the name and duty location of each employee, the estimated total travel costs of each employee, other expected expenses (meeting room rental, etc.), and a justification for choosing the meeting site over at least three other reasonable sites. ### 9/5/95)

(### ### 9/5/95) PART 301-17

## CHAPTER 301 TRAVEL ALLOWANCES

### PART 301-18 FOREIGN TRAVEL

301-18.1 Purpose. This Part sets forth general guidelines and administrative requirements for foreign travel and discusses factors to be considered in authorizing or approving foreign travel. Specific authorities and rates pertaining to foreign travel are contained in the FTR. The requirements in this part are in addition to those generally applicable to all travel.

301-18.2 Policy. It is the policy of the Department to authorize foreign travel when it is in the interest of the work of the Department and the expenses to be incurred can be justified in the furtherance of its programs. Foreign travel may also be performed for the benefit of another department, a foreign government, an international organization, etc., subject to such laws and regulations as may be most appropriate under the circumstances involved.

The most careful administrative consideration should be given to all authorizations for foreign travel and to the costs involved. Before issuance of each authorization for such travel, it is the responsibility of the authorizing official to exercise prudent judgment as to its

necessity and to determine that the purpose of the travel:

(a) relates directly to the accomplishment of authorized programs or functions of the Department and, therefore, that the expenses may be properly paid from funds appropriated or otherwise available to the agency;

(b) concerns the authorized program or functions of another Federal agency and that the expenses are chargeable to the funds of that agency; or

(c) is for the joint benefit of the Department and some other Federal agency, a foreign country, an international organization, etc., and that such benefit warrants a sharing of expenses by the parties involved.

301-18.3 Factors to be considered in authorizing foreign travel.

(a) General. When foreign travel is necessary, careful consideration must be given to the following:

(1) A determination of the number of persons necessary to accomplish the mission.

(2) Selection of the best qualified person for the job.

(3) Careful planning of itineraries to avoid duplicate travel and to assure effective use of resources.

(4) Selection of the most economical means of transportation.

(5) The possibility that Department employees, either stationed in a foreign country or traveling on other official business, could handle matters for Department agencies other than their own agencies.

Other factors for consideration in typical situations follow below.

(b) Department programs. If the foreign travel is for carrying out programs of the Department, allowable expenses shall conform with the FTR and the ATR, except that personnel assigned abroad by the Secretary of Agriculture under 7 U.S.C. 1766c, or other authority, will be authorized allowances and benefits similar to those provided by the Foreign Service Act of 1980 (22 U.S.C. 3901).

(c) Travel for another Federal agency. If the travel is to be undertaken for another Federal agency or another agency of this Department and funds are not transferred or advanced to the performing agency, the agency benefiting may authorize the travel subject to its regulations or the performing agency may authorize the travel under its regulations and receive reimbursement from the agency benefiting (31 U.S.C. 1535-1536).

(d) Travel financed by funds transferred. Travel expenses payable from funds transferred, advanced, or otherwise made available to

the performing agency from appropriations outside the Department are subject to the laws and regulations governing the appropriation of the agency making the transfer or advance. In any case, where travel expenses are to be paid on a basis other than as provided by these regulations, the letter of authorization must indicate what laws and regulations are to be applicable.

(e) Travel under cooperative agreement. Travel may be performed that is of mutual benefit both to the Department in carrying out its regular activities and to a foreign government or international organization. The cooperative agreement, exchange of official correspondence, or jointly signed memorandum that outlines the mutual interest and benefits should also set forth the cost-sharing arrangement including payment of salary, travel, and other expenses. Any request from, or proposed arrangement with, a foreign government or international organization should be officially extended and accepted through appropriate diplomatic or other official channels before arrangements are completed. For the protection of the Department and the individual traveler, OFM should be kept informed in planning the financial arrangements.

The agreement will provide that each party will handle its own funds and pay its respective expenses. However, if the agreement provides for payment of all or part of salary, travel, or other expenses of employees by a foreign government, arrangements should be made for advance of funds or furnishing of property or services under procedures outlined below (22 U.S.C. 1479). (For international organizations and semi-official and private bodies, similar arrangements may be negotiated.)

(1) Dollar advances. If possible, advance of funds in dollars should be arranged through the Department of State. Funds so received may be established as a deposit account in the Treasury of the United States, to be available for the specified purpose, and to be used for reimbursement of appropriations or direct expenditure.

(2) Foreign currency advances. Arrangements may be made through American embassies abroad for deposit of local foreign currency in the account of the Foreign Service disbursing officer at the foreign post of duty for the purpose specified in the underlying agreement. Travelers may withdraw such funds from the disbursing officer in advance of payment or they may be reimbursed in such foreign currency for expenses incurred.

(3) Furnishing of property or services. A foreign government or other cooperating agency may make payments in kind (property or services) when stipulated in the underlying agreement to share costs incurred.

(f) Acceptance by employees of salary or expenses from foreign governments. Financial arrangements should consider that, under the



Constitution (Art. 1, Sec. 9), employees of the United States Government are prohibited from accepting salary directly from a foreign government.

USDA employees should not accept services in kind or incidental expenses from a foreign government unless authorized as indicated above and specifically provided for in the underlying agreement.

301-18.4 Administrative requirements. Each agency shall appoint a Foreign Travel Coordinator who is responsible for assuring that all requirements of this section are met, in particular, the return of official and diplomatic passports per paragraph (i) (1). General information on foreign travel conditions and requirements not included in this regulation may be obtained from the Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS), Passport and Visa Unit.

(a) Travel authorization. An AD-202 is required for foreign travel whether the travel expenses are to be paid from funds available to this Department or from other sources. (See 301-1.102 for policy relating to holders of Type A travel authorizations.)

(b) International travel clearance. (1) International travel must be cleared in the country of destination to ensure that all post responsibilities, including official traveler support, can be carried out effectively and to protect the health and welfare of U.S. Government employees on official travel status.

(2) It is the initiating USDA agency's responsibility to obtain country clearances from the Agricultural Counselor/Attache (AC/A) well in advance of the proposed visit. If no AC/A resides near the country to be visited, the clearance must be obtained from the nearest post of the country to be visited. An information copy must be sent to the country where the AC/A resides. Clearance of the communication by appropriate FAS Area Officer, Foreign Agricultural Affairs (FAA), is mandatory. Travel to Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union must also be cleared by the Eastern Europe and Soviet Secretariat, FAS. For exceptions, see 301-18.4(k) (4). Use of USDA FAS cable, State cable, or Agency for International Development (AID) Action Cable (AIDAC), as defined below, is required for this purpose. Telemail, fax, or other written means of communication can be used only to receive replies as noted in 301-18.4(b) (5).

