

Administrative Policy No. 19.10.01

Subject: Agency Travel Roles & Responsibilities

Information Contact: Office of Accounting Services
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Authorizing Source: State Administrative & Accounting Manual (SAAM), [Chapter 10](#)

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Purpose

To establish the roles and responsibilities for agency travel policy development and oversight, and the submission and payment of travel advances and travel-related expenses through the travel and expense management system (TEMS).

Scope

This policy applies to all Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS):

- Employees;
- Board and commission members (unless stated otherwise in statute); and
- Volunteers.

This policy does not apply to contractors reimbursed under specific contractual arrangements.

Additional Guidance

DSHS Administrative Policies

[5.04](#), Records Retention

[16.01](#), Internal Audit

Subchapter [19.10](#), Travel Policies

[10.06](#) Travel Advance Processes

[10.07](#) Volunteer and Board Member Travel

[14.12, Accountability for State-Owned Vehicles](#)

[DSHS Forms Picker](#)

02-681, Employee TEMS Profile Request

02-682, Volunteer/Board Member TEMS Profile Request

DSHS [Travel Website](#)

[Claiming Reimbursement through TEMS](#)

[Establishing an AFRS Vendor Number and TEMS Profile](#)

Definitions

Advantageous means direct non-financial, work-related benefits accruing to the state.

Approving manager means the approving authority responsible for the traveler's travel status and reimbursement.

Contractor is any person, business, non-profit, or government entity who provides services to DSHS under a contractual agreement and not as an employee of DSHS.

DSHS refers to the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS).

Economical means direct financial, work-related costs that occur at the least cost to the state and which the state is responsible to pay.

Official state business are activities performed by an official or state employee, authorized volunteer, or contractor, work experience program participant, student or employee of another governmental jurisdiction as directed by his or her supervisor in order to accomplish state programs or as required by the duties of his or her position or office.

Out-of-state travel means travel anywhere outside the boundaries of the state of Washington is to be considered out-of-state and should be coded as out-of-state travel. However, with respect to the requirement for prior authorization of out-of-state travel in Subsection 10.10.50, a) travel to counties and/or cities in the states of Idaho and Oregon that are contiguous to the border between Washington-Idaho or Washington-Oregon, or b) out-of-state employees traveling within the same state as their official station shall not be considered out-of-state.

Program means an administration, division, or program within DSHS.

Reimbursement request means the request for travel reimbursement that is submitted using the travel and expense management system (TEMS).

Travel advance means a payment made to a traveler to defray some of the costs the traveler will incur while traveling on official state business.

Travel desk means the travel unit within the office of accounting services.

Travel expense and management system (TEMS) is the software program used to process travel reimbursement requests and travel advances.

Traveler means a person in travel status who is on official state business.

Policy

A. The office of accounting services (OAS) is the official entity for travel policy creation, interpretation, training, and guidance and processing travel reimbursements through the travel and expense management system (TEMS).

As part of these responsibilities, OAS must:

1. Develop and maintain policies, procedures, and training information applicable to travel on official state business.
2. Coordinate the development and maintenance of these policies and procedures with the:
 - a. DSHS Accounting Policy Management Board (APMB)
 - b. Office of Financial Management (OFM)
3. Process all travel reimbursement requests through TEMS within ten working days.
4. Process travel advances based on AP 19.10.06 *Travel Advance Process*.
5. Provide travel policy interpretation and assistance with the TEMS, via the travel desk.
6. Grant TEMS access, for auditing purposes, to authorized staff assigned to review TEMS transactions.
7. Create new profiles and change existing profiles in the TEMS within 5 working days of receiving the properly completed DSHS forms.
8. Delete existing profiles in the TEMS within 5 working days of receiving the properly completed form or system generated request.
9. Add new TEMS users to the travel listserv.

