

**GENERAL SERVICES
ADMINISTRATION****41 CFR Parts 302-1 and 302-5**

[FTR Amendment 59]

RIN 3090-AG20

**Federal Travel Regulation; Fixed
Amount Reimbursement for Temporary
Quarters Subsistence Expenses****AGENCY:** Office of Governmentwide
Policy, GSA.**ACTION:** Final rule.

SUMMARY: This final rule amends the Federal Travel Regulation (FTR) to allow an agency to pay a fixed amount for temporary quarters subsistence expenses. This amendment will save the Government money by easing the burden of processing relocation claims and will increase employee satisfaction with the relocation process.

DATES: This final rule is effective March 22, 1997, and applies to an employee whose effective date of transfer (date the employee reports for duty at the new official station) is on or after March 22, 1997.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Robert A. Clauson, Travel and Transportation Management Policy Division (MTT), Washington, DC 20405, telephone 202-501-0299.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: A multi-agency travel reinvention task force was organized in August 1994 under the auspices of the Joint Financial Management Improvement Program (JFMIP) to reengineer Federal travel rules and procedures. The task force developed 25 recommended travel management improvements published in a JFMIP report entitled *Improving Travel Management Governmentwide*, dated December 1995. On September 23, 1996, the President signed into law the Federal Employee Travel Reform Act of 1996 (Pub. L. 104-201), which included 8 legislative changes recommended by the JFMIP to improve travel and the delivery of relocation services.

This amendment implements section 1712 of the Act, which provides the General Services Administration (GSA) authority to issue regulations that authorize agencies to reimburse a transferred employee a fixed amount for temporary quarters subsistence expenses (TQSE). This amendment is written in the "plain English" style of regulation writing as a continuation of GSA's effort to make the FTR easier to understand and to use.

**How does this amendment change the
allowance for temporary quarters
subsistence expenses?**

This amendment permits agencies to reimburse employees a fixed amount without requiring receipts for TQSE. In addition to the plain English formatting, this amendment also refines the current actual expense method of reimbursing TQSE.

**When will I receive a fixed amount for
temporary quarters subsistence
expenses?**

Your agency decides whether it will offer you the "fixed amount" method of reimbursement for TQSE. If your agency offers you the fixed amount option, you may choose between it and the traditional method under which you are reimbursed your actual TQSE within a maximum ceiling which requires you to document your expenses.

**How does this amendment change the
actual expense method of reimbursing
TQSE?**

This amendment makes two principal changes to the actual expense method of reimbursing TQSE. First, the maximum daily amounts are now expressed in decimal format instead of the previous format which depicted them as fractions of the applicable per diem rate. Note that the new decimal maximum daily amounts in some cases vary from the previous fractional equivalents. For example, the new maximum daily amount for an accompanied spouse and/or a child 12 years or older during the initial 30-day period of temporary quarters occupancy is .75 of the applicable per diem rate instead of two-thirds of that rate.

The new maximum daily amount allowed for a child under 12 during any period of temporary quarters occupancy subsequent to the initial 30-day period will be .4 of the applicable per diem rate instead of two-thirds of one-half of that rate.

Second, an agency now may authorize an extension of the temporary quarters period regardless of when the compelling reason(s) occur. The FTR previously required that compelling reasons occur during the initial period of temporary quarters. This amendment eliminates that requirement.

**What is the "plain English" style of
regulation writing?**

The "plain English" style of regulation writing is a new, simpler to read and understand, question and answer regulatory format. Questions are in the first person, and answers are in the second person. GSA uses a "we" question when referring to an agency

and an "I" question when referring to the employee.

**How does the plain English style of
regulation writing affect employees?**

A question and its answer combine to establish a rule. The employee and the agency must follow the language contained in both the question and its answer.

GSA has determined that this rule is not a significant regulatory action for the purposes of Executive Order 12866 of September 30, 1993. This final rule is not required to be published in the **Federal Register** for notice and comment. Therefore, the Regulatory Flexibility Act does not apply. This rule also is exempt from Congressional review prescribed under 5 U.S.C. 801 since it relates solely to agency management and personnel.

**List of Subjects in 41 CFR Parts 302-1
and 302-5**

Government employees, Travel and transportation expenses.

For the reasons set out in the preamble, 41 CFR chapter 302 is amended as follows:

**PART 302-1—APPLICABILITY,
GENERAL RULES, AND ELIGIBILITY
CONDITIONS**

1. The authority citation for part 302-1 is revised to read as follows:

Authority: 5 U.S.C. 5738; 20 U.S.C. 905(a); E.O. 11609, 36 FR 13474, 3 CFR, 1971-1975 Comp., p. 586.

