

**Bureau of Ocean Energy Management
Interim Policy Document**

Effective Date: June 14, 2019

IPD No. 2019-01

Series: Administrative

Title: Temporary Duty Travel

Originating Office: Office of Administration

1. **Purpose.** This Interim Policy Document (IPD) establishes Bureau policy for all temporary duty travel performed by Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) employees and other Federal employees and invitational travelers performing travel on behalf of BOEM.
2. **Objective.** BOEM will maintain an efficient, effective, and accountable travel program to provide adequate guidance to ensure that travel is performed in accordance with Federal, Departmental, and Bureau policies. This document supplements the Federal Travel Regulation (FTR) and the Department of the Interior's (DOI, Department) Temporary Duty Travel Policy Manual by addressing travel-related policy decisions that must be determined at the Bureau level either because (a) they were mandated by the Federal Travel Regulation (FTR) and were not addressed in DOI policy, (b) they are directly mandated by the Department of the Interior's (DOI, Department) Temporary Duty Travel (TDY) Policy, or (c) they are related to a bureau-specific practice or management principle.
3. **Authorities.**
 - A. Executive Order 13589, *Promoting Efficient Spending*
 - B. The Departmental Manual (205 DM 15) assigns the responsibilities for managing travel and transportation within the Department of the Interior.
 - C. The Departmental Manual (219 DM 2) delegates the authority to manage travel and transportation to the Director of BOEM.
 - D. 41 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Chapters 300, 301, 303, and 304, *The Federal Travel Regulation*
 - E. Department of the Interior Temporary Duty Travel Policy Manual
 - F. Department of the Interior 347 DM – FTR Implementing Instructions
 - G. Decisions by the Government Accountability Office Comptroller General (Comp. Gen.), the General Services Administration Board of Contract Appeals (GSBCA), and the Civilian Board of Contract Appeals (CBCA)
 - H. BOEM Manual (BOEMM 218.1.5), *BOEM Administrative Delegations - Levels of Authority*,

assigns the appropriate levels of authority for approving travel – related items.

4. Reference.

The Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement (BSEE) Administrative Services Intra-agency Reimbursable Support Agreement with the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (Agreement).

5. Definitions.

- A. Constructive cost is the sum of transportation, per diem, and miscellaneous expenses the employee would reasonably have incurred for round-trip travel between their official duty station and the scheduled TDY location.
- B. Residence is the place from which an employee commutes daily to their official duty station.
- C. Return travel is a pre-authorized round-trip that an employee completes between the temporary duty location and residence or official duty station when performing extended temporary duty.

6. Policy.

The Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) policy is to:

- A. Comply with the Federal Travel Regulation and the Department's Temporary Duty Travel Policy Manual.
- B. In accordance with the Agreement, coordinate with the BSEE Office of Administration on BSEE's responsibility for the following:
 - (1) Establish and communicate to employees an internal process for reconsideration of a disallowed claim. If an employee disagrees with the outcome of the reconsideration, the BSEE Finance Division will provide the employee the necessary information to request a review of the claim by the Civilian Board of Contract Appeals (CBCA).
 - (2) Maintain a systematic approach for an online review and approval of travel-related charge card transactions and will notify program managers, supervisors, and the Human Resources Division of suspicious activity, i.e., fraud, misuse, or abuse.
- C. Require that the following general Bureau travel policies are enforced:
 - (1) Approving officials for travel authorizations and vouchers must be an employee who serves in a supervisory position, understands how the travel will contribute to the mission, knows the employee's travel plans, and is responsible for the funds that will pay for the travel costs, usually traveler's supervisor.
 - (2) A traveler enters temporary duty status upon departing from: (a) the residence from which they commute daily to their official duty station, (b) their official duty station, or (c) an alternate location authorized as officially necessary.
 - (3) A traveler cannot be reimbursed in instances where a law or regulation specifically prohibits a payment; erroneous advice by a government official cannot negate that

prohibition.

