



The HR Handbook to Employee Relocation

An Introduction to Employee Relocation

With each passing year, the world grows smaller. Businesses are tackling the international plane in a way they never have before. Gone are the days of businesses having to take their time when it comes to tackling the globe, and instead, even the purest startups often come with multiple locations dotted across the earth.

As a result of companies expanding across the world, we see an ongoing increase in employees moving likewise. To meet the demands of new branches popping up in different countries, many businesses are sending their eager employees to work in these new locations to help opening offices bed in with existing and experienced talent.

With this exciting expansion comes a lot of coordination and planning, as there's a lot more to employee relocation than one might realise. In this handbook, we're providing you with everything you need to get a firm understanding of how to help your business' employees with their overseas adventure in employment.





Employee Relocation: The Logistics

There are any number of reasons that an employee might be relocated to an office in another country. It might be to help start up a new location, fill an important vacancy temporarily, take control of the location, or offer a unique perspective to the new branch. Whatever the motivation behind their move might be, there's a lot to take into consideration and one would be poorly mistaken to think handling an employee relocation is as simple or straightforward as moving a piece in a boardgame.

Experience has shown that employees should not be left to organise their own relocation, for many reasons. If they are moving on behalf of their employer, their employer should do all the heavy lifting and planning for them. Furthermore, leaving employees to manage their own move could prove more difficult overall for the employee and your organisation. Handling an employee relocation requires specialist knowledge in a number of areas that your employees simply wouldn't have - to expect them to would be unreasonable.

Specialist knowledge required for organising an employee relocation include:

- Visas and work permissions
- Organising logistics
- Finding service providers with a strong reputation and reasonable rates (removals companies, estate agents, immigration lawyers, etc)
- Language specialists, language schools and those who can work around language barriers

Your Global Mobility Plan

When a business has a global mobility plan in place, it immediately removes the burden from both employees and HR professionals because there is a tried and trusted plan in place for tackling such a challenge.

A global mobility programme or corporate moving plan should include information and clarification on all aspects of an employee relocation. It is essentially your game plan for what needs to be done and by whom any time a member of staff is being relocated overseas for work. Your Global Mobility Plan should include, but is not limited to:

- Contacts for clarification on visas, including lawyers, embassies and government bodies
- Supplier details for removals, housing, transportation, languages and so on
- Travel providers (from airlines to long-term car rental)
- Guidelines on employee relocation packages and compensation
- Timing guidelines, including a breakdown of when each step of the relocation process should be completed
- Cost guidelines, to ensure that the expenses of the process are properly managed

Choosing to work with a Global Mobility Specialist like Gerson can help you with all of the above, and other aspects of moving staff abroad that may not have occurred to you. Find out more about our [core services](#). You'll find that we are experts in managing most of the above, or have a close network of contacts that can provide any related services you may require.

Common Challenges & Pitfalls

Any time a member of staff is being relocated overseas as part of a corporate moving plan, it comes with a certain set of challenges and pitfalls. Unfortunately, each circumstance is totally unique so these challenges will never be entirely predictable or familiar. Each country has different rules and requirements, and each individual has a different background, set of requirements, list of needs and circumstances that will need to be considered. However, there are certain types of challenges that you can expect and try to prepare for.

Visas and Work Permissions

No matter where in the world an employee is headed, they're going to need to obtain some sort of work visa or entry permission. This will vary from country to country and probably depend on the length of their stay and type of work, but applications will need to be completed and information will need to be provided. It's also likely that some form of background check will need to be completed. Depending on the country and the individual, issues can arise in a multitude of degrees of severity, including:

- Incomplete or incorrectly completed visa application
- Issues with a background check
- Missing proof or validation of residency, qualifications, etc
- Delays, whether routine or due to ongoing issues





Moving With a Family

Employees who are heading overseas to tackle an assignment with their family in tow present an additional set of challenges. Multiply the above visa challenges by the number of family members going along, and you can see how easily the task can become impossible for one person to manage alone.

- But spouses and children present their own challenges, like:
- Suitable housing and neighbourhoods become fewer and more expensive
- Education requirements and proximity to school establishments
- Childcare requirements must be taken into consideration
- Travel costs immediately go up
- Family support must be considered

Ensuring a Smooth Transition

One of the most important things to remember during an employee relocation is that the process has to be absolutely seamless for them. The business' priority is going to be for that individual to settle comfortably and quickly in their new location so that they can hit the ground running in their new role with as few distractions and issues as possible.

The last thing anyone wants is an employee turning up stressed out and unprepared because of a messy moving experience. This is vital for employee happiness and the business' success, so should not be overlooked in any way. That's not to say that it's easy, however. With so many working parts and aspects for moving someone abroad for work, there are plenty of things that can go wrong, therefore any number of challenges can result. By having a strong Global Mobility Plan in place and working with excellent service providers, these can be avoided completely.

Staff Relocation Checklist

On top of having a bulletproof Global Mobility Plan, you'll also want to make sure that you have a clear way to keep things simple and straightforward. An at-a-glance checklist can often help with the broader aspects of an employee relocation and help keep the whole process in line, and ensure that you kick off with all the information you need.

Hold a discussion with the employee about any specific needs or requirements that should be highlighted - ie family, pets, personal circumstances, etc.

Has the member of staff been provided with a satisfactory employee relocation package?

Assess what the member of staff will need in terms of visas and work permissions in order to gain entrance to the destination country

Assess the logistics of their move - what they are taking with them, what's going into storage? What transport will need to be arranged beyond the initial move - long term car rental, etc?

What kind of housing will they require?

What is the process for their current housing? Does the business take care of selling or subletting, or paying rent/mortgage while they're away?

Select a company to help you manage the many working parts of the process

Finding Your Staff Relocation Partner

When it comes to coordinating employee relocations, you want to make sure that your corporate move management service provider is an organisation that can anticipate your needs, meet your expectations and ensure a smooth move for your employees.

When working with Gerson Relocation, you can rely on all this and more. Depending on your needs, we can manage the relocation process from A to Z, or you can opt for a bespoke approach that allows you to choose which aspects we control, support, or leave to you.

We have an impressive track record of coordinating seamless relocations for organisations and their employees to every corner of the globe and we'd be thrilled to help with your next relocation.

At Gerson Relocation we aim to make things as simple and transparent for you as possible. If you have any questions at any point, please simply contact us and we'll provide further assistance, we're always here to help!

[Contact us](#)