**Subpart A—New Appointees and
Transferred Employees****§ 302-1.7 [Amended]**

2. Section 302-1.7 is amended by removing the reference "§ 302-5.2(h)" in paragraph (a) and adding in its place the reference "§ 302-5.4(b)".

3. Section 302-1.14 is amended by revising paragraph (a)(3)(iii) to read as follows:

§ 302-1.14 Use of funds.

(a) * * *

(3) * * *

(iii) Subsistence while occupying temporary quarters as set forth in § 302-5.15 of this chapter;

4. Part 302-5 is revised to read as follows:

**PART 302-5—ALLOWANCE FOR
TEMPORARY QUARTERS
SUBSISTENCE EXPENSES****Subpart A—General Rules**

Sec.

302-5.1 What are "temporary quarters"?

302-5.2 What are "temporary quarters subsistence expenses (TQSE)"?

302-5.3 What is the purpose of the TQSE allowance?

302-5.4 Am I eligible for a TQSE allowance?

302-5.5 Who is not eligible for a TQSE allowance?

302-5.6 Must my agency authorize payment of a TQSE allowance?

302-5.7 Under what circumstances will I receive a TQSE allowance?

302-5.8 Who may occupy temporary quarters at Government expense?

302-5.9 Where may I/we occupy temporary quarters at Government expense?

302-5.10 May my immediate family and I occupy temporary quarters at different locations?

302-5.11 What methods may my agency use to reimburse me for TQSE?

302-5.12 Must I document my TQSE to receive reimbursement?

302-5.13 How soon may I/we begin occupying temporary quarters at Government expense?

302-5.14 How is my TQSE allowance affected if my temporary quarters become my permanent residence quarters?

302-5.15 May I receive an advance of funds for TQSE?

302-5.16 May I receive a TQSE allowance if I am receiving another subsistence expenses allowance?

302-5.17 Am I eligible for a TQSE allowance if I transfer to a foreign area?

302-5.18 May I be reimbursed for local transportation expenses incurred while I am occupying temporary quarters?

Subpart B—Actual TQSE Method of Reimbursement

302-5.100 What am I paid under the actual TQSE reimbursement method?

302-5.101 May my agency reduce my TQSE allowance below the "maximum allowable amount"?

302-5.102 What is the "applicable per diem rate" under the actual TQSE reimbursement method?

302-5.103 What is the latest the period for which I claim actual TQSE reimbursement may begin?

302-5.104 How long may I be authorized to claim actual TQSE reimbursement?

302-5.105 What is a "compelling reason" warranting extension of my authorized period for claiming actual TQSE reimbursement?

302-5.106 May I interrupt occupancy of temporary quarters?

302-5.107 What effect do partial days of temporary quarters occupancy have on my authorized period for claiming actual TQSE reimbursement?

302-5.108 When does my authorized period for claiming actual TQSE reimbursement end?

302-5.109 May the period for which I am authorized to claim actual TQSE reimbursement for myself be different from that of my immediate family?

302-5.110 What effect do partial days have on my actual TQSE reimbursement?

302-5.111 May I and/or my immediate family occupy temporary quarters longer than the period for which I am authorized to claim actual TQSE reimbursement?

Subpart C—Fixed Amount Reimbursement

302-5.200 What am I paid under the fixed amount reimbursement method?

302-5.201 How do I determine the amount of my payment under the fixed amount reimbursement method?

302-5.202 Will I receive additional TQSE reimbursement if my fixed amount is not adequate to cover my TQSE?

Subpart D—Agency Responsibilities

302-5.300 How should we administer the TQSE allowance?

302-5.301 What governing policies must we establish for the TQSE allowance?

302-5.302 Under what circumstances may we authorize the TQSE allowance?

302-5.303 What factors should we consider in determining whether the TQSE allowance actually is necessary?

302-5.304 What factors should we consider in determining whether to offer an employee the fixed amount TQSE reimbursement option?

302-5.305 What factors should we consider in determining whether quarters are temporary?

Authority: 5 U.S.C. 5738; 20 U.S.C. 905(a); E.O. 11609, 36 FR 13474, 3 CFR, 1971-1975 Comp., p. 586.

Subpart A—General Rules

Note to subpart A: Use of the pronouns "I" and "you" throughout this subpart refers to the employee.

