

**FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
FINANCE**

Chapter 5 Temporary Duty Travel – Transportation

5.1 What is the purpose of this chapter? This chapter provides guidance and procedures for employees booking, approving, and modifying transportation reservations for travel and when using their own vehicle for official travel.

5.2 What is the scope of this chapter? This chapter covers transportation for employees conducting temporary duty (TDY) travel. The policy for permanent change of station (PCS) travel is in Part 266 of the Service Manual. Information on local travel is in the memorandum that the Assistant Director - Business Management and Operations issued on 02/23/2009.

5.3 What is the policy? Travelers must:

A. Use the mode of transportation that is most advantageous to the Government to conduct official travel. The traveler is responsible for any additional cost from using an alternate mode of transportation.

B. Use the electronic travel system or travel management center to locate and reserve transportation for official travel.

C. Obtain authorization for each mode of transportation before traveling in order to claim reimbursement for these expenses. The process for documenting approval differs if the traveler is using autobook. Autobook is a functionality in the electronic travel system that bypasses supervisor approval on travel authorizations and sends the itinerary directly to the travel management center for booking.

(1) If the traveler is using the autobook functionality, he or she must:

(a) Obtain the signature of the Approving Official on a hard copy of the Trip-by-Trip Authorization printed from the electronic travel system, or

(b) Complete the Discretionary and Trip-by-Trip Entitlements Form (FWS Form 3-2388), obtain the signature of the Approving Official on the form, and include a copy of the signed form with the receipt packet.

(2) If the traveler is not using the autobook functionality, the electronic travel system creates an official record of approval when the Approving Official digitally signs the travel authorization in the system.

5.4 How is this chapter organized? Table 5-1 shows which sections of this chapter cover the different modes of transportation.

Table 5-1: Information on Modes of Transportation	
Mode of Transportation	Section(s) in this Chapter
<i>Commercial air service</i>	Sections 5.5 - 5.9
<i>Privately owned vehicle (POV)</i>	Sections 5.10 - 5.12
<i>Government vehicle</i>	Sections 5.10 - 5.11
<i>Rail service</i>	
<i>Bus service</i>	
<i>Rental car</i>	Sections 5.13 - 5.17
<i>Taxi, shuttle, and subway service</i>	Section 5.18

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5.5 What are the requirements for using commercial air service? Travelers must:

A. Use the electronic travel system or contact the travel management center to locate and book flights. See Chapter 5 in the *Temporary Duty Handbook: A Guide to the TDY Process* for more information on this topic.

B. Travel by the most cost-effective and efficient route. This usually means traveling by the most direct route on a carrier under contract with the General Services Administration's (GSA) City-Pair Program, in coach or economy class.

C. Use contract city-pair fares whenever they are available. Travelers may select fares offered by non-contract carriers only if:

(1) Space on the scheduled service of the contract carrier is not available in time to accomplish the purpose of the travel;

(2) The scheduled service would require the traveler to incur an overnight lodging expense;

(3) The contract carrier's schedule is inconsistent with the policy of scheduling travel to the maximum extent practical during normal working hours; or

(4) The non-contract carrier offers a fare via the electronic travel system or travel management center that would make the cost to the Government lower than any city-pair or other fare offered by the contract carrier.

(a) To use a non-contract carrier, the traveler must compare costs and document that it is in the Government's best interest to allow the exception. The traveler may use FWS Form 3-2387 to document the cost comparison, or capture screenshots and include them with his or her travel voucher. Comparisons must be made based on the combined costs of transportation, lodging, meals, and related expenses.

(b) The exception to using city-pair fares does not apply if the fare offered by the non-contract carrier is restricted to Government and military travelers performing official business and requires purchase with a Government charge card.

D. The Approving Official documents the approval to use a non-contract fare by including the appropriate reason code on the travel authorization. If the traveler is using the autobook functionality and traveling under a Limited or Unlimited Open Travel Authorization that does not address the use of non-contract fares, the traveler must document approval to use the non-contract fare by completing FWS Form 3-2388 or obtaining another form of written approval (e.g., email).