- (4) A traveler's official duty station for travel purposes is the duty station depicted on their Notification of Personnel Action (SF-50) at the time the travel was performed.
- (5) An employee's lack of knowledge of the applicable regulations will not justify reimbursement for expenses that are not authorized by statute, regulation, or per the Department or BOEM policies.
- (6) Offices can determine whether or not to have a level of review (Reviewer role) between the traveler and the approving official. If an office decides not to have a Reviewer, the approving official will assume the Reviewer's responsibilities.

D. Reduce fatigue-related driving by adhering to the following:

- (1) All employees will take appropriate steps to reduce fatigue related driving and will consider factors such as physical condition, weather, length of trip, and road conditions to determine reasonable travel times within this policy's limits.
- (2) No employee will exceed a total of 10 hours of driving time behind the wheel while on official travel in a duty day.
- (3) Employees embarking on travel after working a partial shift or attending training, are limited to a maximum total work/driving period of 12 hours.
- (4) Employees traveling by common carrier (e.g., air, rail, bus) may only drive the remaining time period up to the 12-hour work/driving limit once they reach their destination. This 12-hour limit may be exceeded for the employee to drive to local area accommodations (close proximity to the airport), or if returning from TDY, to their residence.
- (5) Vehicles with multiple drivers may drive up to a combined total of 12 hours with no person exceeding 10 hours behind the wheel.
- (6) Exceptions to the timeframes outlined in this policy may be made in rare circumstances in order to accomplish immediate and critical operational objectives and/or address special needs such as emergency incidents.

E. Require that pre-approved expenses for travelers with a disability or special need are determined in accordance with the Department's Civil Rights Directive No. 2014-02, Personnel Bulletin No. 14-01. A statement attesting to this must be included on the travel authorization. Except in emergency travel situations, any expense claimed as a reasonable accommodation that was not pre-approved will be disallowed.

F. Require the following general travel authorization policies:

- (1) Travel authorizations must contain any conditions of or limitations on the travel being authorized.
- (2) Except for immaterial or unexpected miscellaneous expenses (e.g., transportation tips, cash advance fees, etc.), travel authorizations must contain an itemized estimate of the travel costs expected to be incurred that are necessary to accomplish the mission effectively and economically.
- (3) Unlimited Open Blanket travel authorizations (TAs) will only be authorized under rare circumstances, which will be determined and approved by the Director. This authority will be documented in the Bureau's Delegations of Authority and cannot be redelegated.
- (4) Limited Open Blanket TAs will only be authorized by supervisors in rare and unique situations; the Bureau's Delegations of Authority will document this authority.

G. Require that travel authorizations are amended:

- (1) When the actual day of departure or return exceeds the date of departure or return on the original authorized travel authorization by more than five (5) days.
- (2) When the itinerary needs to be changed to change the location of the temporary duty (TDY) assignment or to add an alternate TDY site.
- (3) To correct erroneous information or clerical errors that do not affect reimbursement retroactively.

H. Require that approval for actual expenses are made in accordance with BOEM's Delegations of Authority and only under the following situations:

- (1) The approving official can approve actual expense up to 150% of the locality per diem rate.
- (2) The Deputy Director (with concurrence of Associate Director for Administration) can approve amounts greater than 150% and less than or equal to 300% of the locality per diem rate.
- (3) The approving official, upon receiving substantive supporting documentation, can approve actual expense reimbursement after the traveler had completed the travel in the following circumstances when:
 - The traveler is performing emergency travel,
 - The traveler is performing return travel due to a Presidential declaration of a natural or human disaster at the TDY location,
 - The traveler arrived at the lodging facility, which was reserved using the Electronic Travel System (ETS) or the Travel Management Center (Duluth or El Sol), only to find the room unsanitary or the surrounding area dangerous,
 - The traveler booked their lodging prior to travel using the current and allowable General Services Administration (GSA) per diem rate, but GSA changed the lodging rate before the traveler performed the travel, which resulted in a higher actual lodging cost than originally approved,
 - The traveler booked their lodging prior to their foreign travel using the current and allowable Department of State per diem rate, but the rate changed before the traveler performed the travel, which resulted in a higher actual lodging cost than originally approved, or
 - The increase in the lodging expense resulted from currency conversion amounts and lodging taxes on foreign TDY travel.

