

Travel and Use of Equipment Participant Guide

Instructors

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Frequently Asked Questions on Traveling for the Government

Do I have to have a separate authorization for each trip?

No. depending on your position, the frequency of your travel, and the type of trip, authorization may cover (1) all travel for the entire fiscal year, (2) all travel within a geographic area or for travel during a set period of time, e.g. 90 days, or (3) a specific trip. Certain kinds of travel have to be authorized trip-by-trip, such as travel to training, conferences, foreign countries, and when paid for by others.

May I use frequent flyer benefits accrued from official travel for personal travel?

No. When any portion of the benefits was earned with points or time from a trip involving official travel, the benefit belongs to the Government.

How do I keep frequent flyer points earned from official travel separate from those earned from personal travel?

Use separate accounts for official and personal travel, if the airline allows it. If not, you must retain records which establish the credits attributable to personal and official travel, respectively. The burden of proof is on you to show that credits used for personal reasons do not exceed those earned through personal travel. Also, don't forget that any benefits derived from mixed personal and official travel accrue to the Government.

May I voluntarily give up my seat on an oversold flight?

Yes, as long as it does not interfere with your official duties and there is no increase in costs to the Government. If this applies, you may keep any gift or compensation under the following conditions:

- (1) You may not claim additional travel expenses including per diem, as a result of giving up your seat.
- (2). You must take annual leave if your travel is delayed during duty hours, and any expenses you accrue while on leave must be paid by you.

May I keep a penalty payment if I am denied boarding on an oversold flight?

No. A penalty payment belongs to the Government. You should have the airline make the check out to the Treasurer of the United States, and you should submit it with an explanation (Usually an airline form documenting you were bumped and it was not your fault) attached to the front of your travel voucher.

May I take annual leave while on official travel?

Yes, but it must be authorized in advance, either in your travel authorization or separately. The authorizing official must ensure that the travel is essential and the leave is only incidental to the travel. You may not claim per diem

for any day that you take more than four hours of leave. Nor can you claim per diem for non-duty days (e.g. weekends) that precede or follow official business when the stay is for the convenience of the traveler. Care must be taken to avoid the appearance of using Federal funds for personal benefit.

May I piggyback personal travel onto an official trip?

Yes, with four caveats. They are:

- (1). The above guidance on annual leave applies if you are subject to leave limitations.
- (2). The official portion of the trip must be scheduled and routed as the most direct and advantageous to the Government. You may not take circuitous or indirect routes at Government expense to benefit yourself.
- (3). You may not use Government rates, discounts or services unless the vendor extends the same privilege to all Federal employees on personal travel. For example, many rental car companies will allow employees to use the Government rate for personal travel periods, excluding the free insurance when on official business, and some hotels may offer government rates for personal travel.
- (4). Specifically, you may NOT use Government contract air fares (City-Pair contracts) for personal travel. You should obtain the contract fare airline ticket for the official travel, exchange it for a ticket that will cover the complete trip, and pay the difference to the carrier. Also, don't forget that you cannot charge the difference on your Government travel charge card.

How do I prepare my travel voucher in this case?

Present two separate calculations on your voucher; one that accurately reports every segment of your actual travel; another that reconstructs the travel based only on your official itinerary. Your reimbursement will be based on the latter.

The Standards of Conduct prohibit misuse of Government property such as Government owned cars. What constitutes misuse? And does it also apply to rental cars leased by the Government?

Yes. The rules on the misuse of Government owned vehicles also apply to vehicles leased by the Government. You are misusing a Government vehicle when you use it for personal benefit as opposed to using it for the benefit of the Government. The rule of reason allows you to use a rental car as we probably all do when on official travel: you may travel to a restaurant near your hotel for meals, as opposed to having to eat all your meals in the hotel restaurant. The main difference between rental cars used for official travel and motorpool cars is that with a rental car, you are not required to keep a trip-by-trip travel log as is the case with a motorpool car.

