

VA Financial Policies and Procedures
Transportation Expenses

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0301 OVERVIEW

This chapter establishes the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) financial policies and procedures regarding the authorization and payment of transportation expenses for official Government travel. This chapter implements and supplements those portions of the Federal Travel Regulation (FTR) pertaining to temporary duty travel (TDY). The FTR is the Federal regulation that implements statutory requirements and Executive Branch policies for travel by Federal civilian employees and others authorized to travel at Government expense (41 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Chapters 300 through 304).

This chapter provides specific guidance on:

- Methods of Transportation – Section 030201 below.
- Air Travel – Section 030202, page 3.
- Train Travel – Section 030203, page 13.
- Ship Travel – Section 030204, page 14.
- Use of Electronic Devices While Driving – Section 030205, page 14.
- Use of Government Owned Vehicle (GOV) – Section 030206, page 14.
- Use of Privately Owned Vehicle (POV) – Section 030207, page 17.
- Rental of Automobiles and Special Conveyances – Section 030208, page 19.
- Unused Transportation Tickets – Section 030209, page 21.
- Use of Public Transportation – Section 030210, page 22.

0302 POLICIES

030201 METHODS OF TRANSPORTATION.

A. Methods of transportation authorized for official travel include railroads, airlines, helicopter service, ships, buses, streetcars, subways, local transit systems (common carrier transportation), and taxicabs; privately-owned vehicles (POV), and Government-furnished and contract rental automobile and airplanes; courtesy transportation; and any other necessary means of conveyance.

B. Selecting Method of Transportation to Be Used.

1. In selecting a particular method of transportation to be used, the Approving Official (AO) will consider the urgency of the particular travel, the accessibility and availability of public transportation, energy conservation, and the total cost to the Government, including costs of per diem, overtime, lost work time, and actual transportation costs (round-trip costs for use of taxicab versus mileage and parking costs for the use of a POV), and any other circumstances the AO deems relevant.

2. Additional factors to consider are the total distance of travel, the number of locations visited, and the number of travelers. As described in 5 U.S.C. 5733, “the travel of an employee shall be by the most expeditious means of transportation practicable and shall be commensurate with the nature and purpose of the duties of the employee requiring such travel.”

030202 AIR TRAVEL.

030202.01 General.

A. VA travelers will use coach-class accommodations for commercial air carriers for domestic and international travel on official business. Only under limited exceptions will “other-than-coach” class (i.e., business class, first class - formerly called premium class airline accommodations) be authorized.

B. All official travel reservations will be made through the VA E-Gov Travel Service (ETS) online booking engine (OBE) or the Travel Management Center (TMC) unless there are extenuating circumstances and the traveler is authorized an exception to using the OBE (refer to Volume XIV, Chapter 1, *Travel Administration*). Reservations using commercial means (e.g., Orbitz, Travelocity, other travel agents) are not permitted for official travel. Travelers are responsible for any additional costs resulting from the failure to use the ETS, including service fees, cancellation penalties or other additional costs. In addition, VA may take appropriate disciplinary action.

NOTE. A first-time traveler, unaware of the prohibition against using commercial means for making travel reservations, may be granted a one-time exception and may be paid for the travel costs not to exceed (NTE) the cost that would have been properly chargeable to the Government. The traveler will be advised that recurrence of such use of commercial means will result in denial of reimbursement, unless it can be demonstrated that the traveler had no other alternative.

C. VA will procure all common carrier services using the VA centrally billed account (CBA) travel card. In addition, all associated TMC fees and/or ETS fees will be charged to the CBA travel card.

D. VA employees will obtain the lowest available fares in VA’s ETS that will adequately provide the necessary transportation. Fares available in the ETS may include contract city-pair fares (YCA fares), capacity-controlled contract carrier fares (CA fares), and Government unrestricted and restricted non-contract carrier fares. Generally, the restricted fares are the least expensive. CA fares offer similar benefits as YCA fares but at a reduced cost to VA. The use of the higher cost YCA fares should be selected when travel plans are highly likely to change and thereby incur fees that increase the cost of the non-contract carrier fare to be more expensive than a CA fare. If a YCA carrier offers a lower cost capacity controlled fare, the traveler should use the lower of the two when it is available and meets mission needs. See paragraph 030202.04B for the use of penalty and non-refundable fares.

E. If a traveler cannot obtain advance approval because of a bona fide emergency, the purchase may be authorized post-travel. The traveler will explain the reason for the emergency purchase in the comment section of the travel authorization. Refer to Appendix A, TMC Ticketing Procedures, for additional information.

F. VA's local AO may authorize the use of two coach-class seats for a VA employee to accommodate a disability or special need. Justification will be included on the travel authority in VA's ETS. Where two coach-class seats are required, employees will contact the TMC directly to obtain these seats. Station officials should make a cost comparison between two coach-class seats and the other-than-coach-class seat to determine which accommodations are most advantageous to the Government.

G. Travelers who live near more than one airport or traveling to a TDY location with more than one airport will use the airport that is most advantageous to the Government in terms of expediency and cost effectiveness.

H. VA's AO will not prohibit the traveler from using a POV on official travel instead of the authorized mode of transportation (e.g., GOV, air, or rail). For further clarification, refer to paragraph 030207, Use of Privately Owned Vehicle.

I. VA employees are not authorized to purchase contract passenger transportation for personal/unofficial travel.

J. VA will not reimburse the cost of flight insurance purchased by a traveler incident to official travel.

K. VA will reimburse the employee the cost of baggage fees, when necessary, for official travel and supported by an appropriate receipt (refer to Volume XIV, Chapter 4, *Miscellaneous Travel Expenses*).

L. Travelers will return any unused tickets to the TMC immediately to ensure they receive timely credit on the Government travel charge card. Refer to Appendix B, Unused or Partially Used Tickets, for procedures.

M. Only VA travelers (including employees and invitational travelers) on official Government business may use Government contract carriers. Contract employees may not use Government contract carriers. Contract carriers may not be used for personal travel.

030202.02 Other-than-Coach-Class Travel.

A. The Assistant Secretary for Management/Chief Financial Officer's (CFO) approval is necessary for all other-than-coach-class air travel in advance of the actual travel unless extenuating circumstances or emergency situations make advance authorization impossible, or when the travel meets one of the exemptions described in 030202.02C

below. Post-travel requests will explain why prior authorization could not be obtained. In the absence of an authorization or approval, the employee will be responsible for the difference in cost between the other-than-coach-class accommodations used and the coach-class accommodations. Refer to Appendix C, Requesting Other-than-Coach Class Accommodations for the procedures to request other-than-coach-class airline accommodations.

B. Other-than-coach-class travel may include either first class or business class.

C. Justification for Other-than-Coach Class. All VA travel will be coach class unless other-than-coach-class travel is justified in writing using one of the following criteria:

1. Regularly scheduled flights between origin/destination points (including connecting points) provide only first-class and business-class accommodations and the employee certifies such on the voucher.
2. No space is available in coach-class accommodations in time to accomplish the mission, which is urgent and may not be postponed.
3. Using first or business-class accommodations is necessary to accommodate a disability or other special need. The disability will be substantiated in writing by a competent medical authority. Special need will be substantiated in writing according to VA's procedures. If the employee is authorized to have an accompanying attendant, the employee's AO may authorize the attendant to use first or business-class accommodations if the attendant's services are required en route.
4. Security purposes or exceptional circumstances, as determined by VA, make using business-class accommodations essential to successfully performing VA's mission.
5. Coach-class accommodations on an authorized/approved foreign air carrier do not provide adequate sanitation or health standards.
6. The business class upgrades result in an overall cost savings by avoiding additional subsistence costs, overtime, or lost productive time while awaiting coach-class accommodations.
7. The transportation costs are paid in full through agency acceptance of payment from a non-Federal source.
8. The origin and/or destination are outside of the Continental United States (OCONUS), and the scheduled flight time, including stopovers and change of planes, exceeds 14 hours and the traveler is required to report to duty the following day or sooner. In this instance, the employee may use business class accommodations, but will not be eligible for a rest stop en route or a rest period upon arrival at the duty site.
9. Other than coach-class travel is required because of VA's mission.

D. Upgrades to Other-than-Coach Class.

1. Employees may upgrade to other-than-coach-class at personal expense, including the use of frequent flyer benefits, at no additional cost to VA.
2. If the employee elects to use a class of air accommodations more costly than authorized and it is not approved beforehand or afterward, the employee is personally responsible for any excess cost, plus tax.
3. If an employee is in an official travel status and must use more costly accommodations than authorized because of official necessity, a statement will be included on the travel voucher justifying the change to a higher-class accommodation. If an appropriate statement is not included on the travel voucher, the employee will be personally responsible for any extra cost, plus tax.
4. In determining whether other-than-coach-class travel is appropriate, approving officials will consider where such travel is necessary to the public interest after all alternatives have been considered, including whether it is the most cost-effective. This evaluation should include whether flying coach class and incorporating a rest stop at an intermediate point of travel or a rest period at the destination would result in substantial savings to the Government and would be practical given time and travel requirements, compared to the high cost of other-than-coach-class accommodations.

E. Approval of Other-than-Coach Class Due to “Agency Mission.”

VA may authorize other-than-coach-class travel “when required because of agency mission.” Use of this provision will be justified in writing with a full description of the mission requirements, the reason(s) why other alternatives that would allow the use of coach accommodations are insufficient, and the reason(s) why the trip may not be postponed to allow for using coach accommodations. While the nature of the traveler’s pending duties may be a relevant factor, authorizations may not be based on a traveler’s grade or position.

F. Accommodations of Employee’s Disability or Physical Impairment.

1. VA may authorize other-than-coach-class travel, when necessary, to accommodate a disability or other medical condition, and the disability or condition is clearly visible and discernable or substantiated in writing by a competent medical authority. A “competent medical authority” is a physician licensed to practice medicine by a recognized Government body, who has treated the employee for the condition requiring premium-class accommodations.
2. Medical certification must be dated within three months of the first travel using that certification. Certification validating the disability, or other special need, remains in effect for a period of one year from the date of the certification or the duration of the

disability or special need, whichever is shorter, unless the competent medical authority certifies the disability as permanent.

3. A certification from a competent medical authority must include all of the following:

- A description of the disability, medical condition, or special need;
- The approximate duration of the medical condition or special need; and
- A recommendation of a suitable means of transportation for the employee based on the medical condition or special need.

4. Additionally, the employee may certify in writing the unique reason why lower cost commercial coach accommodations, such as bulkhead, aisle seating, or two adjoining coach-class seats, cannot be used in lieu of the higher-cost, other-than-coach-class accommodations. The agency head must determine that, at the time of travel, other-than-coach-class accommodations are necessary because the employee is so disabled, or limited by special medical needs, that other lower-cost economy accommodations cannot be used to meet the requirements.

