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Article 8

Official Travel

Section 1. Compensation and Travel

A. ~~The Parties recognize that employees may be required to perform essential travel away from their official duty station.~~ **The nature of the mission of the Agency is such that it might be necessary for bargaining unit employees to travel officially on behalf of the government.** The Parties further agree that such travel should be arranged and scheduled so as to minimize the effect of such travel on employees. Travel reimbursement will be paid in accordance with applicable Federal Travel Regulations and this agreement.

B. When the employee is required to travel during non-duty hours, the employee will be paid overtime when such travel constitutes hours of work under 5 U.S.C. or the Fair Labor Standards Act, if applicable.

If an employee is required to travel on non-duty time, SSA will ~~make every reasonable effort to~~ give a written explanation prior to traveling. ~~If notice is not provided before traveling, it will be provided subsequently upon request of the~~ employee.

24 C. To the maximum extent practicable, time spent in travel status away from an
25 employee's official duty station will be scheduled by the Agency within normal
26 working hours of the traveling employee(s), **as delineated in the appropriate**
27 **Article 10 Appendix.** To this end, the Agency agrees to the maximum extent
28 practicable:

- 29 1. whenever possible, schedule events to allow employees to travel during their
30 normal duty hours.
- 31 2. allow an employee to travel on the ~~day~~ **workdays** preceding and ~~or~~ after an
32 event when travel on the day of an event would be outside the traveling
33 employee's regular duty hours.

34

35 **D. When it is necessary that travel be performed during non-duty hours, such**
36 **travel will be considered hours of employment for pay purposes pursuant to**
37 **the provisions of Article 10, overtime, and statute.**

38

39 ~~D~~ **E.** Employees retain the right to travel on their own time if they so choose, but are
40 responsible for any additional cost incurred to do so.

41

42 ~~E~~ **F.** If an employee is unable to return home during normal duty hours, the employee
43 may request to do so during non-duty hours, and if approved by an authorized
44 management official, will receive appropriate compensation in accordance with the
45 law and this agreement.

46

47 **G. Employees will not be required to travel away from their normal duty stations**
48 **without appropriate travel orders or other written travel authorizations when it**
49 **is reasonably foreseeable in advance that they will be away from their normal**
50 **duty station for more than 12 hours.**

51
52 **H. Employees without computer access will be provided paper copies of travel**
53 **authorizations in sufficient time (generally 5 work days) prior to travel.**
54 **Employees will be provided access to a computer terminal for the purpose of**
55 **preparing travel vouchers.**

56
57 **I. If the travel is expected to require employees to be absent from their duty**
58 **station for two weeks or more, employees will be given at least fourteen (14)**
59 **days notification of their date of departure, when practicable.**

60
61 **J. To the extent not precluded by law and regulation, for those situations in**
62 **which AFGE representatives who are Agency employees and are on official**
63 **time are not authorized the payment of transportation expenses by SSA, SSA**
64 **agrees to issue no-cost travel orders. This provision is limited to SSA**
65 **representatives who have a government travel card and who use that card for**
66 **full payment of affected transportation expenses. “No Cost” travel orders**
67 **issued will not be used for personal travel, pursuant to this provision.**

68 **The Union request for a no cost travel order will include: (a) the name of the**
69 **AFGE representative; (b) SSN; (c) points of travel; (d) duty station; (e) dates of**
70 **travel; and (f) purpose of travel.**

71 **SSA will provide the common accounting number (CAN) and sub-object**
72 **classification code (SOC) numbers.**

73 **All no cost travel orders will be requested through OLMER by appropriate**
74 **AFGE representatives.**

75

76 **K. The parties will meet to negotiate on changes to the current E2 Solutions**
77 **and/or any subsequent travel software program the Agency will use for travel**
78 **authorizations, travel vouchers, booking of travel and other travel functions.**
79 **Such negotiations will occur within 60 days of the effective date of this**
80 **agreement and will be accomplished pursuant to Article 4.**

81

82 **Section 2. Compensatory Time Off for Travel**

83

84 **A. All Agency employees will receive travel compensatory time in accordance with law**
85 **and regulation.**

86

87 **B. Employees are required to document their time spent in travel on an Agency**
88 **designated form. Management will provide this form to the employee prior to travel.**

89

90 C. Requests for compensatory time off for travel will normally be submitted within 5
91 work days of completion of travel.

92

93 D. Disapproved requests will be returned to the employee with a verbal explanation or
94 written if requested.

95

96 E. Employees requesting travel compensatory time off will use the SSA-71 or
97 equivalent by marking “Other” and indicating “Travel Comp. Time”.

98

99 F. Information on Compensatory Time for Travel will be contained on the Agency
100 website.

101

102 **G. Employees who are on official time will not be excluded from entitlement to**
103 **compensatory time pursuant to this section of Article 8.**

104

105 **Section 3. Change from Per Diem Allowance to Actual Expenses**

106

107 A. Advance Authorization. An employee scheduled to travel in an area, for which a per
108 diem allowance is prescribed, may request advance authorization for travel on the
109 basis of actual expenses. Any such request will normally be approved when the

110 supporting justification showing warranted circumstances for the request meet
111 Agency-wide guidelines.

112

113 B. Post Approval. Reimbursement for actual expenses allowable under law and/or
114 government wide rules and regulations will normally be authorized on a post
115 approval basis if the employee can justify that prudent expenses required by the
116 ordered travel exceeds (as defined by Agency-wide guidelines) the prescribed per
117 diem rate. This provision applies only to travel involving assignments of 30 calendar
118 days or less.

119

120 C. While employees are assigned to training or duty away from their regular duty
121 station, they may elect to return home during non-workdays or non-work hours. In
122 such cases, they will be reimbursed for travel expenses not to exceed the amount
123 reimbursable had employees remained at the temporary duty station. However, if
124 there is a personal or family emergency, such as the death or serious illness of a
125 member of the traveling employee's family or individual related by affinity; or, a
126 catastrophic occurrence or impending natural disaster, such as fire or flood which
127 directly affects the traveling employee's home, requiring the employee to return to
128 their principal residence, the Agency will pay the reasonable costs (including
129 transportation and per diem) of the traveling employee returning to their principal
130 residence.

131

132 D. A copy of official SSA travel regulations will be made available for employees to
133 review upon request. The Agency will inform employees of the appropriate website
134 for travel regulations and tax implications for long term details.

135

136 E. When an employee in travel status is injured or becomes ill ~~and is expected to~~
137 ~~remain so for at least four days~~, the Agency will reimburse the employee for
138 expenses incurred in returning to the employee's normal duty station. In accordance
139 with the provisions of Article 31, a Medical Certificate may be required. Allowances
140 for expenses will be paid in accordance with applicable Federal Travel Regulations.

141

142 F. **Employees who are assigned to training away from their regularly assigned**
143 **duty stations, and elect to return home during non-work days will be**
144 **reimbursed for travel not to exceed the amount reimbursable for the per diem**
145 **had they remained away from home.**

146

147 **Section 4. Continuation of Approved Travel Expenses**

148

149 Employees who are unable to arrive at, or return from their destination during regular
150 duty hours will be reimbursed for authorized travel expenses provided said inability to
151 arrive or return is due to arduous travel conditions beyond the employee's control
152 resulting from natural calamity, unavailability of transportation, or severe weather.

153

154 **Section 5. Travel Advances ~~ment~~ and Claims For ~~of~~ Expenses**

155

156 Employees required to travel shall have the option of requesting a travel advance. Such
157 requests shall be filed by the employee as soon as possible and processed by the
158 Administration as expeditiously as possible. Normally the Administration will not require
159 an employee to travel overnight prior to receiving a travel advance. The Administration
160 shall process all claims for travel expenses as expeditiously as possible, **normally**
161 **within 5 work days.** If an employee should not have adequate funds, the
162 Administration will make every effort to make alternative arrangements.

163

164 **Section 6. Reimbursements**

165

166 A. Management will provide appropriate assistance to employees with travel orders,
167 travel advances, travel authorizations, travel vouchers, and, **if requested,** travel
168 arrangements (e.g., ~~Travel Manager~~ **E2 Solution or any subsequent travel**
169 **program/software**). **Should subsequent changes to E2 Solutions or any**
170 **subsequent travel programs/software be proposed, the Agency will provide**
171 **the Union notice and the right to bargain, pursuant to Article 4.**

172

173 B. Management is responsible for insuring that employees are reimbursed timely. In an
174 effort to pay employees timely, the Agency will ~~endeavor to~~ work closely with
175 employees when errors **or problems** are encountered. ~~It is the employee's~~
176 ~~responsibility for notifying the travel card contractor when a payment issue occurs.~~
177 **If payment to the employee is not made within 3 work days from the**

178 **submission of the travel voucher, the Agency will provide written notice to the**
179 **employee explaining the reason for the delay in reimbursement.** If payment to
180 the employee is not made within ~~30~~ **10** days from the submission of the travel
181 voucher to the appropriate agency official or agency employee, interest/penalties
182 shall accrue pursuant to **law, rule and regulation.** ~~the Prompt Payment Act.~~ **The**
183 **Agency will pay interest and penalties for delays in reimbursement to**
184 **employees for which the Agency is responsible.**

185

186 C. Electronic notification of travel payments will be issued to employees. ~~when this~~
187 ~~feature is available.~~

188

189 D. In the event that a claim for travel expenses is denied, the Agency will notify the
190 employee timely and identify the basis for denial, **within 5 work days of**
191 **submission of the voucher.** ~~Upon request,~~ Management will provide a written
192 explanation. In such cases, the Agency will pay non-disputed expenses.

193

194 E. **The parties agree that split disbursement for reimbursement of official travel**
195 **expenses (split payment to Government Travel Card Contractor/employee) will**
196 **be offered to Agency employees who travel.**

197

198

199 **Section 7. Use of Privately Owned Vehicles/Government Furnished**
200 **Vehicles/Common Carrier**

201
202 Bargaining unit employees will not be required to use privately owned vehicles, nor will
203 they suffer any loss of pay, reprisal, or adverse action on account of refusal to use a
204 POV for Government business, ~~unless such use is made a condition of employment. If~~
205 ~~the Administration decides to make use of privately owned vehicles a condition of~~
206 ~~employment, the Employer will notify the Union and meet its obligation to bargain under~~
207 ~~5 U.S.C. 71.~~

208
209 A. Reasonable periods of time spent by a traveling employee during regular duty hours
210 to make emergency repairs to or refueling of vehicles used to conduct government
211 business will be considered duty time.

