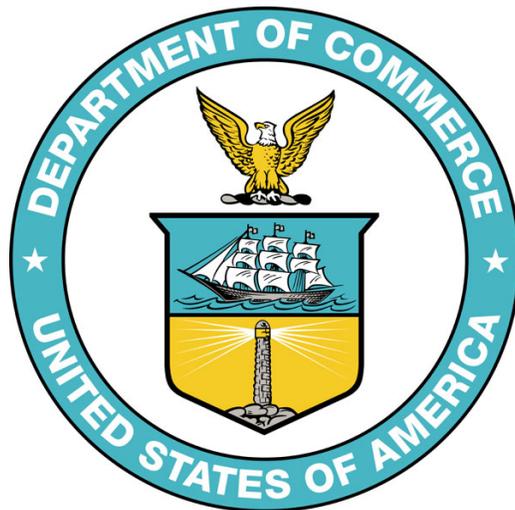


# Department Travel Handbook



**U. S. Department of Commerce**  
**June 2008**

## **FORWARD**

The Department of Commerce (DOC) Travel Handbook is the single authoritative reference for the Department's management of travel. The Travel Handbook should be consulted to determine department wide policies and procedures governing all travel property.

The Travel Handbook contains Departmental policy and procedures for the management of travel by Department personnel, invitational, as well as permanent change of station. The Travel Handbook implements and supplements those portions of the Federal Travel Regulations (FTR) which pertain to the temporary and permanent change of station travel. Material is based on existing laws, Executive Orders, and mandatory regulations of control agencies.

All DOC employees must adhere to the policy and procedures set forth in this handbook when executing travel on behalf of the Department.

### **Scope**

This forward provides material concerning the Travel Management Handbook. The Travel Management Handbook is presented in terms of its establishment, authority, publication, applicability, implementation and supplementation of the FTR, and describes the relationship between the Travel Handbook and the FTR.

### **Authority for Manual**

Department Administrative Order (DAO) 200-0: Department of Commerce Handbooks and Manuals. The Travel Handbook has the status and effect of a DAO.

### **FTR System**

The Travel FTR is issued by the Administrator, GSA. The Travel Handbook implements the FTR by providing basic policy and procedures governing travel operations of the Department. The Travel Handbook is regulatory in nature and covers all travel activities.

### **Publication and Distribution**

The Travel Handbook is published by the Office of Administrative Operations (OA). Any suggested revisions should be addressed to: Associate Director, Office of Administrative Operations (OAO); Room 12852, Herbert C. Hoover Building; Department of Commerce; Washington, D.C. 20230. The Travel Handbook and all updates are serially numbered, and published in loose-leaf form. Operating Units will be provided copies of all updates and correspondence of the Travel Handbook for distribution within its organization. In order to facilitate cross-referencing between the FTR and the Travel Handbook, each Chapter, where appropriate, contains the corresponding FTR.

## Table of Contents

C300 Introduction	6
C301-1 Applicability	7
C301-2 General Rules	7
C301-2.10 Approving Travel	8
C301-2.20 Unique Travel Requests	9
C301-10 Transportation Expenses	10
C301-10.100 Airline	10
C301-10.110 Use of Contract City-Pair Fares	11
C301-10.120 Premium Class Travel	12
C301-10.160 Train	13
C301-10.220 Government Automobiles	14
C301-10.300 Privately Owned Vehicle (POV)	14
C301-10.450 Rental Cars	14
C301-11 Per Diem Expenses	16
C301-11.1 General Rules	16
C301-11.200 Reduced Per Diem: Extended Travel/Training Assignments	17
C301-11.300 Actual Expenses	18
C301-12 Miscellaneous Expenses	18
C301-12.100 Baggage	18
C301-12.200 Telephone Calls	19
C301-12.500 Registration Fees	20
C301-14 Local Travel	20
C301-50 Arranging for Travel Services	23
C301-51 Paying Travel Expenses	23
C301-51.100 Paying for Common Carrier Transportation	24
C301-51.200 Receiving Travel Advances	24
C301-52 Claiming Reimbursement	24
C301-52.100 Timely Reimbursement of Travel Expenses to Employees	24
C301-53 Using Promotional Materials and Frequent Traveler Programs	25
C301-54 Collection of Undisputed Delinquent Amounts Owed to the Contractor Issuing the Individually Billed Travel Charge Card	25
C301-73 Travel Programs	25
C301-75 Pre-employment Interview Travel	25
C301-80 Invitational Travelers	25
C301-81 Group Travel	26
C301-82 Charter Services	26
C301-83.1 Travel Management Services (TMS)	27
C301-83.100 E-Gov Travel (eTS)	28
C301-84 Travel in Conjunction with Leave	28
C301-85 Mixed and Official Travel	29
C301-87 Amending Travel Orders	30
C301-88 Award Recipient Travel	30
C302 Relocation Allowances	31
C302-1 General Rules	31
C302-2 Employees Eligibility Requirements	31
C302-2.10 Service Agreements	32
C302-4 Allowances for Subsistence and Transportation	32
C302-4.200 Per Diem	32

## Table of Contents (Continued)

C302-4.400 Transportation	33
C302-4.500 Use of More Than One Privately Owned Vehicle (POV)	33
C302-5 Allowance for House Hunting Trip Expenses	33
C302-6 Allowance for Temporary Quarters Subsistence Expenses	34
C302-6.1 General Rules	34
C302-6.100 Actual TQSE Method of Reimbursement	34
C302-6.200 Fixed Amount Reimbursement	35
C302-7 Transportation and Temporary Storage of Household Goods and Professional Books, Papers, and Equipment (PBP&E)	36
C302-7.300 Claims for Lost or Damaged Household Goods	36
C302-7.400 Household Goods and Personal Effects Transported Within the Continental United States (CONUS)	37
C302-7.500 Shipment of Household Goods to and From Outside the Continental United States (OCONUS)	38
C302-8 Allowances for Extended Storage of Household Goods (HHG)	39
C302-9 Allowances for Transportation and Emergency Storage of a POV	40
C302-9.1 General Rules	40
C302-9.100 Transportation of a POV within the CONUS	40
C302-9.200 OCONUS	41
C302-10 Allowance for Transportation of Mobile Homes and Boats Used as a Primary Residence	41
C302-11 Allowances for Expenses Incurred in Connection with Residence Transactions	41
C302-11.20 Time Limits	41
C302-12 Use of Relocation Services Company	42
C302-12.100 Home Value	42
C302-12.200 Buyer Value Option Process	42
C302-12.300 The Amended Value Sale	43
C302-12.400 Other Services	44
C302-14 Home Marketing Incentive Payments	44
C302-15 Allowance for Property Management Services	45
C304 Payment of Travel Expenses from a Non-Federal Source	46
Appendix A	47

## Changes

This version of the handbook contains change 1 which:

Replaced section C301-14.4 on pages 19 and 20 of the previous version with the new paragraph below on pages 20-21 in this version:

**C301-14.4** The employee must reach his/her actual work site and return to his/her residence at his/her own expense. If the employee performs official local travel during the regular work day, only the LOCAL travel costs exceeding the normal daily commuting costs will be reimbursed. The reimbursable amount is determined by subtracting the employee's normal daily commuting cost (e.g. metro fare, bus fare, car pool expenses) from the employee's total travel costs for the day. Total travel costs may include parking fees for the employee's POV at his/her actual work site should a determination be made that use of the employee's POV is the most cost effective and advantageous means of conducting official business; however, an employee will not be reimbursed mileage expenses for home to work and work to home travel in the event he or she uses a POV. If an employee commutes to work via POV regularly, he/she will not be reimbursed for parking at his/her actual work site, but may still be reimbursed for other costs associated with official local travel while away from his/her actual work site. Before using his/her POV, the employee should ensure that a Government vehicle is not available. Alternatively, he/she should use a courier service or taxi if it is more cost effective for the Government. If an employee normally commutes using transportation such as a van pool, and must pay regardless of whether he/she rides, the employee is not required to deduct this expense from the total travel costs for the day and may be fully reimbursed for his/her travel expenses.

Table of Contents – Page numbers were all changed to reflect movement of material caused by adding material

All changes are in blue.

**C300 Introduction** This Department of Commerce (DOC) Travel Handbook is written in a sequence to mirror the FTR, when possible, but does not duplicate the FTR. Bureaus and Offices may supplement these policies with additional administrative procedures and restrictions; however, those procedures may not allow for a greater allowance than prescribed, and may not waive the FTR or this handbook to increase the entitlement of an employee. It is the responsibility of the Department to ensure equal and equitable treatment of all employees who are required to perform official travel for the benefit of the Government. The DOC Travel Handbook is maintained by the Travel Management Division (TMD), Office of Administrative Operations, Room 2062, 1401 Constitution Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20230. Visit the TMD website or contact TMD for additional travel guidance:

- a. Website: <http://www.osec.doc.gov/oas/travel/default.htm>
- b. E-mail: [etravel@doc.gov](mailto:etravel@doc.gov)
- c. Telephone: 202-482-1818

There are four fundamental principles a traveler needs to know about Federal travel:

- a. Travel must be conducted in the most effective and efficient manner possible and only when necessary to accomplish the mission of the Government. This usually means, at a minimum, traveling by a direct route on a common carrier in coach or tourist class;
- b. Employees traveling on official business are expected to exercise the same care in incurring expenses that a prudent person would exercise if traveling on personal business. Travelers may not use premium accommodations or obtain unnecessary service(s) at the Government's expense;
- c. Except in emergencies, travel must be authorized in writing and in advance by an official at least one level above the traveler. The authorization must include the purpose(s), place(s), dates, conditions, limitations, and estimated costs of the travel, as well as accounting information; and
- d. Use of the Government sponsored, contractor-issued travel charge card is mandatory for all official travel related charges, unless an exemption has been met for non-use of the card. (See exemptions list: FTR 301-51.2) The Government travel charge card may not be used for personal travel expenses.

DOC Bureau Codes (Form CD-29, Box 6C):

Code	Bureau Name
04	Bureau of the Census
08	National Technical Information Service
10	Patent and Trademark Office
12	International Trade Administration
14	National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
33	Technology Administration
51	Office of the Secretary
52	Economic Development Administration
53	Bureau of Economic Analysis
57	National Institute of Standards and Technology
59	Minority Business Development Agency
61	National Telecommunications and Information Administration
64	Office of the Inspector General
67	Bureau of Industry and Security
65	Economics and Statistics Administration

Federal travel information can be obtained through the Internet sites listed in Appendix A.

### **C301-1 Applicability**

**C301-1.1** The Federal Travel Regulation and DOC Travel Handbook are applicable to employees and entities of the Department of Commerce. Travelers are responsible for knowing applicable travel regulations and related requirements. If the employee is:

- a. Department employee on loan or detail to another Department, the paying agency's regulations will govern.
- b. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Commissioned Officer, the Joint Travel Regulations (JTR) will govern.
- c. Foreign Service Officer, Volume 6 of the State Department's Foreign Affairs Manual (FAM) will govern.

### **C301-2 General Rules**

**C301-2.1** Except in emergencies, every traveler must have written permission in advance, on a Travel Authorization (Order), to travel on official business. The authorization (CD-29 or Bureau approved form) must include the purpose(s), place(s), dates, conditions, limitations, and estimated costs of the travel, as well as accounting information. Approving Officials and travelers are responsible for knowing current travel policy. Approving Officials should first determine if travel is necessary to achieve Departmental goals. When a traveler deviates for their own personal preference or convenience, reimbursement will be limited to the lower of the costs between the authorized itinerary, and the itinerary elected by the traveler. There are three basic types of travel authorizations (orders):

- a. *Unlimited open (Blanket unlimited)*. **THIS IS RESERVED FOR THE SECRETARY AND DEPUTY SECRETARY ONLY.**
- b. *Limited open (Blanket limited)*. This authorization is reserved for frequent travelers. Each trip requires oral approval by the traveler's supervisor. Limited open authorizations must be reviewed and documented quarterly with appropriate documentation showing the name of the reviewing individual and a notation that the travel order was extended through the next quarter. These authorizations must be reissued annually.
- c. *Trip-by-trip*. The following types of travel must be authorized on a trip-by-trip basis: conference travel; foreign travel; travel received from a non-federal source (donated travel); training-related travel; and, travel by volunteers (invitational travel).

**C301-2.2** The purpose of the travel order is to:

- a. Provide the employee with information regarding what expenses DOC will pay;
- b. Provide travel service vendors with necessary documentation for the use of travel contracts and similar arrangements, with transportation and lodging providers. For example, Government-contract air carriers, rental car companies, trains, hotels (FedRooms properties) that give preferential rates and other benefits to Federal travelers on official business;

- c. Provide financial information necessary for budgetary planning; and,
- d. Identify purpose(s) of travel.