5. Travelers seeking other-than-coach-class accommodations due to disability or other special medical needs should request authorization well in advance of anticipated travel to ensure sufficient time to obtain the required prior approval. If extenuating circumstances or emergencies prevent advance authorization, the employee will obtain written approval from the agency head within seven days of travel completion. If other-than-coach-class travel is not approved after the fact, the employee is responsible for the cost difference between the other-than-coach-class transportation used and the transportation class for which the employee was eligible.

030202.03 GSA City Pair Fare Program.

A. The General Services Administration (GSA) City Pair Program (CPP) for airfares is mandatory unless an exception applies, such as a non-contract carrier, for all Federal employees on official travel (refer to 030202.04 below for exceptions). Failure to use the contract carrier because of personal preference or in order to use frequent flyer programs violates the contract. The CPP provides numerous advantages to Federal employees:

1. No advance purchases are required.
2. No minimum or maximum length of stay is required.
3. Tickets are fully refundable without charge for cancellations or changes.
4. YCA fare seating is not capacity-controlled. As long as there is a coach-class seat on the plane, the traveler may purchase it.

5. There are no blackout dates.
6. Locked-in fares facilitate travel budgeting.
7. Tickets carry significant discounts over regular walk-up fares.
8. Fares are priced on one-way routes, permitting agencies to plan trips to multiple destinations.

B. Exceptions to Use of City-Pair Fares.

Use of a non-contract carrier requires advance approval and will be indicated on the travel authorization. A non-contract carrier may be used if the conditions listed in 030202.04B1 below are met.

030202.04 Restricted Fares.

A. Use of Non-Contract Airfares.

Employees may use non-contract airfares when, on the basis of the journey as planned, it is known or can be reasonably anticipated that these tickets will be used. If a carrier offers a lower cost capacity-controlled fare, the traveler should use the lower of the two when it is available and meets mission needs.

B. Use of Penalty and Restricted Fares.

1. The AO may authorize the use of non-contract air carriers when:

- Seating space is unavailable for the scheduled service or the scheduled service would require the traveler to incur overnight lodging expense;
- The contract's flight schedule is inconsistent with the Government's policy of scheduling travel during normal working hours to the maximum extent practicable;
- Rail service is available, and such service is cost effective and consistent with mission requirements; or
- A non-contract carrier offers a lower fare available to the general public, the use of which will result in a lower total trip cost to the Government or other mandatory user. This determination is based upon a cost comparison to include the combined cost of transportation, lodging, meals and related expenses. This exception does not apply if a contract carrier offers a comparable fare and has seats available at that fare.

2. The employee may use fares that are either nonrefundable or for which a charge or penalty is incurred for refund or exchange only when cancellation of travel is unlikely. If

the agency cancels the travel, the AO may approve the expense and the agency will pay for the ticket and any associated cancellation/penalty fees. However, if the traveler chooses to cancel the ticket for personal reasons, the AO may determine that the traveler is liable for the cost of the ticket and any associated cancellation/penalty fees. A Bill of Collection will be issued when the ticket is cancelled for personal reasons and purchased using the CBA Travel Card.

3. The AO will review and approve travel authorities as soon as possible when non-contract airfare reservations are made; the timeline is more stringent than contract fares for the purchase of the tickets after approval. Refer to Appendix A, TMC Ticketing Procedures, for additional information related to contract and non-contract airfares.

4. Justification for using a non-contract carrier will be selected in the travel authorization and voucher. If a cost comparison justification is needed, contact the agency's Travel Office or help desk for guidance.

5. Due to the time required to process alternate station-funded travel, restricted fares that have ticketing requirements of 24 hours or less will be avoided.

030202.05 Fly America Act.

A. Federal regulations (49 U.S.C. 40118) require that when travel is by air to a foreign country, the employee will use a U.S. flag air carrier service if U.S. Government funds are used to pay for the air travel. The general rule of the Fly America Act is that employees will travel on U.S. flag carriers as long as such service is available.

B. U.S. flag air carrier service also includes service provided under a "code share" agreement with a foreign air carrier per Title 14 of the C.F.R. when the ticket or documentation for an electronic ticket identifies the U.S. flag air carrier's designator code and flight number. A code sharing agreement between two airlines allows one airline to put its two-letter identification code on the flights of another airline as they appear in computerized reservations systems. For example, United (UA) has the contract award and has two flights, both shown as "United" in the reservation systems. One flight is on a United plane, and the other is listed as a UA flight but is actually operated by All Nippon Airways (ANA). In this instance, the ANA flight is considered U.S. flag air carrier service.

030202.06 OCONUS Air Transportation.

A. Foreign Air Carrier Service Deemed a Matter of Necessity.

1. Foreign air carrier service is deemed a "necessity" when service by a U.S. flag air carrier is available, but cannot provide the air transportation needed, or will not accomplish the agency's mission.

The term "necessity" includes, but is not limited to, the following circumstances:

- The agency determines that using a foreign air carrier is necessary for medical reasons, including using foreign air carrier service to reduce the number of connections and possible delays in the transportation of persons in need of medical treatment.
- Using a foreign air carrier is required to avoid an unreasonable risk to the traveler's safety and is approved by the agency (e.g., in the case of terrorist threats). Written approval by the agency, of the use of foreign air carrier service, based on an unreasonable risk to the traveler's safety, will be approved on a case-by-case basis. An agency determination and approval of use of a foreign air carrier, based on a threat against a U.S. flag air carrier, will be supported by a travel advisory notice issued by the Federal Aviation Administration and the Department of State. An agency determination and approval of use of a foreign air carrier based on a threat against Government employees or other travelers will be supported by evidence of the threat that forms the basis of the determination and approval.
- There is no availability for the traveler to purchase a ticket in the authorized class of service on a U.S. flag air carrier, and a seat is available in the authorized class of service on a foreign air carrier.

B. Use of Foreign Air Carrier Based on Cost.

Foreign air carrier service may not be used solely based on the availability of a lower cost ticket.

C. Use of Foreign Air Carrier Based on Preference or Convenience.

1. Travelers may not use a foreign air carrier based solely on preference or greater convenience for the agency or traveler.
2. Travelers will not be reimbursed for any transportation cost for which there is improper use of a foreign air carrier service. If authorized by the agency to use U.S. flag air carrier service for the entire trip, and the employee improperly uses a foreign air carrier for any part of or the entire trip (when not permitted under this regulation), the transportation cost on the foreign air carrier will not be payable or reimbursed to the traveler by the agency.

D. Rest Stops and Rest Periods.

1. VA defines a "rest stop" as a break in TDY or relocation travel while employees are en route to their destinations. In contrast, a "rest period" is personal time on either end of TDY travel that permits the employee to rest before reporting for duty.
2. When TDY involves OCONUS travel and the scheduled flight time exceeds 14 hours, including non-overnight airport stopovers and plane changes, a rest stop NTE 24 hours may be authorized. A rest stop allows employees to relax, recuperate,

and acclimate themselves so that they are sufficiently refreshed to perform work when they arrive at the travel destination site.

3. The following criteria will be met when authorizing a rest stop:

- Either the origin or destination will be OCONUS;
- Travel is direct between points, and accommodations are by coach class;
- The rest stop is at any intermediate point, including points within CONUS, provided the point is midway in the journey or as near to midway as scheduling permits; and
- A rest stop may not be authorized when an employee, for personal convenience, elects to travel by an indirect route resulting in excess travel time.

4. If a rest stop is authorized, it will be clearly indicated and detailed on the employee's travel authorization. For the purposes of reimbursement, use the per diem rate for the rest stop location. If the carrier schedule or the requirements to use U.S. flag carriers preclude an intermediate rest stop, or a rest stop is not authorized, the traveler should schedule coach-class travel to arrive at the TDY site with sufficient time to permit a reasonable rest period before reporting for duty.

5. VA may authorize business-class accommodations in lieu of a rest stop. Please note that the length of the flight alone (14 or more hours) does not justify authorizing business class. When considering business-class accommodations for trips over 14 hours, the AO should consider these factors:

- The constructive cost—for example, the cost of business-class accommodations versus the cost of coach-class accommodations, plus the cost of reimbursements in conjunction with a rest stop.
- The purpose and urgency of the trip—whether the trip is so urgent or unexpected that it may not be delayed or postponed, and the traveler is unable to schedule either a rest stop en route or an earlier flight that would allow a rest period before reporting for duty.

6. The analysis regarding the 14-hour rule will be applied when the scheduled flight time from origin to final destination exceeds 14 hours, including stopovers and change of planes. Authorization of business-class accommodations for the outbound part of the TDY does not automatically justify business accommodations for the return trip. The AO should consider the same criteria regarding critical nature, authorizing rest stops, and/or the availability of rest periods.

7. Business-class accommodations may not be authorized when an employee is not required to report for duty the following day, whether at the official duty station or a TDY location, unless there is a medical need that has been certified by a competent medical

authority. Also, if approval is granted for annual leave at the TDY or relocation point before the start of official business, or approval is granted for annual leave upon reporting to an official duty station location, neither a rest stop nor premium-class accommodations are authorized unless there is a medical need that has been certified by a competent medical authority.

E. Official Travel Advisories.

Before any international trips, employees should consult the State Department's Web site for travel advisories at http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/pa/pa_1766.html. Similarly, employees should consult the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Web site at <http://www.cdc.gov/travel/>. These Web sites provide country-specific information about security and health risks and what may be done to help ensure a healthy and safe trip. The VA International Travel and Passport Office (officialtravel@va.gov) will provide information, as appropriate and necessary, to VA employees, but travelers and their supervisors are responsible for timely reviews of these Web sites. When appropriate, travel decisions should include consultations with the respective agency head.

030202.07 Reduced Group or Charter Fares.

VA does not encourage the use of reduced group or charter fares. However, they may be used when the AO has determined, on an individual case basis prior to travel, that use of such a fare is cost effective and will not interfere with the conduct of official business. Chartered aircraft are subject to the same rules as Government aircraft, and agencies in the Executive Branch of the Federal Government are subject to the requirements of OMB Circular A-126, Revised (May 22, 1992), and 41 C.F.R. 101-37, in making such cost effectiveness determinations. Charter reservations do not require a receipt for expense report purposes; however, appropriate comments will be provided on the travel authorization that describes the use of the group or charter services. Refer to Appendix D, Requesting Charter and Contract Services.

030202.08 Government Aircraft.

The AO may authorize the use of a Government aircraft for travel for official purposes in accordance with FTR 301. The AO will ensure that travel on a Government aircraft is the most cost-effective alternative that will meet the travel requirements before it may be authorized.