Travel and Related Issues **Authorities**

1) Use of Frequent Flyer Benefits

Public Law 103-355

October 13, 1994

Federal Property Management Regulations

§ 101-25.103-2 (41 C.F.R. 101-25, 103-2)

Federal Travel Regulations § 301-53.1

Comptroller General Decision B270423

July 1, 1996

2) Use of Premium Class Airline Accommodations

Federal Travel Regulations § 301-10.123 and 301-10.124

3) Denied Boarding Compensation

Federal Travel Regulation § 301-10.116 and 301-10.117

4) Acceptance of Travel and Related Expenses From non-Federal Sources

31 U.S.C. 1353

Federal Travel Regulation Part 304-1

5) Requiring the Use of the Government Furnished Travel Charge Card

Public Law 105-264, Jan. 27, 1998

Federal Travel Regulation Part 301-51

6) Prompt Reimbursement of Travel Expenses

Public Law 105-264, Jan. 27, 1998

Federal Travel Regulation Part 301-52

7) Offset Against Current and Former Employees Who Do Not Pay Travel Charge Card Bill

Public Law 105-264, Jan. 27, 1998

Travel and Related Issues (continued)

8) Use of Government Vehicles

31 U.S.C. 1344

Federal Property Management Regulations
Subpart 101-6.4 (41 C.F.R. 101-6.4)

9) Business Cards for Federal Employees

Department of Justice Memorandum to the General Counsel, General Services Administration, August 11, 1997

Sites With One Touch

Use your "Call" button

Sites Without One Touch

Phone 1-(877)887-6282
Fax 1-(877)884-6282

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Discussion Topics

- ♦ Travel Related Issues
- ♦ Misuse of Government Equipment
- ♦ AND....

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Discussion Topics

Your Questions!!!

Forget this technology stuff...get your questions answered.

One Touch, Microphone,
Telephone 1-877-887-6282 or
Fax 1-877-884-6282

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Use of Frequent Flyer Benefits

Public Law 103-355 mandates the use of Frequent Flyer benefits for official travel only.



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Premium/First Class Travel

First and Premium Class Airline Accommodations can only be used in specified, limited circumstances.

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First Class Travel

- a. No coach class or premium class reasonably available within 24 hrs
- b. Accommodate a disability or special need

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First Class Travel

- c. Exceptional security requirements
 - 1. Traveling in other than First-class would endanger life or Government property.
 - 2. Protective detail
 - 3. Accompanying classified materials.
- d. Required for agency mission

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Premium Class Travel

- a. Regularly scheduled flights provide only premium class
- b. No coach space available in time to accomplish mission
- c. Accommodate a disability or special need
- d. Exceptional security requirements

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Premium Class Travel (cont)

- e. Inadequate sanitation or health standards in coach
- f. Results in overall cost savings
- g. Frequent flyer redemption in accordance with agency policy
- h. Non-federal source pays costs
- i. Flight time > 14 hours

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Upgrades Using Personal Funds

Authorized Use of Personal Funds or Personal Frequent Flyer Points to Upgrade to First and Premium Class Accommodations.

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Denied Boarding Compensation

- a. Involuntary Bumping
- b. Voluntarily Vacating an Airline Seat

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Payment of Travel From Non-Federal Sources

- a. 31 U.S.C. § 1353 authorizes Federal agencies to accept payment of travel expenses for employees to attend meetings and similar functions.
- b. Federal Travel Regulation Part 304-1 implements this authority

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Mandatory use of the Travel Charge Card

- a. Public Law 105-264 mandates the use of a government furnished travel charge card.
- b. Implementing regulations are published in the Federal Register July 16, 1999.

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Prompt Reimbursement of Travel Expenses

Public Law 105-264 mandates reimbursement of travel expenses by agencies to employees within 30 days.

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Employees Who Fail To Pay Charge Card Bills

Public Law 105-264 permits your agency to offset amounts owed to the travel card company from employees' salaries.

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Conference Planning

- a. Increased per diem rate
- b. Refreshments and snacks

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Business Cards

Agencies are now authorized to purchase business cards for their employees.

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Purchase of Promotional or Memento Items

Agencies should generally not expend appropriated funds for purchase of items which are personal in nature.

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For more information

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Use of Government Property

An employee has a duty to protect and conserve Government property and shall not use such property, or allow its use, for other than authorized purposes

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Government Property Includes:

- ◆ Office supplies
- ◆ Telephone and other telecommunications equipment and services
- ◆ Government mail
- ◆ Printing and reproduction facilities
- ◆ Government vehicles

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Use of Government Property

Authorized Purposes are those purposes for which Government property is made available to members of the public or those purposes authorized in accordance with law or regulation.

