

# GovTrip Guide Document

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# **New GovTrip Users**

## **Delegation Memorandums**

All Arrangers and Approvers must have an Attachment 1 on file at their location for everyone for whom they SIGN or APPROVE documents. The Attachment 1 is necessary for audits and Care Reviews. See the Forms Section.

## **E-Authentication**

To log in for the first time, the employee will need to be E-Authenticated which requires 2 paychecks be issued. The email in the GovTrip program must match the email in the GovTrip profile. The FATA will enter the E-Auth number into the profile and follow instructions to activate the user.

## **Form AD-1143**

The Form AD-1143 (e-forms) gives permission to log onto GovTrip. A form must be on file at MWA for everyone using GovTrip before headquarters will issue logon permission. See *the Forms Section*.

## **Password Reset**

Call E-Auth Helpdesk at 1-800-457-3642 to reset the password. The GovTrip password is the same for E-Authentication and AgLearn.

## **Print Preferences**

Use Gov + Forms because the signature is on the front page. After you log in, you have the ability to choose printing preferences in the Traveler Set Up. You can choose to print the itinerary, lines of accounting, document history, etc. Once you set your preferences, all future documents will print that way. Make sure vouchers print the accounting details.

### **Print Preferences – TMC Fee (SATO)**

The TMC Fee does not show up on the authorization. It will automatically be added once the authorization is stamped Approved. The Arranger can make a pen/ink addition to the total for the Financial Tech to enter correct \$\$ into CATS records.

## **Profiles**

Before starting an authorization for a traveler, verify information in the traveler's profile. If errors are found (i.e. email, address, phone, home address etc), email the FATA the information and the document (authorization/voucher) that needs to be updated. The FATA will update both the document and the permanent profile.

### Credit Card

If a new credit card was issued and is not listed in the Profile, call the Travel Coordinator or FATA to verify the credit card number on USBank and enter the number into the profile. The FATA will need to refresh any created authorizations.

# Authorization

## Accounting Codes

### Agency on GovTrip

If the other organization is using GovTrip to prepare travel documents, the FATA can detach and transfer the profile to the other agency. The original Arranger should NOT create additional authorizations while the profile is detached, but will be able to see the travel history. Keep a list of traveler's profiles that have been detached so you don't forget. Additional information on DETACH is on page 40.

### Agency not on GovTrip

When travel is to be billed to another agency that is not using GovTrip, but does use NFC, we are to complete the authorization and voucher, a B-2 can transfer the obligation after vouchering. Normally the paying agency prepares the authorization and voucher.

### Use Other Accounting Codes

If another MWA Unit accounting code is going to be used, the FATA can pull that accounting into the authorization once it is started. If the accounting is going to be used over and over, have your AO contact Kari Deppe, ABFO, [kari.deppe@ars.usda.gov](mailto:kari.deppe@ars.usda.gov) to have it added to the preparing MU.

### Agency using NFC

If another federal agency uses NFC, their accounting code may be added to your MU when the AO makes request through the ABFO. When there is no further need for the accounting code, a request through the ABFO can have headquarters remove it.

### Agency not part of NFC

If a federal agency does not use NFC to process salary or travel (DOE), an interagency agreement will need to be set up to process payment for travel expenses.

### Approving Officials & CATS obligations

An approving official (AO/Delegate) can go into the link "Waiting Approval" and choose "Complete Documents" to see the most current obligations.

## Actual Subsistence

When actual subsistence is used, the GovTrip file needs the approval faxed/scanned to the document by the Arranger and a statement in the pre-audit flag, (ex. Actual approved on xx/xx/xx) before the document can be stamped APPROVED by the Area or AO/delegate.

If the approved memo is not part of the attachments, the approving official/delegate will return the document to the Arranger.

*NOTE: If the dates of travel are changed, GovTrip resets the M&IE.*

### Formula for Actual Subsistence

	Lodging	M&IE	Total
GSA Per Diem	\$ 70.00	\$39.00	\$109.00
Actual Subsistence	\$123.00	\$39.00	\$162.00

Divide the requested subsistence by the GSA per diem to get 149%

### Headquarters' Approval

Actual subsistence requests are sent to headquarters. A very strong, clear justification is required. FedRooms.com will be verified at headquarters, and must be checked and used as part of the justification. Sometimes by calling the conference hotel directly, the government rate will be given. The cost of additional taxi is not tracked by headquarters and is a better choice. Historically, requests for per diem over 149% have not been approved. *See sample memo in the Forms section.*

*NOTE: Lodging should be in the same city as the TDY unless there is no hotels available in that city. To stay in another city because the per diem is higher is not consistent with the intent of the regulations.*

### Multiple People

If there are several people staying at the hotel for which actual subsistence is needed, their names must be listed on the actual subsistence request.

### Sharing Rooms

If two government employees share a room, the per diem allowed is calculated at half per diem rate.

### Voucher prior to Actual Subsistence Approval

The voucher is NOT held up until approval is returned. Voucher for ONLY the allowed per diem amount and when approval comes in, amend the voucher for any lodging expense above per diem. An amendment to the voucher will not generate an additional SATO charge.

### GSA & GovTrip Rates Don't Match

If GovTrip has not updated increased or decreased rates currently posted on GSA, fax/scan the published GSA table section to the authorization, choose Actual Subsistence rates, and justify the pre-audit flag explaining that, "GovTrip rates are \$\$\$ and do not match the GSA rate of \$\$\$". Once the official rates are verified, the Actual Subsistence will be stamped APPROVED.

### GSA Rates updated once a Month

When the rates are updated at the first of the month, it will automatically pull into the voucher.

### Outside Funds and Actual Subsistence

When lodging is being provided "in-kind" by a funding source, the lodging isn't entered on the authorization and may be at a rate higher than per diem. However, if the funding source will reimburse ARS for the lodging, it must be entered into the authorization at the per diem rate.

### Lower Rates cause Actual Subsistence Flag

If the rate input in lodging is lower than per diem, it will also cause an actual subsistence pre-audit flag, and route as if it were requesting actual subsistence. In the pre-audit flag, just state, "lowered lodging rate because xxxxx" so the document can be approved immediately.

## Advance

The travel card is to be used instead of an advance. If an employee does not have a travel card, an advance can be processed.

The FATA must mark the profile, "Advance Allowed" before the authorization will process correctly.

Only one line of accounting may be used in the authorization when requesting an advance, and the accounting cannot be changed on the voucher.

In example of the time frame for processing a Travel Advance requested for May 5 travel, the authorization and advance request were approved in GovTrip on April 11<sup>th</sup>. Looking at the full document history, reveals that GovTrip did not SUBMIT the Travel Advance to FFIS until April 23<sup>rd</sup>. The advance process from GovTrip requires 2 nightly cycles, so it will not be visible in FFIS until April 25<sup>th</sup>. If the travel order (TO) is in ACCPT status on 4/25, then it should pass to Treasury in 1 or 2 days and the EFT to the salary address will process the next day. The employee should see their advance by Monday, 4/28.

Normally, travel advances will be received 1 week prior to the actual departure date. It gives some lead time in case the trip is cancelled prior to issuing the Travel Advance.

## Immediate Advance

Once in a while there is a need to receive an advance immediately. Discuss the circumstances with the FATA.

## Airline Information

### Verify tickets are issued

The booking process may become hung up in the CTO Submit/Booked process. It should move off of this in the same day. If tickets are not moved to CTO Ticketed, a traveler will show up at the airport and not have a ticket at check-in. Prevent this by checking the GovTrip Signature Page and VirtuallyThere.com and calling SATO and then the FATA if necessary.

### 1. Look at the signature page of the authorization.



ADJUSTED	04/17/08	10:00	MINDY L BARBER
SIGNED	04/17/08	10:01	MINDY L BARBER
CTO SUBMIT	04/17/08	10:01	MINDY L BARBER
ADJUSTED	04/17/08	10:03	CTO
CTO BOOKED	04/17/08	10:13	CTO
APPROVED	04/23/08	10:36	CANDACE M WELVE
AUDIT PASS	04/23/08	10:37	Paul Payment
PAY LINK	04/23/08	10:37	Paul Payment
OBLIGATION SUBMITTED	04/23/08	10:39	Paul Payment
POSACK OBLIGATION	04/23/08	10:57	Paul Payment
CREATED	05/08/08	12:39	CTO
ADJUSTED	05/08/08	12:39	CTO
CTO TICKETED	05/08/08	12:39	CTO

2. Look at the itinerary at [www.virtuallythere.com](http://www.virtuallythere.com)

Step 1 You will need the PNR, traveler's name, & traveler's email address to log in

Step 2. Once inside their itinerary - Click on eTicket Receipt



Step 3. Inside the Itinerary, look for the ticketed date



### Limited Capacity Seating

Sometimes fares are shown below the contract fares in yellow that say, "Limited Capacity" seating. The discount rate is available without other special permissions, but there are limited seats (10 or less per plane) and the authorization must be "SIGNED" to reserve that special pricing. This could be the last seat at that rate and the Arranger won't know if it is available until the authorization is stamped SIGNED and goes to CTO SUBMIT. The booking agent will assign that special seat rate if it is still available and it will be held until ticketed. If it is not available, you will get a PNR error and need to pick new flights.

### AirTran

Only SATO can change or remove AirTran flights.

### Smaller Airlines

The smaller foreign airlines often cancel their sections (legs) of the itinerary because the tickets weren't purchased immediately or within their time requirements. Read the FARE RULES to know their early ticket dates or ask SATO to verify. Smaller foreign airlines will cancel flights if they don't have a full plane.

### Flights Canceled or Missed

If the Traveler has a flight canceled while in travel status, they should call SATO first. The number is on their itinerary. There may be a fee associated with the change if SATO wasn't called to make the original reservation.

