

# INSTRUCTORS



**GREG SEE**  
**ASSISTANT DIRECTOR**  
**MAINTENANCE DIVISION**



**TROY RORMAN**  
**NATIONAL BUSINESS AGENT**  
**CENTRAL REGION**

# DEFINITION

**ELM 438.11** - Definitions relevant to pay during travel or training include the following:

- **a. Travel time-** time spent by an employee moving from one location to another during which no productive work is performed and excluding the normal mealtime if it occurs during the period of travel.
- **b. Local commuting area-** the suburban area immediately surrounding the employee's official duty station and within a radius of 50 miles.

# REGULAR COMMUTING

➤ **ELM 438.121** Commuting time before or after the regular workday between an employee's home and official duty station or any other location within the local commuting area is a normal incident of employment and is not compensable. It is not compensable regardless of whether the employee works at the same location all day or commutes home after the workday from a location different from the one where the workday started.

# COMMUTING TO DIFFERENT WORK SITES

➤ **ELM 438.122** Commuting time to and from work is not compensable when an employee is called back to work after the completion of the regular workday. However, such commuting time is compensable if the employee is called back to work at a location other than his or her regular work site.

# COMMUTING WITH A BREAK IN DUTY STATUS

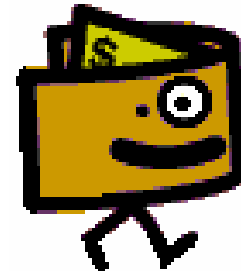
- **ELM 438.123** When an employee is employed to work on a permanent basis at more than One location in the same service day, the time spent commuting between the locations is not compensable travel time, provided there is a break in duty status between the work performed in the different locations.

A break in duty status occurs when an employee is completely relieved from duty for a period of at least 1 hour that may be used for the employee's own purposes. 1-hour or greater period, if the normal meal period occurs during the time interval between the work at the different locations. (See 438.132 or travel time Between job locations when there is no break in duty status)

# TYPES OF COMPENSABLE TRAVEL TIME

## ELM 438.131 General

- The determination of whether travel time is compensable or not depends upon (a) the kind of travel involved, (b) when the travel takes place, and (c) the eligibility of the employee.



# TRAVEL FROM JOB SITE TO JOB SITE

## **ELM 438.132** Basic and Special Pay-

- ✓ Rule- time spent at any time during a service day by an eligible employee in travel from one job site to another without a break in duty status within a local commuting area is compensable. (See 438.123 which makes the travel time noncompensable as commuting time when there is a break in duty status between the work performed in different locations)
- ✓ Eligibility- This type of travel time is compensable for all employees during their established hours of service on a scheduled workday. At all other time, this type of travel is compensable only for FLS-nonexempt employees who are entitled to receive overtime pay.

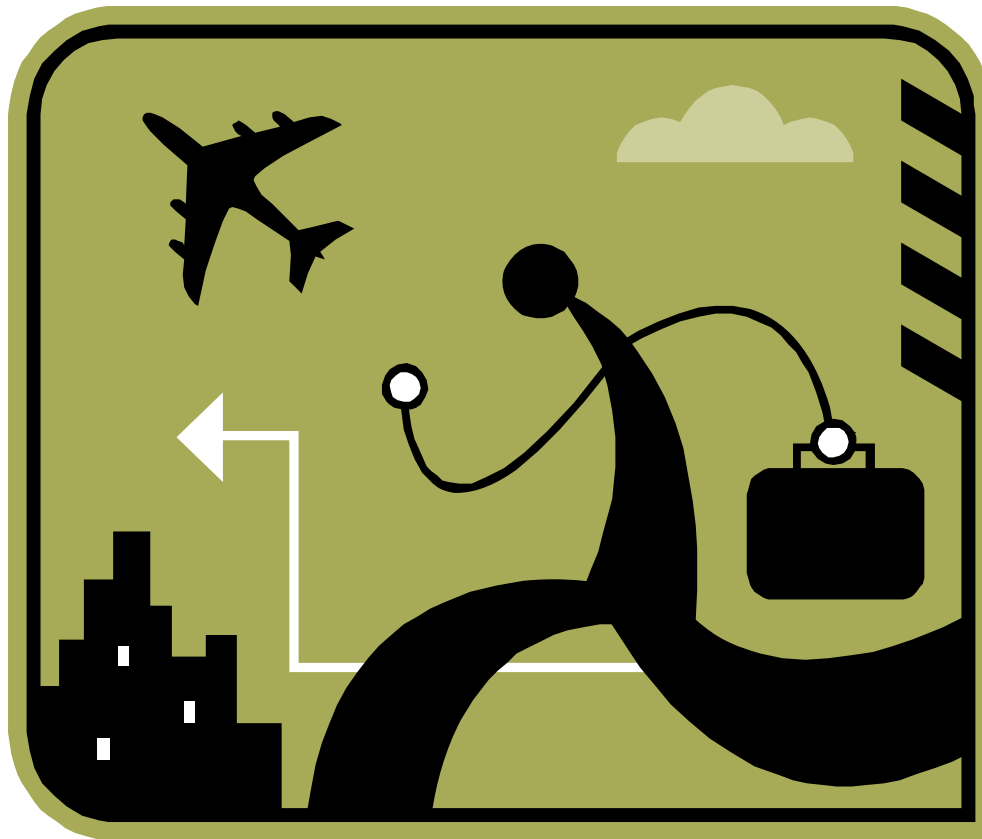
# ONE DAY ASSIGNMENT OUTSIDE THE LOCAL COMMUTING AREA

**ELM 438.133** — The following applies to 1-day assignments outside the local commuting Area:

- a. Rule-** Except as stated in the next sentence, time spent at anytime during a single service day by an eligible employee who is traveling on Postal Service business to one or more locations outside of the local commuting area and back to the home community is compensable. Time spent commuting in either direction between home and an airport , bus terminal, or railroad station within the local commuting area, if it occurs outside of established hours of service on a scheduled workday, and the usual mealtime, must be deducted from compensable travel time.
- b. Eligibility-** This type of travel time is compensable for all employees during their established hours of service on a scheduled workday. At all other times, this type of travel time is compensable only for bargaining unit and non-exempt non bargaining unit employees.



# TRAVEL AWAY FROM HOME OVERNIGHT



# Travel Away From Home Overnight

The following applies to travel away from home overnight:

## **ELM 438.134**

➤ **a. Rule.** Travel time spent by an eligible employee traveling on Postal Service business to and from a postal facility or other work or training site which is outside the local commuting area and at which the employee remains overnight is compensable if it coincides with the normal work hours for a bargaining unit employee's regular bid job regardless of his or her schedule while away from the home installation, or for a non-bargaining employee's schedule in effect while traveling, whether on a scheduled or a non-scheduled day, subject to ELM 438.141 and 438.142.

For instance, an eligible employee with normal work hours of 7:00 p.m. to 3:30 a.m. Saturday through Wednesday is scheduled for training at another location from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. If the employee travels from 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm. on any day of the week, 1.0 travel hour is compensable. If the same employee travels from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 pm on any day of the week, no travel hour is compensable. Compensable travel time includes the time spent in going to and from an airport bus terminal or railroad.

# ELIGIBILITY

## ELM 438.134

➤ **b.** This type of travel time is compensable for all employees on their scheduled workdays. On non-scheduled days, this type of travel time is compensable only for nonexempt employees.

## Intermediate Travel Home

### ELM 438.134

➤ **c.** Employees who are on an extended assignment away from home may be given the opportunity during the assignment to return home for personal convenience.

Although the cost of the round trip is a reimbursable travel expense, the travel time involved is not compensable when it falls outside of the scheduled service week given to the employee during the temporary assignment.

# Scheduling of Travel

## ELM 438.134

➤ d. Travel away from home overnight is to be scheduled by management on a reasonable basis without a purpose either to avoid compensation for the travel time or to make the travel time compensable.

# COMPENSATION PROVISIONS

**ELM 438.15** - Provisions concerning compensation are as follows:

- a. Compensable travel time is counted as work time for pay purposes and is Included in hours worked in excess of 8 hours in a day, 40 hours in a week, or on a Nonscheduled day for a full-time employee, for the determination of overtime for Eligible employees (see 433 and 434.1)
- b. Out-of-schedule premium, nonbargaining rescheduling premium, and guaranteed Time are not payable to employees while traveling away from home overnight.
- c. Night differential is paid to eligible employees during those hours of compensable Travel between 6:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m. on either a scheduled or nonscheduled day.
- d. Sunday premium is paid to eligible employees for paid travel time during a scheduled tour that includes any part of a Sunday.

