

**PART 301-2--GENERAL RULES**

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**TRAVEL AUTHORIZATIONS**

**301-2.1(a) What form do I use to authorize travel?**

NOAA and BIS employees **must** use Integrated Travel Manager (ITM) to electronically process **all** travel authorizations. Travel authorizations properly created, electronically routed, and approved in ITM will generate a Centrally-Billed Account (CBA) obligation number and a Traveler Purchase Order (PO) number in block 8 of the authorization, as applicable. The obligation numbers indicate the authorization is an approved, legally binding document and replaces the ink signature requirement on hard copy travel authorizations. When using the copy feature to copy travel authorizations from a document already data linked in ITM, it is imperative that all obligation data from the copied document be removed. **Please note, authorizations processed in ITM must include the appropriate obligation number(s) in Block 8 of the travel authorization to be considered an “approved” authorization.**

**301-2.1(b) Who do I submit my travel authorization to once it is approved?**

You will need to e-mail or fax your approved travel authorization to your servicing Travel Management Center (TMC – ADTRAV/Panda/US Travel) in order to be ticketed for airfare. However, you are no longer required to attach the approved travel authorization to your travel voucher when submitted to finance for payment. Please note, your servicing TMC **will not** process a ticket for you

- 1) if the ITM Authorization Default form does not include the “Document History” page which is the last page of the authorization; and
- 2) if the CBA Obligation number does not appear in block 8 of the travel authorization.

**301-2.1(c) How can I secure lower airfare in times when I cannot process a travel authorization in ITM due to system unavailability or in emergency circumstances?**

Employees who need to secure lower airfare **in times when a travel authorization cannot be processed in ITM due to system unavailability** are authorized to use the hard copy CD-29 form. CD-29s used in this interim process must include one of the italicized justifications in the comments section of the CD-29 and must contain a ink signature approval. The TMC will not accept a CD-29 without proper justification and ink signature approval. Note: employees will need to re-enter the authorization into ITM once the system is available and prior to voucher submission. Authorizations re-entered into ITM will not need to be sent to the TMC.

Employees who need to secure lower airfare **in times when ITM is available but electronic approvals cannot be obtained due to time sensitivity or “emergency circumstances”** are authorized to use the ITM Travel Manager Default Form. However the authorization must include one of the italicized justifications in the comments section and must contain a ink signature approval.

**Regardless of which method used, all authorizations will be required to route through the system for electronic approval(s) in order to process the travel voucher.**

System Unavailability/Emergency Circumstance Justifications:

1) *“Emergency Travel – Obligation Information not Available”*

- Emergency Travel is defined here as an unforeseen combination of circumstances which results in the immediate need to travel.

2) *“Mission Essential – Obligation Information not Available”*

- Mission Essential travel is defined here as an urgent need to travel to perform activities which are critical to achieving the Line Offices’ objectives and goals.

3) *“System Downtime – Obligation Information not Available”*

- System Downtime is an occurrence in which one or more of the CBS applications are inaccessible to users due, but not limited, to causes such as system maintenance, Internet connectivity, restricted access, unforeseen technical difficulty, etc. System downtime can impact Travel Manager and Core Financial System (CFS) simultaneously or independently.

**301-2.1(d) When must I have a travel authorization?**

You must have a travel authorization when one or more of the following applies to your TDY travel:

- (i) Travel exceeds one calendar day (24 hour period);
- (ii) Travel exceeds 12 hours and per diem is incurred;
- (iii) Common carrier transportation for travel is required; and
- (iv) \*For all gift or bequest travel, regardless of \$ amount.

\*A travel authorization is required for **all** gift or bequest travel including situations when an outside source or another Federal agency prepays all travel expenses and NOAA is charged nothing (zero [\$0] dollar travel authorization). Having an approved authorization in place is important since it not only covers the employee, but also shows that the employee is in a temporary duty (TDY) status. *Note: travel vouchers are also required for zero cost gift or bequest travel.*

**301-2.1(e) Where do I show leave on the travel authorization?**

Leave in conjunction with official travel (before, during, or after), must be shown in the "General Itinerary" and "Other Authorizations" section of the ITM Travel Authorization Default Form, or "Remarks" section of the travel order. Personal points of travel must never be shown on travel authorizations.

**301-2.1(f) Can one travel authorization cover a group of individuals?**

No, travel authorizations (including blanket travel authorizations and trip authorizations) must be for a single traveler only unless they fall under one of the exceptions described in 301-2.1(i).

**301-2.1(g) Are there any exceptions to list more than one individual on a travel authorization?**

Yes, travel authorizations can cover more than one individual for award ceremony travel, home leave travel, evacuation travel, travel of an employee with special needs where an attendant is required, death of an employee, and permanent change of station travel. In these cases, only one travel authorization and one travel voucher will be filed for reimbursement.

Note: Two separate travel authorizations and two separate travel vouchers will be processed whenever a NOAA employee is authorized to accompany another NOAA employee who is performing award ceremony travel.