### Flight Changes

The traveler can talk directly to the airline via phone or at the check-in desk to make changes to issued tickets. Beware, the airline may charge additional fees.

### Refunds

While on travel, if flights are canceled, rescheduled, or unused, the cost may not be refunded because most tickets are issued based upon the entire cost (Through Fares) and one leg cannot be broken out and refunded. The deeper discounted "Through Fares" are a package and are not the same as stringing two fares together.

## **Amending The Authorization**

You cannot amend the authorization once the voucher is created. You would have to delete the voucher to amend the authorization. You can make most financial adjustments on the voucher. After amending the document, be sure to stamp it signed and give a reason for the amendment. Always look at the signature page to make sure the document is routing and approved.

### CTO Amendment

With the increase in fuel, GSA has approved City Pair Fuel Surcharges. If SATO increases their airfare, they will stamp the document CTO Amendment. When the tickets increase over \$300 the document will need to be signed and rerouted. SATO does not have the authority to commit funds for more than \$300. For this reason, monitor the signature page and [www.virtuallythere.com](http://www.virtuallythere.com) prior to departure to make sure the airfare is ticketed.

## **Annual Leave Dates**

### **Annual Leave – Outside Funds**

When travel is paid for by outside funding, all annual leave needs to be documented. Show annual leave dates on the front and back of the trip. In per diem, click A/L and all per diem & M&IE will be automatically zeroed out. Put a statement in the REMARKS section, on A/L xx/xx/xx – xx/xx/xx. Note the dates of annual leave in the pre-audit flag justification box that will appear.

### **Annual Leave – Foreign Travel**

Because visas require entry and departure dates into a country, annual leave needs to be documented in the authorization and the country clearance. There is a limit of not more than 5 days annual leave allowed on a MWA official travel document. The reason for the business travel should span more days than the annual leave.

### **Personal Deviation to Travel**

The preferred method of travel deviation for personal reasons is to process the official travel document without annual leave listed, and then the traveler take the issued ticket directly to the airlines and have them make changes. This is difficult to do with foreign travel because of the multiple airlines and visas involved. If the ticket is issued early, the traveler will be responsible to pay the travel card statement on time.

## **Approval Process**

### **FAX/Scan**

The scan option is not available to approvers. FAX signed copies to the document before stamping the document Approved.

### **Print the FAX cover**

Inside the Documents Awaiting Your Approval, click on Review; – Adjustments – View/Edit -OR- –View; – Expenses; – Documentation/Receipts.

### **Area Approval**

If documents will be sent to the Area for approval (see delegation of authority), leave the signature line blank. Have the RL and traveler sign at another spot.

### **Signature Labels**

The forms have a place for the printed name and signature. Use labels to quickly and clearly type the signatory's name on the form.

### **Delegate Signature Authority (GovTrip Document Processing Manual Version 2 Chapter 8.9.1)**

When the Approver is going to be out of the office, they can temporarily delegate their signature authority to anyone at their same access level. The delegated approver must have Attachment 1 on file for the RL giving them permission to sign for the RL.

### **2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Approvals**

If SATO increases the airfare over \$300 the authorization will re-route through CBA approval, Actual Subsistence, Ethics, FG TRVL APD, and AO/Delegate Approval.

All scan/fax documents will be removed. Therefore the Arranger needs to re-fax the approved documents to file before stamping it SIGNED. Call the approvers and let them know it is going to be sitting at their level for approval.

If a document was amended it will route for approval again.

If a document routes to the AO/Delegate level for approval, the AO/Delegate is signing for the RL. The RL needs to sign the authorization/voucher, and the signature needs to be FAX/scanned to the document. If the dollar amount increase is significant, the Arranger should either email or print it off and check with the RL (fund holder) to make sure that he wants to approve the increase in funds. Then FAX/scan his approval document and have the secretary/Arranger change the \$\$ in CATS.

### **Booking Order**

GovTrip has a booking order that must be followed. While the trip overview page appears to give a choice on what to do next, either to book air, lodging or rental car, you must follow this in sequence. You may only skip air and go directly to lodging if your trip does not require transportation tickets. If you do not follow the sequence of booking air, then lodging and then rental car, you will receive a PNR error. The solution would be to delete everything and start over.

#### **Booking Order – Commercial Carrier**

Taxi is now listed as Comm.Carr-T to not be confused with airfare. The TAV Fee (\$13.50 voucher fee) will associate with the mode of payment associated with the airfare. If airfare is charged to the CBA, the voucher fee will be charged to the CBA. That is why, if changes are made, to airfare payment credit card, the TMC and TAV fee must be changed also. If the change is not made, an email saying the airline tickets will be issued, but the changes need to be made before vouchering.

### **Cancellation**

Follow the one page instruction sheet distributed during training. Close out any canceled trip authorizations on GovTrip. Approved authorizations obligate the accounting system. Check each traveler's existing authorization list and free the money up immediately.

#### **Cancel Travel Before Flights Ticket**

If you cancel the authorization by emptying the tickets and lodging booked through SATO *prior to ticketing*, you will not be billed for the SATO service fee. Do not create a voucher for the fees. Follow the cancelation instructions.

#### **Canceled Flights**

Verify tickets are issued either via email received from SATO or in [www.virtuallythere.com](http://www.virtuallythere.com) eTicket and watch the SIGNATURE field of the GovTrip authorization of any travel departing in the next week. Verify that they still have their airline tickets.

If flights are canceled because of a fuel increase, headquarters (Diane Eggert) may be able

to get the flight rebooked. (or at least post an official complaint) Send to the FATA an email with the subject line: Flight canceled – request assistance. In the body of the email provide: Traveler's Name and PNR#.

Normally an increase in airfare is just added to the authorization and if over \$300 will reroute for signature approvals. Make sure the increase \$\$ is reflected in CATS.

Pay Process Ignore

This is part of the cancellation process and means that the de-obligation of funds has taken place.

Document canceled before fees discovered

Create a new authorization (Post-Auth). Include copies of everything that was in the cancelled auth and a statement explaining that the auth was inadvertently cancelled before fees discovered.

# Trip Cancellation

Short Version p.7-1

(Traveler or Arranger needs to call SATO to cancel the flights prior to departure. If flights were not removed from authorization prior to travel date, they can only be removed on the voucher.)

## 1. Has the document been approved?

- Yes – Amend it.
- No – Adjust it. (View/Edit)

## 2. Are there expenses

*(Look at the signature page ticketing date. Has it ticketed yet?)*

If it was ticketed there will be TMC fee \$4.60 + and TAV fee \$13.50 (voucher fee) that need to be vouchered for even though the trip was canceled?

1. No – Review/Sign → Digital Signature → CANCELED
2. Yes – Proceed to Step 3

## 3. Make document look like the only thing on it is the expense to be vouchered.

1. Remove all reservations
2. Remove all expenses except what needs to be vouchered
3. Per Diem Location Dates → Arrival Date = Departure Date (make the same)
4. Itinerary → Start Date = End Date (make the same)
5. Trip Duration → 12 hours or less
6. Stamp it SIGNED

## 4. Stamp authorization APPROVED

## 5. Adjust the CATS entry

### After the trip - no expenses

Amend the authorization, then cancel it according to the instructions. Print a AD-202 for the Traveler's file with a brief explanation for the canceled authorization.

*NOTE: Traveler or Arrangers are responsible to call SATO to cancel flights AND request a refund if travel is not taken. An email saying the refund is being processed will be sent to the Traveler and Arranger.*

If the travel date is past departure, the airfares cannot be removed in the authorization, they must be removed in the voucher.

### CATS

All authorizations obligate money and need to be recorded in CATS. When a change is made in an authorization that changes the \$\$ obligated, the change should be reflected in CATS.

### Common Carriers

Common Carrier means Taxi as well as airline:

### Early Ticketing

The authority for approving early tickets 15 days prior to departure is delegated to the RL level. There is no need for the memo previously sent for the area director's approval and forwarded to headquarters!

The TRAVELER and supervisor need to be aware that:

#### 1. Domestic travel

Early tickets will require the traveler to PAY their credit card early. Whenever the airfare appears and becomes due on the account statement, during the activated SPLIT DISBURSEMENT FEATURE, the payment for airfare is hard-coded into GovTrip and must go to the card account, the traveler cannot receive the airfare payment directly. The traveler will have to call the travel card provider and request that the overpayment credit be mailed to them.

#### 2. Foreign Travel

Tickets are charged to the MWA CBA account and must be vouchered the same month that they are charged to the CBA account. Use TWO authorizations for the travel. If the authorization was already created with all expenses on one authorization, and the traveler has not turned in receipts after the trip, remove the other expenses from the authorization and process the airfare immediately. Create a new authorization for the other expenses, put a note in remarks, fax/scan the original authorization to the new one to associate the two documents. Do not put expenses on both authorizations or the traveler will be double paid.

### 3. FARE RULES –

Each ticket has FARE RULES that will inform the Arranger of early ticketing date requirements.

#### Early Tickets – When calling SATO

When the Arranger calls SATO, the early ticket date will NOT be inserted into the document just from the verbal request. SATO puts in the required ticket date based upon each airline. Once the travel has been arranged, it will continue to route to the next level for approval. However, the Arranger may go into Edit or Amend, depending on where the document is in the approval process, and change the ticketing date at the signature page. Stamp the authorization SIGNED. By stamping the document SIGNED, it will route through CTO Submit to update their records and move to the next level in the routing list.