(3) Communication.

(i) USDA FAS cable. To be used for non-AID funded travel to a country where FAS has a representative in residence or for AID funded travel if there is no AID representative resident in the same country. Refer to other FAS overseas directory for the list of posts and personnel assigned abroad.

(ii) State cable. To be used for non-AID funded travel to a country where there is no FAS or AID representative in residence. If travel is being made to a country that is covered by an FAS representative who is resident to another post, complete the "INFO PRECEDENCE" line and the "CAPTIONS" line for their notification only.



Place of Birth (as noted in  
passport.)

Traveler's security clearance (If none - write  
none.)

A statement on whether or not Embassy assistance  
is anticipated.

A request for post clearance.

(7) Based on security concerns, some high security risk posts will routinely refuse all clearance requests unless they are transmitted by "Limited Official Use" State cable. Check with the appropriate Area Officer.

(8) When the post travel clearance has been received in accordance with the procedures set out in 301-18.4(b) (3) or (4), attach to form AD-750, International Travel Clearance, and send to the appropriate FAS Area Officer. This requirement also applies to those situations in which employees, traveling on personal passports on annual leave, intend to make contacts related to their official positions with the Department.

(9) FAS will not release a passport until the FAA Area Officer reviews the AD-750 and provides an approval to the FAS Passport and Visa Unit.

(c) Travel clearance. The Department's policy is to require administrative clearance for all non-employees accredited to USDA who are traveling to a foreign country on official business.

All employees traveling to former Soviet Union or risk countries must have an administrative clearance. For a current listing of these countries see Department Personnel Letter No. 732-16, dated January 15, 1985. All employees traveling to other foreign countries are considered to have an administrative clearance for foreign travel.

USDA employees traveling to Eastern Europe and former Soviet Union or other sensitive destinations must be briefed, prior to entering these destinations, concerning certain security and intelligence risks which may be encountered in some foreign countries. Employees must contact their agency Foreign Travel Coordinator who will contact the USDA security officer.

(d) Medical examination and clearance. Agencies have final responsibility for assuring that employees are medically fit for foreign travel. USDA and the Department of State have signed agreements to provide for medical care for employees traveling overseas as well as

employees and families stationed overseas. Medical clearance for official foreign travel must be obtained as follows:

(1) Travel of more than 60 days or permanent assignment.

(i) Employees and dependents 12 year of age and older.

(A) Place of examination. Employees in Washington, D.C., must normally make arrangements for examination through the Department of State. Employees outside Washington, D.C., may be examined at a U.S. Public Health facility, Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) hospital, or local public health facility if any of these facilities will provide this service and if the facility is located within approximately 25 miles of the employee's residence or place of employment. The employee may also be examined by a private physician.

(B) Cost. There is no charge for the examination at the Department of State. For charges incurred when examination is performed by a private physician, reimbursement may be claimed by submitting a receipted bill directly to the agency, by including the expense on an AD-616, or using the form SF-1164 at an imprest fund.

(C) The medical examination. The examining physician will complete DS-1843, Medical History and Examination for Foreign Service.

(D) Agency responsibilities. Agencies are responsible for contacting the Department of State at (202) 647-3642 at least 60 days (90 days during summer months) prior to the employee's departure from Washington, D.C. to make arrangements for the examination. The DS-1843 must be completed and submitted at the time of the first appointment. It is imperative that the employee's agency within USDA be included in item 2(c) and that item 9 identify the kind of clearance requested. Clearance for an assignment to a specific post and TDY of more than 60 days requires "pre-assignment" clearance. For examinations obtained outside the Department of State, agency must also provide DSL-820, Authorization for Medical Examination, authorizing the expenditures.

(ii) Dependents under 12 years of age. These dependents must be examined by a private physician. The physician is to complete Form DS-1622, Medical History and Examination for Foreign Service for Children 12 Years and Under.

(iii) Forms submission. Forward completed forms to the Medical Director, Department of State, Washington, D.C. 20520 as promptly as possible. Form DS-823, Medical Clearance, will be issued specifying the clearance level granted.

(2) Travel for 60 days or less in high altitude (7,000 feet or higher locations). Travelers under these circumstances must have an examination prior to departure and every 6 months as long as they travel to these locations. (See DPM 339-1-7.)

(i) Employees in the Washington, D.C., area.

(A) Place of examination. Employees may be examined at the Cardiology Unit of the Department of State.

(B) Cost. There is no charge for the examination.

(C) The medical examination. The examination will be an EKG and pulmonary function test. The report is sent to the USDA Medical Officer Room 1039-S., Washington, D.C. 20250.

(D) Agency responsibility. Agencies are responsible for calling the Cardiology Unit at (202) 647-8918 to make arrangements for the examination. The traveler must provide a copy of the travel orders at the time of the appointment.

(ii) Employees outside the Washington, D.C., area.

(A) Place of examination. Employees may be examined at a U.S. Public Health facility, VA hospital, or local public health facility if any of these facilities will provide this service and if the facility is located within approximately 25 miles of the employee's residence or place of employment. The employee may also be examined by a private physician.

(B) Reimbursement. Reimbursement may be claimed by submitting a receipted bill directly to the agency, by including the expense on an AD-616, or using the form SF-1164 at an imprest fund.

(C) The medical examination. The medical examination should consist of an EKG and a pulmonary function test, if possible. If the employee is unable to obtain pulmonary function studies, a physical examination is required. Physicians should complete SF-78, Civil Service Certificate of Medical Examination, and submit in accordance with paragraph (2)(ii)(A).

(D) Agency responsibility. Agencies are responsible for making necessary arrangements for examinations. They will provide the traveler with an SF-78 and either one of the following forms: AD-751, Authorization for Medical Examination - when examined by a private physician or local public health facility; or AD-752, Authorization of Medical Examination - when examined at a VA or U.S. Public Health Service facility.

(iii) Submission of medical reports.

(A) All reports will be forwarded to the USDA Medical Officer, Room 1039-S., Washington, D.C. 20250.

(B) If there is a medical problem, the examining physician should consult with the USDA Medical Officer at (202) 720-3893.

(iv) List of high altitude locations.

Location

Altitude in Feet

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia	8,300
Asmara, Ethiopia	7,765
Bogota, Colombia	8,630
LaPaz, Bolivia	11,910
Mexico City, Mexico	7,415
Quito, Ecuador	9,300
San'a, Yemen	7,250

(3) Payment for medical services rendered overseas. Arrangements have been made by FAS with Department of State so that agencies will be billed directly for medical services rendered overseas. USDA agencies must provide FAS information as requested in order for the Department of State to arrange with vendors for the billings.

