

# What happens after an NHL trade? Inside the ‘whirlwind’ of logistics, from pickup to per diems

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[Marcus Johansson](#) had just come off the ice in Anaheim for a [Capitals](#) practice last week when he found out he had been traded.

Again.

It was the fourth time in the past five trade deadlines that Johansson was dealt. There was the New Jersey to Boston move. Seattle to Washington D.C. And, for the second time in three years, Johansson was on his way to Minnesota to join the [Wild](#).

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One of the first calls Johansson received after the trade was from the Wild’s director of team services Andrew Heydt.

“You’re going to make this one easy on me,” Heydt joked.

Johansson laughed.

“It doesn’t get any easier with the family,” he said.

Johansson had to tell his wife, Amelia, and their two daughters — Mila, 7, and Elize, 3 — that he’d be spending most of the next few months away from them. But Heydt knew that. He already had an extensive file on his computer on Johansson, having gone through this trade a couple of years ago when the winger was dealt to the Wild from Buffalo

for [Eric Staal](#). Heydt's file included everything from kids' names to legal, payroll and insurance records.

For every move at the trade deadline — from big ones like [Patrick Kane](#) or [Timo Meier](#) to smaller ones like Johansson — there are countless important details that have to get taken care of behind the scenes while the players' heads are still spinning.

“Your life is thrown into a whirlwind,” said Wild center [Ryan Hartman](#), who's been traded three times in his career.

Players have to pack up their lives and find new housing while trying to decide if they're going to uproot their families to come with them. They've got to get their payroll info transferred, their equipment moved, settle in a new city with new teammates.

Yes, these are first-world problems considering their status and salaries, but the human element and reality of moving to a new city on no notice often gets lost on the trade ticker.

There's [Luke Schenn](#), dealt from the [Canucks](#) to the [Maple Leafs](#), who had the stress of his wife being due to give birth to their third child around deadline day. There's brothers Nick and Brett Richie, swapped for each other between Arizona and Calgary, though they couldn't exactly take over each other's places and cars since their respective fiancées were in their old places.

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And there's Johansson, coming to grips with the fact that FaceTimes with the kids will replace actual playtime with the kids for potentially months.

This is the fourth time Eliza, age 7, had to hear it.

“That part of it is not fun,” Johansson said. “We know we’ll spend a lot of time apart. Those emotions, it’s sad. That’s the first reaction you have before you think of anything else.”



Marcus Johansson (Sergei Belski / USA Today)

For Heydt and others in his position, the job is to not make it any harder than it has to be.

So how do they do it?

Right after Heydt got off the phone with Johansson, he booked him a direct first-class ticket on Delta from LAX to Minneapolis for that afternoon, so he’d be there that night. A car service picked him up at his Anaheim hotel and again at the MSP airport. A room at Hotel Ivy in Minneapolis was booked for the night. The Wild had a game, which Johansson wouldn’t play in. Then they were heading to Canada — Vancouver and Calgary — for a road trip the next afternoon.

“Do you have your passport with you?” Heydt asked.

“Why would I?” Johansson said.

Heydt called Johansson’s wife, who overnighted the passport to Minneapolis, so it’d arrive by 10 a.m. the next day. Before Heydt hung up, he asked Johansson if he had any allergies, so he could notify the team chef. Hanging up, he told Johansson to expect a flurry of messages. Heydt then sent a group text with Johansson’s number to the media relations, equipment, medical and strength training staff so they could coordinate. The same with Taylor Cashman, who handles payroll info in hockey ops. Heydt also added Johansson’s number to the team’s player group texts, and the Swede immediately got welcome messages from teammates from captain [Jared Spurgeon](#) to countryman [Joel Eriksson Ek](#).

“Is it true?” Eriksson Ek asked.

Bill Guerin’s wife, Kara, usually connects with new players’ wives or girlfriends to help them feel welcome and answer any questions. Johansson’s wife and kids are planning on staying at their Arlington, Va., home through the school year, as Mila is in first grade.

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As long as Johansson rents in the Twin Cities, the Wild are responsible for their mortgage for six months, per the Collective Bargaining Agreement. And, yes, that creates an unbalanced benefit for players who have paid off their homes and those who haven’t, according to Justin Noble of Gavin Sports Group, which represents 70 hockey players, including many NHLers.