#### Non Contract Capacity Controlled

*American Airlines is adding early ticket requirements on some of their fares that are not under “contract” fares. These flights are called “non contract capacity controlled” and non-government fares. They can add immediate ticket requirements at any time, **without notice** on non-government fares.*

#### Allow time for all approvals

The Arranger may change the airline tickets to an earlier ticketing date on the screen where the document is stamped SIGNED by the Arranger. Care must be given to allow for all approvals before choosing an early ticket date.

*NOTE: Early Ticketing dates on foreign travel can either be edited after the travel is stamped APPROVED, or the Arranger needs to be careful to choose a ticket that allows additional time for the travel to be processed through the MWA office.*

#### Choose early ticket on ANY flight

Since early ticketing is a budget issue and approval is at the RL level, the Arranger can choose an early ticketing date on ANY trip with RL approval. On the screen where the Arranger stamps the document SIGNED, there is an option to change the ticket issue dates. The Arranger may also edit the document after SATO has added the flights and change the ticketing dates to an earlier date.

*WARNING: Early ticketing is a privilege and if the USBank cards are not paid on time, the privilege could be revoked by headquarters.*

#### Credit Card dates for early ticketing

If airfare is charged to the IBA, the traveler can avoid being billed early by having their ticket issued on the 10<sup>th</sup> of the month before the month of departure. Example: Departure is September 15 and the early ticket is issued on August 10. The statement due date will be October 1 which gives time to file the voucher.

## **Invitational Travelers**

To avoid confusion, submit all the paperwork at one time to the FATA for distribution.

1. Memo requesting permission for the non-fed to travel or if the REE 11 for interviewees has been completed, no other permission is necessary.
2. Upload to Sharepoint:
  - FFIS form for LaShay Brown
  - GovTrip profile
  - Send an email to the FATA saying forms are in Sharepoint

*See the Forms Section.*

### **Invitational Travelers – cause pre-audit flag**

Because invitational travelers do not have a credit card, a pre-audit flag for GovCC-C (CBA) will need no other explanation than, “Invitational Traveler”.

## **Limited Open (Blanket) Travel**

The Limited Open Blanket has no advantages for the Arranger or Traveler. It only benefits the approving official and may speed the process slightly. Although a blanket is created, each trip must have an authorization created separately. The only difference is that each authorization created from the Blanket does not need to be approved again. However, the voucher will need to be approved each time. We have been given the authority to create Limited Open (Blanket) for a quarter. All Limited Open Blankets are approved in the area office.

### **Limited Open (Blanket) Travel – Local Destinations**

If the travel is less than 12 hours, and occurs frequently (plot visits, etc.), a blanket authorization on a paper AD-202 can be submitted to the area office for approval.

Submit the expenses such as mileage for POV, tolls, or parking through the MWA accounting office on an SF-1164. *See the Forms Section.*

## **Local Travel or Less than 12 Hours**

Create travel authorizations that will take place in less than 12 hours (regardless of the mileage driven) having no meal or lodging reimbursement on a paper AD-202 (e-forms), obtain the RL signature, and keep in the traveler’s file. Do not put the authorization in GovTrip or the TRVL program. ATR page 15-16.

Submit the expenses such as mileage for POV, tolls, or parking through the MWA accounting office on an SF-1164. *See the Forms Section.*

## **Non-Refundable (Restricted) Fare**

The Arranger will need to take extra care when choosing a non-refundable fare:

1. The traveler and supervisor must sign the non-refundable fare responsibility form. Scan/fax these documents to the travel authorization. The budgeting level (RL) makes the decision for non-refundable tickets, and the form does not need to be part of the package forwarded to the Area. See the Forms Section.
2. The date the ticket must be issued is coded into GovTrip based on the airline requirements (sometimes 24 hours). See FARE RULES on each flight, or ask the SATO Agent to verify the early ticketing dates.
3. The authorization has to be stamped APPROVED by midnight of ticketing date or the non-refundable ticket will be lost. See early ticketing instructions.
4. Foreign travel must be approved before the early ticket can be actually ticketed. Therefore, allow at least a week for the approval process. The Arranger should choose flights that offer both refundable and non-refundable tickets, and choose a fully refundable ticket until after all approvals for travel have been received. The benefit to using the same flight on foreign trips is that the itinerary wouldn't change. Once approvals have been received, change the ticket to non-refundable on the same flight.

**Warning: Watch the credit card default types when you change any ticketing information.**

5. Although the cost will go down, the authorization will go through the electronic approval process again if the change is more than \$300. However, because it was previously approved, a call to the FATA and the AO/Delegate can make this second approval happen in one day.

## **Other Authorizations – Cost Comparison**

On the tool bar next to Pre-Audit flags, is the “Other Auths.” tab. Select the authorizations that are not mentioned elsewhere in the document – particularly cost comparisons. A text box will open when an item is chosen, give a detailed explanation.

- POV-TDY – 55 cents (effective 1/1/09) Use for Cost comparison up to airfare rate.
- POV Govt-Owned Vehicle Available (must choose the lowest mileage rate 28.5 cents)
- Personal Deviation – Itinerary/Trans mode
- POV use Advantageous to Government (55 cents)

## **Outside Funds (Sponsored Travel)**

### **Add a Sponsor**

Submit via email the Sponsor form to the FATA. An email will notify the Arranger when the Sponsor has been added.

### After Signed – Add Sponsor

If the document was created prior to marking Sponsored Travel, you may edit the document. At the preview section edit itinerary, scroll down and change from Trip-to-Trip to Sponsor. Then at the Sponsor information tab, look up your sponsor and add to the document.

### After Approved – Can't Add Sponsor

If the authorization was stamped Approved before it was marked as outside funds or the Sponsor was added, the authorization must be re-created. The Sponsor cannot be added after the fact. If airline tickets are being issued and departure is imminent, call the FATA to discuss the options.

## **Per Diem - Lodging**

There are two basic categories of accommodations in GovTrip.

### Lodging - Government Preferred.

This should be your first choice...a government preferred accommodation has been inspected (Fire Safe/FEMA) and has passed specific safety standards, has guaranteed a government rate within per diem, has a contractual relationship with GSA, and, you can cancel the day of arrival without penalty. What you can not tell (unless you check the address and location) is where they are located in proximity to your TDY station and other pertinent information about the hotel.

We want to ensure the safety of our staff. However, as you can imagine this is a touchy subject. What is safe to one may not be considered safe to another and, we cannot under any circumstance (nor should you) publish anything about safe and unsafe hotels, bad parts of town, etc. If we do, we could be opening ourselves up to major law suits from the hotels or municipality. Additionally, FMD will not condone nor will they entertain any requests for actual based on an employee's request that all other hotels are unsafe, etc. to do so would put our agency in jeopardy. That is simply a criteria that we should not use for justifying actual.

Look at the list of Government Preferred hotels within your locations and make recommendations to travelers on suggested places to stay within per diem rates. That is certainly an acceptable practice.

### Lodging - Other Lodging.

In Travel/Lodging, there is another category: Other Lodging. When you are looking for a specific hotel and can't find it under the "Govt Preferred" menu, "Other" lodging is pretty much everything else, no special rates, no relationship with GSA and no guarantee of fire or safety standards, etc.

### Lodging in Foreign Cities

There are very few foreign cities that have foreign hotels listed on the search engine. Book those hotels online and verify the per diem rates in the authorization will cover the expense.

### Lodging – Shared Room

301-11.13 *How does sharing a room with another person affect my per diem reimbursement?*

Your reimbursement is limited to one-half of the double occupancy rate if the person sharing the room is another Government employee on official travel. If the person sharing the room is not a Government employee on official travel, your reimbursement is limited to the single occupancy rate.

*NOTE: The employee will still need to request actual subsistence if the shared room rate is more than half per diem allowed.*

### **Per Diem - Meal Reduction**

On the first and last travel day, the meals are reduced to 75%. If meals are provided on those days, reduce the per diem and then deduct the meal allowance provided. If the meal deduction causes the per diem to go below the incidental expense, put them on actual and give them the incidental expense. The traveler always gets incidental expense even if all meals are provided. The only time incidental expense is not received is when they are on annual leave.

### **Per Diem - Changes**

Find the per diem rates by month:

[http://aoprals.state.gov/content.asp?content\\_id=184&menu\\_id=78](http://aoprals.state.gov/content.asp?content_id=184&menu_id=78)

### **GovTrip does not match GSA**

The per diem tables are updated in GovTrip once a month. If the GSA rates are not uploading into GovTrip, put the rates listed on the GSA website in the per diem tab. When a pre-audit flag appears, put as the justification, "The GovTrip rates \$\$ do not match the GSA website rates \$\$." If the newest rates do not pull into the voucher, contact the FATA.

### **Refresh rates in Document**

To force an update into an authorization already created, delete the voucher if it was started but not approved, amend the authorization by clicking on "edit" in the TDY location and reselect the city. Remember to put an explanation in the signature block, "Per diem table updated." If the update took place after travel was taken, add to the statement, "after travel took place".

### **Clear Lodging when not needed – Actual subsistence**

In the Voucher Go to: -Additional Options -Per Diem Entitlements -Go to the day involved - View/Edit -Rates on bottom of that screen -Other -Actual Lodging -Zero that day out -Explain in the pre-audit flag

*NOTE: You can also do "Values Apply Through" to apply it to more than one day. But make sure the update took place on all intended days.*

### **Mileage updated rates**

Expenses for mileage will need to be removed and re-added so the correct rate can be refreshed.

### **Pre-Audit Flags**

The pre-audit flags are printed off and initialed by the RL to prove that he saw them and approves. (Example: Rental cars must have prior approval and are not an entitlement.) The Arranger should FAX/scan the signed Pre-Audit Flags to the document. In some locations the final approval by the AO/Delegate is where the RL signature is fax/scanned. It doesn't matter when that signature gets FAX/scanned as long as it does before the final approval stamp.

