

Overseas relocation assistance guidelines

Child protection

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Overview

These Overseas relocation assistance guidelines (**these Guidelines**) support the Department of Health and Human Service's (**the department**) approach to recruitment and appointment of staff members relocating from overseas to ensure that the department is well positioned to achieve its strategic and operational goals.

These Guidelines outline the relocation assistance for a new staff member appointed for a minimum of two years who relocates from overseas to work at the department. The department aims to recruit high calibre staff. To achieve this aim, the department supports the relocation of staff as required. The department does not provide repatriation assistance, except where necessary to meet the Department of Immigration and Border Protection requirements.

As the employment relationship is one of commitment from both parties, relocation assistance is provided by the department with the expectation that its relocating staff member will continue to work at the department for a minimum period of two years.

Where a relocating staff member's employment ends within the first two years of service with the department, by reason of his or her resignation, or termination by the department for reasons of performance or conduct, the staff member will be required to repay a portion of the total relocation payments, as set out at Schedule 3 of these Guidelines.

1. Definitions

- **Family member** means the spouse or partner of the staff member (if any) and any dependent children of the staff member.
- **Relocation assistance** means a reasonable financial contribution towards the total cost of travel, temporary accommodation, removal and shipping and other costs involved in the relocation of a staff member to Australia from overseas. The amount reimbursed by the department is limited and does not include all the direct or indirect costs of the relocation.
- **Removal and shipping** means the packing and shipping of the possessions of each family member relocating from the staff member's primary residence, excluding all motorised vehicles and any animals.
- **Temporary accommodation costs** means the "room rate" only of the temporary accommodation. Any additional expenses incurred such as food and phone are to be met by the staff member.
- **Travel** means the cost of a one-way economy airfare for the staff member and each family member relocating from their country of origin to Victoria. It may also include travel from the airport, in the department's absolute discretion.

2. Eligibility

These Guidelines are applicable to a staff member who was required to relocate from their current residence (outside Australia) as a result of accepting an appointment with the department in a child protection role in an ongoing or fixed-term role for a period of two years or more.

These Guidelines do not apply to casual staff.

3. Relocation assistance

The department's central division will have the final approval on any Relocation assistance or changes to these Guidelines.

In recognition of the complexity that may be involved in the relocation of a staff member, Schedule 1 provides the maximum dollar amount of Relocation assistance that the department may provide to an eligible staff member. In exceptional circumstances, an application including the reasons may be made to the appropriate Director to approve a payment above the specified maximum relocation assistance amount.

The department may offer a reduced amount of Relocation assistance if the relocation costs of the staff member are less than the maximum allowable due to their individual circumstances.

3.1. Schedule 1

Staff member family status	Maximum amount (up to the value in AUD\$) – Australian visa granted on or prior to 18 March 2018	Maximum amount (up to the value in AUD\$) – Australian visa granted after 18 March 2018
a. Sole staff member	\$3000	\$4400
b. Staff member, partner or spouse	\$4000	\$6400
c. Staff member, partner or spouse and 1 child	\$5000	\$7400
d. Staff member, partner or spouse and 2 children	\$6000	\$8400
e. Staff member, partner or spouse and 3 children	\$7000	\$9400
f. Staff member, partner or spouse and 4 children	\$8000	\$10,400

Staff member family status	Maximum amount (up to the value in AUD\$) – Australian visa granted on or prior to 18 March 2018	Maximum amount (up to the value in AUD\$) – Australian visa granted after 18 March 2018
g. Staff member, partner or spouse and 5 or more children	\$10,000	\$11,400
h. Staff member and 1 child	\$4000	\$5400
i. Staff member and 2 children	\$5000	\$6400
j. Staff member and 3 children	\$6000	\$7400
k. Staff member and 4 children	\$7000	\$8400
l. Staff member and 5 or more children	\$10,000	\$9400

Items not included in the options or exclusions below will be considered on a case by case basis.

