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§ 301-70.910 Do the rules in this part apply to travel on Government aircraft by the President and Vice President or by individuals traveling in support of the President and Vice President?

Given the unique functions and needs of the presidency and the vice presidency, section 4 of Circular A-126, "Improving the Management and Use of Government Aircraft," Revised May 1992, makes clear that Circular A-126 does not apply to aircraft while in use by or in support of the President or Vice President. Since the principal purpose of the rules in this part is to implement Circular A-126, the rules in this part also do not apply to such travel. If any questions arise regarding travel related to the President or Vice President, contact the Office of the Counsel to the President or the Office of the Counsel to the Vice President, respectively.

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AUTHORITY: 5 U.S.C. 5707; 40 U.S.C. 121(c); Sec. 2, Pub. L. 105-264, 112 Stat. 2350 (5 U.S.C. 5701 note).

SOURCE: FTR Amdt. 70, 63 FR 15974, Apr. 1, 1998, unless otherwise noted.

Subpart A—General

§ 301-71.1 What is the purpose of an agency travel accounting system?

To:

(a) Pay authorized and allowable travel expenses of employees;

(b) Provide standard data necessary for the management of official travel; and

(c) Ensure adequate accounting for all travel and transportation expenses for official travel.

§ 301-71.2 What are the standard data elements and when must they be captured on a travel accounting system?

The data elements are listed in appendix C of this chapter and must be on any travel claim form authorized for use by your employees.

§ 301-71.3 May we use electronic signatures on travel documents?

Yes, if you meet the security and privacy requirements established by the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) for electronic data interchange.

Subpart B—Travel Authorization

§ 301-71.100 What is the purpose of the travel authorization process?

The purpose is to:

(a) Provide the employee information regarding what expenses you will pay;

(b) Provide travel service vendors with necessary documentation for the use of travel programs;

(c) Provide financial information necessary for budgetary planning; and

(d) Identify purpose of travel.

§ 301-71.101 What travel may we authorize?

You may authorize only travel which is necessary to accomplish the purposes of the Government effectively and economically. This must be communicated to any official who has the authority to authorize travel.

§ 301-71.102 May we issue a single authorization for a group of employees?

Yes. You may issue a single authorization for a group of employees when they are traveling together on a single trip. However, you must attach a list of all travelers to the authorization.

§ 301-71.103 What information must be included on all travel authorizations?

You must include:

(a) The name of the employee(s);

(b) The signature of the proper authorizing official;

(c) Purpose of travel;

(d) Any conditions of or limitations on that authorization;

(e) An estimate of the travel costs (for open authorizations it should include an estimate of the travel costs over the period covered); and

(f) A statement that the employee(s) is (are) authorized to travel.

§ 301-71.104 Who must sign a travel authorization?

Your agency head or an official to whom such authority has been delegated. This authority may be delegated to any person(s) who is aware of how the authorized travel will support the agency's mission, who is knowledgeable of the employee's travel plans and/or responsible for the travel funds paying for the travel involved.

§ 301-71.105 Must we issue a travel authorization in advance of travel?

Yes, except when advance authorization is not possible or practical and approval is in accordance with § 301-2.1,

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§ 301-2.5, or § 304-3.13. However, the following always require advance authorization:

- (a) Use of reduced fares for group or charter arrangements;
- (b) Payment of a reduced rate per diem;

(c) Acceptance of payment from a non-Federal source for travel expenses (see chapter 304 of this title); and

(d) Travel expenses related to attendance at a conference.

[FTR Case 2020-300-1, 87 FR 55706, Sept. 12, 2022]

§ 301-71.106 Who must sign a trip-by-trip authorization?

The appropriate official is determined as follows:

For	The appropriate official to sign a trip-by-trip authorization is
Use of cash to procure common carrier transportation.	An official at as low an administrative level as permitted by 41 CFR 101-203.2 to ensure adequate consideration and review of the circumstances.
Travel on a Government aircraft	Determined under 41 CFR 101-37.405.
Acceptance of payment from a non-Federal source for travel expenses.	An official at as low an administrative level as permitted by 41 CFR Chapter 304 to ensure adequate consideration and review of the circumstances surrounding the offer and acceptance of the payment.
Travel expenses related to attendance at a conference.	A senior agency official.
All other specific authorizations	An official who may issue the employee a general authorization.

[FTR Amdt. 70, 63 FR 15974, Apr. 1, 1998, as amended by FTR Amdt. 2007-05, 72 FR 61539, Oct. 31, 2007]

§ 301-71.107 When authorizing travel, what factors must the authorizing official consider?

