



# Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigation Board

OFFICE OF GENERAL COUNSEL

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Memorandum

To: Board Members

From: Christopher M. Lyon *Chris Lyon*  
Acting General Counsel

Cc: Leadership Team

Subject: Board Action Report - Notation Item 2024-15

Date: November 15, 2023

On November 14, 2023, the Board approved Notation Item 2024-15, thereby voting to adopt Board Order 049, which sets forth the CSB's travel policy.

### Voting Summary – Notation Item 2024-15

**Disposition: APPROVED**

**Disposition date: November 14, 2023**

	Approve	Disapprove	Calendar	Not Participating	Date
S. Johnson	X				11/13/2023
S. Owens	X				11/13/2023
C. Sandoval	X				11/14/2023



# U.S. Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigation Board

SUBJECT: Travel Policy

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1. **PURPOSE.** This Order provides policy and procedures for the U.S. Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigation Board (CSB) and its staff to travel in support of the CSB Mission and be reimbursed in adherence with the Federal Travel Regulation (FTR) contained in [Title 41 Code of Federal Regulations \(CFR\), chapters 300 through 304](#). This policy is intended as a supplement to provide CSB-specific guidance where applicable to facilitate and standardize a safe and cost-effective method for travelers to perform job-related travel in a manner that is financially advantageous to the Government and takes safety into consideration, and where allowable, convenience for the traveler.
2. **EFFECTIVE DATE.** This Order is effective upon passage by the Board.
3. **SCOPE.** This Order applies to all current and prospective CSB employees who are traveling in connection with official government business (Local, Temporary Duty (TDY), Invitational, Pre-employment, and Foreign). For pre-employment interviews, Board Order 5 is the governing policy. For new employees (referred to as “new appointees” in Board Order 6 (referenced below)), Board Order 6 is the governing policy. For foreign travel, Board Order 45 is the governing policy. This policy should be applied to Board Orders 5, 6, and 45, where appropriate. Travel authorizations specific to chemical incident deployments are addressed in Appendix A. The list of Approved Travel Frequently Asked Questions and Answers are contained in Appendix B.
4. **REFERENCES.**
  - a. [FTR - 41 CFR Chapters 300-304](#) (The FTR is the regulation contained in 41 CFR Chapters 300 through 304, which implements statutory requirements and Executive branch policies for travel by Federal civilian employees and others authorized to travel at Government expense.)
  - b. [5 CFR Part 735 – Employee Responsibilities and Conduct](#) (Regulations that govern the civil service.)
  - c. [5 CFR Part 2635 – Standards of Ethical Conduct for Employees of the Executive Branch](#) (Regulations that establish government ethics.)
  - d. [OMB Circular A-123](#) *Managements Responsibility for Internal Control* (A circular that defines the management responsibilities for internal controls in Federal agencies.)
  - e. [OMB Circular A-123, APPENDIX B](#) *A Risk Management Framework for Government Charge Card Programs* (Revised information updating the Government Charge Card Program)
  - f. [Executive Order 13589](#) -- Promoting Efficient Spending (November 9, 2011), Section 3 (Travel)
  - g. [US Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigation Board, Interview Expense Policy, Board Order 5](#)
  - h. [US Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigation Board, Travel and Transportation Expenses of New Appointees, Board Order 6](#)
  - i. [US Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigation Board, Internal Transfer, Reassignment, and Change in Duty Station, Board Order 42](#)

- j. [US Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigation Board, Foreign Travel, Board Order 45](#)

**5. DEFINITIONS.**

- a. **Local Travel** – Travel in connection with official government business that is 30 miles or less ( $\leq 30$ ) from the official or permanent duty station or home of record<sup>1</sup>. An exception specific to multi-day Agency All-Hands meetings and Office of Investigation meetings is detailed below in Section 6.e.(3).
- b. **Invitational Travel** – As defined in [41 CFR 300-3.1](#), authorized travel of individuals either not employed or employed (under [5 U.S.C. 5703](#)) intermittently in the Government service as consultants or experts and paid on a daily when-actually-employed basis and for individuals serving without pay or at \$1 a year when they are acting in a capacity that is directly related to, or in connection with, official activities of the Government.
- c. **Travel Status** – From the time you begin official travel as defined in [41 CFR 300-3.1](#) from your authorized starting point until you return to your authorized end point. This does not include taking leave enroute or other authorized non-travel related breaks.

**6. POLICY.**

- a. **Travel Distinctions Between Employees Who are Assigned to Work at an Agency Worksite and Remote Workers.**

- (1) Employees who are assigned to work at an Agency Worksite: Travel between the employee’s home/residence and the employee’s agency worksite (e.g., permanent duty station), if they are different, is not ‘official travel’ or ‘local travel;’ it is commuting. In that case, reimbursement of travel expenses incurred when traveling between your home of record and your permanent duty station is not authorized.
- (2) Remote workers:<sup>2</sup> Any authorized/approved travel for government business away from the remote workers’ official worksite/permanent duty station is ‘official travel’ or ‘local travel’ and is authorized for reimbursement.

- b. **Clarification Regarding a New Employee (or “Appointee”) Who is Authorized Relocation Expenses**

- (1) [41 CFR 302-3.2](#) permits the payment of specific relocation expenses, which are limited to the transportation of the employee and immediate family members to the new permanent duty station, a per diem for the employee, and the transportation of household goods.

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<sup>1</sup> Commuting mileage will not be deducted from local travel mileage on local travel vouchers.

<sup>2</sup> Currently all CSB remote workers have established their home of record/residence as their official worksite/permanent duty station.

- (a) Any expenses that are not listed in [41 CFR 302-3.2](#) are not reimbursable by federal agencies as relocation expenses.
  - (b) The employee must complete all aspects of the relocation within one year of the effective date of the appointment as required by [41 CFR 302-2.9](#).
  - (c) The effective date of the appointment is the date on which the employee “report[s] for duty” at his or her official duty station in accordance with [41 CFR 302-2.4](#).
- (2) There is no provision in the FTR that permits reimbursable travel to the employee’s duty station prior to the employee’s relocation. The U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) issued guidance allowing federal agencies to waive the relocation time limit established by the FTR for cases where coronavirus pandemic restrictions created difficulties for individuals attempting to complete their relocation within one year. The GSA guidance does not address whether travel to an employee’s permanent duty station is reimbursable prior to the employee’s relocation. Consequently, if the employee’s permanent duty station is not their current home of record/residence, until the employee relocates to their new home of record/residence, any travel (other than the relocation transportation of the employee and immediate family members to the new permanent duty station) between the current home of record/residence and the permanent duty station is not authorized for reimbursement.