030202.09 Denied Boarding on Airline

If an employee is denied confirmed reserved space, the employee will ensure, to the extent possible, that the carrier shows "Treasurer of the United States" as the payee on the compensation check (and any ticket refund check). The employee will provide the TMC a receipt for the checks, retain a copy of the receipt, and forward the checks, the copy of the receipt, and any unused ticket(s) to the servicing Finance Activity Agent

Cashier for deposit or reuse. Refer to Volume VIII, Chapter 3, *Agent Cashier Policy*, for deposit instructions.

030202.10 Voluntary Surrendering of Seat.

If an employee voluntarily surrenders a seat at the request of the airline, compensation may be accepted only when:

- Surrendering the seat does not interfere with performing official duties;
- Voluntarily surrendering the seat results in additional expense from personal funds for which the employee will not otherwise be reimbursed; and
- As a result of volunteering, the employee is delayed during duty hours and charged annual leave for any additional time away from the office.

030203 TRAIN TRAVEL.

A. Coach-class accommodations will be used for all train travel except when VA authorizes first-class service. However, if a train only has two classes of accommodations available, i.e., first and business class, then the business class is deemed to be classified as coach class for purposes of official travel, as it is the lowest class offered.

1. The following are classes of train accommodations:

- *Coach class*. The basic class of accommodations offered by a rail carrier to passengers that includes a level of service available to all passengers regardless of the fare paid. Coach class includes reserved coach accommodations as well as slumber coach accommodations, when overnight train travel is involved.
- *Slumber coach*. Includes slumber coach accommodations on trains offering such accommodations, or the lowest level of sleeping accommodations available on a train that does not offer slumber coach accommodations.
- *First class*. Includes bedrooms, roomettes, club service, parlor car accommodations, or other premium accommodations.
- *Business class*. A class of extra fare train service that is offered above coach class, but is lower than first-class, as described above.¹

Refer to Appendix C, Requesting Other than Coach-Class Accommodations, for additional information and requesting procedures.

¹ Although Acela is considered business class, because there are only two classes offered, it is considered coach class consistent with the explanation in coach class.

B. When coach-class train accommodations on a foreign rail carrier do not provide adequate sanitation or health standards, VA may authorize first-class train accommodations.

C. If the employee wants to upgrade because of a disability or medical condition, the need will be substantiated in writing by competent medical authority. A special need must be substantiated in writing.

D. VA will consider the use of Amtrak coach service to be advantageous to the Government. Amtrak offers a discount to Federal employee traveling between selected cities (city pairs). Whenever these discount fares are offered and the accompanying service will fulfill mission requirements, they should be used to the maximum extent possible. The discount provided by Amtrak is applicable for official travel only.

030204 SHIP TRAVEL.

A. VA does not consider travel by ship as advantageous to the Government without sufficient justification to ensure that the advantages of such travel will offset the higher cost associated with ocean travel. Consideration will be given to per diem, transportation, and lost work-time.

B. Travelers are required to travel by U.S. flag ship for the entire trip, unless use of a foreign ship has been authorized. The AO who authorized travel on a foreign flag vessel will execute a justifying statement to accompany the expense report. The criteria for the justifying statement are the same as those for use of a foreign air carrier in paragraph 030202.06 above. Any cost that is attributed to improper or unauthorized use of a foreign ship is the traveler's responsibility.

C. The lowest class accommodations will be used when traveling by ship, except when authorized by the VA CFO. The reasons for using other than the lowest class of ship accommodations is described in the FTR.

030205 USE OF ELECTRONIC EQUIPMENT WHILE DRIVING.

A. VA employees are not permitted to engage in text messaging or using electronic equipment, such as cell phones, computers or blackberry devices, when driving a GOV or POV while on official Government business. The use of electronic equipment supplied by the Government is also prohibited while driving.

B. A Federal Government-wide prohibition on the use of text messaging while driving on official business or while using Government-supplied equipment, such as cell phones, computers or blackberry devices, will help save lives, reduce injuries, and set an example for State and local governments, private employers, and individual drivers (refer to Executive Order 13513, dated October 1, 2009).

030206 USE OF GOVERNMENT OWNED VEHICLE (GOV).

A. Employees may be authorized to use a Government automobile for official Government business for both local and TDY travel.

B. When driving a Government vehicle, an employee must possess a valid State, District of Columbia, or territorial motor vehicle operator's license and only use the vehicle for driving, as follows:

- Between places of official business;
- Between places of official business and temporary lodging, when public transportation is unavailable or its use is impractical;
- Between places of official business or temporary lodging and restaurants, drug stores, barber shops, places of worship, laundromats, and similar places necessary for the sustenance, comfort, or health of the employee to foster the continued efficient performance of Government business; or
- As otherwise authorized by the agency under 31 U.S.C. 1344.

NOTE: Reimbursement for the commuting expenses to and from the official station to pick up a GOV for official travel is not authorized regardless of the day of the week.

C. Commitment to Use a Government-Furnished Automobile.

1. VA will obtain commitments from employees who are expected to perform extensive automobile travel on official business, as to whether they will use Government-furnished automobiles or elect to use privately owned conveyances. Refer to Appendix E, Sample Memorandum, for an example of a commitment to use a GOV.

2. Such commitments will be for periods of time that warrant the making of arrangements for the supply of Government-furnished automobiles, and commitment changes will be made in sufficient time in advance of their effective dates to permit arrangements to be made for acquisition or disposal of Government-furnished automobiles as required.

3. VA will require such a commitment when an employee, or group of employees, requires the use of an automobile for official travel on a frequent or repetitive basis (FTR 301-70.102c).

D. Factors to be Considered When Authorizing the Use of GOV.

The following are factors that an agency should consider in determining whether to require an employee to commit to using a Government automobile:

- Full utilization or availability of fleet vehicles, lower cost, and/or official presence; and
- The type of travel the employee performs.

E. Unauthorized Use of a Government Vehicle.

1. Employees are responsible for any additional cost resulting from unauthorized use of a Government vehicle, and may be subject to administrative and/or criminal liability for misuse of Government property.

2. Transportation of Nonofficial Passengers. The sole reason for operation of a Government-owned or leased motor vehicle is the accomplishment of official business. The transportation of nonofficial passengers in vacant space of a vehicle on official business will be avoided. An exception may be granted only when management officials, who have been delegated the authority, grant written approval to permit the incidental transportation of nonofficial passengers; provided that:

- The vehicle is being used for and the trip is connected with, the conduct of official Government business;
- Space is available and is not needed in connection with the accomplishment of official business;
- It is not an additional expense to the Government;
- It does not delay Government business or result in circuitous routes; and
- It does not involve private profit making activities.

F. Reporting to IRS—Use of Government-Owned or Leased Vehicles.

1. Taxability of the Use of Government-Owned or -Leased Vehicles for Commuting. The Deficit Reduction Act of 1984 (Public Law 98-369), and the Contemporaneous Recordkeeping Requirements Repeal Act (Public Law 99-44), require that certain non-cash fringe benefits be subject to Federal income taxes as well as Social Security and/or Medicare taxes. Among these non-cash benefits is the use of a Government-owned or -leased vehicle (GOV) for commuting. A GOV is considered as being used for commuting when it is used by an employee to travel between residence and place of work, whether round-trip or one-way, where the Government would not fully reimburse the employee had the employee used a privately-owned vehicle.

2. Responsibilities.

- Supervisor. The supervisor is to determine, in conjunction with each employee in a position designated a home-to-work position, the number of times the employee used a GOV for commuting. The supervisor will report the name of each employee who used a

GOV for commuting, the number of times the employee used a GOV to commute one-way, and the dates of the usage.

- **Finance Officer.** The finance officers are responsible for ensuring that supervisors report the name of each employee within their jurisdictions who uses a GOV to commute, the number of times each employee used a GOV to commute one-way and the dates of the usage. The finance officer will consolidate this information and report it to the Human Resources Office.
- **Human Resources Offices.** The Human Resources Offices are responsible for compiling a schedule of all employees for whom this benefit will be reported and notifying employees that OASDI and Medicare taxes will be deducted, as appropriate.

030207 USE OF PRIVATELY OWNED VEHICLE (POV).

030207.01 Employee Use of POV.

A. Employees may use their POV (including automobiles, motorcycles, and aircraft) on official travel when:

- Authorized by the AO as advantageous to the Government;
- In lieu of authorized common carrier; and
- In lieu of authorized Government-owned vehicle (GOV) or travel to and from common carrier in lieu of special conveyance (i.e., taxi, shuttle or public transportation).

B. Reimbursable and Non-Reimbursable Expenses:

Reimbursable Expenses in addition to Mileage Allowance	Non-reimbursable Expenses included in the Mileage Allowance
Parking fees; ferry fees; bridge, road, and tunnel fees; and aircraft or airplane parking, landing, and tie-down fees	Charges for repairs, depreciation, replacement parts, grease, oil, antifreeze, towage, and similar speculative expenses, gasoline, insurance, and state and Federal taxes

C. Acceptable evidence for POV ground mileage will include odometer readings of actual and necessary distance traveled for conducting official business. A comparison of actual mileage will be made against the number of miles calculated using Mapquest® as the principal standard for determining approved reimbursement. Other standards (e.g., Rand McNally, Yahoo) may be used if data is not available in Mapquest®. When the deviation exceeds 5 percent between the actual and standard (rounded up to the nearest mile), justification will be provided to the AO.

030207.02 POV Authorized as Advantageous to the Government.

A. POV use is authorized when it is determined common carrier, Government-owned vehicle, or contract rental vehicle is not available or not to the Government's advantage. Factors to be considered when determining if POV is to the Government's advantage should include:

- TDY location in relation to distance from official station;
- TDY location in relation to the lodging;
- Overall cost advantage when there are accompanying passengers under official travel authorizations in the same POV; or
- Salary cost associated by the additional travel time and/or missed work when any substantial distances are involved.

B. Employees may not be directed to drive their POV. POV travel may be authorized when requested by the employee. Transporting other employees as passengers is strictly voluntary on the part of both the employee driving the POV and passengers.

C. An employee must drive a minimum of 300 miles per day unless justification is provided, due to unforeseen conditions (traffic, construction, weather, etc.).

D. An employee will be reimbursed round trip mileage at the current GSA mileage rate. Refer to Appendix J, Privately Owned Vehicle (POV) Mileage Reimbursement Rates. Also, employees will be reimbursed per diem entitlements for the travel days to the TDY location to include lodging if overnight stay is required.

030207.03 POV in Lieu of Authorized Common Carrier.

A. VA may not prohibit employees from driving their POV on official travel. If travelers choose to drive their POV instead of traveling by the authorized common carrier, VA will reimburse the lesser of either the constructive travel costs of the authorized transportation or the actual transportation costs incurred. Refer to Appendix F, Constructive Travel, and Appendix G, Using POV in Lieu of Common Carrier, respectively.

