Relocation Policy for New Faculty, Staff and Researchers

Type of Policy: Academic
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Policy Owner: Human Resources
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Reason for Policy:
When relocation assistance must be provided in order to successfully recruit the candidate of choice, this policy provides guidelines regarding relocation assistance using Institutional funds for new academic and research faculty, and staff members. The policy also sets forth the guidelines for reimbursement of allowable relocation expenses to the new employee.

Policy Statement:
In order to attract the best faculty and staff, Georgia Tech's employment offers must be competitive. Georgia Tech may provide relocation assistance to new employees provided adequate funding is available and proper approval has been obtained.

Procedures:
Eligibility For Program

- New Academic Faculty – Over and above the following policy guidelines, the Office of the Provost may support the actual costs for moving household goods of new tenured/tenure track academic faculty members. Specific guidelines on faculty relocation may be found at Moving Expense Payment for New Academic Faculty. Departmental Human Resource Representatives (HR Reps) may be contacted for assistance.
- Research Faculty
- Staff at Director level and above. Relocation expenses for other levels of staff may be provided based on availability of unit-level funds and appropriate approvals.
- All appointments must be hired into a benefits eligible position for a period to exceed one academic year.
• The hiring department must have determined that the new employee is the most qualified applicant available to fill the position.
• The recruit must reside, at the time of hire, more than 50 miles from the Georgia Tech office to which s/he will report and the employee’s commuting distance must have increased by at least 50 miles one-way.

Funding Options & Approval Process

Provided that departmental funds are available and that prior approval has been granted, relocation and moving expenses may be offered to the recruit. The following approvals for estimated relocation expenses are always required prior to an offer of employment being extended: the manager requesting the relocation, his/her manager, the unit Financial Officer and the appropriate Vice Provost, AVP, Vice President, Dean, or higher.

The department’s HR Rep/Contact will be responsible for obtaining the approvals using the GT Relocation Authorization Form. The Employment Offer Letter must specify the maximum amount of relocation expenses the Institute may pay the employee.

Funds to assist in the relocation of a new employee are:

• Institutional (General Operation/State) Funds: Institutional funds may be used for the specific amount stated in the Employment Offer Letter and may not be used if expenses are not specifically included in Employment Offer Letter.
• Georgia Tech Foundation Funds (GTF): Departments are authorized to use foundation funds for relocation assistance and may provide relocation support to academic and/or general faculty and administrative hires through the unit’s GTF funds.
  ○ The Office of the Provost may support the actual costs for moving household goods of new tenured/tenure track academic faculty members. See Moving Expense Payment for New Academic Faculty to view specific guidelines as it pertains to faculty relocation.
• Georgia Tech Research Corporation (GTRC): GTRC will provide funding in an annual grant (fixed for the year) for reimbursement for travel expenses and/or relocation expenses incurred during the move of full-time professional employees, Research Engineer, Scientist, Associate, and Technologist. These funds will be provided to the Office of Faculty Affairs within the Provost's Office and they will administer those moves on the academic side. Those relocations pertaining to GTRI will be administered by GTRI Accounting.
• Sponsored Project Accounts: In rare cases sponsored project accounts may allow for the payment of relocation expenses for specific personnel with prior written approval of the Director of Office of Sponsored Programs.
• Departmental Revenue Funds cannot be used for relocation purposes.
Travel Related to the Move - House Hunting Expenses

If the move to the new residence is more than one hundred (100) miles from the employee's new work location, the employee may be reimbursed for coach class airfare for himself/herself, spouse and dependent family members who will reside with the employee. A maximum of two house hunting trips and a maximum of three nights lodging per trip may be reimbursed.

Airfare associated with house hunting trips and the actual move may be directly billed to the Institute through Travel Inc. Refer to the Business and Finance Manual: Non-Employee Travel for additional information. Departments may book directly through Travel, Inc. or reimburse the employee's flight purchase by submitting receipts and the Relocation Reimbursement Form to Human Resources Payroll Department – Attention Tax Accountant.

All house hunting reimbursements must be reported as taxable income. IRS regulations can be found at http://www.irs.gov/publications/p521/index.html.