The following factors must be considered:

- (a) The need for the travel;
- (b) The use of travel substitutes (e.g., mail, teleconferencing, etc.);
- (c) The most cost effective routing and means of accomplishing travel; and
- (d) The employee's travel plans, including plans to take leave in conjunction with travel.

§ 301-71.108 What internal policies and procedures must we establish for travel authorization?

You must establish the following:

- (a) The circumstances under which different types of travel authorizations will be used, consistent with the guidelines in this subpart;
- (b) Who will be authorized to sign travel authorizations; and
- (c) What format you will use for travel authorizations.

[FTR Amdt. 70, 63 FR 15974, Apr. 1, 1998; 63 FR 35538, June 30, 1998]

Subpart C—Travel Claims for Reimbursement

§ 301-71.200 Who must review and sign travel claims?

The travel authorizing/approving official or his/her designee (e.g., supervisor of the traveler) must review and sign travel claims to confirm the authorized travel.

[FTR Amdt. 70, 63 FR 15974, Apr. 1, 1998, as amended by FTR Amdt. 2007-05, 72 FR 61539, Oct. 31, 2007]

§ 301-71.201 What are the reviewing official's responsibilities?

The reviewing official must have full knowledge of the employee's activities. He/she must ensure:

- (a) The claim is properly prepared in accordance with the pertinent regulations and agency procedures;
- (b) A copy of authorization for travel is provided;
- (c) The types of expenses claimed are authorized and allowable expenses;
- (d) The amounts claimed are accurate; and
- (e) The required receipts, statements, justifications, etc. are attached to the travel claim, or once the agency fully

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deploys ETS and implements electronic scanning, the electronic travel claim includes scanned electronic images of such documents.

[FTR Amdt. 70, 63 FR 15974, Apr. 1, 1998, as amended by FTR Amdt. 2006-04, 71 FR 49375, Aug. 23, 2006]

§ 301-71.202 May we pay a claim when an employee does not include a copy of the corresponding authorization?

Yes, as long as the travel claim was signed by the approving/authorizing official, except for the following, which require advance authorization:

- (a) Use of reduced fares for group or charter arrangements;
- (b) Payment of a reduced rate of per diem for subsistence expenses;
- (c) Acceptance of payment from a non-Federal source for travel expenses; and
- (d) Travel expenses related to attendance at a conference.

§ 301-71.203 Who is responsible for the validity of the travel claim?

The certifying officer assumes ultimate responsibility under 31 U.S.C. 3528 for the validity of the claim; however:

- (a) The traveler must ensure all travel expenses are prudent and necessary and submit the expenses in the form of a proper claim;
- (b) The authorizing/approving official shall review the completed claim to ensure that the claim is properly prepared in accordance with regulations and agency procedures prior to authorizing it for payment.

NOTE TO § 301-71.203: You should consider limiting the levels of approval to the lowest level of management.

§ 301-71.204 Within how many calendar days after the submission of a proper travel claim must we reimburse the employee's allowable expenses?

You must reimburse the employee within 30 calendar days after the employee submits a proper travel claim to the agency's designated approving office. You must use a satisfactory recordkeeping system to track submission of travel claims. For example, travel claims submitted by mail, in accordance with agency policy, could be an-

notated with the time and date of receipt by the agency. You could consider travel claims electronically submitted to the designated approving office as submitted on the date indicated on an e-mail log, or on the next business day if submitted after normal working hours. However, claims for the following relocation allowances are exempt from this provision:

- (a) Transportation and storage of household goods and professional books, papers and equipment;
- (b) Transportation of mobile home;
- (c) Transportation of a privately owned vehicle;
- (d) Temporary quarters subsistence expense, when not paid as lump sum;
- (e) Residence transaction expenses;
- (f) Relocation income tax allowance;
- (g) Use of a relocation services company;
- (h) Home marketing incentive payments; and
- (i) Allowance for property management services.

[FTR Amdt. 92, 65 FR 21366, Apr. 21, 2000]

§ 301-71.205 Under what circumstances may we disallow a claim for an expense?

If the employee:

- (a) Does not properly itemize his/her expenses;
- (b) Does not provide required receipts or other documentation to support the claim; or
- (c) Claims an expense which is not authorized.

§ 301-71.206 What must we do if we disallow a travel claim?

You must:

- (a) Pay the employee the amount of the travel claim which is not in dispute;
- (b) Notify the employee that the claim was disallowed with a detailed explanation of why; and
- (c) Tell the employee how to appeal the disallowance if he/she desires an appeal, and your process and schedule for deciding the appeal.

§ 301-71.207 What internal policies and procedures must we establish for travel reimbursement?