# SPECIFIC RULES ON COMPENSATION FOR TRAINING TIME



# General



## ELM 438.221

The determination of whether time spent in training is compensable depends upon (a) when the training takes place; (b) the category of training, subject to applicable limitations on paid training hours (See 711 and 712); and (c) the eligibility of the employee



# Your Responsibilities as a Traveler

**F-15, 2-1, Pg. 9, 2004 Ed.**

When traveling on official business, you represent the Postal Service. You are, therefore, expected to perform your duties in a professional manner and with the same care and prudence as if you were traveling at your own expense.



**Specifically, you must do  
all of the following:**

**F-15, 2-1, Pg. 9, 2004 Ed.**



1. Comply with the policies stated in the handbook. Title 39, Section 410 of the United States Code gives the Postal Service the authority to establish its own travel policy. This handbook presents the current policy.

**Specifically, you must do  
all of the following...**

**F-15, 2-1, Pg. 9, 2004 Ed.**

**2. Plan your itinerary to accomplish your purpose with minimum Investment of time and expense. The Postal Service gives you as much freedom as possible within the guidelines of this handbook to decide what expenditures are necessary, and it reimburses you for allowable expenses that you incur while conducting official business.**

**Specifically, you must do  
all of the following...**

**F-15, 2-1, Pg. 9, 2004 Ed.**

**3. Select the least costly mode of transportation that provides adequate service. The Postal Service is committed to conserving energy and reducing travel costs; you must consider these factors when selecting modes of transportation.**



# **Specifically, you must do all of the following...**

**F-15, 2-1, Pg. 9, 2004 Ed.**

4. Schedule your departure and arrival in order to conduct business as efficiently as possible.
5. Claim reimbursement only for allowable expenses and settle your travel advances promptly.
6. Submit the eTravel expense report as soon as possible after your travel is completed but no later than the end of the accounting month in which you completed travel.
7. If, after your tickets were issued, the carrier made any changes in services or destination which reduced your fare, be sure to obtain a refund coupon from the carrier. The Postal Service must have this.

# AUTHORIZING TRANSPORTATION

**F-15, 2-2.1 - 2004 Ed.**

The Postal Service allows employees to rent vehicles such as automobiles, boats, aircraft, or other vehicles for travel on official business within or outside the designated duty station, if this is advantageous to the Postal Service. The vehicle rented should provide the least costly type of transportation available.

Approving officials must approve the use of a privately owned vehicle (POV) or rental vehicle before expenses are incurred.

Approving officials may approve the use of a General Services Administration (GSA contracted vehicle only after determining that no vehicle owned or leased by the Postal Service is available.

# **AUTHORIZING INTERMEDIATE TRIPS HOME**

**F-15, 2-2.4 - 2004 Ed.**

When the extended duty assignment or detail is activated, the officials who approve the travelers' expense vouchers determine the frequency of their intermediate travel home. See 8-1,9 for more information about trips home during extended travel.

The Postal Service does not pay for travel costs for intermediate trips to any locations other than your permanent duty station; these costs will not be approved by the approving officials.

# H0C-NAC-19002

## 1/12/06 DOCKINS/BELL

LABOR RELATIONS



Mr. Greg Bell  
Director, Industrial Relations  
American Postal Workers  
Union, AFL-CIO  
1300 L Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20005-4128



RE: H0C-NAC-19002  
Washington, DC 20260-4100

Dear Mr. Bell:

Recently we discussed in pre-arbitration the above-referenced case which is currently pending national-level arbitration.


The issue in this dispute involves the revisions to Chapter 7, Training and Development, Employee and Labor Relations Manual that was provided to the APWU by letter dated October 2, 1991.

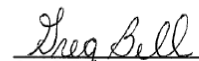
After full and final discussion of all the issues in this matter, the parties agree to the following:

The following provision of Section 716.123 of the ELM that was in affect prior to 1991 change shall be restored:

A weekend return trip is authorized only to the employee's permanent duty station.  
Travel to another location must be authorized in advance by the employee's management.

Please sign and return the enclosed copy of this decision as your acknowledgment of the agreement to settle this case, removing it from the pending national arbitration listing.

  
John W. Dockins  
Manager, Labor Relations  
Contract Administration (APWU)

  
Greg Bell  
Director, Industrial Relations  
American Postal Workers Union,  
AFL-CIO

Date: 1/12/06

“...The following provision of Section 716.123 of the ELM that was in affect prior to 1991 change shall be restored:

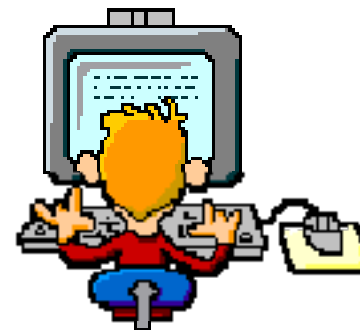
***A weekend return trip is authorized only to the employee's permanent duty station. Travel to another location must be authorized in advance by the employee's management...***”



# REVIEWING AND APPROVING EXPENSE REPORTS

**F-15, 2-2.5 - 2004 Ed.**

All eTravel expense reports must be electronically submitted to the specified approving official. An approving official – or ‘approver’ – is designated for each traveler. The approver has access to eTravel through a personal logon ID and Password. The appropriate approving official reviews the electronic expense Report, Electronic approval and submission of eTravel expense.



# **ELECTRONIC APPROVAL AND SUBMISSION OF e-TRAVEL EXPENSES**

**F-15, 2-2.5 - 2004 Ed.**

**Report to the designated back office signifies the following:**

- a. The approving official has verified that the transportation and expenses comply with postal policy.
- b. The approving official had certified that the transportation and expenses are the most advantageous to the Postal Service.
- c. The approving official had verified that all 'flags' within a report are explained and any 'remarks' entered by the traveler are accurate.

# ISSUES THAT AFFECT TRAVEL POLICY

**F-15, 2-3 - 2004 Ed.**



As you prepare for a trip, be aware that travel policy varies depending upon the following issues:

See the appropriate chapter for the details of the travel policy.

# Duration of the Trip

F-15, 2-3.2 - 2004 Ed.

## a. Duration of the trip.

Travel policy varies depending upon ...

- whether the trip lasts more or less than 1 hours,
- is overnight,
- is between 30 and 180 days,
- or more than 180 days.

## Destination

**F-15, 2-3.6 - 2004 Ed.**

**b.** Policy varies according to whether your destination is less than a 50-mile radius away from your official duty station (local travel); 50-mile radius or more away from your official duty station but within the continental United States (CONUS); Alaska, Hawaii, Puerto Rico, or U.S. possessions; Canada or Mexico; or a country other than Canada or Mexico.

## **Purpose of the trip**

**F-15, 2-3.C - 2004 Ed.**

**c.** Travel policy might be affected depending upon whether the trip is for attending meetings or conferences, training, serving as a witness, serving as a juror, relocating, or conducting official business for the Postal Service.

# **Your Relationship to the Postal Service**

**F-15, 2-3.d - 2004 Ed.**

**d.** If you are an employee of the Postal Service, travel policy varies according to whether you are a bargaining unit employee or nonbargaining unit employee.

If you are not an employee of the Postal Service, the policy varies according to whether you are a potential employee of the Postal Service, expert consultant, outside contractor, member of an advisory council or board, or spouse of an employee of the Postal Service. See Section 2-2.1.

If you are in the Inspection Service, you must follow the instructions issued by the chief postal inspector.

# DEVIATION FROM POLICY

F-15, 2- 4,1 - 2004 Ed.

## What's Allowed:

The Postal Service allows deviations only in extreme circumstances. The Postal Service does not consider those requests for deviations where specific allowance parameters are presented in this handbook. Ignorance of the policy stated in this handbook does not justify a deviation.

- a. An unusual situation arise which is not directly addressed in this policy handbook.
- b. The case is unique.



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## **e-Travel Web Alias**

**F-15, 2- 5.3 – 2004 Ed.**

A web alias is a person designated by the district or plant Manager to assist those travelers within the manager's jurisdiction in creating and submitting an expense report in e-Travel. Only travelers without access to a computer or otherwise designated by their manager to use a web alias will be allowed to have a web alias create and submit expense reports for them.