*NOTE: Do not put anything in the pre-audit flag (Example: I don't know what this flag is.) that you don't want to be read for 6.3 years by the auditors and management. Justification is important. Answer the what, when, where, or why question in just a few words. If you don't know, call your Travel Coordinator or FATA.*

### Overlapping Travel Dates

When a new authorization is created for the same time frame the pre-audit flag "overlapping dates" will be added to the document pre-audit flags. In the pre-audit flag remarks, explain that the other authorization is canceled and this authorization replaces the other.

### Other Expense

Don't use "Other" Expense. Choose something in the list to explain the expense and further explain in the Pre-Audit Flag. Internet Expense should be listed as Business Expense.

### Internet services

Charge to Business Services. Do not use "Miscellaneous or other expense".

When Pre-Audit flags appear – Example: > \$50 per day-- the system is telling us that headquarters believes the charge should be less than \$50 so either eliminate the flag, by going back and changing the amount to less than \$50 or give a very good explanation. If you have past history and know this charge will be over \$50 then explain it in the flag. Some flags appear because the amount is greater than \$1. It is just a data tracking system.

### **POV (Privately Owned Vehicle)**

If the traveler is using a POV (Privately Owned Vehicle) instead of flying AND it is cost effective for the government select POV-TDY. A choice of POV-Gov Vehicle Available is stating that the traveler is choosing to use a POV when a government vehicle is available for the TDY (Temporary Duty) travel. The lower reimbursement rate will apply.

### Rates

POV-TDY – 55 cents (effective 1/1/09)

POV-Govt Vehicle Available – lower rate 28.5

Cost compare – choose POV-TDY (55 cents) and explain in the Purpose Remarks.

*NOTE: If the POV authorization was not stamped signed before the traveler departs, it cannot be stamped signed until after travel is over*

### **Purpose Codes**

1. Award (not used by MWA)
2. Conference Attendance
3. Dependent Education (not used by MWA/foreign duty)
4. Emergency rarely used – for illness, death, disaster
5. Entitlement Travel (not used by MWA)
6. Instructor (not used by MWA)

7. Mission
8. Mission Critical (not used by MWA/disaster)
9. Other Travel –rarely used/non mission
10. Outreach – presentation to collaborators; PR/not a conference
11. Pre-employment
12. Rest & Recuperation (not used by MWA/foreign duty)
13. Special Entitlement (not used by MWA/foreign duty)
14. Special Mission (not used by MWA)
15. Training Attendance (tracked by HR and/or for instructor travel)

Conference

By statutory mandate a quarterly report is provided to Senator Coburn on “Trip Purpose” and “Trip Details” when conference is designated in the GovTrip authorization.

Choose “Conference Attendance” and enter the full conference name FIRST in the “Trip Details” text box and then put a couple spaces between this and any other details you will input.

1. Full official conference name (no acronyms or abbreviations – completely spell out)
2. Exact dates of conference (not travel dates)
3. Name of Sponsor of conference

Check Box 125%

Check the box if the per diem rate needed is 25% more than government per diem. This is a data capture function. It does NOT give approval for actual subsistence.

\*Trip Type:  \*Trip Purpose:

Trip Details:

Training

Choose “ Training Attendance” and enter in Trip Details” text box:

1. Full Name of training meeting or workshop (No acronyms or abbreviations)
2. Exact dates of training (not travel dates)
3. Name of Sponsor of the training

## **Search Engines**

Tickets and pricing available live on GovTrip represents only one search engine. When calling SATO, they have five search engines available and can find more flights, discounts, and hotels.

*Note: Leaving the departure dates and times the same, search several times to find discounted fares on the same flight. Also, can search one way tickets to get the lowest rates on a leg.*

*Trip Type:	<input type="text" value="TT-TRIP BY TRIP"/>	*Trip Purpose:	<input type="text" value="TRAINING ATTENDANCE"/>
Trip Details:	<input type="text" value="New Leader Workshop - 29Sep-30Sep2008 - Office of Personnel Management"/>		

## **Seat Assignments**

Seat assignments are never guaranteed, even if you make a choice using either the airline or the GovTrip's seat selection. Some seat choices require a "surcharge" which is never reimbursable.

### Seat will be assigned at check in

If this message is received on an itinerary, it means the flight is more than 70% full

## **Status Verification**

To check the status of a document, look at the signature page. It is updated immediately and the most accurate description of the document movement process.

## **Zero Expense Travel**

If travel will have NO expenses, use a paper AD-202 (e-forms) to create the authority to travel for liability purposes, have the RL approve, and file it. Do not enter travel into GovTrip or the TRVL program that will NOT have an expense associated later.

### No Expenses - after the trip

After the trip has been concluded, and no expenses were incurred, amend the authorization to cancel it according to the instructions. Explain that no expenses were incurred. Keep the approved document as authority to travel.

# **Step-by-Step Procedures for GovTrip**

Rev. 11/14/08

## **1. Start**

- a. [www.govtrip.com](http://www.govtrip.com) accessible anywhere
- b. Top of Page—"Change Edition" to Department of Agriculture—Check the box to "Remember my Agency Edition"
- c. Optional-Sign up for Email Updates-left hand side of GovTrip Home Page
- d. Login using your Aglearn ID & Password
- e. Items Not to Use/Things not to do:
  - i. Do not "x" out of GovTrip—use "close window" the upper right corner of page, otherwise you will be logged out for 15 minutes
  - ii. Do not type in comment boxes with the reservation pages—will incur a 'touched' fee

## **2. Authorizations**

- a. Fees:
  - i. \$4.60 authorization (SATO electronic submission—non-touched)
  - ii. \$13.50 per voucher
  - iii. \$27.75 cost to SATO "touched fee" when calling in to agent or typing in comment boxes when making reservations (will replace \$4.60 fee and will be one-time fee per each authorization)
- b. Official Travel tab—use for self travel
- c. Official Travel Other tab—use for travelers
  - i. Traveler lookup-search by Last Name
  - ii. Authorizations orders
  - iii. Create New Authorization/Order
- d. Section A
  - i. Starting Point—select from Residence or Duty Station
  - ii. Departing on—Type in Date or select from Calendar icon
  - iii. Trip Type-select from drop down box
    1. Invitational Traveler=non-government employee
    2. Limited Open=blanket
    3. Sponsored Limited=Outside Funds
    4. Trip by Trip=normal travel
  - iv. Trip Purpose-select from drop down box
  - v. Trip Details-enter necessary info just like remarks section in TRVL
- e. Section B
  - i. TDY Location aka Where you will going
  - ii. Departing on Date (when you will return home) Type in or use Calendar icon
  - iii. Selection Location by Location Tool options:
    1. Location search, county search, zipcode search, or TDY location lookup
    2. Type in location name (or county name, zipcode, etc depending on what you choose to search by)
    3. Select your location
      - a. notice it shows you your per diem

- b. be sure to select the right location in the correct state
- c. scroll down to bottom of page and “select and close”
- f. Section C
  - i. “Will you be traveling to another TDY Location?”
    - 1. Select Yes if there is another leg
    - 2. Select No if this is the only leg of the trip
    - 3. Trip duration
      - a. Will default to multi-day or choose:
      - b. 12 hours or less
      - c. >12-24 hours w/lodging
      - d. >12-24 hours-lodging
- g. Section D
  - i. “Where will you like to go to Next?”
    - 1. Can Select Airfare, Lodging, Car Rental, Rail, or Preview Screen, in any order
    - 2. Save & Proceed

### 3. Airfare:

- a. Defaults to round trip
- b. Departing & dates plug-in automatically
- c. Time search defaults to 9 am—use drop down box to change search time
  - i. Global distribution System searches for flights two hours before and two hours after selected search time
  - ii. Departure Airport
    - 1. Type in City Name or Airport Code
  - iii. Arrival Airport
    - 1. Type in City Name or Airport Code
    - 2. Select Nearby Airports
    - 3. Select Appropriate airport
  - iv. Arrival Date-plugs in automatically
  - v. Time search defaults to 9 am—use drop down box to change search time
- d. Select Search Availability
- e. Takes a few minutes to ‘process your request’
- f. Notice left hand side is outbound flights and right hand side is return flights
  - i. Select flights to price
    - 1. Can select up to 5 outbound & 5 return flights at a time \*highly suggest selecting at least 2\*
    - 2. Green bar flights=Contract flights
    - 3. Yellow bar flights=Contract flights w/capacity limits
    - 4. Grayish/blue bar flights=Non-Contract flights & will require a justification and pre-audit screen
    - 5. Scroll to bottom or top of page and select Price Flights or you can also Return to Search
    - 6. Takes a few minutes to ‘process your request’
  - ii. Select flights
    - 1. Select 1 outbound & 1 return flight
    - 2. Select flights or return to search at the top or bottom of the page

3. Note, if you request assistance in booking a flight, you will incur the \$27.75 fee
- iii. Additional Flight Options
  1. Seat selection-Aisle/Window using drop down box
  2. Option to select your seat
  3. OSI-Other Supplementary Information
    - a. Meal preference—Foreign flights
    - b. Note your disabilities: blind, deaf, wheelchair
    - c. May request assistance on & off plane
    - d. Can check box to save to permanent profile
    - e. Save or Cancel
  4. CBA Account
    - a. CBA Account=GVTS
    - b. Only use for non-government, foreign, and those without a Gov't credit card
  5. Frequent Flyer
    - a. Can add your frequent flier info
    - b. Can save to permanent profile
  6. Comments box
    - a. If you enter comments, you will receive a warning box that you will be charged \$27.75
    - b. Highly discourage
  7. Save Selected Flight or Return to Flight search
- iv. Booking Status
  1. States your reservations were booked, PENDING approval
  2. Warning states that your authorization must be signed and approved within 4 days of departure otherwise all reservations will be CANCELED
  3. Proceed