5.6 What costs will the Service pay for checking baggage? We will pay for an employee to travel with up to two bags, within the airline's allowable weight limit, if the airline charges a baggage fee. An Approving Official may authorize a traveler to exceed the two-bag limit when he or she is carrying equipment or materials required for the official portion of the trip.

5.7 What is the Service's policy on first class and business class airline tickets?

A. There are very limited circumstances when a traveler may fly in first class or business class at the expense of the Service. Table 5-2 describes those circumstances, the requirements for the written request, and the required approvals.

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Table 5-2: First Class and Business Class Travel			
Exception Allowing Premium Class Travel	Written Request Must Include	Required Approvals for First Class Travel	Required Approvals for Business Class Travel
<i>For a disabled or otherwise physically impaired traveler</i>	A current certification from a medical authority. The certification must be updated annually, unless the impairment is a lifelong impairment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supervisor • Regional Safety Officer • Director, Department's Office of Financial Management • Assistant Secretary of Policy, Management, and Budget (PMB) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supervisor • Regional Safety Officer • Regional Director / Assistant Director (with copy to the Assistant Director – Business Management and Operations (AD-BMO))
<i>Space is not available in coach or economy class on any scheduled flight in time to accomplish the purpose of the trip, which is so urgent that it cannot be postponed</i>	An explanation of why the matter is so urgent that you cannot postpone it	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supervisor • Director, Department's Office of Financial Management • Assistant Secretary of PMB 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supervisor • Regional Director / Assistant Director (with copy to AD-BMO)
<i>For security reasons or other exceptional circumstances that make premium accommodations essential for successful performance of the mission</i>	A thorough explanation of the situation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supervisor • Chief, Office of Law Enforcement • Director, Department's Office of Financial Management • Assistant Secretary of PMB 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supervisor • Chief, Office of Law Enforcement • Regional Director / Assistant Director (with copy to AD-BMO)
<i>Using premium accommodations will result in a lower total trip cost to the Government than using coach or economy accommodations</i>	A cost comparison documenting the total cost of each trip. The comparison must be based on contract air carrier service where available, and travel by the most direct route.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supervisor • Director, Department's Office of Financial Management • Assistant Secretary of PMB 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supervisor • Regional Director / Assistant Director (with copy to AD-BMO)

B. Travelers must include a copy of the approved request (e.g., FWS Form 3-2388) with their receipt packets.

5.8 What is the policy on coach class seating upgrades? Under coach class seating upgrade programs (e.g., Coach Elite, Coach Plus, Preferred Coach) a passenger may obtain, for a fee, a more desirable seat choice in the coach class cabin.

A. An Approving Official may only authorize the seat choice fee when the coach upgrade is in the interest of the Government (e.g., only seat available).

B. Travelers must address the seat choice fee in the travel authorization or capture it on a supplemental approval (e.g., FWS Form 3-2388) in order to claim the expense.

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C. Travelers may upgrade their seat at their own expense without additional approval. Travelers must use a personal credit card or other personal form of payment to cover the cost of the upgrade.

5.9 When may a traveler use rewards earned through airline loyalty programs or upgrade to premium class at personal expense? Travelers may retain any rewards they earn through airline loyalty programs. A traveler may upgrade official air travel to premium class by using a "free upgrade" earned through participation in a loyalty program or paying with a personal credit card or other personal form of payment without any additional approval. Travelers should contact the travel management center to book flights for official travel using rewards earned through airline loyalty programs.

5.10 When can employees travel by POV, rail, or bus rather than common air carrier?

A. A traveler may travel by POV, rail, or bus instead of common air carrier only when an Approving Official determines it is beneficial to the Government, or the traveler has a current statement from a medical authority indicating that the traveler is unable to travel by air (see sections 5.13 - 5.17 for information about using rental cars).

B. For travel by rail or bus, the traveler must:

(1) Justify use in the travel authorization or obtain a supplemental written approval, and

(2) Use the most cost-efficient class of service available (e.g., coach class on Amtrak Regional, business class on Amtrak Acela Express).

C. If an Approving Official authorizes travel by POV, rail, or bus for medical reasons, the traveler must include a copy of the medical statement with the receipt packet.

D. We consider all of the following cases to be for personal reasons, rather than beneficial to the Government:

(1) All TDY travel locations are adequately served by commercial airlines, and the scheduled departure and arrival times would result in a more efficient trip than travel by POV, rail, or bus.

