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Bulletin

Title: Travel Payments in GovTrip

Number: 08-303

Date: July 16, 2008

Expiration: July 15, 2009

Originating Office: Travel and Relocation Services Branch
Financial Management Division, AFM/ARS

Distribution: All REE Employees

This bulletin changes the policy on the payment of certain expenses through GovTrip directly to the travel card vendor.

Background

On March 10, 2008, the Research, Education and Economics agencies implemented the GovTrip system. A key component of that system is the ability to reimburse certain expenses directly to the travel card vendor, eliminating the need for the employee to first receive reimbursement and then pay the travel card vendor. This process works well with infrequent travelers, but may cause frequent travelers difficulties reconciling their travel card bill.

To relieve frequent travelers of the need to constantly monitor their travel card account for new charges and payments, we asked the Department for permission to allow travelers to elect to receive reimbursement of certain travel expenses directly. The Department has granted this exception. This exception does not apply to common carrier tickets for air and train transportation, the travel management fee, and the voucher fee. Those expenses must be reimbursed directly from GovTrip to the travel card vendor.

REE Policy

Frequent travelers may use the features in GovTrip that allow direct reimbursement of certain travel expenses except for the expense associated with the purchase of common carrier tickets for air and train transportation. Each traveler may decide whether they wish to use this capability in GovTrip; this process is not required. However, if travelers make this election, they are responsible for communicating this decision to their travel arranger. Travel arrangers are responsible for changing the payment method on each traveler's voucher according to the payment decision made by the traveler.

Procedures

Selecting Personal as the payment method on a GovTrip voucher will direct the payment for the expense to the employee rather than the travel card vendor, except for expenses related to common carrier tickets, travel management service fees, and the GovTrip voucher fee.

Employees who have access to GovTrip (travelers for the Economic Research Service and travel arrangers for the Agricultural Research Service, National Agricultural Statistics Service, and Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service) should follow the instructions in **Attachment A** to change the payment method from GOVCC to Personal for lodging, rental car and the miscellaneous expenses of ATM fees, gasoline for rental cars, and hotel taxes.

Note: No change needs to be made for the M&IE portion of per diem and other miscellaneous expenses not listed above since these expenses default to "Personal" as a payment method.

Changing the default from GOVCC to Personal will trigger an "Audit Flag" on the GovTrip "Pre-Audit" page. When reviewing this page, prior to stamping the document "Signed"

(employee) or “T-Entered” (travel arranger), the preparer should enter “Directing payment to employee per REE policy” for each pre-audit flag. Please review **Attachment A** for more instructions on responding to the Pre-Audit flag.

Please contact your GovTrip administrator, under **Attachment B**, for any questions or concerns.

/s/

S. M. HELMRICH
Director
Financial Management Division

Frequent Traveler Direct Reimbursement of Expenses

It is preferable to complete the steps while creating the authorization. However, these instructions apply regardless of whether the document is an authorization or a voucher.

Rental Car

🚗 Open the document and select the **Travel** tab, then **Rental Car**.



If the rental car reservations have already been made, in the Expense Summary box select **VIEW** next to the rental car reservation.

Trip Summary		
Overall Starting Point		
Leave From:	RES: WALDORF, MD	Edit
Leave:	29-Apr-08	
Location 1: SAINT LOUIS (ST. LOUIS),MO		
Leave From:	RES: WALDORF, MD	Edit
TDY Loc:	SAINT LOUIS (ST. LOUIS),MO	
Purpose:	CONFERENCE ATTENDANCE	
Arrive:	29-Apr-08	
Leave:	01-May-08	
Rental Car:	BUDGET	View
Confirmation:	18571275US2-03	
Pick-Up:	29-Apr-08 10:00AM	
Drop-Off:	01-May-08 10:00AM	

Change the method of reimbursement to **PERSONAL** and **Save Selected Car**.

Rental Car	
Use this screen to save the selected rental car.	
TDY Location:	SAINT LOUIS (ST. LOUIS),MO
Pick-Up Date:	29-Apr-08
Pick-Up Time:	10:00AM
Drop-Off Date:	01-May-08
Drop-Off Time:	10:00AM
Rental Car Selected	
\$ 96.15	
Rental Car:	BUDGET
Car Class:	Full Size Car
Pick-up:	STL - St. Louis, Mo (Usa) (Lambert Int L. Apt)
Drop-off:	STL - St. Louis, Mo (Usa) (Lambert Int L. Apt)
Rental rate does not include the Gov't Admin. Rate Suppl. fee of \$5 per day.	
Restrictions: Daily \$36.00, Extra Hour \$18.00, Extra Day \$36.00, Estimated Total Cost \$97.03, Unlimited miles/kilometers	
Other Supplementary Information	
Enter the following details:	
Pick-Up Date:	04/29/2008
Pick-Up Time:	10:00 AM
Drop-Off Date:	05/01/2008
Drop-Off Time:	10:00 AM
Cost:	96.15
Car Rental Club #:	
Method of Reimbursement:	GOVTC PERSONAL
Comments to the Travel Agent:	
<input type="button" value="Save Selected Car"/>	

If the rental car reservation has not been made, search rental car availability (as usual), select the preferred choice, then in the Rental Car Selected section select **PERSONAL** as the method of reimbursement, and then select **SAVE SELECTED CAR**.