**g. Notes:**

- i. Note that everything you do on the left appears on the right to your Trip Summary.
- ii. You will now see your airline itinerary attached to your Trip Summary
- iii. You can Edit to change your flights or Remove

**h. Lodging:**

- i. To book lodging, select lodging tab at the navigation tool bar at the top of the page (It appears under the Travel tab)
- ii. Check in & Check out dates automatically appear
- iii. Required Search Criteria, choose one of the following:
  1. Near a TDY Location
  2. Near an Airport
  3. By Zipcode
  4. By Hotel Name –don't recommend
- iv. Ex. Near an Airport
  1. Distance defaults to 10 miles but can search up to 90 miles from airport
- v. Ex. Near a TDY Location
  1. Select TDY Location

2. Can search up to 90 miles from TDY Location
- vi. Ex. By Zipcode
  1. Enter zipcode
- vii. Search Accommodations ---“Processing your Request”
- viii. Will pull up a list of hotels to choose
  1. Please note it shows your allowed Per Diem
  2. Select Hotel Info & Rates to see availability & rates
  3. Can select OSI—Other Supplementary Information for options:
    - a. Smoking or non-smoking room
    - b. Located away from or by an elevator
    - c. Accessibility
    - d. Enter hotel rewards
    - e. Save or Cancel
  4. Option to View Additional hotel info.
  5. Rates:
    - a. Rates highlighted in green=meets per diem
    - b. Above rates, per diem allowed is stated
  6. Option to charge to GOVCC or Personal CC
    - a. Required to use USBANK/GOV CC
  7. Comments box, if you type in the box, you will receive warning message that you will be charged \$27.75 fee
  8. Save selected Accommodations or Find Different Accommodations
  9. “Processing your request”
  10. Booking Status
    - a. States your reservations were booked, PENDING approval
    - b. Warning states that your authorization must be signed and approved within 4 days of departure otherwise all reservations will be CANCELED
    - c. Proceed

**i. Notes:**

- i. Note that everything you do on the left appears on the right to your Trip Summary.
- ii. You will now see your hotel itinerary attached to your Trip Summary
- iii. You can Edit to change your hotel or Remove

**j. Rental Car:**

- i. To book a rental car, select the Rental Car tab located in Travel
- ii. Pickup date & time and drop off date & time will plug-in automatically
- iii. Select a class of car-economy will default
  1. Must justify the need for anything other than economy in pre-audit flags
- iv. Pickup location will default to airport, if pickup is at another location must select ‘off airport location’
- v. Drop-off location
  1. Need to select same as pickup location or type in were you will be dropping car off
- vi. Search Rental Car Availability
- vii. “Processing Your Request”

- viii. Make your selection by Select & Continue
  - 1. Note, we should always be a prudent traveler
- ix. May select OSI-Other Supplementary Information
  - 1. Choice of Smoking or Non-Smoking vehicle
  - 2. Choice of Additional features—may be at an additional cost & will need to justify
  - 3. Save & Continue
- x. Option to enter in your car rental club# if not already saved to profile
- xi. Method of Reimbursement
  - 1. GOVCC or Personal CC
  - 2. Note, travelers should ALWAYS use USBANK
- xii. Comments box
  - 1. If you enter comments, you will receive a warning box that you will be charged \$27.75
  - 2. Highly discourage
- xiii. Save Selected Car
- xiv. Booking Status
  - 1. States your reservations were booked, PENDING approval
  - 2. Warning states that your authorization must be signed and approved within 4 days of departure otherwise all reservations will be CANCELED
  - 3. Proceed

**k. Notes:**

- 1. Note that everything you do on the left appears on the right to your Trip Summary
- 2. You will now see your rental car reservations attached to your Trip Summary
- 3. You can edit to change or Remove

**l. Expenses:**

- i. Select Expenses tab
- ii. Non-Mileage Expenses
  - 1. Estimate expenses you think traveler will incur
    - a. For example:
      - i. Rental Car Gas
      - ii. Taxi
      - iii. Hotel Taxi
      - iv. Parking
      - v. Visa photos
  - 2. Can enter up to 5 expenses then 1 at a time
- iii. Select Expense Type
  - 1. Use drop down box to select expense
    - a. Can also type in expense at “or”
  - 2. Cost—enter a reasonable dollar amount
  - 3. Date
    - a. Will default to first travel day
    - b. Can change the date or leave as is—does not matter
  - 4. Method of Reimbursement
    - a. GOV CC or Personal CC

- b. Some expenses will automatically default to GOVCC (hotel taxes, rental car gas)
      - c. Can change method of reimbursement at voucher
    - 5. Save Expenses
    - 6. Page will refresh
    - 7. Can enter another expense or Edit/Remove current expenses
  - iv. Mileage Expenses
    - 1. Examples of mileage expenses
      - a. Mileage to and from airport
        - i. Select POV-TDY from drop down box
        - ii. Select Date or can leave default date
        - iii. Method of Reimbursement—defaults to Personal
        - iv. Enter Mileage estimate
          - 1. Can use Table of Distances (like map quest)
        - v. GovTrip will automatically configure amount for you
      - b. Driving to and from TDY location
        - i. To determine rate authorized:
          - 1. Specify POV –available GOV .285
          - 2. Specify POV-TDY (no GOV available) .485
      - c. SAVE Expense
- m. Notes:
  - i. Authorizations are now obligated in FFIS so be realistic when entering in expense estimates
  - ii. Do not bulk expenses to Misc with one large dollar amount
  - iii. In GovTrip, you can add expenses on voucher without amending even if there is not enough money obligated on authorization
- n. Accounting:
  - i. Accounting tab is where you can change your accounting code, you will need to go into this tab to make sure your MU is selected.
- o. Additional Options:
  - i. Per Diem Entitlements
    - 1. This tab is where you would select for each day:
      - a. Annual Leave
      - b. Change Hotel amount—lower or request actual subsistence
      - c. Meals deductions
    - 2. Save these Entitlements
- p. Upload Signed Authorization
  - i. Go into Official Travel-Other or Official Travel (for self)
  - ii. Authorizations
  - iii. Select the appropriate authorization
    - 1. View/Edit
    - 2. Don't uncheck the view-only box
  - iv. It will bring you to the Preview Trip Screen
  - v. Select Expense Tab
    - 1. Documentaiton/Receipts
    - 2. Two Options to Upload:
      - a. Print Fax Cover Sheet

- i. Fax Cover Sheet is only linked to this individual authorization
    - ii. Take FAX Cover sheet, signed AD-202, & Pre-Audit Flags sheet to fax machine and type in fax number listed on cover sheet
    - iii. Staple Cover Sheet and original signed AD-202 and send to AO/Delegate
  - b. Scan
    - i. Browse to select your scanned AD-202 & Pre-Audit Flags Sheet
    - ii. Upload
    - iii. Send original signed authorization to AO/Delegate
- q. **Review & Sign**
  - i. Now that you have made your reservations and entered your expenses you will want to go to the review & sign tab
  - ii. Pre-View trip screen will appear
    - 1. Look over itinerary, expenses, accounting code and calculated trip cost.
  - iii. Save & Proceed to Pre-Audit
    - 1. This will bring you to your Pre-Audit Flags
      - a. Justify your flags in the comment boxes
      - b. Print this page
  - iv. Close Window
- r. **Print**
  - i. Will need to get Traveler & RL's signature
  - ii. Go into Official Travel-Other or Official Travel (for self)
  - iii. Authorizations
  - iv. Select your authorization you are wanting to print
    - 1. Scroll to the right and select the print option
  - v. Traveler will need to initial under Approving Official
  - vi. RL will need to sign as Approving Official and pre-audit flags. If foreign travel, leave the signature line open for the director's signature.
- s. **Review & Sign**
  - i. Follow the step at the bottom of the page (just like Review & Sign – Section P)
  - ii. Digital Signature
    - 1. Submit this document as “signed”
    - 2. Submit Completed Document
    - 3. Save & Combine
- t. **Notes/Comments:**
  - i. GovTrip generates the Authorization Numbers. To Keep a log for yourself, use:
    - 1. Document Name
      - a. System generated but made up of First initial of travelers First & Last name, TDYlocation, and date
    - 2. TA Number
  - ii. To ensure you selected the correct Official Travel tab:

1. Top left hand corner of Authorization, it will state Travel Arrangers name as well as Travelers name.
- iii. If you need your E-authentication password reset, contact:
  1. [eAuthHelpDesk@ftc.usda.gov](mailto:eAuthHelpDesk@ftc.usda.gov) via email
- iv. Don't forget to print your pre-audit flags, so the RL can see them when he signs the AD-202

# Voucher

When creating a voucher, the authorization estimates will automatically fill into the voucher document. Check the charges carefully. Print the voucher, get signatures, Fax/scan the voucher and receipts to the document, then stamp the document SIGNED.

## Amending the Voucher

When an amendment is filed to a voucher, NOTHING is changed on the amendment except the items actually being amended. Leave the original expenses in the document and ADD the new expenses to the document. The system already knows what it paid out so there is no need to “zero out” any expenses, lodging, airfare, etc. Amending the voucher incorrectly (lowering an expense that has previously been paid) may cause the employee to receive a “DUE US” memo telling them they owe the USDA money.

If the voucher was incorrectly zeroed out, the Arranger needs to amend the voucher again, adding back all valid expenses.

Regulations require that the traveler submit their voucher documentation within 5 days after returning from travel. The Arranger/Secretary is required by the MWA to submit the voucher within 5 days of receiving the traveler’s documentation.