You must establish policies and procedures governing:

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(a) Who are the proper officials to review, approve, and certify travel claims (including travel claims requiring special authorization);

(b) How an employee should submit a travel claim (including whether to use a standard form or an agency form and whether the form should be written or electronic);

(c) When you will exempt employees from the requirement for a receipt;

(d) Timeframes for employee to submit a claim (see §301-52.7);

(e) Timeframe for agency to pay a claim (see §301-71.204);

(f) Process for disallowing a claim; and

(g) Process for resolving a disallowed claim.

§301-71.208 Within how many calendar days after submission of a proper travel claim must we notify the employee of any errors in the claim?

You must notify the employee as soon as practicable after the employee's submission of the travel claim of any error that would prevent payment within 30 calendar days after submission and provide the reason(s) why the claim is not proper. However, not later than May 1, 2002, you must achieve a maximum time period of seven working days for notifying an employee that his/her travel claim is not proper.

[FTR Amdt. 92, 65 FR 21366, Apr. 21, 2000]

§301-71.209 Must we pay a late payment fee if we fail to reimburse the employee within 30 calendar days after receipt of a proper travel claim?

Yes, a late payment fee, in addition to the amount due the employee, must be paid for any proper travel claim not reimbursed within 30 calendar days of submission to the approving official.

[FTR Amdt. 92, 65 FR 3057, Jan. 19, 2000]

§301-71.210 How do we calculate late payment fees?

Late payment fees are calculated either by:

(a) Using the prevailing Prompt Payment Act Interest Rate beginning on the 31st day after submission of a proper travel claim and ending on the date on which payment is made; or

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(b) A flat fee, of not less than the prompt payment amount, based on an agencywide average of travel claim payments; and

(c) In addition to the fee required by paragraphs (a) and (b) of this section, you must also pay an amount equivalent to any late payment charge that the card contractor would have been able to charge had the employee not paid the bill. Payment of this additional fee will be based upon the effective date that a late payment charge would be allowed under the agreement between the employee and the card contractor.

[FTR Amdt. 92, 65 FR 21366, Apr. 21, 2000]

§301-71.211 Is there a minimum amount the late payment fee must exceed before we will pay it?

Yes, a late payment fee will only be paid when the computed late payment fee is \$1.00 or greater.

[FTR Amdt. 90, 65 FR 3058, Jan. 19, 2000]

§301-71.212 Should we report late payment fees as wages on a Form W-2?

No, the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) has determined that the late payment fee is in the nature of interest (compensation for the use of money).

[FTR Amdt. 90, 65 FR 3058, Jan. 19, 2000]

§301-71.213 Is the additional fee, which is the equivalent to any late payment charge that the card contractor would have been able to charge had the employee not paid the bill, considered income?

Yes, you must report this late payment fee as additional wages on Form W-2.

[FTR Amdt. 90, 65 FR 3058, Jan. 19, 2000]

§301-71.214 Does mandatory use of the Government contractor-issued travel charge card change the employee's obligation to pay his/her travel card bill by the due date?

No, mandatory use of the Government contractor-issued travel charge card does not relieve the employee of his/her obligation to honor his/her cardholder payment agreement.

[FTR Amdt. 90, 65 FR 3058, Jan. 19, 2000]

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Subpart D—Accounting for Travel Advances

§ 301-71.300 What is the policy governing the use of travel advances?

You should minimize the use of cash travel advances. However, you should not require an employee to pay travel expenses using personal funds unless the employee has elected not to use alternative resources provided by the Government, such as a Government contractor-issued charge card.

§ 301-71.301 In situations where a lodging facility requires the payment of a deposit, may we reimburse an employee for an advance room deposit prior to the beginning of scheduled official travel?

Yes, you may reimburse an employee an advance room deposit, when such a deposit is required by the lodging facility to secure a room reservation, prior to the beginning of an employee's scheduled official travel. However, if the employee is reimbursed the advance room deposit, but fails to perform the scheduled official travel for reasons not acceptable to the agency, resulting in the forfeit of the deposit, the employee is indebted to the Government and must repay that amount in a timely manner as prescribed by you.

[FTR Amdt. 108, 67 FR 57967, Sept. 13, 2002]

§ 301-71.302 For how long may we issue a travel advance?

You may issue a travel advance for a reasonable period not to exceed 45 days.

[FTR Amdt. 70, 63 FR 15974, Apr. 1, 1998. Redesignated by FTR Amdt. 108, 67 FR 57967, Sept. 13, 2002]

§ 301-71.303 What data must we capture in our travel advance accounting system?

You must capture the following data:

- (a) The name and social security number of each employee who has an advance;

- (b) The amount of the advance;

- (c) The date of issuance; and

- (d) The date of reconciliation for unused portions of travel advances.