Rental Car

Use this screen to save the selected rental car.

Pick-Up Location: HOUSTON, TX
Pick-Up Date: 26-Jul-08
Pick-Up Time: 1300
Drop-Off Date: 28-Jul-08
Drop-Off Time: 0730

Rental Car Selected

\$52.75 (includes taxes and fees)

Rental Car: **ADVANTAGE RENT-A-CAR**
Car Class: **Economy Car, 2-4 Doors**
Pick-up: **IAH - Houston, Tx (Usa) (Bush Intercontinental Apt)**
Drop-off: **IAH - Houston, Tx (Usa) (Bush Intercontinental Apt)**
Rental rate does not include the Gov't Admin. Rate Suppl. fee of \$5 per day.
Restrictions: Weekend Per Day \$11.00, Extra Hour \$15.00, Extra Day \$18.00, Estimated Total Cost \$52.75, Unlimited miles/kilometers
> [OSI-Other Supplementary Information](#)

Enter the following details:

Car Rental Club #:

Method of Reimbursement:

Comments entered below will be manually reviewed by your TMC, this will cause your TMC fee to increase. If necessary, add comments to the travel agent:

Expenses

1. Select to the **Expenses** tab, then **Non-Mileage**.



2. For the following expenses, select **PERSONAL** as the method of reimbursement.
 - a. ATM Fee
 - b. Gasoline - Rental Car
 - c. Hotel Taxes

If the expense has already been entered, in the Expense Summary box select **EDIT** next to the expense.

Expense Type	Date	Cost	E/R
CHARTERED AIRCRAFT	07/19/08	\$35,000.00	Edit Remove
BAGGAGE EXPENSES	07/21/08	\$40.00	Edit Remove
TAV FEE -I	07/25/08	\$13.50	
Total Expenses:		\$35,053.50	

In the Edit Expense box select **PERSONAL** as the method of reimbursement, and then select **SAVE EXPENSE**.

Leave: 19-Jul-08 Return: 25-Jul-08 Edit Expense

* Expense Type: CHARTERED AIRCRAFT

- OR - CHARTERED AIRCRAFT

* Cost: \$ 3,500.00

* Date: (mm/dd/yyyy) 07/19/2008

* Method of Reimbursement: GOVCC
-- Please Select --
GOVCC
PERSONAL

[view/edit expense details](#)

Save Expense

If the expense needs to be entered, in the Add Expense section select the expense type, enter the estimated cost, and date of the expense, select **PERSONAL** as the method of reimbursement, and then select **SAVE EXPENSE**.

Leave: 19-Jul-08 Return: 25-Jul-08 Add Expense

* Expense Type: CHARTERED AIRCRAFT

- OR - CHARTERED AIRCRAFT

Cost: \$ 35,000.00

* Date: (mm/dd/yyyy) 07/19/2008

Method of Reimbursement: GOVCC

-- Please Select --

GOVCC

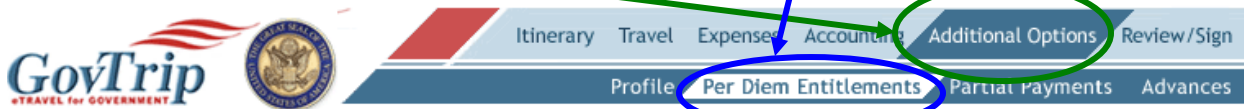
PERSONAL

view/edit expense details

Save Expense

Lodging

1. Select the **Additional Options** Tab, then **Per Diem Entitlements**.



2. In the Per Diem Entitlements block select **Edit All**.

Per Diem Entitlements

Following is a list of per diem allowances for lodging and meals/incidentals for each day of your trip. The "edit" link allows you to change the information (e.g., duty conditions, meals provided, etc.) for a specific date or date range. The "reset" link changes the per diem information to the default rates for that date and location.

