

# MANAGEMENT DIRECTIVE

## Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Governor's Office

**Subject:** Commonwealth Travel Policy

**Number:** 230.10 Amended

**Date:**

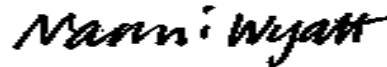
June 17, 2009

**Effective Date: July 1, 2009**

**By Direction of:**



Mary A. Soderberg, Secretary of the Budget



Naomi Wyatt, Secretary of Administration

**Contact Agency:**

Travel: PA Office of Administration, Commonwealth Office of Travel Operations (COTO), Telephone 717-265-8409

Audit and Reimbursement: Office of the Budget, Office of Comptroller Operations, Bureau of Commonwealth Payroll Operations (BCPO), Telephone 717-346-3401

The amendment of this directive consolidates commonwealth business travel policies that existed in several management directives into a single issuance for consistency, clarity and ease of use. Provisions of this issuance ensure responsible stewardship of commonwealth funds while taking into account the safety and reasonable convenience of commonwealth business travelers. Marginal dots are excluded due to major changes.

Issued as a companion to this directive is [Manual 230.1, Commonwealth Travel Procedures Manual](#).

- 1. PURPOSE.** To establish policies and procedures for the commonwealth's travel program that enable commonwealth travelers to successfully execute their essential travel requirements at the lowest reasonable cost.
- 2. SCOPE.** This directive applies to all agencies and employees under the Governor's jurisdiction, and to all other agencies subject to *Section 216* of the *Administrative Code* that have not been exempt by the Executive Board. This includes board members, commissioners, and any other individuals reimbursed for official commonwealth travel.
- 3. OBJECTIVE.** To provide an efficient and economical oversight by which commonwealth employees can secure necessary travel reservations and accommodations in order to conduct official commonwealth business.

#### 4. DEFINITIONS.

- a. **Agency Airline Card.** A purchasing card assigned to each agency to which all airline charges are automatically billed when air transportation is reserved.
- b. **Agency Lodging Card.** A purchasing card assigned to each agency, used for certain overnight lodging and tax charges authorized by COTO.
- c. **Agency Travel Arranger.** An assigned individual in an agency responsible for travel planning and expense report preparation on behalf of individuals traveling on official commonwealth business.
- d. **BCPO.** Bureau of Commonwealth Payroll Operations.
- e. **Contracted Travel Agency.** The contracted commonwealth travel service provider. Commercial air travel, ground travel and lodging and reservations are included in the scope of contracted services.
- f. **Corporate Travel Card.** A card provided to employees to be used only while employee is in overnight travel status and for authorized business purposes.
- g. **COTO.** Commonwealth Office of Travel Operations.
- h. **Online Booking Tool.** A web based tool used to book commercial travel arrangements for commonwealth travelers.
- i. **Preferred Property.** Hotel properties that participate in the commonwealth's travel program.

#### 5. POLICY.

- a. **Reservations.** Travelers must make all air, ground, and lodging travel reservations through the commonwealth's online booking tool unless otherwise directed in [Manual 230.1, Commonwealth Travel Procedures Manual, Section 2.4, Train](#). Those travelers who do not have access to the online booking tool must book their travel arrangements with the contracted travel agency or their agency travel arranger. Travelers who are not employed by the commonwealth must follow the same procedures as employees if their travel is paid for by the commonwealth.
- b. **Justification.** Travelers must confirm the lowest cost reservations that meet the itinerary and needs of the traveler, within commonwealth guidelines. Preferred vendors must be chosen where available. Business justification must be supplied when confirming arrangements that are not compliant with commonwealth policy. Non-compliant arrangements will be subject to review and travel audit.
- c. **Subsistence.** Employees are entitled to receive reimbursement for out-of-pocket expenses incurred in the performance of their duties within prescribed maximums.