[FTR Amdt. 70, 63 FR 15974, Apr. 1, 1998; 63 FR 35538, June 30, 1998. Redesignated by FTR Amdt. 108, 67 FR 57967, Sept. 13, 2002]

§ 301-71.304 Are we responsible for ensuring the collection of outstanding travel advances?

Yes.

[FTR Amdt. 70, 63 FR 15974, Apr. 1, 1998. Redesignated by FTR Amdt. 108, 67 FR 57967, Sept. 13, 2002]

§ 301-71.305 When must an employee account for a travel advance?

An employee must account for an outstanding travel advance each time a travel claim is filed. If the employee receives a travel advance but determines that the related travel will not be performed, then the employee must inform you that the travel will not be performed and repay the advance at that time.

[FTR Amdt. 70, 63 FR 15974, Apr. 1, 1998. Redesignated by FTR Amdt. 108, 67 FR 57967, Sept. 13, 2002]

§ 301-71.306 Are there exceptions to collecting an advance at the time the employee files a travel claim?

Yes, when the employee is in a continuous travel status and

- (a) You review each outstanding travel advance on a periodic basis (the period will be for a reasonable time of 45 days or less); and

- (b) You determine the amount, if any, of the outstanding balance exceeds the amount of estimated travel expenses for the authorized period and collect the excess amount from the employee.

[FTR Amdt. 70, 63 FR 15974, Apr. 1, 1998. Redesignated by FTR Amdt. 108, 67 FR 57967, Sept. 13, 2002]

§ 301-71.307 How do we collect the amount of a travel advance in excess of the amount of travel expenses substantiated by the employee?

When the outstanding advance exceeds what you owe the employee, then the employee must submit cash or a check for the difference in accordance

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with your policy. Your failure to collect the amount in excess of substantiated expenses will cause a violation of the accountable plan rules contained in the Internal Revenue Code (title 26 of the United States Code).

[FTR Amdt. 70, 63 FR 15974, Apr. 1, 1998. Redesignated by FTR Amdt. 108, 67 FR 57967, Sept. 13, 2002]

§ 301-71.308 What should we do if the employee does not pay back a travel advance when the travel claim is filed?

You should take alternative steps to collect the debt including:

- (a) Offset against the employee's salary, a retirement credit, or other amount owed the employee;
- (b) Deduction from an amount the Government owes the employee; or
- (c) Any other legal method of recovery.

[FTR Amdt. 70, 63 FR 15974, Apr. 1, 1998. Redesignated by FTR Amdt. 108, 67 FR 57967, Sept. 13, 2002]

§ 301-71.309 What internal policies and procedures must we establish governing travel advances?

Accountability for cash advances for travel, recovery, and reimbursement shall be in accordance with procedures prescribed by the Government Accountability Office (see Government Accountability Office Policy and Procedures Manual for Guidance of Federal Agencies, Title 7, Fiscal Procedures).

[FTR Amdt. 70, 63 FR 15974, Apr. 1, 1998. Redesignated by FTR Amdt. 108, 67 FR 57967, Sept. 13, 2002, as amended by FTR Amdt. 2007-05, 72 FR 61539, Oct. 31, 2007]

PART 301-72—AGENCY RESPONSIBILITIES RELATED TO COMMON CARRIER TRANSPORTATION

Subpart A—Procurement of Common Carrier Transportation

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301-72.1 Why is common carrier presumed to be the most advantageous method of transportation?

301-72.2 May we utilize methods of transportation other than common carrier (e.g., POVs, chartered vehicles, etc.)?

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301-72.3 What method of payment must we authorize for common carrier transportation?

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301-72.100 What must my travel accounting system do in relation to common carrier transportation?

301-72.101 What information should we provide an employee before authorizing the use of common carrier transportation?

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301-72.200 Under what conditions may we authorize cash payments for procuring common carrier transportation services?

301-72.201 What must we do if an employee uses cash in excess of the \$100 limit to purchase common carrier transportation?

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301-72.204 What must we do to minimize the need for a traveler to use cash to procure common carrier transportation services?

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301-72.300 What procedures must we establish to collect unused, partially used, and exchanged tickets?

301-72.301 How do we process unused, partially used, and exchanged tickets?

AUTHORITY: 5 U.S.C. 5707; 31 U.S.C. 3726; 40 U.S.C. 121(c).

SOURCE: FTR Amdt. 70, 63 FR 15976, Apr. 1, 1998, unless otherwise noted.

Subpart A—Procurement of Common Carrier Transportation

§ 301-72.1 Why is common carrier presumed to be the most advantageous method of transportation?

Travel by common carrier is presumed to be the most advantageous method of transportation because it generally results in the most efficient, least costly, most expeditious means of transportation and the most efficient use of energy resources.