B. DSHS staff must comply with travel policies and procedures set forth by the OFM and the OAS.

1. Travelers must:
 - a. Know relevant policies and procedures or seek clarification from their approving manager or the travel desk before traveling.
 - b. Exercise the same care in incurring expenses that a prudent person would exercise if traveling on personal business, and pay any additional costs or expenses incurred for personal preference or convenience.

- c. Comply with applicable state vehicle or privately owned vehicle (POV) driver responsibilities and requirements in DSHS AP 14.12 when on official state business.
- d. Obtain written authorization before traveling out-of-state (form 03-337) and in any other situations where required.
- e. Use TEMS to submit all travel reimbursement requests and travel advances within the required timeframes.
 - i. Reimbursement requests must be completed as required by SAAM 10.80.20 and as shown in the instructional materials posted on the travel website.
- f. Use their approving managers as the main point of contact for:
 - i. New TEMS user access
 - ii. TEMS profile updates

Note: If there are questions about how to complete the TEMS form, contact the travel desk.

- 2. Approving managers must:
 - a. Understand relevant travel policies and procedures before approving travel or requests for payment of travel related expenses.
 - b. Use the criteria of “most economical” or “most advantageous” to the state (as outlined in SAAM 10.10.20) when determining whether to authorize a person to travel on official state business, and when determining what travel alternatives to authorize.
 - c. Review the itinerary of the traveler to eliminate unnecessary travel.
 - d. Ensure travelers are carpooling on official state business whenever it is more economical or advantageous to the state.
 - e. Limit the number of persons attending a particular conference, convention, meeting or training session to the minimum necessary.
 - f. Ensure the health and safety of travelers, and compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, when placing employees in travel status.
 - g. Before approving reimbursement of travel expenses, review all travel to ensure it was:
 - i. Directly work related
 - ii. Obtained at the most economical price
 - iii. Critical and necessary for state business
 - iv. Pre-approved when required by policy (i.e. out-of-state travel)
 - h. Obtain and review paper or electronic receipts and other documentation (e.g., out-of-state travel authorization, lodging receipts, vehicle mileage log) required by state and agency policy. Ensure documents are retained in accordance with the agency records retention schedule.

- i. In lieu of obtaining original receipts, approvers must ensure a process is in place to reduce the risk of duplicate or improper payments.
- j. Use TEMS to approve travel-related reimbursements paid directly to the traveler. Assure the request is properly completed and that claimed travel expenses are eligible for reimbursement according to state and agency policies.
- k. Review reimbursement requests as outlined in "Claiming Reimbursement Through TEMS."
- l. Process reimbursement requests within 5 working days, by either approving, denying, or returning for changes.
- m. Ensure proper completion of the TEMS form required to create or change TEMS profiles.
- n. Ensure proper completion of the TEMS form required to delete TEMS profiles or system generated request.
- o. Submit the required form received within 5 working days, to the OAS travel desk and facilitate resolution of any discrepancies.
- p. Facilitate establishing or updating vendor numbers of volunteer/board members in the AFRS as documented in DSHS Administrative Policy 19.10.07, under Establishing an AFRS Statewide Vendor Number and TEMS Profile.

Note: If there are questions about how to complete the TEMS form, contact the travel desk.

3. Programs must:

- a. Support their program's system connectivity to TEMS.
- b. Routinely review staff assignments and field operations with the intent of minimizing travel.
- c. Develop and implement alternatives to travel, as well as less expensive methods of travel that includes:
 - i. Teleconferencing and video conferencing;
 - ii. Video recordings and published reports;
 - iii. Car-pooling and greater use of public transportation;
 - iv. Reduced frequency of regularly scheduled out-of-town meetings;
 - v. Restrictions on the number of staff traveling to the same destination; and
 - vi. Coordinating between agencies for joint travel arrangements when more than one agency is involved.
- d. Ensure travelers are not treated differently under like circumstances.

Procedure

Procedures for Claiming Reimbursement through TEMS are posted on the travel website.

ⁱ Updated multiple points to match updates to the SAAM manual definitions

DSHS Official