Household Goods Movement

Georgia Tech’s preferred vendor is Armstrong Relocation & Companies. GTRC has contracts with Allied Van Lines and Armstrong Relocation & Companies and either vendor may be selected by the Corporation or moving coordinator. The contract carriers have a wide network of respected affiliates in the moving industry for which contract rates have been negotiated. These agreements provide for direct billing by the carrier to the coordinating unit (Office of Faculty Affairs or GTRI Accounting). The contract carriers handle domestic and international moves and should be used for full-service pack and move service. In-transit insurance coverage is included, contact the contract carrier for current limits. Household goods are defined as those articles normally part of a family’s possessions such as furniture and clothing. Certain items such as high value, large collections or excessively heavy items may not be covered and should be discussed with a relocation counselor that will be assigned by the moving company.

Self moves may be offered if individuals are relocating a short distance, if they do not have a large quantity of household goods or if budgetary limitations exist. Reimbursable expenses include: rental truck, necessary packing materials, fuel en route, lodging, and approved travel expenses. The contract carriers also handle short moves and, upon request, will assign a complimentary relocation counselor to assist with the move.

Georgia Tech will pay for up to 30 days of storage through the contracted carrier.

If an employee chooses not to use or is unable to use one of the contract carriers and wishes to select another vendor, three (3) quotes are required from licensed relocation carriers. Employees must submit the quotes to the Institute as evidence the company providing the lowest quote was selected. Also, when a preferred vendor is not used, employees may receive only partial
reimbursement.

Movement of household goods through an approved vendor is a not a taxable benefit. Self moves will be taxed according to specific IRS regulations: Publication 521 (2009), Moving Expenses. (Check the IRS Website www.IRS.gov for updated regulations and Publication 521, Moving Expenses.)

All vendor initiations must be handled through Office of Faculty Affairs, GTRI Accounting, or Office of Human Resources. Upon completion of the move, departments must submit reviewed vendor invoice within 10 days of receipt to the Office of Faculty Affairs or GTRI Accounting for approval who in turn will forward to Accounts Payable for processing. In the case of a self move, receipts must be attached to the Relocation Reimbursement Form and submitted to the Human Resources Payroll Department – Attention Tax Accountant.

Final Destination Move

For the final destination move, the employee may be reimbursed for coach class airfare for himself/herself, spouse and dependent family members who will reside with the employee if the employee is traveling farther than 200 miles. Airfare associated with the final move may be directly billed to the Institute through Travel Inc. See Business and Finance Manual Non-Employee Travel for more information regarding this process.

If driving, Georgia Tech will reimburse according to the IRS Standard and the current rate may be found at http://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/p521.pdf. Any mileage reimbursement that exceeds the current IRS guidelines maybe taxable, please consult your tax advisor or Publication 521 (2009), Moving Expenses. There is a two car maximum limit for reimbursement of mileage driven.

For food and lodging, the Federal per diem rate should be utilized and the rate can be found at http://www.gsa.gov/Portal/gsa/ep/home.do?tabId=0. Meals en-route to the new location are taxable.

For mileage reimbursement, receipts and odometer readings or mileage documentation from a map source, such as Mapquest.com, must be provided and reimbursement will be for the most direct route. For airfare reimbursement, e-tickets are acceptable as long as the name of the new employee and the family members match the ticket(s), and show a travel itinerary, cost of ticket and proof of payment. Receipts must be submitted along with the Relocation Reimbursement Form to the Human Resources Payroll Department – Attention Tax Accountant. Reimbursement of final destination expenses cease the night of arrival to the employee’s assigned work location.

Temporary Living Expenses

During the relocation process, at the request of the department, a reasonable part of the expenses associated with temporary living arrangements may be reimbursed. Except for one day (if the
employee can no longer live in his/her former home because the furniture has been moved), all temporary living expenses must be reported as taxable income.

Reimbursement for temporary living expenses must be specified in writing as part of the original offer letter, including the maximum dollar amount to be paid and the maximum time period. Via an ePSF, Human Resources Payroll will process as a supplemental income payment and the ‘Comments field’ on the ePSF must include the total amount to be paid per pay period and the number of pay periods.

