

**E-GOV TRAVEL SERVICE POLICY FOR
TEMPORARY DUTY (TDY) TRAVEL**

1. REASON FOR ISSUE: This directive sets forth policy for the use of the Department of Veterans Affairs' (VA) E-Gov Travel Service (ETS) for Temporary Duty (TDY) travel.

2. SUMMARY OF CONTENTS: ETS shall be used by all VA offices in accordance with policies set forth in this directive.

3. RESPONSIBLE OFFICE: Office of Finance, Financial Services Center, Austin, Texas.

4. RELATED DIRECTIVES: VA Directive 0631.1, Employee Travel Management, and MP-1, Part II, Ch. 2, TDY Policy.

5. RESCISSION: None.

CERTIFIED BY:

**BY DIRECTION OF THE SECRETARY
OF VETERANS AFFAIRS:**

/s/
Robert Howard
Assistant Secretary
for Information and Technology

/s/
Robert J. Henke
Assistant Secretary for Management

Distribution: Electronic Only

E-GOV TRAVEL SERVICE POLICY FOR TEMPORARY DUTY (TDY) TRAVEL

1. PURPOSE. This directive sets forth policy for the use of the Department of Veterans Affairs' (VA) E-Gov Travel Service (ETS) for TDY travel.

2. POLICY. All VA administrations and staff offices will use ETS. ETS will process travel plans and expense reports in accordance with the General Services Administration's Federal Travel Regulation (FTR) CFR 41, Chapters 300 – 301, Public Law 105-264, and VA supplemental policy found in VA Directives 0631 and 0633. The FTR (41 CFR 301-5.4) authorizes exceptions to the use of the ETS on a case-by-case basis by the Secretary or his designee(s). The Secretary has delegated this authority to the Under Secretary for Health, Under Secretary for Benefits, and the Under Secretary for Memorial Affairs, for their respective Administrations, and to the Assistant Secretary for Management for staff offices (the delegation by the Secretary is pending approval).

a. System Use. VA's ETS will be used for official Government travel. Use of the system for personal travel is prohibited.

b. System Access. Management at the facility level will determine who is granted access to the system and at what level.

c. Internal Controls. No employee will have the ability to approve their own travel plan or expense report.

d. Termination of Access. Access to the system will be terminated for any of the following reasons:

(1) Employee leaves VA (retirement, transfer to different agency, leaves Government service, etc.).

(2) Approving Official determines employee no longer requires access.

(3) Employee uses ETS for unauthorized purposes.

3. RESPONSIBILITIES

a. VA Chief Financial Officer (CFO). VA's CFO is responsible for the implementation and oversight of ETS within the Department. VA's CFO shall manage ETS and establish overall system procedures.

(1) The Office of Finance's Financial Services Center (FSC) will carry out oversight responsibilities and establish overall system procedures under the direction of VA's CFO.

(2) The FSC shall carry out implementation responsibilities under the direction of VA's CFO. The FSC director is responsible for designating a program coordinator who will be responsible for implementation of ETS throughout VA.

b. Administration CFOs or Staff Office Equivalents. The Administration CFOs or staff office equivalents are responsible for implementation and management of ETS within their respective organization. They are delegated authority to issue operational procedures to supplement VA Handbook 0636.

c. Facility Director/Regional Office Director. The facility director/regional office director is responsible for designating a system administrator and alternate and a primary and secondary e-Travel coordinator; determining who requires system access; and establishing an appropriate approval hierarchy of primary and alternate approving officials and budget officials within the system.

(1) The system administrator is responsible for technical support of ETS at a facility. This includes, but is not limited to, issues associated with system setup, availability and providing access to the system as directed by facility management.

(2) e-Travel coordinators are responsible for answering functional and operational questions and providing assistance on input to the system.

(3) Determination of system access can be delegated to appropriate levels of management within the facility.

d. Travelers. Travelers are responsible for using ETS to prepare official Government TDY travel documents and for using the system only for authorized purposes. Travelers who do not have access to or use ETS or the agency designated Travel Management Center (TMC), and/or who have obtained an approved exception, are responsible for any additional costs resulting from failure to use ETS or the TMC (reference FTR 41 CFR 301-73.105). Travelers may be subject to disciplinary action, based on their manager's discretion, in accordance with VA Handbook 5021, if they do not use the available ETS or TMC, and if they do not have an approved exception.