In addition to a player’s rent or mortgage in his previous city (up to \$5,300 per month this year) if he ends up renting or buying in his new city, Noble lists off some of the other costs the CBA mandates teams to reimburse:

- Moving expenses, including canceled-lease costs, early-cancellation penalties, utility disconnection and replacing driver's licenses and permits. For example, defenseman [John Klingberg](#), acquired by the Wild from the [Ducks](#), plans to have his belongings shipped to his family's Dallas home and his car shipped to Minneapolis. Both are covered by the Wild.
- Hotel accommodations for the 21 days after the trade. If players were dealt after Feb. 15, they are eligible to receive hotel accommodations for the rest of the season — though that would mean their mortgages in their former cities aren't covered. Klingberg, [Oskar Sundqvist](#) and [Gustav Nyquist](#) — three other Swedes acquired by the Wild — are at the same Hotel Ivy. They all have per diem cards: \$117 per day on the road and \$63.50 at home (if the player is staying in a hotel; none if he's renting). Others find rentals, like [Ryan Reaves](#) in [Dmitry Kulikov](#)'s old place on Lake Minnetonka. Sundqvist, Johansson, Nyquist and Klingberg all had rental cars waiting for them at Xcel Energy Center after Tuesday's morning skate.
- Airfare for the player and his spouse to relocate, including one round-trip for house hunting, plus a one-way trip for moving. If a player doesn't relocate, his family can have one additional round-trip economy-class ticket to travel between cities. Klingberg said his wife and two kids are going to head back to Sweden after the school year, and that flight will be covered by the Wild, along with Klingberg's once his season is over in Minnesota.

Anyone who has ever moved might think this is a logistical nightmare. That's why Gavin actually provides a checklist to its players for reference, which also includes tips like telling your financial institutions you're moving, filing change-of-address paperwork with the post office and organizing your kids' school records.



## TRADED PLAYER CHECKLIST

### CBA Benefits for Traded Players

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- [ ] New team is obligated to pay player's rent/mortgage in previous city for a period of six months. Monthly reimbursement shall not to exceed:
  - 2022/23: \$5,300
  - 2023/24: \$5,450
  - 2024/25: \$5,600
  - 2025/26: \$5,750
- [ ] New team is obligated to reimburse player's moving expenses. Moving expenses include cancelled lease costs and penalties; utility connection/disconnection fees; vehicle importation duties and fees; filing costs of revising legal documents to reflect new addresses; and replacing drivers' licenses and vehicle permits. Reimbursement limited to **documented**, out of pocket costs for the Player only and not estimated costs.
- [ ] Hotel accommodations will be paid for a period of 21 days from the time of transfer. If traded after February 15th, player must be provided hotel accommodations for the remainder of the playing season.
- [ ] While a player is living in team accommodations (hotel) the player is entitled to receive daily per diem and rental car allowance (up to 21 days).
- [ ] Player and spouse airfare for relocation. This includes one round-trip for house-hunting, plus a one-way trip for relocation. Airfare will be business class or economy depending on contract status of the player. Reasonable baggage fees incurred shall be reimbursed.
- [ ] If the player does not intend to relocate his family, the family shall be entitled to one round-trip economy class air travel between cities.

### Lifestyle Considerations

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- [ ] Inform financial institutions/investment accounts of new address.
- [ ] Change your address with postal service; US (US Postal Service) Canada (Canada Post).
- [ ] Advise new team of payroll instructions for direct deposit.
- [ ] Cancel utilities, subscriptions, memberships and services at old residence.
- [ ] Inform general insurance providers of new address (auto, homeowners, umbrella coverage).
- [ ] Replace your driver's licence, locate your vehicle deed or title and register for new plates.
- [ ] Determine validity of your will and estate documents in the new jurisdiction.
- [ ] Clean out safety deposit box.
- [ ] Organize your children's school records.

### Financial Considerations

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- [ ] Know your new tax rate ([NHL Tax Rates](#)).
- [ ] Consider tax residency status and ensure you are aware of residency guidelines.
- [ ] Ensure current financial advisor is licenced in new jurisdiction.
- [ ] Open bank account in new country (if you do not have one).
- [ ] Determine if the location of your investment accounts is still appropriate.
- [ ] Recognize that a deemed disposition of your investment assets may occur.
- [ ] Confirm the departure and arrival dates for cross border transfers.
- [ ] Verify if contributions to the group 401k or TFSA should be initiated or terminated.

