

U.S. Department of Energy
Washington, D.C.

ORDER

DOE O 552.1A

Approved: 2-17-06

SUBJECT: TRAVEL POLICY AND PROCEDURES

1. OBJECTIVES.

- a. To supplement the Federal Travel Regulation [41 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Parts 300–304], which is the principal source of policy for Federal employee travel and relocation matters.
- b. To establish DOE M 552.1-1A, *U. S. Department of Energy Travel Manual*, dated 2-17-06, as the repository for the supplementary travel requirements information for the Department of Energy (DOE).

2. CANCELLATION. DOE O 552.1, *Travel Policy and Procedures*, dated 09-04-02. Cancellation of an Order does not, by itself, modify or otherwise affect any contractual obligation to comply with the Order.

3. APPLICABILITY.

- a. DOE Elements. Except for the exclusions in paragraph 3c, this Order applies to all DOE elements listed in Attachment 1. This Order automatically applies to DOE elements created after it is issued.

The Administrator of the National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) will assure that NNSA employees and contractors comply with their respective responsibilities under this Order.

- b. DOE Contractors. This Order does not apply to contractors.
- c. Exclusions. This Order does not apply to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission as an independent commission.

4. REQUIREMENTS. For specific requirements, see DOE M 552.1-1A (hereafter the Travel Manual).

5. RESPONSIBILITIES.

- a. Assistant Secretaries, Deputy Assistant Secretaries, Deputy NNSA Administrators, and NNSA Assistant Deputy Administrators. Designate isolated official duty stations under the conditions specified in Chapter 302, Part 8, of the Federal Travel Regulation (FTR).

b. Chief Financial Officer (CFO).

- (1) Ensures implementation of statutes, Executive orders, and regulations related to official travel, transportation, and relocation.
- (2) Drafts policies relative to the payment of expenses for official travel, transportation, and relocation.
- (3) Ensures travel-related training is made available when needed.
- (4) Approves and/or designates employees to approve the use of first-class and business-class accommodations by employees under the cognizance of non-NNSA Headquarters organizations. (See DOE M 552.1-1A, 301-10.122.)
- (5) Approves and/or designates employees to approve emergency cash purchases of common carrier transportation in excess of \$100 made by employees or invitational travelers under the cognizance of non-NNSA Headquarters organizations. (See DOE M 552.1-1A, 301-51.102.)
- (6) Approves releases from terms of relocation service agreements when an employee under the cognizance of a non-NNSA Headquarters organization does not fulfill the terms of the agreement. (See DOE M 552.1-1A, 302-2.14.)
- (7) Waives regulatory relocation allowance limitations for employees under the cognizance of non-NNSA Headquarters organizations when the employees are relocating to or from remote or isolated locations. (See DOE M 552.1-1A, 302-2.106.)
- (8) Approves requests for extensions in time for Senior Executive Service (SES) employees under the cognizance of non-NNSA Headquarters organizations to begin their “last move home.” (See DOE M 552.1-1A, 302-3.315.)
- (9) Acts as the DOE liaison to the General Services Administration for all policy issues relating to employee travel and relocation.
- (10) Provides oversight for the DOE travel management program involving use of travel management services, passenger transportation, relocation, and travel charge card services.
- (11) On a case-by-case basis for employees under the cognizance of non-NNSA Headquarters organizations, approves exceptions to requirements in the Travel Manual.

- (12) Approves requests for exemption from mandatory use of the travel charge card from employees under the cognizance of non-NNSA Headquarters organizations (does not apply when an employee's card was canceled due to delinquency or misuse).
- (13) Designates an employee to serve as the DOE program coordinator for travel charge card issues.

c. NNSA Associate Administrator for Management and Administration.

- (1) Approves and/or designates employees to approve the use of first-class and business-class accommodations by employees under the cognizance of NNSA organizations. (See DOE M 552.1-1A, 301-10.122.) Within 10 business days after the end of the fiscal year, supplies report of approved requests in the format required by the FTR to the Director, Office of Financial Policy.
- (2) Approves and/or designates employees to approve emergency cash purchases of common carrier transportation in excess of \$100 made by employees or invitational travelers under the cognizance of NNSA organizations. (See DOE M 552.1-1A, 301-51.102.)
- (3) Approves releases from terms of relocation service agreements when an employee under the cognizance of an NNSA organization does not fulfill the terms of the agreement. (See DOE M 552.1-1A, 302-2.14.)
- (4) Waives regulatory relocation allowance limitations for employees under the cognizance of NNSA organizations when the employees are relocating to or from remote or isolated locations. (See DOE M 552.1-1A, 302-2.106.)
- (5) Approves requests for extensions in time for Senior Executive Service (SES) employees under the cognizance of NNSA organizations to begin their "last move home." (See DOE M 552.1-1A, 302-3.315.)
- (6) On a case-by-case basis for employees under the cognizance of NNSA organizations, approves exceptions to requirements in the Travel Manual in consultation with the CFO.
- (7) Approves requests for exemption from mandatory use of the travel charge card from employees under the cognizance of NNSA organizations (does not apply when an employee's card was canceled due to delinquency or misuse).