### **C301-2.10 Approving Travel**

**C301-2.11** Department Organizational Order (DOO) 10-5 authorizes the Chief Financial Officer and Assistant Secretary for Administration (CFO/ASA) to serve as "agency head" under the authorities in 5 U.S.C. Chapter 57 regarding official travel, transportation, and subsistence of Department employees and other individuals traveling on official business for the Department. This authority is delegated to Secretarial Officers and heads of operating units (as defined in DOO 1-1), to authorize travel for personnel under their supervision.

**C301-2.12** Officials delegated in C301-2.11 to authorize travel may also authorize travel advances in accordance with applicable provisions of the Federal Travel Regulations, and other conditions or limitations.

**C301-2.13** Officials delegated in C301-2.11 may redelegate the authority (in writing) to authorize travel and travel advances when necessary for efficient administration, as follows:

- a. Redlegation may be made to officials who report directly to them, to the deputies of such officials, and to the heads of the headquarters operating unit's next lower organizational level, provided such officials, at either level, have significant managerial responsibilities;
- b. Redlegation may be made to heads and deputy heads of major field offices who report directly to the operating unit headquarters. If there is no deputy head, the authority may be redelegated to one official designated by the head of the field office.

**C301-2.14** If the limitations in C301-2.13 are too restrictive for effective administration of certain programs, the authority may be further redelegated with prior written approval of the CFO/ASA. The request, and justification, must be submitted by the head of the operating unit.

**C301-2.15** The following circumstances must be approved and signed by the bureau Chief Financial Officer, and submitted to the CFO/ASA for approval:

- a. Exemptions from the mandatory use of the Citibank Government travel card, if an employee travels more than five times per year;
- b. Waivers for \$500,000 house value cap;
- c. Acceptance of an in-kind donation for travel which exceeds, by \$250, the value of an expenditure (i.e., for accommodations or transportation) available under the FTR. ("Exceeds by \$250" is defined as an in-kind donation which exceeds maximum allowances for official travel by \$250.); and,
- d. Acceptance of payment from a non-Federal source for travel expenses over \$25,000.

**C301-2.16** The Chief of Staff, or Deputy Chief of Staff, Office of the Secretary, will approve all travel (including both foreign and domestic) for the CFO/ASA, Secretarial Officers, Heads of Departmental Offices, and Heads of Operating units reporting directly to the Secretary.

**C301-2.17** Only officials acting for the requesting/approving official can sign when the requesting/approving official is not physically available to sign travel orders. Requesting/ Approving officials will be responsible for travel orders authorized in their absence.

### **C301-2.20 Unique Travel Requests**

**C301-2.21** Form CD-334, “Request for Approval of Extra Fare Air Accommodations” (or bureau approved form), is used to authorize premium-class accommodations, for both air and train. A copy of Form CD-334 and a copy of the travel authorization must be submitted to a central location within each bureau, for reporting purposes, whenever first-class travel is authorized. A CD-334 is not required when the upgrade is paid for with personal funds or through the use of frequent flyer benefits.

**NOTE:** Employees who have medical certificates on file, as a basis for premium-class accommodations must be re-certified every two years. Form CD-334 (or bureau approved form) must indicate that a medical certificate has been received by the traveler’s approving official.

**C301-2.22** Memoranda of request for reduced fares of group and charter arrangements must be submitted to the appropriate designated official within the employee’s bureau. The memorandum must include justification for use, prior to issuance of the travel authorization. When chartered services are obtained, the terms of the charter shall be in writing and signed by an appropriate designated official within the employee’s bureau. Failure to comply with any of the above mentioned requirements may result in denial of reimbursement. Approval is not required to charter helicopters or other small aircraft for short flights to move personnel or equipment during the course of normal field activities.

**C301-2.23** Memoranda of request for the use of cash to pay for common carrier transportation exceeding \$100 must be submitted to the appropriate designated official within the employee’s bureau. The memoranda of request must come from the requesting/approving official and include a justification; an attached copy of the travel authorization; the passenger’s ticket receipt (must show form of payment); and, the original travel voucher or reclaim travel voucher. By signing the travel voucher, the employee assigns to the United States Government all rights in connection with any reimbursable transportation charges.

**C301-2.24** Form CD-210, “Record of Gift or Bequest” or Form CD-342, Record of Gifts and Decorations from Foreign Government” (or bureau approved form) must be completed, if the donation is from a foreign government, to authorize acceptance of payment from a non-Federal source for travel expenses. Form CD-538, “Acceptance of Payment from a Non-Federal Source for Travel Expenses” (or bureau approved form) must accompany the CD-210 whenever the payment exceeds \$250.

**C301-2.25** Relocation travel should be approved at a level no lower than the individual exercising budgetary control over the unit. This individual should be fully aware of the total costs likely to be incurred in the relocation.

**C301-2.26** A “Fly America Act Justification Statement” is used to authorize foreign air carriers and must be attached to the travel order when procuring transportation tickets. Under normal circumstances, the statement will be signed by an authorizing official; and, under emergency circumstances, can be verbally approved by the approving official, signed by the employee, and signed by approving official post-travel.

**NOTE:** A “Fly America Act Justification Statement” is not required when transportation is financed directly by or reimbursed from private sources or a foreign government.

## **C301-10 Transportation Expenses**

**C301-10.1** In terms of incurring or authorizing transportation expenses, the Department of Commerce (DOC) considers “normal working hours” as Monday through Friday, 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. (local time).

### **C301-10.100 Airline**

**C301-10.101** If the employee’s trip is cancelled, the employee should call the Department’s Travel Management Center to cancel travel arrangements as soon as he/she learns the trip is cancelled or changed. If paper tickets were issued, the employee must return the paper tickets to the Travel Management Center for reimbursement.

**C301-10.102** When a trip is cancelled, the employee must contact the Travel Management service provider to cancel the trip. If the employee does not cancel or return unused paper tickets, he/she will be liable for the value of tickets issued. For exchanged tickets, the employee must provide the airline receipt showing a credit to the Department; and, ensure that the unused portion of the exchanged ticket coupon is credited to the centrally billed account.

**C301-10.103** Contract City-Pair Fare tickets are normally issued three (3) business days in advance, provided the travel management service provider has the employee’s travel order and other required documentation. Employees may request issuance earlier (not to exceed 30 days prior to travel) or later, if preferred.

**C301-10.104** If the employee purchases a paper ticket and an e-ticket is available, he/she will not be reimbursed for fees associated with paper tickets: the Department will not continue to incur this cost. Employees requesting paper tickets will need to provide a personal form of payment to the travel management service provider at the time of reservation.

**C301-10.105** The employee will not be reimbursed for overweight baggage unless Government supplies/materials/equipment are being transported and excess baggage has been authorized.

**C301-10.106** The best practice for reducing transaction fees is to minimize flight changes. Additional transaction fees are not charged unless a ticket is reissued and most airlines require reissuance of the ticket even if the change is minor. The individual airline policy determines whether or not the issuance of a new ticket is required. The employee will be advised, at the time of the change, if a new ticket is required and if an additional transaction fee will apply.

**C301-10.107** The employee may use frequent flyer miles for personal use or to upgrade the Government coach fare. However, choosing not to use the contract carrier because of frequent flyer clubs is a violation of the city-pair contract, unless one of the exception requirements listed in the FTR 301-10.107 applies and your travel order shows approval to use a non-contract fare. Any expenses/fees involved with frequent flyer clubs/miles will be the responsibility of the traveler, not the Department.

#### **C301-10.110 Use of Contract City-Pair Fares**

**C301-10.111** The Department is a mandatory user of the GSA city-pair contract. Travelers on official business are required to use the contract carrier when one is available, unless a specific exception applies. If the traveler does not use a city-pair contract airline, and one is available, the reimbursement will be limited to the price of the ticket as offered by the city-pair airline carrier. The five conditions for not using a contract city-pair fare are listed in the Federal Travel Regulation (301-10.107).

**C301-10.112** Uniformed members of NOAA Corps and Foreign Service Officers are exempt from using contract city-pair carriers; however, they are encouraged to use them.

**C301-10.113** If the employee normally travels on a blanket travel order, an approved authorization and justification for the use of a non-contract carrier must be submitted in a written memorandum prior to travel. If emergency circumstances prevent advance authorization, the authorization and justification for the use of a non-contract carrier must be stated on, or attached to, the travel voucher.

**C301-10.114** If the traveler lives within commuting distance of two airports that have city-pair contract airline service, the traveler should use the airport that will be most advantageous to the government in terms of most expediency and cost effectiveness. Although rare, exceptions to using the lowest cost airport in a multiple airport area are:

- a. Time constraints;
- b. Weather;
- c. Cost, including loss of productive time; and,
- d. Safety.

**C301-10.115** The Department does not encourage the use of non-refundable fares. However, if one of the contract city-pair fare exceptions applies, and the approving official authorizes use of a non-refundable fare in advance, the traveler may use a non-refundable fare. Costs or penalties incurred from unauthorized use of non-contract service(s) are borne by the traveler. In the event of changed plans, cancellations and other penalties, the cost will be reimbursed provided that the cancellation or change was made for the convenience of the Government, or was necessitated by circumstances of an emergency Nature affecting the traveler. The approving official must approve these costs.

**C301-10.116** Justification for use of non-refundable fares must be stated on, or attached to, the travel authorization.

**C301-10.117** If, for personal preference, the non-refundable ticket is not used; the traveler is responsible for all costs associated with the ticket. If, for official reasons, the non-refundable ticket is not used, the Government is responsible for all costs associated with the ticket.

### **C301-10.120 Premium Class Travel**

**C301-10.121** The CFO/ASA must authorize and approve premium-class air and train accommodations for all Office of the Secretary employees, Secretarial Officers, and Heads of Operating Units that report directly to the Secretary.

**C301-10.122** Secretarial Officers have delegated authority to authorize and approve premium-class air and train accommodations for their employees and other individuals traveling on behalf of the Department. This authority may be redelegated. The redelegation must be at a level high enough to ensure adequate consideration and review of the circumstances necessitating premium-class air and train accommodations.

**C301-10.123** “Minimum Standards for Authorization and Approval of Premium-Class Air Accommodations” (see Appendix A) addresses the function delegated by a memorandum from the then Acting CFO/ASA: Redelegation of the authorization and approval for the use of premium-class air accommodations will:

- a. Ensure that no first-class travel is authorized, paid for, or reimbursed to Department employees, including non-Government persons whose travel costs are being paid by the Department, except in the following circumstances:
  1. The traveler has a disability or is otherwise physically impaired such that other accommodations cannot be used, and this condition is substantiated in writing by competent medical authority and recertified every two years;
  2. No other commercial service is reasonably available; i.e., able to meet the traveler’s departure and/or arrival requirement within a 24 hour period, unless the traveler demonstrates that extraordinary circumstances require a shorter period to fulfill effectively the agency requirement; or,
  3. Exceptional security circumstances require such travel, such as: (1) travel by couriers or control officers accompanying controlled pouches or packages and a lower premium class are not available, or (2) travel by agents in charge of protective details accompanying first-class travelers.
- b. Ensure that no first-class travel is authorized or approved through the redemption of frequent flyer benefits or through the acceptance of first-class accommodations from a non-Federal source (gift or bequest).
- c. Ensure that the use of business-class air accommodations are authorized and approved only under the following circumstances:

1. Space is not available in coach-class or equivalent accommodations on any scheduled flight in time to accomplish the purpose of the official travel, which is so urgent that it cannot be postponed;
  2. Business-class accommodations are necessary because the employee is disabled or is otherwise physically impaired such that other accommodations cannot be used, and this condition is substantiated in writing by competent medical authority and recertified every two years;
  3. Business-class accommodations are required because exceptional circumstances make their use essential to the successful performance of the bureau's mission;
  4. Less-than-business-class accommodations on foreign carriers do not provide adequate sanitation or health standards;
  5. The use of business-class accommodations would result in an overall savings to the Government based on economic considerations; or,
  6. Business-class accommodations are obtained through the redemption of frequent flyer benefits.
- d. Maintain internal performance measures reflective of the approval of premium-class air accommodations, including but not limited to documentation, signed by an appropriate official. Bureaus shall maintain reports of approvals of all first-class travel paid with Government funds in order to respond to requests received from the General Services Administration. These reports will include the name of each person for whom first-class travel was paid, the purpose of the travel, the basis on which first-class travel was justified, the cost of the first-class travel, and the cost of the alternative coach level of service.