(2) Some of the TDY travel locations are adequately served by commercial airlines, and the cost of combining common carrier travel and use of a rental car or other special conveyance (e.g., ferry) is less than the cost of traveling by POV, rail, or bus.

(3) The traveler conducts personal travel in conjunction with an official TDY trip and travel by POV, rail, or bus is not otherwise beneficial to the Government.

(4) The traveler chooses to travel by POV, rail, or bus because of a fear of flying that is not documented in a current medical statement issued by a medical authority.

5.11 What must a traveler consider when traveling by POV, rail, or bus for personal reasons? The traveler:

A. Must take annual leave to offset the difference in travel time between the common carrier itinerary and the total travel time.

B. May only claim per diem for the amount of time associated with the common carrier itinerary.

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C. Is responsible for any additional costs that result from choosing to travel by POV, rail, or bus (e.g., lodging) and must complete the Cost Comparison Form (FWS Form 3-2387) to document these costs.

5.12 How does the Service calculate POV mileage reimbursement?

A. The Service uses two General Services Administration (GSA) mileage reimbursement rates to calculate reimbursement for travel by POV:

- (1) A rate for travel by POV that is beneficial to the Government, and
- (2) A lower rate when a Government-owned vehicle (GOV) is available and the traveler uses a POV for personal reasons.

B. These rates change frequently. Visit the GSA Web site for more information on current mileage reimbursement rates.

C. In addition to selecting the appropriate reimbursement rate in the electronic travel system, the traveler must adhere to the following requirements when calculating mileage reimbursement:

- (1) The starting point for the mileage calculation must match the starting point on the travel authorization. The starting point must be either the traveler's residence or duty station, depending on the location he or she departed from immediately before beginning TDY travel.
- (2) We use the MapQuest Web site to benchmark trip distances. If the mileage that MapQuest calculates differs significantly from the mileage that the traveler reports, we will reimburse the traveler for the lesser of the two distances.
- (3) GSA accounts for costs associated with fuel, maintenance, depreciation, taxes, and insurance when setting mileage reimbursement rates. We will not reimburse the traveler for any costs associated with fuel, additional insurance coverage, repairs, or accidents that occur while using a POV on TDY travel.

5.13 When may travelers rent cars for TDY travel?

A. A traveler may only rent a car when:

- (1) An Approving Official determines it is beneficial to the Government, and
- (2) It is specifically addressed in the travel authorization (e.g., Limited Open Travel Authorization, approved Trip-by-Trip Authorization) or supplemental approval (e.g., FWS Form 3-2388) when autobook is enabled.

B. Approving Officials evaluate rental car requests and only approve them when:

- (1) Travel by an alternate mode of transportation would be unduly burdensome, or
- (2) There is no other mode of transportation (e.g., taxi, shuttle).

5.14 What must a traveler consider when renting a car at a TDY location?

A. The traveler must obtain a rental car from a company that participates in the Department of Defense's (DoD) U.S. Government Car Rental Agreement. If multiple participating rental car companies are available, the traveler must select a vendor based on the lowest cost when considering all factors (e.g.,

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location of pick-up and drop-off points, availability of compact size cars). Travelers must explain on the travel authorization and voucher if they rent from a company that is not a DoD-contracted rental car company.

B. Travelers must rent a compact size car, unless they qualify to rent a larger car because they are:

(1) Transporting equipment or materials required for the official portion of the trip that take up more space than is available in a compact car,

(2) Providing transportation to three or more other Service employees on official travel, or

(3) In need of a 4x4 vehicle to safely complete the trip because of inclement weather or off-road terrain.

C. A traveler may participate in a rental car company's loyalty program and earn coupons or promotional benefits during official travel that can be redeemed for either a free day of rental service or a free upgrade to a larger car. The traveler may redeem the loyalty program benefit for a free day of rental service, but may not upgrade to a larger car unless he or she qualifies for an exception to policy.