# FORMS YOU WILL NEED

## F-15, 2- 6 – 2004 Ed.

If you are...	Use This Form...		To...
Preparing to travel	1011	<i>Travel Advance Request and Itinerary Schedule</i> (optional for non-bargaining unit employees)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Get approval for travel.</li> <li>■ Get a travel advance – bargaining unit employees only.</li> </ul> <p><b>Note:</b> The traveler's approving official may decide how much of the itinerary section must be completed.</p>
Returning from non-local travel for bargaining unit employees not enrolled in eTravel	1012	<i>Travel Voucher</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Report an advance.</li> <li>■ Account for a trip cut short or canceled.</li> <li>■ Get reimbursed for travel expenses.</li> </ul>
Returning from non-local travel for employees using eTravel who do not have access to a computer	1012-E	<i>eTravel Expense Report</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Pay government travel card vendor.</li> <li>■ Account for a trip cut short or canceled.</li> <li>■ Reimburse traveler's bank account for travel expenses.</li> </ul>
Returning from local travel for bargaining unit employees not enrolled in eTravel	1164	<i>Claim for Reimbursement for Expenditures on Official Business</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Get reimbursed for official travel expense. (see paragraph 7.1.1.1.3, reimbursement for Local Travel).</li> </ul>

# RETURNING FROM TRAVEL

F-15, 2- 6 – 2004 Ed.

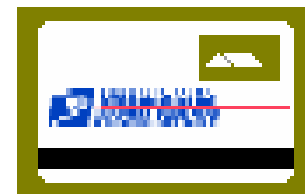
Returning from local travel for employees using eTravel who do not have access to a computer	1164-E	eTravel Expense Report	Reimburse traveler's bank account for local travel in excess of \$15 (see paragraph 7-1.1.1.3, Reimbursement for Local Travel).
Involved in an accident with your rental car	Standard Form 91	<i>Operator's Report of Motor Vehicle Accident</i>	Report damages to rental car while traveling.

# GOVERNMENT TRAVEL CARD SYSTEM

F-15, 3-2.1 – 2004 Ed.

## What It Is-

The Government Travel Card System is a program offered by the Postal Service in which an individual government travel card with automatic teller machine (ATM) privileges issued to designated employees for use while on official travel. If you are issued a travel card, the card is in your name, and charges are billed directly to you for payment.



# IF YOU HAVE THE TRAVEL CARD



**F-15, 3-2.1 – 2004 Ed.**

- a) Transportation, lodging and other travel-related services when traveling on official business for the Postal Service.
- b) Authorized travel of your spouse.
- c) Your immediate family if they are traveling because you are being permanently relocated.

# IF YOU HAVE THE TRAVEL CARD

**F-15, 3-2.1 – 2004 Ed.**

In addition, non-bargaining unit, employees and bargaining unit employees who have individually billed travel cards must use the ATM feature of their card to obtain travel advances. Bargaining unit employees who do not have individually billed travel cards may request an advance by filling out PS Form 1011, Travel Advance Request and Itinerary Schedule. For more information on advances, see 4-2.

**!** Important: You may not use the government travel card for personal business.

# WHO MAY BE ISSUED A CARD

F-15, 3-2.2 – 2004 Ed.



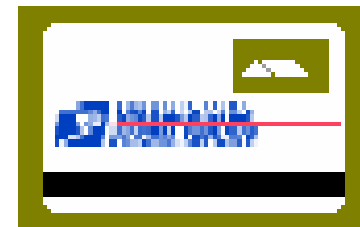
If you are a bargaining unit employee and you are designated a frequent traveler by your facility manager, it is strongly suggested, but not required, that you request an individual government travel card for official travel.

If you are a nonbargaining unit employee, you must have a card. Using the ATM feature of the card is the only way for you to receive a travel advance and you must use your travel card to obtain transportation tickets at the government rate.

# HOW TO REQUEST A CARD

F-15, 3-2.3 – 2004 Ed.

1. Obtain an application from your government travel card coordinator.
2. Fill out the application.
3. Have it approved by an approving official (see Appendix C).
4. Return it to your coordinator.





# ISSUANCE OF TRAVEL CARD AND ATM PIN

**F-15, 3-2.3 – 2004 Ed.**

In approximately 2 weeks, the travel card company will send both your travel card and ATM personal identification number (PIN) to the address you specified as your billing address.



# RESPONSIBILITIES OF CARD HOLDER

F-15, 3-2.4 – 2004 Ed.

As a cardholder, you are accountable for all charges made with the card. Therefore, you must always do the following:

1. Protect the card against unauthorized use.
2. Complete eTravel reports and submit receipts to St. Louis Accounting Service Center (ASC) so that payments will be issued to the government travel card vendor on a timely basis.
3. Pay the portion of your monthly travel card bill not directly reimbursed to the Government travel card vendor through eTravel on time.



Reminder: The individual government travel card is for official travel only. Do not use it for personal business.

# IF CARD IS LOST OR STOLEN

F-15, 3-2.4.1 – 2004 Ed.



If your card is lost or stolen, follow these steps:

1. Notify the travel card company. Use the instructions that accompanied the card when it was issued to you.
2. Notify your government travel card coordinator.



# CANCELLATION OF THE CARD

F-15, 3-2.6.1.1 – 2004 Ed.



If You Voluntarily Cancel Your Card...

If you have an individually billed travel card, you should voluntarily cancel your card only when retiring or terminating your employment with the Postal Service.

# GETTING THE APPROVAL

F-15, 4-1, Pg. 25 - Feb. 2004 Ed.

The approval process varies depending upon where you are going, for how long, and for what reason. This chapter explains the procedure for regular travel, extended duty assignments or details, and travel outside The United States.



# HOW TO GET APPROVAL

F-15, 4-1.1.2 - 2004 Ed.

Follow the steps below to get approval for your trip:

1. Make your travel arrangements. Always use government rates for transportation and lodging. Your approving official must concur with your travel arrangements.

Reminder: Be sure to plan your itinerary to accomplish your purpose with a minimum investment of time and expense.

# HOW TO GET APPROVAL

F-15, 4-1.1.2 - 2004 Ed.

2. Complete PS Form 1011, Travel Advance Request and Itinerary Schedule. This form Conveys your itinerary and travel arrangements to your immediate supervisor and the approving official. See Appendix B for complete information on how to fill out PS Form 1011.

(If you are a bargaining unit employee who does not have an individually billed travel Card, PS Form 1011 also conveys your request for an advance of money for travel. For more information, see 4.2.)

3. Submit the completed PS Form 1011 to your immediate supervisor, who then forwards it to an approving official for approval.

# HOW TO GET APPROVAL

F-15, 4-1.1.2, Pg. 26 - 2004 Ed.

The approving official reviews the form to be sure that you are making the most advantageous and least expensive travel arrangements.

If you are...	The Approving Official...
a. A bargaining unit employee who does not have an individually billed travel card requesting an advance	Signs and forwards the form to the payment office which then issues your advance.
b. Any other employee	Sends the form back to the employee. Bargaining unit employees need approval for trip even if they use an individually billed card.



# GETTING ADVANCES

F-15, 4-2.1, Pg. 27 - 2004 Ed.

## What's Allowed-

Bargaining unit employees who do not have individually billed travel cards may request an advance of money to pay for regular travel or travel for training. You must repay the Postal Service for the advance as soon as your travel is complete.

## **If You Are a Bargaining Unit Employee**

**F-15, 4-2.1.1, Pg. 27 - 2004 Ed.**

**4-2.1.1** If you are a bargaining unit employee who does not have an individually billed travel card and are required to travel away from your duty station for official business or training, you may receive an advance to cover the cost of your lodging plus per diem.

# ADVANCES AND THE INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE

**F-15, 4-2.2, Pg. 28 - 2004 Ed.**

If your travel advance remains outstanding for a period of 120 days or more after your travel is complete, the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) considers that advance to be compensation and, therefore, subject to federal income tax, FICA, and Medicare taxes.

Consequently, the IRS requires employers, such as the Postal Service, to report any Outstanding advances to them, include the amounts in your Form W-2 and Tax Statement, and deduct the appropriate taxes even though you later repay the advance. These regulations apply to both bargaining unit and nonbargaining unit employees.

