

INTER-OFFICE MEMORANDUM

Office of Accounts and Control

TO: Chief Financial Officers
State Departments and Agencies

DATE: September 25, 2002

FROM: Lawrence C. Franklin, Jr., State Controller

SUBJECT: ADJUSTMENTS TO TRAVEL POLICY

The contract for travel services with the Donovan Travel Agency expires on September 30, 2002. The Office of Accounts and Control has decided not to re-bid the travel contract due to tight budgetary conditions and the fact that numerous travelers have expressed concerns of securing lower prices for travel through the use of the Internet. This office has decided to return to the previous method of travelers arranging their own travel plans.

Travelers will be required, for a period of time, to use their personal credit card in order to secure travel arrangements. My office will ensure that repayment of these travel costs to the employee will occur in a timely manner so that travelers do not incur credit card late fees as a result of state travel. To alleviate the use of personal credit cards, the State has recently introduced the use of a "purchase card". This purchase card will be utilized by all individuals who are required to travel. This purchase card will be implemented over the next several months for each agency. The purchase card will be used for securing air transportation, hotel accommodations, and automobile rental (if necessary).

Reservations for travel (after September 30th.) must be made **without the traveler incurring a service charge** for their arrangements. Due to major changes in the airline industry, most, if not all, travel agencies now charge a fee for the services that they provide. Reservations for air travel, without a service charge can be accomplished by the use of the Internet. Travelers should search Internet sites, such as EXPEDIA.COM, TRAVELOCITY.COM, PRICELINE.COM, as well as the specific Internet site for a particular airline. The traveler should always be searching for the lowest possible fare.

Given the fact that a majority of state travel is for conference type activity, travelers can secure their hotel accommodations directly with the conference organizers. In cases where a conference is not the travel purpose, or the traveler requires the use of an automobile, he/she should also seek out the Internet for the lowest possible cost.

This change essentially amends Section 1 of the State Travel Policy. All other sections of the policy will remain intact except for those references to the "state designated travel agency".

Travel request and expense forms must be completed as previously required. Notification of approval of travel will remain the same.

Questions concerning these changes can be directed to Lynn Loveday at: e-mail: Lynn@gw.doa.state.ri.us or telephone: 222-2612. Please distribute this communication to all potential travelers.

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