(4) Immunizations. The traveler is responsible for consulting the USDA Health Unit on immunizations as soon as a trip is planned. If the necessary immunizations cannot be given in the Health Unit, the agency shall make necessary arrangements for them to be given by a public health facility or by a private physician. For permanent assignment abroad or travel of more than 60 days, employees can obtain their immunizations from the Department of State as part of the medical examination.

(e) Documents required by foreign countries. Travelers to foreign countries follow all requirements of the countries involved.

(1) The Passport and Visa Unit, FAS, will obtain official and diplomatic passports and visas.

(2) For other information on the requirements for entry into a foreign country, such as import restrictions applying to plant and animal health safety, the traveler should contact the foreign consular officers stationed in principal cities of the United States.

(3) Once abroad, the traveler must consult the nearest American Embassy or Consulate about the need for visas before changing the itinerary. The traveler is responsible for advising the Agricultural Counselor or Attache involved.

(f) Diplomatic contacts. Employees going to a foreign country on official business must contact the AC/A or, in his or her absence, such other diplomatic officers of the United States, as may be appropriate, upon arrival in their country of responsibility and before transacting business with officials of foreign governments. The above requirement also applies to USDA employees stationed in a foreign country and traveling to another foreign country on official business. The Department of State Diplomatic and Consular officers will provide maximum help and assistance to USDA representatives while abroad. Agencies should cooperate to the fullest degree with United States diplomatic representatives to achieve maximum effectiveness in our relations with foreign countries.

Exception.

The traveler is not required to contact the AC/A upon

arrival in the Counselor/Attache's country of responsibility when the purpose of the trip is to attend a professional society meeting.

However, the AC/A must be contacted in case of attendance at international meetings.

(g) Official letters of introduction. Generally, official letters of introduction will not be issued. If, because of unusual circumstances, the issuance of such a letter will further the interests of the Department, the Agency Head may submit a memorandum to the Administrator, FAS, explaining why the letter is necessary and asking that it be prepared.

(h) Use of American commercial carriers. Any employees traveling or transporting personal effects by ship or airplane on official business outside CONUS shall do so via commercial carriers registered under the laws of the United States as required under the International Air Transportation Fair Competitive Practices Act of 1974 and the Merchant Marine Act of 1937. Refer to 301-3.6 of the FTR for guidelines on the use of American commercial carriers.

(i) Passports and visas for official foreign travel. The Passport and Visa Unit, FAS, will obtain passports and visas for employees and, when requested, will advise employees on Federal and USDA travel policies.

(1) Policy. All employees who are U.S. citizens traveling to a foreign country on official business for the Department must obtain official passports and, when required, official visas before leaving the United States. A few countries require no visas for business or pleasure. Tourist cards and tourist visas may not be used when travel is for official business.

(2) Obtaining passports and visas. To obtain official passports and visas for employees, an AD-121, Passport Request, must be prepared by the agency employing the traveler and submitted to the Passport and Visa Unit, FAS. The AD-121 must be received in FAS at least 45 calendar days before departure for employees in the Washington Metropolitan Area and 60 calendar days before departure for field employees.

NOTE: To the above stated processing time, add 2 days for each additional visa over three; 3 days when Department of State clearances are required; and 20 days for travel to Eastern Europe and former Soviet countries and other sensitive destinations.

(3) Passport application process for employees in the Washington Metropolitan Area.

(i) Applications in Person. After the employing agency sends the AD-121 for FAS signature, the employee must present birth evidence, two passport size photographs (2" x 2" less than six months

old), and a completed but unsigned DSP-11 to the Passport and Visa Unit.

The employee must sign the DSP-11 in the presence of the passport agent.

Acceptable forms of birth evidence are: (1) certified copy of birth certificate with raised seal and date it was filed; (2) expired/canceled official, diplomatic, or personal passport; or (3) original Certificate of Naturalization.

(ii) Applications by Mail. To apply for an official passport by mail, a DSP-82 (Application for Passport by Mail) may be used instead of the DSP-11 when one of the following provisions are met:

(A) Renewing an existing official or diplomatic passport; or

(B) Traveler holds an official, diplomatic or personal passport issued within the last 12 years and traveler was at least 16 years old when previous passport was issued.

Exception.

To acquire passports in less than 20 working days, a separate letter of justification is required by the Department of State and must be attached to the AD-121. For assistance in preparing the letter, contact the Passport and Visa Unit in FAS.

(4) Passport application process for employees outside the Washington Metropolitan Area. The traveler's employing agency will submit an AD-121 to the Passport and Visa Unit, FAS, for signature. After FAS has returned the AD-121 to the agency, the employee must take the AD-121, along with the DSP-11, birth evidence (as indicated in 301-18.4(j)(3)(i)) and two photographs (2" x 2" less than 6 months old) to a passport agent. The DSP-11 must be signed in the presence of a passport agent. If appropriate, employee may use a DSP-82.

(i) Passport agents within the U.S. may be (1) located in a U.S. Post Office, (2) a clerk of a State Court, or (3) a judge or clerk of a probate court.

(ii) Passport agents outside the U.S. are diplomatic or consular officers located within a U.S. Embassy or Consulate.

Exception. To acquire passports in less than 20 working days, a separate letter of justification is required by the Department of State and must be attached to the AD-121. For assistance in preparing the letter, contact the Passport and Visa Unit in FAS.

(5) Employees who have passports on file in FAS. The agency must prepare and send an AD-121 to the Passport and Visa Unit, FAS, at the earliest practical date but in no event later than 15 working days before departure.

NOTE: To the above stated processing time, add 2 days for each additional visa over three; 3 days when Department of State clearances



are required; and 20 days for travel to Eastern Europe and former Soviet countries and other sensitive destinations.

(6) Amendments to AD-121. Travelers must not add countries or in any way change the approved AD-121. Submit changes to the Passport and Visa Unit, FAS, through agency channels as soon as changes are known.

(i) Prepare an AD-121 annotating the form with "AMENDMENT."

(ii) Circle in red the items that have been changed.

(iii) An amendment must be submitted if the departure date of the trip has changed, countries are added or deleted, or if the trip is canceled.

(iv) An amendment must be submitted to cancel an AD-121 that has already been submitted to the Passport and Visa Unit, FAS, if the trip is canceled or delayed by more than 30 days.

(v) If an AD-121 "Amendment" is not received within 30 days after stated departure date, then the Passport and Visa Unit, FAS, will consider the case abandoned and return it to the Agency Foreign Travel Coordinator.

(7) Release of Passports. The Passport and Visa Unit, FAS, will release passports only to the Foreign Travel Coordinator of the agency employing the traveler upon receipt of an AD-750, International Travel Clearance, with the appropriate FAS Area Officer clearance. Agencies will not release the passport to the traveler unless the traveler security and medical clearances, if applicable, have been obtained.