5.15 What is the policy on using a rental car for personal reasons during official travel?

A. The U.S. Government Car Rental Agreement only covers the traveler when he or she uses a rental car to conduct official Government business. The traveler must limit personal use of the rental car to activities required to ensure sustenance, health, and comfort while performing Government business. For example, the traveler may use the rental car to get meals at a nearby restaurant or food store or to travel to a doctor's office, hospital, pharmacy, barber shop, place of worship, or dry cleaning establishment.

B. When a traveler rents a car for a trip that includes both official and personal travel, he or she must return the car at the end of the official portion of the trip and re-rent the car for the personal portion of the trip under a separate reservation. If a traveler is unable to return the car to the rental car company, and the company allows it, the traveler may use a personal form of payment to cover both the official and personal portions of the trip and submit only the cost associated with the official portion of the trip for reimbursement. The traveler must:

(1) Present the travel authorization to the rental car company to receive coverage under the U.S. Government Car Rental Agreement for the official portion of the trip, and

(2) Not use a Government charge card to cover any costs associated with use of a rental car for personal travel.

C. Members of an employee's family may ride in a car rented under the U.S. Government Car Rental Agreement.

D. Only U.S. Government employees may operate a car rented under the U.S. Government Car Rental Agreement. Members of an employee's family must not drive the rental car unless they are Federal Government employees acting within the scope of their assigned duties.

5.16 What are the traveler's responsibilities if he or she is in an accident in a rental vehicle during official travel?

A. If the traveler is in an accident in a rental vehicle during official travel, he or she must:

(1) Remain at the scene of the accident and summon the police,

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(2) Report the accident to the rental car company, and

(3) Complete any documentation the police or rental car company requires.

B. The rental car company should not charge any costs associated with an accident that occurs in TDY travel status to the Government charge card used to secure the reservation.

C. We will cover the total cost associated with the damages only if the accident occurred within the scope of the employee's official duties and the employee did not violate the terms of the U.S. Government Car Rental Agreement.

(1) If the Service finds that the accident was due to negligence or was unrelated to the employee's official duties, the employee may have to pay the Service for the total cost associated with the accident.

(2) If the employee did not rent the car under the U.S. Government Car Rental Agreement, the Region must consider whether to ratify the contract that the employee signed with the vendor. If the Region ratifies the contract, the Service may cover some or all of the costs associated with the accident. This decision is made on a case-by-case basis.

(3) We investigate car accidents in accordance with 240 FW 7 and complete reports in accordance with 320 FW 8.

5.17 How should the traveler handle a rental car issue (e.g., flat tire) during official travel?

A. Travelers having issues with rental cars should contact the rental car company and follow the company's instructions to resolve the issue.

(1) When an employee rents a car under the U.S. Government Car Rental Agreement, the rental car company pays for repairs and services (e.g., auto repair company, tow truck company) directly. The company may not charge the employee's charge card for any costs associated with any damages or repairs. Since the rental car company bears the cost associated with resolving the issue, the costs are not reimbursable to the traveler.

(2) If a traveler rents a car from a company that does not participate in the U.S. Government Car Rental Agreement and the rental car company tells the traveler to pay for the cost of the repairs or services, the traveler may use his or her Government charge card.

(a) The rental car company should deduct the cost from the rental fee. The traveler must provide an explanation of the situation in the travel voucher and attach an itemized receipt as part of the receipt packet.

(b) If the rental car company does not deduct the cost from the rental fee, the traveler should include this information in the report that he or she files upon returning from TDY travel to ensure that the Service addresses the issue during the investigation.

B. There are some rental car issues that the U.S. Government Car Rental Agreement does not cover. The traveler must pay for all of the following items at his or her own expense:

(1) Locking the keys in a rental car;

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(2) Traffic or parking violations, regardless of whether the traveler was performing official Government business at the time of the violation; and

(3) Repairs resulting from negligence or recklessness.

5.18 When must a traveler take a taxi, shuttle, or subway while on TDY travel instead of renting a car?

A. The traveler must use a taxi, shuttle, or subway service when it is cheaper than obtaining a rental car. We will reimburse the traveler for taxi, shuttle, and subway fares, as well as reasonable tips (no more than 20%) for taxi drivers.