I. Ensure that the traveler's deviations from the normally-traveled route adhere to the following:

- (1) Approving officials can authorize deviations from the normally-traveled route for unofficial reasons; however, the Government cannot incur the added cost associated with the revised route.
- (2) The approving official must direct the traveler that deviating from the normally-traveled route is considered personal travel in conjunction with official travel and the traveler must apply any and all rules governing this type of travel.

J. Require that the travel authorization document the method(s) of transportation being

authorized as the most advantageous to the Government in accordance with FTR and DOI TDY policy. If a GOV is authorized, the driver and passengers must be identified on the authorization.

K. Require travelers attending a meeting, conference, or training to upload the itinerary or agenda for that event as an attachment to their travel authorization.

L. Authorize travelers to claim laundry and dry cleaning expenses when assigned on a temporary duty (TDY) that requires five consecutive nights of lodging in the Continental U.S. Travelers cannot claim laundry or dry cleaning expenses on the last day of TDY travel. If a traveler is authorized excess baggage (other than excess Government equipment) and checks a second bag for TDY travel, laundry or dry cleaning expenses may not be claimed unless the TDY travel includes destinations to multiple TDY locations during one trip. Travelers who are directed to perform emergency TDY travel (less than 24-hour notice) are exempt from this rule and may claim laundry and dry cleaning without requiring the minimum consecutive nights of lodging.

M. Except as provided in Section E require travelers that obtain a premium economy seat within the coach-class cabin for a fee, to do so at the traveler's personal expense.

N. Authorizes approving officials to authorize and approve:

- (1) Global Positioning Satellite (GPS) technology on the travel authorization when renting a vehicle in a foreign country or when official travel involves access to extremely remote locations.
- (2) Reimbursement for the cost of forfeited hotel advanced deposit reservations because of unforeseen circumstances, e.g., emergency, severe weather, illness, safety etc., when the reservations were made in accordance with established policy will be made. Employees must have exercised reasonable prudence in cancelling the reservations and notified their immediate supervisor as soon as possible.
- (3) An employee's claim for full M&IE when a meal was provided by the Government if the employee was required to conduct official business offsite during the scheduled meal time.¹
- (4) An employee's claim for official telephone calls made while on temporary duty that were made using the traveler's personal cell phone or the telephone at the lodging establishment.²

O. Require travelers to attach receipts for all mandated Federal Travel Regulation and DOI travel-related expenses to the travel voucher. Additionally, receipts for expenses less than or equal to \$75 that were purchased with the Government-issued travel card will not have to be attached to the travel voucher. Travelers are required to attach the receipt to their travel voucher for any expense over \$10.00 that was paid for with cash or a personal credit card.

P. Limit reimbursement for parking at the airport to the rate for non-hourly, open-surface parking (usually labeled as Long Term Parking at most airports) unless the traveler can

¹ The official business cannot be an informal meeting or for networking purposes.

² Receipts must be attached to the travel voucher.

demonstrate that using the claimed parking would have resulted in some economic or logistical benefit to the agency.