4. REFERENCES

- a. Federal Travel Regulation (FTR) CFR 41, Chapters 300 – 301
- b. MP-1, Part II, Ch. 2, TDY Travel Policy
- c. OF Bulletin 05GA2.09
- d. OMB Circular A-123
- e. Public Law 105-264
- f. Public Law 108-411
- g. VA Handbook 5007, Part VIII, Chapter 15
- h. 5 U.S.C. 5550b
- i. 5 CFR, Part 550, subpart N

5. DEFINITIONS

- a. Approving Official – Individual delegated the authority to approve a travel plan and request for reimbursement (expense report).
- b. Alternate Preparer – Individual who initiates the travel plan on behalf of the traveler. This can be a transportation assistant or other designee.
- c. Budget Official – Individual who is responsible for reviewing the travel plan and expense report for appropriate budgetary and financial information. In addition, this individual will concur on both the travel plan and expense report prior to submission to the Approving Official.
- d. System Administrator – Station individual who is responsible for establishing new profiles and approval chains as necessary after initial data load. This individual also provides technical assistance to travelers and approvers.
- e. Commercial Flight – A non-contract flight.
- f. Contract Flight – A flight between cities where the cost of the flight is based on a contract between the Government and the carrier.
- g. Contractor – Individual(s) working under a cost reimbursement contract and individual(s) working for the Government at specific sites under special arrangements with the contracting agency, and which are wholly federally funded

(e.g., Government-owned, contractor-operated, federally-funded research and development or management and operating contracts). Contractors are prohibited from using city-pair fares.

h. Employee – An appointed officer or employee of an agency, including a special Government employee as defined in 18 U.S.C. 202. This definition also includes an individual employed intermittently in the Government service as an expert or consultant and paid on a daily when-actually-employed basis, and an individual serving without pay or at \$1 per year.

i. e-Gov Travel Service (ETS) – A Web-based system available from any desktop, laptop, or personal digital assistant.

j. Expense Report – A listing of expenses, prepared by a traveler after conclusion of authorized travel, which is presented to the agency for the purposes of obtaining reimbursement.

k. Expenses – Authorized and allowable expenses incurred in the performance of official travel.

l. Invitational Travel – Authorized travel of individuals either not employed by VA or by VA employees (under 5 U.S.C. 5703) who travel intermittently in the service of the Government as consultants or experts and who are paid on a daily basis, and for individuals serving without pay or for \$1 per year when they are acting in a capacity that is directly related to, or in connection with, official activities of the Government.

m. Limited Open Travel Authorization – A travel authority for a named employee that allows the employee to perform temporary duty travel of a repetitive and frequent nature without further authorization. A limited open travel authorization must contain specific conditions, which include realistic limitation of purpose, geographic area, trip duration, and cost. Any travel that does not conform to the specified limitation must be separately authorized. A limited open travel authorization may not be used for foreign travel, permanent change of station travel, pre-employment interview travel, travel related to attendance at a conference or training, or travel related to attendance at meetings of veterans service organizations. All limited open travel authorizations must be renewed at the beginning of each fiscal year.

n. Unlimited Open Travel Authorization – A travel authority for a named employee that allows the employee to perform temporary duty travel of a repetitive and frequent nature without further authorization. Use of an unlimited open travel authorization is restricted to incumbents of the following positions: Secretary and assistants; Deputy Secretary and assistants; Under Secretaries, their Deputies, and Executive Assistants; Assistant Secretaries; Other Key Officials; and Medical Inspectors. Unlimited open travel authorizations may not be used for foreign travel, permanent change of station travel, pre-employment

interview travel, or travel related to attendance at meetings of veterans service organizations (this restriction does not apply to the Office of the Secretary). All unlimited open travel authorizations must be renewed at the beginning of each fiscal year.

o. Official Travel – Travel that is authorized as necessary for carrying out the purpose of the appropriation from which it is funded.

p. Online Booking – The Internet term for making flight, hotel and car rental reservations via the Internet.

q. Split Disbursement – Split disbursement is the process of dividing a travel voucher reimbursement between the amount due to traveler and amount due to the Government travel card-issuing bank. The balance owed to each is sent directly to the appropriate party at the time of payment. The amount due to the traveler is remitted to the traveler's bank account via Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT). The amount due the Government travel card-issuing bank is paid directly to the bank via EFT. Employees are required to use the split disbursement option when preparing their expense report.

r. Temporary Duty Travel (TDY) – Travel to a place, away from an employee's official duty station, where the employee is authorized to work.

s. Travel Management Center (TMC) – The contractor that provides travel agency services, such as reservations and ticketing for airlines, lodging and car rental.

t. Travel Plan – A travel request. It includes estimates of all expenses that may be incurred while in travel status.