# Arranging Transportation

**F-15, 5, Pg. 31 - 2004 Ed.**

Transportation includes all official travel by air or surface and any other expenses related to that travel.

This chapter presents your responsibilities for setting up your itinerary, dealing with promotional incentives, and when necessary, performing a cost comparison and obtaining refunds. It also addresses the criteria for determining the method of transportation to use and the procedures for arranging transportation by air, train or bus, Postal Service or General Service Administration (GSA) vehicle, privately owned vehicle, and rented vehicles.

# YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES FOR SETTING UP YOUR ITINERARIES

F-15, 5-1.1, Pg. 31 - 2004 Ed.

When setting up your itinerary, you are responsible for using the method of transportation most advantageous to the Postal Service, taking the most direct route, and using the least expensive services available that still meet your needs. Travel arrangements must have the concurrence of your approving official.

**!** **Important:** The Postal Service has contractual arrangements with specific travel agencies to provide such services as reservations and ticketing for official travel. You must use these travel agencies when arranging transportation.

# **TAKE THE MOST DIRECT ROUTE**

**F-15, 5-1.1.2, Pg. 32 - 2004 Ed.**

## **What's Required-**

You must take the most direct route from place to place. You may travel non-stop.

# TAKE THE MOST DIRECT ROUTE

## H98T-1H-C01200943/62 PENSACOLA, FL

In the Matter of the Arbitration )  
( H98T-1H-C 01200943  
between ) ( Local No: 01JMD006  
( Grievant: Class Action  
UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE ) ( H98T-1H-C 01200962  
( Local No: 01JMD004  
and ) ( Grievant: John M. Davis  
(  
( Post Office: Pensacola, Florida  
AMERICAN POSTAL WORKERS )  
UNION, AFL-CIO )



BEFORE: Arbitrator Mark I. Lurie

APPEARANCES:

For the U.S. Postal Service: James W. Bledsoe  
For the A.P.W.U.: Charlie Robbins

Place of Hearing: Pensacola, Florida Post Office

Date of Hearing: March 8, 2006

Post-Hearing Citations Received and  
the Hearing Declared Closed March 16, 2006

Date of Award: March 17, 2006

Relevant Contract Provision: Article 19

Contract Year: 2000-2006

Type of Grievance: contract

**Award Summary:**

The Arbitrator finds that the term "direct route," as used in Section 5-1.1 of the F-15 Handbook, does not have the meaning attributed by the Postal Service; i.e., the shortest route. Rather, the Arbitrator deems the term "direct route," when applied to the selection of a driving route, to mean any reasonable route that does not include deviations that are unrelated to the objective of the trip. The grievance is sustained. The Service is directed to pay the affected employees for the mileage they each, respectively, drove. The grievance of Section 323.3.d of ASM 13 and of Article 19, insofar as it pertains to the adoption of local forms, is denied.

  
Mark I. Lurie, Arbitrator

“...The Arbitrator finds that the term “direct route,” as used in Section 5-1.1 of the F-15 Handbook, does not have the meaning attributed by the Postal Service; i.e., the shortest route. Rather, the Arbitrator deems the term “direct route,” when applied to the selection of a driving route, to mean any reasonable route that does not include deviations that are unrelated to the objective of the trip...”

# The Consequences

**F-15, 5-1.1.3.2, Pg. 32 - 2004 Ed.**

- If you choose to interrupt your travel or take a less direct route for your personal convenience, the following apply:
  - a. You must obtain prior approval from your approving official.
  - b. Your per diem may not exceed the per diem allowed for uninterrupted travel by a direct route.
  - c. You must provide a cost comparison on your expense report.
  - d. You will be paid the lesser amount from the cost comparison.



# Use the Least Expensive Services Available

F-15, 5-1.1.3.1, Pg. 32 - 2004 Ed.

## What's Required...

- You must use the least expensive services available within reason, balancing the need for efficiency in conducting business against your convenience, safety, and comfort. You must use government rates and discount contract fares arranged by GSA.
- When the least expensive fare is not available or when the least expensive fare would cause you to be unreasonably delayed or inconvenienced, be in substantial discomfort, or have your safety jeopardized, you may use a more expensive service. However, you must weigh the increased cost of the fare against the other costs of the delay to the Postal Service, such as lodging or per diem.

# The Consequences

**F-15, 5-1.1.3.2, Pg. 32 - 2004 Ed.**

If you use a more expensive service, you must do the following:

- 1. Obtain prior approval from your approving official.
- 2. Include a statement on your expense report explaining these factors:
  - a. Why you used the more expensive service.
  - b. How the higher cost service is beneficial to the Postal Service.

## Per Diem

F-15, 5-1.4.3, Pg. 35 - 2004 Ed.

- The estimated per diem is limited to the amount allowable if you had used the approved mode of transportation.
- If your trip included more than one temporary duty station, you must reconstruct the entire trip so that you claim only the per diem periods that you would have claimed if you had used the approved mode of transportation.

**!** IMPORTANT: If using your privately owned vehicle rather than a common carrier takes more time during normal working hours than using the common carrier, you will be charged leave for the excess time.

## **Per Diem**

**F-15, 5-1.4.3, Pg. 35 - 2004 Ed.**

In eTravel, use the Report Remarks feature to record the details of your Cost Comparison when you use your privately owned vehicle instead of a common carrier. Show the cost of travel using by air or train, and the cost of transportation to and from the air or train terminals. Also include any cost of parking that would have been incurred. This is the amount reimbursable for travel.

## **Per Diem cont...**

**F-15, 5-1.4.3, Pg. 35 - 2004 Ed.**

Submit your eTravel reimbursement request using the Privately Owned Vehicle expense type. If the cost for driving is less than what has been determined to be reimbursable, include the full round trip distance in the Privately Owned Vehicle expense entry. If the mileage reimbursement is greater than the amount that has been determined to be reimbursable, divide the reimbursable amount by the current mileage rate, and submit for that amount of mileage through eTravel.

## Per Diem cont...

F-15, 5-1.4.3, Pg. 35 - 2004 Ed.

### Example One:

Airfare	\$250
Taxi To and From Airport	\$ 50
Total Reimbursable Cost	\$300

Mileage To and From Destination:	500
Times Current Mileage Reimbursement Rate	.485
Reimbursable Amount	\$242.50

Claim 500 miles through eTravel using the Privately Owned Vehicle expense type.

## Per Diem cont...

F-15, 5-1.4.3, Pg. 35 - 2004 Ed.

### Example Two:

Airfare	\$250
Taxi To and From Airport	\$ 50
Total Reimbursable Cost	\$300
Mileage To and From Destination:	1,500
Times Current Mileage Reimbursement Rate	.485
Calculated Mileage Reimbursement	\$727.50
Reimbursable Amount	\$300.00
Divided by Current Mileage Reimbursement Rate	.485
Miles to Enter into eTravel Under Privately Owned Vehicle	619

# **5-2 Arranging Air Transportation**

**F-15, 5-2.1.1, Pg. 36 - 2004 Ed.**

## **What's Required:**

- **The Fly America Act requires that you use American air carriers, regardless of cost, convenience, or personal travel preferences. In unusual circumstances, an officer of the Postal Service may authorize an exemption from using American air carriers. You must request this exemption at least 2 weeks before your departure.**
- **You must make reservations as far in advance as possible to allow the Postal Service to take advantage of any special fares that may be available for advance reservations and ticket purchases. However, be aware that certain discounted fares are subject to substantial penalty upon cancellation.**



# How to Make Your Airline Reservation

F-15, 5-2.1.2, Pg. 36 - 2004 Ed.

**Reminder:** You must use the Postal Service contracted travel agency to make airline reservations. The procedure for making your Reservations varies according to whether you are a bargaining or non-bargaining unit employee.

If You Are a...	To Obtain Your Airline Tickets...
a. Bargaining unit employee who does not have an individually billed travel card	Fill out an airline ticketing form to charge the ticket to the appropriate Government Travel Account. For the procedures, contact your supporting finance office.
b. Non-bargaining unit employee or bargaining unit employee who has an individually billed travel card	Use your individually billed government travel card.

# Arranging to Use Your Privately Owned Vehicle

**F-15, 5-2.1.2, Pg. 39 - 2004 Ed.**

## Circumstances That May Justify Use of Your POV

You may receive approval to use your POV in the following circumstances:

- a. It will be advantageous to the Postal Service.
- b. You are on specific assignments, such as investigation and route examinations, customer service travel, and postal systems reviews.
- c. You are participating in civil defense tests and activities. Employees traveling for civil defense purposes to and from emergency locations are considered to be on official business and acting within the scope of their employment.