3.2. Travel (airfares, train, or car)

A staff member may claim the cost of a one-way economy airfare for each Family member relocating, in accordance with their visas. Airfares will be purchased directly by the staff member and the staff member may seek reimbursement of the cost with an original receipt. For travel from the airport, a staff member may seek reimbursement of the cost with an original receipt.

3.3. Temporary accommodation

A staff member may claim up to one month's Temporary accommodation costs upon arrival in Victoria with an original receipt. Any Temporary accommodation costs beyond one month will be at the staff member's own expense.

It is expected that the staff member will book any temporary accommodation and pay for the temporary accommodation costs. However, the department offers assistance through settlement services as set out at clause 5.

3.4. Removal and shipping

The department reserves the right to review the removal and shipping receipts provided by the staff member and limit the reimbursement to reasonable items and may, for example, exclude valuable collections of artwork, large sporting equipment and large musical instruments.

Removal and shipping does not include the unpacking of items or the cleaning of the staff member's former or new Victorian primary residence.

The department will not accept responsibility for any claims made for any damage of goods.

3.5. Other costs

A staff member may claim the cost of an Australian working visa, accreditation for the Australian Community Workers Association and the Australian Association of Social Workers and relevant international police checks. The staff member may seek reimbursement of the cost with an original receipt.

4. Customs and import duties

The department will not provide any relocation assistance related to any form of non-standard customs import duty, agricultural or quarantine charges incurred as a result of items being brought into Australia. The department may

reimburse standard customs and import expenses for standard household effects, excluding artworks and collectables.

5. Settlement services

The department offers assistance in settlement services through third party providers such as McArthur or other local providers. The details are outlined in Schedule 2 below. Please note that the package or service might vary.

5.1. Schedule 2

Agency	Services
Third party providers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Airport pick up for the staff member and their family members. • First night's accommodation provided in a central location. • Housing assistance: support helping the staff member find suitable accommodation. For example, being a housing referee to verify salaries, visiting properties on their behalf at open to inspections if possible. • Assisting a staff member to apply for a bank account and a tax file number before the staff member leaves their home country. • Linking the staff member to a migration agent (the staff member will pay for this). • Linking the staff member with a buddy support group. The support group will be staff arriving at the same time and from the same country. • Health insurance cover information provided to the staff member.

6. Termination and repayment obligations

Where a staff member's employment ends within the first two years of service, by reason of his or her resignation or termination by the department for reason of performance or conduct, the staff member will be required to repay a portion of the total relocation payments, as follows:

6.1. Schedule 3

Date of termination	Amount to be paid
a. Within 6 months of commencement	100 per cent
b. Over 6 months but less than 1 year	75 per cent
c. Over 1 year but less than 18 months	50 per cent
d. Over 18 months but less than 2 years	25 per cent

Repayment is not required in the case of redundancy.

7. Reimbursement

A staff member is limited to one claim and may only claim relocation expenses with original receipts. The staff member will have six months from the commencement date of their employment contract with the department to claim for relocation expenses. The claim must not be submitted until the staff member has commenced employment with the department. Reimbursement will not be made until the staff member is on the department's payroll.

The department will reimburse the staff member's reasonable relocation expenses in its absolute discretion promptly after receiving a complete claim from the staff member.

8. Taxation

The department's contribution towards a staff member's relocation expenses may be considered by the Australian Taxation Office to be taxable income. All contributions will be taxed as per Australian Tax Office provisions applicable at the time. To avoid complications, claims under these Guidelines must be made within six months of the commencement date of the staff member's employment contract.

General relocation expenses are exempt for Fringe Benefit Tax (**FBT**) purposes under section 58F of the *Fringe Benefits Tax Assessment Act 1986* (Cth). The department will not provide direct money payments to a staff member for relocation expenses as such payments will attract FBT. Receipts for reimbursed relocation expenses will be kept by the department. Receipts for expenses not reimbursed should be kept by the staff member, to be submitted to the Australian Taxation Office if required.

9. Acknowledgement

I acknowledge that I have read these Guidelines.

Employee name: _____

**Employee signature
and date:** _____

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