- Constructive travel costs include the sum of the round trip contract carrier, baggage fees, which may have been incurred, estimated round trip taxi fare to and from the common carrier, including allowable 15 percent tip, and per diem entitlements for travel days. When common carrier is air, the contract airfare (YCA) will be used for consistency. If there is no contract airfare servicing the official duty station and/or TDY location, the Government unrestricted fare will be used.

- Actual costs will include round trip mileage reimbursement from departure point (residence or official station) to TDY location and return based on the POV mileage rate per GSA, other POV reimbursable expenses (e.g., tolls, parking) and per diem allowances incurred during travel days.

B. VA will charge annual leave for any additional days missed as a result of travel by POV. Refer to Appendix I, Scenarios Combining Personal with Official Travel, for further information.

030207.04 POV in Lieu of Authorized Government-Owned Vehicle (GOV).

When a GOV is available and authorized, as advantageous to the Government, and an employee chooses to drive a POV, VA will reimburse the employee the appropriate mileage rate. Refer to Appendix J, POV Mileage Reimbursement Rates.

030207.05 Round Trip to/from Common Carrier Terminal in POV in Lieu of Special Conveyance.

A. Travelers will be reimbursed POV mileage from either their residence or office to the common carrier terminal for the most direct route unless extenuating circumstances exist. Reimbursement will be the lesser of the actual mileage reimbursement or estimated special conveyance cost (e.g., taxi, hotel shuttle, public transportation).

1. When a POV is driven round trip to drop off and/or pick up an official traveler at the common carrier terminal, the official traveler is provided mileage reimbursement for two round trips and any associated fees (e.g., tolls). No parking at the terminal will be reimbursed.

2. When an official traveler drives to the common carrier terminal from a residence or official station to begin a TDY trip and then from the terminal to a residence or official station when the TDY is completed, the traveler will be reimbursed mileage for two one-way trips. Terminal parking fees are reimbursable. The total mileage and parking costs will not exceed the cost of two one-way taxi fares, including allowable 15 percent tips.

3. When an official traveler transports another official traveler to and from the same terminal, the mileage reimbursement is authorized for the additional distance involved. Mileage reimbursement will only be to the official traveler incurring the POV expenses and include the actual cost of parking plus the additional mileage. The passengers may not claim mileage reimbursement.

B. Mileage is payable to only one of two or more employees traveling together on the same trip and in the same vehicle. No deduction is made from the mileage allowance if other passengers contribute to defraying driving expenses.

030208 RENTAL AUTOMOBILES AND SPECIAL CONVEYANCES.

A. Rental cars will be authorized in advance of travel after a determination has been made by the AO that use of the rental car, incidental to official travel, is advantageous to the Government. Use of the rental car for purposes other than official travel is prohibited. Any additional costs incurred incidental to use of a rental car for personal reasons will not be reimbursed. Refer to Volume XIV, Chapter 4, *Miscellaneous Travel Expenses*, for additional information on approved reimbursable expenses for rental cars, e.g., gasoline.

B. When two or more persons travel together by means of a rented vehicle or special conveyance, each traveler will state that fact on his or her travel voucher, together with the names of all travelers and the names of their employing agencies.

C. VA requires travelers to rent compact size cars when conducting official travel unless they qualify for larger cars under one of the following three exceptions:

- The traveler is transporting equipment or materials required for the official portion of the trip that take up more space than is available in a compact car;
- The traveler is providing transportation to other VA employees on official travel; or
- The traveler experiences inclement weather conditions (snow or ice) or his or her trip includes off-road terrain and a 4x4 vehicle is required to safely complete the mission of the TDY trip.

Employees may upgrade to a larger vehicle at their own expense if none of the three exceptions (above) are met.

D. Collision Damage Waiver Insurance.

1. The Government is a self-insurer. Rental vehicles available under agreements with the Government include full coverage insurance for damages resulting from an accident while performing official travel (refer to FTR 301-10.451a(1) and (2)). Employees will not be reimbursed for additional rental/auto insurance purchased.

2. Any deductible amount paid by the employee may be reimbursed directly to the employee or rental agency if the damage occurred while performing official business (refer to FTR 301-10.451a(3)).

Exception. Employees will be reimbursed for collision damage waiver or theft insurance when they travel to a foreign country and such insurance is necessary because the rental or leasing agency requirements, foreign statute, or legal procedures could cause extreme difficulty for employees involved in an accident.

E. Reporting Accidents While Using Authorized Rental Automobiles or Special Conveyances. The traveler will notify the rental agency of any accident and obtain a police report for the company, if one is reasonably available, and will fill out a rental agency accident report when requested to do so. The rental agency should advise the traveler that under some state laws, failure to report an accident may result in the traveler being charged with the cost of repairs to the rented vehicle. The time spent while waiting for the replacement or for repairs due to any mechanical failure of the vehicle will be deducted from the total amount of rental time. The traveler will prepare a Motor Vehicle Accident Report (SF 91) at the time of an accident. Upon return from official duty, the traveler will forward the accident report to his or her supervisor and regional counsel for review and appropriate action. Refer to Appendix K, Motor Vehicle Accident Report.

F. Incidental Charges.

If the hire of a special conveyance does not include costs of the incidental expenses of gasoline or oil; rent of garage, hangar, or boathouse; subsistence of the operator; or ferrriage, tolls, or other such incidental charges, the traveler purchasing the accommodation or the services of the conveyance operator should pay those charges first, if practicable, and then itemize them in the bill.

030209 UNUSED TRANSPORTATION TICKETS.

030209.01 Individually Billed Account (IBA) Travel Card.

A. Any charges billed directly to an individually billed account (IBA) Government travel card should be credited back to that account.

B. If a ticket is purchased against an IBA travel card, any airline ticket refund due will be the traveler's responsibility. In this instance, the unused or partially unused ticket should be returned to the issuer, and a credit card refund notice receipt should be obtained.

C. The amount of the charge should be deducted from the amount claimed on the travel voucher. A note should be placed on the face of the travel voucher explaining that the ticket, or portion of it, was unused and that a refund has been requested.

D. Employees should inform the Travel Management Center (TMC) when a trip has been cancelled. This notice will enable the Finance Activity to cancel any obligation established for the transportation charge.

E. When accepting exchanged or returned tickets purchased with an individual charge card, the TMC will issue a credit card refund notice receipt to the traveler showing that the credit is due the traveler.

030209.02 Centrally Billed Account (CBA) Travel Card.

A. VA will use the following procedures for processing refunds for unused tickets purchased with a CBA travel card:

1. Partially unused tickets.

- Obtain the partially unused ticket from the traveler and return it to the TMC that furnished the ticket.
- Obtain a receipt from the TMC showing that a credit is due the agency.
- Confirm that the value of the partially unused ticket has been credited to the agency CBA travel card.

2. Unused tickets.

- Obtain the unused ticket from the traveler and return it to the TMC that furnished the ticket.
- Obtain a receipt from the TMC showing that a credit is due the agency.
- Confirm that the value of the partially unused ticket has been credited to the agency CBA travel card.

030210 USE OF PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION.

A. Taxi, Bus, Subway and Other Modes.

1. For local transportation, VA may authorize the use of taxis for the following purposes:

- Travel between places of business at the official or TDY station;
- Travel between a place of lodging and a place of business at a TDY station;
- Travel to obtain meals at the nearest available place where the nature and location of the work at a TDY station are such that meals cannot be obtained at the location;
- Travel from the employee's home to the office to pick up Government supplies or materials on the day the employee departs the office on an official trip requiring at least one night's lodging; or
- Travel from the office to the employee's home on the day the employee returns to the office after travel has been completed.

2. VA may authorize an employee public transportation between the employee's residence and office in cases of necessity. The AO may authorize/approve the usual taxicab fare, plus tip, for travel between the employee's office and home when:

- The employee depends on public transportation for officially ordered work outside regular working hours; and
- The travel between the employee's office and home is during hours of infrequently scheduled public transportation or darkness.

3. VA will limit reimbursement for tips to 15 percent of the taxi fare.

0303 AUTHORITY AND REFERENCES

030301 31 U.S.C. 1344, Passenger Carrier Use

030302 31 U.S.C. 1349, Adverse Personnel Actions

030303 46 U.S.C. 55302, Transportation of United States Government Personnel

030304 49 U.S.C. 40118, Government Financed Air Transportation

030305 49 U.S.C. 41102, Fly America Act

030306 38 C.F.R. Part 14, Legal Services, General Counsel, and Miscellaneous

030307 41 C.F.R. Part 102-5, Home to Work Transportation

030308 41 C.F.R. Chapters 300-304, Federal Travel Regulations

030309 67 Comp. Gen. 496, Military Personnel - Travel - Advances - Overpayments - Debt Collection Waiver Under the Waiver Statutes, June 28, 1988

030310 Executive Order 13043 (April 18, 1997), Increasing Seat Belt Use

030311 Executive Order 13513 (October 1, 2009), Federal Leadership on Reducing Text Messaging While Driving

030312 Reclamation Supplement to Federal Property Management Regulations (FPMR) Part 38, Subpart 114S-38.3, Use of Government Vehicles

030313 General Services Board of Contract Appeals (GSBCA), 13993-TRAV, October 16, 1997

030314 GSBCA, 14413-TRAV, March 19, 1998

030315 GSBGA, 16146-TRAV, August 6, 2003

030316 OMB Circular A-126, Improving the Management and Use of Government Aircraft

030317 U.S. Government Car Rental Agreement

030318 VA Forms Intranet Website

030319 VA Forms Internet Website

0304 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

030401 The Assistant Secretary for Management/Chief Financial Officer (ASM/CFO) oversees all financial management activities relating to the Department's programs and operations, as required by the Chief Financial Officers Act of 1990 and 38 U.S.C. 309. Specific responsibilities include the direction, management and provision of policy guidance and oversight of VA's financial management personnel, activities and operations. The CFO establishes financial policy including travel, systems and operating procedures for all VA financial entities and provides guidance on all aspects of financial management.

030402 Under Secretaries, Assistant Secretaries, Chief Financial Officers, Finance Officers, Chiefs of Finance Activities, Chief Accountants and other key officials are responsible for ensuring compliance with the policies and procedures set forth in this chapter and will designate one or more persons to answer questions pertaining to the preparation of temporary duty travel and permanent change of station authorities and vouchers. Under Secretaries and the Chairman of the Board of Veterans' Appeals may authorize actual expense greater than 150 percent up to 300 percent for travelers under their jurisdiction.

