

**FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
FINANCE**

Finance

Part 265 Travel

Chapter 11 Temporary Duty Travel – Conference Travel

265 FW 11

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Topics	Sections
<u>OVERVIEW</u>	11.1 What is the purpose of this chapter? 11.2 What is the scope of this chapter? 11.3 What is the overall policy? 11.4 What are the authorities for this chapter? 11.5 What terms do you need to know to understand this chapter?
<u>RESPONSIBILITIES</u>	11.6 Who is responsible for travel-related expenses for conferences?
<u>TRAVEL</u>	11.7 How does conference travel differ from regular Temporary Duty Travel (TDY)? 11.8 How does the Service minimize travel costs associated with attending a conference? 11.9 What is the maximum lodging cost allowed for conference attendance? 11.10 When can an employee make conference-related travel reservations?

OVERVIEW

11.1 What is the purpose of this chapter? This chapter establishes policy and procedures related to incurring expenses for U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) employees who attend conferences, specific training activities, or meetings (called “conferences” throughout) while performing official Temporary Duty Travel (TDY) on behalf of the Service.

11.2 What is the scope of this chapter?

A. This chapter applies to the specific TDY requirements related to costs for travel for conferences (e.g., meeting, retreat, seminar, symposium, etc.), or training activities that are considered a conference (see [5 CFR 410.404](#) and [section 11.5B](#) for a definition of “conferences”). For approvals to actually attend conferences, see the [Joint Administrative Operations \(JAO\) Conference and Event Management team’s SharePoint site](#).

B. This chapter does not cover:

(1) Training programs (see [231 FW 5](#));

(2) Attendance at international meetings (see [532 FW 1 and 2](#));

(3) Permanent Change of Station (PCS) ([see 266 FW 1](#));

(4) Temporary Change of Station (TCS) (see Federal Travel Regulation (FTR), [41 CFR Part 302, Subpart E](#)); and

**FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
FINANCE**

Finance

Part 265 Travel

Chapter 11 Temporary Duty Travel – Conference Travel

265 FW 11

(5) Local travel in and around a permanent duty station (see [265 FW 12](#)).

11.3 What is the overall policy? When traveling to conferences, employees must:

A. Follow the Service’s travel policy (see Part [265 of the Service Manual](#)).

B. Obtain approval notification from the [JAO Conference and Event Management team](#) prior to requesting a travel authorization or reserving travel for a conference (see Conference and Event Management’s [Frequently Asked Questions](#) for more information on levels of approval for various types of conferences and how employees must document those approvals).

C. Provide receipts for all actual conference expenses (e.g., registration and fees for the conference) as part of the travel voucher receipt package in the electronic travel system.

11.4 What are the authorities for this chapter? See [265 FW 1](#) for a list of the authorities for all the chapters in [Part 265](#).

11.5 What terms do you need to know to understand this chapter?

A. Approving officials are supervisors, Directorate members (i.e., Regional Directors; Assistant Directors; Director, National Conservation Training Center (NCTC); Chief, National Wildlife Refuge System (NWRS)), and other officials who approve travel-related transactions (e.g., authorizations and vouchers).

B. Conference is to be broadly understood to encompass workshops, seminars, symposia, or similar events. Often, but not always, conferences will involve official travel.

C. Electronic travel system (i.e., ConcurGov) is an automated, web-based process that Service travelers and approving officials use to plan, document, manage, and monitor TDY travel (see [265 FW 2](#)). ConcurGov is the Service’s current electronic travel system.

D. TDY travel is travel that is performed for official purposes and is over 50 miles from the traveler’s permanent duty station and commuting residence.

E. Travel arranger is a staff member who books, documents, and adjusts travel reservations on behalf of others, including invitational travelers. The staff member could be a Service employee or a contractor.

F. Travel authorization is the form we use to approve official TDY travel and travel-related expenses. These forms are created and approved in the electronic travel system. All travelers must receive written authorization from their approving official before traveling, except in bona fide emergencies (see [265 FW 4](#) for more information).

G. Travelers are employees and non-employees who are authorized to conduct TDY travel on behalf of the Service.

**FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
FINANCE**

H. Travel Management Center (TMC) (i.e., Duluth Travel, Inc. and El Sol Travel, Inc.) is responsible for assisting travelers with booking and adjusting travel itineraries. The TMC charges higher fees to assist with booking travel and adjusting reservations than those associated with self-service booking through ConcurGov.