(8) Assistance. Additional information may be obtained from the Passport and Visa Unit, FAS.

(j) Retention of passports.

(1) Disposition of passport upon completion of travel. All official and diplomatic passports are the property of the U.S. Government until officially canceled by the Passport Office, Department of State. Passports issued under these regulations must be returned to the Passport and Visa Unit, FAS, within 5 working days of completion of travel for which the passport was issued.

(2) FAS responsibility. The Passport and Visa Unit, FAS, is the only designated USDA agency authorized to obtain official and diplomatic passports and foreign country visas for USDA. The Passport and Visa Unit will retain the passports until their expiration dates (usually 5 years from the date of issuance) or notification of an employee's change in status.

NOTE: Passports which have expired are removed from the Passport

and Visa Unit, FAS, file and sent within 5 days of expiration to the Passport Office, Department of State for destruction.

Passports held by the traveler which have expired must be returned to the Passport and Visa Unit, FAS, for return to the Passport Office. A passport, until canceled by the Passport Office, is still the property of the U.S. Government and must be accounted for.

(3) Revalidation of passports. Unexpired passports will be revalidated for additional official travel upon receipt of a completed AD-121.

(4) Intermittent travel. In a few instances, agencies are authorized to hold passports for employees who make frequent short notice trips (primarily to Canada or Mexico). For these trips, it is not necessary to notify the Area Officers provided that special arrangements are made by the AC/A and the Program Director concerning the notification they need. Send a copy of the communication to the Deputy Assistant Administrator, Foreign Agricultural Affairs, FAS.

(i) Annual justification. By March 1 of each year, the Agency Head must justify the need for employees, as noted above, to retain their passports. The justification memorandum with the employees' names should be sent to the Director, Management Services Division, FAS.

(5) Changes in employment status. The agency must notify the Passport and Visa Unit, FAS, of any change in employment status that would affect the need for maintaining an unexpired passport (for example, resignation, death, retirement, transfer to another Department, etc.).

(###  
CHAPTER 301 TRAVEL ALLOWANCES

PART 301-19 TRAVEL ALLOWANCES FOR  
INTERGOVERNMENTAL PERSONNEL ACT (IPA) ASSIGNEES

301-19.1 Coverage. State or local government agency employees assigned to USDA under IPA appointments and USDA employees assigned to State and local government agencies may be paid travel and transportation allowances as authorized by 5 U.S.C. 3375. Department appropriations may be used to pay for all or part of these expenses. The type and extent of expenses to be authorized are based on an administrative determination by an authorized official and must be set forth in a written IPA Agreement. IPA assignees may receive either certain change of official duty station allowances or per diem for each assignment, but not both.

(a) Service Agreement. Expenses for either per diem or change of official duty station allowances may not be authorized unless the IPA

assignee has agreed, in writing, to complete the entire period of assignment or one year, whichever is shorter, unless separated or reassigned for reasons beyond the assignee's control and acceptable to USDA. If the IPA assignee violates the agreement, the money spent for expenses other than those for official travel while away from the assignment location is recoverable from the assignee as a debt due, unless waived in whole or in part by the head of the agency in which the assignee is located.

301-19.2 Assignment where change of official duty station allowances are involved. When payment of change of official duty station allowances is advantageous to the Government, the following allowances are authorized:

(a) Transportation of assignee and immediate family to and from the assignment location.

(b) Expenses of transportation of household goods and personal effects, including transporting, packing, crating, temporarily storing, hauling, and unpacking such goods not to exceed 18,000 pounds net weight.

(c) Per diem for assignee and immediate family for one trip from original place of residence to assignment location and return to original post of duty upon completion of assignment.

(d) Subsistence of assignee and immediate family while occupying temporary quarters at assignment location and temporary quarters upon return to former post of duty.

(e) Storage of household goods and personal effects for assignment at an isolated location.

(f) When miscellaneous expenses related to change of official duty station where movement or storage of household goods is involved:

(1) The equivalent of 1 week's basic pay or \$350, whichever is less, for an IPA assignee without immediate family;

(2) The equivalent of 2 week's basic pay or \$700, whichever is less, for an IPA assignee with immediate family;

(3) Allowances in excess of the above amounts are authorized when supported by paid bills or other evidence justifying the amounts claimed. The total claim may not exceed:

(i) One week's basic pay up to the maximum weekly pay of a GS-13 for an IPA assignee without family, or

(ii) Two weeks' basic pay up to the maximum bi-weekly pay of a GS-13 for an IPA assignee with immediate family.

(g) Assignee's transportation, per diem, and other allowable travel expenses while traveling on official business away from the designated post of duty during the assignment.

301-19.3 Assignments where change of official duty station allowances are not involved. The following travel allowances are authorized for the IPA assignee only:

(a) Between home and assignment location. Travel between assignee's home and the assignment location to include transportation by less-than-premium-class air accommodations or mileage as allowed in FTR 301-4.2(a) for use of POV plus the standard CONUS per diem rate during travel when initially reporting for duty and when returning to original duty station upon completion of the assignment.

(b) While at assignment location.

(1) Assignment of 30 days or less. The applicable maximum per diem rate (standard CONUS or locality rate from FTR Chapter 301 Appendix A) will be paid to the assignee for the first 30 calendar days after reporting for duty.

(2) Assignment greater than 30 days. For the first 30 calendar days of an assignment, per diem, as shown in (1) above, may be paid to the assignee. During this 30-day period, the assignee shall seek long-term residence accommodations. After the first 30-day period, a lower per diem rate of up to 55 percent of that paid during the initial period may be authorized for the remainder of the assignment. If the reduced rate is not known at the time the AD-202 is prepared, state that a Travel Authorization Amendment will be issued during the first 30 days of the assignment which will specify the reduced rate. An AD-202 must be issued before the start of the assignment and must specify exactly what travel allowances are approved.

(c) While traveling away from the assignment location.

(d) Dual per diem rates. An IPA assignee, who is receiving per diem at the assignment location, is authorized receipt of an additional per diem allowance while on official temporary duty at another location (except as noted above). The additional per diem is allowed only if the assignee is occupying long-term residence accommodations and is limited to the increased expenses resulting from the temporary duty travel.

(1) Full per diem at a temporary duty location will be paid to assignees who will not incur dual lodging costs or who received change of official duty station allowances instead of per diem. Assignees are authorized the same allowances as USDA employees.

(2) In computing dual per diem allowances, the lodgings portion of the authorized per diem rate at the assignment location will be paid.