030403 The Office of Financial Policy (OFP) provides Department-wide financial policy and guidance. OFP Travel Policy staff develop, coordinate, issue, evaluate and review agency-wide travel policies and procedures. Additionally, staff help develop, pilot, monitor and implement agency-wide travel related systems.

030404 Approving officials will:

- A. Authorize official travel for travelers under their jurisdiction in advance of the travel.
- B. Determine if the travel is essential for the purpose of carrying out the mission of VA.
- C. Ensure all travel is authorized and performed consistent with the FTR, 41 C.F.R. 301-304, VA Travel Policy, and any other agency-specific guidance relating to travel issues.

- D. Ensure adequate funds are available before authorizing travel.
- E. Ensure all travel is performed in the most economical and effective manner.
- F. Ensure VA's E-Government Travel Service (ETS) is used to prepare, process, approve, and route travel authorizations and vouchers for official temporary duty travel, including the requirement to use the ETS for making reservations.
- G. Examine expense reports to ensure the justification, supporting documentation and receipts are attached to ensure that travel expenses for which reimbursement is claimed was performed as authorized and that split-pay was used to pay for all authorized expenses made to the card.
- H. May authorize actual expense up to 150 percent of the per diem rate for travelers under their jurisdiction.
- I. Ensure travelers under their jurisdiction complete vendorizing forms for establishment in VA's ETS. The ETS is used to process travel payments electronically, file expense reports with electronically attached receipts, and comply with the travel card program guidelines.

030405 Travelers will:

- A. Be knowledgeable of the Federal Travel Regulation, VA Travel Policy, and any other agency-specific guidance relating to travel issues.
- B. Minimize costs of official travel by exercising the same care in incurring expenses that a prudent person would exercise if traveling on personal business and expending personal funds. Excess costs, circuitous routes, delays, or luxury accommodations and services unnecessary or unjustified in the performance of official business will not be reimbursed are not acceptable under this standard. Travelers will be responsible for excess costs and any additional expenses incurred for personal preference or convenience.
- C. Ensure travel is authorized by the Approving Official prior to departure.
- D. Arrange travel using VA's ETS, including reservations for transportation, lodging, and rental cars, unless an exception applies.
- E. Cancel transportation and lodging reservations timely.
- F. Claim and obtain, where applicable, exemptions of tax imposed on hotel accommodations in locations listed in the Federal Acquisition Service's (FAS) GSA SmartPay Website. Only certificates issued by the locality granting the exemption may be used.

G. Submit claim for reimbursement of expenses within 5 business days upon return to the official station, with the exception of travelers in an extended travel status, who will submit expense reports at least once each month for a travel period that exceeds 30 days. Local expense reports may be submitted monthly or quarterly.

H. Liquidate travel advances.

I. Comply with VA's Travel Charge Card Program guidance contained in Volume XVI, Chapter 2, *Travel Charge Card*.

0305 PROCEDURES

Procedural and other guidance to assist the traveler may be found either in Section 0202 Policies or in relevant appendices, as indicated below:

- Appendix A: TMC Ticketing Procedures
- Appendix B: Unused or Partially Used Tickets
- Appendix C: Requesting Other-than-Coach-Class Accommodations
- Appendix D: Requesting Charter and Contract Services
- Appendix E: Sample Memorandum on Commitment to Use GOV
- Appendix F: Overview of Constructive Travel
- Appendix G: Example of Using POV in Lieu of Common Carrier
- Appendix H: Sample Cost Comparison Worksheet
- Appendix I: Scenarios Combining Personal with Official Travel
- Appendix J: Privately Owned Vehicle (POV) Mileage Reimbursement Rates
- Appendix K: Motor Vehicle Accident Report
- Appendix L: Federal Travel Regulation References

0306 DEFINITIONS

030601 Abode. The place where an individual resides (e.g., home, hotel, apartment).

030602 Alternate location. A destination other than the traveler's official station or the point of interruption while on TDY travel. In the case of illness or injury of the employee, the nearest hospital or medical facility capable of treating the illness or injury is not considered to be an alternate location. For example, an employee becomes incapacitated during TDY and travels from his or her current location to another city or locality to seek specialized treatment.

030603 Approving Official (AO). An employee with authority to approve or direct travel for official Government business by the agency head.

030604 Business Class. A class of accommodation offered by airlines that is higher than coach and lower than first class, in both cost and amenities. This class of accommodation is generally referred to as "business, business elite, business first, world business, connoisseur, or envoy" depending on the airline.

030605 Coach Class. The basic class of airline accommodation that is normally the lowest fare offered regardless of airline terminology used. For reference purposes only, coach class may also be referred to by airlines as "tourist class," "economy class," or "single class," when the airline offers only one class of accommodations to all travelers.

030606 Common Carrier. Private-sector supplier of air, rail, bus or ship transportation.

030607 Constructive Travel. Involves the need to limit a traveler's reimbursement when travel is performed using a mode of transportation not authorized/approved by the approving official or when one travels by other than the usually traveled route between two points.

030508 Continental United States (CONUS). Refers to the 48 contiguous States and the District of Columbia as defined in the FTR, 301-1.3(c)(6).

030609 Contract Carriers. U.S. certificated air carriers which are under contract with the government to furnish Federal employees and other persons authorized to travel at Government expense with passenger transportation service. This also includes GSA's scheduled airline passenger service between selected U.S. cities/airports and between selected U.S. and international cities/airports at reduced fares.

030610 Driving. Operating a motor vehicle on an active roadway with the motor running, including while temporarily stationary because of traffic, a traffic light or stop sign, or otherwise. It does not include operating a motor vehicle with or without the motor running when one has pulled over to the side of, or off, an active roadway and has halted in a location where one may safely remain stationary.

030611 E-Gov Travel Service (ETS). The Government-contracted, end-to-end travel management service that automates and consolidates the Federal travel process in a self-service Web-centric environment, covering all aspects of official travel, including

travel planning, authorization, reservations, ticketing, expense reimbursement, and travel management reporting.

030612 Employee. An appointed officer or employee of an agency, including a special Government employee (e.g., political appointee). 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 (WAE) basis, and an individual serving without pay or at a \$1 a year (also referred to as “invitational traveler”).

030613 Federal Travel Regulation (FTR). The FTR enumerates the travel and relocation policy for all Title 5 Executive Agency employees.

030614 Field Work. Official work requiring the employee’s presence at various locations other than his or her regular place of work. (Multiple stops, (itinerant-type travel) within the accepted local commuting area, limited use beyond the local commuting area, or transportation to remote locations that are only accessible by Government-provided transportation are examples of field work).

030615 First Class. The highest class of accommodation offered by the airlines in terms of cost and amenities. This is generally termed “first class” by airlines and reservation systems.

030616 Foreign Area (see also non-foreign area). Any area, including the Trust Territories of the Pacific Islands, situated both outside of CONUS and the non-foreign areas.

030617 Government-contract Rental Automobile. An automobile obtained for short-term use from a commercial firm as specified in the Federal Travel Directory, under the provisions of an appropriate GSA Federal Supply Schedule contract.

030618 Government-furnished Automobile. An automobile which is owned by VA, assigned or dispatched to VA on a rental basis from a GSA Interagency Fleet Management Center, or leased by VA for a period of 30 days or longer from a commercial firm.

030619 Invitational Travel. Authorized travel of individuals either not employed or employed (under 5 U.S.C. 5703) intermittently in the Government service as consultants or experts and paid on a daily when-actually-employed basis and for individuals serving without pay or at \$1 a year when they are acting in a capacity that is directly related to, or in connection with, official activities of the Government. Travel allowances authorized for such persons are the same as those normally authorized for employees in connection with temporary duty.

030620 Local Travel. Travel performed within an established local radius of the official station. The standard local radius will be 50 miles from the official station. A VA station may establish a local radius specific to their station based on counties or nearby cities.

This local radius will be established in writing and approved by the Facility Director. For virtual employees, the local radius will be 50 miles from the virtual/mobile office.

030621 Miscellaneous Travel Expenses. Other miscellaneous travel expenses are those described in 41 C.F.R. that are directly attributable and necessary to the travel and TDY as authorized and performed. When authorized or approved, these expenses are reimbursable in addition to the per diem allowance and transportation expenses.

030622 Non-Foreign Area. The States of Alaska and Hawaii, the Commonwealths of Puerto Rico, Guam and the Northern Mariana Islands, and the territories and possessions of the United States (excludes the Trust Territories of the Pacific Islands).

030623 Official Station. The location of the employee's or invitational traveler's permanent work assignment. (Refer to Volume XIV, Chapter 7, *Local Travel*.)

030624 Official Travel. Travel under an official travel authorization from an employee's official station or other authorized point of departure to a TDY location and return from a TDY location, between two TDY locations, or relocation at the direction of a Federal agency.

030625 Online Booking Engine (OBE). An Internet based system that permits travelers to make their own reservations for transportation (e.g., air, rail, and car rental) and lodging.

030626 Other-than-Coach class. Any class of accommodations above coach class, e.g., first class or business class.

030627 Outside the Continental United States (OCONUS). Refers to Alaska, Hawaii, and the United States territories, including American Samoa, Guam, the Northern Mariana Islands, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

030628 Payment. Funds paid for travel, subsistence, and related expenses by check or similar instrument, or payment in-kind.

030629 Payment In-Kind. Any goods, services, or other benefits provided by a non-Federal source for travel, subsistence, and related expenses in lieu of funds paid to VA by check or similar instrument for the same purpose.

030630 Per Diem. A daily payment instead of actual expenses for lodging, meals, and related incidental expenses. The per diem allowance is distinguished from transportation expenses and other miscellaneous travel expenses.

030631 Privately Owned Automobile. A car or light truck (including vans and pickup trucks) that is owned or leased for personal use by an individual.

030632 Privately Owned Vehicle (POV). Any vehicle such as an automobile, motorcycle, aircraft, or boat operated by an individual that is not owned or leased by a Government agency, and is not commercially leased or rented by an employee under a Government rental agreement for use in connection with official Government business.

030633 Rest Period or Rest Stop. A duration of rest not to exceed 24 hours at either an intermediate point en route or at the destination and will allow for appropriate overnight lodging. The rest period or stop begins upon arrival at the lodging accommodation and ends at departure from the accommodation.

030634 Special Conveyance. Commercially rented or hired vehicles other than a privately owned vehicle and other than those owned or under contract to an agency.

030635 Special Mission Travel.

Travel which includes, but is not limited to, providing patient attendant services, travel in support of VA sponsored programs for Veterans (e.g., Wheel Chair Games, Winter Olympics), travel of other than a VA employee, and travel in response to a natural disaster or emergency situation.

030636 Temporary Duty (TDY) Location. A place away from an employee's official station where the employee is authorized to travel.