**301-2.1(h) How do I show changes to a travel authorization that has already been approved, but travel has not taken place?**

You should complete an amended travel authorization. Amendments should be issued to add expenses that require specific approval (e.g., to add a destination) or to show when travel is delayed more than 30 days. Amendments will completely replace original travel authorizations and will include all costs for the trip.

**301-2.1(i) What should I do if I incur unexpected expenses that are not authorized on the travel authorization?**

After travel, unexpected expenses that are not authorized on the travel authorization may be post-approved at the discretion of your authorizing official in the remarks section of the travel voucher using the following statement: "Electronic approval of this travel voucher indicates reimbursement of the (specific expense(s)) as stated on the travel voucher were necessary and post-approved." **Please note employees are responsible for obtaining approval from their authorizing official prior to incurring unexpected expenses. Failure to obtain approval in advance of incurring an unexpected expense may result in the employee being denied reimbursement.**

In addition, amendments are required in cases where the expenses incurred exceed the estimated amounts on the original order outside of the tolerance levels established in the Core Financial System (CFS) and in cases where expenses incurred fall into object class codes that were not on the original order. *See FTR, Chapter 301-12 and NTR, Chapter 301-1.20 - 301-1.35 for expenses that require specific authorization.*

**301-2.1(j) What is a blanket (limited open) travel authorization?**

A blanket travel authorization is issued to pre-authorize multiple trips which cannot be scheduled in advance. Blanket travel authorizations:

- 1) Can only be issued to NOAA employees and should be limited to repetitive operational travel;
- 2) Should include a specific purpose that would apply to all trips made under the blanket travel authorization;
- 3) Should be limited as to duration and places to be visited. The duration of a blanket travel authorization (up to the limit of one fiscal year) will depend on the nature of the activity in which the employee, station, or field party is engaged; and
- 4) Cannot be used for conferences, meetings, seminars, etc.

**301-2.1(k) Can blanket travel authorizations be used for foreign travel?**

Yes. Blanket travel authorizations may be used for foreign travel only when:

- 1) Daily assignments are of a routine operational nature, such as cross-the-border travel to Canada, or
- 2) Travel to any foreign area is an emergency, e.g., disaster clean-up, and spills of oil and hazardous materials.

**301-2.1(l) Once my blanket travel authorization is authorized, do I need to have any other approval?**

Yes. All travel accomplished through blanket travel authorizations must be covered by individual trip authorizations. Each trip accomplished through blanket travel authorizations must be authorized by the employee's supervisor prior to travel or post-approved on the travel voucher after travel. Post-approvals should be rare and should be considered only for emergencies. Note: Blanket travel authorizations are not used for obligating travel funds. Only the individual trip authorizations are used for obligating travel funds.

**301-2.1(m) Can actual expenses be authorized on my blanket travel authorization?**

No. Actual expenses cannot be authorized on blanket travel authorizations. Actual expenses can only be authorized on individual travel authorizations, including trip authorizations, authorized at the level of authority cited in *NTR*, Chapter 301-1.26.

**301-2.1(n) Who assigns travel authorization numbers?**

Each Line and Corporate Office is responsible for assigning all travel authorization numbers.

**301-2.1(o) Are accounting codes required on travel authorizations and trip authorizations?**

Every travel authorization and trip authorization must include a CAMS accounting classification code which would include the bureau, the project/task, organization code, and object classification code(s).

**301-2.1(p) What is the format for assigning a travel authorization number?**

Travel authorization numbers are always nine characters (either numeric or alpha) without dashes (-), spaces, or any special characters. All travel authorization numbers **must** be unique and will always start with the last digit of the fiscal year, followed by a three character organization code, followed by a one character travel type code, and will end with four sequential alphanumeric characters (i.e. numbers, letters or a combination of both).

**301-2.1(q) What are the different travel “type” codes?**

B-Blanket Travel (Domestic/Non-Foreign)	YXXX <b>B</b> 0050
Domestic Trip Authorization Scheme	YXXX <b>B</b> 0051-YXXX <b>B</b> 0099
K-Blanket Travel (Foreign)	YXXX <b>K</b> 0050
Foreign Trip Authorization Scheme	YXXX <b>K</b> 0051-YXXX <b>K</b> 0099
E-Evacuation Travel	YXXX <b>E</b> 0001
L-Local Travel	YXXX <b>L</b> 0001
P-PCS (Domestic/Non-Foreign)	YXXX <b>P</b> 0001
R-PCS/Overseas Assignment & Return (Foreign)	YXXX <b>R</b> 0001
S-Single (Domestic/Non-Foreign)	YXXX <b>S</b> 0001
F-Single (Foreign)	YXXX <b>F</b> 0001

**Note:** The type of travel must be entered in the fifth position of the travel authorization number.

**301-2.1(r) How are trip authorization numbers assigned?**

An individual trip authorization number will be a sequential alphanumeric scheme within the blanket travel authorization number (positions 6-9). For example: If the blanket domestic/non-foreign travel authorization number is YXXXB0050; the trip authorization numbers will be YXXXB0051 through YXXXB0099.