§ 302-5.1 What are "temporary quarters"?

The term "temporary quarters" refers to lodging obtained for the purpose of temporary occupancy from a private or commercial source.

§ 302-5.2 What are "temporary quarters subsistence expenses (TQSE)"?

"Temporary quarters subsistence expenses" or "TQSE" are subsistence expenses incurred by an employee and/or his/her immediate family while occupying temporary quarters. TQSE does not include local transportation expenses incurred during occupancy of temporary quarters (see § 302-5.18 for details).

§ 302-5.3 What is the purpose of the TQSE allowance?

The TQSE allowance is intended to reimburse an employee reasonably and equitably for subsistence expenses incurred when it is necessary to occupy temporary quarters.

§ 302-5.4 Am I eligible for a TQSE allowance?

You are eligible for a TQSE allowance if you are an employee who is authorized to transfer; and

(a) Your new official station is located within the United States, its territories or possessions, the Commonwealths of Puerto Rico or the Northern Mariana Islands, or the former Canal Zone area (i.e., areas and installations in the Republic of Panama made available to the United States pursuant to the Panama Canal Treaty of 1977 and related agreements (as described in 22 U.S.C. 3602(a)); and

(b) Your old and new official stations are 40 miles or more apart (as measured by map distance) via a usually traveled surface route.

§ 302-5.5 Who is not eligible for a TQSE allowance?

New appointees, employees assigned under the Government Employees Training Act (5 U.S.C. 4109), and employees returning from an overseas assignment for the purpose of separation are not eligible for a TQSE allowance.

§ 302-5.6 Must my agency authorize payment of a TQSE allowance?

No, your agency determines whether it is in the Government's interest to pay TQSE.

§ 302-5.7 Under what circumstances will I receive a TQSE allowance?

You will receive a TQSE allowance if:

(a) Your agency authorizes it before you occupy the temporary quarters (the agency authorization must specify the period of time allowed for you to occupy temporary quarters); and

(b) You have signed a service agreement; and

(c) You meet any additional conditions your agency has established.

§ 302-5.8 Who may occupy temporary quarters at Government expense?

Only you and/or your immediate family may occupy temporary quarters at Government expense.

§ 302-5.9 Where may I/we occupy temporary quarters at Government expense?

You and/or your immediate family may occupy temporary quarters at Government expense within reasonable proximity of your old and/or new official stations. Neither you nor your immediate family may be reimbursed for occupying temporary quarters at any other location, unless justified by special circumstances that are reasonably related to your transfer.

§ 302-5.10 May my immediate family and I occupy temporary quarters at different locations?

Yes. For example, if you must vacate your home at the old official station and report to the new official station and your family remains behind until the

end of the school year, you may need to occupy temporary quarters at the new official station while your family occupies temporary quarters at the old official station.

§ 302-5.11 What methods may my agency use to reimburse me for TQSE?

Your agency will reimburse you for TQSE under the actual expense method unless it permits the "fixed amount" reimbursement method as an alternative. If your agency makes both methods available to you, you may select the one you prefer.

§ 302-5.12 Must I document my TQSE to receive reimbursement?

For fixed amount TQSE reimbursement, you do not document your TQSE. For actual TQSE reimbursement, you must document your TQSE by itemizing each expense and providing receipts as required by FTR § 301-11.3(c) of this subtitle.

§ 302-5.13 How soon may I/we begin occupying temporary quarters at Government expense?

As soon as your agency has authorized you to receive a TQSE allowance and you have signed a service agreement.

§ 302-5.14 How is my TQSE allowance affected if my temporary quarters become my permanent residence quarters?

If your temporary quarters become your permanent residence quarters, you may receive a TQSE allowance only if

you show in a manner satisfactory to your agency that you initially intended to occupy the quarters temporarily.

§ 302-5.15 May I receive an advance of funds for TQSE?

Yes. If authorized in accordance with § 302-1.14(a) of this chapter, your agency may advance the amount of funds necessary to cover your estimated TQSE expenses for up to 30 days. Your agency subsequently may advance additional funds for periods up to 30 days.

§ 302-5.16 May I receive a TQSE allowance if I am receiving another subsistence expenses allowance?

No, with one exception. You may receive a cost-of-living allowance payable under 5 U.S.C. 5941 in addition to a TQSE allowance.

§ 302-5.17 Am I eligible for a TQSE allowance if I transfer to a foreign area?

