

## **Permanent Change of Station (PCS) Frequently Asked Questions**

### **What is a PCS?**

A PCS is the relocation of a current Federal employee from one official work site to another or the relocation of a new employee to his/her first assignment site.

### **Mileage Requirement:**

To qualify for a PCS, the new official duty station must be at least 50 miles further from the employee's current residence than the old official station is from the same residence. For example, if the old official station is 3 miles from the current residence, the new official station must be at least 53 miles from that same residence.

### **What is an employment service agreement?**

An employment service agreement is a written agreement between you and your agency that is required by statute. It is signed by both the employee, and the agency's representative. It states that the employee will remain in the service of the government (not a particular agency) for a specified period of service (at least 12 months) following the effective date of the relocation. If the employment service agreement is broken, the employee is required to repay all PCS reimbursements and third party payments made on his/her behalf.

### **Categories of Relocating Employees:**

#### **New Appointee and Current Federal Employee**

##### **What is the definition of new appointee?**

A new appointee is a person hired by the Government for the first time, an employee who has returned from a break in service (with certain exceptions), or a student trainee assigned to the Government after completion of his/her college work.

##### **What is the definition of a current Federal employee?**

A current Federal employee is a person who officially occupies a position in the Federal government.

## **Benefits and Limitations:**

### **New appointees are entitled to:**

- En route transportation for employee and immediate family (definition follows).
- En route per diem (if applicable) for employee.
- Transportation and 60 days of temporary storage for up to 18,000 pounds of household goods.

### **Current Federal employees are entitled to:**

- En route transportation for employee and immediate family.
- En route per diem (if applicable) for employee and immediate family.
- A miscellaneous expense allowance.
- Reimbursement for some expenses associated with the sale of the primary residence at the old duty station, and the purchase of a primary residence at the new duty station.
- Transportation and 60 days of temporary storage for up to 18,000 pounds of household goods.
- A Relocation Income Tax Allowance.

### **At the discretion of the gaining State office, current employees MAY be authorized:**

- A house hunting trip.
- Up to 30 days of temporary quarters.
- The use of a relocation service company.
- The home marketing incentive.

## **What is the definition of an immediate family member?**

### **Any of the following members of an employee's household at the time he/she reports for duty at the new duty station:**

- Spouse
- Domestic partner (an adult in a [domestic partnership](#) with an employee of the same-sex)

- Children of the employee, the employee's spouse, or the employee's domestic partner, who are unmarried and under 21 years of age or who, regardless of age, are physically or mentally incapable of self-support. (The term "children" shall include natural offspring, stepchildren, adopted children, and a child born after the employee's effective date of transfer if, at the time of the transfer, the spouse's travel is prevented by the advanced stage of pregnancy. Also included are other dependent children, such as grandchildren or legal minor wards, who are under the legal guardianship of the employee, the employee's spouse, or the employee's domestic partner.
- Dependent parents (including step and legally adoptive) of the employee, the employee's spouse, or the employee's domestic partner.
- Dependent brothers and sisters (including step and legally adoptive) of the employee, the employee's spouse, or the employee's domestic partner, who are unmarried and under 21 years of age or who, regardless of age, are physically or mentally incapable of self-support.

**For more detailed information, please [reference DOI's Permanent Change of Station Policy Guide](#) and/or [Federal Travel Regulation \(FTR\) 41 C.F.R. Chapter 302](#)**