**C301-10.124** Travel Orders with premium-class travel requests must show actual travel dates and match exact travel dates on form CD-334 (or bureau approved form). If the traveler has a change after forms are prepared, the traveler may "ink" the changed dates and obtain the approving official's initials of the change on the Travel Order; however, a new CD-334 (or bureau approved form) must be completed and signed showing corrected actual dates of travel. The travel order and premium-class travel request dates must match the itinerary.

**C301-10.125** Form CD-334, "Request for Approval of Extra Fare Air Accommodations," is used to authorize premium-class air and train accommodations. Whenever premium-class travel is authorized, a copy of Form CD-334 and a copy of the travel order must be submitted to a central servicing organization within each bureau for reporting purposes. Form CD-334 is not required when the upgrade is paid for from either the employee's personal funds or through the use of frequent flyer benefits.

### **C301-10.160 Train**

**C301-10.161** If the traveler prefers to use the train as a mode of travel for personal preference, the traveler's reimbursement will be limited to the lesser of the actual expenses or the constructive travel cost of traveling by air using the lowest available city-pair airline fare. Work hours used in excess of those required for travel by air, will most likely require leave, and must be approved on the employee's travel order.

**C301-10.162** If the traveler uses other than coach-class train accommodations without prior approval, the reimbursement will be limited to the cost of traveling by coach-class train.

### **C301-10.220 Government Automobiles**

**C301-10.221** each bureau or operating unit, with control over Government automobiles, is responsible for issuing the governing policies necessary to ensure proper care and use of Government automobiles for use on official travel.

### **C301-10.300 Privately Owned Vehicle (POV) See 301-10 Subpart D – Privately Owned Vehicle (POV) for official travel.**

**C301-10.301** If the traveler has approval to use a POV to travel to an alternate work site near the employees' duty station, the employee will be reimbursed the increased cost incurred, not to exceed the mileage allowance for the additional miles driven, plus the increased tolls and parking fees incurred. For example, if the employee duty station is 10 miles from the employee's home, and he/she must travel to an alternate worksite 15 miles from home, the traveler would only be reimbursed for 5 miles (15 - 10 = 5).

**C301-10.302** The employee cannot be required to use a POV to perform official travel.

**C301-10.303** If someone drives the employee to and/or from the common carrier terminal in a POV, the employee will be reimbursed round trip mileage, to and/or from the employee residence to and/or from the airport, and parking, to the extent it does not exceed the cost of a taxicab fare and tip.

### **C301-10.450 Rental Cars**

**C301-10.451** Rental cars should be used only when it is more cost effective than other forms of local transportation or when the rental car is required to perform the official duties. The employee should not use a rental car unless the cost of commuting by taxi would exceed the cost of the rental car. Automobile rentals should be limited to situations where other means of transportation are not practical, economical or available, and in emergency situations. Whenever practical, the most economical means of transportation to and from hotels and terminals should be used. Many hotels provide complimentary shuttle service to and from airports.

**C301-10.452** The Department does not require the employee to use any one particular rental car company; however, the selection must be a company that is under agreement with DOD and should be the lowest cost available when all factors are considered (i.e., location of the pick up and drop off points and availability of compact size rental rates). The companies covered by the agreement must provide current model cars and insurance as part of the rental fee. In addition, the companies may not charge for authorizing additional government drivers. Only a Government employee performing official travel and holding a current travel order authorizing a rental car may operate the rental car. A copy of the current rental car agreement is located at: <http://www.sddc.army.mil/sddc/Content/Pub/656/rentalcaragreement.pdf>.

**C301-10.453** The employee is authorized to rent a compact-sized car, unless transporting a large amount of Government property that requires a larger car, or is providing transportation for more than two additional employees who are also on official travel.

**C301-10.454** The employee may accept a free upgrade to a larger car or use a free coupon, or other promotion benefit to upgrade.

**C301-10.455** If the traveler has an accident while using the rental car on official business, the traveler should notify the police and have an accident report prepared. A copy of the accident (police) report must be provided to the rental car company. The rental car company cannot bill the employee for the damages incurred to a rental car while it is being used for official business. The rental car company must bill the Department or the employee's bureau for any damages for which they believe the employee is responsible. If an investigation reveals the damage was incurred through negligence or improper use of the vehicle, the employee's bureau will be responsible for collecting the cost of damages from the employee. If a rental car company tries to bill the employee directly or requests the name of the employee's personal insurance company, the employee should notify the Travel Management Services (TMS) provider that arranged the rental and the national office of the rental car company. The employee should not provide personal insurance policy information.

**C301-10.456** If the employee is attending a conference at or in the immediate vicinity of the hotel, a rental car is only authorized when the cost of commuting by taxi would exceed the cost of the rental car for the period, the employee has excess Government equipment/baggage needed at the conference, the employee has a disability or other medical need (documented), or there are multiple Department attendees, and renting a vehicle would be a cost savings to the Department.

**C301-10.457** When renting a vehicle, use the "prudent traveler" approach for refueling:

- a. Long distance travel: Some rental car companies offer gasoline at or below the market rate when the traveler pre-pays for a tank. If the employee intends to travel a long distance, he/she should inquire about pre-paying for gasoline. If the employee does not plan to use a full tank, prepayment would not be cost effective.
- b. Short distance travel: Employee should fill the tank prior to returning the vehicle. Generally, gasoline charges are more costly at the car rental company than at a local gasoline station.

Time constraints may occasionally make it impossible to fill up before returning the car; however, this practice should be the exception rather than the rule.

**C301-10.458** The employee may purchase accident insurance for a rental vehicle that is used for official business in a foreign country, if the insurance is deemed necessary or required by the laws of that country.

**C301-11 Per Diem Expenses See Appendix A for links to Per Diem Rates.**

## **C301-11.1 General Rules**

**C301-11.2** The employee will not receive per diem if the employee's temporary duty station is within 50 miles of the employee's permanent duty station or residence, unless the travel conditions are so severe that returning to his/her residence would endanger the employee's health or safety or if the employee is attending a conference. If the employee's travel involves severe conditions or the employee is attending training or a conference, the employee's approving official may authorize per diem for official duty in excess of 12 hours and is at least 30 miles from both the residence and permanent duty station. Per Diem will not be paid for temporary duty performed, training or conference attendance within 30 miles of his/her permanent duty station or residence.

**C301-11.3** To determine whether the employee has traveled 12 hours or more, the clock starts when the employee departs his/her residence or permanent duty station, whichever is later. If the employee goes to his/her permanent duty station prior to starting a temporary duty trip, the trip time will not start until the employee departs the permanent duty station. The employee must show the starting and ending times for all travel of less than 24 hours.

**C301-11.4** If the employee is on temporary duty that extends over a weekend; the employee may go to another location for the non-duty hours and still be paid per diem, not to exceed the amount the employee would have received at the employee's temporary duty location.

**C301-11.5** If the employee is at a temporary duty location and chooses to travel on non-workdays to a location other than the employee's official station or residence, entitlement to per diem or actual subsistence continues. However, the employee is not entitled to transportation costs in lieu of claiming per diem or actual subsistence.

**C301-11.6** The employee must be receiving per diem on the day preceding and the day following a non-workday to receive per diem.

**C301-11.7** Per Diem and other travel expenses will be discontinued for any day in which an employee's leave status exceeds four (4) or more hours.

**C301-11.8** If the employee's temporary duty location becomes the employee's permanent duty location, the per diem entitlement and rental car authorization terminate at midnight on the day the employee is notified that the temporary duty location has become his/her new permanent duty station; unless, the employee is expected to return to the old duty station and perform substantial work prior to the official start of the transfer.

**C301-11.9** When meals are included in registration fees, the employee's per diem rate will be adjusted to reflect pre-payment. (See: [www.gsa.gov/mie](http://www.gsa.gov/mie))

**C301-11.10** The employee will not be reimbursed per diem expenses when the employee accelerates departure from the official duty station or delays departure from the temporary duty location by two or more days for the sole purpose of performing travel during regularly scheduled working hours. For instance, an employee who is administratively scheduled to

perform temporary duty on Monday may not be paid per diem for two consecutive non-workdays when he/she departs on Friday in order to avoid traveling on the weekend.

**C301-11.11** If, for reasons beyond the employee's control, he/she must obtain lodging in an adjacent locality where the prescribed per diem rate is higher than the rate prescribed for the temporary duty location, the employee must justify and reflect such justification on the travel order.

**C301-11.12** Gratuities or tips to taxi drivers and others providing necessary services (not included as a part of the incidental allowance) to the traveler, will be limited to 15 percent of the basic charge(s).

### **C301-11.200 Reduced Per Diem: Extended Travel/Training Assignments**

**C301-11.201** if the employee's travel assignment is 30 days or more, the per diem rate will be reduced to 55 percent of the full per diem rate (lodging plus M&IE) specified in the FTR for the location, unless a different rate can be fully justified. Under unusual situations, the reduced rate may be increased or decreased depending upon the conditions and necessary costs that must be incurred by the traveler. The reduced rate should be established based on the conditions that exist when the travel is performed; thus, if a traveler is forced to incur unusual lodging and/or meal costs due to the assignment, the rate should be based on cost data provided. The established rate must be shown on the travel order. A flat per diem rate **may not** be established to provide:

- a. A lodging allowance for staying with friends and/or relatives, or for lodging at his/her abode (home);
- b. A full M&IE allowance because lodging is obtained with friends or relatives (a reduction should be made to the locality M&IE allowance);
- c. A payment that will, based on the data available, knowingly allow the employee to receive more than the full M&IE allowance;
- d. The full locality per diem rate; or,
- e. A payment sufficient to cover periods where per diem is lost due to annual leave or expenses of family members.

**C301-11.202** The reduced per diem rate is applicable from the first day of the assignment through the last day of the assignment. Changes to the flat per diem rate should be based on cost data, and the employee must be notified and agree with the change prior to the effective date of the change.

**C301-11.203** When a temporary duty assignment that was expected to last less than 30 days is determined to require temporary duty in excess of 30 days, a flat rate should be established for the remaining days of the assignment.

**C301-11.204** When an employee on extended temporary duty is required to go to another temporary duty location for a short period and return to the former location, dual lodging may be authorized to defray the lodging expenses that may be incurred at both locations. Receipts are required for dual lodging claims.

**C301-11.205** The employee may be authorized to return to his/her official duty station at intervals of not less than two weeks, provided that the temporary duty assignment will continue for at least one more week. Approval authority for periodic weekend return must be at a level high enough to ensure adequate consideration and review of the circumstances necessitating the return. Each bureau is responsible for preparing the appropriate cost analysis to justify such returns based on factors that may be unique to the bureau.

### **C301-11.300 Actual Expenses**

**C301-11.301** Officials delegated to approve travel are also authorized to approve travel on an actual subsistence expense basis.

**C301-11.302** If the employee has approval for actual lodging expenses, the maximum allowable lodging expense is determined by multiplying the total locality per diem rate (lodging and M&IE) by 3, and subtracting the M&IE rate from the total. Example: Lodging rate \$70, M&IE \$49, Total locality rate \$119. Maximum actual lodging that can be approved or paid is  $(3 \times \$119) - \$49 = \$308$ .

**C301-11.303** If the employee is authorized actual lodging and meal expenses, the employee's per diem will be reduced for the first and last day of travel, because the maximum per diem for these days are less. The maximum allowable for actual expenses will be less, since actual expenses are based on maximum allowable per diem.

**C301-11.304** The travel order must reflect the maximum allowance per calendar day for actual expenses, e.g., "actual subsistence expenses not to exceed \$0.00 per day."

**C301-11.305** Actual expenses cannot be authorized on limited open travel orders. However, in emergency situations, actual expenses on a limited open travel order must be post-approved in the remarks section on the travel voucher.

**C301-11.306** If the employee requests post-approval, he/she must include a statement on his/her travel voucher explaining the circumstances for requesting actual subsistence.

### **C301-12 Miscellaneous Expenses**

#### **C301-12.100 Baggage**

**C301-12.101** To claim reimbursement for lost or damaged baggage when the employee has not been compensated by the carrier, a claim may be filed under 31 U.S.C. 3721, The Military Personnel and Civilian Employees Claims Act of 1964, Public Law 88-558, using the Form CD-224, Employee Claim for Loss of or Damage to Personal Property.

The CD-224, a copy of the travel order, correspondence with the carrier, and the amount paid by the carrier will be submitted to the appropriate servicing claims office for payment. See DAO 203-17 for additional information on personal property claims.

## **C301-12.200 Telephone Calls**

**C301-12.201** The employee is expected to use Government telephones, Federal Calling Cards or pre-paid calling cards for long-distance calls while on official travel. The employee may pay for the charges with his/her Government travel charge card or use cash when other options are unavailable or unacceptable. An explanation must be included with the travel voucher for reimbursement claims for all cash payments. The explanation must state that the use of other methods were attempted and determined to be unacceptable or unavailable. The employee must exercise the same care in incurring expenses that a prudent person would exercise if calling at personal expense.