## “Due US” Condition

If a traveler is paid too much, and the voucher is amended to the lower amount, the traveler will get a bill for the overpayment. The traveler should make a check payable to USDA/ARS. The location Financial Technician will process the check through the lock box.

## SAMPLE EMAIL:

From: GovTrip.eTravel.System@etsproext01.govtrip.com [<mailto:GovTrip.eTravel.System@etsproext01.govtrip.com>]

Travel Approver,

The approved voucher for the above reference Government Travel Record has a Balance Due to the Government as a result of an excess travel payment(s) or travel advance in the amount shown. This e-mail is the Travel Approver's notification of this situation.

You are required to contact the traveler to ensure that the traveler received the notification of the debt.

The traveler assigned to you has 30 days from the date of this notification to make payment or submit a request for waiver, remission or cancellation of the debt; otherwise, action will be taken to immediately collect the debt via payroll deduction. The traveler must contact the GovTrip Travel Administrator (TA) to obtain instructions for paying the debt via cash collection or for instructions on requesting a waiver/remission or cancellation of debt. The traveler may inquire of the DTA for the waiver process.

Action will automatically be taken after 30 days to collect the debt via payroll deduction unless appropriate approved procedures have been initiated to stop this procedure.

You may access GovTrip @ <http://www.govtrip.com/govtrip/site/index.jsp>

## **Interim Vouchers**

Use interim vouchers for long term assignments (30 days or more). Create an interim voucher every 30 days for the expenses that have occurred. When creating the authorization, it is a good idea to spread known expenses out so they can be vouchered before the end of the trip. On the second and third interim voucher, leave the previous expenses listed and ADD to them and continue to lengthen the dates of the voucher. The amounts will look huge but you will be able to see the breakdown of payments at  Additional Options  Payment Totals.

After the voucher has been filed, the expenses paid to the employee cannot be reduced, it will cause a "Due US" Condition explained above.

## **Early Ticketing**

Once the interim function is working correctly, we will be able to process early tickets.

Unlike amendments, each interim voucher will have its own TAV Fee \$13.50.

## **Split Vouchers**

Until the interim function is confirmed to be working correctly, we will continue to process foreign early tickets using the split voucher process.

When foreign airfare is ticketed and charged to the CBA account prior to travel, two authorizations need to be created and two vouchers. One authorization will have the airfare, TMC Fee, and TAV Fee, and will be vouchered early. The second authorization will have the rest of the per diem and expenses, and be vouchered after the traveler returns.

## **Remove Voucher**

The voucher must be removed to edit the authorization.

# SATO

## Call SATO for Estimates 866-569-5334.

Travelers and arrangers may call SATO for flight pricing estimates without charge. Remember though that if you find a great flight, you CANNOT BOOK it unless the document PNR step has been completed and they can see the document. You will be charged the booking service fee if you have them attach the flight to the authorization. The benefit to calling SATO is that they can see 5 booking engines, while GovTrip only has one booking engine available.

### SATO Services and Fees

GovTrip has one search engine, SATO has five search engines. Although the fee to call SATO seems expensive, the amount of time and frustration in trying to find flights is probably costing the MU more in the long run. Also, SATO has access to more flights and can usually find a flight at a lower cost and convenient time. Almost all foreign flights require a call to SATO. There is only one SATO fee for each trip, regardless of how many times they are called before the airfare is booked. If SATO is called again after the first flights were ticketed, there will be additional charges. If the flights are canceled before ticketing, there will be no fee.

### Remove all flights before calling SATO to book flights

If the Arranger tries to book flights and can't find all the required flights, ALL of the flights chosen must be REMOVED before calling SATO. If the Arranger is starting the authorization, enter enough information to search for flights, but do NOT select any flights, scroll to the bottom of the airline screen, type message in "Notes to the TMC" box, click Request Assistance, and sign the document.

## Creating a PNR Number for Call-in Service

REMEMBER – this procedure triggers a full service TMC (Travel Management Center) fee

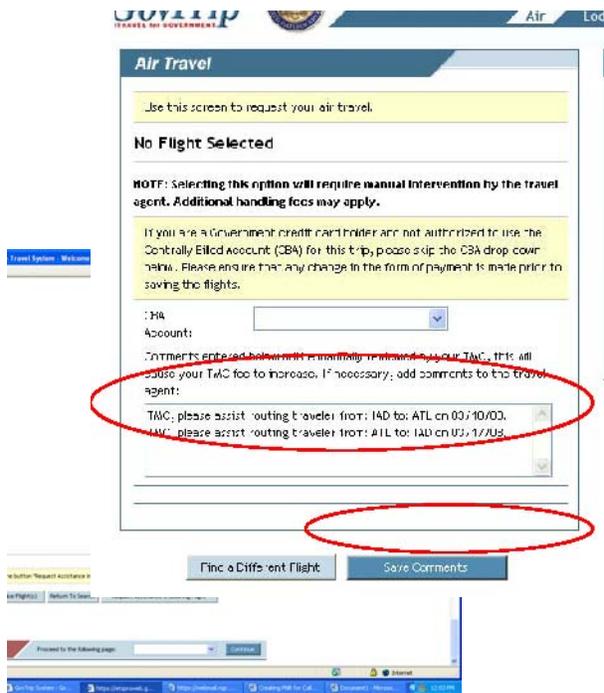
- See Fee Schedule in the Forms Section.

### Calling SATO for Flights

When creating the authorization you will be able to see the Confirmation Number/PNR # on the Itinerary. Once you can tell SATO the PNR (Passenger Name Record) number, they will be able to choose flights for you and plug them into the PNR#.

- At the bottom of the itinerary page in Section D, select the radial button for "Air Travel." Next select "Save and Proceed."
- Enter the traveler's departing and arriving location, and select "Search Flights"
- Once flights have returned, YOU DO NOT NEED TO SELECT A FLIGHT, scroll to the bottom of the page, and enter a comment and select "Request Assistance In Booking Flight" as pictured below:
- The next page will take you to the Air Travel Screen. The "Message to the Agent" will auto-fill based on your previous search criteria. The traveler/Arranger will be able to add more text or change the information in this box if necessary.

- From this screen the traveler/Arranger has the opportunity to select the CBA (Central Billed Account) as the method of reimbursement if necessary. The CBA information will then be sent to Sato via the PNR.
- When complete select “Save Comments” as shown below:
- Complete the document with miscellaneous expenses, changes to per diem if needed, and select accounting.
- Call the Sato reservation center (866-569-5334) and provide the PNR. The agent can then provide assistance and at the same time access the traveler’s GovTrip document to place the needed information into it.
- After the agent books the reservations, the document will be stamped CTO Booked and will then route to the approving official.



# Foreign

When a document comes through the area for foreign travel, we will upload the AD signature page. The Arranger should upload any other documents that require signature at the RL level, such as pre-audit flags, etc.

Please leave room for the AD signature on the bottom of the authorization.

*WARNING: If the package is stamped APPROVED in GovTrip but the country clearance is not granted or the visa is not processed in time for departure, the traveler will not be allowed to depart and the research unit may be responsible for paying for unused tickets.*

## **CBA (Central Billed Account)**

The CBA account is used for all foreign travel, employees without travel cards, and invitational traveler's airfare. The check box to select CBA is at the bottom of the airfare select screen, or at the bottom of the screen where you "Save Comment" to SATO prior to making the phone call.

When you call SATO make sure they know when to charge flights to the CBA.

### Airfare charged on the CBA

Airfare, the TMC Fee, and the TAV Fee charged on the CBA account must be processed for payment in the same month it was ticketed and billed to the CBA account.

*NOTE: See additional IBA/CBA instructions under the Authorization Section.*

## **Country Clearance**

Use the country clearance form to collect all the personal information for the trip. Do not put any of the personal information on the FTIS record remarks. Do not duplicate your efforts, and protect personally identifiable information (pii)

## **FTIS Purpose Statements**

Headquarters is asking for clear and specific purpose statements in FTIS (Foreign Travel Information System) and/or the country clearance form. Just one or two sentences will do.

### Examples:

1. Attending the 8<sup>th</sup> Congress of Tribology and presenting lecture titled, "xxxxxxxxxxx".
2. Meeting with Collaborators at the University of Ghent to discuss the bacteria of xxxxx.

*NOTE: Give the "what" and "why for the travel.*

## **Itinerary Changes**

If the itinerary changes after the document was stamped FG TRVL COORD APPD, provide to the FATA the latest itinerary for country clearance and visa.

## **Non-refundable Tickets on Foreign Travel**

If you wish to purchase non refundable fares, you must be VERY CAREFUL with the flights you choose while the authorization is being approved.

Per SATO, South African Air requires ticketing 3 days after booking or else reservations will be canceled. Other foreign airlines may require immediate ticketing. Read FARE RULES under each flight before booking them or ask the SATO representative to read the FARE RULES to you. Allow additional time to process foreign travel documents.

### **Steps to follow:**

1. If possible, choose the same flights that will be non-refundable AFTER everything will be approved. If you cannot pick the same flights, just pick flights that will be MORE than the non-refundable tickets on the same days.
2. Make sure the flights do NOT have an early ticket date on them --- check the FARE RULES. The earliest ticketing date is the date that all the tickets will be issued.
3. If the tickets get issued (ticketed), you cannot exchange them for non-refundable fares on the SAME flight. You must cancel the authorization by clearing out all the charges except the TMC Service Fee and the TAV Fee (voucher fee) \$13.50, sign it, and do a voucher against those fees, AND START ALL OVER with a new authorization. You cannot use the same PNR number to book the same flights again once those flight numbers have been canceled because the airlines believe the PNR was canceled with the flights.