No. You may not receive a TQSE allowance under this part when you transfer to an area outside the United States, its territories or possessions, the Commonwealths of Puerto Rico or the Northern Mariana Islands, or the former Canal Zone area (i.e., areas and installations in the Republic of Panama made available to the United States pursuant to the Panama Canal Treaty of 1977 and related agreements (as described in 22 U.S.C. 3602(a))). However, you may qualify for a comparable allowance under the Standardized Regulations (Government

Civilians, Foreign Areas) prescribed by the State Department.

§ 302-5.18 May I be reimbursed for local transportation expenses incurred while I am occupying temporary quarters?

Generally not. Local transportation expenses are not TQSE, and there is no authority to pay them as such. You may, however, be reimbursed under part 301-2 of this subtitle for necessary transportation expenses if you perform local official business travel while you are occupying temporary quarters.

Subpart B—Actual TQSE Method of Reimbursement

Note to subpart B: Use of the pronouns "I" and "you" throughout this subpart refers to the employee.

§ 302-5.100 What am I paid under the actual TQSE reimbursement method?

Your agency will pay your actual TQSE incurred, provided the expenses are reasonable and do not exceed the maximum allowable amount. The "maximum allowable amount" is the "maximum daily amount" multiplied by the number of days you actually incur TQSE not to exceed the number of days authorized, taking into account that the rates change after 30 days in temporary quarters. The "maximum daily amount" is determined by adding the rates in the following table for you and each member of your immediate family authorized to occupy temporary quarters:

For	The "maximum daily amount" of TQSE under the actual expense method that		
	You and/or your unaccompanied spouse* may receive is	Your accompanied spouse or a member of your immediate family who is age 12 or older may receive is	A member of your immediate family who is under age 12 may receive is
The first 30 days of temporary quarters.	The applicable per diem rate75 times the applicable per diem rate.	.5 times the applicable per diem rate.
Any additional days of temporary quarters.	.75 times the applicable per diem rate.	.5 times the applicable per diem rate.	.4 times the applicable per diem rate.

(That is, when the spouse necessarily occupies temporary quarters in lieu of the employee or in a location separate from the employee.)

§ 302-5.101 May my agency reduce my TQSE allowance below the "maximum allowable amount"?

Yes. If the estimated daily amount of your TQSE is determined in advance to be lower than the maximum daily

amount, your agency may reduce the maximum allowable amount to your expected expenses.

§ 302-5.102 What is the "applicable per diem rate" under the actual TQSE reimbursement method?

The "applicable per diem rate" under the actual TQSE reimbursement method is as follows:

For temporary quarters located in	The applicable per diem rate is
The continental United States (CONUS)	The standard CONUS rate.
Alaska, Hawaii, the United States territories or possessions, the Commonwealths of Puerto Rico or the Northern Mariana Islands, or the former Canal Zone area (i.e., areas and installations in the Republic of Panama made available to the United States pursuant to the Panama Canal Treaty of 1977 and related agreements (as described in section 3(a) of the Panama Canal Act of 1979)).	The locality rate established by the Secretary of Defense or the Secretary of State under § 301-7.3 of this subtitle.

§ 302-5.103 What is the latest the period for which I claim actual TQSE reimbursement may begin?

The period must begin before the maximum time for beginning allowable travel and transportation under § 302-1.6 of this chapter expires.

§ 302-5.104 How long may I be authorized to claim actual TQSE reimbursement?

Your agency may authorize you to claim actual TQSE in 30-day increments, not to exceed 60 consecutive days. However, if your agency determines that there is a compelling reason for you to continue occupying temporary quarters after 60 consecutive days, it may authorize an extension of up to 60 additional consecutive days. Under no circumstances may you be authorized to claim actual TQSE reimbursement for more than a total of 120 consecutive days.

§ 302-5.105 What is a "compelling reason" warranting extension of my authorized period for claiming actual TQSE reimbursement?

A "compelling reason" is an event that is beyond your control and is acceptable to your agency. Examples include, but are not limited to:

(a) Delivery of your household goods to your new residence is delayed due to strikes, customs clearance, hazardous weather, fires, floods or other acts of God, or similar events.

(b) You cannot occupy your new permanent residence because of unanticipated problems (e.g., delay in settlement on the new residence, or short-term delay in construction of the residence).

(c) You are unable to locate a permanent residence which is adequate for your family's needs because of housing conditions at your new official station.

(d) Sudden illness, injury, or death of employee or immediate family member.