212
213 B. In situations where a traveling employee is required to pick up or return a
214 government-furnished vehicle from a motor pool, without first checking in and/or out
215 of the permanent duty station, the Administration will schedule the travel
216 assignments so that the traveler may leave home at the same hour he/she would
217 leave to report to the office, and, upon return, so that he/she may arrive home at the
218 same time he/she would ordinarily arrive had he/she worked at the office.

219
220 C. When an employee uses a privately owned vehicle instead of an available
221 government-furnished vehicle (GFV), mileage will be paid at the maximum reduced
222 rate consistent with GSA regulations.

223

224 D. In all other cases, mileage for use of privately owned vehicles (POVs) will be
225 compensated at the maximum rate permitted by GSA.

226

227 E. Requests for the use of POV/Rental Cars will be **approved** ~~acted on using current~~
228 ~~SSA policies~~ in a fair and equitable manner.

229

230 F. Common carrier will be used whenever it is reasonably available, unless:

231

232 1. the use of common carrier would seriously interfere with the performance of
233 official business;

234

235 2. or such use imposes an undue hardship on the employee; or

236

237 3. the Federal Travel regulations provide for some other mode; or

238

239 4. the employee requests and receives approval to use a POV or rental car; or

240

241 5. there is a leased GSA automobile made available to the employee.

242

243

244 **Section 8. Document and Property Loss/Theft**

245

246 An employee is accountable for government documents or property in their possession
247 and/or custody. Employees exercising reasonable care will not be held responsible for
248 documents or property damaged, lost, or stolen from their possession and/or custody.

249

250 **Section 9. Protective Assistance and Communications While in Travel Status**

251

252 A. The Administration recognizes that some travel job assignments present a threat to
253 the personal safety of employees. When such circumstances are brought to the
254 attention of the supervisor by employees or the Union, appropriate measures will be
255 taken to assure the safety of the employee. The parties agree to jointly review
256 existing protective procedures from time to time to assure that employees receive
257 the maximum feasible protection from such dangers.

258

259 B. Employees in travel status will be reimbursed ~~\$3.00~~ **\$25.00** per day to make
260 personal calls **and for Internet services**. Exceptions for additional reimbursement
261 may be granted by the travel authorizing official in cases of emergency.

262

263 C. If an employee is in travel status ~~for at least one week at a single SSA facility,~~
264 management will provide the employee with email access at that facility when
265 possible. ~~Management will consider requests for email access from employees in~~
266 ~~travel status for durations of less than one week.~~

267

268 **Section 10. Long-Term Assignments and Training Arrangements**

269

270 An employee on a long-term assignment will be authorized occasional return trip(s) to
271 his/her permanent duty station approximately at the mid-way point of the detail between
272 ~~120~~ **90** and ~~180~~ **120** days and for details of ~~180~~ **90** days or more approximately every
273 ~~90~~ **45** days at government expense on non-workdays or during periods of leave.
274 Reimbursement for long term assignments and training arrangements will be in
275 accordance with Federal Travel Regulations.

276

277 **Section 11. Travel Attendants**

278

279 In accordance with law, employees in travel status with a qualified disabling condition
280 who require the assistance of an attendant will be provided such assistance by the
281 Agency. Travel and per diem will be paid for the attendant.

282

283 **Section 12. Travel Savings Program**

284

285 **A. The Government Employees Incentive Awards Act (5 U.S.C. 501-4508)**
286 **authorizes an Agency to pay a cash award for “efficiency” or “economy”.**
287 **The SSA Travel Savings Program (the program) rewards employees who**
288 **save SSA money while on TDY travel through the issuance of SSA Travel**
289 **Savings Program awards. Participation in the program is strictly voluntary.**
290 **The savings can come from the accomplishment of official air travel at less**
291 **than the**

292 **airline contracted rate thorough the use of frequent flyer miles, flight credits,**
293 **prizes, free flights or otherwise; from the use of less expensive lodging; from**
294 **the avoidance of tax on lodging through the use of official tax exemption**
295 **form; or from any other actions taken by the employee to reduce the cost of**
296 **official travel to less than the maximum allowed for the travel involved.**

297

298 **B. All temporary duty travel will be covered under this program.**

299

300 **C. The amount of the award for each employee will be 50% of the savings. The**
301 **minimum savings to qualify for an award is \$100 and, thus, the minimum**
302 **cash award that can be received is half of the savings, or \$50. Savings may**
303 **be accumulated over a number of trips in order to reach the \$100 minimum.**

304

305 **D. All employees are encouraged to stay at a hotel/motel that meets the**
306 **requirements of the Hotel and Motel Fire Safety Act of 1990. The Official**
307 **Airline Guide indicates which Hotels/Motels are in compliance.**

308 **Employees who participate in the program will receive cash awards by**
309 **incurring a lodging expense at a daily rate that is less than the maximum**
310 **lodging rate for the locality (including tax) under the Lodging Plus Method of**
311 **reimbursement.**

312 **Transportation costs from the place of temporary duty lodging to the**
313 **temporary duty work site and return to the place of temporary duty lodging**

314 will be factored into computing the savings, any transportation costs
315 determined by the travel voucher approving official to be excessive will be
316 deducted from the lodging savings, however, the remaining savings will
317 qualify as savings under the program.

318 The following are examples (not an exhaustive list) of savings on lodging
319 that would qualify under the program.

320 1. Savings on the cost of temporary duty travel that result when a room
321 is shared qualify for savings under the program. The employees
322 should arrange to be billed separately. If this is not possible, a daily
323 rate must be determined for each employee. Divide the total lodging
324 cost by the number of employees and the number of nights to arrive at
325 a daily rate for each employee. That daily rate for each employee is
326 subtracted from the maximum daily rate for the locality to determine
327 the daily lodging savings for each employee.

328 2. Savings on the cost of temporary duty lodging that result when an
329 employee stays with someone (e.g., family, friends) qualify as savings
330 under the program.

331 3. Savings on the cost of temporary duty lodging that result when an
332 employee stays at his/her property (e.g., second home, vacation home,
333 vacant rental property, 'timeshare', etc.) qualify as savings under the
334 program.

335

- 336 **E. Savings that result from the accomplishment of temporary duty air travel at**
337 **less than the airline contracted rate through the use of frequent flyer miles,**
338 **flight credits, flight discounts, prizes, free flights or otherwise, qualify for**
339 **savings under the program. It does not matter how these were earned or**
340 **obtained (official travel, personal travel, or otherwise).**
- 341 **Savings on transportation costs will be determined by a comparison with the**
342 **contract city pair rate in effect at the time of the flight. If no contract fare is**
343 **available, then the lowest available, not restricted coach fare will be used as**
344 **a basis for determining the savings.**
- 345
- 346 **F. The “SSA Travel Savings Program Form” must be completed and submitted**
347 **by the participating employee with the applicable voucher for each trip where**
348 **savings have resulted. After a review of the voucher and the recorded**
349 **savings on the SSA Travel Savings Form, the employee and the travel-**
350 **approving official will sign the form.**
- 351 **Once the minimum \$100 savings have accrued for any employee, the SSA**
352 **Travel Savings Form(s) is (are) ready for processing. The original(s) will be**
353 **attached to a completed SSA Form SSA-171 U3, Recommendation for**
354 **Performance Award, which will be submitted to HRMG for processing. The**
355 **employee will receive an SF-50 from HRMG showing the award amount**
356 **period.**
- 357 **An employee’s travel savings balance will be carried forward indefinitely**
358 **until the minimum \$100 savings is achieved. SSA Travel Savings Program**

359 **Awards will be issued quarterly to each employee who has achieved**
360 **accumulative savings of at least \$100 by the end of the quarter. Taxes will be**
361 **withheld (federal, state, local, FICA) from the award amount. The amount of**
362 **the award and the amounts withheld will be indicated on the W-2 issued to**
363 **the employee.**

364

365 **G. Entry spaces have been provided on the form to record personal information**
366 **(name and SSN), the authorization number, the date and day of the week for**
367 **each night of lodging. The maximum locality rate for lodging for each night**
368 **must be recorded (including tax, if any). The actual lodging cost will be**
369 **entered as well. The savings for lodging is determined by subtracting each**
370 **night's actual lodging costs and any excessive daily transportation costs**
371 **from the maximum lodging rate for the locality (including tax). The results**
372 **will represent the savings on lodging.**

373 **Spaces for summary entries have been provided so that the lodging savings,**
374 **total airfare savings, and any other savings can be recorded from the current**
375 **trip and previous trips.**

376 **A copy of the original travel savings forms submitted for the award must be**
377 **sent to HRMG in Central Office. This information will be used to produce**
378 **reports on the amount of savings generated by the program.**

379

380

381 **Section 13. Travel Reports**

382

383 **The Agency agrees to provide the AFGE General Committee Spokesperson or**
384 **his/her designee a summary of the types of reports that are available through E2**
385 **Solutions or any future travel program. Such reports will be provided the first**
386 **month of each quarter for the preceding quarter. The Union will be provided**
387 **copies of actual reports.**

388

389 **Section 14. Relocation**

390

391 **If an employee is selected from an external vacancy announcement, the Agency**
392 **will pay appropriate relocation expenses in accordance with SSA policy and**
393 **Federal Travel Regulations as if the employee had been selected from an internal**
394 **vacancy announcement.**

395

396

397

398

399

400

401

402 **APPENDIX A**

403

404 **CITIBANK GOVERNMENT TRAVEL CREDIT CARD**

405

406 **Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is entered into by and between the**
407 **American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE) (hereinafter called**
408 **the Union) and the Social Security Administration (hereinafter called**
409 **SSA or Agency). This MOU covers the policies on issuance of the**
410 **Citibank Government travel credit card (hereinafter called travel card),**
411 **usage of this travel card for payment of travel expenses and usage of**
412 **automated teller machines (ATM) for authorized cash withdrawals by**
413 **employees with the travel card.**

414

415 **1. All provisions of the Federal Travel Regulation (FTR) will be applied**
416 **fairly and equitably to bargaining unit employees regardless of**
417 **location.**

418 **2. All SSA employees who travel, with limited exceptions as identified**
419 **in items 4., 12. and 14., must obtain and use the Citibank travel card**
420 **and the Government ATM program for authorized cash withdrawals.**
421 **While employees are encouraged to use the travel card for all**
422 **travel expenses, they may use their own charge cards or personal**

- 423 funds to cover these expenses, other than transportation tickets.
- 424 3. SSA will make every effort to ensure that all employees, who are expected to
425 travel, will receive their travel card, travel orders and/or travel
426 authorizations in sufficient time (5 workdays) for the employee(s) to arrange for
427 travel, lodgings and to obtain their authorized advance, if applicable, during
428 normal duty hours. Travel advances will be calculated in accordance with
429 applicable travel regulations and agreements.
- 430 4. In individual circumstances, an employee has the right to submit a
431 written hardship request for an exception from the Government Travel
432 Card Program. A request based on religious beliefs is an example of a
433 valid hardship. When an exception is granted under this provision,
434 advances will be made in accordance with item 3 of this MOU.
- 435 5. In accordance with Article 8 of the National Agreement, employees
436 who desire a travel advance must utilize the ATM feature of the Citibank
437 Government Travel Card Program. Employees will be reimbursed ATM
438 fees associated with the authorized ATM cash withdrawals. In addition,
439 employees will be given a sufficient amount of administrative time to
440 travel to and from the nearest ATM facility, which is in the travel card
441 network.
- 442 6. ATM cash withdrawals are limited to \$700 every 7 rolling days, and
443 not to exceed \$500 per day. Retail charges (e.g., parking expenses), where
444 appropriate, are limited to \$700 Per month. In exception cases,
445 employees may be authorized higher ATM/retail limits (e.g., a traveler

446 must conduct back-to-back travel for an extended duration), if their
447 Citibank account is not delinquent. ATM limits will be increased in
448 proportion to increases in the meals and incidental expenses (M & IE)
449 limit as authorized by the Federal Travel Regulation.