**c. Travel Arrangements.**

- (1) Arranging for travel should be executed in accordance with [41 CFR 301-50](#). Travel arrangements should be made through the designated electronic travel system (ETS)<sup>3</sup>. When practicable, the travel request/ authorization form in Appendix B will be approved and ETS travel authorizations will be completed and submitted to supervisors<sup>4</sup> ten or more business days in advance of the travel date. This action is necessary to allow supervisors, the Office of Financial Operations, and the traveler the time to make changes to arrangements and include supporting documentation required for travel. The traveler may use the services of the Travel Management Center (TMC)<sup>5</sup> to assist in ‘unique’ or emergency situations when the traveler needs to request advance ticketing on an ‘unapproved’ authorization within 24 hours of departure. After a travel authorization has been approved, the TMC may be contacted to change a ticket for emergency situations, an agency business need/schedule change, and/or when it will be financially advantageous to the government (e.g., reduce travel compensation time or overtime, etc.)
- (2) When preparing the travel authorization, the traveler should estimate travel expenses. In accordance with [41 CFR 301-71.103\(e\)](#) the travel authorization provides an “**estimate of the travel costs.**” For the travel authorizations, when entering planned

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<sup>3</sup> ConcurGov is the CSB’s Electronic Travel System (ETS).

<sup>4</sup> There may be specially designated “supervisors” for Board Members, Senior Executives, and the Director of Administration.

<sup>5</sup> National Travel is the CSB’s Travel Management Center (TMC).

travel expenses into the ETS, as they are estimates<sup>6</sup>, no documentation is required to support the expense amounts in the travel authorization process.

d. **Local Travel.** Local travel does not require a travel authorization, but it does require a supervisor’s pre-approval. With the exception of Section 6.e.(3) below, per diem is not allowed for employees working at their permanent duty station or within the local travel area surrounding the permanent duty station. If local travel is essential to the transaction of official CSB business, supervisors may authorize local travel and approve reimbursement for transportation expenses that employees incur while conducting official business in their local area.

e. **TDY Per Diem Expenses and the 12 Hour Rule.**

- (1) [41 CFR 301-11.9](#) states that per diem or actual expense entitlement starts on the day you depart your home, office, or other authorized point and ends on the day you return to your home, office or other authorized point.
- (2) For travel outside of the local area that is authorized for overnight lodging, travel expenses and per diem generally apply.
- (3) Overnight lodging is always authorized for multi-day Agency All-Hands meetings or Office of Investigations meetings, regardless of the business location. In this case, when the traveler elects to use overnight lodging, travel expenses and per diem are authorized.
- (4) For single day travel, to be eligible for per diem expenses the traveler must be in a travel status for more than 12 hours per [41 CFR 301-11.1](#)
- (5) Specifically, for single day travel, per diem is always authorized when the authorized method of travel is Common Carrier Transportation and is ticketed via the ETS or through the TMC. (This authorization does not apply to commuter rail, bus, and other intra-city transportation.) Due to prudent traveler arrival times (currently 2 hours before departure), transportation to and from the transportation center, and transportation to and from the TDY site, CSB policy is that this will always take more than 12 hours.
- (6) When a car is used as the authorized method of travel for single day travel, the following formula will be used to make this determination prior to approving the authorization:

$$\text{(Distance to TDY destination in miles x 2 / 30 mph) + gov't business hours + 1 hour allowance} = x \text{ hours}$$

If x is greater than 12, the traveler is eligible for per diem expenses.

- (a) The distance is multiplied by two to cover travel to the TDY site and back.
- (b) 30 mph is the average speed, including driving in town, on an interstate, and traffic congestion.

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<sup>6</sup> For consistency, fare estimates for taxis, Ubers, Lyfts, etc. should come from <https://ride.guru/>

- (c) Government business is the reason for travel and includes, but is not limited to, conferences, meetings, training, interview location, etc., and does not include ANY travel related time.
- (d) The 1-hour allowance includes, but is not limited to, walking to the car, parking, calling a taxi/Uber/Lyft/etc.
- (e) 30 mph and 1 hour allowance are constant and cannot be changed.

Example: The traveler is leaving from home to attend training at a hotel that is 75 miles away. The training is scheduled for 8 hrs.

**(75 miles x 2 / 30 mph) + 8 hours + 1 hour**

**5 hours + 8 hours + 1 hour = 14 hours...traveler IS eligible for per diem expenses**

- (7) If per diem is not authorized for travel based upon the formulas above, but the actual travel had additional unaccounted for delays causing the actual travel status to exceed 12 hours, per diem expenses will be paid.

f. **Authorized Methods of Transportation in order of Government Preference ([41 CFR 301-10.5](#)).**

- (1) The transportation methods below are the primary methods of transportation to get to the TDY destination. This section does not address the need for a rental car or other conveyance once at the TDY destination.
  - (a) Common Carrier Transportation (e.g., aircraft, train, bus, ship, or other transit system) [41 CFR Subpart B \(301-10.100 – 301-10.190\)](#) applies.
    - (i) Contract City Pair Program fare – **required**, unless one of the limited exceptions in [41 CFR 301-10.111](#) exists and must have supervisor approval. For CSB policy purposes, when your flight is the same day as your official business is taking place, if your travel status must start before 8:00 a.m. local time, exception [41 CFR 301-10.111\(b\)](#) may be applied.
    - (ii) Contract fare - when a contract city pair fare is not used based upon an authorized exception, a contract fare should be used.
    - (iii) Non-contract fare – must meet the requirements of [41 CFR 301-10.112](#) and must have supervisor approval.
  - (b) Special Conveyances (rental cars, taxis, TNC, innovative mobility technology company, etc.) [41 CFR Subpart E \(301-10.400 – 301-10.453\)](#) applies. See additional information on rental cars below.
  - (c) Privately Owned Vehicle (POV) – Use of a POV must be at the request of the traveler (cannot be required by the Government). [41 CFR Subpart D \(301-10.300 – 301-10.310\)](#) applies.

