



State of Arizona Accounting Manual

Topic 50 Travel
Section 07 Agency-level
Travel Responsibilities

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INTRODUCTION

In order for State travel to be conducted as fairly, efficiently and economically as possible, it is important for all those involved in traveling, travel planning, travel administration and travel claim processing to understand their respective roles as they related to travel. What follows is a list of those responsibilities; this list is non-exhaustive. In the event of a conflict between this list and the instructions, directions or policies enumerated in other applicable sections of SAAM, those other sections prevail.

SAAM 5008, *Travel Matters Requiring the Approval of the State Comptroller*, includes additional information of value pertaining to travel-related approvals.

POLICIES

1. The responsibilities of an agency head and those to whom such authority is delegated include, but are not limited to:
 - 1.1. Approving out-of-state travel.
 - 1.2. Authorization to use chartered or rental aircraft.
 - 1.3. Any out-of-state travel involving three (3) or more individuals from the same agency or can reasonably be expected to equal five thousand dollars (\$5,000) in total travel costs to a single agency requires particular scrutiny of the agency head, his deputy or the agency CFO; it also requires the collection and retention of documentation as to the purpose of the trip. Such documentation must include a complete written explanation of the purpose, need and cost-benefit of the trip as well as a description of the alternatives considered, but dismissed, that may have resulted in a savings for the State. This documentation must also contain the names of the traveler(s), travel date(s), and travel destination(s).
2. Agency management's responsibilities include, but are not limited to:
 - 2.1. Ensuring:
 - 2.1.1. All authorized travel is in the best interest of the State.
 - 2.1.2. All travel expenses are reasonable and necessary.
 - 2.1.3. All required receipts are collected, reviewed, verified and retained.

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- 2.1.4. All expenses paid or reimbursed comply with SAAM.
- 2.1.5. The most economical, as may be practical under the circumstances, is used.
- 2.1.6. The duty post or posts of each employee are designated in the best interest of the State.
- 2.1.7. Employees obtain appropriate approvals or exceptions prior to traveling.
- 2.1.8. Adequate funds and spending authority are available for travel.
- 2.1.9. All travel card charges are reconciled correctly and any overpayments or improper charges are recovered.
- 2.1.10. All travelers are familiar with the travel policies contained in SAAM before traveling for the State.
- 2.1.11. All supervisors are familiar with the travel policies contained in SAAM before authorizing an employee's travel.
- 2.1.12. All travel approvers are familiar with the travel policies contained in SAAM.
- 2.1.13. Travelers submit travel claims on a timely basis; and that untimely filed travel claims are handled as described in SAAM 5056.
- 2.2. Establishing and disseminating:
 - 2.2.1. Agency-specific policies related to travel procedures when employees travel for the State (this may be accomplished by incorporating by reference the relevant sections of SAAM).
 - 2.2.2. Procedures to ensure accountability for cash advances.
 - 2.2.3. Procedures to ensure appropriate use and control of the Employee Travel Card and the Central Travel Account.
 - 2.2.4. Policies and procedures for the review and approval of employee travel claims in a complete and timely manner. (See SAAM 5056.)
- 2.3. Providing:
 - 2.3.1. Guidance and training to agency employees, supervisors, travel approvers, and travel payers in the proper procedures for filing travel claims, paying travel expenses, and making travel reimbursements.
- 3. A supervisor's responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