You may also receive approval to use your POV for personal convenience.

- However, you must submit a cost comparison with your expense report.

See 5-1.4 for information on performing a cost comparison.



# Criteria That the Approving Official Will Use

**F-15, 5-5.1.2, Pg. 40 - 2004 Ed.**

The approving official's decision will be based on, but not limited to, the following criteria:

- a. Whether commercial air, train, or bus service is suitable.
- b. Whether Postal Service or GSA vehicles are available.
- c. Whether using your POV would reduce the overall cost of travel, such as by saving on per diem or local transportation expenses.
- d. Whether using your POV would save time, either travel time or overall work time.
- e. Whether your POV would be used extensively in the vicinity of the temporary duty station.
- f. Whether the vehicle is required for civil defense travel.

# **If You Are Using Your POV as a Personal Convenience**

**F-15, 5-2.1.2, Pg. 41 - 2004 Ed.**

## **Reminder:**

**If you are using your POV only as a personal convenience, you must submit a cost comparison with your expense report.**

**See 5-1.4 for information on performing a cost comparison.**

# Arranging Lodging

**F-15, 6-1, Page 43, 2004 Ed.**



- **Your Responsibilities**

**The Postal Service has contractual arrangements with specific travel agencies to provide lodging reservations for official travel. You should use these agencies when arranging lodging. Your approving official must concur with your travel arrangements.**

**You must make a diligent effort to obtain lodging at a reasonable rate. The policy for allowing actual lodging expenses is not approval to randomly select lodging facilities without regard to cost. The Postal Service does not tolerate any capricious or nondiscretionary use of lodging facilities that charge exorbitant rates.**

**Control over lodging expenses is an integral part of the approving official's management duties.**

# Arranging Lodging

F-15, 6-1, Page 43, 2004 Ed.

- **Important:** If you claim an exorbitant rate for lodging, the approving official will disallow the amount that exceeds the reasonable rate for the location.
- However, if you make reasonable attempts to obtain less costly lodging, but your attempts are unsuccessful, the Postal Service will pay for actual expenses incurred.

# What's Allowed

F-15, 6-2, Page 43, 2004 Ed.

## 6-2.1 General Policy

- The Postal Service reimburses you for actual expenses for lodging when you
- are in travel status for regular travel, extended duty assignments or details, or training.
- If you are in travel status on a non-workday and you require lodging, the Postal Service reimburses you for the expense.
- **Reminder:** Be sure to save your receipts. To be reimbursed, you must attach required receipts to your Receipt Report and send them to Back Office Processing. Receipts must be from a recognized commercial place of lodging — such as a hotel, motel, or boarding house.

## **Lodging During Training**

**F-15, 6-2.3, Page 45, 2004 Ed.**

- **When in-service training or duty is conducted away from your permanent duty station, the responsible officials must make a determined effort to obtain suitable lodging at a rate that will result in lower per diem costs.**
- **That obtained rate becomes the maximum allowed for all participants, whether you use the lodgings or choose to stay elsewhere for personal reasons.**



# **Entering Your Lodging Costs into the e-Travel System**

**F-15, 6-3, Page 46, 2004 Ed.**

## **6-3.1 Hotels and Motels**

- You must enter lodging charges using the hotel expert feature of the e-Travel system and split room rate and taxes into two entries. This allows you to itemize the room charge and tax and to eliminate non-reimbursable charges by designating them as “personal.” Itemization of hotel charges is mandatory in order to eliminate all non-reimbursable charges that may be included in your lodging bill.

## **6-3.2 Leased Lodging**

- You must enter these charges in the e-Travel expense report using the “Rent” expense type. For each rent expense that you include in an e-Travel report, you must include a copy of the summary page of the lease agreement with your receipt report when you send the receipt report to St. Louis Accounting Service Center.

## **6-3.3 If You Are on Detail and Are in Leased Lodging And Go on a Trip**

- In e-Travel, if you are on detail and are in leased lodging and go on a trip, you will claim the lease expense using the “Rent” expense type and the lodging expense while on this trip using the “Hotel” expense type.

# Determining Daily Expenses

F-15, Chapter 7, Page 47, 2004 Ed.

- When traveling for the Postal Service, you are reimbursed for your daily expenses — the money you spend for meals, laundry, and other miscellaneous expenses while you are away from home.
- This chapter explains when you're allowed to claim your actual expenses and when you're allowed to claim per diem. It also explains how per diem works and the fine points of the policy for calculating it.

## Important:

Be aware that the reason for your travel might influence how you determine your daily expenses. [See Chapter 9](#), Handling Expenses for Special Travel Situations, for information on what's allowed if you're traveling as a witness, juror, non-employee of the Postal Service, or in other capacities.

# **When to Claim Per Diem Versus Actual Expenses**

**F-15, 7-1, Page 47, 2004 Ed.**

- **Whether you're allowed to claim per diem or your actual expenses depends on your destination and the duration of your trip.**

# According to Your Destination

F-15, 7-1.1, Page 47, 2004 Ed.

## 7-1.1.1.1 What Constitutes Local Travel

- Local travel is defined as travel to a location within a 50-mile radius of your permanent duty station in which overnight lodging is not needed. If your destination is within a 50-mile radius of your permanent duty station and if you are required to stay overnight, your trip is considered regular travel, not local travel. See 7-1.1.2 for information on what's allowed for regular travel.

## 7-1.1.1.2 What's Allowed

- For local travel, the Postal Service reimburses you for your actual expenses — all reasonable subsistence expenses that you incur as a result of your official travel. You are not eligible to claim per diem. Specifically, you are entitled to the following:
  - a. Meals that you are required to attend as part of an official business session. You may be reimbursed for out-of-pocket expenses. You are *not* reimbursed for meals that are part of a normal workday, such as a typical lunch break.

## 7-1.1.1.2 Important:

To claim meals that you are required to attend as part of an official business session, you must state on your expense report that attendance was required.

# According to Your Destination

## F-15, 7-1.1, Page 48, 2004 Ed.

- b. Telephone charges necessary for conducting official business.
- c. Miscellaneous expenses such as renting viewgraphs or movie screens for training sessions or meetings.

**Important:** To claim miscellaneous expenses, you must attach a receipt for any expenditure of more than \$50 which you did not download into your report from the pre-populated company card data in the e-Travel system. You must explain the expense in your expense report.

- d. Mileage. When it is advantageous to the Postal Service, you may be authorized to depart directly from and return directly to your home.
- The Postal Service may reimburse you for any mileage that *exceeds* the distance between your home and your *permanent* duty station. If the mileage is less than that between your home and your permanent duty station, you may not claim a mileage reimbursement. You may claim out-of-pocket expenses such as tolls, parking, etc.

- Use the formula below to calculate the amount for which you may be reimbursed.

_____	Mileage from home to <i>temporary</i> duty station
_____	- Mileage from home to <i>permanent</i> duty station
_____	Allowable mileage x Standard mileage rate from Appendix A
_____	Amount you may claim for reimbursement

**Important:** Your daily commute between your residence and your permanent duty station is *not* considered local travel. Getting to work is your responsibility; therefore, you may not claim that mileage.

# Reimbursement for Local Travel

F-15, 7-1.1.1.3, Page 48, 2004 Ed.

## a. For Employees Using the e-Travel System

- An employee who uses the e-Travel system to claim regular travel reimbursements must also use the e-Travel system to claim local travel reimbursements of \$15 or more. The e-Travel system will reimburse the employee through direct payment to the employee's bank account via electronic funds transfer. A check will be issued to bargaining unit employees not using EFT.
- If a claim for local travel reimbursement is less than \$15, the employee should accumulate claims until the cumulative total reaches \$15 or more before submitting an e-Travel report. However, the employee should accumulate claims for just one accounting month before submitting an e-Travel report, even if at the end of the accounting month the cumulative total is less than \$15.

## b. For Employees Not Using the e-Travel System

- An employee not using the e-Travel system to claim regular travel reimbursements should submit all claims for local travel reimbursement using PS Form 1164, *Claim for Reimbursement for Expenditures on Official Business*. The employee will receive reimbursement by cash or check.

