

TRAVEL FOR OFFICIAL GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

I. Purpose

This directive establishes the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) policy for Travel for Official Government Business.

II. Scope

This directive applies to all DHS organizational elements serviced by the DHS Office of the Chief Financial Officer. All organizational elements that receive travel support from another Federal agency or that have existing programs, should continue to use those procedures until a DHS-wide system is developed and implemented.

III. Authorities

This directive is governed by numerous Public Laws and national policy, such as:

- A. 41 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Chapters 301 through 304.
- B. 5 U.S.C. 5721-5734.
- C. 20 U.S.C. 905(a).

IV. Definitions

- A. **Card**: A contractor-issued Government charge card for use by DHS employees authorized to travel. The term excludes personal credit cards issued to employees based upon their own financial merit by credit card companies.
- B. **Federal Travel Regulations (FTR)**: Regulations promulgated by the General Services Administration for all civilian Federal Executive Branch employees.
- C. **Employee**: An individual employed by DHS, regardless of rank or status; or an individual employed intermittently in Government service as an expert or consultant and paid on a daily when-actually-employed basis; or an individual serving without pay or at \$1 a year (also referred to as "invitational traveler").

- D. **Official Duty Station**: The building or place where an officer or employee regularly reports for duty to perform his or her work assignments.
- E. **POV**: Privately owned vehicle.
- F. **Local Travel**: Official travel necessary to conduct business within a 50 mile radius of headquarters.
- G. **Official Travel**: Travel authorized by DHS-issued travel orders.
- H. **National Travel**: Travel agency contractor who provides travel reservation services to DHS employees who are authorized to travel on official business.
- I. **Travel Authorization/Orders (TA)**: Written permission to travel on official business.
- J. **Travel Claims/Voucher**: Written request, supported by documentation and receipts, where applicable, for reimbursement of expenses incurred in the performance of official travel.

V. Responsibilities

- A. The **Under Secretary for Management** shall: be responsible for all aspects of this directive.
- B. The **Chief Financial Officer** shall:
 - 1. Monitor the activities of all DHS organizational elements serviced by the DHS Office of the Chief Financial Officer to ensure compliance with this directive.
 - 2. Establish procedures with a system of internal controls to prepare travel authorizations and process claims for reimbursement.
 - 3. Ensure that travel claims are properly liquidated and reimbursements paid to traveler within 30 calendar days of receipt. Interest will be paid on travel claims not processed within 30 calendar days of receipt in the finance office.
- C. The **DHS Travel Technician** shall:
 - 1. Prepare TAs, upon request, and coordinate approvals and certification of funds for DHS travelers.
 - 2. Record the TA in the travel system.

3. Provide a copy of the approved TA to the traveler.
4. Prepare travel claims for reimbursement and liquidate claims submitted for payment.

D. The **Traveler/Employee** shall:

1. Provide required bank information, i.e., bank name, routing number, and account number necessary for electronic fund transfer payment of travel claims
2. Obtain approval, prior to travel, from a designated approving official.
3. Work with the DHS travel technician to prepare a travel authorization (TA). Information required for prepare the TA includes: traveler's complete name; traveler's Social Security Number; Traveler's grade/rate; organizational element; traveler's phone number; travel dates; estimated cost of travel; travel destination; purpose of travel and justification for any additional expenses, i.e., actual expenses, rental car, etc. The above information may be provided to the DHS travel technician via e-mail.
4. Make travel reservations through the DHS Travel Management Center.
5. Ensure that all claims for reimbursement are in accordance with the FTR and submitted within 5 workdays of completion of travel; every two weeks when on extended travel.
6. Pay the contractor-issued Government travel charge card bill in full by the due date if travel expenses were billed to the card (See MD # 1520).

E. The **Approving Official** shall:

1. Approve travel authorizations for employees.
2. Verify that authorized travel is completed.
3. Review travel expenses incurred and being submitted for reimbursement by the traveler to ensure compliance with the FTR.

F. **Policy & Procedures:**

All travel conducted by the DHS employees serviced by the DHS Office of the Chief Financial Officer will be in accordance with the FTR. Until a DHS system is developed, the USCG travel system will be used to prepare TAs, prepare travel claims for reimbursement and liquidate claims for reimbursement.

G. **Policy:** The following travel policies apply to all DHS organizational elements serviced by the DHS Office of the Chief Financial Officer authorized to travel.

1. No travel expenses will be reimbursed without a properly prepared and approved TA. TAs should be prepared and approved prior to departure on travel. Trip-by-trip TAs are preferred, however, a quarterly blanket TA may be approved for frequent travelers. A TA identifies in writing:

- a. The traveler.
- b. Purpose of travel.
- c. Dates of travel.
- d. Travel destination.
- e. An estimate of authorized travel and transportation expenses to be incurred.