**C301-12.202** The employee may make a brief daily personal call home while performing official travel that requires an overnight stay. The call must be made using the least-cost-to-the-government method available. The employee may be reimbursed on a one-time-only basis for calls made home and charged to the hotel room. This reimbursement will be limited to not more than \$5.00 per day for each day of domestic travel, and for foreign travel a reasonable daily amount based on actual location. The reimbursement voucher must contain an explanation of why a Federal Calling Card or a prepaid calling card was not used. Failure to obtain a Federal Calling Card or prepaid calling card will not be justification for consideration of future claims for reimbursement of personal telephone calls.

**C301-12.203** There are no limits on the number of official phone calls the employee can make while traveling; however, only those phone calls necessary to conduct official business should be made.

**C301-12.204** Telephone calls are considered official when the employee calls because of delays due to official business or transportation; the employee and/or spouse are traveling for two or more nights at the new duty station on an approved house hunting trip and the employee calls the old duty station; the employee travels for two or more nights from the old duty station to the new duty station; or, the employee makes a brief call to immediate family members that remain at the old duty station.

**NOTE:** Title 5: Administrative Personnel 630.1202 states: “Spouse means an individual who is a husband or wife pursuant to a marriage that is a legal union between one man and one woman, including common law marriage between one man and one woman in States where it is recognized.”

**C301-12.205** When performing official Government travel, employees are expected to use the most practical and cost effective method for making business calls and/or personal calls home. (See aforementioned methods.) Duration, frequency and cost must be considered in determining allowable reimbursement regardless of the method used to make the call. Calls made using wireless services may be reimbursed if they increase the overall cost of the traveler's normal wireless service charges and when they are authorized by the approving official as cost effective to the Government.

## **C301-12.500 Registration Fees**

**C301-12.501** Employees should not use the travel charge card to pay for registration fees for temporary duty. Under extremely unusual circumstances, the card may be used with prior approval from the employee's approving official. Circumstances include: cash is required to procure the registration fee, or registration fee was not paid in advance for an unforeseen reason, or other reasons beyond the employee's control. The fee must be authorized on the travel order with a proper justification explaining why the travel charge card was used. Reimbursement is claimed as a miscellaneous expense on the travel voucher.

## **C301-14 Local Travel**

**C301-14.1** Local Travel is travel that is performed for official purposes in and around the employee's duty station and does not entitle the employee to per diem or other subsistence allowances. Policies for travel that create an entitlement to per diem or subsistence reimbursement are found under temporary duty allowances.

**C301-14.2** The place where the majority of the employee's duties are performed and where the greatest part of the employee's time is spent in the "actual work site" or "official duty station." This location is usually, but not always, designated on the employee's SF-50.

**C301-14.3** If the employee performs temporary duty (TDY) at or near the employee's permanent duty station and/or residence, the employee will not receive per diem if the temporary duty is within 50 miles of the employee's duty station or residence. If the travel involves severe conditions or attendance at training or a conference, the approving official designated by the employee's bureau, may authorize per diem for duty in excess of 12 hours and is at least 30 miles from both the residence and permanent duty station. Per Diem will not be paid for TDY performed training or conference attendance within 30 miles of the employee's permanent duty station or residence.

**C301-14.4** The employee must reach his/her actual work site and return to his/her residence at his/her own expense. If the employee performs official local travel during the regular work day, only the LOCAL travel costs exceeding the normal daily commuting costs will be reimbursed. The reimbursable amount is determined by subtracting the employee's normal daily commuting cost (e.g. metro fare, bus fare, car pool expenses) from the employee's total travel costs for the day. Total travel costs may include parking fees for the employee's POV at his/her actual work site should a determination be made that use of the employee's POV is the most cost effective and advantageous means of conducting official business; however, an employee will not be reimbursed mileage expenses for home to work and work to home travel in the event he or she uses a POV. If an employee commutes to work via POV regularly, he/she will not be reimbursed for parking at his/her actual work site, but may still be reimbursed for other costs associated with official local travel while away from his/her actual work site. Before using his/her POV, the employee should ensure that a Government vehicle is not available. Alternatively, he/she should use a courier service or taxi if it is more cost effective for the Government. If an employee normally commutes using transportation such as a van pool, and must pay regardless of whether he/she rides, the employee is not required to deduct this expense from the total travel costs for the day and may be fully reimbursed for his/her travel expenses.

**C301-14.5** The employee will be reimbursed if he/she uses a personally owned vehicle (POV) for approved official duties in and around the employee's duty station, providing he/she has approval to use a POV in writing by his/her approving official. The employee will be reimbursed for the miles driven, tolls, and parking fees incurred while away from the office. The mileage allowance received is intended to cover the average cost of operating a POV.

**C301-14.6** The employee will not be reimbursed for gasoline if using a POV for official business; instead, the employee will receive a mileage allowance which is designed to include reimbursement for gasoline.

**C301-14.7** If the employee rides with a co-worker for official business in and around the duty station, a local travel allowance will not be received. Only the primary operator may be reimbursed.

**C301-14.8** If the employee has approval to use a POV to travel to an alternate work site near the duty station, reimbursement will be limited to the increased cost incurred, not to exceed the mileage allowance for the additional miles driven plus the increased tolls and parking fees incurred.

**C301-14.9** Local travel for training is reimbursed in the same manner as other approved local travel, providing reimbursement for training travel has been authorized and approved. The Government Employees Training Act (5 U.S.C. 4101-4118) does not require reimbursement of all training expenses; thus, reimbursement will be governed by the employee training agreement. The reimbursement for training travel may not be authorized in an amount greater than that for local travel to perform official duties.

**C301-14.10** The employee will not be reimbursed for fines pertaining to parking or traffic violations while performing approved local travel. Fines are not reimbursable.

**C301-14.11** The employee cannot be required to use a POV to perform official duties.

**C301-14.12** The employee may be reimbursed for mileage from his/her residence to the office or a designated location to pick up a government vehicle to be used for travel not requiring overnight lodging, if the travel to the designated location exceeds the normal commuting cost to the office. When the cost exceeds the normal commuting cost, reimbursement will be limited to the increased cost incurred, not to exceed the mileage allowance for the miles driven, plus increased tolls and parking fees incurred.

**C301-14.13** DOC will not reimburse employees for additional insurance coverage for use of a POV for performing official duties in the local area. The mileage reimbursement takes into consideration gasoline, insurance, and other operating costs.

**C301-14.14** If the employee's office/duty station is relocated, the employee may not be reimbursed for the additional mileage or travel costs from his/her residence to the new

office/duty station. The cost of commuting from the employee residence to the duty station is a personal responsibility.

**C301-14.15** If the employee is authorized to drive a POV to a temporary duty station, local mileage will not be paid for the travel from his/her place of lodging to the temporary duty station. Transportation costs between place of lodging and places where meals are obtained are part of the incidental expenses included in the per diem allowance.

**C301-14.16** If the employee is assigned a Government vehicle or has agreed to use a Government vehicle, and subsequently, for personal reasons, elects to use a POV for local travel, the mileage rate received is limited to the cost that would have been incurred to use the Government automobile, fixed costs excluded.

**C301-14.17** The employee cannot be required to provide transportation for, or accept the responsibility of transporting, other employees in a POV.

**C301-14.18** The employee cannot be required to ride with another employee in his/her POV.

**C301-14.19** The employee can be required to ride in a Government vehicle with other employees. If, for personal preference, the employee chooses not to ride in a Government vehicle that is available, and is transporting other employees, and elects to use a POV, the mileage rate received is limited to the cost that would have been incurred for use of a Government automobile, fixed costs excluded.

**C301-14.20** Before an employee drives a Government vehicle to his/her residence and keeps it overnight for an official requirement the next day; he/she must consult the fleet management official for information on the proper use of a Government vehicle. The use and control of Government vehicles are subject to the fleet management regulations and not the FTR.

**C301-14.21** Mileage reimbursement will not be authorized for travel between the employee's residence and actual work site for overtime on regular and non-regular work days; or, when the employee is called back from his/her residence for overtime on regular work days.

**C301-14.22** Taxi fares, not mileage costs, may be reimbursed in limited circumstances for travel incident to work that has been ordered outside of normal working hours and after dark. However, the employee must have received notification of unscheduled overtime after reporting to duty. When emergency overtime is required, taxi fares may be authorized only when the use of public transportation would subject the employee to substantial personal hazard or safety; and, there is no other means of transportation.

**C301-14.23** Mileage claims for local travel, within a 50-mile radius of the employee's residence or official duty station, should be submitted on form SF-1164 (or bureau equivalent). This travel should be performed within one calendar day and should not involve an overnight stopover or a per diem claim.

**C301-14.24** If the employee performs official local travel on a non-work day to an alternate work site, total travel costs will be reimbursed on a mileage basis without any deductions for regular commuting costs.

## **C301-50 Arranging for Travel Services**

**C301-50.1** It is mandatory to use the Travel Management Center for all official travel. The Department currently has a contract with ADTRAV to provide Travel Management Services. This service is provided via walk-in, telephone, fax, or e-mail. Currently, there are no on-line services available.

**C301-50.2** The Department awarded a Department-wide E-Gov Travel (eTS) task order to Electronic Data Systems (EDS) Corporation to use FedTraveler.com. This end-to-end solution is not currently available; however, when it becomes available, all employees will be required to use this service to arrange all travel reservations.

**C301-50.3** When the Department begins using eTS; there are a few exceptions for **not** using the EDS on-line booking tool, Quality Agent:

- a. Lack of internet access;
- b. Complex, multiple leg domestic or international travel (a simple Europe trip is not complex);
- c. Causes an unreasonable burden on mission accomplishment(s) (e.g., emergency travel-- and the tool is not accessible, complicated invitational travel, necessity of reasonable accommodations or special needs for persons with disabilities);
- d. Permanent Change of Station;
- e. Contract employees (not eligible for contract city-pairs unless the air carrier is informed and agrees in writing);
- f. Specific lodging (Pre-Arranged, Conference, Overseas, Unplanned Travel, Establishments not covered by the Hotel and Motel Fire Safety Act); and,
- g. Unplanned travel.

**C301-50-4** eTS is a reporting tool and a cost savings initiative. If an employee refuses to use eTS, his/her supervisor will contact the bureau's/operating unit's servicing human resources office for a determination of the appropriate disciplinary action. Penalties vary depending on the circumstances, but may include written reprimand, suspension, and removal.

## **C301-51 Paying Travel Expenses**

### **C301-51.1 Waiver from Using the Government-Sponsored Travel Charge Card**

**C301-51.2** The head of the employee's bureau or operating unit will forward all requests for exemptions to the CFO/ASA for approval.

### **C301-51.100 Paying for Common Carrier Transportation**

**C301-51.101** The employee is required to use the centrally-billed travel account to pay for common carrier transportation. If the employee receives an exemption from using the travel charge card, personal funds or a travel advance (unless the employee's card has been cancelled)

may be used for remaining travel expenses.

### **C301-51.200 Receiving Travel Advances**

**C301-51.201** See Cash Management Policies and Procedures Handbook, Chapter 5. Cash Advances, Section 5.0 Advances to Employees at:

<http://www.osec.doc.gov/ofm/cash/cover.htm>

**C301-51.202** The maximum advance for domestic travel is \$5,000 and does not represent an entitlement. Managers should allow an advance amount taking into consideration a reasonable estimate of the travel cost.

**C301-51.203** The maximum advance for foreign and relocation travel is \$7,500. This should be more than sufficient to cover 45-days of current expenses. Managers should allow an advance amount taking into consideration a reasonable estimate of the travel cost.

**C301-51.204** Foreign expenses for an extended trip should be vouchered at least once every 30 days. Travelers on extended overseas travel should arrange to send their vouchers to their home offices for processing at their servicing payment office. This will ensure that the employee's travel history is complete and outstanding travel advance balances are correct.

**C301-51.205** Advances for relocation expenses should be requested in stages and as needed (e.g., house hunting, temporary quarters, household contents transportation). Vouchers should be submitted in a timely manner for each stage.

**C301-51.206** If an employee loses his/her Travel Charge Card privileges (through either suspension or cancellation) due to account delinquency or misuse, the employee will promptly resolve any outstanding balance on the Travel Charge Card, and use personal funds to finance all travel expenses (except transportation tickets) on official travel until Travel Charge Card privileges are restored. A convenience check or electronic funds transfer will not be authorized.