# Regular Travel Within the Contiguous United States

F-15, 7-1.1.2, Page 49, 2004 Ed.

- If you are on regular travel within the contiguous United States, including any overnight trips within a 50-mile radius of your permanent duty station, your daily expenses are reimbursed at the per diem rate for that area. The e-Travel system will compute your per diem for you based on the temporary duty station location and the number and type of meals to be deducted that you enter on the per diem expense line entry. **See 7-4** for information on calculating per diem if you are not using the e-Travel system.

# According to the Duration of Your Trip

## F-15, 7-1.2, Page 49, 2004 Ed.

### 7-1.2.1 - Travel Completed Within 12 Hours During the Same Day

- If you are in travel status for less than 12 hours during the same calendar day, no per diem is allowed.

### 7-1.2.2 - Travel Lasting More Than 12 Hours but Less Than 24 Hours With or

#### 7-1.2.2 - Without Lodging

- Without Lodging — If you are in a travel status for 12 hours but less than 24 hours, you are reimbursed 75 percent of a full day's per diem at the rate listed for your travel destination.
- With Lodging — If you are in a travel status for 12 hours but less than 24 hours over a 2-day period and lodging is required, you are reimbursed 75 percent of the 2 days per diem at the rate listed for your travel destination.

### 7-1.2.3 - Extended Duty Assignments or Details

- If you are required to be away from your permanent duty station for more than 6 months, the Postal Service may pay the less expensive of the following:
  - a. Per diem.
  - b. The expenses for transporting your immediate family and household goods. This cost must be less than the estimated per diem for the entire period.
- Only one of the above benefits may be authorized.

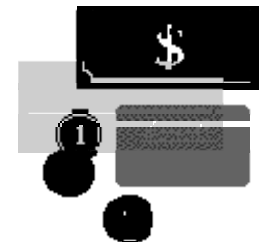


# What Per Diem Includes

F-15, 7-2, Page 50, 2004 Ed.

**Per diem includes the following expenses:**

- a. Meals.
- b. Incidental expenses, such as fees, and any tips to waiters, bellhops and porters, laundry and cleaning expenses.
- c. Laundry and dry cleaning.



# How Per Diem Works

**F-15, 7-3, Page 50, 2004 Ed.**

## 7-3.1 - The Per Diem Calculation

- On the first day of your trip, you are reimbursed 75 percent of the daily per diem rate of your destination, regardless of the time that you left to go on official travel. On the last day of your trip, you are reimbursed 75 percent of the daily per diem rate of the last destination of your trip regardless of the time that you returned to your home or duty station. The location of your permanent duty station or residence is *not* considered a destination for per diem purposes.
- If your trip has a single temporary duty station destination, the per diem for the entire trip is that of your temporary duty station destination. For example: if you travel to Denver, CO, for a 3-day meeting, your per diem for the entire trip is at the rate for Denver.
- If your trip has multiple temporary duty station destinations, the duty station destination where you end the day determines the per diem rate for the entire day. For example: if you travel from Washington, DC, to Minneapolis, MN, for a morning meeting and then travel on to St. Louis, MO, that afternoon for business, and you spend the night in St. Louis, you are reimbursed at the rate for St. Louis for the entire day.

# Different Types of Rates

F-15, 7-3.2, Page 51, 2004 Ed.

## 7-3.2.1 - According to Your Destinations

- Some areas that you travel to are more expensive than others. Per diem rates are set to reflect this difference.
- The high-cost rates are in Appendix A.
- If you travel to several areas with different rates in the same trip, you will need to use different rates for each area. **See 7-4.2.1.2** for more information.

# According to Whether Meals Are Provided



**F-15, 7-3.2.2, Page 51, 2004 Ed.**

- If meals are provided at no cost to you or at a nominal fee, you must reduce the per diem by an appropriate amount.
- For example, meals might be provided to you by any of the following:
- a. If you stay with your immediate family while performing temporary duty at a former permanent duty station from which your family has not moved, you must reduce the cost of per diem for any meals they provide.
- b. The sponsors of a meeting, conference, or training session.
- c. The Postal Service Technical Training Center in Norman, OK, or the Management Academy in Potomac, MD.
- d. An agency of the federal government.
- The amount by which you should reduce your per diem varies according to the meal provided and whether you are traveling in an average-cost or high-cost area of the United States. If you are traveling to a foreign country, you must reduce the per diem by a percentage instead of by a specific amount. See Appendix A for the current amounts or percentages. The e-Travel system calculates per diem for you. You enter the number of breakfasts, lunches, and/or dinners provided in the appropriate fields of the per diem expense type entry.

# Policy for Calculating Per Diem

**F-15, 7-4, Page 51, 2004 Ed.**

- Although the fundamental concept of per diem is straightforward, travel isn't.

When you travel to several areas in one trip, each with different per diem rates, when must you switch from one rate to another? How do you handle combining official travel with annual leave? What about on workdays? Are you eligible for per diem then? This section covers the details on how to calculate per diem in a variety of circumstances.

# While You're Traveling

F-15, 7-2, Chapter 8 - Page 55, 2004 Ed.

- **Whether you claim your actual daily expenses or the per diem rate, some expenses are reimbursable in addition to the standard expenses covered in Chapter 7, Determining Daily Expenses.**

# Travel To and From the Terminal

**F-15, 8-1.1, Page 55, 2004 Ed.**



- You are allowed to claim expenses incurred when traveling between your home, permanent duty station, or other approved point and the airport, train, or bus station.
- Always use the least expensive form of transportation to and from the terminal, considering such factors as time of day, length of travel time, distance to the terminal, and the availability of public transportation.
- Use the following table to determine exactly what you may claim in different travel situations.

# Travel To and From the Terminal

F-15, 8-1.1, Page 55, 2004 Ed.

If ...	Then You May Claim ...
a. You use a taxi instead of available public transportation, such as a limousine or airport shuttle	The full taxi fare plus a maximum tip of 15 percent.
b. Another person drives you to or from the terminal	Actual mileage for the round trip.
c. Another person drives you to the terminal and returns to pick you up	Two round trips and any parking fees incurred by the driver when picking you up at the terminal.
d. You drive to the terminal, park your car at the terminal and drive yourself home	Actual mileage plus parking fees. Be sure to save your parking receipt if it totals more than \$50. You will need to submit this receipt to St. Louis ASC unless you paid for parking with your individually billed travel card and add the charge into your Expense report from the Company Card page of the eTravel system.



# Documenting Your Expenses

F-15, 8-2, Page 61, 2004 Ed.

- As you travel, be sure to save the receipts specified in this section. You will need them to document your expenses on your expense report. With the exception of your hotel receipt (which is always required), you do not have to submit receipts if you use your individually billed travel card for payment, and you add the expense into your travel report from the company card page of the e-Travel system.
- The receipts required vary according to whether you are being reimbursed for your actual expenses or at the per diem rate. (See 7-1 for information on when you may claim per diem and when you may claim actual expenses.)

## Important:

Attach your receipts to an 8-1/2" x 11" sheet of paper for ease in handling. See Appendix B for more information on completing your expense report. The receipt requirements below do not apply if you are using e-Travel and have paid for a reimbursable expense using your individually billed travel card, and have downloaded that expense from the company card page of the e-Travel system.