If you complete the process correctly, you can exchange the flights for non-refundable fares after it is approved, the \$\$ will be lower and the auth will NOT re-route for approval.

*NOTE: Email the FATA the FINAL itinerary for the country clearance and visa if the flight times or numbers change.*

# Help Desk Answers

## Error Messages:

Always provide the traveler's name and PNR number when requesting email assistance through the area office.

### Method of Payment Error

If the Arranger chooses the wrong method of payment for the airfare (Example: IBA instead of CBA) and the document is stamped SIGNED and goes to GovTrip to book the flights – the method of payment cannot be changed.

The flights will need to be canceled by calling SATO, removed from the authorization, new flights chosen, authorization signed again, and sent through CTO Submit for booking.

Changes can be made by the Arranger (including TMC fee) except for the TAV Fee (voucher \$13.50). Before you stamp the amendment SIGNED, call the FATA and conference call to GovTrip to remove the TAV Fee. Then route the document as usual by stamping the document SIGNED.

### Payment Module Pre-Reject for Audit Fail

This means that in the FFIS obligation interface, FFIS is feeding back information that there are not sufficient funds in the budget for the chosen accounting code to cover the obligation. This will not prevent ticketing, but will cause a reject on the voucher. Notify the ABFO to review the account and make adjustments to the budget to guarantee sufficient funds to pay the voucher. This will probably occur at the end of the year.

### PNR Error Message: Unknown #21

When the document is signed and sent to booking, this message could mean several things, but common errors could be that the seat you chose for that flight was taken by the time you sent the request, or the flight itself is full. Do not pick flights one day and then come back the next day to finish and sign the document. Someone may have already taken the seats on the flight you wanted to book. You might have better success without a seat choice or just choosing another flight and trying again. Remember the system is live, so anyone could be looking at the same flight and seat you are considering.

## **Fees**

TAV FEE \$13.50 is the voucher fee

TMC FEE See current schedule of fees in the Forms Section.

If the authorization is canceled before the flights are ticketed there are no fees charged.

## **Pre-Audit Flags (Flags are justifications not error messages)**

Reason Flagged    Item Description

Chk Items TDY Stop    Itinerary item not associated to TDY stop

The dates of travel were changed, and the TMC fee was still dated with the previous departure date (8/3 in example), and the new departure date is 8/5. Preferably, edit the authorization to change the TMC fee date, if it doesn't allow the change, put a justification in the pre-audit flag: Changed departure dates.

## **Retrieve Document After Signing**

If the Arranger signed the document and discovered an error, they may retrieve the document at any level by clicking either edit (before stamped approved) or clicking amend (after it has been approved). However, while it is routing through CTO Submit/CTO Submit and/or Audit Pass/Payment Submitted there will be a short time that the document is not available for either edit or amend.

## **Returned Documents**

When more information is needed (particularly on audit flags) the document will be returned to the Arranger, who will receive an email from GovTrip that the document has been returned. The approving official that returned the document will place a comment on the Digital Signature Page. Please read the emails and look at the document to answer/fix the requests and SIGN the document again to cause it to re-route.

## STAMPS

- PAY LINK - obligation is in the process.
- AUDIT PASS - headquarters looked at it and let it pass the initial audit.
- OBLIGATION SUBMITTED - the obligation is pending
- POSACK OBLIGATION. - has been obligated or de-obligated if canceled.

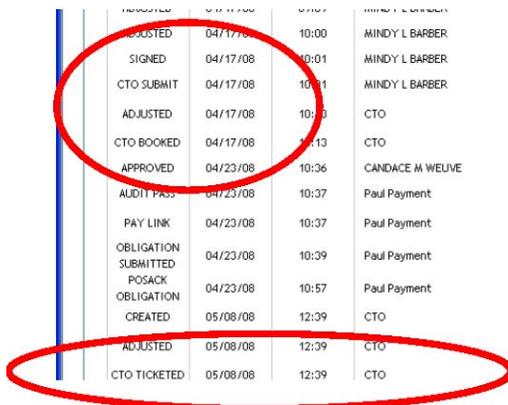
## Travelers Making Changes

Let the travelers know that they should not call SATO and make changes to their itinerary without the Arranger's knowledge. The cost may increase which needs to be updated in CATS, and may require additional approval. The foreign travel itinerary is submitted with the visa application and country clearance. Any changes to the itinerary should be forwarded to the ATA immediately. Many countries require flight numbers upon arrival.

## Verify tickets are issued

The booking process may become hung up in the CTO Booked process. It should move off of this in the same day. If tickets are not issued a traveler will show up at the airport and not have a ticket at check-in. Prevent this by checking the GovTrip Signature Page and VirtuallyThere.com

### 1. Look at the signature page of the authorization to verify "ticketed".

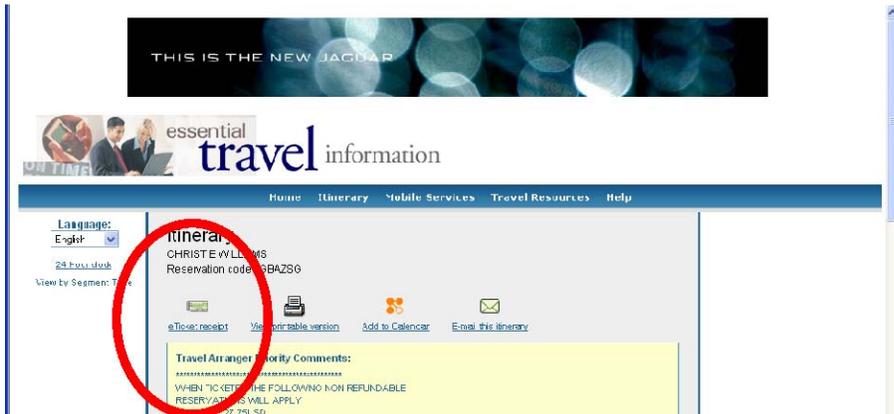


STAMP	DATE	TIME	USER
REQUESTED	04/17/08	10:00	MINDY L BARBER
SIGNED	04/17/08	10:01	MINDY L BARBER
CTO SUBMIT	04/17/08	10:01	MINDY L BARBER
ADJUSTED	04/17/08	10:03	CTO
CTO BOOKED	04/17/08	10:13	CTO
APPROVED	04/23/08	10:36	CANDACE M WELVE
AUDIT PASS	04/23/08	10:37	Paul Payment
PAY LINK	04/23/08	10:37	Paul Payment
OBLIGATION SUBMITTED	04/23/08	10:39	Paul Payment
POSACK OBLIGATION	04/23/08	10:57	Paul Payment
CREATED	05/08/08	12:39	CTO
ADJUSTED	05/08/08	12:39	CTO
CTO TICKETED	05/08/08	12:39	CTO

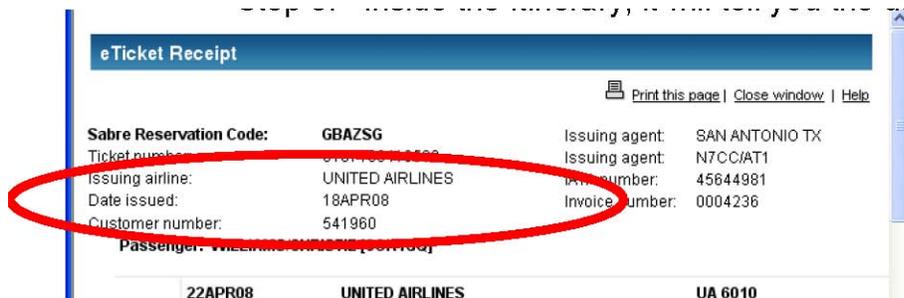
2. Look at the itinerary at [www.virtuallythere.com](http://www.virtuallythere.com)

Step 1. You will need the PNR, Traveler's name, and traveler's email address to log in.

Step 2. Once inside their itinerary - Click on eTicket Receipt.



Step 3. Inside the Itinerary, it will tell you the date it was ticketed.



# What \$\$ went to USBANK

Explain what \$\$ went to USBank Individually Billed Account (IBA).

On the Signature Page look at the Remarks once the PAID Stamp is applied.

*Suggestion: Keep travel files in a holding location until you verify the PAID stamp has been applied. Once the stamp is applied, put the travel file away.*

The screenshot shows the GovTrip Travel System interface in Microsoft Internet Explorer. The browser address bar displays "https://etsproweb.govtrip.com - GovTrip Travel System - Welcome to GovTrip - Microsoft Internet Explorer". The page title is "Document History" with a "Display Full History" link. The main content is a table with the following data:

Status	Date	Time	Name	Remarks
CREATED	04/18/08	10:44	BRITTNEY L JONES	
T-ENTERED	05/06/08	16:44	BRITTNEY L JONES	
ADJUSTED	05/07/08	08:35	BRITTNEY L JONES	
APPROVED	05/07/08	15:30	KAREN L REDDICK	
AUDIT PASS	05/07/08	15:31	Paul Payment	
PAY LINK	05/07/08	15:31	Paul Payment	document data-linked to Payment Module
PAYMENT SUBMITTED	05/07/08	15:34	Paul Payment	Document data-linked to Accounting
PAID	05/14/08	06:07	Paul Payment	Total Amount Paid: 1131.50 Payee Amount EFT/Check # Address/Destination (Traveler) 308.00 Credit Card 823.50

Below the table, there are links for "> View Reasons for Audit Failures" and "> View Adjustments". At the bottom of the page, there is a navigation bar with the text "Proceed to the following page:" followed by a dropdown menu set to "Trip Overview" and a "Continue" button. The status bar at the bottom of the browser shows "Done" and "Internet".

