



**THE GEORGE
WASHINGTON
UNIVERSITY**
WASHINGTON, DC

Responsible University Official:
Associate Vice President, Financial
Operations
Responsible Office: Accounts Payable
Services
Last Revised Date: August 10, 2006

RELOCATION EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENT

Policy Statement

It is the policy of the university to reimburse employees for relocation (i.e., moving) expenses only when approved by the appropriate vice president. The university will comply with all applicable federal and state income tax withholding and Form W-2 reporting requirements for reimbursement of relocation expenses.

Reason for Policy

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance to departments regarding the required approvals for processing relocation expense reimbursements and general information regarding taxable and nontaxable relocation expenses.

Who is Governed by this Policy

Faculty and staff

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Policy

Faculty above the rank of Instructor are eligible for reimbursement of moving expenses as stated in the Faculty Handbook. All exceptions should be approved by the Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs or his designee.

Staff may be eligible for reimbursement of relocation expenses. All relocation expenses must be approved by the appropriate Vice President or designee.

The hiring department is responsible for all relocation costs.

The offer letter to a new appointee should specify the maximum moving expense reimbursement that will be paid by the university. The reimbursement request should include the portion of the offer letter referencing the maximum expense reimbursement.

Expenditures from restricted funds can only be made in accordance with the policies and regulations governing those funds.

Expenses eligible for reimbursement include all expenses identified as reimbursable by the IRS, as well as others deemed reimbursable by the university. This includes but is not limited to:

- A. House-Hunting Expenses – Includes all expenses related to travel for employee and spouse/same-sex domestic partner (taxable)
- B. En Route Travel Expenses – Includes cost of transportation, lodging for employee, spouse/same-sex domestic partner and dependent children living at home (not taxable). Reimbursement of meals en route is taxable.
- C. Temporary Living Expenses – Expenses incurred for temporary living arrangements while relocating near the university (taxable)
- D. Moving of Household and Personal Effects - Includes actual costs of packing, transporting, unpacking household effects; in-transit storage costs; insurance; and moving household pets (not taxable)
- E. Auto Shipment – Automobiles used as primary mode of transportation of the employee and spouse. Automobiles may be driven or shipped. Mileage reimbursement will be provided at university's approved rate if automobiles are driven. (not taxable)

Under Internal Revenue Service (IRS) regulations, all reimbursements associated with the move other than "qualified moving expenses" are taxable income to the employee subject to tax withholding and reporting on the employee's Form W-2 (refer to [IRS publication 521](#) for more details). The following non-qualified expenses are taxable income to the employee:

- A. Home improvements to help sell home;
- B. Loss on the sale of the home;
- C. Expenses of buying or selling a home;
- D. Expenses of getting or breaking a lease or security deposits;
- E. Mortgage penalties;
- F. Real estate taxes;
- G. Pre-move house hunting expenses;
- H. Mileage reimbursement in excess of IRS rate;
- I. Temporary living expenses near the university;
- J. Any part of the purchase price of new home or refitting of carpets and draperies;
- K. Car tags or driver's license fees;
- L. Meals;
- M. Storage charges except those incurred in transit and for foreign moves;
- N. Payments associated with moving goods from a second home; and
- O. Payment of a lump sum relocation allowance, without requirement of documentation as to the expenses paid with the allowance, or excess allowance used for non-qualified expenses.

Faculty or staff members who receive relocation assistance will be required to reimburse the university for relocation assistance if they voluntarily leave the university for any reason within 12 months from their date of hire. Reimbursement to the university will be pro-rated according to the number of months the employee has worked at the university.

Definitions

For this purpose, "qualified" means non-taxable and "non-qualified" means taxable. Expense reimbursements must meet all tests described below in order to be exempt from taxation.

Individuals eligible for relocation expense reimbursement:

- A. A new employee or a current employee transferring to a qualified job
- B. A member of the employee's household (Note: The IRS does not recognize a domestic partner as a member of the employee's household)

Qualified Job:

- A. A new job for the person being moved
- B. Full-time
- C. Expected to last at least 9 months if a new employee, or 12 months if a relocation of an existing employee
- D. At least 50 miles farther from the old residence than the old job was from the old residence

Qualified (Non-Taxable) Moving Expenses:

- A. Expenses incurred within one year from date reported to new job
- B. Expenses for moving household goods and personal effects
- C. En route travel by car, posted IRS mileage is allowed
- D. En route lodging (does not include meals)
- E. Storage of household goods up to 30 days

Related Information

[Accounts Payable Department](#)

[GW University Policies](#)

[Human Resource Services](#)

[Internal Revenue Service \(IRS\)](#)

[IRS Publication 521: Moving Expenses](#)

[Office of General Counsel](#)

[Payroll Services](#)

Contacts

Contact	Telephone	Email
Human Resource Services	202-994-8500	askhr@gwu.edu
Office of the Senior Vice President General Counsel	202-994-6503	gwlegal@gwu.edu
Office of Faculty Personnel	202-994-6510	
Accounts Payable Services	571-553-0247	apcustsv@gwu.edu
Tax Department	571-553-8313	tax@gwu.edu
Payroll Services	571-553-4277	payroll@gwu.edu

Document History

- **Last Reviewed Date:** March 19, 2018
- **Last Revised Date:** August 10, 2006
- **Policy Origination Date:** Not Available

Who Approved This Policy

Beth Nolan, Senior Vice President and General Counsel

Louis H. Katz, Executive Vice President and Treasurer

Steven Lerman, Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs

This policy, as well as all [university policies](#), are located on the [Office of Compliance and Privacy's](#) home page.