- (2) The methods of transportation above are in order of normal government preference. Per [41 CFR 301-10.4](#), the supervisors will consider the following factors when selecting/authorizing a method of transportation:
- (a) most expeditious means practicable
  - (b) commensurate with the nature and purpose of duties
  - (c) total cost to the government
    - (i) per diem
    - (ii) overtime (specifically does not include travel to and from the TDY location)<sup>7</sup>
    - (iii) lost worktime (to include developing/providing pre-authorization justifications)
    - (iv) actual transportation costs (vehicle cost, parking, etc.)
  - (d) total distance traveled
  - (e) number of sites visited
  - (f) number of travelers

**g. Rental Cars ([41 CFR 301-10.450 – 301-10.453](#)).**

- (1) Supervisors may authorize rental cars for use at the TDY location. The supervisor will take into consideration such factors as the location of the business activity and the lodging location, the availability of hired conveyance at the TDY location, the need to carry equipment or baggage to support the activity, and the availability of locations to obtain meals at the lodging location and/or location of the business activity. Travelers are always authorized rental cars when traveling to multiple and/or remote locations. The rental car authorization covers the entire duration of the TDY authorization, including weekend days or holidays that occur during period of the TDY authorization, but only for government business/travel.
- (2) Travelers must use the least expensive compact car available unless an exception for another class of vehicle is approved by the supervisor per [41 CFR 301-10-450\(c\)](#). Authorized exceptions include:
- (a) When the cost of other than a compact car is less than or equal to the cost of the least expensive compact car.
  - (b) Medical disability, special need, and/or reasonable (“special”) accommodation.
  - (c) Whenever more than 2 employees are traveling together.
  - (d) Whenever there is a large amount of Government material incident to their official business,
  - (e) For safety reasons, such as extreme weather or rough/difficult terrain.

**h. Parking (Common Carrier Terminals, Hotels, etc.).**

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<sup>7</sup> ‘Travel compensation time’ is used when normal workday time is exceeded during travel to and from the TDY location.



- (1) Common Carrier Terminal (typically airports) Parking - For purposes of compliance with [41 CFR 301-10.308](#), the CSB has selected the cost of a taxi to be the expense comparison for common carrier terminal parking. For policy purposes, the CSB has determined that 7 days of parking<sup>8</sup> at a common carrier terminal is less than the cost of a taxi. Timeframes exceeding 7 days require a documented cost comparison, prior to travel authorization approval.
  - (2) Hotel Parking - For the safety of the traveler, parking at lodging location/hotel and/or TDY venue is always authorized. When there is no parking at the lodging location/hotel/TDY venue, the closest parking available is authorized. Valet parking is authorized when it is the only option at the TDY venue or is at no additional cost to the government (above what the normal parking would be).
- i. **Invitational Travel.** Travel allowances authorized for invitational travel are the same as those normally authorized for CSB employees in connection with TDY and should follow this policy. Travel will be authorized by whichever office director or executive (or their designees) retains the service of the traveling individual.
  - j. **Foreign Travel.** When foreign travel is required, consult Board Order 45. Travel will be authorized by the Chairperson or Reviewing Board Member (RBM), as appropriate. This policy should be applied to Board Order 45, where appropriate.
  - k. **Pre-employment Travel.** As a matter of CSB policy, in addition to interviewees performing pre-employment interview travel as authorized by [41 CFR 301-1.3\(b\)](#), this Order also authorizes any other travel expenses (excluding relocation – see Board Order 5) incurred for official agency-authorized purposes for personnel who have accepted a job offer until the date of their entrance on duty (EOD). An example of this would be travel for pre-employment physical examinations. Travel allowances authorized for “interviewees”<sup>9</sup> or personnel who have accepted a job but are not yet officially ‘onboard’ are the same as those normally authorized for CSB employees in connection with TDY and should follow this policy, where appropriate. When needed, the hiring authority will coordinate with the Human Resources Director to authorize the travel in accordance with Board Order 5.
1. **Other Authorized Expenses Not Included in the Travel Authorization.**
    - (1) **Use of Hired Conveyance.**
      - (a) Travelers on authorized TDY travel may be authorized the use of hired conveyance to obtain meals when no restaurant facilities are available at the lodging location or within ¼ mile of the lodging or business activity location, or if the travel to the meal is unsafe (e.g., dangerous neighborhood, you must cross an interstate). [41 CFR 301-10.420\(a\)\(2\)\(iv\)](#) allows that travelers may use Taxis/Uber/Lyfts/etc. to obtain meals at the nearest available place when the

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<sup>8</sup> This authorization does not include valet parking at the airport.

<sup>9</sup> FTR Defines “interviewee” as “An individual who is being considered for employment by an agency. The individual may currently be a Government employee.”

nature and location of the official business or the lodging at a TDY location are such that meals cannot be obtained there. For purposes of CSB policy and personnel health and safety concerns, the definition of a ‘meal’ excludes fast-food dining. This allows travelers to go to a restaurant even if a fast-food facility is closer; however, if a fast-food facility is closer, and the traveler desires to eat fast-food instead of traveling to a restaurant, that is also authorized.

- (b) This authorization also applies to food deliver services<sup>10</sup> (e.g., DoorDash, GrubHub, Uber, etc.) when no restaurant facilities are available at the lodging location or within ¼ mile of the lodging or business activity location, or if the travel to the meal is unsafe.
  - (c) You must attach a statement or include electronic remarks with your travel voucher explaining why such transportation was necessary.
- (2) **Tips.** CSB policy (per [41 CFR 301-10.420\(a\)](#) and [41 CFR 301-10.421](#)) authorizes tips for a taxi, transportation network company, innovative mobility technology company, shuttle service, courtesy transportation driver, or valet parking attendant, not to exceed 25%.
- (3) **Government Travel Card (GTC) Cash Advances/ATM Fees ([41 CFR 301-51.200](#)).** GTC cash advances are authorized when it is necessary to use cash for **travel expenses** due to technology (or other) issues that make it impractical to use a government travel card. When it is necessary for a GTC cash advance, ATM fees are an authorized expense for reimbursement. The following restrictions apply to GTC cash advances/ATM usage:
- (a) May only be used during authorized travel dates; and
  - (b) Cash advances are limited to no more than \$200 for the entire TDY duration.
- Should additional cash advance funds be needed, the traveler must make the request to the Agency/Organization Program Coordinator (A/OPC). It is always the traveler’s responsibility to follow GTC guidance and to pay all charges and fees and reconciling your account by the billing cycle due date. Failure to do so may result in loss of GTC privileges and/or punitive action.<sup>11</sup> [OMB Circular A-123, Appendix B](#), has additional information on Government Travel Cards.

