



Implementation Guidelines for Authorizing Payment of Travel Expenses for Candidates' Pre-Employment Interviews and Travel and Transportation Expenses for New Appointees

A Mandatory Reference for ADS Chapter 467

Revision Date: 08/20/2008
Responsible Office: HR
File Name: 467mad_082008

Implementation Guidelines for Authorizing Payment of Travel Expenses for Candidates' Pre-Employment Interviews and Travel and Transportation Expenses for New Appointees

1. Overview

Effective Date: 12/17/07

These guidelines set forth USAID's policy directives and required procedures, criteria, and responsibilities for the payment of the following:

- Travel expenses for candidates invited for pre-employment interviews, and
- New appointees' travel and relocation costs to their first official duty station.

***2. Responsibilities**

Effective Date: 12/17/07

- a.** The **Immediate Supervisor**, working with the Office of Human Resources (HR) to fill a vacancy, is normally the recommending official who is responsible for initiating a request for payment of a candidate's pre-employment interview travel expenses or new appointee's travel and relocation costs.
- b.** The **Bureau/Independent Office (B/IO)** management staff is responsible for coordinating requests for payment of travel expenses to HR for approval and identifying available funding for payment of the travel expenses.
- c.** The **Office of Human Resources, Chief, Civil Service Personnel Division (HR/CSP)** is responsible for authorizing payment of candidates' pre-employment interview travel expenses or new appointees' travel and relocation costs for covered positions and periodically reviewing and evaluating use of these authorities.
- d.** The **Chief Financial Officer (M/CFO)** is responsible for approving requests for waiver of repayment of travel and transportation expenses.

***3. Use of this Authority**

Effective Date: 12/17/07

The Agency will authorize payment of travel expenses for candidates invited for pre-employment interviews and new appointees' travel and transportation expenses, subject to available funding.

Payment of candidates' pre-employment interview travel expenses and new appointees' travel and transportation expenses is limited to individuals who reside outside the metropolitan Washington, D. C. commuting area.

HR authorizes payment of candidates' pre-employment interview travel expenses and new appointee's travel and relocation expenses to their first duty station, based on consideration of the factors in subsections 5b and 6b.

A decision made in connection with a specific vacancy does not guarantee a similar decision in connection with future vacancies.

4. Applicability

Effective Date: 12/17/07

The guidelines are applicable as follows:

a. The Agency may authorize payment of candidates' pre-employment interview travel expenses or new appointees' travel and relocation expenses for Civil Service (CS) appointees and candidates, Administratively Determined (AD) appointees and candidates, Schedule C appointees and candidates, Senior Executive Service (SES) appointees and candidates, and Executive Schedule (EX) appointees and candidates.

b. Appointees and candidates for Foreign Service (FS), Senior Foreign Service (SFS), Foreign Service National (FSN), and temporary and/or intermittent (when actually employed) positions are excluded from coverage. Also excluded from coverage are candidates for U.S. personal services contracts (PSCs) or FSN personal services contracts. Travel authorities for FS and SFS appointees and candidates are covered in [ADS Chapters 522-525](#).

***5. Procedures for Paying Candidates' Pre-employment Interview Travel Expenses**

Effective Date: 12/17/07

The following procedures apply for paying candidates' pre-employment interview travel expenses:

a. Supervisors normally initiate requests for payment of pre-employment interview travel expenses. Supervisors must prepare a brief written request for payment that addresses the factors below. The supervisor then forwards the written request through his or her management staff for them to identify the funding and to forward the request to the Chief, HR/CSP for approval.

b. The Chief, HR/CSP, or designee, considers the following factors in approving requests for payment of candidates' pre-employment interview travel expenses:

- Whether the position is critical to Agency needs;

- Whether the Agency has experienced or is experiencing difficulty in recruiting qualified individuals for such positions and whether payment of interview travel expenses would be needed to assist in recruiting efforts;
- Whether sufficient information for determining the candidate's qualifications or adaptability for employment in a particular position can be obtained from information on the candidate's resume or application or by telephone conversations with the individual; and
- Whether there is a reasonable expectation of employing the candidate.

c. Upon approval of the request, the appropriate B/IO management staff prepares a [Request and Authorization of Official Travel, AID Form 5-8](#), in accordance with [5 U.S.C. 5706\(b\)](#) and the [Federal Travel Regulations \(FTR\)](#).

***6. Procedures to Pay New Appointees' Travel and Transportation Expenses**

Effective Date: 12/17/07

a. Supervisors normally initiate requests for payment of a new appointee's travel and transportation expenses. Supervisors must prepare a brief written justification that addresses the factors below. The supervisor then forwards the written request through his or her management staff for identification of funding to HR/CSP to approve.

b. The Chief, HR/CSP or designee considers the following factors in approving requests for payment of travel and transportation expenses for new appointees:

- Whether the position is critical to the employing B/IO's needs;
- Whether the appointee's qualifications are of such high value to the employing B/IO to warrant payment of the expenses;
- Whether the Agency has experience or is experiencing difficulty in recruiting qualified individuals for such positions and whether payment of travel and transportation expenses would be needed to assist recruitment efforts;
- The desirability of offering a recruitment incentive to a particular candidate; and
- Whether payment of travel and transportation expenses is being recommended solely or in combination with other incentives, such as a recruitment incentive or an appointment above the minimum rate, for a particular appointee.

