



United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
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To: Service Directorate

From: Assistant Director and Chief Financial Officer - Business Management and Operations

Subject: Using Government Charge Card for Local Travel

On November 1, 2014, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) employees began using their individual government travel charge cards to pay for local travel expenses such as taxi, parking, transit, or tolls. Employees incurring non-reimbursable travel expenses do not file an SF-1164. Instead, the supervisor performs the standard review of the employee's charge card transactions and certifies the charges are valid and accurate. Administrative officers should ensure the local charge card expenses are properly categorized as a local travel expense. Offices should redistribute approved local travel costs via the FBMS charge card reallocation process to commitment item 211L – Local Travel.

The government travel charge card remains the preferred method to pay for local travel expenses. **Effective January 1, 2016, employees who submit an SF-1164 for local travel no longer need to include a justification for not using the government charge card.** As a reminder, employees must never purchase fuel for a personally-owned vehicle (POV) using their government charge card in lieu of claiming POV mileage on a SF-1164. Specific operating procedures and expectations for employees, supervisors, and administrative officers are provided in the attachment.

If you have any questions, please contact Mr. Michael Sciortino, Chief, Division of Financial Management at (703) 358-2054 or michael_sciortino@fws.gov.

Attachment

Procedures to Use Employee Government Travel Card for Local Travel

The following procedures must be used for employees incurring local travel expenses for official government business:

1. Employee receives verbal or written approval to incur local travel expenses per office policy. Employee must receive written approval (e-mail is adequate) to rent a car for local travel. Employee should not use the DI-1020, TDY Travel Authorization.
2. Employee uses government charge card for local expenses that may include taxi, transit, tolls, and parking costs. Employee may not use it to fuel a personally owned vehicle (POV) and must claim local POV mileage on a SF-1164, Claim for Reimbursement for Expenditures on Official Business. Also, employees may not use the charge card for an ATM advance.
3. Employees who do not have a government charge card or a de-activated charge card, do not need to obtain one for local travel, unless the employee will incur frequent local travel expenses.
4. Employee should keep a log, similar to the DFM TF 01, Local Travel Log, to show the purpose of each charge. <https://inside.fws.gov/go/post/dfmTravel>. For example, if the employee took a taxi between the FWS Headquarters Skyline office and MIB, the employee must justify why he/she did not take the FWS shuttle. Employee should maintain receipts for all centrally billed expenses. However, receipts for local travel expenses under \$5.00 are not required.
5. If the employee incurs both POV mileage and parking (or some other costs that could be paid for by the government charge card), then the employee should pay for the parking via government charge card. The employee will claim the POV mileage (after deducting his/her normal commuting costs, if applicable) on the SF-1164 and note that the parking was paid via government charge card.
6. Once the employee receives his/her charge card statement or printout of the statement, the employee should attach the Local Travel Log and receipts to the statement and sign the statement. If the employee did not maintain a log, the employee must write the purpose for each charge on the statement.
7. All charges need to be reviewed and approved by the supervisor.
8. Once approved, the local transactions are provided to the office's administrative officers to review the charges and redistribute the charge card expenses to commitment item (BOC) 211L- local travel in a non-foreign TDY. Instructions to redistribute charge card costs can be found at the following weblink: https://inside.fws.gov/go/post/FBMS_CC

If there are a lot of toll charges on the monthly charge card statement, it can be time-consuming to determine which ones are local travel and which ones are TDY-related for purposes of redistributing them in FBMS. Thus, if it's estimated that the majority of toll charges on the monthly charge card statement are local travel within the permanent duty area, you can redistribute all the toll charges on the monthly statement to BOC 214l, which is local travel within the permanent duty area.

9. The administrative officer needs to maintain the statement and receipts in a hard copy file or electronic file (if hard copies are scanned) for a minimum of three years.

10. The Division of Financial Management (DFM) or the Regional Budget and Finance Office (BFO) may perform a sample review of local travel charges to determine whether the office followed the steps above and internal controls are in place.