450 7. Unit employees who utilize the Government Travel
451 Card Program will be permitted to file for reimbursement of first-class
452 postage and money orders as a miscellaneous expense for the
453 purpose of paying the Citibank bill. Should a dispute with Citibank arise
454 concerning any item on the Citibank bill, employees should outline the
455 problem in writing and forward it to Citibank with their payment for
456 the undisputed amount. Should a dispute arise with the agency
457 concerning reimbursement of a particular travel expense item, that item
458 will be processed in accordance with current published policy.
459 However, those items not in dispute will be processed for immediate
460 payment.

461 8. It is understood that the travel card and account are not to be used
462 for personal purposes and may only be used in connection with
463 official Government travel. Each applicant for the travel card will
464 receive a Government Travel Card Employee Information Packet.
465 SSA will develop this employee information packet with input from
466 the Union. SSA will afford the Union 30 calendar days after receipt of
467 the current information packet or 3 days after the effective date,
468 whichever is later to submit specific recommendations and/or

469 **changes to the Citibank Government Travel Card Employee**
470 **Information Packet. SSA will include appropriate Union**
471 **recommendations and changes and provide a written explanation to**
472 **the Union for any recommendations or changes that were not**
473 **included.**

474 **9. The agency may temporarily deactivate the travel card due to**
475 **changes in an employee's position and/or travel requirements.**
476 **The agency will notify the employee at least 72 hours in**
477 **advance of deactivation of the travel card. Employees who are**
478 **expected to travel at least once per year will not have their**
479 **cards deactivated.**

480 **10. The travel card is the employee's and shall not be stored by or**
481 **surrendered to any administrative, executive officer or supervisor.**
482 **Employees should exercise caution and care in giving the card number**
483 **to another employee to make travel arrangements on their behalf and**
484 **when giving signature on file authorization to travel agents.**
485 **Employees are encouraged to cross out the charge card number from**
486 **the receipts submitted with their SF-1012, Travel Voucher.**

487 **11. Employees have the right to decline to provide their SSN and mother's**
488 **maiden name, which are used for security purposes, and other Privacy**
489 **Act data not relevant for the issuance of the Government travel card.**
490 **This right shall not affect the employee's ability to qualify for the**
491 **Government travel card. SSA will specifically advise employees of this**

492 right in the Employee Information Packet.

493 12. When the employee cannot obtain acceptable lodging at or under the
494 rate for the area at a facility accepting the travel card within the
495 immediate vicinity of the temporary duty station, the employee may be
496 authorized to make an ATM cash withdrawal, or if necessary, receive
497 an advance of funds calculated in accordance with applicable travel
498 regulations.

499 13. SSA agrees to capture available data concerning the timeliness
500 of payment of vouchers. This information will be shared with the
501 spokesperson, AFGE General Committee, or designee(s), on a
502 semiannual basis.

503 14. In the event an employee is unable to make an authorized cash
504 withdrawal through the ATM function through no fault of their own, SSA
505 agrees to provide a timely advance through another method of
506 payment.

507 15. Whereas SSA will establish Agency Program Coordinators in each
508 region to act as regional coordinators and one in Central Office to
509 act as a national coordinator, AFGE will appoint a national
510 coordinator. This individual will, among other things, agree to act as
511 liaison with the Agency coordinators for any questions and/or
512 problems brought to their attention. The AFGE coordinator will be
513 provided with appropriate material to carry out this function. This
514 function will be considered as appropriate use of official time

515 pursuant to the applicable appendix of Article 30 of the National
516 Agreement. This time will be excluded from any official time bank and
517 individual cap.

518 **16. The parties agree to the importance of having an ongoing**
519 **working relationship to discuss the Government Travel Card Program.**
520 **The parties agree to be available as needed to discuss program**
521 **matters by telephone, conference call or video conference as mutually**
522 **agreed upon by the parties. Any concerns or issues may also be**
523 **submitted in writing and will be promptly responded to. In addition, face**
524 **to face meetings may be held if deemed necessary by both parties.**

525

526 **Furthermore, the parties agree to hold three (3) meetings, one (1) day**
527 **each meeting, no more than one (1) meeting per year, with three (3)**
528 **representatives each, beginning in 2010 through the end of the contract**
529 **period, including any renewals. The meetings are to discuss and**
530 **evaluate the Citibank Government Travel Card Program. In addition, a**
531 **contractor representative may be present if requested by either party.**
532 **The agenda will be exchanged 15 days prior to each meeting. All AFGE**
533 **representatives will be on official time, with travel and per diem paid by**
534 **SSA. Official time for AFGE representatives will be excluded from any**
535 **bank or individual cap.**

536 **17. Upon written request to the Office of Finance, Division of Travel**
537 **Management, P.O. Box 17761, Baltimore, Maryland 21235-7761, SSA**

538 **agrees to provide every employee, who is offered the travel card, with**
539 **access to and/or a copy of applicable travel credit card provisions and**
540 **the most current General Services Administration contract concerning**
541 **the Citibank Government Travel Card Program.**

542 **18. SSA agrees to provide the spokesperson, AFGE General**
543 **Committee, or designee(s), a copy of the types of reports that are**
544 **provided to SSA by Citibank. The AFGE General Committee**
545 **Spokesperson will be provided with copies of such reports on an**
546 **ongoing basis.**

547 **19. SSA employees will be provided with a copy of this Appendix when**
548 **they are issued the Citibank Government Travel Card information**
549 **packet. A copy of this Appendix will be published in the appropriate**
550 **AIMS Guide.**

551 **20. It is agreed that split disbursement for reimbursement of official**
552 **travel expenses (split payment to government card**
553 **vendor/employee) will be offered, when available, to Agency**
554 **employees who travel.**

555 **21. Cardholders will be surveyed during the base period of this contract.**
556 **The results will be shared with the Union. The scheduling of any**
557 **subsequent surveys will be determined based on the results of this**
558 **survey. The Union will be given an opportunity to assist in**
559 **designing the survey. Survey questions will be provided to the**
560 **Union prior to distribution to the bargaining unit.**

561 **22. Should the card vendor attempt to collect a fee from the employee**
562 **and the amount in arrears is no fault of the employee, the employee**
563 **should contact their pertinent SSA Program Coordinator for**
564 **assistance in resolving the matter. If SSA is at fault for any fee due**
565 **to delayed payment or violations of this agreement and/or Federal**
566 **Travel Regulations, the Agency will pay any fee charged by the**
567 **credit card company.**

568 **23. If and when SSA decides to implement new aspects of the Travel**
569 **Card Program not specifically addressed in this MOU, such notice**
570 **and opportunity to bargain in accordance with Article 4 of the National**
571 **Agreement will be afforded to AFGE.**

572 **24. Inadvertent use of the Government travel credit card for personal**
573 **use will not be subject to disciplinary action.**

574 **25. The principles of progressive discipline pursuant to Article 23 will**
575 **apply to misuse of the Government Travel card.**

576 **26. All SSA employees who travel, with limited exceptions as identified**
577 **below and in provision 27 of this MOU, must obtain and use the travel**
578 **card for all travel expenses and the ATM program for authorized cash**
579 **withdrawals. The following travel expenses are exempted from the**
580 **mandatory use of the travel card:**

581 **(a) Expenses incurred at a vendor that does not accept the**

- 582 **Government contractor-issued travel charge card;**
- 583 **(b) Laundry/dry cleaning;**
- 584 **(c) Parking;**
- 585 **(d) Local transportation system;**
- 586 **(e) Taxi;**
- 587 **(f) Tips;**
- 588 **(g) Meals (when use of the card is impractical, e.g. group meals) or**
589 **the Government contractor-issue travel charge card is not accepted.**
- 590 **(h) Phone calls (when a Government calling card is available for use**
591 **in accordance with Agency policy);**
- 592 **(i) An employee who has an application pending for the travel charge**
593 **card.**
- 594 **(j) Individual traveling on invitational travel;**
- 595 **(k) New appointees;**
- 596 **(l) Tolls; and**
- 597 **(m) Reimbursable cell phone calls for business purposes or to call**
598 **home.**

599 **27. The Commissioner of SSA or designee has the authority to grant**

600 exemptions from the mandatory use of the Government contractor-
601 issued travel charge card. He/she may exempt any payment, person,
602 type or class of payments, or type or class of Agency personnel if the
603 exemption is determined to be in the interest of the Agency. The
604 Agency intends to continue all existing exemptions.

605 **28. The travel authorizing official will verify that appropriate receipts**
606 **are attached to the employee's voucher.**

607 **29. Travel vouchers for temporary duty travel will be paid by the**
608 **Agency within 10 calendar days from the date the voucher is**
609 **submitted to the travel authorizing official. Travelers will be paid**
610 **a late payment fee of 10% per day of total vouchered**
611 **expenditures if the Agency does not make a payment within 10**
612 **days.**

613
614 **Employees should submit their vouchers to travel authorizing**
615 **officials within 5 days after travel; and travel authorizing officials**
616 **must indicate "Received: date" on the voucher to ensure that**
617 **vouchers are processed with the 10-day timeframe after receipt**
618 **by the travel authorizing official. For vouchers submitted**
619 **electronically, the electronic signature date of the traveler may be**
620 **used. If the voucher is FAXed, the FAX date may be used, or if**
621 **the voucher is submitted after normal working hours, the date of**
622 **the next business day may be used as the receipt date.**

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After the travel voucher has been submitted, within 4 calendar days, the travel authorizing official will notify the employee of any errors made on the voucher that would prevent payment of the voucher within 10 calendar days, indicating why the travel voucher is not proper for payment. However, uncontested reimbursable expenses claimed in the voucher will be paid in 10 calendar days from the date of voucher submission.