### **C301-52 Claiming Reimbursement**

#### **C301-52.100 Timely Reimbursement of Travel Expenses to Employees**

**C301-52.101** A proper voucher is one that is substantially complete in every material respect (documentation and receipts) and has been signed and dated by the traveler. The trip must have been authorized and performed, the appropriate receipts/ticket stubs and other required documentation are accurate; and, the traveler has signed and dated the travel voucher certifying to its correctness. In addition, the voucher must be approved by the appropriate authorizing official.

#### **C301-53 Using Promotional Materials and Frequent Traveler Programs**

**C301-53.1** Approval by the employee's approving official is not necessary if an upgrade to premium-class for official Government travel is made by using earned frequent flyer miles.

### **C301-54 Collection of Undisputed Delinquent Amounts Owed to the Contractor Issuing the Individually-Billed Travel Charge Card**

**C301-54.1** The maximum amount that may be deducted from the employee's disposable pay, as set forth in Public Law 105-264, 112 Stat. 2350, October 19, 1998, is 15 percent per pay period, unless the employee consents in writing to a greater deduction amount.

### **C301-73 Travel Programs See FTR 301-73.**

### **C301-75 Pre-employment Interview Travel**

**C301-75.1** Pre-employment interview travel costs will only be paid to help recruit highly-qualified individuals for hard-to-fill positions.

**C301-75.2** Bureau officials should contact their servicing human resources office for a determination as to which applicants qualify for the payment of pre-employment interview travel and transportation expenses.

**C301-75.3** Once determined that an individual qualifies for pre-employment interview travel, the hiring official determines what expenses will be paid for each individual.

### **C301-80 Invitational Travelers**

**C301-80.1** Invitational travelers, experts or consultants are authorized to travel as DOC employees. Invitational travelers are required to procure common carrier transportation through the Department's servicing Travel Management Services (TMS) provider.

**C301-80.2** Travel costs for persons, other than Federal employees, may be approved only by designated bureau officials. They must be conferring on official business or performing a direct service to the Government.

**C301-80.3** When travel for any non-Federal employee is authorized, a note will be entered on the travel order indicating that it is an "Invitational Travel Order."

**C301-80.4** Authorizing officials, before signing an invitational travel order, should confirm that steps are being taken to prevent the invitational traveler's unauthorized purchase of transportation costs with personal funds.

**C301-80.5** Travel advances are discouraged for non-Federal employees; however, in rare instances may be authorized. The authorizing official must ensure that the amount advanced is reasonable under the circumstances, and that a travel voucher and/or personal reimbursement check is submitted in a timely manner.

### **C301-81 Group Travel**

**C301-81.1** Requests for approval of groups of employees from the same bureau, to include non-

Government persons (invitational travelers) whose travel expenses are being paid for by the Department, traveling to the same location or event must be submitted to and approved by the appropriate designated official within the sponsoring bureau, as follows:

- a. Domestic group travel: Memoranda of request for groups of fifteen or more employees;
- b. Foreign and non-foreign group travel: Memoranda of request for groups of eight or more employees.

**C301-81.2** The authority to approve group travel requests may be redelegated in writing to a level that ensures proper review and control.

**C301-81.3** To authorize group travel, bureaus/operating units must maintain documentation, signed by an appropriate designated official that, demonstrates compliance with the following minimum standards:

- a. Ensure that travel is essential;
- b. Limit attendance to the minimum participants necessary to accomplish the mission;
- c. Consider costs in selecting attendees and meeting locations. Such expenses include travel to and from the site, ground transportation, lodging, meals and incidental costs, registration fees, meeting room rentals, and other related costs, including employees' time away from the official duty station; and,
- d. Contemplate alternatives (i.e. conference calls or delegating field personnel to accomplish the proposed mission).

### **C301-82 Charter Services**

**C301-82.1** The Department strongly discourages use of charter services. However, if the employee's operating unit's mission dictates use of charter services, and has completed a cost comparison, the operating unit must prepare a memorandum for approval. The Office of General Counsel and the CFO/ASA must approve the memorandum. The Travel Management Division is available to assist employees with the process (202-482-1818).

### **C301-83.1 Travel Management Services (TMS)**

**C301-83.1.1** The Department's Travel Management Services (TMS) provider is ADTRAV. The TMS will provide all transportation services to the employee in accordance with the FTR and DOC policies, regarding reservations and ticketing for air, rail, bus, steamship, car and hotel.

**C301-83.1.2** All employees must use ADTRAV to reserve all common carrier, hotel, car, and train reservations. The only exceptions for not using the ADTRAV are for emergency travel, and lodging accommodations for: pre-arranged lodging (such as conferences), overseas lodging, lodging for unplanned travel, lodging at establishments not covered by the Hotel and Motel Fire Safety Act.

**C301-83.1.3** The TMS will arrange car rental reservations, with the DOD agreement car rental company, offering the lowest flat rate for all Government employees.

**C301-83.1.4** Ticket delivery and prepaid tickets will be processed as required. As a last resort, the TMS agent will advise that tickets must be picked up at the airport. Two forms of ID will be required at the airport, and a prepaid service fee may apply.

**C301-83.1.5** When the employee has a service problem or complaint, please contact the Travel Management Division at 202-482-1818 or e-mail at [etravel@doc.gov](mailto:etravel@doc.gov). The Travel Management Division can also assist employees with DOC travel policy and procedures.

**C301-83.1.6** Changes to a planned itinerary should be made directly with the TMS to comply with Government rules and regulations, and avoid unnecessary charges for guaranteed hotel reservations and airline cancellation fees.

**C301-83.1.7** If the employee's plans change or a flight is missed, call the TMS immediately to cancel the reservations, including hotels and rental cars.

**C301-83.1.8** Unused tickets, or any portion thereof, must be turned in to the TMS for a refund.

**C301-83.1.9** A lost ticket will be refunded within six months, if it has not been used. The airline will refund the unused value minus a processing fee.

**C301-83.1.10** The employee will receive a detailed travel itinerary with each reservation. The itinerary will include travel arrangements including: air, car, hotel reservations, dates, costs and confirmation numbers, where applicable. The itinerary contains other useful information such as a TMS toll-free number for assistance while on travel.

**C301-83.1.11** When emergency reservations or changes are needed, outside of normal working hours, the employee may call the 24-hour TMS reservations number, 1-800-827-7777. If calling a toll free number is not an option, call collect at 210-824-8455.

**C301-83.1.12** Employees must use their official passports for all official travel. Personal passports cannot be used for official travel, however, can be used for applying for official/diplomatic passports. All passports must be kept in a secure location or with the Passport/Visa agent at the TMS office.

### **C301-83.100 E-Gov Travel (eTS)**

**C301-83.100.1** The Department awarded a Department wide eTS task order to Electronic Data Systems Corporation (EDS) in December 2004, and in November 2006, exercised the option for another 2-year base period. Once eTS is implemented, all employees will be expected to use eTS to prepare travel authorizations, arrange travel, and complete vouchers.

**C301-83.100.2** Travel management services include both online and agent-assisted travel reservations. Although the Department will strongly recommend use of the On-line Booking Engine (OBE), there will be few exceptions that will require travel agent assistance, such as complex foreign travel, and multiple-leg domestic trips.

**C301-83.100.3** Travel Authorization and Vouchering System (TAVS) is the eTS function that automates the process for travel authorization (order) and vouchering. The travel authorization for temporary duty (TDY) travel will include a detailed itinerary and pricing information, and will calculate estimated, authorized per Diem. Users will create and route vouchers electronically, and travelers and Bureaus will be reimbursed through direct payments.

### **C301-84 Travel in Conjunction with Leave**

**C301-84.1** If an employee chooses to use annual leave during a period of official travel, the leave must be approved, and the signed travel order should reflect the places and dates of planned leave. If leave was taken without authorization on the travel order, the travel voucher must be approved by the official who signed the travel order. Employees are not authorized to use the Government contract city-pair fares for personal travel use.

**C301-84.2** If the employee elects to combine personal travel with official travel, please inform the travel management services (TMS) provider travel agent about the official trip first. TMSs are required, by contract, to issue a ticket charged to the Government that reflects only the travel authorized on the order. The official ticket must abide by all contract carrier rules and must use Government fares. Once the official itinerary is established, a ticket will be issued and charged to the centrally-billed account. The personal travel may be added by exchanging the official ticket in accordance with the applicable official travel and airline rules.

**C301-84.3** Most official travel will not include the use of penalty fares; however almost all of the lowest fares for non-official travel involve penalties. This is a very important factor and the employee must be advised of the penalties and risk(s) involved. If for any reason the travel is cancelled, the employee will be responsible for reimbursing the Government for the fare.

**C301-84.4** Airlines only allow the use of Government fares on the official route stated on the travel orders. Employees are never allowed to use Government fares for personal travel. Travelers are advised that in a limited number of instances, non-contract carriers may offer restricted or unrestricted coach fares to the general public which is lower than Government contract fares. In such cases, the lower fare(s) may be used based on an application of exception letter c. as stated in the FTR (301-10.107).

**C301-84.5** Most rental car companies extend their Government rates to Government employees on personal travel. However, the collision damage waiver (CDW) is only included on rentals covered on the travel orders. Credit cards offer CDW protection when renting a car. If the employee has a rental car as authorized for official travel on the orders and decides to keep it for personal time as well, this will be handled as two separate rentals by the rental car company. The rental car company may ask for a Government ID.

**C301-84.6** Some hotels extend Government rates to Government employees on personal travel. The hotel may ask for a Government ID.

**C301-84.7** The Government allows federal travelers to use Frequent Flyer award upgrades

earned on personal travel or official trips, as long as it doesn't increase the cost to the Government. In many cases, the upgrades can only be used on a full coach fare, not a Government fare. There are a few airlines that allow upgrades from a Government fare, but it takes more miles and/or a different level of award. Check with the airline for questions regarding the use of Frequent Flyer awards/upgrades.

**C301-84.8** TMSs are required, by contract, to staff offices with agents dedicated to handling official travel. It is mandated that these agents service the official travelers first.

### **C301-85 Mixed and Official Travel**

**C301-85.1** Travel is considered “political” if its primary purpose is to engage in activities directly related to the employee’s position as a leader in his/her political party. Appearing at party functions, fund raising events, and campaigning for specific candidates are prime examples of travel that is considered political.

**C301-85.2** The employee can only travel on political trips on official time and if appointed by the President with the advice and consent of the Senate (PAS). Assumption of an "acting" status does not allow political travel.

**C301-85.3** All the costs of political travel must be paid for by the political sponsor. The political organization may not use Government travel fares, lodging or car rental discounts. The employee is not restricted to coach travel or other limitations, such as per diem. The sponsor should provide travel arrangements in-kind with a pre-paid ticket and hotel room. The employee should claim other expenses from the sponsor. Since political travel is wholly non-official, there is no need for the Department to have records of it, unless it is mixed political-official travel.

**C301-85.4** Only the Secretary may use a Government-owned vehicle for travel to or from a political event, providing it is on regular business days and the political sponsor pays the market value cost in advance. The Secretary may also use an official vehicle for security reasons. Other employees who accompany the Secretary as part of their official responsibilities may also ride in an official vehicle.

**C301-85.5** Non-PAS Federal employees may accompany PAS Federal employees on political travel, but only to carry out official duties of the Department such as security, communications, scheduling, etc. These employees are subject to all Federal requirements for expenses and accounting. During the trip, they may attend a political function; however, they may not participate in political activities while on official time.

**C301-85.6** The primary policy for paying for mixed political-official business on the same trip is that the political sponsor and the United States are each to pay their proper share. Neither should subsidize the other, nor be subsidized by the other’s discounts. There are three ways to handle this travel:

- a. The political sponsor purchases the ticket at commercial rates and provides the accommodations in-kind. Once the trip is over, the other expenses and the Department’s

share can be calculated and reimbursement made. (This is the easiest and recommended method.)

- b. The Department provides its share of the pre-trip allocation of the travel costs for the travel and the sponsor pays for its share. The Department is obligated to pay only the United States' share at the Government rate, while the political sponsor must pay its share at a commercial rate.
- c. The employee pays the cost out of personal funds and then seeks reimbursement from the sponsor and from the Government for their respective shares. The method used in calculating the relative shares is called the "hard-event" formula, which is based on the actual time spent at political and official events. The calculations can be complex and a specialist should assist to ensure correct calculations.

### **C301-87 Amending Travel Orders**

**C301-87.1** When it is necessary to postpone official travel, new orders or amendments will not be required unless the delay in the official travel exceeds 30 days.

**C301-87.2** If premium-class travel is involved, the travel order must match the exact dates on the premium-class travel request.