I. Travel voucher is the form we use to approve travelers for reimbursement of travel-related expenses. These forms are created and approved in the electronic travel system.

RESPONSIBILITIES

11.6 Who is responsible for travel-related expenses for conferences? See Table 11-1.

Table 11-1: Responsibilities for Travel-Related Expenses for Conferences

These employees...	Are responsible for...
A. The Director	Approving or declining to approve Servicewide policy.
B. JAO Administrative Operations Center (AOC) Financial Operations Division Chief	Providing guidance on TDY travel-related issues as necessary.
C. JAO AOC Travel and Charge Card Operations Branch Chief	Providing guidance on TDY travel-related issues as necessary.
D. JAO AOC Travel Team (i.e., Federal Agency Travel Administrators (FATA), Audit team, Help Desk team)	<p>(1) Providing travelers with guidance on the FTR and on Department of the Interior (Department) and Service travel policies, and</p> <p>(2) Assisting travelers and travel arrangers with technical issues associated with the electronic travel system.</p>
E. Approving officials	<p>(1) Familiarizing themselves with TDY travel policy,</p> <p>(2) Complying with the FTR and Departmental and Service policies,</p> <p>(3) Reviewing and approving TDY travel authorizations and vouchers,</p> <p>(4) Ensuring expenses are authorized and allowable and the associated amounts are accurate,</p> <p>(5) Ensuring required documentation (i.e., justifications) and receipts are uploaded,</p> <p>(6) Recognizing that electronic signatures processed through the electronic travel system are legally binding, and</p>

**FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
FINANCE**

Finance

Part 265 Travel

Chapter 11 Temporary Duty Travel – Conference Travel

265 FW 11

These employees...	Are responsible for...
	(7) Using the electronic travel system in adherence with the FTR .
F. Employees	(1) Familiarizing themselves with TDY travel policy, (2) Complying with the FTR and Departmental and Service policies, (3) Requesting approval(s) to travel prior to leaving for trips, (4) Using the electronic travel system in adherence with the FTR , and (5) Ensuring travel for conference attendance is in compliance with this policy.

TRAVEL

11.7 How does conference travel differ from regular TDY travel? When entering the travel in the electronic travel system (i.e., ConcurGov) for a travel authorization to travel to a conference, the employee or travel arranger must:

A. Indicate in the electronic travel system that the travel is for a conference attendance.

B. Attach conference documentation in the electronic travel system. The documentation must include:

(1) Conference attendance approval (see Conference and Event Management's [Frequently Asked Questions](#) for more information on levels of approval for various types of conferences and how employees must document those approvals), and

(2) Receipts or a record for all direct and indirect costs paid by the Government, whether directly by agencies or as reimbursement from agencies to employees or others associated with the conference (e.g., conference fees, tuition, workshops, fieldtrips, and materials for the conference). Conference expenses do not include funds paid under Federal grants to grantees.

11.8 How does the Service minimize travel costs associated with attending a conference? To minimize conference travel-related costs, employees must:

A. Attend only the days of the conference that specifically require the employee to be present,

B. Reduce lodging costs based on the conference agenda (e.g., staying at lodging places that fall within the per diem, taking advantage of group lodging discounts available to conference

**FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
FINANCE**

Finance

Part 265 Travel

Chapter 11 Temporary Duty Travel – Conference Travel

265 FW 11

attendees),

C. Use the General Services Administration (GSA) City Pair Program to obtain lower cost capacity-controlled air fare (see [265 FW 5](#)),

D. Use public transportation or ride sharing, and restricting rental car use to essential use only, and

E. Reduce the number of attendees to those necessary to fulfill the mission of the Service.

11.9 What is the maximum lodging cost allowed for conference attendance? Planned conferences must use the [maximum lodging rate](#) the GSA has established for TDY travel or obtain prior approval for actual subsistence on a case-by-case basis (see [265 FW 6](#)). If the hosting organization selects a venue that exceeds per diem rates, employees must find alternative lodging.

11.10 When can an employee make conference-related travel reservations? Once an employee receives notification of conference approval, they may make their travel plans using the electronic travel system (see [265 FW 2](#) for guidance and exceptions to using the electronic travel system).

/sgd/ Stephen Guertin
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

Date: December 7, 2021