## **When Claiming Actual Expenses**

**F-15, 8-2.1, Page 61, 2004 Ed.**

- **If you are claiming reimbursement of your actual expenses, you must have receipts for each item in order to document your expenses on your expense report.**

# **When Claiming Per Diem**

**F-15, 8-2.2, Page 61, 2004 Ed.**

- **Follow the guidelines presented in 8-2.2.1 through 8-2.2.8 found in the F-15 Handbook.**

# **Handling Emergencies**

**F-15, 8-3, Page 65, 2004 Ed.**

- **8-3.1- Your Confirmed Flight Is Overbooked**
- **8-3.2- Your Confirmed Lodging Is Not Available**
- **8-3.3- Getting Emergency Cash**
- **8-3.4- Damage to Rental Car**
- **8-3.5- Your Itinerary Is Changed**
- **8- .6- Illness**
- **8-3.7- Family Emergencies**
- **8-3.8- Death of an Employee**

# **Handling Expenses for Special Travel Situations**

**F-15, Chapter 9, Page 71, 2004 Ed.**

- **9-1 As a Witness**
- **9-2 As a Juror**
- **9-3 At the Request of Another Postal Service Installation**
- **9-4 At the Request of Another Government Agency**
- **9-5 As a Representative of an Employee Organization**
- **9-6 To Attend Meetings, Conferences, or Training Sessions**
- **9-7 As a Non-employee of the Postal Service**

# Getting Reimbursed and Repaying Advances

**F-15, Chapter 10, Page 77, 2004 Ed.**

- When you return from travel, you must do the following:
  - 1. Complete and submit the required forms or electronic report to be reimbursed for your travel expenses.
  - 2. Repay your advances.
- **This chapter explains the details of getting reimbursed and repaying your advances.**

# Getting Reimbursed

**F-15, 10-1, Page 77, 2004 Ed.**

- **10-1.1 Regular Travel**
- **10-1.1.1 Which Form to Submit**
- **If you use the e-Travel system, you must submit regular and local travel expense reports electronically. If you are not on e-Travel, submit PS Form 1012, *Travel Voucher*, to be reimbursed for all travel away from your permanent duty station and PS Form 1164, *Claim for Reimbursement for Expenditures on Official Business*, to be reimbursed for local travel. PS Form 1164-A, *Claim for Reimbursement for Postal Supervisors (for Employee Business Expenses Only)*, should be used to claim expenses for street supervision at the daily rate.**

# How Often to Submit It

## F-15, 10-1.1.2, Page 78, 2004 Ed.

Use the guidelines in the following table to determine when to submit an expense report.

If ...	Then You ...
a. You are on regular travel in the United State, its territories, or possessions	Must submit at least one expense report in each accounting month.
b. You are on international travel	Must submit an expense report when your trip is complete.
c. You do not anticipate more travel within the following 3-week period	Must submit an expense report immediately and claim your travel expenses.
d. You do not anticipate another trip within the accounting month	Must submit your expense report at the end of the trip.
e. Your trip spans 2 accounting months	Must submit 1 expense report for the entire trip, except for year-end.
f. You are on an extended duty or training assignment lasting 2 weeks or more	May submit your expense reports more frequently if you need the funds to meet your expenses.



# Local Travel

**F-15, 10-1.2, Page 78, 2004 Ed.**

## 10-1.2.1 Which Form to Submit

- When you return from local travel submit PS Form 1164, *Claim for Reimbursement for Expenditures on Official Business*, to be reimbursed for your expenses. If you use the e-Travel system, you must use that system to file for reimbursement.

## 10-1.2.2 How to Be Reimbursed From Post Office Funds

- To be reimbursed from local Post Office funds, submit your approved PS Form 1164 to your supporting finance or accounting office. If sufficient cash is available, you will be reimbursed in cash. If sufficient cash is not available, the Post Office will issue a postal money order.

# Repaying Advances

F-15, 10-2, Page 78, 2004 Ed.

- 10-2.1 Standard Policy for Repayment
- If the amount of your outstanding travel advance exceeds the amount of your travel expenses, you must repay the difference as soon as you complete the travel for which you received the advance.

## When to Repay Your Advance

If You Are a . . .	Then You Must Repay Your Advance . . .
a. Bargaining unit employee who does not have an individually billed government travel card	As soon as possible after your trip is complete.
b. Nonbargaining unit employee or bargaining unit employee who has an individually billed government travel card	When you receive your travel card bill. (Nonbargaining unit employees must obtain advances by using the ATM feature on their individual government travel card. This advance cannot be claimed on an eTravel report.)



**Reminder:** If your travel advance remains outstanding for a period of 120 days or more after your travel is complete, the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) considers that advance to be reportable compensation and, therefore, subject to federal income taxes, FICA, and Medicare taxes.

# How to Repay Your Advance

## F-15, 10-2.1, Page 79, 2004 Ed.

- 10-2.1.2- The repayment of travel advances to traveler depends on how the advance was issued and whether or not the traveler uses the e-Travel system. If the traveler has an individually billed travel card, the traveler must use the travel card to obtain a cash advance. The amount of the cash advance must be paid to the travel card company and may not be claimed on their e-Travel expense report.
- If the advance was issued by the San Mateo Accounting Service Center (ASC) (the traveler does not have a travel card), the advance will automatically be deducted from the amount of the reimbursement to be paid to the employee.
- If the advance was charged to traveler's individually billed travel card, then the traveler owes the company card the advance. Travelers must not enter cash advances on their e-Travel expense report.

# How to Repay Your Advance

**F-15, 10-2.1.2, Page 79, 2004 Ed.**

- If the traveler was issued an advance locally, the traveler may repay the advance by submitting a personal check or money order with travel voucher.
- Follow these steps to ensure that your advance account is properly credited:
  - 1. Write a personal check or obtain a money order for the full amount of your outstanding balance. Be sure it's payable to the U.S. Postal Service.
  - 2. Write your Social Security number on the check or money order.
  - 3. Write a memo to accompany your check or money order. Be sure to include all of the following:
    - a. Your name.
    - b. Social Security number.
    - c. Instructions to apply the payment to your outstanding advance.
  - 4. Attach the check or money order and the memo to the front of your expense report.

# If You Are Separating From the Postal Service

F-15, 10-2.1.3, Page 80, 2004 Ed.

- When you are separating from the Postal Service, your office or installation notifies the San Mateo ASC. The San Mateo ASC then examines your travel advance record to determine if you have any outstanding advances.
- **! Important: The Postal Service deducts any unpaid outstanding advances from your final salary checks unless you directly repay the disbursing officer, U.S. Postal Service.**

# **Travel Expense and Advance Report**

**F-15, 10-2.2, Page 80, 2004 Ed.**

- Each accounting month, the San Mateo Accounting Service Center prepares the Travel Expense and Advance Report, which lists employees that have outstanding travel advances and shows the employee's name, Social Security number, finance number, amount of unpaid balance, and year-to-date travel expenses. The balance for relocation expenses is identified separately from regular outstanding travel advances.
- Each approving official reviews the report for his or her organizational unit. If you have any outstanding balance, your approving official will notify you in writing and instruct you to repay your balance.
- Approving officials will review reports to determine whether each employee who is listed as having an outstanding advance is a continuous traveler or will be traveling within the next 3 weeks. If no travel is anticipated, the employee must immediately refund the outstanding balance. If any of the employees listed will definitely travel within 3 weeks, approving officials must determine how much of the outstanding advance is needed and request an immediate refund of any excess. The review by approving officials helps determine which employees owe money to the Postal Service.

# e-Travel

## F-15, 10-3, Page 80, 2004 Ed.

- If you are enrolled in the e-Travel system, this is the only way that you will be able to be reimbursed for your travel expenses.
- e-Travel is a web based system that provides the following conveniences for the Postal Service travelers:
  - a. Allows travelers to enter travel expenses into a secure, automated system.
  - b. Provides electronic submission to the traveler's approving manager for approving expense reports.
  - c. Reduces the requirement for hard copy receipts to only those expenses of \$50 or more that are not charged to the government travel card and pre-populated from the Company Card screen into an e-Travel report. (Exception: the hard copy hotel receipt must always be submitted to the e-Travel Back Office.)
  - d. Directly reimburses the travel card company for expenses charged to the traveler's government travel card.
  - e. Offers electronic funds transfer (EFT) for non-bargaining employees and bargaining employees who prefer reimbursement to the traveler's bank account for out-of-pocket expenses.

# Accessing e-Travel

**F-15, 10-3.1, Page 81, 2004 Ed.**

- An e-Travel logon ID is obtained by submitting PS Form 1010, *e-Travel Participant Enrollment Form*, to the local e-Travel coordinator. The e-Travel enrollment form is available on the e-Travel splash page located at <https://etravel.usps.gov/eworkplace/> on the Postal Service Intranet.
- After submitting your enrollment form you will receive a Responsibility Statement back from the local e-Travel coordinator that you are to sign and return to the coordinator. You will then be provided an e-Travel logon ID. Access to e-Travel can be found at the web address in the previous paragraph or by clicking on the *Headquarters* button (from the Postal Service Intranet at <http://blue.usps.gov/>). After the Postal Service Headquarters web page loads, click on the *Finance* link located in the middle of the page. The e-Travel link is located at the top of the links listed on the left side of the Finance web page.