**C301-87.3** Travel Orders must be amended when the material increase of funds exceeds \$250.

### **C301-88 Award Recipient Travel**

**C301-88.1** Travel and per diem expenses may be provided to a Departmental award recipient to attend a major award ceremony (e.g., Presidential award ceremony, the Department's or Bureau's annual award ceremony, or a prestigious honorary award ceremony sponsored by a non-Federal organization). The travel must be directly to and from the site of the ceremony and must be performed in accordance with the policies contained in the Federal Travel Regulations and this Handbook.

**C301-88.2** Bureaus may provide reimbursement of travel and per diem expenses for one individual of an award recipient's choosing. This person can be a family member or another person whose close association with the employee is the equivalent of a family relationship. At the bureau's discretion, travel reimbursement for more than one individual may be considered in instances where the award winner requires assistance because of a disability or other medical need. One travel order shall be issued that covers both the employee and the additional person(s). The employee will be responsible for submitting a travel voucher to obtain reimbursement for the travel costs of himself/herself and the additional person(s).

**C301-88.3** Acceptance of an honorarium, a payment given to the employee as a consultant for services for which fees are not legally required, in connection with the employee's official duty or position, is prohibited. However, if the employee lectures while on annual leave (not on official travel orders), a reimbursement of expenses may be accepted from a non-Federal source.

### **C302 Relocation Allowances**

## **C302-1 General Rules**

**C302-1.1** Relocation allowances will only be paid to help recruit highly qualified individuals in hard to fill positions, or when the move is advantageous to the Government. Bureau officials should contact their servicing personnel office for a determination of which applicants qualify for the relocation allowances. Once determined that an individual qualifies for relocation allowances, the hiring official determines what expenses will be paid for each individual based on FTR chapter 302 requirements.

## **C302-2 Employees Eligibility Requirements**

**C302-2.1** An approved travel order and a completed and signed service agreement, Form CD-150, Request for Authorization of Travel and Moving Expense” (or bureau-approved form) must be completed before any relocation expenses are incurred.

**C302-2.2** Prior to the employee’s reporting date at the new duty station; the servicing personnel officer is responsible for providing full relocation information concerning the benefits which may be available.

**C302-2.3** Secretarial Officers, Heads of Departmental Offices, and Heads of Operating Units reporting directly to the Secretary can approve and/or redelegate the authority to approve:

- a. An extension of the two-year time limitation for completing residence transactions not to exceed four years;
- b. A waiver of limitations for employees relocating to/from isolated areas when determining that failure to waive the limitation would cause an undue hardship on the employee;
- c. A waiver of debt for relocation expenses when an employee does not remain in Government service for twelve months following the date of appointment;
- d. Relocation expenses when the new official station is less than 50 miles from the old official duty station. (This is rare);
- e. Higher mileage rates Outside the Continental United States (OCONUS) are not to exceed the maximum rate prescribed by the General Services Administration;
- f. An exception to the daily minimum driving distance when there is a delay beyond the employee’s control such as acts of nature, restrictions by Government authorities or other acceptable reasons such as special needs;
- g. Extensions of Temporary Quarters Subsistence Expense (TQSE) beyond 60 days. However, if it is determined that there is a compelling reason for the employee to continue occupying temporary quarters after 60 consecutive days, it may authorize an extension of up to 60 additional consecutive days in 15 day intervals;
- h. A written extension of temporary storage beyond 90 days, not to exceed 180 days, in 15-day intervals;
- i. Designated areas as isolated official stations. **This authority cannot be re-delegated;**
- j. Transportation of a POV to a post of duty subsequent to the time of assignment;
- k. Transportation of a POV within the Continental United States (CONUS) when it is

determined to be advantageous to the Government; and,

1. In cases of extreme hardship, a waiver of the 90-day waiting period in which an employee must independently market their home.

### **C302-2.10 Service Agreements**

**C302-2.11** To request a waiver of debt for relocation expenses, a memorandum specifying the reasons beyond the employee's control that are acceptable to the bureau, should be submitted by the approving official of the travel order, through the Line Office CFO, and submitted to the bureau CFO for approval.

**C302-2.12** The agency Head or his/her designee can approve relocation expenses, and must ensure that all travel orders are prepared properly and in accordance with applicable Federal, Commerce, and bureau regulations.

### **C302-4 Allowances for Subsistence and Transportation**

#### **C302-4.200 Per Diem**

**C302-4.201** For travel Outside the Continental United States (OCONUS), per diem allowances for enroute relocation travel between the old (CONUS or OCONUS) and new (OCONUS) official stations will be at the applicable locality rate. Enroute travel follows the same rules as temporary duty travel.

**C302-4.202** When lodging is not required, the M&IE standard CONUS rates apply; however, lodging costs will not be paid.

#### **C302-4.400 Transportation**

**C302-4.401** The daily minimum driving distance may be more than, but not less than an average of 350 miles per calendar day. Exceptions will be considered when there is a delay beyond the employee's control, or for other acceptable reasons such as special needs.

#### **C302-4.500 Use of More Than One Privately Owned Vehicle (POV)**

**C302-4.501** One POV is authorized as being advantageous to the Government. Use of more than one POV may be authorized when:

- a. Immediate family and luggage cannot reasonably fit in one vehicle;
- b. Age, physical condition, or other medical need requires reasonable accommodations;
- c. The employee is required to report to new official station before the immediate family, whose delay is acceptable such as completion of school term, sale of property, settlement of personal business affairs, disposal or shipment of household goods, and temporary unavailability of adequate housing at the new official station;
- d. A member of the immediate family performs unaccompanied travel between authorized points other than those for the employee's travel; or,

- e. Immediate family members must be at the new official station, for acceptable reasons such as school enrollment, prior to employee reporting date.

### **C302-5 Allowance for House hunting Trip Expenses**

**C302-5.1** House hunting trips are discouraged. The employee is encouraged to use the internet and other tools to assist with finding a permanent residence.

**C302-5.2** Expenses for child/pet care services are not reimbursable.

**C302-5.3** House hunting trips must not begin until the employee has a current appraisal of the residence to be sold at the old official duty station.

**C302-5.4** When a POV is authorized, the driving distance between the old duty station and the new duty station must exceed 350 miles.

**C302-5.5** When using common carrier transportation, a compact rental car may be authorized. Taxi fare reimbursement is limited to transportation between the common carrier terminals and the residence at the old duty station or place of lodging at the new duty station.

**C302-5.6** Mileage reimbursement to the airport, when flying to the house hunting trip location, will be at the current POV mileage rate.

### **C302-6 Allowance for Temporary Quarters Subsistence Expenses (TQSE)**

#### **C302-6.1 General Rules**

**C302-6.2** The period for TQSE shall be reduced by, at least, the number of days utilized for a house hunting trip or not applicable if a house hunting trip was completed.

**C302-6.3** If the Department determines there is a compelling reason to continue occupying TQSE after 60 consecutive days, authorization will occur in increments of not more than 15 day each.

**C302-6.4** Justification for allowing payment of TQSE at other than the old and/or new official duty station must be shown on the travel order.

**C302-6.5** If the employee signs a long term lease on an apartment or house, he/she cannot claim occupancy of the leased property as temporary quarters for the period authorized for TQSE. The quarters must be rented on a temporary basis to qualify for TQSE.

**C302-6.6** If the employee sells his/her residence, he/she may not lease it back from the new owner and claim TQSE for the period occupied. The employee must vacate the residence before claiming TQSE.

**C302-6.7** Payments of lodging to relatives and/or friends are not reimbursable unless there are demonstrated justifications that the costs incurred equate to the costs provided, as a result of

housing the employee and/or his family (i.e. the monthly rent or house payment typically would not change). It is not reasonable for employees to agree to pay relatives the same amounts they would have to pay for lodging in motels. A TQSE worksheet must be submitted by the employee itemizing all temporary subsistence expenses on a daily basis.

**C302-6.8** If the employee is offered a fixed amount for TQSE, he/she may choose between the actual and fixed amount reimbursement. The employee's decision must be indicated on his/her travel order and **may not** be changed at a later date. Fixed amount TQSE is limited to 30 days, but may be authorized for less than 30 days. No extensions are allowed under this method.

### **C302-6.100 Actual TQSE Method of Reimbursement**

**C302-6.101** To claim actual TQSE, employees must itemize expenses on Form CD-372, Expense Record for Temporary Quarters (or bureau approved form). The form must be attached to the CD-370, Travel Voucher (or bureau approved form), to support the temporary quarters expenses being claimed. Receipts are required for all lodging, laundry, and dry cleaning expenses, except when coin-operated facilities are used.

**C302-6.102** TQSE is authorized as follows:

- a. Initial period of TQSE: The authorization for TQSE and the length of time for occupancy shall be authorized in advance on the employee's travel order. All breaks in TQSE must be explained on the travel voucher or on the CD-372, Expense Record for Temporary Quarters (or bureau approved form);
- b. Additional time of TQSE: Extensions are not automatic. Travel orders must be amended to indicate extensions of TQSE. Authorizations to extend TQSE and the number of days authorized must not exceed 15-day increments. Additional time will be authorized only in circumstances where there are compelling reasons beyond the employee's control.

**C302-6.103** Compelling reasons for an extension of TQSE can be found at: FTR 302-6.105. The following are NOT considered compelling reasons to extend TQSE:

- a. Poor housing market (as opposed to inadequate housing conditions);
- b. General economic conditions of the old or new official duty station;
- c. Personal financial concerns of the employee, e.g., a desire to receive a reimbursement or capital gain in a different tax year;
- d. Inability, for whatever reason, to sell residence;
- e. The spouse's continued employment in the old area, which delays the movement of the family to the new area;
- f. The children's continued attendance at school(s) in the old duty location, which delays the family's move;
- g. Inability to locate permanent quarters (rental, lease, or purchase) in an area of moderate housing, due to personal preferences and decisions;
- h. Personal decisions to have a home constructed in areas of moderate housing (construction typically requires 90 to 120 days, or longer.); and,
- i. Acceptance of an extended possession date at the time the contract for permanent

quarters was signed.

**NOTE:** Title 5: Administrative Personnel 630.1202 states: “Spouse means an individual who is a husband or wife pursuant to a marriage that is a legal union between one man and one woman, including common law marriage between one man and one woman in States where it is recognized.”

### **C301-6.200 Fixed Amount Reimbursement**

**C302-6.201** There are several advantages under the fixed amount reimbursement method:

- a. The employee can be reimbursed for the full amount as soon as the residence is vacated;
- b. No receipts are required;
- c. The employee does not have to incur the expense to be reimbursed; and,
- d. The employee will be reimbursed even if he/she does not occupy temporary quarters for the full period.

**C302-6.202** The travel approving official negotiates with the employee to determine the number of days of TQSE received under the fixed amount reimbursement method, providing the number of days does not exceed 30 days.

**C302-6.203** The employee may be authorized TQSE under the fixed amount reimbursement method, if the employee is moving to a location where there are assigned government furnished quarters, as long as the number of days are reduced to the number of days that Government quarters are not provided.

**C302-6.204** If the employee’s family remains at the old residence and the employee relocates to the new duty station, the employee will not be paid TQSE for his/her family until the family vacates the old residence; thus, the entitlement will be limited to only the employee.

### **C302-7 Transportation and Temporary Storage of Household Goods and Professional Books, Papers, and Equipment (PBP&E)**

**C302-7.1** The Department uses the Actual Expense Method whenever the GSA cost comparison indicates a \$100 or more cost savings.

**C302-7.2** The employee is billed for any non-allowable items such as a weight of more than 18,000 pounds for or extra valuation insurance.

**C302-7.3** The employee must disassemble and reassemble, before and after moving, the following items: ice maker, swing sets, outdoor playground equipment, television and radio antennas, satellite dishes, storage sheds, gas dryers, pool tables, hot tubs, water beds, and dog kennel/dog run. If the employee is not qualified to complete this task, a certified technician may be hired and the charge may be claimed as part of the miscellaneous expenses on the travel voucher.

## **C302-7.300 Claims for Lost or Damaged Household Goods**

**C302-7.301** If the employee determines loss or damage upon delivery, he/she must note the incident on the inventory and have the carrier's driver also sign. If the driver refuses, or if the loss or damage is discovered later, the employee should immediately call the carrier's destination agent and request a representative to verify the loss and/or damage. Further the employee must promptly prepare a list of the lost or damaged items with the following information for each:

- a. Carrier's inventory number;
- b. Description of item(s);
- c. Description of damage or statement of loss;
- d. Estimated purchase date and cost of the lost or damaged article(s);
- e. Repair or replacement costs; and,
- f. Estimated weight.

**C302-7.302** If the employee's shipment was made via the commercial bill of lading (CBL) method, the carrier is required to acknowledge claims within 10 days after receipt. If shipment was made via the commuted rate system, the carrier is required to acknowledge claims within 30 days after receipt. The carrier is required to pay, decline, or offer a compromise settlement within 120 days after receipt unless there are reasons beyond its control which prevent settlement.

