



COMMISSION ON NATIVE CHILDREN – TRAVEL GUIDELINES

TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS

In accordance with the Federal travel regulations, the U.S. Department of the Interior (DOI) will make all travel arrangements.

INVITATIONAL TRAVELER

Invitational travel is a trip authorized for individuals who are not employed. Travel allowances authorized for invitational travelers are the same as those approved for DOI employees. All travel will be arranged from current duty station (i.e., your home address), to location of CNC Regional Hearing, and back home to duty station.

TRAVEL PLANNING

DOI will reach out to you by email or phone. Contact will be made as early as possible to allow time to create and complete your Travel Authorization (TA). An email will include a link with questions to help guide how your TA will be created.

COMBINED OFFICIAL AND PERSONAL TRAVEL

A traveler who wishes to perform personal travel in conjunction with official travel is responsible for covering all costs associated with the personal portion of the trip when arriving early, departing later, or return to an alternate location. DOI must do a cost comparison of flights for the authorized travel and for requested early/date departure, or alternate location (personal travel).

- If the airfare does not reflect an increase in price, DOI will book the flight and include the cost comparison as part of the Travel Authorization for justification.
 - Pre-authorization prior to travel authorization is approved.
- If there is an increase to the airfare because of personal travel for the requested flight, DOI will only book the flight for the authorized travel dates. Once ticketed, the traveler can call the airline and work directly to change the flight. Any associated expenses due to the change in the ticket will need to be covered by the traveler.
 - Pay any cost associated with personal travel (i.e., lodging, etc.).
 - No *per diem* when trip is extended for personal purposes.

If you are making any changes to the original travel dates, please let Regina or Annette know ASAP so they can amend your travel authorization to reflect the changes.

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DOI will make travel arrangements and pay for common carrier (aircraft/train), using the most expeditious and cost-effective manner. This may also include personal owned vehicle (POV) when authorized as advantageous to the government.

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Government contract flights can be identified on the FedTravel website to research options in advance. Flights will be made directly by DOI and paid by the DOI. DO NOT use personal credit cards to book your flights, you may risk reimbursement. Flights will only be booked on Government contract carriers.

Baggage check-in: all fees pertaining to one check bag up to the allowable weight limit is reimbursable with receipt. DOI may not authorize excess baggage fees (i.e., more than one check bag) for personal items.

Note: DOI will not reimburse for flight or seat upgrades. Upgrades must be arranged by you directly with the airline and paid out-of-pocket.

If a traveler encounters a situation where you will miss your common carrier or it was cancelled, you will need to speak directly to a representative by calling the following number (855) 847-6398:

Option 1 – DTI Travelers stationed in the lower 48 – normal business hours 7:00 AM – 10:00 PM ET (excluding Federal Holidays).

Option 2 – El Sol Travelers stationed in Alaska – normal business hours 8:00 AM – 6:00 PM Alaska time (excluding Federal Holidays).

Option 3 – El Sol Travelers stationed in Hawaii and Pacific Islands – normal business hours 8:00 AM – 6:00 PM Alaska time (excluding Federal Holidays).

Contacting a travel representative will result in additional fees. Please email DOI of event as additional fees will occur when speaking with a representative and will be noted for the record when closing out your travel.

If you are changing your flights (for any reason) **for official travel**, please work directly with the representative as listed above. Please notify Regina or Annette on any changes to your travel.

LOCAL TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS

Local travel is close distance of the location and typically occurs during normal duty hours. Invitational travelers are not entitled to per diem reimbursement. Mileage reimbursement for local travel by personal owned vehicle is paid at the full GSA mileage rate of \$0.51 per mile when authorized as advantageous to the Government. The traveler will sign the Claim for Reimbursement for Expenditures on Official Business (OF-1164) for mileage.

LODGING ARRANGEMENTS

DOI will make reservations and pay for lodging and taxes only. Upon check in, you will be asked to provide a personal credit card for incidentals. The DOI will not reimburse a traveler for any personal charges billed to the room. You should arrange to pay these types of charges separately. To be on the safe side, **please keep your lodging receipts.**

If you arrange to stay outside of the host hotel, please seek prior approval. Reimbursement for staying outside hotel will reflect on your TA at the maximum government lodging per diem amount for location and receipt is required. DOI will reimburse for lodging only. Taxes, cleaning fees, and other fees are not reimbursable.