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- 3.1. Knowing:
 - 3.1.1. State travel policy as set forth in SAAM.
 - 3.1.2. Agency travel policies and procedures as they relate to travel.
 - 3.1.3. Employees' duty stations, that those duty stations have been designated to favor the interests of the State, and the effect of those duty stations on travel reimbursements and other travel-related costs.
 - 3.1.4. The limits of approval and reimbursements pertaining to travel as contained in State and agency policies.
 - 3.1.5. When and how exceptions must be requested (See SAAM 0015).
- 3.2. Authorizing travel only when necessary and within delegated authority.
- 3.3. Reviewing travelers' itineraries in advance to ensure the most economical method of travel under the circumstances is used.
- 3.4. Verifying that travel claims are:
 - 3.4.1. Within allowable rates and all required documentation is attached.
 - 3.4.2. As applicable, actual, reasonable and necessary.
- 3.5. Reviewing and approving or rejecting travel claims in a timely manner.
- 3.6. Ensuring that employees file travel claims in a timely manner.
- 3.7. Working with employees to plan travel sufficiently in advance to secure advantageous travel and lodging rates.
4. A travel claim approver's responsibilities include, but are not limited to:
 - 4.1. Knowing:
 - 4.1.1. State travel policy as set forth in SAAM.
 - 4.1.2. What constitutes an exception to travel policy, as well as when and how to request an exception to policy, if warranted. (See SAAM 0015.)
 - 4.1.3. Agency travel policies and procedures as they relate to travel.
 - 4.2. Verifying that travel claims are:

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- 4.2.1. Within allowable rates and all required documentation is attached.
- 4.2.2. As applicable, actual, reasonable and necessary.
- 4.3. Reviewing and approving or rejecting travel claims in a timely manner.
- 4.4. Ensuring that employees file travel claims in a timely manner.
5. A traveler's responsibilities include, but are not limited to:
 - 5.1. Knowing:
 - 5.1.1. State travel policy as set forth in SAAM.
 - 5.1.2. What constitutes an exception to travel policy, as well as when and how to request an exception to policy, if warranted. (See SAAM 0015.)
 - 5.1.3. Agency travel policies and procedures as they relate to travel.
 - 5.1.4. His duty post and the effect it has on his eligibility for travel reimbursement.
 - 5.2. Making sure that travel claims are:
 - 5.2.1. Within allowable rates and all required documentation is attached.
 - 5.2.2. As applicable, actual, reasonable and necessary.
 - 5.3. Claiming only those expenses and reimbursements to which he may be entitled in accordance with SAAM and his agency's travel policies.
 - 5.4. Filing travel claims in a timely manner.
 - 5.5. Obtaining, in advance, necessary approvals for travel, including the method of travel and lodging.
 - 5.6. Securing the most economical method of travel, including lodging, applicable under the circumstances.
 - 5.7. Participating in any travel classes that may be required by his agency.
 - 5.8. Working with his supervisor and management to plan travel sufficiently in advance to secure advantageous travel and lodging rates.
6. With respect to conference and non-conference lodging rates that exceed the applicable State rate:

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- 6.1. An agency head or deputy agency head may delegate to the agency chief financial officer the authority to directly request a policy exception from the State Comptroller.
 - 6.2. Such requests must be made by email to gaotravel@azdoa.gov.
 - 6.2.1. Using fully executed Forms GAO-515, accompanied by any necessary supporting materials, and emailed as attachments to gaotravel@azdoa.gov.
 - 6.3. A copy of these requests, if not made by the agency head or his deputy, must be emailed to the agency head.
 7. All delegations of authority of any type must be in writing and be retained for a period consistent with that prescribed by LAPR for accounting records.
 8. Agency travelers must be sufficiently familiarized with traveling for the State before they actually travel for the State.
 - 8.1. An agency traveler should know how to find SAAM online and how to identify those aspects of Travel Policy that might affect him. For example, if a traveler is going to be driving an automobile, he should become familiar with SAAM 5015, *Traveling by Individually Operated Motor Vehicle*. If a traveler is going to require hotel lodging while traveling for the State, he should be familiar with SAAM 5030, *Hotels, Meals and Lodging*.
 - 8.2. The GAO may from time-to-time publish other travel training materials, such as CBTs and QRGs, that merit review not only by travelers, but by supervisors, managers and others involved at any level with employee travel as well.
 9. Agency management must comply with all travel-related policies and procedures that may be issued by any competent State authority. In addition to those produced by the General Accounting Office, these may include policies published by statewide Risk Management, ADOA/ADOT Fleet Operations, etc.