**m. Reimbursement.**

- (1) Travelers should submit a travel claim within 5 working days of completing Official Travel or every 30 days when in a continuous travel status per [41 CFR 301-52.7](#). The requirements of a travel claim are that the traveler provides the travel authorization (automatically provided in the ETS) to include lodging, any additional special expenses that were authorized, and any other expenses that exceed \$75 per [41 CFR 301-11.25](#) and [41 CFR 301-52.7](#). Additionally, the ETS internal logic requires receipts for common carrier (usually airfare) and rental cars regardless of their cost. As an example specific to the ‘\$75 rule,’ when driving a POV, if the mileage equates to an expense of \$75 or less, no supporting documentation is required for reimbursement. However, if the mileage exceeds \$75, a map (from Google Maps,

<sup>10</sup> The meal is not authorized for reimbursement. Only the food delivery service is authorized for reimbursement.

<sup>11</sup> [https://citibank.com/tts/sa/federal-government-benefits/assets/docs/gsa\\_travel\\_cardholder\\_guide.pdf](https://citibank.com/tts/sa/federal-government-benefits/assets/docs/gsa_travel_cardholder_guide.pdf)

- MapQuest, etc.) must be provided in the travel voucher as supporting documentation. As another example, when taking a taxi or Uber/Lyft/etc. during official travel, if the fare is \$75 or less, no receipt is required.
- (2) Travelers shall be reimbursed by the CSB for all reasonable and necessary travel costs connected to Official Travel. All items on the miscellaneous list of expenses in [41 CFR 301-12.1](#) that are not addressed in this policy that have been specifically authorized by the supervisor are authorized for reimbursement.
  - (3) When attending conferences, travelers are not required to reduce their meals and incidental expenses (M&IE)/per diem when conference organizers provide coffee, fruit, and/or pastries, etc. CSB policy excludes these items from the definition of a ‘meal.’

**7. RESPONSIBILITIES.**

- a. **Travelers:** Requests authorization, travel, and seeks reimbursement as governed by the FTR and this Order. If the traveler needs something different or in addition to what is in their approved travel authorization for which reimbursement is desired, the traveler acquires additional approvals from the supervisor, unless it is addressed in the attached Frequently Asked Questions and Answers. E-mails the supervisor requesting authorizations for travel related expenses that require an exception or justification that does not have a specific location in the ETS. If approved, uploads e-mail chain including the supervisor approval to the authorization in the ETS.
  - b. **Supervisors:** Reviews travel authorization requests for accuracy and compliance with this Order. Authorizes/approves travel, travel expenses, and reimbursement in accordance with the FTR and this Order. Addresses any additional travel needs or any travel issues resulting from the authorization and/or reimbursement they approved. Responds to traveler e-mail requests for travel related expense authorizations that require an exception or justification that does not have a specific location in ETS.
  - c. **Office of Financial Operations:** Processes the travel authorization after verifying the availability of funds, applies the appropriate accounting codes, and processes the approved travel voucher upon completion of travel. Additionally, ensures travel voucher documents comply with the FTR and this Board Order and that reimbursements are correct and accurate. Answers any questions about the use of the ETS (e.g., where to enter or review justification/exception information). Addresses any issues with the approving supervisor. Cannot override a supervisor’s approval or require additional information or documentation beyond what is required by the FTR and this Board Order.
  - d. **Human Resources Director:** Follows the provisions of this Board Order, where appropriate, in the execution of Board Orders 5 and 6.
8. **REVIEW AND UPDATE.** The Office of Financial Operations (in consultation with the other Office Directors and the Chairperson) will be responsible for reviewing this Order at least every 2 years and for proposing revisions to the Board when appropriate.

**U.S. CHEMICAL SAFETY AND HAZARD INVESTIGATION BOARD**

November 14, 2023

**APPENDIX A: Deployment Specific Travel Authorizations**

**APPENDIX B: Approved Travel Frequently Asked Questions and Answers**

## **BO 049 – TRAVEL POLICY APPENDIX A: Deployment Specific Travel Authorizations**

In addition to the authorizations in the travel policy, the following are **automatically authorized** for CSB Deployments:

**LOCAL AREA REDUCTION:** Because of mission and health and safety requirements, local travel for CSB deployments is reduced to travel 1 mile or less ( $\leq 1$ ) from the official or permanent duty station.

**TRAVEL MANAGEMENT CENTER (TMC):** Upon notice of deployment, deploying travelers may use the services of the TMC. One CSB employee may set up travel for all or several of the deploying travelers or travel may be set up individually. When doing so, please inform the TMC it is for a CSB deployment.

**RENTAL CARS:** “Because of agency mission” ([41 CFR 301-10.450\(c\)\(2\)](#)) any sized rental car that is requested is authorized for as many travelers as request it.

**LODGING:** “Because of mission requirements” ([41 CFR 301-11.300\(d\)](#)) lodging is always authorized at the closest available and safe hotel to the incident location, incident command center, staging area, or other designated meeting location provided the lodging rate does not exceed 300 percent of the maximum per diem allowance for the TDY location ([41 CFR 301-11.30](#)). The “actual expense rate” will always be reimbursed when used.

**BAGGAGE EXPENSES:** Because it is “in the interest of the Government” ([41 CFR 301-12.2](#)), all fees pertaining to the first checked bag, as well as a second and subsequent bags (as needed for deployments), including excess or oversized baggage fees, charges for transferring baggage, charges for storing baggage, etc. are always authorized and will be reimbursed.

**PURCHASE OF WATER:** Though it is a non-travel expense, during deployments, the purchase of water is an expense that is authorized for reimbursement. As a ‘non-travel’ expense, regardless of the cost, a receipt is required to be submitted with the travel voucher.

