

Policy Changes

Receipt Requirements

Old Policy - Itemized receipts were required for any single expense of \$75 or more, excluding meals and incidental expenses for which they receive lodgings-plus per diem reimbursement. In addition, receipts were required for the following expenses, regardless of the cost associated with the expense:

- Common carrier transportation.
- Lodging, including any associated taxes or fees.
- Rental car and fuel.
- ATM fees (government travel charge card only).
- Currency conversion fees.
- Meals reimbursed under the actual expense method.
- Laundry/dry cleaning done at a professional facility.
- Charges associated with using hotel phones or personal cellular phones for official business. (government phones, government-issued calling cards, and cell phones are the preferred methods for communicating while on TDY travel.)

New Policy - Receipts are now only required for the following:

- Common carrier transportation.
- Lodging, including any associated taxes or fees.
- Rental car.
- Meals reimbursed under the actual expense per diem method.
- Centrally billed authorized expense of \$75 or more.
- Reimbursable (paid to traveler) authorized expense of \$10 or more.

Most Advantageous Mode of Transportation

Old Policy - Commercial air service is considered most advantageous mode of transportation over 250 miles, deviation requires a cost comparison.

New Policy - Commercial air service is now considered most advantageous mode of transportation over 350 miles, any deviation requires a cost comparison.

Airport Parking

Old Policy - The original mileage amount of parking plus mileage to be under \$150 total is no longer used, as it does not comply with Federal Travel Regulation (FTR).

New Policy - When Personally Owned Vehicle (POV) is elected for traveling to common carrier terminals from residences or official duty stations, instead of by taxi, Transportation Network Company (TNC) (e.g., Uber, Lyft) or airport shuttle service, reimbursement may only be claimed for mileage and parking. However, reimbursement of airport parking is limited to the amount it would cost for round-trip taxi fare plus tip on the same trip. Travelers may use an estimating tool, such as (<http://www.taxifarefinder.com>), to estimate the cost of round-trip taxi fares. A cost comparison form is no longer required.

Passenger in GOV

Old Policy - Reimbursement was limited to cost comparison with the mode of transportation most beneficial to the Government.

New Policy - Passengers assigned to a Government Owned Vehicle (GOV) must use that as their primary mode of TDY transportation. Travelers who choose to drive POV may not be reimbursed any mileage cost.

Automated Toll Payment Systems

Old Policy - Travelers were expected to avoid toll roads or pay tolls with cash or a government travel charge card.

New Policy - Allows for use of Automated Toll Payment Systems for rental cars in specified situations.

Clarifications

Combining Official and Personal Travel

Travelers are ineligible for per diem when leave is taken from four or more hours to more than half of the scheduled workday. Sick leave is excluded from this rule.

Preferred Method of Transportation

The Federal Travel Regulation (FTR) defines preferred methods of transportation as common carrier transportation, GOV, commercial rental car and POV, in order of preference. If an automobile is determined to be the most advantageous method of transportation, the order of preference for travel using a vehicle is as follows: GOV, special conveyance (rental car) and POV.

Use of POV for Personal Preference

In order to comply with the FTR, a cost comparison is required when a person is authorized to use a rental car but chooses to use their POV because of personal preference.

Non-Conventional Lodging

Home rental service providers, such as, Airbnb and Trovit are considered non-conventional lodging ([Memorandum dated 4/6/2017, Use of Home Rental Services and Similar Non-Conventional Lodging Services](#)).

Reminders

Prudent Person Rule

It is a fundamental, overarching principle that a federal civilian employee traveling on official business “must exercise the same care in incurring expenses that a prudent person would exercise if traveling on personal business.” [41 CFR 301-2.3 \(2006\)](#).

Supervisory Review and Approval Responsibilities

All employees are reminded that in accordance with Service policy, approving employee travel (authorizations and vouchers) may only be delegated to a Supervisor at least one level above the traveler. The only exception is when the traveler has a Limited Open/Unlimited Open Travel Authorization (LOTA). In this case, a management assistant or travel arranger (delegate approver) may approve travel authorizations for trips where all expenses are covered by the Limited Open/Unlimited Open Travel Authorization. In all other cases, the approving official must personally approve a travel authorization in Concur or hard copy, or issue supplemental approval prior to travel ([Memorandum dated 5/9/2016, Supervisory Review and Approval Responsibilities](#)).

Prior-approval of Travel

Travelers must always obtain authorization prior to performing TDY travel. Exceptions to this requirement are limited to bona fide emergency situations when a travel authorization cannot be reasonably obtained in advance. A travel authorization must be created and approved as soon as possible. Failure to obtain prior authorization can result in non-reimbursement of all unauthorized travel costs. Beginning January 1, 2019, travelers and approving officials will be notified when an authorization has been approved after completion of travel.