# Credit Card Usage

## Jackson/Tulino Sign-off 9/3/02



LABOR RELATIONS

September 3, 2002

Mr. Warren "Jake" Jackson  
Assistant Maintenance Director "B"  
American Postal Workers  
Union, AFL-CIO  
1300 L Street, N.W.  
Washington, DC 20005-4128

Dear Jake:

This is in response to your July 18 email message concerning eTravel reimbursement. The Postal Service will make direct payment to the credit card company for expenses charged to the travel card, upon approval of the expense report. Authorized travel reimbursement for items not charged to the travel card will be paid directly to a bank account designated by the traveler or by check, at the option of the employee.

If you have any questions regarding the foregoing, please contact Alan Moore of my staff at (202) 268-7795.

Sincerely,

  
Doug A. Tulino  
Manager  
Labor Relations Policies and Programs

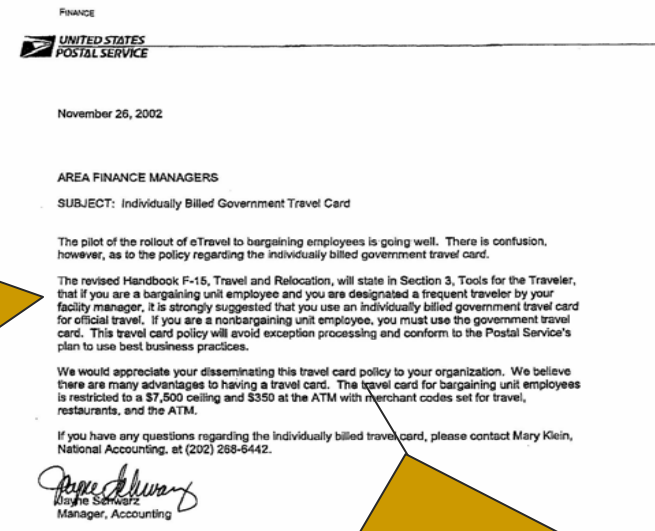
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# Credit Card Usage

Jayne Schwarz, Accounting Manager

## Individually Billed Government Travel Card

“...The revised Handbook F-15, Travel and Relocation, will state in Section 3, Tools for the Traveler, that if you are a bargaining unit employee and you are designated a frequent traveler by your facility manager, it is strongly suggested that you use an individually billed government travel card for official travel. If you are a non-bargaining unit employee, you must use the government travel card. This travel card policy will avoid exception processing and conform to the Postal Services’ plan to use best business practices...”



“...We would appreciate your disseminating this travel card policy to your organization. We believe there are many advantages to having a travel card. The travel card for bargaining unit employees is restricted to a \$7,500 ceiling and \$350 at the ATM with merchant codes set for travel, restaurants, and the ATM ...”

# Using e-Travel

F-15, 10-3.2, Page 81, 2004 Ed.

- Links to e-Travel user documentation can be accessed from the e-Travel splash page at <https://etravel.usps.gov/eworkplace/> prior to logging on to e-Travel or from the e-Travel Concur Central web page after logging on to e-Travel.
- The Concur Classroom link provides access to training modules and simulations to assist the traveler in learning the e-Travel system.
- The *e-Travel User Guide* provides in-depth instructions to complete an e-Travel expense report.
- The *e-Travel Quickstart Guide* provides a summary of the steps to be taken to complete an e-Travel expense report.

# Creating an e-Travel Report

F-15, 10-3.3, Page 82, 2004 Ed.

<p><b>Step 1</b></p>	<p>Log on to the eTravel system</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Access the Internet Explorer web browser on your personal computer.</li> <li>2. Type <i>eTravel</i> into the browser's address field, and press the Enter key.</li> <li>3. Type your logon ID and password in the appropriate fields on the logon page.</li> <li>4. Click the logon button or press Enter.</li> </ol> <p><b>Note:</b> Your logon is not case sensitive, but your password is. See the <i>eTravel User Guide</i> located on the eTravel web page for more complete instructions on how to log on.</p>
<p><b>Step 2</b></p>	<p>Create a new report</p>	<p>On the home page, select <i>Create</i>. The report header page will be displayed.</p>
<p><b>Step 3</b></p>	<p>Complete the header information</p>	<p>All fields preceded by a red asterisk must be completed. Click the <i>Next</i> button to save the information.</p>
<p><b>Step 4</b></p>	<p>Prepopulate your report with charges from the Company Card page</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Click on the <i>Expense Entry</i> tab to go to the Expense Entry page for your current report.</li> <li>2. Edit the company card entries that are now in your travel report or add new entries that were not charged on your travel card (per diem, mileage, etc.)</li> </ol> <p><b>Note:</b> See the <i>eTravel User's Guide</i> for detailed instructions on editing company card entries and entering other expenses.</p>
<p><b>Step 5</b></p>	<p>Review and submit your expense report</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Carefully review your expense report and make any necessary changes.</li> <li>2. Explain any unusual items and eliminate any exception flags.</li> <li>3. Click the <i>Submit</i> button and then <i>OK</i> on the legal certification that displays. The Submit Report screen displays showing the name of your approving manager.</li> <li>4. If your approving manager is correct as displayed, click <i>Send</i>.</li> </ol> <p><b>Note:</b> If you must choose an alternate approving manager, follow the instructions in the <i>eTravel User Guide</i>.</p>
<p><b>Step 6</b></p>	<p>Print your report</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. From the list of your active reports, select the one you have sent for approval and click the Print button. The Print Report task window displays.</li> <li>2. Click the <i>Next</i> button to display the report. Print the Receipt Report if receipts are required.</li> <li>3. Staple only the required receipts to the Receipt Report, insert the report and receipts into the appropriate window envelope, and send them to the appropriate Back Office Processing unit.</li> <li>4. Log off the eTravel system.</li> </ol>

# **Receiving Your Reimbursement**

**F-15, 10-3.4, Page 83, 2004 Ed.**

- **Reimbursement will occur once a report has been approved, passed Back Office review, and all required receipts have been received. If a report is not approved by the approving official or the Back Office review, it will be returned to the traveler for correction and resubmission.**

# Web Alias — How Travelers Without Web Access Use e-Travel

**F-15, 10-3.6, Page 83, 2004 Ed.**

- Not all travelers will have web access and be able to enter their own travel reports on e-Travel. In order to accommodate these travelers, web alias has been created.
- Web alias allows an approving manager to select a designated person to prepare and submit electronic travel reports for non-web-enabled employees. The traveler will submit one of two information forms to the person designated as their web alias so that web alias can enter expense claims into the e-Travel system for the traveler using traveler's e-Travel account:
  - PS Form 1012-E, *e-Travel Expense Report — Overnight Travel*
  - PS Form 1164-E, *e-Travel Expense Report — Local Travel*
- After returning from travel, the traveler completes a PS Form 1012-E or PS Form 1164-E listing, by expense types used in the e-Travel system, all expenses being submitted for reimbursement. Required receipts are to be submitted with the Form 1012-E or PS Form 1164-E to the designated web alias person who will enter the expense claims into the e-Travel system, prepare and send the receipt report and applicable receipts to the Back Office and submit the report to the traveler's approving official.

# Update Notice

## Handbook F-15, Travel and Relocation February 2004

Handbook F-15, *Travel and Relocation*, was last printed February 2004. To inform you of changes since that time, we periodically update this online edition of HBK F-15. We use vertical bars (i.e., revision bars) in the margin to indicate text changed since February 2004.

- Use the table in this update notice to find out about changes published in the *Postal Bulletin*.
- Find the chapter, subchapter, part, or section in the first column and read across the other columns to find specific information about that revisions.

This online version of HBK F-15, published February 2004, is updated through December 9, 2004, with the following *Postal Bulletin* articles:

# Update Notice cont.

## Handbook F-15, Travel and Relocation February 2004

This chapter, sub-chapter, part, or section...	titled...	was updated to...	in <i>Postal Bulletin</i> issue number ...	with an issue date of...
Appendix A, General Information				
A-2.4	High cost Localities	revise the travel per diem rates.  remove the Denver, Durango, and Fort Collins entries listed under Arkansas.	22138 22140	g-30-2004 10-28-2004
Appendix B, Instructions for Submitting Forms				
B-6.2	PS Form 1010, eTravel Participant Enrollment	include the most recent edition (August 2004) of the form.	22143	12-9-2004
B-7.2	PS Form 1018, eTravel Repayment for Overpayments or Cash Advances	include the most recent edition (November 2004) of the forms.	22143	12-9-2004



**THE END**

**Thank you for your attention!**