**ACCEPTANCE OF FOOD AND BEVERAGES:** Because of mission requirements and in the interest of the government, when food and beverages are otherwise unavailable or it is impractical to leave the investigation site for this purpose, if food and beverages are offered<sup>12</sup>:

- 1) Deployed personnel should make every effort to pay for food and beverages. If this occurs, there are no issues.
- 2) If, for whatever reason, payment cannot be accepted, under these unusual circumstances deployed personnel may accept. The following applies:
  - a) The Investigator-in-Charge (IIC) will make the determination for the entire team of deployed personnel that food and beverages are unavailable and/or it is impractical to leave the investigation site for this purpose.

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<sup>12</sup> Deployed personnel shall not solicit for meals per [41 CFR 304-3.5](#).

## **BO 049 – TRAVEL POLICY APPENDIX A: Deployment Specific Travel Authorizations**

- b) **This should be thought of as ‘the exception to the rule.’** As soon as reasonably practicable, the IIC will make every effort to develop and implement a plan that eliminates extended reliance on uncompensated-for food and beverages.
- c) This will not reduce meals and incidental expenses (M&IE)/per diem per [41 CFR 301-11.200](#).

Deployment travel is generally on short notice but should be coordinated as much as is practical to meet team and individual travel needs while ensuring proper execution of the mission in an efficient and effective manner.

## **BO 049 – TRAVEL POLICY APPENDIX B: Approved Travel Frequently Asked Questions and Answers**

### **When can I submit a local voucher?**

Traveler(s) may submit local voucher for local travel performed 30 miles or less ( $\leq 30$ ) from their permanent duty station (PDS) or residence from which an employee commutes daily.

Local travel should only be performed with a supervisor's approval.

### **Will I need to complete a travel authorization for an initial deployment?**

Authorizations can be processed by a central booking person (could be administrative staff or a team member of the deployment team, etc.). Call 1-800-347-9779 to book travel if tickets need to be issued within 24 hours for non-deployments or any time for deployments.

A central booking person will call National Travel (NT) to alert them of the following when booking the group's travel:

- It is an initial deployment,
- Where the TDY location is,
- How many investigators, along with their names, will travel as a group,
- Departure airports, times and dates (NT will look for arrival airports, contract carriers, schedules, and lodging availability at the TDY location),
- Number of rental cars needed and what sizes, and

Additional travelers such as the Board, Board Affairs Specialist, and Public Affairs that may also be traveling on the initial deployment.

Always book a round-trip itinerary to save the service fee even when the return date is not certain at the booking time (we can always change the return date easily during travel).

### **Will I need to complete a travel authorization for deployment return?**

Yes. Travel authorizations need to be prepared by travelers or an administrative staff member and approved by supervisors.

### **Am I required to complete a travel authorization for non-deployment travel?**

Yes. Travel authorizations need to be prepared by travelers or other staff members and approved by supervisors at least 10 calendar days, to the extent possible, before travel to ensure travelers know what expenses will be reimbursed before they are incurred.

### **How soon will I need to cancel a reservation prior to scheduled travel?**

CSB can reimburse travelers for the TMC if trips are cancelled/changed for business reasons, weather, or emergency reasons with supervisor approval. Generally, travelers will not be reimbursed TMC fees if a trip is cancelled for non-emergency, personal reasons, or if the traveler (or individual making travel arrangement) forgets to cancel a reservation in a timely manner.

## **BO 049 – TRAVEL POLICY APPENDIX B: Approved Travel Frequently Asked Questions and Answers**

If any part of your travel is not booked via ConcurGov or NT, the traveler is responsible for canceling travel arrangements to avoid the charge (e.g., lodging is booked separately and directly with the hotel, either by the traveler or by the conference organizer).

### **When is it acceptable to book with non-contract carriers?**

- a) Space on a scheduled contract flight is not available in time to accomplish the purpose of your travel, or the use of a contract service would require you to incur unnecessary overnight lodging costs that would increase the total cost of the trip.
- b) The contract carrier's flight schedule is inconsistent with explicit policies of your federal department or agency regarding scheduling travel during normal working hours.
- c) A non-contract carrier offers a lower fare to the general public that, if used, will result in a lower total trip cost to the government (the combined costs of transportation, lodging, meals, and related expenses considered).

NOTE: Exception c) does not apply if the contract carrier offers the same or lower fare and has seats available at that fare, or if the fare offered by the non-contract carrier is restricted to Government and military travelers performing official business and may be purchased only with a government travel card or centrally billed accounts.

Before purchasing a non-contract fare, travelers must meet one of the exception requirements listed above (a, b, & c), obtain a supervisor's approval, and upload the approval with their travel authorization in ConcurGov. Typically for initial deployments, justification a) or b) would most likely be the case for using a non-contract carrier.

If the non-contract fare is non-refundable, restricted, or has specific eligibility requirements:

- i) Travelers must know or reasonably anticipate, based on their planned trips, that they will use the ticket; and
- ii) The agency (supervisor) must determine that the proposed non-contract transportation is practical and cost effective for the Government.

### **If my flight is canceled and I'm offered a voucher, can I keep it, or should it be returned to CSB?**

Travelers performing official travel should specify that they will need to receive a check, written out to the "Treasurer of the United States," rather than receiving travel vouchers. If the airline is unable to provide the travel with a check, a voucher for free transportation can be accepted (restrictions may apply). This is the same as 'involuntary bumping.'

**INVOLUNTARY 'BUMPING:'** If travelers are performing official travel and the airline denies them a confirmed seat on a plane (due to an oversold flight) and offers a payment because of this, travelers should request a check rather than a travel voucher. All checks should be made out to the "Treasurer of the United States" as the payee on the compensation check and forward the



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check to CSB Finance. CSB Finance, in turn, will forward the check to BFS to post it to CSB general fund.

If this occurs and the only available flight is the next day, additional lodging and any necessary travel expenses to transit to the lodging and back to the airport are authorized within the guidelines of the travel policy. The supervisor should be notified as soon as possible if this occurs.