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# Detach Function (Travel for other agency)

The DETACH function just moves the employee's profile for a short time to another GovTrip user Agency. During that time, the Arranger will not be able to create additional travel authorizations or vouchers, but will be able to see documents. It is important for the Arranger to remember, the traveler's profile was detached. The time period needs to be discussed between the Arranger's office and the receiving office – the MWA will request the return of detached profiles if there is a pre-arranged date. When the profile is moved, all the authorizations created will move with the profile, and be returned with the profile.

There are two ways to handle the DETACH process:

## 1. Receive Accounting Code

The Arranger creates the authorization and notifies the FATA to DETACH the employee (authorizations move with the employee profile) so the other office can put in their accounting information. The other office (or location Arranger) notifies the FATA to receive the traveler's profile to the original location. When the FATA RECEIVES the profile, the authorization will then have the other agency's accounting in it and the Arranger will be able to see the traveler's information to finish the authorization and sign it for the traveler. The Arranger will create the voucher.

## 2. Other Office Creates the Document

The other office keeps the profile while they create and process the authorization and voucher. The original Arranger can view the document to print a complimentary copy for the traveler's file. The paying office usually creates the documents because they know the expenses they want to pay, but the two offices need to talk about how to handle these arrangements.

*NOTE: It is possible to receive the profile back for a while and return it so the voucher can be created. It is important to plan this up front if at all possible.*

## Receiving a Profile

Because the receiving location may change email address and routing list information in the profile, the FATA will print off the profile before detaching the document. Once the profile is received back in the MWA, the FATA will check the profile and restore its original information, and notify the location that the profile has been received.

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# TRAVEL CARDS

## Billing Schedule

The USBank sends their bills out each month with a payment due date of the first day of the month (ex.4/1). If payment is received before that date or posted during the grace period (usually midnight on the 7<sup>th</sup> of the month), the payments will be recorded before the delinquent report is generated the next day on the 8<sup>th</sup> of the month. If a payment is received and posted on the 8<sup>th</sup>, it won't appear as paid because the cut off was midnight the previous night and the statement will be generated on the 10<sup>th</sup> of the month based on information at the time of the cut off. Be aware that the USBank in-house posting process may take a couple days. So payments received on the 6<sup>th</sup> will probably not be posted by the 7<sup>th</sup>.

## USBank Split Disbursement

Travelers expect to see their voucher payments posted to their statement when the USBank is being paid directly during the Split Disbursement process. Look at the date the voucher was stamped APPROVED. It takes 3 to 7 days from that date to process from GovTrip through NFC where an EFT payment is issued to USBank. It takes the same length of time for expense payments to route to their salary check bank. Their bank may even take a day or two to post the payment after receipt of the EFT.

If their voucher was stamped APPROVED on 4/4, the payment made directly to USBank would probably not show up on the statement issued based on the 4/7 midnight cut off date. The account will be considered delinquent.

## Paying the USBank Statement Due

The **traveler** is encouraged to call USBank at the phone number on the back of their credit card to make payments FREE of charge.

## View USBank Statements

The traveler may view their account online. See instructions in the Forms Section.

## Card Sharing

If the Travel Card is used to buy a meal for someone else, it is considered "card sharing" and is strictly prohibited. If the traveler wants to pay for multiple meals, they need to use their personal credit card. The Inspector General will question a large dollar amount charged to a restaurant.

## Credit Card Numbers

When you start a travel document for someone and their credit card number is not listed in the My Account Information, email or call the FATA to request that it be verified in USBank and entered. When the traveler has access to the program and enters their own USBank credit card number into their profile, the FATA will still have to activate it. Once the new credit card is entered into the profile, their current documents will need to be refreshed by the FATA.

## **IBA vs. CBA**

### Individual Bank Account (IBA) GovCC-I

The IBA is issued to the traveler by the credit card company and is used for most official travel expenses.

### Central Billed Account (CBA) – GovCC-C

The CBA is used for invitational travelers or employees without an IBA. The month the airfare is charged to the CBA, a voucher must be created and approved for the airfare and associated TMC, TAV Fees.

### Changing before SIGNED

If the wrong credit card type is defaulted (IBA vs CBA) BEFORE stamping the document signed, the Arranger can remove the Authorization fee (TMC \$4.60) and re-enter the airfare.

### Changing after SIGNED

Once the document is stamped SIGNED, the Arranger can change the TMC fee, but will NOT be able to change the credit card type for the Voucher Fee (TAV \$13.50). A phone call through the FATA to GovTrip must be made to change the TAV Fee.

*NOTE: If flights are edited, check the credit card type because it will default to the IBA on foreign flights.*

### TMC & TAV Fees on Trip Canceled

If the trip is canceled after the ticket has been issued on the CBA account, the TMC fee or the TAV fee cannot be added to another document to save time or money. Because of the CBA account charges, a voucher for the fees must be processed.

### Use Same Card Type

Airfare, TMC Fee (booking fee), and TAV Fee (voucher fee) must be charged to the same card type either IBA or CBA, and must be reimbursed directly to the appropriate credit card. Look at the preview screen, expenses. If the airfare and fees are not charged to the same card, the authorization will reject.

### CBA on All Foreign

Foreign travel is too expensive to charge to the traveler's personal GovCC-I account. Choose GOVCC-C after picking each flight, otherwise, it will default to the traveler's IBA account. You must pick CBA on EVERY FLIGHT. Be careful when making amendments to the flight information, it will default to the IBA again.

The only way to change the IBA to the CBA is to cancel the flights and rebook. Some of the countries require the flight numbers, so we can't request visas or country clearance until the itinerary is set. Provide the final itinerary to the FATA.

## **FFIS Payment Cycles**

FFIS processes payments 3 times per week, not nightly. Payments should be expected to the travel card in one week.

# **VirtuallyThere.com**

If an emailed itinerary is not received when flights are booked or when they are ticketed, Virtuallythere.com will have the information. See emailed itinerary for booked and ticketed in the Forms Section.

## **www.VirtuallyThere – On-line itineraries**

GovTrip itineraries interface with [www.virtuallythere.com](http://www.virtuallythere.com). The screen will display “retrieve an itinerary”. Put in the reservation code (the six character PNR number) and the passenger’s last name. On the next page “traveler verification”, you will be asked to verify identity by putting in the email address for the traveler. The email must match the one on the itinerary, which will be the email in the traveler’s profile

On the Home page, click on the e-ticket icon in the middle left of the page to find the ticketed date and final cost.

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# Tool Bars

## ITINERARY

- Trip Overview
  - Overall Starting Point Information
  - Overall Ending Point Information
  - Other Trip Information
    - Type Trip
    - Trip Description
    - Trip Duration
- Per Diem Locations
  - Add a TDY Location

## TRAVEL

- Air
- Lodging
- Rental Car
- Rail
- Other Transportation
  - Add Ticket Information

## EXPENSES

- Non-mileage
- Mileage
- Documentation/Receipts
  - FAX
  - Upload Scanned Documentation

## ACCOUNTING

- Accounting Codes

## ADDITIONAL OPTIONS

- PROFILE
  - My Profile
    - Mailing
    - Residence
    - Billing
    - Emergency Contact
  - My Preferences
    - Air Travel Preferences
    - Miles to Airport
    - Lodging Preferences (Don't add

*info here; if you do, when you are doing search in GovTrip and your preferences are not available, nothing will come up)*

## ADDITIONAL OPTIONS (continued)

- Rental Car Preferences (Don't add info here; if you do, when you are doing a search in GovTrip and your preferences are not available, nothing will come up)
- Passport Information

- My Additional Information
  - Duty Station
  - Payment Address
  - Travel Approver
  - Additional Information

- My Account Information
  - Accounting Information
  - EFT and Credit Card Accounts

## • PER DIEM ENTITLEMENTS

- Per diem rates
  - View/edit expense details
    - Cost options
    - Foreign Calculator
- Conference
- Meals
- Other Per Diem Entitlements
  - Leave
  - Actual Lodging

- PARTIAL PAYMENTS (This will not be used by USDA)

## • ADVANCES

## REVIEW AND SIGN

- Preview Trip
- Pre-Audit Trip
- Other Authorizations
  - Add Additional Authorizations for This

## Trip

- Digital Signature
  - Document Action
  - Pending Routing Actions
  - Document History
- Trip Compare
  - Available Authorizations

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# End of Fiscal Year

New authorizations and air reservations may be created before the new FY accounting is available by using previous FY accounting codes. Vouchers may be created and approved for current year FYXX expenses.

## Obligations

When creating new fiscal year travel in August and September, the current year accounting will be used, the travel will process airfare, go into reject, and will not obligate new fiscal year funds. However, tickets will be issued.

## Accounting Codes Available

New FY accounting codes will not be valid until after NFC uploads the codes some time in mid October. Once NFC adds the new accounting codes to GovTrip, we will be notified to amend the accounting in the authorization. The Arranger should put a note in the signature block saying, "Accounting amended to new FY". The authorization will move through the approval system again.

## Updates – that don't upload correctly

Updates are uploaded to GovTrip overnight and are checked the next day. If the upload didn't work correctly, GovTrip will re-upload. If you get an error after a recent upload, remove the codes, close the document, re-open it, and then re-enter the codes to get them to refresh.

## Non-Refundable Tickets

Because appropriations are not available for the new FY, non-refundable tickets should not be purchased with previous year accounting codes. All airfare must be fully refundable government fares.

## Vouchers approved by mid September

Because NFC will be changing over to the new FY, vouchers will need to be stamped Approved mid September to be processed for payment prior to NFC opening in the new FY.

## B2

If airfare must be ticketed prior to the new FY for travel in early October, the current FY accounting will be used and the Financial Technician will process a B2 to move the charges.