30. Upon written request of the Government charge card contractor, the Agency may collect undisputed delinquent amounts the employee owes them in accordance with the provisions and procedures of the Debt Collection Act MOU contract language.

31. Employees shall be provided a reasonable amount of administrative time to participate in all aspects of the Government travel card program including but not limited to booking flights, hotel rooms, and rental cards, obtaining travel orders, reading and asking questions regarding travel packets and travel policies, obtain advances whether by ATM or otherwise, filing travel vouchers, obtaining appropriate documentation for travel vouchers, questioning and appealing decisions regarding travel voucher claims, disputing Government credit card bill charges, responding to SSA Government card program surveys, disputing fees charged by the Government

646 **credit card vendor, disputing collection efforts by the**
647 **Government travel card vendor or SSA, etc.**

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669 **APPENDIX B**

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671 **TRAVEL ALLOWANCES FOR LONG-TERM TRAINING ASSIGNMENTS**

672

673 **A. Surveys**

674 **SSA will conduct joint Union-Management surveys to determine**
675 **lodging, per diem and necessary subsistence reimbursement for**
676 **training assignments of more than 30 days. Surveys will also**
677 **determine which facilities meet health and safety, cleanliness,**
678 **and disabled employee accessibility requirements. The Agency**
679 **will pay maximum travel and per diem rates pursuant to the GSA**
680 **Schedule. Surveys will be utilized to ascertain whether**
681 **reimbursement should be increased or on an actual expense**
682 **basis.**

683 **B. Definitions**

- 684 **1. Expenses covered by per diem: has the same meaning as**
685 **found in the GSA Travel Regulations.**
- 686 **2. Allowable Expense: has the same meaning as found in the**
687 **GSA Travel Regulations.**
- 688 **3. Lodging Facility or Facility: The place of lodging (hotel, motel,**
689 **etc.)**
- 690 **4. Unit: Room in the facility.**
- 691 **5. Survey: The method by which reimbursable costs will be**

692 **determined.**

693 **6. Claims for Reimbursement: Has the same meaning as the**
694 **terms found in the GSA Travel Regulations.**

695 **C. Procedures**

696 **1. When there is a training class made up of employees only**
697 **represented by one component Council, the President or**
698 **designee of that Council will be notified in writing. When**
699 **there is a class made up of employees represented by more**
700 **than one Council, the Spokesperson of the SSA/AFGE General**
701 **Committee will be notified in writing.**

702 **2. This notice will contain, at the minimum, the names of the**
703 **employees in the class, their grades, job titles, duty stations, type of**
704 **class, dates of class and location of the class. This notice will be given in**
705 **sufficient time to perfect any survey which may be required and prior to**
706 **the beginning of any such class.**

707 **3. Upon receiving such notice, the appropriate Council President**
708 **or the Spokesperson (or designee) will designate a Union**
709 **Representative to participate in the survey. A survey will**
710 **be conducted in order to determine whether SSA should reimburse more**
711 **than the maximum published GSA rates due to circumstances that exist**
712 **near the temporary duty station. The survey will also determine what**
713 **facilities near the temporary duty station comply with health and safety,**

714 disabled access and amenity requirements. The survey will be conducted
715 as expeditiously as possible.

716 4. Management agrees to pay travel costs up to the amount that
717 would be allowed if a local representative were named. In
718 those training centers without a local representative,
719 Management will incur travel costs equivalent to those
720 incurred if the nearest representative were designated.

721 5. SSA will, at all times, pay the maximum allowable travel expenses
722 including reimbursement for lodging and meals pursuant to GSA Travel
723 published rates.

724 **D. Standards**

725 The following standards must be considered when determining a
726 representative sample of lodging facilities and/or restaurants (normally
727 facilities, (normally three to six), to be included in the survey for arriving at the
728 reimbursement rate in excess of that allowed by the GSA Schedule.

729 1. Facilities/restaurants surveyed should be within the normal
730 commuting area (usually not more than 5 miles).

731 2. Each room or unit must be equipped with a telephone.

732 3. Facilities/restaurants surveyed must meet all applicable fire
733 and safety standards.

- 734 **4. Facilities/restaurants surveyed should have adequate and well lighted**
735 **parking areas.**
- 736 **5. Surveyed facilities should have onsite laundry facilities.**
- 737 **6. Eating establishments with dining facilities must be**
738 **available within a 1 - 3 block radius of the facility.**
- 739 **7. Surveyed facilities must have adequate heating, air conditioning electricity for lighting**
740 **and adequate hot and cold running water.**
- 741 **8. Facilities/restaurants should provide maintenance of parking**
742 **areas, sidewalks, driveways and grounds; remove ice and snow**
743 **and litter from sidewalks, driveways and parking areas; permit tenant access to the**
744 **premises 24 hours per day.**
- 745 **9. Bus service should be available within 2 blocks of the**
746 **facility/restaurant with no more than 1 hour service between**
747 **the hours of 6:30 - 9 a.m. and 3 - 6 p.m. dally.**
- 748 **10. Facilities should provide security services 24 hours per**
749 **day.**
- 750 **11. All relevant laws, rules and regulations will be observed**
751 **regarding accessibility to persons with disabilities.**
- 752 **12. Each unit will be provided with safe and adequate locking**
753 **devices on the doors and windows. Each unit should have**

754 adequate furniture and linens. Each room will be adequately
755 sized for long term residence.

756 **13. Any facility/restaurant surveyed should have both non-smoking**
757 **and smoking rooms and/or areas.**

758 **14. Facilities should provide daily cleaning and linen service.**

759 **15. Facilities should provide high speed Internet service. If a fee is charged**
760 **for such service, such fee will be paid by SSA.**

761 **16. The facility should provide elevator service if it is multi-storied.**

762 **17. Facility units will be equipped with _____ and radon detections.**

763 **18. Facility units will have, at minimum, basic cable television service.**

764 **19. Facilities will provide accessible defibrillators.**

765 **20. Facilities will provide refrigerators which, if require an additional charge,**
766 **will be reimbursed by SSA.**

767 **E. Conduct of Survey**

768 **1. The designees will use available resource material (e.g., Federal Hotel/Motel Discount**
769 **Directory, Yellow Pages, etc.) to develop which facilities/restaurants may meet the criteria**
770 **to be included in the survey of costs.**

771 **2. The designees will mutually agree which facilities/restaurants will be included in the**

772 survey, based upon the criteria as outlined in this agreement.

773 3. Upon determining the lodgings costs for facilities in the surveyed group,
774 an average cost per day will be developed by adding together the sum of
775 each daily lodging cost and dividing by the number of facilities surveyed.

776 For example:

777	<u>FACILITY</u>	<u>COST PER DAY INCLUDING TAX</u>
778	A	\$ 135.00
779	B	136.00
780	C	132.00
781	D	140.00
782	E	<u>145.00</u>
783	Total Cost	\$118.00 divided by 5 facilities=
784		\$123.60

785 4. A representative sample, normally three to six restaurant facilities,
786 (exclusive of cafeteria and fast food restaurants), shall be surveyed to
787 including a 20 percent tip, will be conducted to determine the average cost
788 of three meals per day in the locality.

790 5. Miscellaneous costs will be determined by taking 10 per cent of the
791 prescribed rate previously established for the area by GSA.

793 6. These costs will be added together to establish the rate for the class. If the
794 rate exceeds the GSA proscribed rate, travelers will be reimbursed for up to

795 **300% of the proscribed GSA rate or an actual expense basis computation of**
796 **(E)(6).**

797
798 **Trainees will receive 100% of the actual necessary expenses for the first 30**
799 **days of long term training and 60% of the actual and necessary expenses for**
800 **the remaining days of training.**

801 **7. Union participation in these surveys, will be on official time, not to be**
802 **counted against any cap or bank.**

803 **8. The parties will jointly inspect the lodging facilities and**
804 **restaurants which are included in the initial survey.**

805 **Subsequent surveys will be jointly conducted by phone. Should**
806 **one of these facilities be subject to complaint by trainees,**
807 **the union or management the parties may conduct another joint**
808 **inspection in order to determine if the facility still meets the standards of**
809 **this MOU.**

810 **9. Surveys will examine Internet Hotel Rating Services in their analysis of**
811 **acceptable facilities. Acceptability includes meeting health and safety,**
812 **cleanliness and noise standards.**

813 **10. Surveyors will contact any government regulatory Agencies (state, federal**
814 **and local) to determine whether any survey of hotels have been subject to**
815 **an inordinate number of complaints from the public regarding health and**
816 **safety, cleanliness, sanitation, noise and/or fraud. Surveyors will contact**
817 **appropriate law enforcement agencies to determine whether both the**

818 **facility itself and the surrounding neighborhood is free from crime and**
819 **therefore, safe.**

820 **F. Miscellaneous Provisions**

821 **1. All affected employees will be given travel orders and or,**
822 **authorizations and advances in advance of the beginning of the**
823 **training class.**

824 **2. Employees will receive a Training Kit which will include; at a minimum, a**
825 **copy of this MOU, examples of processing vouchers, reimbursement**
826 **rates, necessary receipts POV/GOV/Common Carrier travel**
827 **requirements/rates, method of appeal/ etc. as required by applicable GSA**
828 **Travel Regulations. The Union will be provided a copy of this trainee**
829 **travel kit and an opportunity for its review prior to issuance to any**
830 **bargaining unit employee.**

831 **3. Employees are free to make alternative arrangements, however any**
832 **reimbursement will be limited to the rate developed by the survey.**

833 **4. Employees, at the end of the class, will be requested to evaluate the**
834 **accommodations they occupied as well as the sufficiency of the Survey**
835 **Rate. In addition, helpful comments will be solicited with a view to**
836 **alleviate potential future problems. Any such evaluation will be provided**
837 **to the Spokesperson of the SSA General Committee.**

838 **5. Consistent with 5 USC 71, the Administration will not communicate**
839 **directly with employees regarding conditions of employment in a manner**
840 **which will improperly bypass the Union under law.**