### **When is it acceptable to change flights (for example, if I can or need to return to my residence earlier than previously scheduled)?**

Travelers may choose to change their flights to an earlier time in order to return home earlier from a trip if the return flight is with a contract airfare with a contract carrier, no justification is needed. If not, the same exception criteria apply to non-contract carriers. These are:

- a) Space on a scheduled contract flight is not available in time to accomplish the purpose of your travel, or the use of a contract service would require you to incur unnecessary overnight lodging costs that would increase the total cost of the trip.
- b) The contract carrier's flight schedule is inconsistent with explicit policies of your federal department or agency regarding scheduling travel during normal working hours.
- c) A non-contract carrier offers a lower fare to the general public that, if used, will result in a lower total trip cost to the government (the combined costs of transportation, lodging, meals, and related expenses considered).

If the non-contract fare is non-refundable, restricted, or has specific eligibility requirements:

- i) Travelers must know or reasonably anticipate, based on their planned trips, that they will use the ticket; and
- ii) The agency (supervisor) must determine that the proposed non-contract transportation is practical and cost effective for the Government.

Supervisors should approve this prior to making changes. This is similar to 'voluntary bumping.'

**'VOLUNTARY BUMPING:'** If travelers finish their work at the TDY but volunteer to get bumped, then they will receive a voucher from the airline, and they can keep the voucher for themselves. However, please note that any additional travel related expenses that are incurred as a result of voluntarily vacating your seat will not be reimbursed.

### **If I stay an additional night for personal reasons, how do I justify the cost of the flights at a time different than the end of my TDY?**

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When booking travel, travelers must compare the actual return flights due to staying additional nights for personal reasons against their official return flights and document that info in their authorizations.

If the costs are different between the two, personal vs. business, then the traveler will be reimbursed for the lesser amount of the personal or the business flight.

### **Can I upgrade my seat on a flight?**

Travelers can be reimbursed for an upgrade to their seat if one of three below scenarios apply:

- When the airline will only guarantee a seat on a flight if it is an upgraded seat.
- The traveler requires a medical accommodation (which must be medically supported and approved by a supervisor prior to travel).
- When the flight time is 5 hours or longer, and the traveler is working during transit.

NOTE: Travelers must request approval for seating upgrades from their supervisor prior to departure, and documentation (approved business reason or medical accommodation) must be included in the traveler's authorization.

### **Am I allowed to access/pay for WIFI on a flight while traveling on official CSB business?**

Authorization for in-flight Wi-Fi will be permitted on a case-by-case basis, which will be determined by the traveler's supervisor. Below is the guidance to follow:

- All travelers should request to use in-flight Wi-Fi with a brief explanation of the business that must be performed in-flight to their supervisor. Whenever practical, requests should be done in advance of travel. The traveler must include their request, as well as their supervisor's approval with their travel voucher as justification for the expense.
- Unless there is an urgent need, travelers should refrain from using Wi-Fi on flights of an hour or less.
- Travelers are responsible for understanding how the airline charges for Wi-Fi use and ensuring that only minimal expenses are incurred to conduct CSB business.

### **For deployments, should I check my go-kit on the plane or ship it to and from my duty station?**

Either is acceptable. Whichever is more convenient to the deployed traveler AND ensures the equipment is available when needed.

### **When is it acceptable to use another form of transportation other than air travel?**

Rail, bus, private car or other public conveyances may be used but their costs are limited to the cost of the air contract carrier.

### **When is it acceptable to park at the airport?**

Any approved travel that is 7 days or less.

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For a lengthy travel period or deployment (anything more than 7 days) travelers should use cabs or other conveyance to travel to the transportation center/airport.

If the traveler takes personal time during travel (i.e., traveler stays at the TDY location after their business has been completed, their airport parking reimbursement will be pro-rated based on the business travel dates).

### **When is it acceptable to use valet parking?**

Valet parking is acceptable when it is the only option at the Lodging or TDY site, or when there is no additional cost to the government.

### **What if I cannot get a hotel at the per-diem rate close to the business place?**

With the exception of deployments, travelers need to justify the costs vs. benefits for them to stay in the hotel. Factors can include the cost of cab fares, the distance from the hotel to the TDY location, the time travelers need to commute between the lodging hotel and the business place, and the time and/or need to engage in the events with other stakeholders that will take place prior or after the main business meetings, etc.

The supervisor must approve lodging above per diem in advance of travel and the authorization and voucher should include the justification.

### **What if the hotel refuses to remove taxes from my bill?**

When travelers use a government travel card (IBA) for their business travel, their lodging costs may be exempt from some of the hotel taxes. CSB travelers are recommended to ask for tax exemption from hotels. However, if denied, they can submit lodging taxes with their vouchers and will be reimbursed for them.

States where IBA cards are exempt require the traveler to present a State Tax Exempt Letter which can be found at: <http://www.gsa.gov/portal/content/212667>.

### **If I stay an additional day while on government travel for personal reasons, am I eligible for the Per Diem rate (also referred to as the Federal Room rate) for the additional night(s)?**

You can ask the hotel for the Federal Room rate (termed Extra Value for You, XVU) or *use Federal Room.com* to book leisure portions of lodging (Rates are supported by the official Government lodging program managed by GSA). The Federal Room rate is negotiated by the Government for Federal Government travelers and offers:

- Rates that are always at and often below per diem
- A 4 p.m. or later day-of-arrival cancellation policy
- No hidden costs or penalties
- No charge for early check-out

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### **Can I use Transportation Network Company (Uber/Lyft/etc.) in place of a regular cab/taxi?**

Yes, if the cost of unlicensed taxis like Uber is comparable to licensed taxis in the area. Travelers may create their business profiles within the Uber application to pay for its service from their government travel cards.

### **Is the usage of a rental car permissible?**

Yes, with supervisor approval.

### **Am I required to rent a compact car?**

With the exception of deployments, travelers must use the least expensive compact car available, unless an exception for another class of vehicle is approved. The CSB will approve these exceptions on a case-by-case basis, and travelers must indicate the reason for the exception on the travel authorization request. The CSB will authorize the rental of a sedan other than a compact car if one of the following applies:

- a) When a compact car cannot accommodate a medical disability or other special needs that the renter may have. See Board Order 032, Reasonable Accommodation Procedure for guidance on how to request a reasonable accommodation.
- b) When a compact car cannot sensibly transport all the equipment needed to adequately fulfill a CSB mission.
- c) When the cost of other than a compact car is less than or equal to the cost of the least expensive compact car.
- d) When additional room is required to accommodate multiple employees authorized to travel together in the same rental vehicle.
- e) When travelers must carry a large amount of government material needed for official business and a compact rental vehicle does not have enough space.
- f) When necessary for safety reasons, such as during severe weather or having to travel on rough or difficult terrain.