But how much of this checklist do the players actually handle?

“I’d say little to none,” said Heydt, who has a checklist of his own for the process.

That’s because every team has a person like Heydt, whose job is to make these trades/transitions as seamless as possible. The player’s agents are also very much involved in helping out, as well as their financial advisors. Klingberg isn’t calling U-Haul for quotes on movers to take his belongings from Anaheim to Dallas. Johansson isn’t worried about finding a rental car in Minneapolis. The Leafs helped set it up where Schenn could stay behind in Vancouver last weekend while his wife was close to giving birth, and the team rented ice time and had a skills coach stay behind so he could practice.

“The one piece that goes overlooked a lot is the mental impact a move can have on a player,” Noble said. “If they spend a long time in a current city — a guy like Patrick Kane has been in Chicago for many years; he’ll go to the same place for breakfast, same place for groceries. Hockey players are huge in routines. It’s part of their makeup and why they’re so successful.”

Noble used the example of one of the agency’s clients, Dryden Hunt. The 27-year-old winger, who has a place in Calgary, is on his fourth team this year. He was claimed off waivers from the [Rangers](#) by the [Avalanche](#) in mid-October. He was traded to the Leafs in mid-December for [Denis Malgin](#). And at the deadline, he was acquired by the [Flames](#).

“It’s definitely one of the unique situations I’ve ever seen,” Noble said. “We’re getting reimbursements from different teams for different locations. It’s been a whirlwind. It’s funny because he owns a house in Calgary but rented it to a Flame. Now he’s back in Calgary and he’s got a lease with someone else, so he’s got to find somewhere else to stay when he’s there.”

Usually a week after a trade, reps like Noble or agents will touch base with clients on another important factor: taxes. If a player is moving from a high-tax state (like California or New York) to a no-state-income tax state like Florida or Tennessee, they work to establish the player's residency in the new locale as soon as possible. An example was when former Rangers captain Ryan Callahan was dealt to the [Lightning](#) at the 2014 trade deadline (for future Hall of Famer Martin St. Louis). Bartlett, Callahan's agent, was granted permission prior to the trade to talk contract with then-Lightning general manager Steve Yzerman, so they had a pretty good idea they might be able to work out a deal as pending unrestricted free agent. Callahan signed a six-year, \$34.8 million deal that summer.

"You get 10 percent more income in some states," Bartlett said. "So you want to take advantage."

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The taxes, the reimbursements and the moving logistics are typically handled by a player support staff and their team. But every player has their own unique story, their own preferences. Bartlett recalled one client who had more than a handful of pets — and a ton of luggage — and chartered a private plane for a two-hour flight. The cost was around \$30,000.

(And, no, that wasn't expensed by a team).

"They had three dogs, two cats, a goat, or whatever he had," Bartlett joked. "It wasn't a goat, but they had five or six different pets. It wasn't your normal family dog deal. A bird, a couple cats, couple dogs. It was a pretty good collection."

Johansson didn't have any pets to bring back to Minnesota, but he did get to go back to Arlington on Sunday to meet up with his family and grab some luggage to prepare for the rest of the season. Heydt booked Johansson a flight there from Minnesota after the team returned Sunday



from Calgary, and the winger got to spend a couple of days — missing Monday’s practice — with his kids.

Everything else gets taken care of for him. But saying goodbye again isn’t on anyone’s checklist.

“The kids get older, and they understand more,” Johansson said. “That part doesn’t get any easier.”

*(Top photo of Patrick Kane: Bruce Bennett / Getty Images)*



[Joe Smith](#) is a senior writer for The Athletic covering the Minnesota Wild and the National Hockey League. He spent the previous four years as Tampa Bay Lightning beat writer for The Athletic after a 12-year-stint at the Tampa Bay Times. At the Times, he covered the Lightning from 2010-18 and the Tampa Bay Rays and Tampa Bay Buccaneers from 2008-13. Follow Joe on Twitter [@JoeSmithNHL](#)