- Q. Require travelers to adhere to the following when submitting cost comparisons³:
- (1) It is the traveler's responsibility to substantiate by uploading screen shots, e-mails, etc., the costs claimed when preparing a constructive cost comparison.
 - (2) If actual costs cannot be established prior to travel, estimates from the following sources will be accepted when creating constructive cost comparisons:
 - Mileage guides or odometer readings for mileage;
 - ETS for lodging and rental cars;
 - GSA per diem table for meals;
 - GasBuddy for Fuel;
 - TMC for airfare (Government and personal portions); and
 - Toll Guru for tolls.
 - (3) If the traveler fails to obtain estimated costs for airfare to be used in constructive cost comparisons; after-the-fact calculations will be determined using the current least cost logical fare depicted in the ETS.
 - (4) Updated constructive cost comparisons showing actuals costs incurred must be uploaded with the travel voucher.
- R. Require travelers performing extended temporary duty to adhere to the following:
- (1) Periodic return travel home from and extended TDY assignment is authorized and must have approving official's concurrence.
 - (2) Travel to an alternate location in lieu of the traveler's official duty station or residence (which is the place from which the traveler commutes daily) is prohibited.
 - (3) Per diem for extended temporary duty travel will be in accordance with the amounts depicted in the DOI Policy; reason(s) for any deviations from the prescribed limits must be substantiated on the TA. TAs not containing a valid justification will be deemed erroneous and the TA must be amended to adjust per diem expenses accordingly.
- S. In accordance with the Agreement, coordinate with BSEE Office of Administration on BSEE's responsibility for issuing and maintaining a Table of Penalties for fraud and misuse or abuse of the Government-issued Travel Card (GovTC).
- T. Require the approving official/supervisor to provide written approval to a traveler's request to have a new GovTC expedited in cases where a cardholder's GovTC was lost/stolen.
- U. Require managers and employees to seek the guidance from their servicing personnel office for policies pertaining to pay, compensatory time off for travel, other compensatory time, personnel benefits, administering leave, and other personnel actions involving employees in travel status.

³ Initial cost comparisons must be uploaded to the travel authorization.

7. Responsibilities.

A. Director is responsible for:

- (1) Performing the Travel and Transportation administrative authorities that have been delegated by the Assistant Secretary - Policy, Management, and Budget.
- (2) Redelegating the appropriate administrative authorities for Travel and Transportation as directed by Departmental Manual.
- (3) Requiring subordinates to support and follow the Federal, Department, and BOEM travel policies, with the responsibility reflected in performance standards.

B. Deputy Director is responsible for:

- (1) Performing the Travel and Transportation administrative authorities that have been delegated by the Director.
- (2) Requiring subordinates to support and follow Federal, Department, and BOEM travel policies, with the responsibility reflected in performance standards.

C. BSEE Associate Director for Administration is responsible for:

- (1) Oversight of the Bureau's travel program.
- (2) Performing the Travel and Transportation administrative authorities delegated by the Director.
- (3) Redelegating the appropriate Travel and Transportation authorities to the appropriate Bureau officials, ensuring that the levels of approval for travel authorizations and travel vouchers are at the lowest level of management. (See BOEME's Administrative Delegations of Authority Handbook, Part 219 1-H.5)
- (4) Requiring subordinates to support and follow Federal, Department, and BOEM travel policies, with the responsibility reflected in performance standards.

D. BSEE Chief, Finance Division is responsible for:

- (1) Managing the Bureau's travel program.
- (2) Ensuring FTR updates and supplemental guidance or policy issued by the Department is disseminated to the Bureau employees.
- (3) Ensuring that controls over centrally-billed Government travel card transactions are in place to prevent travelers from being reimbursed for centrally-billed transactions.
- (4) Ensuring that interest is paid on valid travel vouchers that were not paid within 30 days from the date submitted by the traveler.
- (5) Ensuring consistency in travel voucher audits.
- (6) In accordance with the Agreement, maintains the Finance Chapter of the BOEM (BOEMM 218.1.5), *Administrative Delegations of Authority*.
- (7) Providing travel training to approving officials, travel arrangers, and travelers.

E. BSEE Federal Agency Travel Administrators (FATAs) are responsible for:

- (1) Assisting travelers in obtaining Electronic Travel System (ETS) user profiles and performing administrative tasks in the ETS.
- (2) Providing employees, approving officials, and travel preparers guidance on travel policies, as necessary.
- (3) Contributing to resolving travel policy issues by escalating concerns to Bureau policy point-of-contact, as necessary.

