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41 CFR Ch. 302 (7-1-01 Edition)

(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.

PART 302-6—ALLOWANCE FOR EXPENSES INCURRED IN CONNECTION WITH RESIDENCE TRANSACTIONS

Sec.

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

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

To the extent allowable under this part, the Government shall reimburse an employee for expenses required to be paid by him/her in connection with the sale of one residence at his/her old official station, for purchase (including construction) of one dwelling at his/her new official station, or for the settlement of an unexpired lease involving his/her residence or a lot on which a mobile home used as his/her residence was located at the old official station provided the conditions set forth in this section are met:

(a) *Transfers covered—agreement required.* A permanent change of station is authorized or approved and, except as provided in paragraph (g) of this section, the old and new official stations are located within the United States, and the employee has signed an agreement as required in § 302-1.5. (See exclusions in § 302-6.4.)

(b) *Location and type of residence.* The residence or dwelling is the residence as described in § 302-1.4(k), which may be a mobile home and/or the lot on which such mobile home is located or will be located. These criteria also apply to the former nonforeign area official station residence of employees who are eligible for residence transaction expenses under paragraph (g) of this section (see definition in paragraph (g)(1)(i) of this section).

(c) *Title requirements.* The title to the residence or dwelling at the old or new official station, or the interest in a cooperatively owned dwelling or in an unexpired lease, is in the name of the employee alone, or in the joint names of the employee and one or more members of his/her immediate family, or solely in the name of one or more members of his/her immediate family. The rules in paragraphs (c) (1) through

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(3) of this section apply in determining title to the residence.

(1) *Title interest must have been acquired prior to notification of transfer.* For an employee to be eligible for reimbursement of the costs of selling a dwelling or terminating a lease at the old official station, the employee's property interest must have been acquired prior to the date the employee was first officially notified of his/her transfer to the new official station. In the case of an employee covered by paragraph (g) of this section, the employee's interest must have been acquired prior to the date the employee was first officially notified of his/her transfer to the foreign area.

(2) *Legal title interest.* Except as provided in paragraph (c)(3) of this section, title to the residence is determined by the name of the party (or parties) on the title document (e.g., the deed).

(3) *Equitable title interest.* The employee, and/or a member(s) of his/her immediate family, in a situation listed in paragraphs (c)(3) (i) through (v) of this section is deemed to have title to the residence without regard to whether his/her name appears on the title document.

(i) *Title held in trust.* The property is held in trust and the conditions in paragraphs (c)(3)(i) (A) through (F) of this section apply.

(A) The property must be the employee's residence as described in paragraph (b) of this section.

(B) The employee and/or a member(s) of the immediate family must be the only beneficiary(ies) of the trust during his/her lifetime.

(C) The employee and/or a member(s) of the immediate family must retain the right to distribute the property during his/her lifetime.

(D) The employee and/or a member(s) of the immediate family must retain the right to manage the property.

(E) The employee and/or a member(s) of the immediate family must be the only grantor/settlor of the trust, or must retain the right to direct distribution of the property upon dissolution of the trust or death.

(F) The employee provides the agency with a copy of the trust document.

(ii) *Title held by financial institution.* The title is held in the name of a financial institution and the conditions in paragraphs (c)(3)(ii) (A) through (D) of this section apply.

(A) The property is the employee's residence as described in paragraph (b) of this section.

(B) The employee and/or a member(s) of the immediate family executed a financing agreement (e.g., mortgage) with the financial institution.

(C) State or local law requires that lending parties take title to perfect (i.e., protect) a security interest in the property, or the financial institution requires that it take possession of title as a condition of the financing agreement.

(D) The employee must provide the agency with a copy of the financing document. The agency may require that the employee also provide proof of state or local laws governing secured credit.

(iii) *Title includes an accommodation party or parties.* The title is held both in the names of: the employee singularly, or the employee and one or more members of his/her immediate family jointly, or one or more members of his/her immediate family; and an individual (accommodation party) who is not an immediate family member. In addition, the conditions in paragraphs (c)(3)(iii) (A) through (G) of this section apply. (An accommodation party is an individual who signs an employee's financing agreement (e.g., a mortgage) to lend his/her name (i.e., credit) to the arrangement.)

(A) The property is the employee's residence as described in paragraph (b) of this section.

(B) The employee and/or a member(s) of the immediate family has right to use the property and to direct conveyance of the property.

(C) The lender requires signature of the accommodation party on the financing document.

(D) The employee and/or a member of the immediate family, is liable for payments under the financing arrangement (e.g., mortgage).

(E) The accommodation party's name is on the title.

(F) The accommodation party does not have a financial interest in the

property unless the employee and/or a member(s) of the immediate family defaults on the financing arrangement.