**C302-7.303** For lost or damaged household goods, the employee must first submit a claim to the carrier by certified mail, return receipt requested. This can be accomplished by contacting the delivering carrier to acquire claim forms and a visit from the carrier's representative to inspect and verify loss or damage. Additionally, the employee should mail a follow-up letter to the carrier. If loss or damage is observed as the carrier unloads and unpacks, the letter must be postmarked within 5 working days after delivery of the employee's household goods. If loss or damage is discovered by the employee while unpacking or after the carrier has completed delivery, the letter must be postmarked within 15 calendar days after the delivery of the household goods.

**C302-7.304** If the employee is not satisfied with the carrier settlement, a claim can be filed with the Government under the Military Personnel and Civilian Employees Claims Act of 1964 (31 U.S.C. 3721). The employee must complete Form CD-224, Employee Claim for Loss of or Damage to Personal Property. Follow the procedures established in DAO 203-17 for filing claims. Employees should also refer to the General Services Administration (GSA) pamphlet entitled "Shipping Your Household Goods" for further information on filing claims.

This can be obtained at:

[http://www.gsa.gov/gsa/cm\\_attachments/GSA\\_BASIC/hhggguide2002\\_R2FX46\\_0Z5RDZ-i34K-pR.pdf](http://www.gsa.gov/gsa/cm_attachments/GSA_BASIC/hhggguide2002_R2FX46_0Z5RDZ-i34K-pR.pdf)

**C302-7.305** Operating unit claims officers have the authority to process claims and submit vouchers for payment. All claims equal to or exceeding \$5,000 will be forwarded to the Department's Assistant General Counsel for Administration for final review. Upon notification

of the Office of General Counsel's approval, the claims officer will submit a voucher for payment.

### **C302-7.400 Household Goods and Personal Effects Transported Within CONUS**

**C302-7.401** Household goods and personal effects allowable for transport at the Government's expense include household furnishings, equipment and appliances, furniture, clothing, books, snowmobiles and vehicles with two or three wheels (not to exceed 18,000 pounds).

**C302-7.402** The employee must carefully watch the carrier pack, inventory, and load his/her household goods. The employee will receive a complete copy of the carrier's inventory form. Notations should be made on the inventory form regarding any disagreement with the carrier's evaluation of the condition of the household goods before the employee signs the inventory form.

If the employee is claiming full valuation and there are any items of exceptional value, he/she should make certain that a copy of a bona fide, current appraisal is attached to the inventory copy being retained.

**C302-7.403** The moving company will unpack household goods upon request. This consists of unpacking the items and placing them on counter top, or tabletops, etc. The moving company is only required to place furniture one time. Damage or loss should be noted on the delivery receipt before the employee signs. The carrier's driver should co-sign the notation. The carrier is also responsible for removing all the debris from unpacking.

**C302-7.404** Do not include the following in the household good shipment:

- a. Automobiles, trucks, vans, and similar motor vehicles; large boats; airplanes; gliders; mobile homes; camper trailers; and farming vehicles; outboard motors; major vehicle parts such as engines;
- b. Live animals, birds, fowls, and reptiles;
- c. Cord wood and building materials; and
- d. Property for resale, disposal, or commercial use rather than for use by the employee or the immediate family;
- e. Property liable to impregnate or otherwise damage equipment or other property (e.g. hazardous articles including explosives, flammable and corrosive materials, poisons, etc.);
- f. Articles that cannot be taken from the premises without damage to the article or premises; and,
- g. Perishable articles including frozen foods, articles requiring refrigeration, or perishable plants unless:
  1. Shipment is to be transported not more than 150 miles and/or delivery accomplished within 24 hours from the time of loading;
  2. No storage of shipment is required; or,
  3. No preliminary or en-route servicing or watering or other preservative method is required of the carrier.

## **C302-7.500 Shipment of Household Goods To and From OCONUS**

**C302-7.501** If door-to-door common carrier rates are not applicable, allowable costs include the actual costs of drayage, to and from the common carrier, for goods not in excess of the authorized weight.

**C302-7.502** Packing, crating, and transportation allowable expenses include expenses incurred in hiring, transporting, and packing lifting vans when shipments are made in whole or in part by water, but do not include charges in connection with any shipment or storage of empty lift vans or import duties on lift vans.

**C302-7.503** The valuation of property, as declared for shipping, will not exceed that to which the lowest freight rates apply. An employee may declare excess valuation, above the minimum permitted, if he/she assumes all additional expenses as a result of the excess valuation including the cost of insurance needed to protect the higher valuation.

**C302-7.504** The allowable transportation and related services may be obtained from any available commercial carrier, except, all shipments of property by water shall be made on ships registered under the laws of the United States whenever such ships are available.

**C302-7.505** Commercial shipments will be made on bills of lading or purchase orders whenever possible; otherwise, reimbursement shall be made to the employee for transportation expenses actually and necessarily incurred within the limitations prescribed by this section.

**C302-7.506** If the services rendered cover, in addition to transportation, other services such as packing, crating, drayage, unpacking, and temporary storage, the total charge for the services shall be itemized to show the specific charge for each service.

## **C302-8 Allowances for Extended Storage of Household Goods (HHG)**

**302-8.1** Storage of household goods beyond 30 days is treated as a taxable income item and is reported to the payroll office. This is reported taxable income paid to a 3rd party.

**302-8.2** The initial 90 days of temporary storage may be extended for an additional 90 days, or a portion of, if warranted, in 15-day intervals. The employee may request an additional 90 days by sending a memo to the designated official. Examples of circumstances that could justify the additional 90 days are:

- a. An intervening temporary duty assignment or long-term training agreement;
- b. Non-availability of suitable housing at the new duty location;
- c. Serious illness of employee or illness/death of dependent;
- d. Delays in construction work on a new or renovated residence; and,
- e. Strikes, acts of Nature or other circumstances beyond the employee's control.

**C302-8.3** The maximum number of temporary storage days the Government will pay for is 180. If a shipment is in storage past 180 days, it will be converted to commercial storage and the insurance coverage, under the Government contract, will terminate.

The employee is still entitled to a delivery out of storage at the Government's expense even if the time in storage exceeds 180 days, as long as the delivery is prior to the ending date of the 2-year period allowed for completion of a PCS. The only exception to this time limit is if an extension is granted for the relocation.

## **C302-9 Allowances for Transportation and Emergency Storage of a Privately Owned Vehicle (POV)**

### **C302-9.1 General Rules**

**C302-9.2** Shipment of a POV must be stated on the approved travel order. If the employee ships a POV without authorization, reimbursement will not be made.

**C302-9.3** The employee's POV must meet the environmental and safety standards of the United States, to be eligible for shipment.

**C302-9.4** The employee may not ship a leased vehicle as a POV at the Government's expense; and, there is no reimbursement for expenses associated with breaking a leased vehicle.

**C302-9.5** Cost to ship a POV must not exceed the value of the POV.

### **C302-9.100 Transportation of a POV Within the Continental United States (CONUS)**

**C302-9.101** The employee may not ship one POV and drive another POV to the new official station.

**C302-9.102** If the employee must report to the new official station several weeks before the immediate family can join him/her, one POV may be shipped and the family may drive the other, providing there are compelling reasons that the family cannot accompany the employee to the new official station. However, family travel to the new official station must not be concurrent with the employee's travel to the new official station.

**C302-9.103** If the employee ships a POV to the new official station; the Government will not pay for shipping additional personal items by air freight nor pay excess baggage charges.

**C302-9.104** If the employee ships a POV, reimbursement for a car rental or taxi cab at the new official station, until the POV arrives, is not permitted. The Government cannot provide a Government vehicle for the purpose of commuting to and from work while waiting for the arrival of a POV that has been shipped.

**C302-9.105** The employee's POV insurance may or may not continue to cover the vehicle while it is being transported to the new duty station, because coverage varies between different

insurance companies. The employee should consult his/her insurance company regarding the coverage his/her policy offers during shipment.

**C302-9.106** The Government does provide insurance on a POV while it is being shipped, because the carrier is required to provide insurance, if it is shipped on a bill of lading.

**C302-9.107** The employee POV cannot be considered as part of household goods. A POV must be shipped on a separate bill of lading.

### **C302-9.200 Outside CONUS**

**C302-9.201** If the employee is authorized to transfer to a post of duty OCONUS, he/she may be approved to ship only one POV to the actual post of duty and not to an alternate location.

### **C302-10 Allowances for Transportation of Mobile Homes and Boats Used as a Primary Residence**

**C302-10.1** Eligibility for this allowance requires written certification, on the employee's travel voucher, that the mobile home is for use as a primary residence for him/her and/or his/her immediate family at the new duty station.

**C302-10.2** When transporting a mobile home, partly by commercial carrier and partly by private means, the allowances apply for each respective portion.

**C302-10.3** Allowances for temporary quarters for the employee and his/her immediate family may be authorized only while awaiting arrival of a mobile home being shipped by a commercial carrier.

### **C302-11 Allowances for Expenses Incurred in Connection with Residence Transactions**

**C302-11.1** The employee may select a preferred method of reimbursement for the sale of his/her residence:

- a. Direct Sale Method: The employee markets and sells the residence at the old official duty station within 60 days. The employee will file for direct reimbursement of the allowable costs incurred; or,
- b. Relocation Services Program: The employee will enroll in the relocation services program (See C302-12).

### **C302-11.20 Time Limitations**

**C302-11.21** Settlement dates for the sale, purchase and/or lease termination transactions, for which reimbursement is requested, must happen not later than 2 years after the date which the employee reports for duty at the new official station. However, upon written request, before the 2-year period is completed, an additional period, not to exceed 2 years, 6 month increments or less, may be authorized if warranted.

## **C302-12 Use of a Relocation Services Company**

**NOTE:** All Bureaus do not offer use of a relocation services company.

**C302-12.1** The employee must market the home independently by listing it with a real estate broker in order to be eligible for the home sale service portion of the contract.

**C302-12.2** The listing agreement must contain the following exclusion clause:

The seller(s) hereby reserve the right to sell the Property directly to (Contractor Name) at any time and, in such event, to cancel this listing agreement with no obligation for commission or continuation of listing hereafter and to turn over an acceptable written offer hereunder to (Contractor Name) for closing and payment of commission which shall be deemed earned and payable only upon closing to title.

**C302-12.3** The gaining office must be kept informed of the status of the home sale. If the employee agrees to use the Relocation Services and then sells the house through a real estate agent without using the relocation contractor, the employee will not be eligible for the home sale incentive program. The gaining office must notify the relocation contractor and cancel the order and deobligate the funds.

**C302-12.4** When an employee elects to use the Relocation Services for the sale of residence, no additional expense may be reimbursed to the employee for the sale of that residence.

### **C302-12.100 Home Value**

**C302-12.101** The maximum home value the Department will pay for home sale services is \$700,000. The Office of Administrative Services (OAS) will consider requests to waive the \$700,000 maximum home value for home sale services.

**C302-12.102** A memorandum of request for a waiver of the maximum home value, in which a bureau will pay for home sale services, along with a copy of the listing agreement and a signed travel order, should be submitted by the approving official, through the Line Office CFO, and submitted to OAS for approval.

### **C302-12.200 Buyer Value Option Process**

**C302-12.201** The “buyer value option” is considered the most cost effective method when using third party services. If the employee can successfully market the home, prior to the contractor appraisal process, this will significantly reduce the fees/expenses paid to the third party service contractor.

**C302-12.202** The relocation contractor will provide the employee with a list of qualified, certified appraisers, to conduct an appraisal, if he/she is not marketing under the buyer value option. The employee will select two appraisers and one alternate in order of preference.

**NOTE:** The employee may choose an appraiser who is not on the list; however, the appraiser must meet contract requirements. Upon receipt of the disclosure statement and notification of the transferee's choice of appraisers, the contractor orders two independent appraisals, a title search, and any required inspections.

**C302-12.203** The appraisal is made in an "as is" condition using an "Employee Relocation Council" appraisal form, and will be based on a market time of 120 days or the average time for the particular area (from the date of listing to the date of sale). A third party appraisal is required, if there is a 5 percent or greater variance between the two appraised values. The employee is allowed to submit comparable sales for the appraisers' consideration.

**C302-12.204** After the appraisal process is completed; the company will make the employee a verbal offer. This offer will be the average of the two values or, in the case of a third appraisal, the average of the two closest appraisals.

**C302-12.205** The employee has 60 days from the date of the verbal offer to accept or reject the company's appraised value offer or utilize the amended value offer option.