### **What insurance is available through the government when renting a vehicle for official business?**

When renting a car for official travel, travelers should always ask for the government rate, which includes the Government Administrative Rate Supplement (GARS). The GARS is charged at \$5/day, which includes automatic unlimited mileage and collision damage insurance. Travelers should always ensure the GARS is included on their rental agreement. GARS will cover the rental vehicle only when used for official purposes, limited to transportation:

- a) Between places of official business;
- b) Between official business locations and places of temporary lodging when public transportation is unavailable, or its use is impractical.
- c) Between either places of business at a TDY location or lodging facility at a TDY location and restaurants when a restaurant is not near the lodging or work places, drug stores, barber shops, places of worship (should be the nearest church/temple that matches the

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traveler's belief), cleaning establishments, and similar places necessary for the sustenance, comfort, or health of the employee to foster the continued efficient performance of government business.

NOTE: Travel to the places listed must be to the nearest location available, as otherwise authorized by the agency for unusual situations. The government cannot reimburse travelers for Collision Damage Waiver, theft, or other optional insurances. Therefore, the renter must decline this option when it is offered at the rental company.

### **Can I use the rental car for personal travel (for example if I must stay over the weekend during a deployment)?**

Rental cars are to be used for official business purposes per the FTR and CSB Travel Policy. Travelers are not covered by the government's insurance if they are operating the rental car for their own personal entertainment (e.g., to see a movie or take a sightseeing tour).

### **Are family members and contractors covered by the government insurance if they are passengers in a car rented for official CSB business?**

Only government employees traveling on official CSB business are covered by GARS and should be transported in rental cars.

Travelers are discouraged from allowing contractors to ride in rental cars without a compelling reason.

### **What is the policy on purchasing fuel for car rentals?**

Travelers are not reimbursed for purchasing pre-paid refueling options for rental cars. Therefore, travelers are required to refuel their rentals prior to returning their vehicle to the drop-off location.

NOTE: If it is not possible to refuel completely prior to returning the vehicle because of safety issues or the location of closest fueling station, travelers will be reimbursed for vendor refueling charges. However, this needs to be justified/explained and will be approved only on a case-by-case basis, in very limited situations (e.g., business meetings extend beyond anticipated time that could have resulted in missing a flight.)

### **How will I be reimbursed for tolls while operating a rental car for official business?**

Track and claim each individual toll paid for official business. If you are unsure of the amount, acquire it from your government charge card prior to submitting your voucher or if cash is paid get a receipt or conduct internet research on the toll road. Receipts for \$75 or less are not required.

### **Are we allowed to use frequent customer programs?**

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Yes. Conversely, travelers are not allowed to select a travel service provider just to obtain the frequent traveler benefits per the FTR and CSB's travel policy. However, travelers can use their earned frequent flyer mileage points to upgrade their seats or class of service for their travel provided the government does not incur additional costs.

Travelers can also keep promotional benefits or materials received from the airlines that they earned from official travel for their personal use, if these benefits are at no cost to the government.

Travelers will not be reimbursed for fees associated with rental car loyalty points or the transfer of points charged by car companies.

### **What are the policies for international travel (forms, travel class)?**

Review BO 045, Foreign Travel, and contact Financial Operations as soon as you become aware of a potential foreign trip to understand the rules and timelines for international travel.

Travelers should also inform IT of international travel to ensure their mobile phones and Wi-Fi devices do not incur additional fees when used internationally.

### **What are the government policies on tipping? How much can I tip my cab driver?**

The CSB Travel Policy allows travelers to give and be reimbursed for tips not to exceed 25% of the cost.

### **Will I get reimbursed if I use my government credit card to buy alcohol with dinner?**

Travelers can use the card to buy wine/alcohol if it is part of the meal and when the traveler is not required to submit his receipts to get reimbursed for his M&IE per diems. However, when travelers submit their meal receipts to get reimbursed for the actual expense (this may happen very occasionally, such as when travelers part-take in conference meals that charge higher than regular meals) then the wine or alcohol drinks should be paid separately on their personal credit/debit cards.

### **Are ATM fees reimbursable?**

Per CSB's travel policy, only ATM fees incurred on the Government Travel Card during TDY for travel purposes will be reimbursed.

### **Is laundry, cleaning, and the pressing of clothing expenses reimbursable?**

Yes, if for travel in the Continental United States (the 48 contiguous states and the District of Columbia) if the traveler incurs a minimum of four consecutive nights of lodging on official travel.

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No, if for travel outside the Continental United States. Laundry, cleaning and pressing of clothing expenses are included in the incidental allowance and are not reimbursed separately.

### **What is the policy on travel during working hours? When can I claim Travel Comp versus Overtime?**

See HR for CSB’s current policy. Both Travel Comp time and overtime require advanced approval by a supervisor.

### **How many days are permissible for completing travel vouchers in ConcurGov?**

Vouchers should be submitted within 5 business days after the trip is completed.

### **What is the approved spending limit that does not require a receipt when submitting my voucher?**

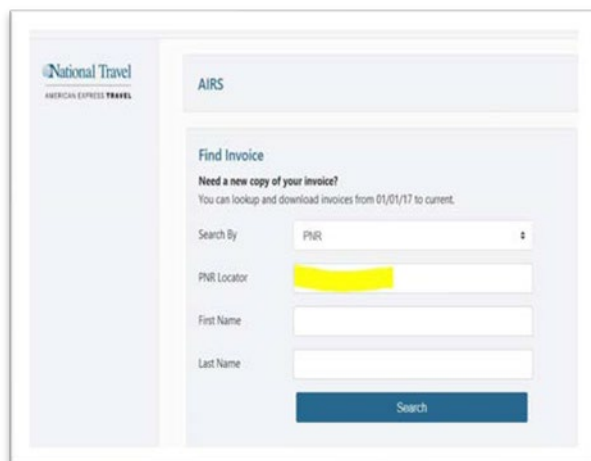
In general, expenses of \$75 or less do not require a receipt. Any expenses exceeding \$75 will always require a receipt. Also, common carrier transportation (air, rail, bus, ship, and ferry boats), lodging, and rental cars always require a receipt, regardless of the dollar amount.