(G) The employee provides the agency with acceptable documentation of the accommodation. Agencies shall issue policy defining acceptable documentation of the accommodation. Such documentation may include a copy of the financing document and/or a written statement from the employee certifying that the conditions in paragraphs (c)(3)(iii) (A) through (G) of this section apply. Such documentation also may include a written statement from the accommodation party certifying that he/she does not have a financial interest in the property.

(iv) *Title held by seller of the property.* The title is held in the name of the seller of the property and the conditions in paragraphs (c)(3)(iv) (A) through (D) of this section apply.

(A) The property is the employee's residence as described in paragraph (b) of this section.

(B) The employee and/or a member(s) of the immediate family has right to use the property and to direct conveyance of the property.

(C) The employee and/or a member(s) of the immediate family must have signed a financing agreement with the seller of the property (e.g., a land contract) providing for fixed periodic payments and transfer of title to the employee and/or a member(s) of the immediate family upon completion of the payment schedule.

(D) The employee must provide the agency with a copy of the financing agreement.

(v) *Other equitable title situations.* The title is held both in the names of: the employee singularly, or the employee and one or more members of his/her immediate family jointly, or one or more members of his/her immediate family; and an individual who is not an immediate family member. In addition, the conditions in paragraphs (c)(3)(v) (A) through (E) of this section apply.

(A) The property is the employee's residence as described in paragraph (b) of this section.

(B) The employee and/or a member(s) of the immediate family has right to use the property and to direct conveyance of the property.

(C) Only the employee and/or a member(s) of the immediate family has made payments on the property.

(D) The employee and/or a member(s) of the immediate family received all proceeds from the sale of the property.

(E) The employee must provide suitable documentation to the agency that the conditions listed in paragraphs (c)(3)(v) (A) through (D) of this section have been met. Agencies shall issue policy defining acceptable documentation. Such documentation must include financial documents proving that only the employee and/or a member(s) of the immediate family made payments on the property, and financial documents proving that the employee and/or a member(s) of the immediate family received all proceeds from the sale of the property.

(d) *Occupancy requirements.* The dwelling for which reimbursement of selling expenses is claimed was, except as provided in paragraph (g) of this section, the employee's residence at the time he/she was first officially notified by competent authority of his/her transfer to the new official station.

(e) *Time limitation—(1) Initial period.* The settlement dates for the sale and purchase or lease termination transactions for which reimbursement is requested are not later than 2 years after the date that the employee reported for duty at the new official station. For employees eligible under paragraph (g) of this section, new official station means the official station to which the employee reports for duty when reassigned or transferred from a foreign area.

(2) *Extension of time limitation.* (i) Upon an employee's written request, the 2-year time limitation for completion of the sale and purchase or lease termination transactions may be extended by the head of the agency or his/her designee for an additional period of time not to exceed 1 year.

(ii) The employee's written request should be submitted to the appropriate agency official(s) as soon as the employee becomes aware of the need for an extension but before expiration of the 2-year limitation; however, in no case shall the request be submitted later than 30 calendar days after the

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expiration date unless this 30-day period is specifically extended by the agency.

(iii) Approval of this additional period of time shall be based on a determination that extenuating circumstances, acceptable to the agency concerned, have prevented the employee from completing the sale and purchase or lease termination transactions in the initial timeframe and that the residence transactions are reasonably related to the transfer of official station.

(iv) When an employee is eligible for an extension of the time limitations for completion of a residence transaction and such an extension is approved by an agency, relocation entitlements and allowances shall be determined by using the entitlements and allowances prescribed by regulations in effect on the employee's effective date of transfer and not the entitlements and allowances in effect at the time the extension of the time limitation is approved. (See § 302-1.3(d).)

(f) *Reimbursement of expenses.* The rules in paragraphs (f) (1) and (2) of this section govern the reimbursement of employee residence transaction expenses.

(1) *Employee must actually incur the expenses.* An employee shall be reimbursed only for expenses actually incurred and paid by the employee or a member of the employee's immediate family. If any expenses were shared by persons other than the employee or a member of his/her immediate family, reimbursement is limited to the portion actually paid by the employee and/or a member of his/her immediate family.

(2) *Pro rata reimbursement.* When the title possessed by an employee and/or a member(s) of his/her immediate family is not full title to the residence, or when an employee is deemed to have a title interest under paragraph (c)(3) of this section, the employee shall be reimbursed on a pro rata basis to the extent of his/her actual title interest plus his/her deemed title interest in the residence. Additionally, an employee shall be reimbursed on a pro rata basis in the situations listed in paragraphs (f)(2) (i) and (ii) of this section.