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855 **APPENDIX C**

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RELOCATION SERVICES CONTRACT

858 **This agreement covers the manner in which relocation services, as authorized**
859 **by Section 5724 of title 5, United States Code (U.S.C.) and the Federal Travel**
860 **Regulations (FTR) as established by the General Services Administration (GSA)**
861 **and/or the Comptroller General (CG) of the United States, are to be provided and**
862 **paid in connection with residence transactions in association with the relocation**
863 **services contract.**

864 **Relocations services will be offered to all eligible relocating employees. Newly-**
865 **appointed employees, eligible for limited relocation assistance, will be offered**
866 **transportation of household goods. The employee has the option of using**
867 **either the relocation services provided by SSA or receiving direct reimbursement**
868 **from the Government.**

869 **Reimbursements will be consistent with GSA regulations concerning purchase**
870 **and sale of the employee's residence, per FTR, Section 302-6 and 5 U.S.C. 5724.**

871

872 **A. Administrative Leave**

873 **Employees relocating for the benefit of the Government will be granted**
874 **administrative leave (excused absence) by their supervisor of record.**

875 **1. Administrative leave will be granted to employees for all activities related**
876 **to the sale, leasing and/or purchase of a residence. This includes but is**
877 **not limited to loan applications, obtaining and preparing documents,**
878 **house hunting, packing, unpacking and settlement activities.**

879 **B. Contractor Services**

880 **In the subject contract, SSA will obtain a contractor to provide, subject to**
881 **applicable laws and regulations, a relocation services program consisting of**
882 **but not limited to:**

- 883 **1. Guaranteed home sale;**
- 884 **2. Marketing assistance;**
- 885 **3. Management of the shipment and storage of household goods;**
- 886 **4. Property management;**
- 887 **5. Home finding for buyers and renters;**
- 888 **6. Mortgage counseling;**
- 889 **7. Spouse employment counseling; and**
- 890 **8. Assistance to renters available up to 2 years after relocation for those who want**
891 **to buy a home; extensions may be granted upon request up to 1 additional year.**

892 **C. Contractor Responsibilities**

893

894 **Contractor will perform duties such as:**

- 895 **1. Within 1 working day of notification from the SSA relocation staff, the**
896 **contractor shall contact the employee explaining the services**
897 **available.**
- 898 **2. Counseling employees on the effective and timely use of the services.**
- 899 **3. Confirm in writing to the employee and SSA relocation staff within 2**
900 **working days, the contact and the services selected by the employee.**
- 901 **4. During the process, the employee will be given the right to change services**
902 **he/she has selected and also have the right to change counselors.**
- 903 **5. After initial contact with employee the contractor will issue Relocation**
904 **Services Employee Handbook and any descriptive materials regarding the**
905 **services to employee within 5 days.**
- 906 **6. Provide, on an ad hoc basis, counseling and information to**
907 **SSA employees who contact them directly for assistance. The**
908 **contractor will not perform any work under the contract until**
909 **authorization has been received from SSA. Within 1 working**
910 **day after receipt of authorization from SSA, the contractor**
911 **will re-contact the employee and upon approval will**
912 **commence work.**
- 913 **7. Counsel employees concerning the proper and best**
914 **techniques for marketing their home.**

956 use normal marketing time (list date to sale date) and shall indicate
957 on the appraisal report the marketing time on which the appraisal is
958 based. The appraiser must provide comparable sales and listing
959 information and indicate any relevant items not used.

960 **E. Employee Rights**

- 961 1. Employees will be notified of the fees associated with any service
962 whose cost involves a reimbursed or non-reimbursed tax liability
963 to the employee.
- 964 2. Upon request, a copy of the Federal Travel Regulations or applicable
965 sections will be made available to employees.
- 966 3. The employee has the right to choose the mortgage company.
- 967 4. The employee has the right to terminate the outside sale process and
968 accept the guaranteed home sale offer any time after 23_ _days beyond
969 receipt of the guaranteed offer, provided the property has been listed
970 at least for a 30-day period.
- 971 5. No interest or any special fees shall be incurred by the employee for
972 monies that may be advanced by the contractor for closing costs.
973 This does not include any special services or cost agreed to by the
974 employee.
- 975 6. The privacy of the employee must be maintained throughout the entire

976 relocation process by all interested parties.

977 7. The provisions of Article 24 will be applicable for any dispute
978 regarding this procedure. This includes claims for monetary
979 damages.

980 8. Employees will not be subject to any pressures by the contractor or
981 SSA to accept or reject services under this contract.

982 9. The employee may receive extensions upon request as specified
983 in the contract.

984 10. Data collected from employees in connection with the
985 relocation services contract will not be used in connection
986 with any personnel actions affecting employees.

987 Concerns about the accuracy of the information provided in
988 connection with the use of the relocation services contract are
989 appropriate matters for discussion and resolution between
990 management and employees.

991 11. Employee incentive awards for successfully marketing their own
992 home in accordance with terms of the Relocation Services Contract will
993 be \$2,500. This incentive award will not affect and/or decrease
994 monies available to pay other incentive or performance awards.
995 These awards will be payable within 120 calendar days after
996 settlement.

997 F. COMMITTEES

998 **SSA shall provide the Union on an annual basis the following:**

- 999 **1. Questionnaires, reports of complaints, etc., received from**
1000 **employees who have relocated.**
- 1001 **2. Any and all data and reviews submitted to the Agency from the**
1002 **contractor.**

1003 **A Relocation Services committee will be established by the parties. The**
1004 **committee will be composed of an equal number of Union representatives**
1005 **and Management Officials. The Union will be entitled to appoint a**
1006 **minimum of three Union Representatives. The Committee will meet to**
1007 **assess the progress of SSA's relocation program and make**
1008 **recommendations for prospective adjustments, as appropriate.**

1009 **Frequency of committee meetings will, at a minimum, be determined by**
1010 **the committee. The committee will meet annually for up to 5 days at SSA**
1011 **Headquarters.**

1012 **The meeting will be informal; however, a report of the committee's**
1013 **findings will be prepared and submitted to the parties.**

1014 **Matters proposed for discussion by either party will be forwarded to the**
1015 **other party within at least 15 days after receipt of items 1 and 2 above and**
1016 **at least 30 working days prior to these meetings.**

1017 **SSA will pay for all travel and per diem expenses incurred by the three**
1018 **Union representatives. All official time utilized for committee functions**

1019 **will be excluded from the bank or block.**

1020 **Committee meetings and arrangements will be subject to the mutual**
1021 **consent of the committee.**

1022 **Additional subject matters for review may be undertaken by the**
1023 **committee upon mutual consent of the committee.**

1024 **G. Miscellaneous**

1025 **1. Extensions of the acceptance period must be requested orally within 5**
1026 **work days prior to expiration of the 60 day period to the contractor.**
1027 **Written confirmation must follow. Extensions will normally be granted.**
1028 **Denials will be in writing with a rationale.**

1029 **2. Within 2 days prior to the employee vacating the property, there will be**
1030 **a joint inspection by the employee and the contractor or his/her**
1031 **representative. Any deficiencies to be charged to the employee will be**
1032 **noted in writing at this time. A copy of the report will - be given to the**
1033 **employee. In addition, within 36 hours of employee vacating the**
1034 **property, the contractor's representative will perform a post-vacate**
1035 **inspection and fax a copy to the contractor. If the fax is not received within**
1036 **the 36 hours, then any additional damages will fall under the debt**
1037 **collection procedures and not subject to the 5 percent holdback. The**
1038 **contractor will not be able to hold back more than 5 percent of the equity to**
1039 **correct any noted deficiencies based upon mutual agreement. Any**

- 1040 **disagreement will be governed by Article 24 .**
- 1041 **3. Employees will have up to 45 days from acceptance of offer to vacate**
1042 **and will be responsible for all costs until he/she vacates (or acquisition if**
1043 **property is vacant). Employees will agree to allow their homes to be shown**
1044 **upon request by the listing broker or representative. Any extension must**
1045 **be requested orally within 5 work days prior to the 45 day time limit.**
1046 **Written confirmation must follow. Approval must come from the Project**
1047 **Officer. Extensions will normally be approved. Denials will be in writing and**
1048 **provide a rationale.**
- 1049 **4. Employees must select and begin use of relocation services within 180**
1050 **days of notification of the transfer. The request for extension must be in**
1051 **writing and approved by the travel authorizing official and/or the Regional**
1052 **Relocation Liaison. Written request for the extension must be made within**
1053 **15 days from the end of the period. Requests for extensions will normally be**
1054 **granted. Denials must be in writing and provide a rationale.**
- 1055 **5. The contractor will provide title search, inspections and any other services**
1056 **needed to satisfy law and local custom. For any conditions revealed at the**
1057 **time of the inspection that were not covered in an adjustment by the**
1058 **appraiser, the contractor shall establish the cost to secure such conditions**
1059 **by obtaining estimate(s) by qualified inspector(s) or repair contractor(s).**
1060 **If the cost to cure exceeds \$500, two estimates shall be obtained. The**
1061 **contractor shall notify the employee of the repair requirements prior to**

1062 **making the guaranteed offer.**

1063 **6. Any alleged overpayments by SSA to an employee will be handled in**
1064 **accordance with the debt collection negotiations outcome.**

1065 **7. This plan does not prohibit consideration and/or application of the**
1066 **relocation bonus provisions of the Federal Employees Pay**
1067 **Comparability Act of 1990 for bargaining unit employees who also**
1068 **utilize SSA's relocation services.**

1069 **8. The Union will be furnished a copy of the Relocation Services Employees**
1070 **Handbook within 30 days of receipt by SSA.**

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1080 **APPENDIX D**

1081 **FEDERAL EMPLOYEE TRAVEL REFORM ACT (FETRA)**

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1083 **A. This Appendix covers implementation of the Federal Employee Travel**
1084 **Reform Act (FETRA) as contained in 41 CFR 302-1, 4, 5, 6, 10, 14 and 15.**

1085 **B. In cases where the assignment of an employee to a temporary duty**
1086 **station is in the interest of the Government, travel authorizing officials**
1087 **may now elect to pay limited relocation benefits instead of long term**
1088 **detail per diem. This authority affects assignments ranging from 6 – 30**
1089 **months in duration. When limited relocation benefits are authorized, a**
1090 **temporary change in duty status will occur, requiring the employee’s**
1091 **salary to be adjusted to reflect the rate at the temporary duty site.**

