



TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY HEALTH SCIENCES CENTER EL PASO

Operating Policy and Procedure

HSCEP OP: 79.05, **Business Travel Account (BTA) Requests and Travel Advances**

PURPOSE: The purpose of this Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center El Paso (TTUHSC El Paso) Operating Policy and Procedure (HSCEP OP) is to establish the guidelines for corporate travel credit cards and the advancement of funds which may be used to cover a portion of official travel expenses.

REVIEW: This HSCEP OP will be reviewed on December 1 of each odd-numbered year (ONY) by the director of procurement services, with recommendations for revisions submitted to the chief financial officer or designee by December 15.

POLICY/PROCEDURE:

I. Use of the Business Travel Account (BTA)

- A. A BTA request is designed to assist employees who do not qualify for a State travel credit card, were denied with the initial application for a State travel credit card and do not have a personal credit card available to them to purchase an airline ticket. This request is handled through the Travel System Office when submitting the travel application (see HSCEP OP 79.02).
- B. Travel arranged by a Travel Agency regardless of funding type must use the State of Texas contracted travel agency, National Travel Systems.
- C. An employee *does not* qualify for a BTA if the employee:
 - Is eligible for a state travel card but does not wish to apply for a card;
 - Has a state travel card but does not wish to use the card; or
 - Has had a state travel card that was cancelled for non-payment.
- D. Use of the BTA to purchase airline tickets may be requested for prospective employees and speakers if this would reduce the cost of the airfare paid by the institution.
- E. Cancelled BTA airline tickets must be expensed on a local funding source. Departments are responsible to ensure cancelled BTA airline tickets are either used for future TTUHSC El Paso business travel, refunded by the BTA travel agency, or reimbursed by the traveler.

II. Request for Travel Advances.

- A. TTUHSC El Paso may advance funds for travel expenses to an employee only if the expenses are incurred during travel that requires an overnight stay outside the employee's designated headquarters. A person who is not an employee of TTUHSC El Paso (i.e., students, prospective employees, speakers, participants) may not receive a travel advance.
- B. Advances must be realistic relative to actual expenses that will be incurred. TTUHSC El Paso will reimburse the difference between the advance and actual expenses of the trip. Advances will be denied if, after two trips, the employee is sending to the Travel

Services Office checks for overpayment of an advance instead of the employee receiving reimbursement from TTUHSC El Paso for the remaining expenses of the trip.

- C. An employee *does not* qualify for an advance if the employee:
- Is eligible for a state travel card but does not wish to apply for a card;
 - Has a state travel card but does not wish to use the card;
 - Has had a state travel card that was cancelled for non-payment or misuse;
 - Has an outstanding travel advance from a previous trip; Is on the State Comptroller's Texas Payee Information System (TPIS) hold list at the time of the advance. (NOTE: Reasons why an employee is on the TPIS hold list include being in default on a Texas Guarantee Student Loan, indebted to the state or a state agency, delinquent on state tax, not paying child support, or owing a reimbursement for unemployment taxes.)
- D. Travel advances will also be issued to employees who have used their state corporate travel card or any personal credit card to purchase airline tickets or hotel deposits paid in advance and received a billing statement from the credit card vendor prior to the actual travel date. Upon electronic submission of the travel application, a request for this advance must be included. Airfare cost may be advanced with a copy of the itinerary showing the cost of the airline ticket and method of payment. A copy of the credit card/debit card bank statement or a cancelled check must be submitted to the Travel Services Office, travelep@ttuhsc.edu if no other proof of payment is available. Retain your original airline ticket receipt for filing with your travel voucher.
- E. A travel voucher must be received in the Travel Services Office no later than fifteen working days after the completion of the trip if the employee received a travel advance. Anyone violating this time frame for more than two trips will be denied any requests for advances on future trips. Should extenuating circumstances arise, the Travel Services Office should be contacted immediately.
- F. If the reimbursement voucher is not sufficient to repay the advance, claimants should attach to the voucher a check or money order for the amount of the difference. The check must accompany the voucher at the time of submission to the Travel Services Office. The check should be sent directly to the Travel Services Office (MSC 51008) with the travel voucher number identified on the check.
- G. If the voucher exceeds the original advance amount, a check will be issued to the individual for the balance of the reimbursement.
- H. If a travel advance was issued on an expense incurred prior to the travel and the trip was cancelled, the employee is responsible for cancelling the reservation or flight. The department will be responsible for documenting and tracking how the travel credits will be used. Travel credits will need to be used for future business travel only.
- I. If the employee used the credit for personal reasons or if the employee is terminated before a credit is used, the department will be responsible for requesting reimbursement from the employee.

III. Registration Fees.

Registration fees that are required in advance must be paid directly to the vendor by using the Purchasing Card or the Direct Pay forms in TechBuy. A travel advance is not used for this type of payment. If a fee is paid at the conference, reimbursement may be claimed on the travel voucher when claiming all other expenses.

IV. Prepaid Hotel Deposits.

Advanced deposits required by hotels to hold a reservation for the traveler must be processed as a prepaid advance in the Travel System. The application must be submitted with the advance request and the pertinent information concerning the reservation must be sent to the Travel Services Office before the advance will be approved.