

SmartTax Customer Guide

State Taxes When You Travel

What is the GSA SmartPay Charge Card Program?

It is the largest federal government charge card program. Many government employees will use the GSA SmartPay Purchase, Travel, Fleet, or Integrated Card as a form of payment when making authorized purchases on official government travel or when using a government fleet vehicle.

What are the Different Types of Federal Government Charge Cards?

- **Centrally Billed Account (CBA)** expenses are directly paid by the federal government and should not be charged state taxes.
- **Individually Billed Account (IBA)** expenses are paid by the federal cardholder and, depending on the state, may be eligible for state taxation.

When and Where Should I Pay Taxes When I Travel?

Each state determines the tax exemption status for federal government travelers when using the GSA SmartPay Travel Card. For more information about the tax exemption status for specific states, please visit: smartpay.gsa.gov/about-gsa-smartpay/tax-information/state-response-letter.

Did a Vendor Exempt Taxes in a State that Doesn't Exempt Taxes?



Please pay the tax! Recognizing that a state does not exempt state taxes for transactions with the GSA SmartPay Travel Card is important as vendors will still be required to accurately assess taxes. This may cause complications in the future, including vendors potentially back-charging taxes owed.

What Should You Do Before You Travel?

- Visit the GSA SmartPay website to determine if the state you are traveling to exempts taxes for transactions with GSA SmartPay charge cards; make note of the website, in case you need it during travel.
- If the state exempts IBA cards, determine if a tax exemption form is needed; if it is, fill it out and bring it along on your travels.
- Bring copies of travel authorization forms or your federal identification card, to verify your status.
- Write down your card program manager's contact information, in the event there are any issues at the hotel check-in desk.
- Take a moment to familiarize yourself with the applicable tax exemption laws; if you are traveling to a state that exempts taxes, taking a printout containing that information with you may speed up the exemption process during your travels.
- When traveling to a tax-exempt state, contact the hotel – *before you travel* – to verify that taxes will not be charged to your GSA SmartPay Travel Card.



What Should You Do When You Travel to a Tax-Exempt State?

- When applicable, please make sure you complete and submit a state tax exemption form when you check in.
- If the hotel does not recognize the tax exemption status, please refer hotel representatives to the GSA SmartPay website or to the state's taxation authority, to verify tax exemption. If the hotel still does not recognize exemption, please pay the taxes and plan to reclaim the taxes assessed when you return from travel.
- If the hotel in a tax-exempt state does actually assess state taxes, please notify your agency's card manager.
- For security reasons, do not allow the hotel to photocopy your federal identification card.

What Should You Do After You Return From Travel?

- Maintain copies of all receipts, in order to verify taxes assessed. Receipts should be maintained for 75 months (six years and three months).
- Maintain points of contact for vendors assessing taxes in tax-exempt states and notify your card manager to initiate the tax reclamation process, which may differ from agency to agency.
- Keep track of your travel information, specifically critical information such as travel dates, locations, vendors, and amount of taxes assessed.
- If you find state taxing authority publications with information about exemption and/or reclamation, please share these with your fellow travelers and card manager.
- In accordance with Federal Travel Regulations, please remember to use the GSA SmartPay Travel Card when you are on official federal government travel, as all states will not exempt taxes on personal cards, and your agency will not have the ability to earn important refunds.

Contractor Bank Contact Information

Cardholders can contact their charge card bank by calling the 800/888 # on the back of their cards or they can contact their Agency/Organization Program Coordinators (A/OPC) for assistance.

For assistance with your government charge card(s), you can reach the contractor banks at:

Citibank:

<https://home.cards.citidirect.com/CommercialCard/Cards.html>
(800) 790-7206 (within the United States)
(904) 954-7850 (outside of the United States)

JP Morgan Chase:

<https://gov1.paymentnet.com/>
(888) 297-0783 (within the United States)
(847) 488-4441 (outside the United States)

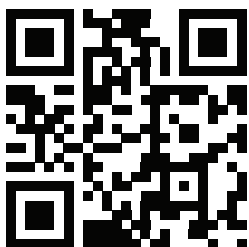
U.S. Bank:

<https://access.usbank.com/cpsApp1/index.jsp>
(888) 994-6722 (within the United States)
(701) 461-2232 (outside the United States)

For More Information

For questions and assistance, contact the Office of Charge Card Management by email at gsa_smartpay@gsa.gov, or via the GSA SmartPay phone line at **(703) 605-2808**. You may also visit our website at smartpay.gsa.gov.

For specific issues, please contact your card manager.



Scan this code with your smartphone and a QR reader app to obtain a pdf version of this publication, or to order a paper copy.

www.gsa.gov
 April 2012
 5-12-00440

Order publications at gsa.gov/cmIs