For the first and last days of travel, only a proportionate share of the amount allowed for meals may be paid. ### 9/5/95)

CHAPTER 302 RELOCATION ALLOWANCES  
PART 302-1 APPLICABILITY, GENERAL RULES, AND ELIGIBILITY  
CONDITIONS

Subpart A--New Appointees and Transferred Employees

302-1.1 Authority. Delegation of authority to authorize relocation travel is addressed in 301-1.1.

302-1.2 Applicability. These regulations do not apply to employees transferring to or from foreign areas. Under a special authority conferred upon the Secretary by 7 U.S.C. 1766c, employees receive the allowances and benefits similar to those provided by the Foreign Service Act of 1980 (22 U.S.C. 3901).

302-1.3 General provisions.

(a) Travel covered.

(1) If the benefit to the Government is sufficient to warrant payment of relocation allowances, payment should be made even though the employee may incidentally receive benefit. The Department does not require employees to share the costs of official transfers.

(i) An employee's request for a transfer can be accepted as indicating that the employee desires or will benefit from a transfer. However, the transfer might also be for the benefit of the Government. If the employee would have been selected for the position, relocation allowances should be authorized, despite the fact that the employee made the request. An expression by an employee on a personnel form or in a general poll of employees about a preference for employment in certain localities is not a request for transfer.

(e) Training. For long-term training under the Government Employees Training Act, a cost comparison must be performed to determine whether the employee should be paid certain change of station expenses or reimbursed under temporary duty travel regulations.

(f) Employee details. When an employee will be detailed for a substantial period (usually a year or more), a cost comparison will be prepared to determine whether the employee should be relocated instead of detailed. Relocation expenses may be paid only if the employee has a change of permanent duty station.

(g) Administrative leave. Employees may be allowed administrative leave not to exceed a total of 80 hours for such

activities as premoving and postmoving arrangements and for taking an approved househunting trip when relocation allowances are authorized under these regulations. (See DPM Chapter 630, Subchapter 11-5i and Subchapter 12-6a for further information.)

#### 302-1.4 Definitions.

(e) Agency. The word "agency" as used in the FTR refers to a Federal Department (for example, USDA) and shall be construed to mean the Department of Agriculture. "Agency," as used in these supplements, means an organizational entity within USDA (such as Soil Conservation Service) that ultimately reports to the Secretary of Agriculture, is recognized by OP as an agency, and is included in the Department's list of agencies.

(m) Agency Head. This title refers to USDA officials who are responsible for administering an agency. It includes heads of Departmental Staff Offices reporting to the Assistant Secretary for Administration, but does not include individuals identified as "General Officers" in 301-1.3(c) (12).

#### 302-1.5 Service agreements.

If the preprinted agreement on the Attachment for Relocation Travel (AD-202R) is not used, a signed copy of the employee's service agreement must be attached to the original travel voucher sent to the NFC. Travel vouchers for relocation expenses must not be approved for payment until the service agreement is signed. Figure 302-1 is the Department's service agreement and it may be used in lieu of the one preprinted on the AD-202R.

A service agreement is not required for SES career employees relocating under FTR 302-1.3. For last move home for SES career appointees, see FTR 302-1.101 for eligibility.

Employees who do not remain in the service of the Government for 12 months following the date of transfer usually are liable for any relocation allowances paid by the Government. If collection of this type of claim against an employee is waived, all documentation on the waiver must be retained by the agency for 3 years.

(b) Transfers, appointments, and separations involving posts of duty outside the continental United States. (1) Entitlement to expenses for travel to a post of duty outside CONUS is subject to the employee signing an agreement to serve 12 months at the assigned duty post.

(2) Unless otherwise authorized by the Agency Head, the period of service required for return travel is 24 months. Any time spent on leave between the current and immediately preceding tours of duty and the time spent in transit between duty posts may be counted toward the 24-month requirement. When the Department's interest will be better served, Agency Heads may require a shorter or longer period of service.

Upon completion of the required period of service, the employee may be returned to any duty point in CONUS without executing a service agreement. 302-1.7 Short distance involved.

(a) Transfers. If the old and new duty posts are only a short distance apart and are within the same general local or metropolitan area, the Agency Heads or their designees must determine whether relocation allowances will be authorized.

This determination must be made in advance on an individual basis and must be documented in writing. A copy of the written determination must be furnished to each affected employee, and the original must be retained in the official files.

302-1.8 Two or more family members employed.

(d) Procedures. A determination as to which of the two alternatives is selected shall be made in writing and signed by employee members of the same immediate family. If the separate relocation option is selected, the determination must specify under which employee member's authorization non-employee family members, e.g., children, will receive allowances.

302-1.12 Overseas assignment and return.

(e) Prior return of immediate family.

(2) Return for compassionate reasons. Expenses of returning the employee's immediate family and household goods and personal effects may be allowed (even if the employee has not completed the required period of service) if the Agency Head determines that the public interest requires the family's return for compelling personal reasons of a humanitarian or compassionate nature.

302-1.13 Overseas tour renewal agreement travel.

(a) Eligibility.

(3) Employees assigned, appointed, or transferred to a post of duty in Alaska or Hawaii after September 8, 1982. Agency Heads are delegated the authority to implement regulations for the payment of tour renewal expenses not allowable under 302- 1.13(a) (2).

302-1.14 Use of funds.

(a) Advance of funds. See 301-10.3.

302-1.15 Withholding income taxes from relocation allowances.

The Onibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1993 will effect the

following information, please contact your agency relocation coordinator for rules in effect at the time of your transfer.

(a) Allowances subject to withholding. (1) Moves of less than 50 miles.

All moving allowances authorized by 5 U.S.C. 5724a are subject to withholding of Federal income taxes when the employee's new duty station:

(i) is less than 50 miles farther from his former residence than his former duty station, or

(ii) is less than 50 miles from his former residence if he had no former duty station.

(2) Moves of 50 miles or more. If the move is 50 miles or more, the only moving allowances that are not subject to income tax withholding are:

(i) transportation of household goods and 30 consecutive days of temporary storage, and

(ii) enroute lodging and transportation (but not meals) of the employee and the immediate family.

(b) Processing payments.

(1) General. See the NFC Procedures Manual, Title II, Chapter 2, Travel and Transportation, Section 2, Travel Vouchers, for instructions for claiming reimbursement on the AD-616R, Travel Voucher (Relocation).

(2) Employee responsibility. Employees claiming reimbursement for allowances in connection with changes of official station will be responsible for designating the State in which they will be liable for State withholding taxes. The State designated shall be shown in the "residence" block on the AD-616R.

(3) NFC responsibility. The NFC will be responsible for computing and withholding Federal and State income tax and social security employment taxes from change of station allowances on vouchers subject to these taxes.

(i) Federal withholding tax. Federal income tax withholding will be computed at 20 percent of the taxable allowances claimed and approved.