Date	Location	View/Edit	Reset	Ldg Cost	Ldg Allowed	M&IE Allowed	Per Diem Rate	Code	B	L	D	Qtrs
07/19/08	DENVER,CO	Edit	Reset	0.00	0.00	0.00	140 / 49	*				
07/20/08	DENVER,CO	Edit	Reset	0.00	0.00	0.00	140 / 49	*				
07/21/08	DENVER,CO	Edit	Reset	140.00	140.00	36.75	140 / 49					
07/22/08	DENVER,CO	Edit	Reset	140.00	140.00	49.00	140 / 49					
07/23/08	DENVER,CO	Edit	Reset	140.00	140.00	49.00	140 / 49					
07/24/08	DENVER,CO	Edit	Reset	140.00	140.00	49.00	140 / 49					
07/25/08	DENVER,CO	Edit	Reset	0.00	0.00	36.75	140 / 49					

3. In the Per Diem Rates section select **VIEW/EDIT EXPENSE DETAILS**.

Per Diem Rates

Costs are total for all travelers. You may change your lodging costs below. Use the "View / Edit Expense Details" link for expense details such as payment method, reimburseable, etc.

Per Diem Rate: 140.00 / 49.00

Lodging: \$ 0.00 [view / edit expense details](#)

M & IE: \$ 0.00

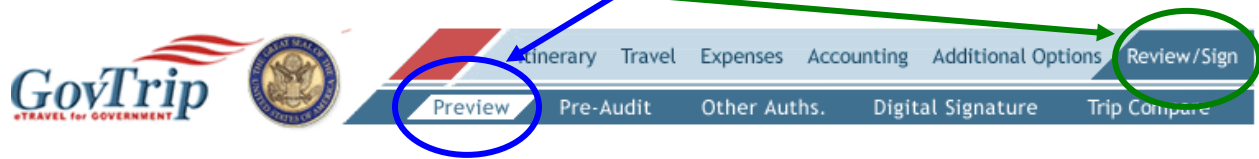
4. In the Expense Details box, under Cost Options select **PERSONAL** as the Method of Reimbursement, and then select **SAVE**.

The screenshot shows the 'Expense Details' form. At the top, a yellow banner reads 'Use this screen to edit the expense details.' Below this is the 'Cost Options' section with the following fields: Expense Type: Lodging; Expense Cost: 0.00; Reimbursable: YES; Expense Category: LODGING; Method of Reimbursement: a dropdown menu with 'GOVCC' selected, and 'PERSONAL' highlighted in blue and circled in green. Below the 'Cost Options' is the 'Foreign Calculator' section with input fields for Foreign Currency (0.00) and Exchange Rate (0.00). A yellow banner below the calculator reads 'If the expense cost doesn't appear to be correct, then try using the following exchange rate:'. At the bottom of the form are two buttons: 'Return' and 'Save', with the 'Save' button circled in blue. A green arrow points from the text 'PERSONAL' in the instruction to the 'PERSONAL' option in the dropdown menu. A blue arrow points from the text 'SAVE' in the instruction to the 'Save' button.

5. It is NOT necessary to change the method of reimbursement for Meals & Incidental Expenses (M&IE) because the default payment method for M&IE is PERSONAL.

Preview

1. Select the **Review/Sign** Tab, then **Preview**.



2. Review all information in the **Preview Trip** box for accuracy. Paying particular attention to the **Expenses** section and the **Method of Reimbursement** column.

Preview Trip

Review the details for this trip below. To make edits, click on the links at the left to return to that section. If you have no changes, proceed to Pre-Audit. Click [here](#) to compare with previous Adjustment.

Overall Starting Point Time Zone: EST (06)

Itinerary: [Edit](#) Leave From: RES: , Leave: 28-Jul-08 Trip Details & Comments to the Approving Official: Bronze Tomato Award from Agricultural Sciences Academy

Overall End Point Time Zone: EST (06)

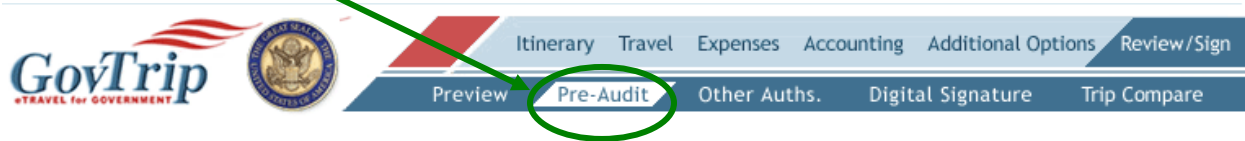
Itinerary: [Edit](#) Leave From: RES: , Return Location: RES: , Arrive: 29-Jul-08

Expenses

Row #	No.	Expense Type	Date	Cost	Method of Reimbursement
Edit	1.	ATM FEE	07/28/08	\$5.00	PERSONAL
Edit	2.	GASOLINE-RENTAL CAR	07/28/08	\$45.00	PERSONAL
Edit	3.	HOTEL TAXES	07/28/08	\$26.00	PERSONAL
Total:				\$76.00	

Pre-Audit

1. Select **Pre-Audit** tab.



2. In the Pre-Audit Trip box, in ***Justification to Approving Official** box enter the statement "Directing payment to employee per REE policy" for all reasons identified as *DFLTPMT Method Used*, then select **Save and Proceed to Digital Signature**.