- d. Heads of Departmental Elements (including the NNSA Administrator).
- (1) Approve their own travel, official travel of employees and other persons traveling for DOE, and employee relocation allowances in accordance with the requirements set out in the Travel Manual.
 - (a) Approval authority (except authority to approve their own travel) may be delegated to subordinates with the authority to redelegate at any level.
 - (b) Individuals delegated this authority will be referred to as approving officials in the Travel Manual.
 - (2) Approve actual expense reimbursement not to exceed 300 percent of locality per diem under special or unusual circumstances as identified in the FTR.
 - (a) Redelegation of this authority is limited to two levels below the head of the Departmental element.
 - (b) Requests for exceptions to this policy will be forwarded to the CFO for non-NNSA organizations or the NNSA Associate Administrator for Management and Administration for NNSA organizations.
 - (3) Ensure employees are fully informed of official travel and relocation rules and regulations and, as needed, are provided access to prescribed travel management services.
 - (4) Distribute travel charge card delinquency and misuse reports to supervisory personnel to ensure that supervisors are aware of noncompliant cardholders.
 - (5) Approve employee acceptance of payments by sources outside the Federal Government for travel expenses after obtaining legal review.
 - (6) Designate an employee and an alternate to serve as the element's travel coordinators for travel issues.
- e. Heads of Field Elements. In addition to responsibilities listed in paragraph 5d, heads of field elements will do the following.
- (1) Approve the use of first-class or business-class air transportation for employees under the cognizance of the respective field element. (See DOE M 552.1-1A, 301-10.122.) Within 10 business days after the end of the fiscal year, supply report of approved requests in the format required by the FTR to the Director, Office of Financial Policy.

- (2) Approve emergency cash purchases made by employees or invitational travelers for transportation expenditures in excess of \$100. (See DOE M 552.1-1A, 301-51.102.)
- (3) Approve releases from terms of relocation service agreements when an employee under the cognizance of the respective field element does not fulfill the terms of the agreement. (See DOE M 552.1-1A, 302-2.14.)
- (4) Waive regulatory relocation allowance limitations for employees under the cognizance of the respective field element when the employees are relocating to or from remote or isolated locations. (See DOE M 552.1-1A, 302-2.106.)
- (5) Approve requests for extensions in time for SES employees under the cognizance of their respective field elements to begin their “last move home.” (See DOE M 552.1-1A, 302-3.315.)
- (6) Designate an employee and an alternate to serve as the field element’s travel charge card program coordinators for travel charge card issues.
- (7) Approve field employees’ requests for exemption from use of the travel charge card (does not apply when an employee’s card was canceled due to delinquency or misuse).
- (8) Report approval of exemptions from use of the travel charge card to the Office of Financial Policy within 5 working days of approval.
- (9) Approve employee acceptance of payments by sources outside the Federal Government for travel expenses after obtaining legal review.

f. Designated Agency Ethics Official.

- (1) Establishes policies and procedures for DOE acceptance of travel payments from non-Federal sources.
- (2) Provides advice, as necessary, regarding invitational travel under 5 United States Code 5703 (see 10 CFR, Part 1060, “Payment of Travel Expenses of Persons Who Are Not Government Employees”).

g. Human Resources Directors. When appropriate, concur with travel authorizations for interview travel of potential employees (invitational travel) initiated by the organizational elements requesting the interviews and, for current Federal employees, authorizations issued at the request of other DOE organizations wishing to interview.

h. Supervisors.

- (1) Authorize the issuance of travel charge cards, as needed, to subordinate employees.
- (2) Counsel employees who are delinquent in paying their travel charge card bills or have questionable or inappropriate charges to their accounts; allow employees the opportunity to explain delinquencies or questionable charges and maintain records of the meetings and the explanations.
- (3) Contact the servicing human resources office for determinations of appropriate disciplinary actions if explanations for delinquencies or other questionable charges/activities are inadequate, and take appropriate actions. At the discretion of the supervisor, the travel charge card may be canceled at this time.
- (4) Notify the travel charge card program coordinator to suspend the travel charge card if there is a second instance of inappropriate use, and reactivate the card on an as needed basis.
- (5) Notify the travel charge card program coordinator to cancel the travel charge card if there is a third instance of inappropriate use, an explanation for delinquency is inadequate, or the employee is leaving the Department.
- (6) On an annual basis, identify those employees who have not traveled for 1 year or more and determine, based on the employees' future travel requirements, whether their individual travel charge cards should be canceled. For those travel charge cards that should be canceled, notify the travel charge card coordinator to cancel the cards.
- (7) Sign relocation service agreements when required.
- (8) Certify an itemized list of professional books, papers, and equipment (PBP&E) as necessary for the employee to perform his/her new job when relocation requires an excess weight allowance for PBP&E.

i. DOE Travel Charge Card Program Coordinator.

- (1) Manages the DOE travel charge card program.
- (2) Serves as the primary contact point for the travel charge card contractor.
- (3) Monitors DOE summary reports of delinquent activity for centrally billed travel accounts and individually billed travel accounts, and as necessary,

consults with travel charge card program coordinators for improving delinquency performance.