**Reimbursement/Payment Process**

To be reimbursed expenditures must be reasonable and necessary. Expenses must be incurred after the employee executes an [Employment Relocation Agreement](http://policylibrary.gatech.edu/employment/relocation-policy-new-faculty) and they must be reported within 12 months of the date the employee starts work at the new location.

All expenses must be itemized on the Relocation Reimbursement Form and submitted to the hiring department. Once approved the hiring department should forward the Reimbursement Form and a copy of the Employee Relocation Agreement, including all receipts supporting such expenses, to the Human Resources Payroll Department – Attention Tax Accountant.

Payments to approved moving companies are paid through the Accounts Payable invoice approval process. If there are any tax implications, Accounts Payable will submit the amounts to the Human Resources Payroll Department for taxation and proper reporting.

The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) requires the Institute to report reimbursements and payments associated with the move as additional income to the employee if the reimbursements and payments exceed IRS guidelines. The additional income would also be subject to payroll taxes. IRS regulations can be found at [http://www.irs.gov/publications/p521/index.html](http://www.irs.gov/publications/p521/index.html).

**Non-Reimbursable Expenses**

Non-Reimbursable expenses include, but are not limited to, costs associated with the move of pleasure boats, airplanes, vacation trailers, recreational vehicles, building supplies, storage sheds, and fees associated with home sale or mortgage. Additional insurance that exceeds the state policy is a personal expense.

**Moving of Laboratories**

When laboratory equipment and supplies must be moved, the department chair or dean must obtain the approval of the Provost, EVPR Research, and/or AVP Research, GTRC. GTRC will initiate and facilitate the move of laboratory equipment. Departments should contact GTRC as soon as possible to coordinate the lab move to coincide with the new employee move. Payments will be processed directly through GTRC.
Repayment Provisions

Any employee to be reimbursed for relocation expenses pursuant to this policy must execute an Employment Relocation Agreement with GT before such expenses are incurred. The agreement will specify that the employee must remain employed on a regular full-time basis for at least one academic year and that if the employee discontinues employment before one academic year, the employee will reimburse GT. Reimbursement to the Institute will be pro-rated according to the number of months the employee has worked for GT and repayment may be waived if employment is terminated for reasons beyond the employee's control. The repayment provision must be included in the offer letter.

Process: The repayment process will follow the established procedure detailed in Salary Overpayment Repayment Process.

General Payment Procedures

Reimbursement and payment requests will be accepted after the effective start date of the employee.

In accordance with IRS guidelines, reimbursement or payment requests must be submitted within sixty (60) days after expenses are incurred or paid.

Any exception requests to this policy must be approved by the President, Executive Vice President for Administration & Finance, Executive Vice President Research, or Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs or their designees.

Disclaimer

Georgia Tech has the sole right to revise, amend, or discontinue this policy at any time.

Forms:
- Relocation Reimbursement Form
- Relocation Authorization Form
- Employment Relocation Repayment Agreement

Form Links:
- Relocation Reimbursement Form
- Relocation Authorization Form
- Employment Relocation Repayment Agreement

Related Information:
- www.IRS.gov
Relocation Expenses (Intrastate)

> Academic Affairs
> Business & Finance
> Campus Use & Facilities
> Employment

- Compensation and Payroll
- Employee Benefits & Services
- Employee Relations
- Employment

- Access to Medical Records
- Approval of Resident Student Rates for Nonresident Employees
- Business Casual Dress Policy for Summer and Fridays
- Business Ethics
- Campus Disability Compliance
- Conflict of Interest
- Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA)
- General Work Rules
- Hiring
- Immigration
- Joint Staffing
- Non-Retaliation Policy
- Performance Management Policy
- Performance Review Following Probationary Period
- Personnel Records
- Progressive Discipline
- Promotion Guidelines for Professional Research Personnel
- Provisional Employment (Probationary Period)
- Purchase of Gifts for Employees/Students
- Relocation

- Moving Expense Payment for New Academic Faculty
- Relocation Expenses (Intrastate)
- **Relocation Policy for New Faculty, Staff and Researchers**
- Responding to Allegations of Scientific or Other Scholarly Misconduct
- Student Employment
- Tech Temp
- Terminations, Reorganizations, and Reassignments
- Unemployment Compensation

> Human Resources Administrative Practice Manual: Classification, Compensation,