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Department of the Interior Internet Acceptable Use Policy

Personal Use

During personal time, employees may retrieve non-job related text, graphics, and information to develop or enhance internet related skills.

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Policy Limitations

- ◆ No additional charges to the Department.
- ◆ Do not access, retrieve, or print text and graphics information which exceeds the bounds of generally accepted standards of good taste and ethics.
- ◆ Do not engage in any unlawful activities.

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Policy Limitations (DO NOT)

- ◆ Engage in personal commercial activities.
- ◆ Compromise the security of any Government host computer.
- ◆ Engage in any fund raising activity.
- ◆ Endorse any product or services.
- ◆ Participate in any lobbying activity.

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Policy Limitations (DO NOT)

- ◆ Engage in any active political activity. (Does not apply to Presidential appointees who have received Senate confirmation.)
- ◆ Use as a radio or music player.
- ◆ Use "push" or continuous data stream technology.

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Draft DOI Policy - Acceptable Use of Office Equipment

Office Equipment Includes:

- ◆ Copy machines
- ◆ Computers (including e-mail)
- ◆ Printers (black and white only)
- ◆ Fax machines - copying functions only

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Draft DOI Policy - Acceptable Use of Office Equipment

Does NOT Include:

- ◆ Projectors: LCD, slide, overhead
- ◆ Televisions
- ◆ VCRs
- ◆ Telephones, cell phones, FAX machines (separate policy)

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Draft DOI Policy - Acceptable Use of Office Equipment

Does NOT Include:

- ◆ Motor vehicles/aircraft/boats
- ◆ Government charge cards
- ◆ Photographic equipment
- ◆ Machine shop tools
- ◆ Firearms
- ◆ Lawn mowers, etc.

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*Draft DOI Policy -
Acceptable Use of Office Equipment*

Employees may, on non-duty time, make limited personal use of office equipment incurring only a negligible expense to the government.

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*Draft DOI Policy -
Acceptable Use of Office Equipment*

- ◆ Limited personal use for copiers = 10 pages per week on occasion.
- ◆ Limited personal use for e-mail = transmit to no more than 5 addressees
- ◆ No mass e-mailings - do not disrupt service to LANs, etc.

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*Draft DOI Policy -
Acceptable Use of Office Equipment*

- ◆ Use caution when giving out Government e-mail address - reduce unwanted e-mail.
- ◆ Do not represent personal e-mail as official e-mail.

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*Draft DOI Policy -
UNacceptable Use*

- ◆ No illegal or offensive activities
- ◆ No fundraising
- ◆ No lobbying
- ◆ No engaging in political activities (except PAS employees)

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*Draft DOI Policy -
UNacceptable Use*

- No personal services:
- ◆ Dating services
 - ◆ Day trading
 - ◆ Real estate (except when in Government relocation status)
 - ◆ Loan or mortgage applications

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Penalties

- May include:
- ◆ Oral and/or written reprimand
 - ◆ Suspension without pay
 - ◆ Removal from federal service

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Draft DOI Policy - Telephone Use

May use for official business and personal calls that are NECESSARY and in the interest of the Government.

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DOI Draft Policy - Telephone Use ***Examples of Necessary Phone Calls:***

- ◆ Home to alert of a schedule change
- ◆ Make alternative child care arrangements
- ◆ To doctors, hospital staff, day care providers
- ◆ To family in an emergency
- ◆ For funeral arrangements
- ◆ To make emergency repairs to vehicles or residences

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DOI Draft Policy - Telephone Use

May make purely personal phone calls

- ◆ On personal time
- ◆ Local calls only - no expense to the government
- ◆ Of reasonable length - 5 to 10 minutes

Personal phone calls in excess of 3 per day is considered excessive

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DOI Draft Policy - Telephone Use

May NOT:

- Make personal long-distance phone calls
- Use Government phone cards for personal use
- Make international calls
- Make "900" number calls

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Not registered for this training?

Send your name and agency to
arthur_bennett@ios.doi.gov

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What's coming next

July 27, 2000 - 1:30-3:30 p.m. ET
Topics: Criminal Statutes, Gifts and
Negotiating Outside Employment

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