§ 302-5.106 May I interrupt occupancy of temporary quarters?

Yes. Your authorized period for claiming actual TQSE reimbursement is measured in consecutive days, and once begun, normally continues to run whether or not you occupy temporary quarters. You may, however, interrupt your authorized period for claiming actual TQSE reimbursement in the following instances:

(a) For the time allowed for en route travel between the old and new official stations;

(b) For circumstances attributable to official necessity such as an intervening temporary duty assignment or military duty; or

(c) For a non-official necessary interruption such as hospitalization, approved sick leave, or other reason beyond your control and acceptable to your agency.

§ 302-5.107 What effect do partial days of temporary quarters occupancy have on my authorized period for claiming actual TQSE reimbursement?

Occupancy of temporary quarters for less than a whole day constitutes one full day of your authorized period. (However, see § 302-5.110 regarding en route travel.)

§ 302-5.108 When does my authorized period for claiming actual TQSE reimbursement end?

The period ends at midnight on the earlier of:

(a) The day preceding the day you and/or any member of your immediate family occupies permanent residence quarters.

(b) The day your authorized period for claiming actual TQSE reimbursement expires.

§ 302-5.109 May the period for which I am authorized to claim actual TQSE reimbursement for myself be different from that of my immediate family?

No, the eligibility period for which you are authorized to claim actual TQSE reimbursement for yourself and for each member of your immediate family must run concurrently.

§ 302-5.110 What effect do partial days have on my actual TQSE reimbursement?

You may not receive reimbursement under both the actual TQSE allowance and another subsistence expenses allowance within the same calendar day, with one exception: if you claim TQSE reimbursement on the same day that en route travel per diem ends, your en route travel per diem will be computed under applicable partial day rules and you also may be reimbursed for actual TQSE you incur after 6:00 p.m. of that day.

§ 302-5.111 May I and/or my immediate family occupy temporary quarters longer than the period for which I am authorized to claim actual TQSE reimbursement?

Yes, but you will not be reimbursed for any of the expenses you incur during the unauthorized period.

Subpart C—Fixed Amount Reimbursement

Note to subpart C: Use of the pronouns "I" and "you" throughout this subpart refers to the employee.

§ 302-5.200 What am I paid under the fixed amount reimbursement method?

If your agency offers and you select the fixed amount TQSE reimbursement method, you are paid a fixed amount for up to 30 days. No extensions are allowed under the fixed amount method.

§ 302-5.201 How do I determine the amount of my payment under the fixed amount reimbursement method?

Multiply the number of days your agency authorizes TQSE by .75 times the maximum per diem rate (i.e., lodging plus meals and incidental expenses) prescribed in chapter 301 of this subtitle for the locality of the new official duty station. Then, for each member of your immediate family, multiply the same number of days by .25 times the same per diem rate. Your payment will be the sum of these calculations.

§ 302-5.202 Will I receive additional TQSE reimbursement if my fixed amount is not adequate to cover my TQSE?

No.

Subpart D—Agency Responsibilities

Note to subpart D: Use of the pronouns "we" and "you" throughout this subpart refers to the agency.

§ 302-5.300 How should we administer the TQSE allowance?

Temporary quarters should be used only if, and only for as long as, necessary until the employee and/or his/her immediate family can move into permanent residence quarters. You must administer the TQSE allowance to minimize or avoid other relocation expenses.

§ 302-5.301 What governing policies must we establish for the TQSE allowance?

You must establish policies and procedures governing:

(a) When you will authorize temporary quarters for employees;

(b) Who will determine if temporary quarters is appropriate in each situation;

(c) If and when you will authorize the fixed amount option for TQSE reimbursement;

(d) Who will determine the appropriate period of time for which TQSE reimbursement will be authorized, including approval of extensions and interruptions of temporary quarters occupancy;

(e) Who will determine whether quarters were indeed temporary, if there is any doubt.

§ 302-5.302 Under what circumstances may we authorize the TQSE allowance?

You may authorize a TQSE allowance on an individual-case basis when use of

temporary quarters is justified in connection with an employee's transfer to a new official station. You may not authorize a TQSE allowance for vacation purposes or other reasons unrelated to the transfer.

§ 302-5.303 What factors should we consider in determining whether the TQSE allowance actually is necessary?

The factors you should consider include:

(a) *The length of time the employee should reasonably be expected to occupy his/her residence at the old official station prior to reporting for duty at the new official station.* An employee and his/her immediate family should continue to occupy the residence at the old official station for as long as practicable to avoid the necessity for temporary quarters.

