



Texas Tech University Operating Policy and Procedure

OP 79.02: Texas State Travel Management Program

DATE: September 21, 2005

PURPOSE: The purpose of this Operating Policy/Procedure (OP) is to provide information to employees regarding vendors contracted by the state of Texas to provide travel services, as negotiated by the Texas Building and Procurement Commission's Travel and Transportation Division. This OP will also outline procedures relating to compliance with the travel program regulations.

REVIEW: This OP will be reviewed in November of each odd-numbered year by the managing director of Contracting with recommended revisions forwarded through appropriate administrative channels to the senior vice president for administration and finance by December 1.

POLICY/PROCEDURE

1. Authority

Pursuant to Texas Administrative Code, Title 1, Part 5, Chapter 125, and Texas Government Code, Chapter 2171, the Travel and Vehicle Fleet Services program of the Texas Building and Procurement Commission administers the State Travel Management Program (STMP) to provide centralized management and coordination of state travel. The program applies to all state agencies, including institutions of higher education, and requires participation in certain contracts for travel services.

2. General

The STMP has negotiated contracts for travel expense charge cards, rental car rates, airline fares, hotel rates, and other travel services. When on official travel, Texas Tech University employees *must* use the contracted rental car agencies and airfares when reimbursement will be requested for expenses from state appropriated funds. Tech employees *should* use these contracted services when reimbursement will be requested from institutional funds. Details of the contracted agencies and applicable rates may be found on Texas Tech's travel Web site: www.fiscal.ttuhs.edu/travel/main/links.asp.

The STMP also has contracted for the services of a state travel agency, and the use of these services is optional for the university. At this time, the university has chosen not to exercise this option.

3. Exceptions

The contracted services should be used as required unless one of the following conditions exists:

- a. Travel is part of a group program or conference for which reservations must be made through a specified source to obtain a specified rate or service.
- b. A contract travel vendor cannot provide services in the time required to accomplish the purpose of the travel.
- c. A contract hotel is not available in a location that will reasonably allow the traveler's business requirements to be fulfilled.
- d. A contract hotel or rental car company cannot provide the required services because it is sold out or it does not offer services in the city being visited.
- e. Alternative rental car or hotel arrangements can be made at a lower total cost than the contract hotels or rental car companies. Note: For rental cars, the total costs should include the base rate, loss/damage waiver or liability insurance protection, mileage charge, taxes, and surcharges. For hotels, the cost of the guest room, less taxes, shall be used to compare total costs.
- f. A contract airline offers a fare lower than the contract fare.
- g. A non-contract airline offers a lower published fare to the general public. However, lower or identical airfares offered to state travelers only are not included as part of this exception.
- h. Travel is undertaken by persons with disabilities, by persons transporting prisoners or other persons in the custody of the state, or in a medical emergency.
- i. Use of contract travel vendors may present a security or safety risk to the traveler.

Even though a traveler is not required to use the contracted rental car companies for travel paid from non-appropriated funds, the amount of reimbursement (including the loss/damage waiver protection) will be limited to the contracted rates unless a valid exemption is claimed. (Documentation may be required to verify the exemption.)

4. **State Contracted Credit Card System**

The STMP has contracted with a credit card company to provide charge cards for official travel use. The procedure outlining the use of the state travel card may be found in OP 79.03.

5. **Compliance Policy**

- a. It is the responsibility of the traveler's supervisor to review the employee's travel arrangements and travel vouchers to ensure that any travel reimbursed meets the requirements of the *State Travel Allowance Guide* and TTU policies. If contracted services were not used, the traveler must include a written claim for exemption along with the travel voucher. (For state-appropriated funds, use the exemption form attached to this policy.)
- b. Travel Services will check travel vouchers for compliance with the requirements of the State Travel Management Program. Travel vouchers that are not in compliance with these provisions may be delayed or rejected.

6. **Problems with Contracted Vendors**

Travel Services should be notified as soon as possible during normal office hours (8 a.m. to 5

p.m., Monday through Friday) if problems arise with any of the contracted vendors.

Attachment: State Travel Contract Exemption Reporting Form