

VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL: NO HARD COPY TO FOLLOW

September 9, 2010

Memorandum

To: Directorate, Field Directorate, Chief, USPP, WASO Division Chiefs and Team Leaders  
From: Comptroller, National Park Service  
Subject: Continuing Travel Processing Improvements

The purpose of this memorandum is to convey changes in the way the National Park Service processes temporary duty travel authorizations and vouchers. We continue to modernize the process to take advantage of technological advancements implemented in GovTrip 2.0, to strengthen internal controls, and to comply fully with applicable laws and regulations. Attachment 1 provides more details on these changes.

Effective immediately, in accordance with the Federal Travel Regulation Part 301-73.100, all Temporary Duty travel must be processed through GovTrip, unless an exception has been granted.

Please direct questions regarding these changes to your region's designated travel coordinator. In addition, questions concerning GovTrip navigation and system questions should be addressed to Steven Mahorney, Systems Accountant, Accounting Operations Center (AOC), at (703) 487-9179. Travel policy questions should be addressed to Supervisory Fiscal Specialists, AOC, Angela Terry (703) 487-9338 or Timothy Bailey (703) 487-9129.

/s/ C. Bruce Sheaffer  
SIGNED ORIGINAL ON FILE

Attachments (2)

authorizations limit expenses to those that result in the greatest advantage to the government and that travel is performed by the most expeditious means practicable. In accordance with FTR part 301-70.101, the following should be considered in determining which method of transportation results in the greatest advantage to the government:

1. The total cost to the government, including per diem, overtime, lost work time, actual transportation costs, total distance of travel, number of points visited, the number of travelers, and energy conservation.
2. Travel by common carrier (GSA City-Pairs contract airfare) is considered the most advantageous method to perform official travel. Other methods of transportation may be authorized as advantageous only when the use of common carrier transportation would interfere with the performance of official business or impose an undue hardship upon the traveler, or when the total cost by common carrier exceeds the cost by another method of transportation. A determination that another method of transportation is more advantageous to the government than common carrier will not be made on the basis of personal preference or inconvenience to the traveler.

**Constructed Travel (Cost Comparisons):** If a mode of transportation is chosen that is not the most advantageous to the government, then reimbursement must be limited to the constructive cost of the authorized, most advantageous method of transportation. This is the sum of per diem and transportation expenses that the employee would reasonably have incurred if they had traveled by the authorized, most advantageous method of transportation.

**A. Requirements—**

1. In GovTrip, prepare two travel authorizations (one for the method most advantageous to the government, and one for the method preferred by the traveler).
2. Use the TRIP COMPARE function in GovTrip to choose the lesser of the two costs.
3. Upload a copy of the TRIP COMPARE to the authorization that is in the best interest of the government.
4. When applicable, add the following statement to the travel authorization: “use of POV authorized, but cannot cost the government more in time and expense than the constructed cost of travel via common carrier.”
5. In GovTrip, if the use of a POV is not considered advantageous to the government, select “POV USE NOT ADVANTAGEOUS TO GOVERNMENT” in the Other Authorizations section under Additional Options.
6. Authorize the TA that is in the best interest of the government.
7. Upon return, complete a voucher showing the travel as actually performed, compare this to the constructed costs of the approved TA.
8. Reduce the costs claimed on the voucher to the total of the constructed cost.

**B. Types of costs to be considered include the following:**

1. Per diem—The total number of days on official business at the TDY location(s), plus a reasonable amount of time for travel to and from the official station, or other authorized point of departure, and the TDY location(s), and between TDY locations. A reasonable amount of time is generally considered to be one day of travel for each authorized destination of the trip. The lodging expenses actually incurred are used to compute the constructed travel costs. Reimbursement of lodging expenses will be actual, not to exceed the prescribed rate for the temporary duty station locality.
2. Air transportation—When determining constructive costs for common carrier, the availability of contract airfare seats must be assumed. The GSA City-Pairs contract airfare rates must be utilized when performing constructive costs.
3. Transportation costs to be considered in addition to airfares—In determining the constructed common carrier cost, the usual transportation costs to and from the common carrier airports should also be included.

4. Taxicabs and rental cars—Only the usual taxicab or airport limousine fares, plus tip, not round-trip mileage and parking, should be used for constructed travel purposes. The cost of a rental car for travel at the temporary duty site must not be included in the total constructed cost of the common carrier transportation.
5. Requirement of annual leave—The traveler must take annual leave for any normal working hours lost because of additional travel time incurred due to travel by POV at the traveler's own convenience or personal preference. The employee is to be charged leave for excess travel time traveled by privately owned vehicle when they could have accomplished the official business involved in a shorter time had they traveled by appropriate common carrier. The leave must be shown on the travel voucher.

In computing constructed costs, transportation and per diem are combined for actual versus constructed travel. The total actual cost is compared to the constructed cost calculation. If the actual cost is greater, then the actual amount claimed must be reduced to the total of the constructed travel cost.

Submission of Travel Vouchers through GovTrip: Effective immediately, all temporary duty travel vouchers must be submitted via GovTrip, unless an exemption has been granted. Vouchers submitted via GovTrip must have any required supporting documentation uploaded into GovTrip prior to payment. Exemptions to this may be granted in the following circumstances:

1. Such use would result in an unreasonable burden on mission accomplishment (e.g. emergency travel is involved and GovTrip is not accessible; or the traveler has special needs or requires disability accommodations in accordance with FTR part 301-13).
2. Such use would compromise a national security interest.
3. Such use might endanger the traveler's life (e.g., the individual is traveling under the Federal witness protection program, or is a threatened law enforcement/investigative office traveling under FTR part 301-31).
4. Additionally, certain types of travel vouchers must still be sent to AOC for manual audit and payment. These vouchers should continue to be submitted to the AOC as in the past. These vouchers are as follows:
  - a. Permanent Change of Station vouchers-GovTrip cannot currently process Permanent Change of Station vouchers.
  - b. Certain reclaim, supplemental, or amended vouchers-Reclaim, supplemental, or amended vouchers are vouchers in which an expense has been added, removed, or modified on a voucher that has already been submitted for reimbursement. GovTrip is not currently capable of processing where the adjusted expenses result in a decrease in entitlements that had been paid on a previous voucher. Due to this, vouchers with a decrease in entitlements must be sent to AOC for manual processing. All other changes may be processed in GovTrip.

In cases where an approved exemption exists, the travel voucher must be mailed to the AOC for manual processing and reimbursement; the travel voucher must have the approved exemption attached.

Electronic Signatures: All vouchers submitted via GovTrip must be electronically signed by the actual traveler; unless an approved exemption exists under the following circumstances:

1. Invitational Travelers. In such cases the travel voucher must be physically signed by the Invitational Traveler, and uploaded into GovTrip.
2. National Park Service Officials with the authority to delegate his/her signature authority to other select personnel. In such cases the delegation approving the signature authority must be uploaded into GovTrip.