(ii) Federal Insurance Contribution Act taxes. See NFC Title II, Voucher and Invoice Payments Manual, Bulletin 92-2, Withholding of Social Security Employment Taxes from Relocation Travel Voucher, February 14, 1992, for details on the withholding of these taxes.



(iii) States taxes. In States for which State income taxes are regularly withheld from Federal salaries, income taxes will be deducted and computed at 10 percent of Federal income tax withheld, exclusive of FICA tax.

(c) Amounts withheld for taxes.

(1) General. The NFC will report income and tax withholdings to the appropriate taxing authorities on Form W-2.

(2) Report to employees. A TRVL-3301, Computation of Employee Moving Expense Reimbursement Voucher and Year-To-Date, will be furnished to each employee showing the amount of taxable and nontaxable allowances, the amount of deductions made, and net allowances (see NFC Procedures Manual, Title II, Chapter 2, Travel and Transportation, Section 2, Travel Vouchers).

#### 302-1.16 Evacuation.

(a) General. An employee may be allowed evacuation expenses (5 U.S.C. 5725) upon determination by the Agency Head that the employee's duty station is within a zone from which the employee's family should be evacuated for (1) military reasons, (2) other reasons that create imminent danger to life or property, or (3) adverse living conditions seriously affecting the health, safety, or accommodations of the family. Threats against employees and/or their families at duty stations within the 50 States, by members of the populace, do not fall within the purview of 5 U.S.C. 5725.

(b) Evacuation expenses. Such expenses include transportation of immediate family and household goods and personal effects. In computing allowable expense for evacuation, regulations apply to transportation expenses incident to assignments to posts of duty outside CONUS, or between points within CONUS. These regulations also are applicable when an employee transfers or is assigned to a duty point where the immediate family, for the above reasons, is not permitted to accompany the employee.

(c) Designation of location. Transportation of an employee's immediate family and household effects may be to a location designated (1) by the employee, (2) by the immediate family of the employee when circumstances prevent the employee from designating the location, or (3) to a location determined administratively when it is impractical to determine the intent of the employee or his/her family. If the location designated by either the employee or the immediate family is within a prohibited area, an alternate location may be designated either by the employee or his/her immediate family. The immediate family and household effects may later be transported at Government expense from the designated or alternate location to a duty station to which the

employee is assigned and from which the conditions cited in 302-1.16(a) have been lifted.

Subpart B--SES Career Appointees Upon Separation for Retirement

302-1.102 Agency authorization or approval.

All career appointees eligible for moving expenses must submit requests to the Departmental officials authorized to approve these requests. See 301-1.1(d) (i) for specifics on the delegation of authority and approval process.

FIGURE 302-1

SERVICE AGREEMENT

I hereby agree to remain in the Government Service for a period of 12 months following the effective date of my transfer unless I am separated for reasons beyond my control and acceptable to

(Name of Agency)

I agree that, if I do not remain in the Government Service for the 12-month period (unless I am separated for reasons beyond my control and acceptable to the above-named Agency), I will repay to the Government all monies expended by the United States for travel, transportation, and allowances connected with my transfer, and I understand that under such circumstances these monies are recoverable from me as a debt due the United States.

I agree that, if I receive Withholding Tax Allowance payments for claims filed for relocation transfer expenses, I will file a Relocation Income Tax Allowance claim. I understand that I am obligated to file a claim for a Relocation Income Tax Allowance even though the Withholding Tax Allowance payments do not exceed the Relocation Income Tax Allowance. When Withholding Tax Allowance payments exceed the Relocation Income Tax Allowance claim, I understand that I am obligated to repay the excess as a debt due the Government. If I do not file the claim for Relocation Income Tax Allowance, I agree to repay the Government the entire Withholding Tax Allowance expended by the United States in connection with my transfer. I understand that under such circumstances such funds are recoverable from me as a debt due the United States.

(Date)

(Signature of Employee)

Note: Employees are reminded that the term "all monies expended by the United States" includes payments to third parties, e.g., relocation service companies, as well as withholding tax allowances and relocation income tax allowances.

## CHAPTER 302 RELOCATION ALLOWANCES

### PART 302-2 ALLOWANCES FOR SUBSISTENCE AND TRANSPORTATION

302-2.3 For use of a privately owned automobile in connection with permanent change of station.

(d) Maximum per diem allowances when privately owned automobile is used.

(2) Maximum allowance based on total distance. The AD- 616 must show (or be accompanied by) a complete itinerary, especially when the subsistence allowances are based on the 300 miles-per-calendar-day minimum rule.

## CHAPTER 302 RELOCATION ALLOWANCES

### PART 302-3 ALLOWANCE FOR MISCELLANEOUS EXPENSES

302-3.1 Applicability.

(b) Types of costs covered.

(6) The cost of acquiring a certified outdoor household articles inspection document for transferees moving from or through high risk gypsy moth infestation areas may be paid as a miscellaneous expense. (See, also 302-8.3.)

## CHAPTER 302 RELOCATION ALLOWANCES

### PART 302-5 SUBSISTENCE WHILE OCCUPYING TEMPORARY QUARTERS

302-5.1 Policy. The temporary quarters allowance and the duration of payment must be authorized on a case-by-case basis. This determination must be made in writing on the AD-202R. A copy will be retained in agency files together with the service agreement for 3 years.

302-5.2 Conditions and limitations for eligibility.

(a) Length of time allowed and location of new official station. The employee must explain all breaks in temporary quarters occupancy on

the AD-616 or on the attached AD-569, Expense Record for Temporary Quarters.

(2) Additional time in certain cases. Any additional period of temporary quarters subsistence expenses beyond the initial 60-day period must be approved by an official at an administrative level higher than the one who authorized the initial 60-day period of temporary quarters, unless the initial period was authorized by the Agency Head. Documentation required is the same as that required in 302-5.1 above.

The additional time can only be authorized in circumstances where there are compelling reasons beyond the employee's control. The following are not considered compelling reasons:

(i) Poor housing market (as opposed to inadequate housing conditions).

(ii) General economic conditions of the locale the employee is moving from or to.

(iii) Personal financial problems of the transferee, for example, a desire to place a reimbursement or capital gain in a different tax year.

(iv) Inability, for whatever reason, to sell residence does not by itself justify this extension.

(d) Temporary quarters located at other than official station. The administrative determination required in 302-5.1 above must contain the justification for allowing payment of temporary quarters subsistence expenses at other than the old and/or new official station.

(i) When relocation services have been authorized. When the home purchase service portion of relocation services has been authorized, the employee's reimbursement for temporary quarters subsistence expenses generally is limited to a maximum of 30 days. The Agency Head must review and approve requests for additional temporary quarters subsistence in excess of 30 days on an individual, case-by-case basis. This approval authority may not be redelegated.