F. Regional Directors and Division/Office Chiefs are responsible for:

- (1) Understanding and ensuring that subordinates understand travel policy on allowable travel costs.
- (2) Ensuring that the levels of approval for travel authorizations and travel vouchers are at the lowest level of management.
- (3) Travel vouchers are reviewed appropriately and timely by knowledgeable Approving Officials.
- (4) Requiring subordinates to support and follow Federal, Department, and BOEM travel policies, with the responsibility reflected in performance standards.

G. Approving Officials are responsible for:

- (1) Understanding travel policy on allowable travel costs and how to properly review and approve a TDY trip using the ETS.
- (2) Exercising good judgment and prudence in approving travel requests and travel related expenses and ensuring that only those travel expenses necessary and/or incidental to official travel are authorized and approved.
- (3) Approving travel authorizations timely to ensure reservations are not canceled.
- (4) Except in emergency situations, ensuring that travel authorizations are approved prior to the individual beginning travel.
- (5) Approving travel vouchers electronically through the ETS within 7 days after being submitted by the traveler.
- (6) Ensuring that claims submitted for reimbursement contain authorized expenses that are allowable under the FTR, DOI, and bureau policies.
- (7) Serving as Deciding Official on requests for reasonable accommodations relative to travel and ensuring all requests are approved in accordance with the DOI Personnel Bulletin 14-01 and approval is annotated on the employee's travel authorization.
- (8) Approving travel expenses as under their purview as depicted in the bureau's Delegations of Authority.

H. Employees that travel for official business are responsible for:

- (1) Understanding travel policy on allowable travel costs.
- (2) Understanding that they must be aware of and are fully responsible for all travel arrangements made on their behalf by a travel arranger.

- (3) Ensuring an approved travel authorization exists prior to traveling.
- (4) Ensuring all travel expenses are prudent and necessary and submitting the expenses in the form of a proper claim.
- (5) Submitting travel vouchers within 5 working days after completing their trip or period of travel; or every 30 days if they are in continuous travel status.
- (6) Bringing requests for reasonable accommodation to the attention of the Human Resources Division, Employee and Labor Relations Branch to allow enough time for the process to be completed prior to traveling on TDY.

I. Travel Reviewers are responsible for:

- (1) Performing a cursory review of travel documents, to include the following:
 - (a) Travel Authorizations:
 - (i) The trip purpose is accurately portrayed.
 - (ii) Details of the trip are documented.
 - (iii) 'Departing From' and 'Returning To' fields in the Trip Information section are complete.
 - (iv) All itinerary locations scheduled to be visited are identified.
 - (v) Any required attachments are present, i.e., conference itinerary/agenda, constructive cost comparison, etc.
 - (vi) Returning document to preparer/traveler when errors are discovered.
 - (b) Travel Vouchers:
 - (i) All expenses claimed were authorized on the travel authorization. If not, a detailed justification is included.
 - (ii) All required receipts are attached.
 - (iii) Updated constructive cost comparison, if applicable.
 - (iv) Returning document to preparer/traveler when errors are discovered.
- (2) Confirming accounting information on the travel documents.

J. Travel Arrangers are responsible for:

- (1) Facilitating the travel process on behalf of an employee or an invitational traveler by arranging transportation, making reservations for lodging and special conveyances, creating travel authorizations and travel vouchers, and uploading required documentation into the ETS.
- (2) Ensuring that the travelers are adhering to travel policies regarding allowable travel-related costs and required approvals.
- (3) Ensuring the travelers have concurred with the travel arrangements, especially any deviations that could cause adjustments to reimbursements, prior to finalizing travel plans.

8. Material Superseded.

9. Cancellation. This IPD will remain in effect through Fiscal Year 2021, unless incorporated into the BOEM Manual, cancelled, or superseded by another IPD.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "L. Renee Orr".

L. Renee Orr
Acting Deputy Director