B. The traveler must use complimentary shuttles, when available.

5.19 What is the policy on combining official and personal travel? Travelers must receive authorization to conduct personal travel in conjunction with official travel. The Approving Official must ensure that the official travel is essential and the personal travel is only incidental to the official purpose of the trip.

5.20 How does a traveler combine official and personal travel? The process for combining official and personal travel differs, depending on whether the personal portion of the trip impacts the cost of transportation. The traveler must use the search tools in the electronic travel system or contact the travel management center to estimate costs for the official itinerary and the combined official-personal itinerary and determine which of the following processes is applicable to the trip. The Service will cover the cost of the fee the travel management center charges for booking the itinerary.

A. If the personal travel does not impact the cost of transportation (e.g., extending a single-destination trip and traveling on a city-pair fare), the traveler must:

(1) Book the trip for the combined official-personal duration in the electronic travel system.

(2) Remove per diem reimbursement from all days of personal travel included in his or her itinerary to ensure that the Government does not incur costs for any portion of the personal travel.

(3) Include a note in the travel authorization alerting the Approving Official of the intention to take personal leave in conjunction with official travel. If the traveler is using autobook and conducting a trip authorized under a Limited Open or Unlimited Open Travel Authorization that does not address personal leave, he or she must:

(a) Complete FWS Form 3-2388,

(b) Obtain the Approving Official's signature on the form, and

(c) Include a copy of the signed form with the receipt packet.

B. If the personal portion of the trip (called "personal deviation") impacts the cost of transportation, the traveler must:

(1) Use the electronic travel system to estimate costs for the official itinerary and the combined official-personal itinerary and document these cost estimates on FWS Form 3-2387.

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(2) Provide FWS Form 3-2387 and screenshots of any flight prices to the Approving Official for review. The Approving Official authorizes the traveler to conduct a personal deviation by signing the form.

(3) Book the combined official-personal trip with the travel management center and cover any costs associated with the personal deviation with a personal credit card or other personal form of payment.

(4) Remove per diem reimbursement from all days of personal travel included in the itinerary to ensure that the Government does not incur costs for any portion of the personal deviation.

(5) Include a copy of the approved FWS Form 3-2387, any supplemental documentation (e.g., screenshots), and the itinerary booked by the travel management center with the receipt packet. If the traveler completes FWS Form 3-2387 and obtains an Approving Official's signature, the traveler does not have to complete FWS Form 3-2388 to document the personal deviation.

C. When the traveler books a combined official-personal trip, the reservation is non-refundable. If the Service cancels the official portion of the trip, and this causes the traveler to cancel the personal travel, we may cover some or all of the costs associated with the cancelled ticket. The traveler's supervisor makes this decision on a case-by-case basis.

5.21 When must travelers compare costs for travel?

A. Travelers must compare costs for travel any time they:

(1) Select a mode of transportation that is not the most cost-effective method available, or

(2) Complete a personal deviation that affects the cost of transportation.

B. A cost comparison is not required if the travel authorization specifically authorizes an exception to policy.

5.22 How do travelers complete cost comparisons? Travelers must:

A. Compare costs in the electronic travel system or by contacting the travel management center,

B. Use the estimates to complete FWS Form 3-2387,

C. Obtain the Approving Official's signature on FWS Form 3-2387,

D. Include a copy of the signed form with the receipt packet, and

E. Submit the travel voucher for the total cost associated with the less expensive itinerary.

5.23 What are the traveler's responsibilities when a TDY trip is interrupted with an official deviation? If a traveler's trip is interrupted with an official deviation (i.e., the traveler receives direction to perform TDY travel at another location), the traveler is responsible for contacting the travel management center as soon as possible to adjust and cancel travel reservations as necessary. We will cover the cost associated with change fees and penalties only after determining that the traveler acted reasonably and responsibly in adjusting or cancelling reservations.

5.24 Where can employees find additional information about transportation? Chapter 5 of the *Temporary Duty Handbook: A Guide to the TDY Process* has more information about transportation, including examples and screenshots from the electronic travel system.

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5.25 Who should employees contact with questions about transportation? Contact your Regional Travel Coordinator with questions about transportation. There is a list of the Regional Travel Coordinators in the *Temporary Duty Handbook: A Guide to the TDY Process*.

/sgd/ Sam D. Hamilton
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