030637 Texting or Text Messaging. Reading from or entering data into any handheld or other electronic device, including for the purpose of Short Message Service (SMS) texting, e-mailing, instant messaging, obtaining navigational information, or engaging in any other form of electronic data retrieval or electronic data communication.

030638 Transportation Expenses. Transportation expenses include commercial bus, air, rail, or ship fares and are reimbursable in addition to the per diem allowance. Transportation expenses also include local transit system and taxi fares, cost of commercial rental cars and other special conveyances, and mileage and other allowances to cover operating expenses for use of privately owned conveyances, including fees for parking, ferries, etc.

030639 Travel Authorization. Written or electronic authorization to travel on authorized official business for the Government resulting in reimbursement for expenses on a travel claim (voucher). Travel may be authorized on a blanket (unlimited or limited) authorization or on a trip-by-trip authorization. An unlimited authorization allows an employee to travel for any official purpose without further authorization. A limited authorization allows an employee to travel on official business without further authorization under certain specific conditions; e.g., travel to specific geographic area(s) for specific purpose(s), subject to trip cost ceilings, or for specific periods of time. A trip-by-trip authorization allows an individual or group of individuals to take one or more official business trips, which will include specific purpose, itinerary, and estimated costs.

030640 Travel Card (Government Travel Charge Card). Government Travel Charge Card or Travel Card is a convenient method for federal agencies and their employees to make payments for official government travel and travel related expenses. There are two types of accounts available under the GSA SmartPay contract – an individually billed account (IBA) and a centrally billed account (CBA).

030641 Travel Claim (Voucher). A written request, supported by documentation and receipts, where applicable, for reimbursement of expenses incurred in the performance of official travel, including permanent change of station (PCS) travel.

030642 Travel Management Center (TMC). A common carrier travel firm under contract providing reservation, tickets and related travel management services for official travelers.

030643 Travel Management Service (TMS). A service for booking common carrier (e.g., air, rail, and bus confirmations and seat assignments), lodging accommodations, and car rental services; fulfilling (i.e., ticketing) reservations; providing basic management information on those activities; and meeting other requirements as specified in the FTR. A TMS may include a Travel Management Center (TMC), Commercial Ticket Office (CTO), an electronically available system, other commercial methods of arranging travel, or an in-house system.

030644 Traveler. An individual as defined by the FTR who is authorized to perform official Government travel.

030645 Work. Any place within the accepted commuting area, as determined by the Federal agency for the locality involved, where an employee performs his or her official duties.

0307 RESCISSIONS

030701 MP-1, Part II, Chapter 2, Employee Travel Management, Paragraph 8 (Modes of Travel and Accommodations)

030702 OF Bulletin 09047E3.08, Use of Non-Contract Airfares

030703 Travel Notice 10-04, Privately owned Vehicle Mileage Reimbursement Rates

030704 Travel Notice 09-07, Fiscal Year 2010 Per Diem Rates and City Pair Fares

030705 Travel Notice 09-05, US Airways Online Checked Bag Feature

030706 Travel Notice 09-01, Privately Owned Vehicle Mileage Reimbursement Rates

030707 Travel Notice 08-09, Mid-Year Mileage Rate Reimbursement Change

- 030708 Travel Notice 04-03, Use of Restricted Fares
- 030709 Travel Notice 03-14, FY 2004 City Pair Airfare Awards
- 030710 Travel Notice 03-20, General Services Administration (GSA) City Pair Program Contract
- 030711 Travel Notice 03-22, Use of Privately Owned Vehicle for Temporary Duty Travel
- 030712 Travel Notice 03-23, FY 2004 POV Reimbursement Rates
- 030713 Travel Notice 02-01, Change in Privately Owned Vehicle (POV) Reimbursement Rates for Automobiles, Motorcycles and Airplanes
- 030714 Travel Notice 02-21, FY 2004 City Pair Contract Solicitation
- 030715 Travel Notice 02-22, United Airlines and City Pairs
- 030716 Travel Notice 02-24, New Mileage Rates for Privately Owned Vehicles (POV)
- 030717 Travel Notice 02-25, Significant Changes to Baggage and Passenger Screening
- 030718 Travel Notice 01-01, Revised Temporary Duty Mileage Rates
- 030719 Travel Notice 01-08, New TMC Transaction Fee
- 030720 Travel Notice 01-09, GSA Travel Advisory and Procedures for Approving Alternate Modes of Transportation for Official Travel
- 030721 Travel Notice 01-11, Use of Electronic Tickets

0308 QUESTIONS

Questions concerning these financial policies and procedures should be directed as follows:

- | | |
|------------|---|
| VHA | VHA CFO Accounting Policy (10A3A) (Outlook) |
| VBA | VAVBAWAS/CO/FINREP (Outlook) |
| All Others | OFP Accounting Policy (Outlook) |

APPENDIX A: TMC TICKETING PROCEDURES

A. AIR TRAVEL

General Information

VA travelers will select the method of transportation that is most advantageous to the Government. Travelers will obtain the lowest available fare that will adequately provide the necessary transportation when making their travel arrangements in FedTraveler.com.

After all reservation selections are made, the traveler/alternate preparer should review the trip details on the “Review and Modify Trip” page. Upon review of the travel selections, changes should be made as needed. The traveler/alternate preparer will carefully read and take note of the important “Ticket by Date” information displayed and the general fare rules.

Upon the completion of the reservation, the traveler/alternate preparer will receive an email from the E-Gov Travel Service (ETS) and/or the Travel Management Center (TMC) provider which includes reservation information. The traveler/alternate preparer should verify the itinerary information is correct and populated onto the travel authorization. The traveler/alternate preparer may receive a message from the TMC indicating the reservation was unavailable or the fare has expired (non-contract/restricted fares) and to select another option. At this time, the traveler/alternate preparer should log into VA’s ETS to select another fare.

Government Contract Fares

The travel authorization will be approved in a timely manner to allow the TMC to perform the ticketing process. Ticketing of Government contract fares will begin 7 calendar days prior to the travel. When the travel itinerary has a combination of Government contract and non-contract/restricted fares, the more restrictive (i.e., non-contract/restricted) fare rules will dictate the ticketing requirements and will require Government contract fares to be ticketed sooner than the 7 calendar days. Government contract fares are fully refundable when cancelled.

Non-Contract/Restricted Fares

Travel authorizations containing Non-Contract/Restricted Fares (Lowest Available Fares) need to be approved and ticketed within 24 hours or less from the reservation time. Fares are not guaranteed until ticketed.

In the event the travel authorization is cancelled, the traveler will receive a credit from the airline for future travel. The cost of exchanging the cancelled ticket for a future

restricted ticket currently averages \$150. When a future TDY has been approved and the travel authorization has been created in ETS, the traveler will contact the TMC directly for travel reservations. The TMC will apply the credit to the new travel itinerary. This process will also result in additional ETS and TMC transactions fees (non-self service fee). The traveler is ultimately responsible for ensuring the partial or unused ticket is used on the next available travel episode.

Paper Tickets

For domestic and international travel, the TMC will not issue paper tickets. If a paper ticket is required by the airline, the cost of any fee is reimbursable by the Government. Currently, very few airlines require paper tickets because of electronic ticket (e-ticket) technology. If a paper ticket is obtained because of personal preference and the TMC has the ability to issue an e-ticket, then the cost of the airline fee and delivery fee would be the traveler's responsibility and is not reimbursable by the Government. The employee is responsible for the cost of the paper ticket as it is a personal preference.

B. Train Travel

When making train reservations through the Online Booking Engine (OBE) or the TMC, the traveler/alternate preparer will contact the TMC using one of the options listed below, regardless of the payment method (CBA or IBA Travel Card):

Option 1: Travelers may pick up the ticket at the train station ticket counter or at the kiosk at the train station. This option requires the 3-digit card verification value code on the back of the card as well as the ZIP code of the billing address for the credit card being used.

Option 2: Travelers may have a paper ticket issued prior to departure. This option will incur a non-self-service transaction fee plus a delivery fee. Courier service has limited delivery areas. U.S. mail delivery requires tickets to be issued at least 5 business days prior to the travel date. U.S. mail delivery is not guaranteed for on-time delivery. This option requires the 3-digit card verification value code, ZIP code of the billing address for the credit card being used, and the name and mailing address where the ticket will be sent.

APPENDIX B: UNUSED OR PARTIALLY USED TICKETS

Airline tickets have a monetary value that is paid at the time the ticket is issued. This includes e-tickets and paper tickets that are paid by IBA and CBA. The value of the ticket belongs to the Federal Government. The traveler has the responsibility to report and return all unused and partially-used tickets to the TMC as soon as possible for processing of the applicable refund credit. Travelers should keep the credit receipt until the Government credit card company issues the appropriate credit on a later statement. Travelers will not submit unused tickets bought with a Government charge card with the travel voucher. Do not include the cost of any unused tickets on the voucher for reimbursement. Amtrak will charge a 10 percent refund service charge (i.e., cancellation charge) on all returned, unused tickets, up to a maximum of \$100 per single reservation. Travelers should cancel as soon as they know their travel plans have changed. The traveler will bear any costs assessed as a penalty or charge by a carrier if the approving official determines that the traveler could have cancelled and avoided the charge.

Employees who are authorized to purchase a restricted ticket retain a credit on the ticket that may be used at a later date, should travel plans change. This credit may not be transferred; it is limited to the employee and the airline. Fees associated with restricted tickets that are incurred by a traveler who fails to use or cancel a ticket due to reasons beyond the traveler's control and acceptable to the approving official will be considered a necessary cost of travel and payable from VA funds.

Agency/Organization Program Coordinators and Approving officials will create a tracking system to ensure optimal use of unused/cancelled restricted airline tickets.

APPENDIX C: REQUESTING OTHER-THAN- COACH-CLASS ACCOMMODATIONS

A. VA Form 0899. The traveler will complete the form before beginning travel, sign it and obtain the necessary signatures. Field employees will obtain signatures from their Under Secretary or the Chairman of the Board of Veterans' Appeals (BVA), while staff office employees will obtain signatures from their Assistant Secretary. The OFP will review all requests and forward them to the CFO for a decision. If extenuating circumstances or emergency situations prevent advance authorization/approval, the traveler will include an explanation in the request that justifies why approval could not be obtained in advance of travel.