(b) *The existence of less expensive alternatives.* If a less expensive alternative to the TQSE allowance exists that will enable the employee to find permanent quarters at the new official station, you should consider such an alternative. For example, authorize a househunting trip instead of temporary quarters if it would cost less overall.

(c) *The existence of other opportunities to arrange for permanent quarters.* Consider whether the employee had other adequate opportunity to arrange for permanent quarters. For example, you should not authorize temporary quarters if the employee had adequate opportunity during an extended temporary duty assignment to arrange for permanent quarters.

§ 302-5.304 What factors should we consider in determining whether to offer an employee the fixed amount TQSE reimbursement option?

The factors you should consider include:

(a) *Ease of administration.* Actual TQSE reimbursement requires an agency to review claims for the validity, accuracy, and reasonableness of each expense amount. Fixed amount TQSE reimbursement does not require review of expense amounts and is therefore easier to administer.

(b) *Cost considerations.* You must weigh the cost of each alternative. Actual TQSE reimbursement may extend up to 120 consecutive days, while fixed amount TQSE reimbursement is limited to 30 days. Actual TQSE reimbursement may be less expensive, since its ceiling is based on the standard CONUS rate, while fixed amount TQSE reimbursement is based on the locality per diem rate. However, fixed amount TQSE reimbursement may be less expensive

because the maximum daily rate under actual TQSE reimbursement is a higher percentage of the applicable per diem rate than fixed amount TQSE reimbursement.

(c) *Treatment of employee.* The employee is allowed to choose between actual TQSE reimbursement and fixed amount TQSE reimbursement when you offer the fixed amount TQSE reimbursement method. You therefore should weigh employee morale and productivity considerations against actual cost considerations in determining which method to offer.

§ 302-5.305 What factors should we consider in determining whether quarters are temporary?

In determining whether quarters are "temporary", you should consider factors such as the duration of the lease, movement of household effects into the quarters, the type of quarters, the employee's expressions of intent, attempts to secure a permanent dwelling, and the length of time the employee occupies the quarters.

Dated: March 17, 1997.

Thurman M. Davis, Sr.,
Acting Administrator of General Services.
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41 CFR Part 302-15

[FTR Amendment 60]

RIN 3090-AG21

Federal Travel Regulation; Property Management Services

AGENCY: Office of Governmentwide Policy, GSA.

ACTION: Final rule.

SUMMARY: This final rule amends the Federal Travel Regulation (FTR) to allow an agency to pay for property management services when an employee transfers in the interest of the Government. This amendment will save the Government money when property management services are substituted for the sale, at Government expense, of an employee's residence.

DATES: This final rule is effective March 22, 1997, and applies to an employee whose effective date of transfer (date the employee reports for duty at the new official station) is on or after March 22, 1997.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Robert A. Clauson, Travel and Transportation Management Policy Division (MTT), Washington, DC 20405, telephone 202-501-0299.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: A multi-agency travel reinvention task force was organized in August 1994 under the auspices of the Joint Financial Management Improvement Program (JFMIP) to reengineer Federal travel rules and procedures. The task force developed 25 recommended travel management improvements published in a JFMIP report entitled *Improving Travel Management Governmentwide*, dated December 1995. On September 23, 1996, the President signed into law the Federal Employee Travel Reform Act of 1996 (Pub. L. 104-201), which included 8 legislative changes recommended by the JFMIP to improve travel and the delivery of relocation services.

This amendment implements section 1714 of the Act which provides the General Services Administration (GSA) authority to issue regulations which authorize agencies to pay for property management services. This amendment is written in the "plain English" style of regulation writing as a continuation of GSA's effort to make the FTR easier to understand and to use.

What are "property management services"?

"Property management services" are services, offered by a company, which assist a transferee in retaining and renting, rather than selling, his/her residence at the old official station.

How may property management services be obtained?

The employee may obtain the services directly and be reimbursed, or the agency may contract with a relocation services company to provide these services.

Must an agency authorize payment for property management services?

No. The agency has the option of offering this, as one way of managing the sale of a residence in connection with a relocation; it is intended to provide flexibility for agencies and transferees.

Under what circumstances may an agency pay for property management services?

An agency may pay for property management services when an employee transfers to a foreign area. An agency also may pay for property management services instead of the sale of an employee's residence at Government expense when an employee assigned to a foreign post of duty is transferred back to a different