- (4) Notifies travel charge card program coordinators of changes in the travel charge card program.

j. Travel Charge Card Program Coordinators.

- (1) Ensure completeness of information on travel charge card applications.
- (2) Complete DOE information and authorization sections of travel charge card applications.
- (3) Forward original applications to the travel charge card vendor and maintain copies of the applications with employee acknowledgment statements.
- (4) Monitor presuspension reports and delinquency reports and notify the affected employees and the heads of their respective Departmental elements of the status of accounts.
- (5) Review account activity reports on a monthly basis for charges that are not travel-related, and notify the employees and the heads of Departmental elements of inappropriate charges.
- (6) Coordinate temporary increases or decreases in individual employee charge limits with the travel charge card vendor. Record permanent changes online on the travel charge card vendor Web site.
- (7) Cancel an employee's travel charge card when notified to do so by the employee's supervisor when an employee has resigned, retired, transferred to another Agency, or transferred to another DOE duty station and the account has not transferred within 30 days of the employee's transfer.
- (8) Contact the gaining organization's travel charge card program coordinator when an employee transfers to another geographic location within the Department, and initiate transfer of responsibility for oversight of the travel charge card account.
- (9) Obtain the new supervisor's signed approval before transferring-in an employee's travel charge card account at the new duty station.
- (10) Monitor the individual travel charge card account listing to ensure that all open accounts are for current employees and that all accounts for employees who resigned, retired, transferred to another Agency, or otherwise left the employ of the Department have been canceled.

- (11) Forward travel charge card vendor requests for salary offset of delinquent account balances to the appropriate payroll office.

k. DOE Site Relocation Coordinators (SRCs).

- (1) Act as primary liaisons between DOE and relocation services companies.
- (2) Provide advice and guidance to relocation coordinators regarding relocation issues.

l. Relocation Coordinators.

- (1) Act as primary points of contact for employees and program offices to provide guidance on relocation allowances under the guidance of the FTR, Travel Manual, and SRCs.
- (2) Provide required paperwork to employees eligible for relocation allowances.
- (3) Review completed paperwork, including forms and travel authorizations, for compliance with the FTR and Travel Manual. Consult with program offices and approving officials regarding corrections and/or additional justifications/information to support authorizations.
- (4) Facilitate or make arrangements for the relocation of eligible employees.

m. Travel Coordinators.

- (1) Respond to inquiries from employees, including experts or consultants employed intermittently, regarding travel issues.
- (2) Act as liaisons between employees, accounting service centers, and the Office of Financial Policy.

n. Employees.

- (1) Meet travel charge card obligations in a proper and timely manner pursuant to 5 CFR, Part 2635, "Standards of Ethical Conduct for Employees of the Executive Branch," or be subject to appropriate disciplinary action such as reprimand, suspension, or dismissal.
- (2) Report lost or stolen travel charge cards to the travel charge card contractor and local travel office or travel charge card program coordinator immediately.
- (3) Notify the local travel office or travel charge card program coordinator when they resign, retire, or transfer to another Agency.

- (4) Immediately upon transferring to another duty station within DOE, obtain the new supervisor's signed approval to transfer the travel charge card account to the new duty station and forward the approval to the travel charge card program coordinator at the new duty station.

6. REFERENCES.

- a. 10 CFR 1060, Payment of Travel Expenses of Persons Who are Not Government Employees.
- b. 41 CFR 300-304, Federal Travel Regulation.
- c. Title XXXII of P.L. 106-65, National Nuclear Security Administration Act, as amended.
- d. 5 U.S.C. 5703, Per Diem, Travel, and Transportation Expenses; Experts and Consultants; Individuals Serving Without Pay.
- e. DOE O 440.2B, *Aviation Management and Safety*, dated 11-27-2002.

7. CONTACT. Questions concerning this Order should be addressed to the Office of Financial Policy at 202-586-4860.

BY ORDER OF THE SECRETARY OF ENERGY:



CLAY SELL
Deputy Secretary

DOE ELEMENTS TO WHICH DOE O 552.1A IS APPLICABLE

Office of the Secretary
Departmental Representative to the Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board
Energy Information Administration
National Nuclear Security Administration
Office of the Chief Financial Officer
Office of the Chief Information Officer
Office of Civilian Radioactive Waste Management
Office of Congressional and Intergovernmental Affairs
Office of Counterintelligence
Office of Economic Impact and Diversity
Office of Electricity Delivery and Energy Reliability
Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy
Office of Environment, Safety and Health
Office of Environmental Management
Office of Fossil Energy
Office of General Counsel
Office of Hearings and Appeals
Office of Human Capital Management
Office of Inspector General
Office of Intelligence
Office of Legacy Management
Office of Management
Office of Nuclear Energy, Science and Technology
Office of Policy and International Affairs
Office of Public Affairs
Office of Science
Office of Security and Safety Performance Assurance
Secretary of Energy Advisory Board
Bonneville Power Administration
Southeastern Power Administration
Southwestern Power Administration
Western Area Power Administration