302-5.4 Allowable amount.

(a) Actual expenses allowed. Agencies are responsible for determining the reasonableness of amounts claimed.

(b) Itemization and receipts. If employees obtain temporary lodgings with friends or relatives at no cost, the employee must show the details (dates and locations) on the AD- 616 or on the attached AD-569. When submitting their AD-569, employees should indicate whether meals were obtained from restaurants or prepared in temporary quarters. This process will assist approving officials in determining reasonableness of meal charges. When meals are prepared in the temporary quarters, employees should provide grocery receipts. (See the

NFC Procedures Manual, Title II, Chapter 2, Travel and Transportation Payments, Section 1, Travel System, for instructions on preparing the AD-569.)

## CHAPTER 302 RELOCATION ALLOWANCES

### PART 302-6 ALLOWANCE FOR EXPENSES INCURRED

#### IN CONNECTION WITH RESIDENCE TRANSACTIONS

302-6.1 Conditions and requirements under which allowances are payable.

(e) Time limitation.

(2) Extension of time limitation.

(ii) Agencies must establish a policy for the retroactive extension of the 2-year limitation on residence transactions. (See Comptroller General Decision B-226022, May 4, 1987.)

(f) Payment of expenses by employee -- pro rata entitlement. Agency officials are responsible for making administrative determinations on proration of certain expenses. For more land than reasonably relates to the residence site, the proration should be based on such factors as zoning laws, expert opinion of local real estate brokers, and local practices. In such cases, the AD-424, Employee Application for Reimbursement of Expenses Incurred Upon Sale or Purchase (or Both) of Residence Upon Change of Official Station, must contain a statement that all land-related expenses claimed are properly allocable to the residence site.

302-6.3 Procedural and control requirements.

(a) Application for reimbursement and documentation of expenses. Settlement statements and similar residence transaction documents must contain the signatures of both the buyer and the seller.

(b) Review and administrative approval of sale and purchase expenses. Agency officials must review the real estate expenses claimed on the AD-424 to determine that all charges represent usual and customary fees prevailing in the area involved.

## CHAPTER 302 RELOCATION ALLOWANCES

### PART 302-8 TRANSPORTATION AND TEMPORARY STORAGE OF HOUSEHOLD GOODS AND PROFESSIONAL BOOKS, PAPERS, AND EQUIPMENT

302-8.2 General limitations.

(a) Maximum weight allowance. Employees are monetarily liable for the costs associated with transporting and/or storing household goods exceeding the maximum weight allowance. There are no exceptions to this regulation.

(c) Determining the net weight.

(4) Constructive weight. Employees must obtain weight certificates when they transport their own household goods. If the employee cannot obtain a weight certificate, an explanatory statement of estimated weights, based on measurement tables available from commercial truck rental companies or the dimensions of the truck or trailer used, and a statement of how fully the vehicle was loaded must accompany the voucher.

(f) Loss and damage liability. In general, bona fide losses not recoverable from a carrier are reimbursable under the Military Personnel and Civilian Employees Claims Act of 1964 (31 U.S.C. 3721). See also, DR 2510-1, Claims Against the United States.

302-8.3 Transportation within the continental United States. Employees moving from locations determined to be high-risk gypsy moth areas must obtain an outdoor household articles inspection document. The cost of acquiring the document, but not for the cost of treatment, should gypsy moth life form be found, is reimbursable under 302-3.1(b).

Details on obtaining the inspection document as well as other pertinent data, for example, designated high-risk area locations, can be found in DR 2330-1, Certified Gypsy Moth Inspection Prior to the Movement of Outdoor Household Articles, and in the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) pamphlet, Don't Move Gypsy Moth. This pamphlet must be attached to the AD-202 to be sure that the employee is aware of the requirement. Copies of the pamphlet may be obtained from:

APHIS Distribution Service  
Room G110  
6505 Belcrest Road  
Hyattsville, MD 20782

(c) Use of commuted rate or actual expense method. Upon request, GSA regional offices will provide detailed information on either commuted rate or actual expense tariffs (see 41 CFR 101-40.2). Cost comparisons obtained from these offices will serve as the basis for the Agency Head's, or designee's, advance determination on whether to authorize the commuted rate method or the actual expense method (also known as Government Bill of Lading (GBL) method).

302-8.5 Temporary storage.

(b) Allowable expenses. Weight certificates or itemized warehouse receipts must be obtained. This is especially important if

the employee places only a portion of the household goods shipped in storage.

## CHAPTER 302 RELOCATION ALLOWANCES

### PART 302-11 RELOCATION INCOME TAX (RIT) ALLOWANCE

302-11.2 Coverage. The NFC's Procedures Manual, Chapter 2, Travel and Transportation, Section 2, Travel Vouchers contains procedural instructions for filing a RIT allowance claim.

302-11.6 Procedures in general. Eligible employees who file travel vouchers will have a Withholding Tax Allowance (WTA) calculated and applied against the Federal withholding tax on taxable relocation reimbursements. Receipt of a WTA requires the employee to submit a RIT allowance claim in the tax year following the year the employee receives

the WTA, regardless of whether the employee owes any additional reimbursement. This claim usually results in an additional payment to the employee because the WTA is only an estimated payment and because it

does not offset State or local taxes. If an employee fails to submit a RIT allowance claim, it is considered a zero claim, and the entire amount of the WTA's will be repaid. WTA's and RIT allowances are subject to the same repayment policy that applies to other relocation expenses when employees fail to complete the terms of their service agreement (see Figure 302-1 for Service Agreement).

## CHAPTER 302 RELOCATION ALLOWANCES

### PART 302-12 USE OF RELOCATION SERVICE COMPANIES

302-12.2 Policy. Agencies must offer relocation services to all eligible transferring employees as defined in FTR 302-12.4. Agencies must provide employees with written information (see 30212.5.(i)) about the relocation services program before the AD- 202 is approved since the

decision not to use the relocation services program is non-revocable when stated on the AD-202R. The employee's decisions affect entitlement. An employee may relocate using these services or may choose to relocate under 302-6 of this regulation. Employees who decide

not to use relocation services may not later be provided these services for the same move.

302-12.4 General conditions and limitations for eligibility.

(c) Dwellings excluded from coverage. Homes that are uninsurable, homes that contain Urea-Formaldehyde Foam Insulation,

mobile homes, cooperatives, and house boats are not covered under this program. Since the conditions of eligibility may vary from year to year, the employee should consult the current relocation services contract for any additional ineligible homes.