1. Disability or Special Need. When use of other-than-coach class is necessary due to accommodate a disability or special need, as described in FTR 300-3.1 (Glossary of Terms), the following requirements apply:

- A disability will be certified annually in a written statement by a competent medical authority. A special need will be certified annually in writing by the approving official or a competent medical authority. However, if the disability or special need is a life-long condition, a one-time certification statement is required (refer to FTR Section 301 for the requirements of a certification statement).
- Travelers with a permanent disability or special need may be authorized to use other-than-coach-class accommodations on a blanket authorization for the length of time they serve with VA. Travelers with a temporary disability or special need may be authorized to use other-than-coach-class accommodations on a blanket authorization for the length of time specified on the medical certification, NTE an annual basis. Temporary needs will be re-certified at least annually. All other authorizations will be limited to a trip-by-trip basis.
- If a traveler requires the assistance of a medical attendant en route, the medical certification will specify this requirement, as well as a recommended class of travel for the attendant. The approval for an employee to use other-than-coach accommodations does not extend to other family members or medical attendant unless approved by the VA CFO. In the absence of such approval, family members and medical attendants will be limited to coach-class accommodations. Refer to Volume XIV, Chapter 5, *Travel Under Special Circumstances*, for additional information on the use of medical attendants.
- All medical documentation and other information regarding the reasonable accommodation process will be kept confidential and disclosed only on a need-to-know basis. This means that all medical information, including information about functional limitations and reasonable accommodation obtained in connection with a request for reasonable accommodation will be kept secure in files separate from the individual's Official Personnel File.

2. 14-Hour Rule. If a request is to accommodate the 14-Hour Rule for air travel, travelers will provide copies of their proposed flight itineraries with the request.

B. Expense Report. Travelers should attach a copy of their authorizations and ticketed itineraries to their expense reports for audit purposes.

APPENDIX D: REQUESTING CHARTER AND CONTRACT SERVICES

A. USE OF CHARTER OR CARRIER SERVICES. When a group of persons (10 or more) will travel at the same time and on the same itinerary, consideration will be given to the use of either charter or contract services by use of the Purchase Card or Purchase Order.

1. Where charter services are ordered from a carrier, their terms will be stated in writing. The statement will be prepared in duplicate and signed by the VA official designated to authorize travel and the carrier's representative. The original will be given to the carrier and the duplicate to the Finance Activity concerned.

2. Where contract services are ordered from a carrier, their terms will be stated in writing. The agreement will be prepared in duplicate, assigned a VA contract number, and signed by the VA official designated to authorize travel and the carrier's representative. The original and copy will be forwarded to the concerned Finance Activity. The governing contract will be shown by number and date.

With the exception of contracts for inter-city bus service, a copy of each contract, negotiated or otherwise, providing rates or charges for passenger transportation services will be forwarded, promptly upon execution, to the General Services Administration (TAD), Washington, DC 20406.

B. SUPPLEMENTAL OR NONSCHEDULED CARRIERS. No charter or contract services for air transportation will be made with a supplemental or non-scheduled carrier unless prior information has been obtained from the Federal Aviation Administration, Washington, DC, or its Regional or General Aviation District Office in the field, indicating that the carrier is complying with their safety standards.

APPENDIX E: SAMPLE MEMORANDUM

Department of
Veterans Affairs

Memorandum

Date:

From: <Employee's Name and Position>

Subj: Commitment to Use Government-Furnished Automobiles

To: <Approving Official's Name and Position>

1. I hereby agree to use a Government-furnished automobile whenever it is determined that an automobile is required for official local and/or temporary duty travel. I understand that if a Government-furnished automobile is not available, I will be reimbursed <insert mileage rate as if a privately owned vehicle is determined to be most advantageous> ____ cents per mile. I also understand that if a Government-furnished automobile is available, and I am permitted to use a privately owned automobile at my request, my mileage reimbursement will be <insert reduced mileage rate for employee with signed commitment letter but chooses to use a privately owned vehicle> ____ cents per mile.

2. This memorandum will be rescinded one year from date signed or when new mileage reimbursement rates are published by the General Services Administration, whichever occurs earlier.

<Employee's signature>

APPENDIX F: CONSTRUCTIVE TRAVEL

A. OVERVIEW

1. TRANSPORTATION MODE.

Government travel should be performed using the most expeditious and cost-effective transportation mode. Sometimes, a traveler might prefer to use a travel mode other than that which is typically determined to be most advantageous to the Government. For instance, a traveler may want to drive a POV or a rental car instead of flying. Travelers who wish to use an alternate mode should provide the approving official a comparison of costs and travel details for both the preferred and alternate modes.

2. CONSTRUCTIVE TRAVEL.

a. Constructive travel considers only the en route portion of travel, which includes the following travel segments:

- Travel from trip start location to first TDY location;
- Travel from one TDY location to another; or
- Travel from last TDY location to trip end location.

The traveler should enter the preferred mode(s) of travel on the authorization and enter the standard travel costs on a constructive travel worksheet. This worksheet may then be attached to the travel document.

b. Constructive travel helps the approving official determine the best way for travel to be performed and whether to limit the traveler's reimbursement to the costs associated with the standard mode. In addition to limiting transportation-related costs, it may be necessary to adjust the en route per diem entitlements as part of the constructed travel process. If travel by air is the standard mode, then only one day of allowable travel (and related per diem) is typically authorized when traveling in CONUS. The approving official will ensure that per diem entitlements are entered correctly for the excess travel days. If chargeable as leave, per diem will be excluded from those excess days on the travel plan.

c. If the approving official determines that the use of a non-standard transportation mode is the best way for travel to be performed, the travel is approved as normal and no limited reimbursement applies. Local business rules may also determine the best way for travel to be performed.

APPENDIX G: USING POV IN LIEU OF COMMON CARRIER

A. ILLUSTRATION OF A TRAVEL ITINERY

Susie Traveler is assigned TDY in Atlanta, GA, from her official duty station in Washington, DC. She was authorized to travel by air, but chose to drive her POV. The travel authorization will reflect “air” as the authorized mode of transportation. Her POV reimbursement will not exceed the cost of going by common carrier YCA fare. She could have traveled by air, departing her residence at 1 p.m. Sunday and returning to her residence at 7 p.m. Friday. The cost of airfare, a round-trip city-pair fare, would have been \$492, baggage and booking fees \$75, and estimated taxi to the airports \$74. Susie chose to use POV. She left her residence on Saturday and had a lodging cost of \$70 in North Carolina (the standard CONUS per diem rate) on that evening. She arrived in Atlanta, GA, on Sunday and had a lodging cost of \$115 per night. Susie departed Atlanta, GA, on Friday evening and arrived home on Saturday at 2 a.m. Net round-trip mileage was 1,100 miles and tolls were \$16.50.

The locality per diem rate for Atlanta, GA, is \$164 (\$115 lodging, plus \$49 MIE).
The Standard CONUS per diem rate is \$116 (\$70 lodging, plus \$46 MIE).
See next page for cost analysis.

B. COMPARATIVE COST ANALYSIS

1. Round-trip Constructive Air Travel:

Airfare	\$ 492.00
Baggage and booking fees	75.00
Estimated taxi to the airports	74.00
Per Diem:	
Day of travel to Atlanta, GA, plus lodging (75% x \$49 MIE = \$36.75 + \$115)	151.75
Day of return (75% x \$49 MIE)	<u>36.75</u>
Total Constructive Air Costs:	\$ 829.50

2. Round-trip Cost of Actual POV Travel:

Mileage (1,100 x \$.50 (the current rate))	\$ 550.00
Tolls	16.50
Per Diem:	
Depart residence Saturday (75% x \$46 = \$34.50 + \$70)	104.50
Arrive Atlanta (\$49 MIE + \$115 lodging)	164.00
Depart Atlanta (\$49 MIE, no lodging)	49.00
Arrive residence Saturday (75% x \$49 MIE)	<u>36.75</u>
Total Cost of Actual POV Travel:	\$ 920.75

C. EXPLANATION:

Since the cost of the actual POV travel performed exceeds the total constructive cost, reimbursement is limited to the constructive cost of the common carrier air travel. Susie will receive \$829.50 and be personally responsible for additional costs via POV mode.

APPENDIX H: SAMPLE COST COMPARISON WORKSHEET

Reserved for Future Use.

APPENDIX I: SCENARIOS COMBINING PERSONAL WITH OFFICIAL TRAVEL

A. COMBINATION SCENARIOS.

1. The FTR addresses the interrelationship between personal and business travel and indicates the following:

“Reimbursement for expenses shall be based only on such charges as would have been incurred by the usually traveled route unless a different route is approved as officially necessary. When a person for personal convenience travels by an indirect route or interrupts travel by a direct route, the extra expense shall be borne by the traveler. An employee may not use contract airline for personal travel.”

2. The following scenarios illustrate situations where a traveler combines personal travel with official travel and then describes the procedures used to arrange, pay for, and/or reimburse appropriate expenses.

• SCENARIO 1

On March 3, the VA employee is approved to attend a conference in Los Angeles, CA, between May 1 and May 5. The employee travels directly from his official duty station, Washington, D.C. to Los Angeles, CA, on April 30. The employee takes personal leave at the end of the conference to visit family in San Diego, with return to the official station on May 8. On May 6, he rented a vehicle and drove 90 miles from Los Angeles to San Diego. On May 8, he drove back to Los Angeles and flew back to Washington, D.C. and traveled by taxi to his home in Alexandria, VA.

VA Procedures

The VA employee will book round-trip travel between Washington, D.C., and Los Angeles, CA, using the FedTraveler.com OBE with initial travel day on April 30 and return travel day on May 8. May 7 and 8 are excluded as personal days on the travel authorization. Travel arrangements are purchased using the Travel Charge Card.

The traveler is entitled to be reimbursed for his round-trip ticket between Washington, D.C. and Los Angeles, CA.

• SCENARIO 2

As of early July, the VA employee was scheduled to be on annual leave between August 9 and August 20. She planned to spend her vacation in Duluth, MN, and purchased a personal, non-refundable, round-trip ticket between Birmingham, AL, and Duluth. The ticket cost \$275. Subsequently, she was asked to attend a conference in Minneapolis, MN, on August 19 and 20. She agreed to have her personal ticket

modified and reissued so she could fly back on August 20 from Minneapolis to Birmingham. She maintained her original outbound air travel from Birmingham to Duluth, planning to drive from Duluth to Minneapolis. The cost of the reissued ticket was \$301. There was an additional reissue charge/exchange fee of \$60.

On August 1, her approving official approved her travel plan to and from Minneapolis, recognizing it was official business and indicated that her personal ticket was to be reissued to include the authorized official travel.

On August 13, she flew from Birmingham to Duluth for her vacation. On August 19, she drove 167 miles from Duluth to Minneapolis for the conference. On August 19 and 20, she attended the conference. She flew from Minneapolis to Birmingham on August 20, and traveled by taxi to her home in Tuscaloosa.

The traveler sought reimbursement of \$562.50 for her travel expenses between Tuscaloosa-Duluth-Minneapolis-Tuscaloosa, including airfare, per diem for August 19 and 20, local transportation, and the reissue fee.