2. Electronic funds transfer will be the payment method for all travel reimbursements;

3. All travel reservations will be made through National Travel. National Travel will provide 24-hour service 365 days a year with a dedicated 1-800 (toll free) telephone number for DHS organizational elements serviced by the DHS Office of the Chief Financial Officer. Call 1-800-537-1064 to make all travel reservations, to change an existing reservation, or to cancel a reservation;

4. E-ticket is the preferred method for common carrier reservations. National Travel will provide a traveler itinerary via e-mail/fax for all reservations.

5. A contractor-issued Government travel charge card will be issued to frequent travelers. A frequent traveler is an employee who travels two or more times a year.

H. **Temporary Duty Travel:**

1. Employees authorized to travel will provide National Travel with the approved TA number when calling to make travel reservations. National Travel is not authorized to process travel reservations without a TA number. The cost of common carrier transportation will be charged to the employee's travel card. A personal credit card shall not be used;
2. Employees who have not been issued a travel card will be authorized to charge a DHS direct billed account on the TA. A copy of the approved TA must be faxed to National Travel to make reservations;
3. Employees who have not been issued a travel card may be authorized a travel cash advance, upon request. The request must be received from the traveler at least five workdays prior to departure on travel. The travel advance will be processed and electronic funds transfer payment made via the Department of Treasury;
4. Employees issued a travel card will not be authorized a cash advance through Treasury. The travel card ATM will be used for any required travel advances.
5. Employees will submit travel claims for reimbursement (SF 1012 or Agency equivalent) within 5 workdays of completion of travel to their Approving Official. Employees on extended travel will submit travel claims for reimbursement every two weeks to their Approving Official. Approving Officials will either approve the claim within 3 workdays of receipt or return it to the traveler for clarification/justification. Approved claims will be forwarded to the Chief Financial Officer staff for payment. Properly prepared travel claims will be paid within two weeks of receipt.

I. **Local Travel:**

1. No TA is required for local travel. Normal local travel expenses include costs associated with the use of a POV, such as, mileage, tolls, parking fees, etc., and public transportation fees, such as cabs and metro. Mileage reimbursement will be paid at the standard GSA rate. All local travel will be funded by the traveler's organization. If funding is to be provided by another office, the traveler's organization shall coordinate with the funding organization;
2. Local travel will not include: lodging and M&IE (meals and incidental expenses); and expenses incurred for rental of a vehicle to conduct authorized official business. If a rental vehicle is authorized for local travel, a TA must be prepared in accordance with this directive. The travel charge card may be used for authorized local travel expenses.

3. Employees will submit local travel claims for reimbursement (SF 1164 or Agency equivalent) to an Approving Official. Approving Officials will either approve the local travel within 3 workdays of receipt or return it to the traveler for clarification/justification. Approved claims will be forwarded to the DHS travel technician for payment. Under normal conditions, properly prepared local travel claims will be paid within two weeks of receipt.

J. **Permanent Change of Station (PCS):**

1. Prior to incurring any reimbursable relocation (PCS) expenses a TA will be prepared. The TA will be prepared by the DHS travel technician for approval by the Under Secretary for Management and the Chief Human Capital Officer in accordance with applicable laws and regulations outlined in the FTR. The USCG travel unit will provide technical support to DHS employees who are required to relocate;

2. Employees may submit partial claims or one final claim once all authorized relocation expenses have been incurred. Employees have up to two years from the "entry on duty date" to complete their relocation. All relocation expenses must be supported by receipts.

3. The immediate supervisor will be the Approving Official for reimbursement of relocation expenses. The Approving Official will forward the approved voucher to the Chief Financial Officer staff for payment. Properly prepared claims will be paid within two weeks of receipt.

K. **Procedures:** The following procedures apply to prepare a TA:

1. A Civilian Temporary Duty (TD) Request and Travel Orders must be completed and authorized in the USCG system.

2. Information needed to complete the TA:

a. Travelers complete name.

b. Travelers Social Security Number.

c. Travelers grade/rate.

d. Division and/or branch that the travel is being done for.

e. Travelers phone number.

f. Travelers departure date and number of days on travel.

- g. Estimated cost of travel.
- h. Travelers destination/s.
- i. Purpose of travel.
- j. Justification for addition expenses i.e. actual expenses, rental car.

3. The traveler should return the original signed copy of the TA and 2 copies to the DHS travel technician. The traveler should maintain a signed copy of the TA for his/her records.

4. The DHS travel technician will complete the TA in the system and provide a copy to accounting for certified funds.

L. **Questions or Concerns Regarding the Process:** Any questions or concerns regarding this directive should be addressed to the Office of the Under Secretary for Management.