- d. **Travel Credits.** The acceptance, retention, or use of personal travel, products, or services by commonwealth employees and appointed officials of promotions and offers obtained in the course of official commonwealth business is prohibited by the *Governor's Code of Conduct, 4 PA Code 7.151*, and the *State Ethics Law, 65 PS401*. Any credits, promotions, certificates, or other considerations earned in a frequent traveler program must be used for commonwealth business travel. Travelers may not use a personal credit card in place of the commonwealth corporate travel card or agency airline card in order to gain benefits from their credit card company.
- e. **Payment Methods.** Travelers on commonwealth business are required to use one of the methods of payment through the course of their approved travel itineraries:
  - (1) **Agency Airline Card.** All air travel will be charged to the agency airline card automatically when reserved via the online booking tool or the contracted travel agency. Travelers are not permitted to use their corporate travel card or personal credit card to reserve air flights.
  - (2) **Agency Lodging Card.** The use of the agency lodging card for payment of hotel rate and tax must be authorized by COTO.
  - (3) **Corporate Travel Card.** Use of the corporate travel card is mandatory for employees expected to be in overnight travel status four or more times a year. Employees who have had their card canceled are not eligible for a commonwealth payment method.
  - (4) **Cash Advance.** A cash advance will be considered only after all other options of payment are explored and exhausted.
- f. **Reimbursement.** Employees traveling on official commonwealth business will receive reimbursement of actual expenses incurred in the performance of their duties within prescribed maximums. Submission of a travel expense report must occur within 60 days of the date of travel. Travel expenses are reimbursed by the commonwealth within 15 days of receiving an approved expense report with all applicable attachments and receipts.

## 6. RESPONSIBILITIES.

- a. **The Commonwealth Office of Travel Operations** shall:
  - (1) Conduct a thorough review of commonwealth policies relating to travel to ensure that all travel policies are consistent and recommend necessary changes.
  - (2) Negotiate and manage the booking, fulfillment, advisory, and other travel related service contracts, in addition to the establishment of a network of preferred vendors.
  - (3) Monitor compliance with travel policies and contracts.
  - (4) Provide data to commonwealth agencies, and offer recommendations for cost-reduction and compliance, where applicable.

- (5) Authorize the use of the agency lodging card. Upon approval, COTO will notify the hotel and advise the agency that the payment is confirmed. COTO will also provide traveler names and other pertinent information to BCPO.

**b. The Bureau of Commonwealth Payroll Operations shall:**

- (1) Ensure compliance with travel reimbursement policies by conducting post-travel audits of submitted reimbursement reports.
- (2) Reconcile monthly airline card billings to the airline usage report.
- (3) Match the agency lodging card information provided by COTO against the travel expense report to ensure compliance with applicable policies.
- (4) Reimburse travelers in accordance with policy, and upon notification from agency, withhold amounts as necessary from travelers, forward payments to the corporate travel card issuer, and inform travelers and their supervisors of appropriate dates and amounts being withheld.
- (5) Give approval for cash advances to commonwealth travelers.

**7. PROCEDURES.** In conjunction with this *Management Directive 230.10, Commonwealth Travel Policy*, [Manual 230.1, Commonwealth Travel Procedures Manual](#), details commonwealth travel policies and procedures to which travelers must adhere. Refer to [Manual 230.1, Commonwealth Travel Procedures Manual](#), for more detailed direction.

**This directive replaces, in its entirety, *Administrative Circular 08-15, Lodging Payments with an Agency Lodging Card*, dated September 8, 2008; *Management Directive 230.9, Acquisition and Payment of Travel Services* dated January 16, 2009; *Management Directive 230.10, Travel and Subsistence Allowances*, dated January 21, 2009; *Management Directive 230.13, Commonwealth Corporate Card Program*, dated September 18, 2007; *Management Directive 230.14, Foreign Areas Subsistence Allowances*, dated March 29, 2007; and *Management Directive 230.15, Continental United States High Cost Subsistence Allowances*, dated March 29, 2007.**