

**Forest Service Handbook  
National Headquarters - Washington Office  
Washington, DC**

**Forest Service Handbook 6509.33 – Federal Travel Regulation (GSA)  
Chapter 302 - Relocation Allowances  
Part 302-5 - Allowance for Househunting Trip Expenses**

**Supplement:** 6509.33-2005-1

**Effective date:** September 02, 2005

**Duration:** This amendment is effective until superseded or removed.

**Approved by:** Jesse L. King, Associate Deputy Chief/CFO

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**Responsible Staff:**

**Last Change:** 6509.33-2004-3 to 6509.33\_304

**Superseded Document(s):** 6509.33\_302-5, Supplement 6509.33-2001-1, February 22, 2001

**Digest:** Following is an explanation of the changes throughout the directive by section.

**302-5.13:** Adds section for agency policy regarding the fixed amount method used to reimburse employee for househunting trip expenses.

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**STANDARD POSTING INSTRUCTIONS**

**FOR THE FEDERAL TRAVEL REGULATION, FSH 6509.33**

(For further direction on organization and posting of parent text (white pages) see the Foreword to the Federal Travel Regulation beginning on page i.)

**ORGANIZATION.** The Federal Travel Regulation (FTR) is divided into chapters, parts, subparts (if applicable), sections, and paragraphs. The numbers 301, 302, 303, and 304 connote specific chapters of Title 41 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR). The number before the decimal point indicates the part within each chapter; the number after the decimal point indicates the section. For example 301-1.1 refers to:

Chapter	Part	Section
301-	1.	1

Pages within each part are consecutively numbered beginning with Arabic number 1. Each page number is preceded by the part number; for example, the third page of Part 301-2 is numbered 2-3. Individual pages are identified by chapter in the running header.

**TRANSMITTALS.** Transmittals accompany parent text, Department supplements, and Forest Service supplements. File transmittals at the front of the Handbook in numerical sequence with the highest amendment or supplement number first. Group the transmittals in the following order by issuing Agency and unit level:

- Federal Travel Regulation (FTR) (white transmittals);
- Agriculture Travel Regulations (ATR) supplements (yellow transmittals);
- Forest Service Travel Regulations (FSTR) supplements (buff transmittals);
- Region, Station, or Area Supplements (blue transmittals); and
- Forest Supplements (green transmittals).

**SUPPLEMENTS AND INTERIM DIRECTIVES.** Post supplements to the parent text of the Federal Travel Regulation (white pages) at the end of each part (for example, at the end of part 301-1, 301-2, and so on) by color in the following order:

- Agriculture Travel Regulations (ATR) supplements (yellow pages);
- Forest Service Travel Regulations (FSTR) supplements (buff pages);
- Washington Office ID's (pink pages);
- Region, Station, or Area Supplements (blue pages);
- Region, Station, or Area ID's (pink pages);
- Forest Supplements (green pages); and
- Forest ID's (pink pages).

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**Table of Contents**

<b>§ 302-5.7 .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>§ 302-5.11 .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>§ 302-5.12 .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>§ 302-5.13 .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>§ 302-5.104 .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>§ 302-5.301 .....</b>	<b>6</b>

**Subpart A - Employee's Allowance For Househunting Trip Expenses**

<b>SECTION</b>	<b>QUESTION</b>	<b>ANSWER</b>
<b>§ 302-5.7</b>	<b>Under what circumstances will I receive a TQSE allowance?</b>	<p>You will receive a TQSE allowance if:</p> <p>(c) You meet any additional conditions your agency has established.</p> <p>In the event the employee dies while receiving TQSE, the employee's designated beneficiary or other appropriate recipient shall receive the employee's TQSE allowance through the date of death, as money due the employee. Such benefits become part of the settlement of accounts of the deceased employee (Comp. Gen. B-166528, April 21, 1969).</p>
<b>§ 302-5.11</b>	<b>What methods may my agency use to reimburse me for TQSE?</b>	<p>Employees may select either the actual TQSE method or the fixed amount reimbursement method.</p>
<b>§ 302-5.12</b>	<b>Must I document my TQSE to receive reimbursement?</b>	<p>Expenses of temporary quarters obtained from relatives or friends may be reimbursed, if they are reasonable; that is, they must be related to the relative's actual cost of providing lodging and/or meals (Comp. Gen. B-175787, August 11, 1972; Comp. Gen. B-187419, June 1, 1977; and FTR 301-11.12). Expenses for meals and/or lodging during the time an employee is visiting family located in permanent quarters at the old official station are not allowable. This applies regardless of whether an employee gives up a motel or hotel room during the time spent with the family.</p>

SECTION	QUESTION	ANSWER
§ 302-5.13	What methods may my agency use to reimburse me for househunting trip expense?	<p>Employees choosing the fixed amount househunting trip expense are allowed 10 days regardless of the number of days. When claiming fixed amount househunting reimbursement:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Do not require receipts for expenses.</li><li>2. Ensure the employee completes Form <u>FS-6500-140</u>, Individual's Request for Authorization.</li><li>3. Complete electronic <u>Form AD-202</u>, Travel Authorization/Advance. In block 42, Remarks, enter "Househunting is authorized via the fixed rate method for &lt;employee&gt;, &lt;spouse&gt; or &lt;employee and spouse&gt;. New duty location is city/county/state. Factor used: \$____(locality rate)____ X ____ (factor)____ = \$____ Example: \$111.00 (locality rate) X 6.25 (factor) = \$693.75" (Note: Once a reimbursement method has been established on Form AD-202, it cannot be changed.)</li><li>4. Do not make any deductions for the day(s) the employee is in leave status.</li><li>5. Ensure the employee completes Form <u>AD-616R</u>, Travel Voucher (Relocation). In block 31, Per Diem, enter "10" as the number of days and "Fixed Rate" as the number of travelers.</li></ol>

SECTION	QUESTION	ANSWER
§ 302-5.104	How long may I be authorized to claim actual TQSE reimbursement?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. For employees using Relocation Services, contract extensions beyond the initial 30-day periods may be authorized only by the Washington Office, Director of Financial Management.</li><li>2. For employees not using Relocation Services, contract extensions of temporary quarters beyond the initial 60 days may be authorized by the Washington Office and Regional Financial Approving Officials. This authority cannot be redelegated.</li><li>3. Employees should request extensions in writing, showing justifications.</li></ol>
§ 302-5.301	What governing policies must we establish for the TQSE allowance?	<p>You must establish policies and procedures governing:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>(a) The approving official can authorize temporary quarters when it is considered to be in the best interest of the Government.</li><li>(c) Employees may select either the actual TQSE method or the fixed amount reimbursement method.</li><li>(d) The approving official shall determine the appropriate period of time which TQSE reimbursement can be authorized.</li><li>(e) The approving official shall determine whether quarters were indeed temporary, if there is any doubt (FTR 302-5.305).</li></ol>