### **What should I do if I get an error that requires justification in ConcurGov? (e.g., accounting codes prior to submitting my travel authorization or voucher?)**

Travelers can refer to the accounting codes provided by the Office of Financial Operations and select the accounting code suitable for their travel category. If the accounting code has not been in ConcurGov then travelers just need to enter “to be input by Finance” to get through the system.

### **Is there a way I can track my airline receipts/and or train receipts to add to my voucher?**

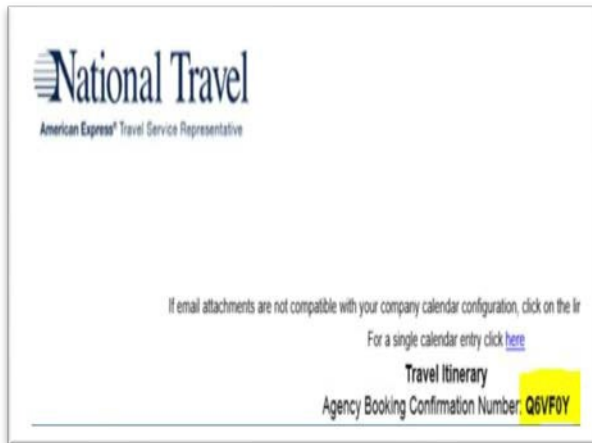
Air travel receipts can be retrieved from: <https://client.nationaltravel.com/Airs/>



The screenshot shows the 'AIRS' section of the National Travel website. It features a 'Find Invoice' form with the following fields: 'Search By' (set to 'PNR'), 'PNR Locator' (with a yellow highlight), 'First Name', and 'Last Name'. A blue 'Search' button is located at the bottom of the form. The page also includes a header for 'National Travel' and 'AMERICAN EXPRESS TRAVEL'.

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The AIRS page will appear, you will need to enter the Passenger Name Record (PNR) as the Agency Booking Confirmation Number located on your itinerary:



When there is a change during travel, the traveler(s) can access their ticket information by logging onto the above site and update changes, such as:

- Retrieve and upload all ticket information applicable to the trip, to show/track all changes that occurred during travel.
- All tickets issued throughout travel must be accounted for and submitted into the system to ensure calculation accuracy.

Travelers must follow up with NT to resolve any issues regarding additional costs or refunds incurred during travel. NT will either post the refund to their website or they may put you in touch with their Accounting Department. This process may take a while to process.

NOTE: Train receipts: Travelers must upload their actual Amtrak ticket(s) reflecting the costs for their vouchers as NT does not track train fares in their system. NT only has the pre-travel train fare when booking.

### **How can I prevent making adjustments and/or corrections to my ConcurGov documents?**

- Ensure that mandatory receipts (air/train, hotel, rental car and all expenses exceeding \$75) are uploaded with vouchers.
- Ensure that all air tickets, costs, and refunds are accounted for.
- Ensure that train fares are correct using the actual receipts or check your travel card statement. Do not rely on NT's website for train fares.
- If there are any expenses listed in the authorization tab that were not incurred during travel, please remove them to avoid confusion before adding new expenses to vouchers.
- Check the estimated costs for "Authorizations" vs. "Actual Expenses" on vouchers to confirm that there are no duplications and that nothing is missing due to oversight.
- Ensure that all travel expenses have the dates within the range of the travel period to avoid "hard fail" by ConcurGov, which prevents travelers from submitting their vouchers electronically in ConcurGov.



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- Ensure that hotel receipts are itemized for the lodging rate for each individual night and its respective lodging taxes (if any). Please do not lump all of your hotel nights together.
- If charged taxes when parking at a hotel, the taxes must be added to the parking cost as a whole. **Please do not add parking taxes with lodging taxes.**
- If actual lodging occurs (i.e., lodging rate is more than per diem), travelers need to enter the actual rate and check “Actual Lodging” button under “Show Per Diems Conditions” next to the lodging rate in the voucher and copy that Per diem condition to all applied dates.
- If travelers are dropped off and picked up at the airport, they are entitled to double POV mileage reimbursement for each way, provided that the cost does not exceed the cab fare.
- If travelers return on the early morning hours (past midnight) of the next day after their approved end travel date, they must update their trip end date in their voucher, under the “General/Trip Information” section but leave the departure date intact. Consequently, when this occurs, travelers are entitled to full M&IE Per Diem the day they were supposed to arrive home and partial M&IE Per Diem on the day they actually arrive home. Please confirm that an additional night for lodging has not been entered for that date (please double check this and remove it from the voucher since the system will add it in when travelers extend their travel date to the next day.) See the screenshot below:

The screenshot displays a web-based interface for managing travel vouchers. The top navigation bar includes tabs for Summary, Profile, General, Expenses, Exceptions, Accounting, Advances, Totals, Confirmation, and Perform Pre-Audit. The main content area is divided into sections: Document Information, Trip Information, and Itinerary Locations. The Trip Information section shows details for Trip No. 1, with departure and return locations set to RES: Lakewood, CO. The trip duration is multiple days, starting on 03/23/2015 and ending on 03/28/2015. A checkbox for 'Allow changes to reservations to shorten this trip' is checked. The Itinerary Locations section shows a table with one entry for Torrance, CA, with an arrival date of 03/23/2015 and a departure date of 03/27/2015. The purpose of the trip is listed as INVESTIGATION.

Please note the “Lodge Allowed” and “M&IE Allowed,” are the correct Per Diem amounts travelers are entitled for this scenario:

Per Diem Allowances							
Details	Edit	Date	Per Diem Rate	Ldg Cost	Ldg Allowed	M&IE Cost	M&IE Allowed
▶	✎	03/23/15	71.00	172.50	172.50	53.25	53.25
▶	✎	03/24/15	71.00	172.50	172.50	71.00	71.00
▶	✎	03/25/15	71.00	172.50	172.50	71.00	71.00
▶	✎	03/26/15	71.00	172.50	172.50	71.00	71.00
▶	✎	03/27/15	71.00	0.00	0.00	53.25	71.00
▶	✎	03/28/15	71.00	0.00	0.00	53.25	53.25