**C302-12.206** The employee has 30 calendar days from receipt of the written offer to request a reevaluation of the written appraised value offer. Reevaluation should be completed within the 60-day acceptance period.

**C302-12.207** Once an offer is accepted, the employee signs the contract of sale, has it notarized, and returns it to the company.

### **C302-12.300 The Amended Value Sale**

**C302-12.301** The "amended value sale" requires the employee to coordinate an offer from an outside party; however, the employee may not sign a third party offer or binder, accept earnest money, or accept a down payment on a home. In addition, the exclusion clause must be in the listing agreement.

**C302-12.302** The company determines if all contingencies are acceptable, and whether or not the offer will net a greater return than the company's offer. If acceptable, the company will:

- a. Instruct the employee to change the company's contract of sale to the higher offer price; and,
- b. Instruct the employee to send the company a properly executed amended contract of sale, unsigned third party offer, and other necessary documents.

**C302-12.303** Following receipt of the amended contract of sale, the relocation company will calculate and pay the equity to the employee, based on the amended value. The employee bears

no risk if the sale falls through or if the original terms change. If the sale falls through, it will revert to an appraised value sale and be filed accordingly.

**C302-12.304** The employee must vacate the property 45 days after the day of acceptance, maintain the property in the same condition as when it was appraised, carry costs until the vacate date; and, transfer the title directly to the contractor at the time of acceptance or the vacating date, whichever is later.

#### **C302-12.400 Other Services**

**C302-12.401** Other services offered at no cost to the employee or the Government includes:

- a. Marketing assistance -- at old duty station;
- b. Renter assistance -- at new duty station;
- c. Buyer assistance -- at new duty station; and,
- d. Mortgage counseling -- at new duty station.

#### **C302-14 Home Marketing Incentive Payments**

**C302-14.1** The home marketing incentive allowance does not increase costs to the bureau. Employees who earn the home marketing incentive allowance will generally produce a net savings to the bureau by reducing the fees paid to the relocation service company, reducing the time in temporary quarters, reducing the amount of relocation income tax allowance that must be paid, and reductions of other administrative costs.

**C302-14.2** The maximum home marketing incentive an employee may receive is five percent of the amended value sale price of the employee's residence or the savings realized by the bureau. The savings to the bureau will be calculated by subtracting the fees paid on the amended value sale from the fees that would have been paid on an appraised value sale of the residence.

**C302-14.3** If the employee requested enrollment in the home sale program within ten (10) days of being notified of the transfer and obtained an amended value sale for the residence, the bureau must pay a home marketing incentive allowance.

**C302-14.4** If the employee is reimbursed for occupying temporary quarters for more than 60 days, he/she will not be entitled to a home sale incentive allowance.

**C302-14.5** The employee is advised to use a real estate agent when marketing the residence. When an acceptable offer is received, the offer should be immediately transmitted to the Relocation Services Company, prior to signing an acceptance. The employee must include an exclusion clause in the contract with the real estate agent so the residence can be sold to the Relocation Services Company without obligating the employee to pay a commission. If the employee receives an offer from a buyer, the employee should not sign the contract between him/her and the new buyer. The employee will sell the property to the Relocation Services Company. The Relocation Services Company will sell the property to the new buyer and is responsible for all closing costs.

**C302-14.6** The employee's real estate agent will receive the appropriate commission from the Relocation Services Company if the offer is accepted.

**C302-14.7** The employee must participate in the home sale program and use the Relocation Services Company to receive a home sale incentive allowance. The employee cannot sell the house on his/her own.

**C302-14.8** The employee will not be reimbursed for marketing expenses necessary to obtain an amended value sale. Marketing expenses are reimbursed on direct sales only.

**C302-14.9** The employee must obtain an offer that is acceptable to the Relocation Services Company to receive the home sale incentive allowance. If the offer contains contingencies, the borrower can not qualify financially, or the sale does not meet other terms of the contract, the Relocation Services Company is not obligated to accept the offer.

**C302-14.10** To claim the employee home sale incentive allowance, the employee must file a travel voucher supported by a copy of the appraised value offer, and a copy of the signed amended sales contract to transfer the residence to the Relocation Services Company.

**C302-14.11** The employee's servicing finance office will determine the amount of the incentive allowance upon receipt of claims showing the residence was sold.

**C302-14.12** The employee's bureau will withhold Federal, State, local income, and the applicable social security taxes from the Home Marketing Incentive Payment. This withholding will be an estimated amount and will be reported to the payroll office for final calculation.

**C302-14.13** The employee's bureau may use either of the following methods for determining the estimated tax to withhold:

- a. A predetermined percentage that closely estimates the tax liability for all employees may be applied, with the payroll system making any necessary adjustments;
- b. A calculation that withholds 28 percent for Federal Withholding Tax, 7.65 percent for FICA tax (1.45 percent if the employee is covered by the Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS)), and state and local taxes based on published withholding rates. The payroll system will make adjustments when necessary.

### **C302-15 Allowance for Property Management Services**

**C302-15.1** The Department does not provide property management service benefits to employees.

**C304 Payment of Travel Expenses from a Non-Federal Source See DAO 203-9 and DAO 202-739.**

## Appendix A

Federal travel information can be obtained through the following Internet sites:

CD Forms	<a href="http://www.osec.doc.gov/forms/direct.htm">http://www.osec.doc.gov/forms/direct.htm</a>
Centers for Disease Control (CDC)	<a href="http://www.cdc.gov/travel/index.htm">http://www.cdc.gov/travel/index.htm</a>
CIA Fact book	<a href="https://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/">https://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/</a>
Citibank Travel Card On-Line Training	<a href="http://apps.fss.gsa.gov/webtraining/trainingdocs/traveltraining/index.cfm?CFID=4204629&amp;CFTOKEN=86062032">http://apps.fss.gsa.gov/webtraining/trainingdocs/traveltraining/index.cfm?CFID=4204629&amp;CFTOKEN=86062032</a>
Citibank Website	<a href="http://www.citibank.com/us/d.htm">http://www.citibank.com/us/d.htm</a>
Citidirect	<a href="http://www.cards.citidirect.com/welcome.asp">http://www.cards.citidirect.com/welcome.asp</a>
City Pair Search	<a href="http://www.gsa.gov/citypair">www.gsa.gov/citypair</a>
Civilian Board of Contract Appeals	<a href="http://www.cbca.gsa.gov/">http://www.cbca.gsa.gov/</a>
Code of Federal Regulations (CFR)	<a href="http://www.access.gpo.gov/nara/cfr/cfr-table-search.html">http://www.access.gpo.gov/nara/cfr/cfr-table-search.html</a>
OPM Comp Time Q&As	<a href="http://www.opm.gov/oca/compmemo/2005/2005-03-att1.asp">http://www.opm.gov/oca/compmemo/2005/2005-03-att1.asp</a>
Contractor Travel	<a href="http://www.gsa.gov/Portal/gsa/ep/contentView.do?programId=9680&amp;channelId=-17885&amp;oid=20112&amp;contentId=20110&amp;pageTypeId=8211&amp;contentType=GSA_BASIC&amp;programPage=%2Fep%2Fprogram%2FgsaBasic.jsp&amp;P=FBC5">http://www.gsa.gov/Portal/gsa/ep/contentView.do?programId=9680&amp;channelId=-17885&amp;oid=20112&amp;contentId=20110&amp;pageTypeId=8211&amp;contentType=GSA_BASIC&amp;programPage=%2Fep%2Fprogram%2FgsaBasic.jsp&amp;P=FBC5</a>
Currency Converter	<a href="http://www.xe.com/ucc/">http://www.xe.com/ucc/</a>
Department Administrative Orders (DAO)	<a href="http://204.193.232.34/cgi-bin/doi.cgi?218:112:1:2">http://204.193.232.34/cgi-bin/doi.cgi?218:112:1:2</a>
Department Forms	<a href="http://www.osec.doc.gov/forms/default.htm">http://www.osec.doc.gov/forms/default.htm</a>
Department of Commerce Travel Site	<a href="http://www.osec.doc.gov/oas/travel/">http://www.osec.doc.gov/oas/travel/</a>
Department of Homeland Security	<a href="http://www.dhs.gov/index.shtm">http://www.dhs.gov/index.shtm</a>
Department of State (Travel warnings)	<a href="http://travel.state.gov/">http://travel.state.gov/</a>
Department of State Standardized Regulations (DSSR)	<a href="http://www.state.gov/m/a/als/c1843.htm">http://www.state.gov/m/a/als/c1843.htm</a>
EDS	<a href="http://www.fedtraveler.com/">http://www.fedtraveler.com/</a>
Federal Register	<a href="http://www.gpoaccess.gov/fr/index.html">http://www.gpoaccess.gov/fr/index.html</a>
Federal Travel Regulations	<a href="http://www.gsa.gov/fttr">www.gsa.gov/fttr</a>
GSA link to Federal Vehicle Policy Division	<a href="http://www.gsa.gov/Portal/gsa/ep/contentView.do?programId=9152&amp;channelId=-13175&amp;oid=10077&amp;contentId=13280&amp;pageTypeId=8203&amp;contentType=GSA_BASIC&amp;programPage=%2Fep%2Fprogram%2FgsaBasic.jsp&amp;P=MTL">http://www.gsa.gov/Portal/gsa/ep/contentView.do?programId=9152&amp;channelId=-13175&amp;oid=10077&amp;contentId=13280&amp;pageTypeId=8203&amp;contentType=GSA_BASIC&amp;programPage=%2Fep%2Fprogram%2FgsaBasic.jsp&amp;P=MTL</a>
GSA Website	<a href="http://www.gsa.gov">http://www.gsa.gov</a>
Hotel/Motel Fire Safety Act of 1990	<a href="http://www.usfa.dhs.gov/">http://www.usfa.dhs.gov/</a>
IRS Publication 521 (Moving Expenses)	<a href="http://www.irs.gov/publications/p521/">http://www.irs.gov/publications/p521/</a>
Joint Federal Travel Regulations (Uniformed Service Members)	<a href="https://secureapp2.hqda.pentagon.mil/perdiem/trvlregs.html">https://secureapp2.hqda.pentagon.mil/perdiem/trvlregs.html</a>

## Appendix A (Continued)

Federal travel information can be obtained through the following Internet sites:

Leave Handbook (DOC)	<a href="http://ohrm.os.doc.gov/index.htm">http://ohrm.os.doc.gov/index.htm</a>
Mileage and Map Information	<a href="http://www.mapquest.com/">http://www.mapquest.com/</a>
Per Diem Rates	
CONUS	<a href="http://www.gsa.gov/perdiem">www.gsa.gov/perdiem</a>
OCONUS - Foreign	<a href="http://www.state.gov/m/a/als/prdm/">http://www.state.gov/m/a/als/prdm/</a>
Non-foreign (Hawaii, Alaska, U.S. Territories)	<a href="https://secureapp2.hqda.pentagon.mil/perdiem/perdiemrates.html">https://secureapp2.hqda.pentagon.mil/perdiem/perdiemrates.html</a>
POV Mileage Rates	<a href="http://www.gsa.gov/Portal/gsa/ep/contentView.do?programId=9299&amp;channelId=-13224&amp;oid=10359&amp;contentId=9646&amp;pageTypeId=8203&amp;contentType=GSA_BASIC&amp;programPage=%2Fep%2Fprogram%2FgsaBasic.jsp&amp;P=MTT">http://www.gsa.gov/Portal/gsa/ep/contentView.do?programId=9299&amp;channelId=-13224&amp;oid=10359&amp;contentId=9646&amp;pageTypeId=8203&amp;contentType=GSA_BASIC&amp;programPage=%2Fep%2Fprogram%2FgsaBasic.jsp&amp;P=MTT</a>
Rental Car Agreement	<a href="http://www.sddc.army.mil/sddc/Content/Pub/656/rentalcaragreement.pdf">http://www.sddc.army.mil/sddc/Content/Pub/656/rentalcaragreement.pdf</a>
Standard Forms	<a href="http://www.gsa.gov/Portal/gsa/ep/formslibrary.do?formType=SF">http://www.gsa.gov/Portal/gsa/ep/formslibrary.do?formType=SF</a>
Tax Exemption Certificates	<a href="http://www.gsa.gov/Portal/gsa/ep/contentView.do?P=MTT&amp;contentId=16366&amp;contentType=GSA_OVERVIEW">http://www.gsa.gov/Portal/gsa/ep/contentView.do?P=MTT&amp;contentId=16366&amp;contentType=GSA_OVERVIEW</a>
Transportation Security Administration (TSA)	<a href="http://www.tsa.gov/travelers/airtravel/assistant/index.shtml">http://www.tsa.gov/travelers/airtravel/assistant/index.shtml</a>