(i) *Multiple occupancy dwelling.* If the residence is a duplex or another type of multiple occupancy dwelling which is occupied only partially by the employee, or whenever the employee shares responsibility for a leased property (e.g., a shared apartment arrangement), expenses shall be reimbursed on a pro rata basis.

(ii) *Excess land.* The employee shall be limited to pro rata reimbursement when he/she sells or purchases land in excess of that which reasonably relates to the residence site.

(g) *Transfer from a foreign area to a nonforeign area—(1) Definitions.* For purposes of this paragraph, the following definitions apply:

(i) *Former nonforeign area official station.* This term means the official station from which the employee was transferred when assigned to the post of duty in the foreign area.

(ii) *Nonforeign area.* Nonforeign area includes the United States.

(iii) *Foreign area.* Foreign area refers to any area not defined as a nonforeign area.

(2) *Applicability.* The provisions of this part are applicable, as specified in this paragraph, to employees who have completed an agreed upon tour of duty in a foreign area and instead of being returned to the former nonforeign area official station, are reassigned or transferred in the interest of the Government to a different nonforeign area official station than the official station from which the employee was transferred when assigned to the foreign post of duty. The distance between the former and new official stations must meet the mileage criteria specified in § 302-1.7 for short distance transfers.

(3) *Authorized reimbursement.* Generally, an employee is required to serve at least one tour of duty in a foreign area and retain a residence in a nonforeign area with the expectation of returning to the former official station in the nonforeign area. However, there are instances when an employee completes a tour of duty in a foreign area and is subsequently transferred to a different official station or post of duty in a nonforeign area than the one from which he/she transferred when assigned to the foreign post of duty. When this

type of transfer is authorized or approved, reimbursement is allowable for real estate expenses required to be paid by the employee in connection with:

(i) The sale of the residence (or the settlement of an unexpired lease) at the official station from which the employee was transferred when he/she was assigned to a post of duty located in a foreign area; and

(ii) The purchase of a residence at the new official station when the employee is transferred in the interest of the Government from a post of duty located in a foreign area to a nonforeign area official station (other than the official station from which he/she was transferred when assigned to the foreign post of duty).

(4) *Reimbursement limitations.* Reimbursement under this paragraph is prohibited for any sale (or settlement of an unexpired lease) or purchase transaction that occurs prior to the employee's first being officially notified (generally in the form of a change of official station travel authorization) that instead of returning to the former nonforeign area official station, he/she will be reassigned or transferred to a different nonforeign area official station than the one from which he/she was transferred when assigned to the foreign post of duty.

(5) *Service agreement required.* A signed service agreement shall be required as prescribed in § 302-1.5 for any employee who is eligible for reimbursement of residence transaction expenses authorized under this paragraph.

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§ 302-6.2 Reimbursable and non-reimbursable expenses.

(a) *Brokers' fees and real estate commissions.* A broker's fee or real estate commission paid by the employee for services in selling his/her residence is reimbursable but not in excess of rates generally charged for such services by the broker or by brokers in the locality of the old official station. No such fee or

commission is reimbursable in connection with the purchase of a home at the new official station.

(b) *Other advertising, selling, and appraisal expenses.* Costs of newspaper, bulletin board, multiple-listing services, and other advertising for sale of the residence at the old official station are reimbursable if the employee has not paid for such services in the form of a broker's fee or real estate agent's commission. The customary cost of an appraisal also may be reimbursed.

(c) *Legal and related expenses.* To the extent such costs have not been included in brokers' or similar services for which reimbursement is claimed under other categories, the following expenses are reimbursable with respect to the sale and purchase of residences if they are customarily paid by the seller of a residence at the old official station or if customarily paid by the purchaser of a residence at the new official station, to the extent they do not exceed amounts customarily charged in the locality of the residence: costs of (1) searching title, preparing abstract, and legal fees for a title opinion, or (2) where customarily furnished by the seller, the cost of a title insurance policy; costs of preparing conveyances, other instruments, and contracts and related notary fees and recording fees; costs of making surveys, preparing drawings or plats when required for legal or financing purposes; and similar expenses. Costs of litigation are not reimbursable.

(d) *Miscellaneous expenses—(1) Reimbursable items.* The following expenses are reimbursable in connection with the sale and/or purchase of a residence, provided they are customarily paid by the seller of a residence in the locality of the old official station or by the purchaser of a residence at the new official station, to the extent they do not exceed specifically stated limitations, or in the absence thereof, amounts customarily paid in the locality of the residence:

(i) FHA or VA fee for the loan application.

(ii) Loan origination fees and similar charges such as loan assumption fees and loan transfer fees. A loan origination fee is a fee paid by the borrower to