A screenshot of the 'Pre-Audit Trip' form. The form has a title bar and a yellow warning box at the top. Below that, a section titled 'Items have been Flagged in this Travel Document' contains a table with three rows of flagged items. Each row has three columns: 'Reason Flagged', 'Item Description', and '* Justification to Approving Official'. The first two columns are circled in blue, and the third column is circled in green. At the bottom of the form, a button labeled 'Save And Proceed To Digital Signature' is circled in red. A red arrow points from the second step of the instructions to this button. A green arrow points from the first step of the instructions to the 'Pre-Audit' tab in the navigation menu above.

3. Proceed with stamping the document when complete.

**REE AGENCY FEDERAL AGENCY TRAVEL ADMINISTRATORS
(FATA)**

AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH SERVICE:

Administrative and Financial Management:

Janelle McClintock	301-504-1311	Janelle.Mcclintock@ars.usda.gov
Diane Eggert	301-504-1260	Diane.Eggert@ars.usda.gov
Jeanette Powers	301-504-1310	Jeanette.Powers@ars.usda.gov

Office of Administrator, National Agricultural Library, National Program Staff

Elizabeth Jackson	301-504-7693	ejackson@nal.usda.gov
Laura Pope	301-504-5570	lpope@nal.usda.gov

Beltsville Area

Joseph LaCour	301-504-5542	Joe.LaCour@ars.usda.gov
Nichella Simms	301-504-5664	Nichella.Simms@ars.usda.gov

North Atlantic Area

Joyce Hamilton	215-233-6689	Joyce.Hamilton@ars.usda.gov
Darleen Nelson	207-581-3266	Darleen.Nelson@ars.usda.gov
Maria Dallara	215-233-6550	Maria.Dallara@ars.usda.gov

South Atlantic Area

Valjean Farmer	706-546-3492	Valjean.Farmer@ars.usda.gov
Joanne Goings	706-546-3326	Joanne.Goings@ars.usda.gov
Phyllis B Johnson	706-546-3192	Phyllis.Johnson1@ars.usda.gov

MidWest Area

Kit Mernick	309-681-6628	Kit.Mernick@ars.usda.gov
JoAnn Volk	309-681-6629	Joann.Volk@ars.usda.gov

MidSouth Area

Cack Norquist	662 686 5384	Cack.norquist@ars.usda.gov
Dianne Morris	662 686 5396	Dianne.morris@ars.usda.gov

Northern Plains Area

Linda Sundstrom	970-492-7026	Linda.Sundstrom@ars.usda.gov
Kendra McGehee	970-492-7026	Kendra.McGehee@ars.usda.gov

Southern Plains Area

Freida Williams	979-260-9493	Freida.Williams@ars.usda.gov
Brenda Whitwell	979-260-9494	Brenda.Whitwell@ars.usda.gov
Patti Toth	979-260-9492	Patti.Toth@ars.usda.gov
Barbara Crane	979-260-9495	Barbara.Crane@ars.usda.gov

Pacific West Area

Lisa Jackson-Beitia	510.559.6010	Lisa.JacksonBeitia@ars.usda.gov
Sharon Haag	510.559.6011	Sharon.Haag@ars.usda.gov
Joyce Daniels	510.559.6007	Joyce.Daniels@ars.usda.gov

COOPERATIVE STATE, RESEARCH, EDUCATION AND EXTENSION SERVICE:

Jeanette Powers	202-720-8505	Jeanette.Powers@ars.usda.gov
Linda Geddie-Abney	202-720-3536	Linda.Geddie-Abney@ars.usda.gov

ECONOMICS RESEARCH SERVICE:

LaShawn Williams	202-694-5105	lashawnw@ers.usda.gov
Kimberly Wood	202-694-5181	kwood@ers.usda.gov
Fran Hresan	202-694-5209	fhresan@ers.usda.gov

NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS SERVICE:

NASS employees should contact their assigned FATA; they may view the list of FATAs and their areas of assignment on the NASS Discussion Board.