



DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
Veterans Health Administration
Washington DC 20420

IL 17-2005-001

In Reply Refer To: 173

February 14, 2005

OFFICE OF FINANCE INFORMATION LETTER

USE OF THE GOVERNMENT TRAVEL CARD

1. This Information Letter is to remind all Veterans Health Administration (VHA) employees of VA Directive and Handbook 0631.1, Employee Travel Management Travel Card Policy, on the appropriate and legal use of the government travel card which includes the following:

a. Any employee who travels two times per year or more on official Government business is required to use the government travel credit card to pay for official travel expenses and to obtain travel advances. **NOTE:** *Local facility procedures may require that airfare be billed to the Facility Centrally Billed account instead of the traveler's government travel credit card.*

b. The Government Travel Card must be used to pay for travel expenses while on temporary duty (TDY) travel. These expenses include, but are not limited to:

- (1) Transportation (airfare, bus, rail, car rental);
- (2) Meals, when practical;
- (3) Lodging;
- (4) Fuel, if driving a privately owned vehicle (POV) or rental car; and
- (5) Travel Advances.

c. Travel advances are to be obtained using the card through an automated teller machine (ATM) no more than 3 days prior to travel departure. The withdrawal limit varies according to the ATM, but cannot exceed \$400 per week. **NOTE:** *All ATM fees need to be claimed on the travel reimbursement voucher.*

d. The Government Travel Card cannot be used for:

- (1) Personal expenditures;
- (2) Travel expenses for other government employees; or
- (3) Cash advances, if not on travel or scheduled for travel within 3 days.

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e. During a permanent change of station (PCS) move, the Government Travel Card must be used to pay for all official en-route travel expenses, including those for members of the immediate family accompanying the traveler. These include:

(1) Transportation (airfare, bus, rail, car rental) including tickets purchased for members of the immediate family accompanying the traveler to the new station;

(2) Lodging;

(3) Meals, when practical;

(4) Fuel, if driving POV or rental car; and

(5) Travel Advances.

f. Both the losing and gaining facility travel card coordinators need to be notified of the PCS so the card account can be transferred with minimum impact.

g. Interim travel claims must be processed and the travel card account paid each month. If the account is not kept current, the card provider will suspend or cancel the card and the card will not be usable by the PCS traveler.

g. The travel card may be suspended or cancelled due to delinquent payments. Misuse of the Government Travel Card or failure to repay charges made on the Government Travel Card may result in disciplinary actions.

2. Questions about this Information Letter may be directed to the VHA Accounting Policy Mailbox in Outlook, or to 202-273-5539.

Jimmy A. Norris
VHA Chief Financial Officer

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