1092

1093 **Limited relocation benefits under this authority include travel and per**
1094 **diem for en route travel; transportation and temporary storage for**
1095 **household goods or mobile homes; transportation of a POV; a relocation**
1096 **income tax allowance; and certain miscellaneous expenses. Temporary**
1097 **quarters and a house-hunting trip will also be approved by the travel**
1098 **authorizing official if requested by the employee.**

1099

1100 **The limited relocation benefits allows travel authorizing officials to**
1101 **authorize and pay for the shipment of a privately owned vehicle (POV) to**
1102 **the new duty station. The parties agree that employee may request to**
1103 **ship their POV or to drive; however, SSA will pay for or reimburse**
1104 **shipment costs only if more cost-effective than en-route travel. If**
1105 **employees drive, SSA will pay for mileage reimbursement and all per**
1106 **diem expenses pursuant to Federal Travel Regulations. Travel will be**
1107 **during working hours.**

1108

1109 **For temporary assignments offered or directed by management which**
1110 **are expected to last up to one year, the travel and per diem payment**
1111 **provisions of the Travel Manual Appendix will apply.**

1112

1113 **For temporary assignments offered by management which are expected**
1114 **to last over one year, the provisions of 41 CFR 302-1 may apply when the**
1115 **Agency determines that it would be more advantageous due to cost and**
1116 **other factors as contained in 43 CFR 302-1.302.**

1117

1118 **Employees expected to go on or return from long term temporary**
1119 **assignments, will be fully informed of the effects such assignment has**
1120 **on their health insurance coverage and afforded opportunity to adjust**

1121 **their coverage to best meet their needs. Employees expected to go on or**
1122 **return from long term temporary travel assignments will also be fully**
1123 **informed regarding the taxation of travel expense reimbursements.**

1124

1125 **Employees will receive a reasonable advance notice of**
1126 **transfer/relocation.**

1127

1128 **In accordance with Article 6 of this Agreement, Management has the**
1129 **responsibility to ensure that:**

1130 **1. Employees on detail will remain on dues withholding. The**
1131 **Union organization receiving the dues at the time of the detail**
1132 **continues to receive the dues.**

1133 **2. Employees transferred, reassigned or otherwise relocated to a**
1134 **different Local will also remain on dues withholding. The Union**
1135 **organization receiving the dues at the time of the reassignment**
1136 **or promotion will continue to receive the dues.**

1137 **C. Transferees who perform a house-hunting trip in connection with a**
1138 **permanent change of station also may elect to receive their**
1139 **reimbursement in the form of a fixed amount in lieu of the traditional**
1140 **lodgings-plus method. The rationale for this is the same as for temporary**

1141 **quarters.**

1142 **D. Transferees who must occupy temporary quarters at the new duty station**
1143 **will have a new option to be reimbursed for their lodging, meals and**
1144 **incidental expenses in a fixed amount instead of using the traditional**
1145 **actual expense method. The fixed amount is determined according t the**
1146 **location of temporary quarters and is based in part on the locality’s per**
1147 **diem rate. If this method is elected, the transferee would use the fixed**
1148 **amount to defray expenses and any remainder is retained by the**
1149 **transferee. No receipts or vouchers are submitted in contrast to the more**
1150 **detailed voucher with receipts required under the traditional method.**

1151 **E. For employees who claim direct reimbursement of transportation**
1152 **expenses for the sale or purchase of a residence, their residence sale and**
1153 **purchase reimbursement will be subject to the current limitations of 10**
1154 **percent of the sale price and 5 percent of the purchase price, respectively.**

1155 **F. The incentive award program for relocation home sales will be authorized**
1156 **and made as travel payment.**

1157 **G. For SSA transferees who move to a duty station outside the continental**
1158 **United States (CONUS) and choose not to sell their home in anticipation**
1159 **of a return, SSA can now reimburse expenses related to services provided**
1160 **for renting and managing a primary residence while the employee is**
1161 **assigned t the duty station outsides CONUS.**

1162

1163 **Employee understanding of these policy changes is extremely important,**
1164 **in order that transferees can make the appropriate decisions regarding**
1165 **the new choices they have.**

1166 **1. SSA will prepare and distribute an explanation of these changes**
1167 **along with the “Relocation Services Guide” and the “Direct**
1168 **Reimbursement Guide”, so that every transferee will receive a**
1169 **copy of the explanation when they receive their guides, which**
1170 **are provided to every employee when they begin a change of**
1171 **station.**

1172 **2. SSA will insert new information blanks into the “Change of**
1173 **Station Travel Order Information” form which transferees fill out**
1174 **at the initiation of their relocation, in order to elicit from them**
1175 **their choices regarding the new options available to them; and**

1176 **3. SSA will prepare a “plain language” explanation of the changes**
1177 **for distribution to SSA’s Regional Relocation Coordinators. This**
1178 **will allow those coordinators, who directly service transferring**
1179 **employees, to provide transferees with accurate verbal and**
1180 **written guidance regarding the new policies and procedures.**

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1183 **APPENDIX E**

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TRAVEL MANUAL MOU

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1. All provisions of the Federal Travel Regulations (FTR) will be applied fairly

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and equitably to bargaining unit employees regardless of location.

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2. SSA agrees to implement any new travel rates upon the date as specified by

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the General Services Administration and notify the AFGE General Committee

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as soon as they become aware of the change.

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3. The parties agree that if any AFGE Local, Council or the General Committee

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becomes aware that the subsistence costs for a particular city or area does not

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appear to be adequate, the Local, Council or General Committee may provide

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this information to the designated management official. SSA will notify the

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General Committee of the names of the management officials designated to

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receive the information. The designated management official will conduct a

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survey pursuant with Appendix B of this Article. The results of the survey

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will be used to establish temporary actual expenses, per diem rates for the

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locality at issue. If the survey indicates that a higher per diem rate than the

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GSA Schedule is appropriate, SSA will request GSA to adjust the per diem

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rate for the localities accordingly. SSA will provide the General Committee

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with copies of requests for per diem adjustments and with copies of any

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responses to requests for per diem adjustments received from GSA. Upon

1204 request, SSA agrees to check, at reasonable intervals, on the status of any
1205 pending requests for per diem adjustments.

1206 **4. Payment of Relocation Expenses**

1207 **a. Introduction**

1208 The purpose of this section is to set forth when relocation expenses, as
1209 authorized by 5 USC 5724 and the Federal Travel Regulations (FTR) as
1210 established by the General Services Administration and/or the
1211 Comptroller General of the United States, are to be paid.

1212 Relocation expenses are to be paid when an employee permanently
1213 changes residence accompanying a change in official duty station
1214 which is for reasons which are in the interest of the government and
1215 not primarily for the convenience or benefit of the employee.

1216 **b. Relocation Pursuant to Job Postings**

1217 With the exception of “hardship” cases as provided in subsection 4.b.1
1218 below, the parties agree that job relocations which are made pursuant
1219 to “job postings” will automatically be deemed in the interest of the
1220 government and not primarily for the convenience or benefit of the
1221 employee. Employees who relocate pursuant to job postings will
1222 receive relocation allowances. The amount of relocation allowances
1223 will be determined in accordance with the FTR and other applicable
1224 law or government wide rule or regulation.

1225 **The phrase “job postings” for relocation allowance purposes includes**
1226 **announcements of job openings pursuant to the merit promotion plan**
1227 **and/or the National Agreement and also solicitations of interest (i.e.,**
1228 **memos, teletypes, e-mail messages, or the like recruiting candidates for**
1229 **a position).**

1230 **“Hardship” selections made prior to competition are recognized to**
1231 **differ from other job posting cases and are not covered by the**
1232 **requirements set forth above that job postings are to automatically**
1233 **result in eligibility to receive relocation allowances. In hardship**
1234 **selection cases made prior to competition, the payment of relocation**
1235 **allowances would be at the discretion of management. This different**
1236 **treatment is due to the recognition that many “hardship” selections**
1237 **made prior to competition will have been made primarily for the benefit**
1238 **or convenience of the employee. For purposes of this Section 6.b.,**
1239 **“hardship” is defined as a set of circumstances that are so severe that**
1240 **they jeopardize the employee’s or his/her family’s health or financial**
1241 **security.**

1242 **c. Cases Other than Job Postings**

1243 **In other cases, the determination of whether a particular reassignment**
1244 **action is in the interest of the government and not primarily for the**
1245 **benefit or convenience of the employee will be made on a case by case**
1246 **basis, after consideration of all of the relevant surrounding**

1247 **circumstances. The fact that an employee had expressed interest (by a**
1248 **SSA 4100 form or other means) would be relevant evidence that a**
1249 **particular reassignment was primarily for the benefit or convenience of**
1250 **the employee, but is not to be preclusive or dispositive, in and of**
1251 **itself, of the issues of entitlement to receive relocation allowances.**

1252 **d. The avoidance of otherwise properly payable relocation expenses is not**
1253 **a valid reason for not selecting a particular applicant for a merit**
1254 **promotion announcement or other recruitment action. Nor may budget**
1255 **constraints justify denying an employee payment for relocation**
1256 **expenses which otherwise would be warranted under the terms of this**
1257 **Article.**

1258 **e. Within thirty (30) days of receipt of a written request from an employee**
1259 **who has been selected for a merit promotion or other recruitment**
1260 **action involving permanent relocation and who has been denied**
1261 **relocation expenses, the Agency shall provide the requesting employee**
1262 **and the Union with a written explanation of the reason for the Agency's**
1263 **determination that the payment of relocation expenses was not**
1264 **appropriate.**

1265 **f. Employees who are awarded relocation expenses will be required to**
1266 **agree in writing to remain in government service for 12 months after the**
1267 **effective date of the transfer pursuant to the merit promotion or other**
1268 **recruitment action unless separated for reasons beyond the employee's**

1269 control.

1270 5. The applicable travel orders will accurately reflect, or be amended to reflect,
1271 the major duties of the employee on travel status.

1272 6. SSA will provide unit employees, in advance of departure on a travel
1273 assignment, with information regarding the purpose of their travel, the
1274 anticipate duration, transportation arrangements, and pay status while in
1275 travel.

1276 7. SSA will make every reasonable effort to ensure that employees receive their
1277 travel orders in advance sufficient for the employee(s) to arrange for travel,
1278 lodging, and obtaining advances for per diem and travel allowances, if
1279 applicable, during normal duty hours.

1280 8. Upon request and automatically in the case of a first time traveler, SSA
1281 agrees to provide every employee who is required to travel with summary
1282 written material and an oral explanation of applicable government travel
1283 regulations pertaining to the type of travel which is to be performed.