c. When it is known in advance that candidates' pre-employment interview travel expenses and/or new appointees' travel and relocation expenses will be paid for the particular position, HR/CSP must include a statement to this effect in the Merit Promotion vacancy announcement to facilitate recruitments efforts.

d. Upon approval of a request to pay a new appointee's travel and transportation expenses, HR/CSP prepares the travel authorization (TA) and provides the appointee with information concerning the allowable expenses. The B/IO management staff identifies available funding and provides funding cites for the TA. New appointees are eligible for payment of the following items in relocating to their first duty station (see [Federal Travel Regulations, 41 CFR 302-1.1](#))

- Transportation of employee and immediate family member(s) ([41 CFR 302-4](#));
- Per diem for the appointee only (41 CFR 302-4);
- Transportation and temporary storage of household goods ([41 CFR 302-7](#));
- Extended storage of household goods ([41 CFR 302-8](#));
- Transportation of a mobile home or boat used as a primary residence in lieu of the transportation of household goods ([41 CFR 302-10](#)).

e. Authorization of allowable expenses and payment of travel and transportation expenses will be made in accordance with [Chapter 302 of the Federal Travel Regulations](#).

f. An advancement of funds, based on and authorized by the approved TA, for the allowable expenses listed above may be paid to a new appointee.

7. Written Service Agreement for New Appointees' Travel and Transportation Expenses

Effective Date: 12/17/07

Payment for any of the allowable expenses or for an advance of funds may not be authorized unless the new appointee signs a service agreement to remain in Government service for twelve months from the effective date of his or her appointment.

8. Repayment of Travel and Transportation Expenses

Effective Date: 12/17/07

a. Except as provided in subsection 8b, an employee who fails to complete the twelve months of service required by the **Payment of Travel and Transportation**

Expenses Service Agreement, Form AID 400-18, will be indebted to the Federal Government and required to repay the travel and relocation expenses on a pro rata basis. The amount to be repaid will be determined by providing credit for each full month of employment completed by the employee under the service agreement. In such cases, HR/CSP notifies the M/CFO to initiate billing and collection actions. See [ADS 625, Accounts Receivable and Debt Collection](#), for additional information regarding employee indebtedness and Agency debt collection procedures.

b. Repayment of travel and transportation expenses is not required

- When the employee fails to complete the 12 months of service, due to involuntary separation from the Agency for reasons beyond the employee's control, which are acceptable to the Agency; or
- When the employee is granted a waiver by the Chief Financial Officer (M/CFO) that recovery of this debt, in whole or in part, would be against equity and good conscience or against the public interest. Requests to waiver recovery of an employee's debt to the Agency must be submitted in accordance with waiver procedures found in [ADS 625, Accounts Receivable and Debt Collection](#).

c. If an employee transfers from USAID to another Federal agency before the completion of twelve months' service, the remainder of the service obligation (in months) is transferred to the receiving agency.

***9. Records and Evaluation**

Effective Date: 12/17/07

HR/CSP maintains records on use of these authorities. The records include a copy of the travel authorization, written request for payment from the employing Bureau/Independent Office, and a copy of the signed Service Agreement for Payment of Travel and Transportation Expenses (if applicable). The original signed Service Agreement will be filed in the e-Official Personnel Folder (e-OPF) of the employee.

HR periodically evaluates the use of these authorities to ensure that payment conforms to the regulations and requirements set forth under these guidelines.

10. Authority and References

Effective Date: 12/17/07

These guidelines meet the requirements in [5 U.S.C. 5706b](#), [5 U.S.C. 5723](#), and [5 CFR part 572](#).

See also

- [Federal Travel Regulations \(41 CFR chapters 301-304\)](#)
- [ADS 625, Accounts Receivable and Debt Collection](#)

The following agreement form is required to comply with the policy directives and required procedures in this Mandatory Reference:

- **Service Agreement for Payment of Travel and Transportation Expenses (AID Form 400-18) (<http://inside.usaid.gov/forms/a400-18.doc>)**

11. Definitions

Effective Date: 12/17/07

candidate or interviewee

An individual who has applied for (or is being considered for) a position in the Agency who

- Has never worked for the Federal government;
- Has worked for the Federal government in the past; or
- Is currently employed by the Federal government in a Federal agency outside of the Washington, D. C. commuting area, regardless of the type of appointment. (Chapter 467)

commuting area

Commuting area is the geographic area that normally is considered one area for employment purposes. It includes any population center (or two or more neighboring ones) and the surrounding localities where people live and reasonably can be expected to travel back and forth daily to work. (Chapter 467)

new appointee

Includes employees on their first appointment to the Federal government and also former Federal employees appointed after a break in service, except that employees separated as a result of reduction in force or transfer of function may be treated as transferees instead of new appointees (see Federal Travel Regulations, 41 CFR 302-1.9). (Chapter 467)

service agreement

A written agreement initiated by USAID and signed by a newly appointed employee under which the employee agrees to remain with the Federal government for twelve months in return for payment of travel and transportation expenses. (Chapter 467)

08/20/08 Revision
Substantive: YES
Editorial: YES
(Office symbols have been updated.)

467mad_082008