

## Travel Tips

### Policy

- ✈ All travel shall be approved by the head of the agency or official whom such authority has been delegated.
- ✈ Travel is authorized only to accomplish the purpose of the government effectively & economically. Submit a Travel Request to your supervisor.
- ✈ All travelers need a profile established prior to any travel.

### Authorized Travel

- ✈ Authorization must be approved before expenses occur.
- ✈ Employees traveling are expected to exercise prudent care in incurring expenses. Unnecessary or unjustified expenses are not acceptable.
- ✈ Travel shall be by the most cost effective route and means of accomplishing travel.
- ✈ Taking spouse and/or children in a government vehicle: Refer to employee manual on "Use of a Government Vehicle".
- ✈ Registrations fees will be paid by a government purchase card (it is not allowed to be paid by your travel card). If it is training or a workshop, complete a SF-182 Training Request. Use of Personal vehicle for government travel may be authorized.

### Reimbursement

- ✈ Reimbursable expenses are those essential to the transaction of official business.
- ✈ Employees are responsible for excess costs and additional expenses incurred for personal preference or convenience
- ✈ Travelers shall stay at a fire-safe approved accommodation. The Hotel and Motel Fire Safety Act of 1990 mandates that federal employees on travel must stay in public accommodations that adhere to the life safety requirements in the [legislation guidelines](#).
- ✈ Present receipts for reimbursement with the travel cover sheet to your travel coordinator. Tape small receipts on 8½x11 papers. Meal receipts are not necessary unless you request actual reimbursement.
- ✈ You must acknowledge meals provided by the conference, included in the registration fee or supplied by the government on your travel cover sheet. Per Diem is reduced by any meals provided in the cost of the conference or training, etc.
- ✈ Per Diem on the day you leave and the day you return is ¾ of the daily per diem.
- ✈ If you have a government calling card, you should not request reimbursement for phone calls.
- ✈ If you purchase supplies or fuel with your personal credit card or cash, request reimbursement with form 1164. Receipts are required. Submit to LAO. These items should not be reimbursed through a travel voucher.
- ✈ You will be reimbursed mileage up to the cost of the appropriate common carrier including per diem by that method of transportation. Example: You are traveling to Denver, CO for a conference that begins on Tuesday and ends on Thursday. The cost of the airline ticket is \$550.00 round trip. Your travel days are Monday and Friday. You have authorization from your RL to drive your personal vehicle. You leave on Sunday and return the following Sunday, total mileage driven is 1,620 miles x .445 = \$720.90. You would only be reimbursed \$550.00. You would not receive per diem for Sunday, Saturday or Sunday. (Mileage rates for personal vehicles vary)

### **Travel for Training:**

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- An SF-182 request for training must be approved in AgLearn prior to travel. A training number is required on the travel request and on the SF-182. The training number is available from the Administrative Officer. ([See SOP on Training](#))

### **Leisure travel in conjunction with official travel:**

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- Travelers must reserve and ticket their official travel using GovTrip. The tickets should be for transportation directly to and from their official duty station to their temporary duty station.
- To arrange leisure travel, the traveler must exchange the tickets issued for official travel directly with the airline and the airlines reissue the tickets to add any non-official destinations. The traveler must pay any difference in cost with a personal credit card. The difference in cost is the responsibility of the traveler and may not be reimbursed. Any credit due should be credited to the form of payment used to purchase the official transportation tickets.
- Travelers may not use government contract airfare for leisure travel.
- Travelers are ineligible for per diem for personal days taken in conjunction with official travel
- Travelers must have specific authorization for leave taken with official travel

### **Domestic Travel**

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- Required Lead Time: 3 weeks before departure

### **Foreign Travel**

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- Required Lead Time: 60 days prior to departure for passport re-validation
- 90 days prior to departure for passport issuance
- A Through Letter of Request, stating justification for travel, is required. Addressed to Dr. Blackburn through your Research Leader
- After approval, notification will be sent to the location from the travel desk stating approval of trip and what needs to be submitted for the foreign travel. The approval is for the foreign trip only, and does not automatically include approval of contributed funds or annual leave that may have been mentioned in the Letter of Request.
- The location will send a complete package to the Area Office. To include
  - Flight/or Travel Itinerary
  - Visa information (if applicable)
  - Contact Information
  - Any other information requested for specific country
- Upon receipt of the approval, the location will enter the trip into ARIS/FTIS. This must be done before Headquarters will release official passports

### **Contributed Funds**

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- Required Lead Time: 30 days
- Only funding from a non-federal source in excess of \$250 should be considered for acceptance.
- Must be approved by the Designated Area Ethics Advisor in advance of travel. To obtain approval send a Through Letter of Request (stating mutual benefits derived), letter of offer, Conflict of Interest Form (original

*signature) and "Receipt of Funds from Non Federal Source" form (original signature) in one package to the Area Transportation Assistant, Linda Sundstrom.*

- *Letter of Offer must state items being paid, form of payment, contact name, and return mailing address. Preferred form of payment is by check made payable to the USDA-ARS. DO NOT ACCEPT CHECKS PAYABLE TO YOU. We are able to receive a wire transfer if a check cannot be issued. We are not able to accept direct deposit of funds. If the form of payment changes during the trip, you must have a letter of explanation and back-up information to include copy of payment received and disposition of payment.*
- *AD-202 must state who is paying for which items, address of payee, how are they paying on the face of the AD-202.*
- *Filers of Financial Disclosure Forms must report all contributed travel on the form.*

### ***Technicians and CAT III Scientists Traveling to Meetings***

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- *It is NPA policy to not approve travel costs for technicians and Cat III scientist to attend scientific meetings. Exceptions to this policy will be made when travel is for the purpose of obtaining formalized training (SF-182 training request required) of for certain extenuating circumstances. Authorship will not be accepted as justification for travel.*