VA Procedures

Applying the regulations, the traveler is entitled to reimbursement of allowable travel expenses between Tuscaloosa and Minneapolis, including airfare at the Government rate in effect at the time. An employee who travels via an indirect route is entitled to reimbursement up to the amount the Government was going to spend on the direct route.

Since the travel between Tuscaloosa-Duluth-Minneapolis-Tuscaloosa co-mingled personal travel with official travel, the travel arrangements cannot be made using the FedTraveler.com OBE and will be purchased with personal funds. Additionally, the travel plan will exclude the personal days in Duluth (i.e., vacation) but include the estimated cost of the travel in the travel authorization to ensure the estimated cost is included in the total obligation. The travel plan would have August 19 and 20 as the traveler's official travel days.

The traveler is entitled to be reimbursed for her airfare in an amount NTE the cost of a round-trip ticket between Birmingham and Minneapolis on a contract carrier YCA fare. Included in her constructive travel cost is the mileage between her personal site, Duluth, and her TDY site, Minneapolis.

• SCENARIO 3

The VA employee departs his residence in White River Junction on personal leave for two weeks (April 15-30). While on leave in Chicago, IL, he is asked to perform TDY in Nashville, TN, beginning April 22 and ending April 26. The traveler performed the TDY and then returned to his leave location.

VA Procedures

The employee will use FedTraveler.com and change the beginning and ending travel location to an alternate location (i.e., the personal leave site, Chicago). Official travel for this TDY will be booked using the OBE in FedTraveler.com.

- **SCENARIO 4**

The VA employee is informed of the requirement to perform TDY in Cleveland, OH. Her official station is Washington, D.C. She informs her supervisor of her personal need to go to Orlando, FL before beginning her TDY. She would like to depart from Orlando and travel to Cleveland rather than returning to Washington, D.C. to begin her TDY. The traveler would travel to Orlando, FL on May 2. The TDY begins May 5 and ends May 7. The employee would return to the official station on May 10.

VA Procedures

The official station will perform a cost comparison between the official station and TDY location and the alternate location and TDY location to determine if the alternate location is advantageous to Government.

1. Alternate Location Advantageous to the Government.

An approving official may authorize the employee to perform round-trip travel between alternate location and TDY location when the cost of round-trip transportation is less expensive than round-trip transportation between the official station and TDY location. Since the alternate location is advantageous to the Government, comments on the travel plan would specify the alternate location as being advantageous to the Government, and would identify the dates of travel (May 7- 9). The travel plan would not include any personal travel days. Travel arrangements between the alternate location and TDY location would be obtained using the FedTraveler.com OBE and purchased with the travel card. The personal travel between the official station and alternate location (personal site) are the responsibility of the employee and are purchased using personal funds.

2. Alternate Location Not Advantageous to the Government.

The travel authority will identify all travel days (personal and official) in connection with this TDY travel. The point of origination and point of return are the official station. Since the traveler would be traveling by an indirect route for personal convenience, travel arrangements would be made outside FedTraveler.com and purchased with personal funds. The travel authority would exclude the employee's personal travel days (May 2-4 and May 8-10) but include the estimated cost of the travel to ensure the

estimated cost is included in the total obligation. An employee who travels via an indirect route is entitled to reimbursement up to the amount the Government was going to spend on the direct route. Therefore, the traveler's reimbursement is limited to the cost of direct travel by a usually traveled route between the official station and TDY location. The traveler is responsible for any additional expense(s).

APPENDIX J: PRIVATELY OWNED VEHICLE (POV) MILEAGE REIMBURSEMENT RATES

The following table identifies the current POV mileage reimbursement rates obtained from GSA (www.gsa.gov/mileage). These rates are effective January 1, 2011. The traveler’s reimbursement will be based on the miles using the most direct route as determined by Mapquest times the applicable rate listed below.

USE OF POV	MILEAGE RATE
Authorized as advantageous to the Government	\$0.51 per mile
In lieu of Authorized Common Carrier	\$0.51 per mile
When no GOV is available	\$0.51 per mile
When GOV is available	\$0.19 per mile
To and From Common Carrier Terminal	\$0.51 per mile
Privately Owned Motorcycle	\$0.48 per mile
Privately Owned Airplane	\$1.29 per mile

APPENDIX K: MOTOR VEHICLE ACCIDENT REPORT

MOTOR VEHICLE ACCIDENT REPORT	Please read the Privacy Act Statement on Page 3.	INSTRUCTIONS: Sections I thru IX are filled out by the vehicle operator. Section X, Items 77 thru 87c are filled out by the operator's supervisor. Sections X thru XIII are filled out by an accident investigator for bodily injury, fatality and/or damage exceeding \$500.			
SECTION I - FEDERAL VEHICLE DATA					
1. DRIVER'S NAME (Last, first, middle)		2. DRIVER'S LICENSE NO./STATE/LIMITATIONS		3. DATE OF ACCIDENT	
4a. DEPARTMENT/FEDERAL AGENCY PERMANENT OFFICE ADDRESS				4c. WORK TELEPHONE NUMBER ()	
5. TAG OR IDENTIFICATION NUMBER	6. EST. REPAIR COST \$	7. YEAR OF VEHICLE	8. MAKE	9. MODEL	10. SEAT BELTS USED <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
11. DESCRIBE VEHICLE DAMAGE					
SECTION II - OTHER VEHICLE DATA (Use Section VIII if additional space is needed.)					
12. DRIVER'S NAME (Last, first, middle)			13. DRIVER'S LICENSE NUMBER/STATE/LIMITATIONS		
14a. DRIVER'S WORK ADDRESS				14c. WORK TELEPHONE NUMBER ()	
16a. DRIVER'S HOME ADDRESS				16c. HOME TELEPHONE NUMBER ()	
18. DESCRIBE VEHICLE DAMAGE					17. ESTIMATED REPAIR COST \$
18. YEAR OF VEHICLE	19. MAKE OF VEHICLE	20. MODEL OF VEHICLE		21. TAG NUMBER AND STATE	
22a. DRIVER'S INSURANCE COMPANY NAME AND ADDRESS				22b. POLICY NUMBER	
				22c. TELEPHONE NUMBER ()	
23. VEHICLE IS <input type="checkbox"/> COMPANY <input type="checkbox"/> RENTAL <input type="checkbox"/> LEASED <input type="checkbox"/> INDIVIDUALLY OWNED		24a. OWNER'S NAME(S) (Last, first, middle)		24b. TELEPHONE NUMBER ()	
25. OWNER'S ADDRESSES:					
SECTION III - KILLED OR INJURED (Use Section VIII if additional space is needed.)					
26. NAME (Last, first, middle)				27. SEX	28. DATE OF BIRTH
29. ADDRESS					
30. MARK "X" IN TWO APPROPRIATE BOXES <input type="checkbox"/> KILLED <input type="checkbox"/> DECEASED <input type="checkbox"/> PASSENGER <input type="checkbox"/> INJURED <input type="checkbox"/> HELD <input type="checkbox"/> PHYSICIAN		31. IN WH-CH VEHICLE <input type="checkbox"/> DRIVER <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER ()	32. LOCATION IN VEHICLE	33. FIRST AID GIVEN BY	
34. TRANSPORTED BY		35. TRANSPORTED TO			
36. NAME (Last, first, middle)				37. SEX	38. DATE OF BIRTH
39. ADDRESS					
40. MARK "X" IN TWO APPROPRIATE BOXES <input type="checkbox"/> KILLED <input type="checkbox"/> DECEASED <input type="checkbox"/> PASSENGER <input type="checkbox"/> INJURED <input type="checkbox"/> HELD <input type="checkbox"/> PHYSICIAN		41. IN WH-CH VEHICLE <input type="checkbox"/> DRIVER <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER ()	42. LOCATION IN VEHICLE	43. FIRST AID GIVEN BY	
44. TRANSPORTED BY		45. TRANSPORTED TO			
46. Pedestrian			47. DIRECTION OF PEDESTRIAN (SW, NW, SE, etc.)		
48. NAME OF STREET OR HIGHWAY			FROM TO		
49. DIRECTION OF PEDESTRIAN (SW, NW, SE, etc.)					
50. DIRECTION OF PEDESTRIAN (SW, NW, SE, etc.)					

APPENDIX L: FEDERAL TRAVEL REGULATION REFERENCES

VA Chapter/Paragraph References	<u>FTR References</u>	Subject Descriptions
030201A	301-10.3/301-10.100	Methods of Transportation
030201B(1)	301-70-102a	Selecting Methods of Transportation
030201B(2)	301-10.4/301-10.100 /301-70.100 and 301.70.101a	Selecting Methods of Transportation
030202.02(c)	301-10.121and 10.124	Premium Class Travel
030202.02(f)	301-13.2	Accommodation of Employee with Disability or Physical Impairment
030202.03A	301-10.107	Use of Contract Airfare
030202.06A(1)	301-10.138	Use of Foreign Air Lines
030202.06B	301-10.139	Use of Foreign Air based on Cost
030202.06C(1)	301-10.140	Use of Foreign Air based on Preference
030202.06C(2)	301-10.132 to 10.134 and 10.143	Improper Use of Foreign Air Line
30202.06D(4)	301-11.20 / 301-10.124h /301-70.200b	Rest Stops an Rest Periods
030202.08	301-10.261	Use of Gov't Aircraft
030202.09	301-10.116 / 301-72.300	Denied Boarding on Airline
030202.10	301-10.117	Voluntary Surrender of Airline Seat
030202.11	301-12.2	Baggage Allowance
030203	301-10.160	Train Accommodations
030206A	301-10.200	Use of GOV
030206C	301-10.201	Use of GOV

VA Chapter/Paragraph References	FTR References	Subject Descriptions
030206D	301-70.104 / 301-70.102C(1)	Use of GOV Factors
030206E	301-10.202 / 301-70.102c(3)	Unauthorized Use of GOV
030206F(1)	301-10.106 to .110	Reporting to IRS – Use of GOV
030207.01	301-10.303	Use of POV
030207.05	301-10.308	POV Travel to and from Airport
030207.05A(3)	301-10.305 / 301-70.102e	More than One Employee in POV
030207A	301-70.105a / 301-10.6	Cost Comparison – POV Personal Preference
030208A	301-10.450 and 10.453	Rental Cars
030208F	301-10.401	Incidental Charges – Special Conveyances
030209.01B	301-10.113 and .114 / 301-70.300	Unused Transportation Tickets
030209.01D	301-72.300 a to d	Exchanged or Returned Tickets
030209.02A	301-72.301	Follow-up on Credit for Unused Tickets
030210	301-10.420 and 10.421	Use of Public Transportation