#### 302-12.5 Procedural requirements and controls.

(e) Travel authorization. The AD-202R must indicate if relocation services are authorized and the estimated costs of such services. Agencies must have a statement attached to the AD-202 on which the employees document that they have (1) read the written information about the relocation services program and (2) have elected or declined to participate. Employees must submit this attachment with their signed service agreement. If the employee requests a delay in the initiation of these services, this must be included on, or attached to, the AD-202, together with a justification for delay. Examples of acceptable reasons for delayed entry are a need for the spouse to find new employment, waiting for end of school term, etc.

(f) Temporary quarters. When the home purchase service portion of relocation services has been authorized, employees' reimbursement for temporary quarters subsistence for themselves and their families is generally limited to a maximum of 30 days. The Agency Head must review and approve requests for additional temporary quarters subsistence in excess of 30 days on an individual, case-by-case basis. This approval authority cannot be redelegated. (See also 302-5.2(e).)

(g) Service agreement. In order to complete the AD-202R, employees must indicate whether or not they will use relocation services. Employees who decide not to use relocation services may not subsequently be provided these services for the same move.

(h) Timing of services. Authorizing officials may approve a delay in the initiation of services if justified by the employee. Employees who wish to delay services should also delay marketing their homes. Marketing of an employee's home should be viewed as evidence that the request for a delay in services is not valid and should not be approved.

(i) Information package. Prior to completion of the AD- 202, agencies should provide employees with a package of information discussing the relocation services program. The package should include (1) a reminder that employees authorized home sale services are required to actively market their homes by listing with a realtor and that any exceptions must be authorized by the agency relocation services coordinator; (2) a reminder that when listing the homes with realtors, they must include the exclusion statement required in GSA's Relocation Services Federal Supply Schedule (the relocation services contractor's counselor will provide the employee with guidance and assistance); (3) a copy of the Federal Supply Schedule; and (4) a copy of the contractor's homeowner's disclosure statement.

#### 302-12.7 Income tax consequences of using relocation companies. Income



taxes paid by a transferred employee resulting from the transfer will be reimbursed in accordance with 5 U.S.C. 5724b and FTR 302-11. Payments made by the Government to a relocation services company that purchases a transferred employee's home are not considered income to the employee. No tax liability will result; however, the employee is responsible for taxes on any recognizable gains resulting from the sale.

302-12.8 Services available. Services available under this program include, but are not limited to, the following:

(a) Home purchase service.

(1) Regular sale. The relocation services company will make an offer to purchase the employee's residence for its fair market value as determined by independent appraisals. This offer will be valid for a specific period (specified in the contract with the relocation services company). The employee may reject the relocation services company's offer and be reimbursed for residence sale expenses under direct real estate reimbursement rules (see FTR 302-6). The employee will not be reimbursed for any charges (inspection fees, appraisal fees, etc.) that duplicate fees paid to the relocation services company.

(2) Amended value sales. Immediately after their enrollment in the relocation services program, employees must begin to market their homes independently. Employees, when marketing their homes, must include an exclusion clause in their listing contract with their broker and should contact the relocation services company to get the exact wording for this clause. If the employee receives a higher bona fide offer before the expiration of the relocation services company's offer to purchase the home, the relocation company will amend the employee's offer to the higher amount (less any non-reimbursable items agreed to in the outside offer). The employee immediately sells the home to the relocation services company, which in turn accepts the outside offer.

(3) Amend from zero sale. If an employee receives an outside offer to purchase his/her home prior to the completion of the appraisal process, the employee should notify the relocation services company immediately. The employee must not sign any papers with the proposed offeror. The relocation services company will advise the employee of the documentation needed to review the offeror's terms. The relocation services company also will counsel the employee throughout the negotiation of the offer. The contractor will obtain a broker's market analysis as a benchmark of market value to help determine the reasonableness of the outside offer. In order to qualify for the amend from zero sale, the offer must not exceed the broker's market analysis by more than 5 percent and the offeror must demonstrate the ability to qualify for financing. If the employee is satisfied with the new sale amount, the contractor may make a guaranteed offer to purchase the property if (1) the contractor determines the offer to be bona fide and (2) the broker's market analysis indicates it is a reasonable offer.

(b) Home finding assistance. The relocation services company will provide individual counseling services to familiarize transferring employees with the real estate markets (including rental properties),

schools, taxes, commuting, community life, etc., at the new duty stations. Use of this free help service may help to reduce househunting expenses.

(c) Home marketing assistance. The relocation services company will assist in developing a marketing strategy for the employee's old residence. This will include helping the transferring employee to select a real estate broker, to establish a realistic listing price, and to make the best use of the home purchase offer received from the relocation services company.

(d) Mortgage finding assistance. The relocation services company will provide information on the types and availability of mortgage financing and qualification requirements.

#### CHAPTER 303 PAYMENT OF EXPENSES CONNECTED

### **WITH THE DEATH OF CERTAIN EMPLOYEES**

#### PART 303-1 GENERAL

303-1.1 Authority, coverage, and applicability. General Officers and Agency Heads are authorized to make payments under the provisions of this Chapter and 5 U.S.C. 5742. This authority may be redelegated in writing to a sufficiently high level to ensure proper review and control.

303-1.2 Responsibility. General Officers and Agency Heads are responsible for carrying out the provisions of this Chapter. This authority may be redelegated in writing to a sufficiently high level to be sure of appropriate implementation.

303-1.7 Method of payment. The appropriation or fund available for the activity in which the deceased employee was engaged shall be charged with the allowable expenditures. (See also NFC Time and Attendance Manual, II-35, Section C-9, or Federal Personnel Manual Supplement 990-1.)

#### CHAPTER 303 PAYMENT OF EXPENSES CONNECTED

### **WITH THE DEATH OF CERTAIN EMPLOYEES**

#### PART 303-2 ALLOWANCES

303-2.1 Preparation of employee remains. No allowance is permitted for

the preparation of the remains of deceased members of the employee's family. However, the agency has the authority to pay for the transportation of the remains of a member of the employee's immediate family (see FTR 303-2.4).

CHAPTER 304 PAYMENT FROM A NON-FEDERAL SOURCE FOR TRAVEL EXPENSES

PART 304-1 ACCEPTANCE OF PAYMENT FROM A NON-FEDERAL SOURCE FOR TRAVEL EXPENSES

304-1.3 Policy.

(c) Administration and delegation of authority. Agency Heads are responsible for carrying out the provisions of this part. ### ## 9/5/95)

CHAPTER 304 PAYMENT FROM A NON-FEDERAL SOURCE FOR TRAVEL EXPENSES

PART 304-2 REDUCTIONS IN MEETING AND TRAINING ALLOWANCE PAYMENTS

(###

304-2.1 Authority. Agency Heads are responsible for carrying out the provisions of this part. ### 9/5/95)

(### 9/5/95)