

Government Issued Travel Cards

Dated 2/24/2010

The Government issued travel card is embossed with this statement: "For Official U.S. Government Travel Only". This means that the card may be used ONLY for official travel and travel related expenses away from the official duty station. In this case, official travel is travel for which a travel voucher will be filed. The charge card should not be used for travel authorized at government time/personal expense or during one day trips away from the employee's duty station.

All Oklahoma employees should have a government issued travel card. Applications for travel cards may be obtained from Financial Management by contacting Jody Townsley at (405) 742-1285. Each employee is required to review Departmental Regulation 2300-001 "Government Travel Card Regulation" and to have a signed and dated travel card Acknowledgement and Acceptance Statement on file in Financial Management.

The use of the travel charge card is mandatory, as is compliance with the Department's Government Travel Card Regulation. The card should be utilized for airline and other common carrier transportation services, hotel/motel, restaurant, automobile rental, gasoline (except for agency-owned vehicles) and other expenses incurred incident to official travel. If an employee combines personal travel (leave time) with official travel, personal travel expenses incurred while on leave such as lodging and meals cannot be charged on the travel card.

Cash advances can be obtained with the travel cards just prior to the travel for miscellaneous travel expenses and meal expenses. Travel card cash advances should not exceed estimated M&IE amount, less meals charged.

Travel card and/or cash advances may not be used to pay meeting/conference registration fees.

Government issued travel charge cards should not be used to purchase items of a personal nature such as clothing, toiletries, or gifts while in travel status.

Travel cards should not be used for gasoline when using a GOV or when using a POV for official travel by personal preference.

Food or toiletries at a retail store such as Wal-Mart or Target, or convenience stores should not be purchased using the travel card.

Government issued travel charge cards should not be used for personal, family, or household purposes. If a travel card is inadvertently used for personal expenses, the employee should immediately contact the vendor and have the charge switched to his/her personal credit card and then notify Jody Townsley in Financial Management, by email. The credit limit for most employees is preset at \$2,500. If the employee is scheduled for travel and the anticipated travel costs including air fare and lodging exceed \$2,500, the credit limit can be temporarily increased. For further information on credit limitations, please call Jody Townsley at 405-742-1285.

Employees are required to pay undisputed travel card bills in full by the due date, even if reimbursement has not been received. Because this card is issued in the employee's name, this payment record will appear on employee's personal credit reports. Once a cardholder account has been cancelled, the account cannot be reopened. The agency is allowed to collect undisputed delinquent amounts owed to the Government travel charge card contractor from the employee's disposable pay upon written request from the contractor. Employee should refer to page 74, section 2635.809 of the "Standards of Ethical Conduct for Employees of the Executive Branch" book handed out during ethics training, for employee responsibilities for fulfilling financial obligations.

The State Office monitors charges made on the travel cards. Employees who misuse their travel charge cards may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including removal. National Instruction 360-300 – Misuse of the Travel Charge Card issued recently contains specific information about the disciplinary penalties warranted by the various types of travel charge card misuse. Examples of misuse include but are not limited to the following:

- Using the card for excessive cash advances or for cash advances unrelated to official travel,
- Using the card for non-official travel related expenses,
- Allowing someone else to use the card.
- Failing to make prompt and full payment of the travel card bill,
- Not using the travel card for purchasing airline tickets or lodging for government travel, or
- Personal use of the credit card.

The consequences for the misconduct in misusing the travel charge card are serious. The potential penalties for misuse of the Government travel card include:

- Removal for enabling another person to use his travel charge card.
- Suspension or removal for making unauthorized purchases (including cash advances).
- Suspension or removal for delinquency in paying travel charge card bills.

Employees are strongly encouraged to read and understand the seriousness of the penalties set forth in National Instruction 360-300 found at the following site: <http://directives.sc.egov.usda.gov>. Employees should also review Departmental Regulation (DR) 2300-001, Government Travel Card Regulation. DR2300-001 may be found at the following website: <http://www.ocio.usda.gov/directives/doc/DR2300-001.pdf>.

The following is a Penalty Guide for the misuse of the travel charge card. The table of penalties is not all-inclusive; therefore, the absence of a particular type of misuse of the travel charge card does not preclude appropriate disciplinary action. The implementation of the stated penalties applies to the misuse of the travel charge card occurring after August 17, 2007; however, deviation from the table of penalties may occur for a variety of reasons. For example, when an employee has repeatedly committed the same offense (including those prior to August 17, 2007), even though the employee is being charged with the offense for the first time, it may be appropriate to exceed the maximum suggested penalty. Conversely, there may be occasions when it may be appropriate to assess a lesser penalty for the offense. In all events of misuse of the travel charge card, the employee will be required to provide a written explanation of the occurrence. The explanation will be documented in the decision letter.

Nature of Misconduct	First Offense	Second Offense	Third Offense
Delinquency: Payment 30 days or more past due:			
Infrequent traveler (<= 5 trips/year)	Letter of warning	Reprimand to 7-day suspension	14 to 30-day suspension
Frequent traveler (> 5 trips/year)	Letter of warning to reprimand	Reprimand to 14-day suspension	30-day suspension to removal
Misuse: Personal purchases, or cash advances not related to official to official travel:			
One transaction/cash advance <= \$300	Reprimand to 14-day suspension	30-day suspension to removal	Removal
One transaction/cash advance > \$300	15 to 30-day suspension	60-day suspension to removal	Removal
More than one transaction/cash advance	60-day suspension to removal	Removal	
Note: A transaction is a single use of the card regardless of number of items purchased at one time.			
Excessive purchases, or excessive cash advances (as defined by DR 2300-001) associated with official travel:			
Advances associated with one trip	Reprimand to 30-day suspension	60-day suspension to removal	Removal
Advances associated with more than one trip	60-day suspension to removal		
Allowing/enabling another to use the cardholder's card	Removal	Removal	Removal

Note: Travel card bills are due on or before the next statement date.
For example: If your statement date is 06/07/07, you owed \$500, and your due date is 07/07/07, then you should have paid \$500 by 07/07/07. If you have not paid your bill by the next statement date of 08/07/07 then you are 30-days past due.

Questions employees may have regarding the travel charge card may be addressed to Jody Townsley, Financial Management at (405) 742-1285. Questions regarding the penalties assessed for the misuse of the travel charge card may be addressed to Babette Goodwin, Human Resources at (405) 742-1211.