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ALLOWABLE M&IE REIMBURSEMENT RATE

Travelers receive the standard GSA *per diem* allowance for meals and will be reimbursed to the traveler through direct deposit after the travel is complete. The *per diem* is a standard rate and the traveler assumes the cost for meals in excess of the allowance and receipts are not required. See

<https://www.gsa.gov/travel/plan-book/per-diem-rates>. M&IE allowance is a set amount that traveler receives based on the pre-authorized temporary duty location. You will pay for meals out-of-pocket, and receipts are not required.

- When the travel period is more than 12 hours but fewer than 24, the M&IE allowance is calculated based on 75 percent of the maximum per diem rate for the locality.
- Any provided meals will be deducted from the *per diem*.
- No per diem when trip is extended for personal purposes.

If meals are furnished during a meeting, attendees must reduce the M&IE rate by the appropriate amount for each meal.

GROUND TRANSPORTATION

You will be reimbursed for travel expenses for taxis, shuttle, Uber/Lyft, etc.

- To/from home to airport, or
- Airport parking (whichever is cheaper of the two).
- To/from the airport to host hotel.
- Mileage for use of personal owned vehicle (POV) if authorized as advantageous to the Govt using the GSA mileage rate.

Please keep receipts. A good practice when a receipt is not provided, take a picture with your phone of the meter showing your total charge as this can serve as your receipt. If you choose to tip your driver, DOI will only reimburse up to 20%.

DOI will arrange transportation for the whole group if the agenda indicates meeting at different locations (i.e., site visits, etc.) Invitational travelers are not allowed rental vehicles and will be an out-of-pocket expense.

When in doubt, please ask before making any changes or charges that are not authorized on your travel authorization.

WHAT IF I NEED TO CANCEL MY TRIP?

If you are unable to travel after all arrangements have been made, please notify DOI (Regina or Annette) with as much advanced notice as possible to cancel all travel. DOI will cancel flight for refund and coordinate with the hotel to eliminate any costs for a NO SHOW.

WHAT STEPS DO I NEED TO TAKE WHEN I COMPLETE MY TRAVEL?

You will need to submit all receipts within 3-business days of your return.

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WHAT EXPENSES REQUIRE A RECEIPT?

If no receipt is provided, take a picture of transaction as proof.

- Ground transportation (i.e., taxi, shuttle, Uber/Lyft/etc.).
- Airport/Amtrak parking (e.g., you drove from home to airport/Amtrak and parked in paid structure).
- Baggage fee (e.g., authorized one checked luggage up to the allowable weight limit) depart and return.
- Hotel receipt provided directly to you.

WHAT ARE NON-REIMBURSABLE EXPENSES?

You will not be reimbursed for any of the following:

- Flight change or seat upgrades.
- Charges incurred on a flight.
- Personal charges to the room (i.e., room service, laundry, etc.).
- Rental cars and any associated fees.
- Baggage fee for more than one checked bag.
- Any other items not on your approved Travel Authorization.

IS THERE A CHECKLIST OF RECEIPTS TO TURN IN?

Receipts can be either scanned or picture via phone.

Check list:

- ☐ Ground transportation home to airport/Amtrak.
- ☐ Baggage check-in for departure.
- ☐ Ground transportation airport/Amtrak to hotel.
- ☐ Ground transportation hotel to airport/Amtrak.
- ☐ Baggage check-in for return.
- ☐ Ground transportation airport/Amtrak to home.
- ☐ Airport parking.

WHO DO I SEND MY RECEIPTS TO?

Travel Receipts can be sent to Regina Gilbert at regina.gilbert@bia.gov and Annette Romero at annette.romero@bia.gov. Call if you have any questions (505) 563-3807 or at (202) 834-1213.

ONCE RECEIPTS ARE PROVIDED, WHAT CAN I EXPECT?

Once all receipts are provided, DOI will create a Travel Voucher. A TV will be sent for your review, signature/date, and returned. By signing the voucher, you are confirming all charges are accounted. Once all approving signatures are received, the travel voucher will be finalized for processing.

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TRAVEL REIMBURSEMENT?

A direct deposit will be made to the banking institute you've identified on your ACH Form within 10-days after final approvals are made.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Travel Arrangements and Travel Vouchers:

Regina Gilbert: (505) 563-3807 or regina.gilbert@bia.gov

Annette Romero at annette.romero@bia.gov