

State of Georgia Travel Policy Highlights – 2012

Effective Date:

- GA Travel & Expense System (GTE) Users: May 1, 2012
- Non-GTE System Users: No later than July 1, 2012
 - Non-GTE Systems Users are not required to convert to the GTE System by 7/1/12. However, if you are interested in adopting the system, please contact Steve Harrison at 404-657-3932

Special Note:

- Throughout the policy, words like “must” and “should” are used:
 - When the term “**must**” is used, no Agency or individual has the authority to deviate from the specific policy/procedure
 - The term “**should**” is used to convey that Agencies and individuals are expected to follow the policy/procedure as written and are required to justify any departures from such policy/procedure when the specifics of the situation indicate an alternate procedure is a reasonable departure from the recommended policy/procedure

General Provisions:

- All users on GA Travel & Expense System (GTE) are required to reserve airline, hotels, and car rentals thru the online booking system
- Written pre-trip authorization is no longer required except when lodging is required within a 50 mile radius. Individual agencies may require prior authorization for certain kinds of travel
- An expanded list of miscellaneous expenses are included in the policy
- It is highly recommended that Travel Advances should not be granted for less than \$500
- Travel Advances should not be granted for “meal expenses” only
- Continuous travel advances will be processed outside the system, for GA Travel & Expense System (GTE) users
- Sections regarding international travel and employees with disabilities are included in the policy

Airline Travel:

- In the event there is a charge for checking luggage, the State will reimburse for a maximum of one (1) piece of checked luggage
- If a refundable fare must be used, the difference in the cost of the flight should not exceed \$150
- Lower cost flights should be chosen within two hours before or after the preferred flight time when the alternative flight saves \$200.00 or more roundtrip
- Guidelines are included for securing lowest logical airfare, connecting flights, and utilizing alternative airports for additional saving opportunities for the State
- Guidelines are included regarding the use of private aircraft for State business



- Business class is reimbursable for international flights when the portion of the flight that is nonstop exceeds 10 hours in duration. Pre-trip approval for the additional expense is required. This does not include any time spent in between flights during a connection
- Federal regulations require that U.S. carriers be used for foreign travel on trips funded by federally sponsored programs, unless a U.S. Carrier is not available

Car Rental:

- Renting vehicles outside the State vendor program requires an approved waiver form (SPD-NI005 from DOAS)
- Personal use of rental vehicles is prohibited while on official State business
- The DOAS Car Rental Cost Comparison remains recommended but not required.

Meals:

- For overnight trips, traveler will receive 75% of allowable per diem on day of departure and return
- For non-overnight trips, travelers will receive 75% of the allowable per diem if travel is more than 50 miles from home, and are away for more than (12) hours
- Per diem allowances are calculated based on last location of the travel day. For non-overnight travel the calculation is based on the last business location. For overnight travel the calculation is based on the location of lodging for each night of travel
- State of Georgia has adopted GSA rates for out of state travel, including \$5 incidentals. The in-state per diem rates do not include incidental expenses
- Guidelines and definitions are included for Special Meals

Expense Reimbursement:

- GA Travel & Expense users and Non GA Travel & Expense users must not combine in state and out of state expenses on the same reimbursement form
- GA Travel & Expense users and Non GA Travel & Expense users should be careful to select the correct "trip type" when using the updated travel expense form or GTE System
- Employees should submit expense reports within 45 calendar days of completion of travel
- Employees must return any Travel Advance amount in excess of allowable substantiated expenses within 45 calendar days after the completion of the trip
- Travel expense reports may be selected for audit at any time and all required receipts must be retained by the traveler for three years after the travel date if not attached to the expense report
- Non-GTE Users reporting expenses on the Manual Expense Report Form must use the updated Manual Expense Form which will be available on the SAO Website as of 7/1/12