1284 9. Employees will file travel vouchers within 5 working days after returning
1285 from travel. SSA agrees that all reimbursement vouchers for travel
1286 expenses will be processed within 10 calendar days of receipt. Management
1287 will remind supervisors of the need to process travel vouchers as
1288 expeditiously as possible and the proper procedures for handling disputed
1289 claims. Should there be a dispute as to a particular item, that item will be

1290 processed in accord with current published policy. However, those items
1291 not in dispute will be processed for immediate payment. Future travel
1292 advances will not be barred by the fact that there are outstanding items in
1293 dispute, particularly in cases where an appeal of a denial is in process or the
1294 employee asserts that a travel voucher has been filed on behalf of a prior
1295 travel advance.

1296 **10. Disabled employees who are required to travel will be authorize necessary**
1297 **travel expenses for attendants if the disabled employee meets the criteria for**
1298 **an attendant set forth in relevant law and government wide rules or**
1299 **regulations. The attendant will also be authorized necessary travel**
1300 **expenses pursuant to the FTR.**

1301 **11. Reimbursement of actual and necessary subsistence expenses will be**
1302 **authorized, if appropriate. The actual and necessary subsistence expense**
1303 **basis will appropriately be authorized for travel assignments for which the**
1304 **actual and necessary expenses are expected to exceed the application**
1305 **maximum per diem allowance.**

1306 **12. In accord with 28 USC 2671 et seq and 31 USC 3722, management will pay**
1307 **all allowable claims under law and government wide rule and regulation.**

1308 **13. In accord with PL 98-151, employees will receive a reasonable advance**
1309 **notice of transfer/relocation.**

1310 **14. When an employee's return from travel is delayed to permit the employee to**

1311 **travel during the employee’s regular duty hours, the payment of up to, but**
1312 **not including, 3 days additional per diem will be made for that purpose.**

1313 **15. Temporary Duty Per Diem**

1314 **The costs necessary to compensate employees for lodging, meals and**
1315 **incidental expenses (M&IE) vary with the length of the particular temporary**
1316 **duty assignment in a given location.**

1317 **In cases in which the length of the temporary duty assignment is announced**
1318 **to the employee in advance to exceed 30 calendar days at a single**
1319 **temporary duty location, employees will be entitled to receive lodgings up to**
1320 **the maximum lodgings rate for the locality plus Meals and Incidental**
1321 **Expenses for the locality plus Meals and Incidental Expenses (M&IE) up to**
1322 **the maximum M&IE rate for the locality for the first 30 days of temporary**
1323 **duty assignment following that announcement. Thereafter, assuming that**
1324 **appropriate lodging facilities with cooking facilities are available, employees**
1325 **shall receive per diem lodgings rate for the locality plus M&IE expenses in**
1326 **an amount equal to 60% of the maximum M&IE rate for the locality. In those**
1327 **cases where appropriate lodging facilities with cooking facilities are**
1328 **unavailable or where unusual circumstances are present and acceptable**
1329 **long term lodging is not available at 60% of the maximum per diem, SSA will**
1330 **reimburse employees at the maximum M&IE rate for the locality if special**
1331 **circumstances exist and the maximum per diem rate is insufficient to**
1332 **reimburse lodging and/or M&IE expected by the traveler, the travel survey**

1333 procedures outlined in Appendix B will be used to determine the actual
1334 appropriate expense rate for the traveler.

1335 **16. Commuting Area**

1336 Per diem will be allowed only when the employee's assigned temporary duty
1337 station is outside of the pre-defined reasonable commuting distance from
1338 the employee's official duty station. Reasonable commuting distance is
1339 such that it must allow the Agency to schedule travel for the employee
1340 during their regular scheduled work day to the maximum extent practicable.
1341 Per diem will be appropriate if the travel is more than 30 miles distance from
1342 the employee's official duty station. Per diem will be allowed for commuting
1343 distances of less than 30 miles, if evidence indicates that the total travel
1344 time will exceed 2 hours.

1345 **17. Travel reimbursement for mileage, if the traveler utilizes a POV, or for**
1346 **public transportation expenses are appropriate for commuting area travel. If**
1347 **a traveler utilizes a POV for commuting area travel, and the commute is**
1348 **longer than the traveler's normal commute from their residence to their**
1349 **official duty station, the traveler will be reimbursed for the excess mileage**
1350 **costs at the GSA published rate. If the traveler uses public transportation to**
1351 **travel to the temporary duty site within the commute area, the traveler will be**
1352 **reimbursed any transit fees incurred that exceed either the travel fees**
1353 **expended to commute from their resident to and from their duty station or**
1354 **the value of the POV round trip mileage from their residence to the duty**

1355 station based on GSA published rates.

1356 **18. Limited Blanket Travel Orders for Union Representatives**

1357 As provided below, properly designated AFGE representatives who are also
1358 SSA unit employees shall be authorized limited blanket travel orders to
1359 locations frequently traveled on Union business. The Limited Blanket Travel
1360 Orders will be issued on a quarterly basis.

1361 The spokesperson, AFGE General Committee (or designee) shall notify SSA
1362 in writing of these representatives who are designated for this purpose. The
1363 Spokesperson, AFGE General Committee (or designee) agrees not to
1364 designate Union representatives below the Regional Vice-President level or
1365 equivalent for coverage by limited blanket travel orders authorized by this
1366 Section. Upon receipt of such a designation, SSA will expeditiously process
1367 new limited blanket travel orders for those Union representatives.

1368 Notwithstanding the foregoing, the Agency is not required to grant more
1369 than forty (40) Union representatives limited travel orders pursuant to these
1370 provisions in any given quarter. (This overall cap includes continuations
1371 and renewals of limited travel orders issued in a previous quarter.)

1372 **19. No Cost Travel Orders for Union Representatives**

1373 For those situations in which Union representatives who are also SSA unit
1374 employees and are on official time are not authorized the payment of
1375 transportation expenses by SSA, SSA agrees to issue a no-cost travel order.

1376 **This provision is limited to Union representatives who have a government**
1377 **travel card and who use that card, another credit card, or cash for full**
1378 **payment of affected transportation expenses. No cost travel orders issued**
1379 **pursuant to this provision will not be used for personal travel.**

1380 **The Union request for a no cost travel order will include:**

1381 **(a) the name of Union representative**

1382 **(b) Social Security number of Union representative**

1383 **(c) points of travel**

1384 **(d) duty station**

1385 **(e) dates of travel; and**

1386 **(f) purpose of travel**

1387 **SSA will provide the common accounting number (“CAN”) and subobject**
1388 **classification code (“SOC”).**

1389 **Inter-regional travel will be requested through the Central Office. Intra-**
1390 **regional travel will be requested through the regional office.**

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1394 **APPENDIX F**

1395 **RELOCATION POLICIES**

1396 **This Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is entered into by and between the**
1397 **American Federation of Government Employees General Committee of SSA,**
1398 **hereinafter referred to as AFGE or the Union, and the Social Security**
1399 **Administration, hereinafter referred to as SSA or Management.**

1400 **Nothing in this MOU will serve to amend, modify or otherwise change any term**
1401 **or condition of the National Agreement, Supplemental thereto, or past practice**
1402 **at any level or location, not specifically inconsistent with this MOU.**

1403 **All provisions of the Federal Travel Regulations will be applied fairly and**
1404 **equitably to bargaining unit employees.**

1405 **This agreement covers the parties' understandings that have been reached**
1406 **concerning policy changes in the Federal Travel Regulations (FTR) Chapters**
1407 **302-2, 302-3, 302-6, 302-11, 302-14 and 302-16. The understandings reached are**
1408 **addressed more specifically as follows:**

- 1409 **a. When an employee is relocated at SSA expense (“transfers”), that**
1410 **employee will have a period of 2 years to complete their move. When**
1411 **deemed appropriate under specific criteria detailed in FTR 302-11, SSA**
1412 **travel authorizing officials (TAO) can authorize an additional 2 years**
1413 **beyond the original 2 years for transferees to complete their moves.**

1414 **b. Transferees who choose not to itemize and document their miscellaneous**
1415 **relocation expenses will be reimbursed a fixed amount reimbursement of**
1416 **\$500 for a single person or \$1,000 for a family. If FTR are revised to**
1417 **include other amounts, the increased amount will be available to eligible**
1418 **SSA employees.**

1419 **Transferees who choose to itemize their miscellaneous expenses will be**
1420 **reimbursed for expenses related to the transportation of household pets.**
1421 **Other miscellaneous expenses will be reimbursed per 4 CFR 302-16.1.**
1422 **Items not listed will be reimbursed if such expenses, fees, deposits or**
1423 **losses are associated with employee relocation. Examples include, but**
1424 **are not limited to, contracts for household security systems, telephone**
1425 **service contracts, lodging association fees, parking costs, contract**
1426 **storage locker rental, fees for disconnecting appliance equipment and**
1427 **utilities, forfeiture of medical, dental and workers comp, forfeiture of**
1428 **private insurance contracts, drivers license and use taxes, cutting and**
1429 **fitting rugs, draperies, curtains, etc. Total itemized miscellaneous**
1430 **expenses are still subject to the statutory limitations of 1 week's basic**
1431 **pay for single employees and 2 weeks' basic pay for employees with**
1432 **family. Pay is defined as one's pay upon relocating to the new duty**
1433 **station.**

1434 **c. In order to be considered for reimbursement of a temporary living**
1435 **allowance, a transferee's old and new duty station must be at least 50**
1436 **miles part as measured by map distance via a usually traveled route.**

1437 **Even if a transferee meets this initial test, TAOs must still determine if the**
1438 **allowance is warranted, using the criteria discussed in AIMS 07.22.**

1439 **“Relocation Allowances” dated April 2, 1993.**

1440 **Transferees can submit temporary living expense claims in increments of**
1441 **less than 30 days, down to a minimum of 1 week’s expenses.**

1442 **d. “New hire” transferees (non-Federal employees relocated to their first**
1443 **official duty station for SSA) will receive a relocation income tax**
1444 **allowance as prescribed in FTR 320-17.**

1445 **e. In order for any employee to be eligible for reimbursement of relocation**
1446 **expenses, the distance between that employee’s old and new duty**
1447 **stations must be at least 50 miles. If the new official duty station is less**
1448 **than 50 miles from the new official duty station, the Agency will reimburse**
1449 **relocation expenses if the one way commuting pattern between the old**
1450 **and new official duty station increases by at least 10 miles or there is an**
1451 **increase in commuting time to the new official duty station or a financial**
1452 **hardship is imposed due to increased commuting expenses.**

1453 **F. The amount of SSA’s home marketing incentive program will be the lesser**
1454 **of five percent of the price that the relocation service company paid when**
1455 **it purchased the residence from the transferred employee on the savings**
1456 **SSA realized from the reduced fee/expense it paid as a result after**
1457 **employee finding a bona fide buyer.**

1458 **g. The Employee Relocation Guide will be updated to include the provisions**
1459 **of Appendices C, D and E of Article 8.**

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1475 **APPENDIX G**

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1477 **WEB BASED TRAVEL PROGRAM**

1478 **A. Scope**

1479 **The web based travel program software is an electronic document**
1480 **preparation, routing and approval system, which interfaces with the**
1481 **financial accounting system to make travel payments and notifications**
1482 **and should be used for all temporary duty travel.**

1483 **1. Where possible, travel authorizations must be prepared and**
1484 **authorized electronically prior to travel.**

1485 **2. SSA will pay travel vouchers for temporary duty travel within 10**
1486 **days of submission and within 3 days of data link. Failure to meet**
1487 **such time frames will result in payment of interest to the traveler.**
1488 **Interest will be based on current Citibank interest rates charged to**
1489 **the public.**

1490 **3. Management will electronically approve travel documents on a**
1491 **timely basis.**

1492 **4. The travel authorizing official will maintain storage of voucher**
1493 **receipts for no longer than 3 years unless any such receipt is the**
1494 **subject of litigation by AFGE.**

1495 **5. SSA will make every effort to ensure that all employees who are**
1496 **expected to travel will receive their travel authorization in sufficient**
1497 **time (no later than 5 workdays) prior to travel unless travel is of an**
1498 **unexpected or of an emergency nature. This is to ensure that**
1499 **employees have time to arrange their itinerary (transportation,**
1500 **lodging, etc.) and to ensure the proper SOC and CAN information is**
1501 **provided for travel arrangements.**

1502 **6. In an effort to pay employees timely, the Agency will endeavor to**
1503 **work closely with employees when errors are encountered. It is the**
1504 **employee’s responsibility for notifying the travel card contractor**
1505 **when a payment issue occurs. If payment to the employee is not**
1506 **made within 10 days from the submission of the travel voucher to**
1507 **the appropriate agency official or agency employee,**
1508 **interest/penalties shall accrue pursuant to the Prompt Payment Act.**
1509 **The Agency will coordinate with the travel card contractor and the**
1510 **employee regarding any travel card delinquencies caused by**
1511 **processing problems or delays that are beyond the employee’s**
1512 **control.**

1513 **7. Should management propose any changes in the web based travel**
1514 **software, management will provide notice and the opportunity to**
1515 **bargain to AFGE pursuant to Article 4 of this agreement.**

1516 **8. Travel vouchers should be submitted via the current version of the**

1517 **web based travel software program within 5 workdays after travel,**
1518 **whenever possible.**

1519 **9. If system/software problems occur and employees are not paid**
1520 **within 10 calendar days of the proper submission of an acceptable**
1521 **travel voucher, the employee will be paid by Third Party Draft.**

1522 **10. Employees with special needs will be handled on a case by case**
1523 **basis in accordance with this agreement, applicable laws, rules and**
1524 **regulations. SSA will ensure that its web based travel software is**
1525 **ADR compliant. Any changes in software will be implemented**
1526 **simultaneously to disabled employees who receive alternate ADR**
1527 **compliant software.**

1528 **11. Employees without computer access will be provided paper copies**
1529 **of travel authorizations in sufficient time (no later than 5 work days)**
1530 **prior to travel. Employees will be provided access to a computer**
1531 **terminal, for the purpose of preparing/signing vouchers.**

1532 **12. It is agreed that split disbursement for reimbursement of official**
1533 **travel expenses (split payment to Government Travel Card**
1534 **Contractor/employee) will be offered to agency employees who**
1535 **travel.**

1536 **13. Copies of instructions, training guides, and user manuals**
1537 **concerning the web based travel system will be made available on**

1538 **the Travel web site and provided to the Union and employees in**
1539 **paper form upon request.**

1540 **14. Electronic notification of travel payments will be issued to**
1541 **employees.**

1542 **15. The parties agree to the importance of having an ongoing working**
1543 **relationship to discuss the web based travel program. The parties**
1544 **agree to be available, as needed, to discuss program matters.**

1545 **16. SSA agrees to provide the AFGE General Committee Spokesperson**
1546 **or designee(s) a summary of the types of reports that are provided**
1547 **by the government travel web based system. If requested, the**
1548 **Union will be provided with copies of actual reports. Such reports**
1549 **will be provided to the Union on an ongoing basis at the Union's**
1550 **request.**

1551

1552 **B. Training**

1553 **1. Appropriate training on the agency web based travel program will**
1554 **be provided, as needed, to all preparers, reviewers, and travelers,**
1555 **which includes viewing IVT training, videotapes and the demo disk.**

1556 **2. In the event bargaining unit employees are to be selected as**
1557 **Government web based travel software trainers/instructors,**

1558 **volunteers will be solicited and considered for selection.**

1559 **3. Management recognizes and acknowledges that there will be a**
1560 **reasonable learning period necessary for employees when the**
1561 **begin to use the web based travel software system. Travelers who**
1562 **feel they need additional training may request it.**

1563 **4. Management will train an expert in each SSA installation who can**
1564 **provide hands on assistance to employees who request such**
1565 **assistance in interacting with the web based travel program.**

1566

1567 **C. Administrative Time**

1568 **Time spent by employees in obtaining travel orders, submitting vouchers,**
1569 **engaging in the web based travel program and filing appeals of travel**
1570 **related decisions will be considered administrative time. SSA will provide**
1571 **employees a reasonable amount of administrative time to engage with the**
1572 **web based travel system and to receive training and assistance regarding**
1573 **such system.**

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1577 **APPENDIX H**

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USE OF CELLULAR TELEPHONES

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1581 **1. SSA will not mandate the use of cellular telephones or coerce or pressure**
1582 **employees to volunteer t use them. However, the employee who travels**
1583 **will be issued, upon request, an agency cellular phone.**

1584 **2. The needs of employees with disabilities will be accommodated in**
1585 **accordance with the applicable laws, government wide rules and**
1586 **regulations and this agreement. Such accommodations include**
1587 **retrofitting cellular phones t accommodate employees' disabilities.**

1588 **3. Employees exercising reasonable care will not be held responsible for**
1589 **cellular property damages, lost, or stolen from their possession and/or**
1590 **custody. Employees recognize they are accountable for Government**
1591 **property in their possession and/or custody.**

1592 **4. If an employee is questioned about the loss, theft, damage or misuse of**
1593 **cellular telephone equipment, the Agency will advise the employee of**
1594 **his/her right to Union representation. If the employee requests**
1595 **representation, all discussion regarding the issue will cease until**
1596 **representation is arranged.**

- 1597 **5. In all cases where the Agency determines that an employee is at fault for**
1598 **the loss, theft, damage, and/or misuse of cellular telephone equipment,**
1599 **management will notify the appropriate AFGE Union official on a timely**
1600 **basis.**
- 1601 **6. Information collected from or extracted from cellular phone bills will not**
1602 **be used to appraise employees.**
- 1603 **7. Employees using cellular phone technology will be neither advantaged**
1604 **nor disadvantaged and that employees who do not wish to use the**
1605 **technology will not be adversely affected.**
- 1606 **8. Records will be kept of cellular phone assignments showing date signed**
1607 **out, employee's name, instrument number, and date returned.**
- 1608 **9. SSA will survey traveling employees 6 months after the effective date of**
1609 **the contract regarding the use and need for additional cellular telephones.**
- 1610 **10. The Agency intends that the cellular telephone bill will be the official**
1611 **document used to substantiate and account for calls made on each**
1612 **cellular telephone. Individual usage logs will not be required of users of**
1613 **cellular telephones.**
- 1614 **11. The parties agree that cellular telephones were purchased for the safety of**
1615 **the employees while traveling on government business. Cellular**
1616 **telephones are also intended for employee convenience in expediting**
1617 **official work while in travel status. The parties agree that employees will**

1618 **be expected to exercise good judgment in determining when to use the**
1619 **cellular telephone in lieu of other reasonably available/less costly**
1620 **communication options. Employees may use cellular phones in the same**
1621 **manner as they use phones at their official duty station. Thus, cellular**
1622 **phones may be used to make personal calls pursuant to the contract.**

1623 **12. Generally, employees will decide when to turn on the cellular telephone**
1624 **depending on the situation they encounter in the field.**

1625 **13. Travelers will be informed of the extent of contracted air coverage**
1626 **available within their assigned area.**

1627 **14. At the time a cellular telephone is assigned, employees will be given a**
1628 **carrying case, batteries, plug in adapter, and recharger.**

1629 **15. The Agency intends to provide travelers with necessary orientation and**
1630 **training to properly use the cellular telephone in the field.**

1631 **16. The Agency will address health and safety issues associated with the use**
1632 **of cellular phones and communicate those issues to affected employees.**

1633 **17. If sufficient cellular phones exist to distribute to traveling employees,**
1634 **health and safety considerations will dictate who is issued such phones.**
1635 **Employees who are not issued phones when a cellular telephone shortage**
1636 **exists, employees will be reimbursed for all communication expenses**
1637 **incurred due to the failure of SSA to provide them with a cellular phone.**

- 1638 **18. The parties agree that information existing from health and safety**
1639 **concerns, regarding possible health effects resulting from**
1640 **electromagnetic fields existing in this technology will be referred to the**
1641 **National AFGE/SSA Health and Safety Committee.**
- 1642 **19. Upon request, the Spokesperson of the AFGE General Committee, or**
1643 **his/her designee, will be provided reports, studies or other memorandums**
1644 **relating to the use of the cellular telephone technology generated from**
1645 **information compiled by the Agency.**
- 1646 **20. Upon request, the Agency will also provide, to the General Committee**
1647 **Spokesperson, or his/her designee, manufacturer's or private source**
1648 **advisories and/or information in the Agency's possession about scientific**
1649 **and/or health/safety findings concerning the cellular telephone equipment**
1650 **assigned to employees.**
- 1651 **21. Employees are permitted to have and use personally owned cellular**
1652 **phones on SSA space. Employees will be permitted to make and receive**
1653 **short personal calls/text messages/e-mails with their cellular phones**
1654 **during Agency duty hours.**

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