

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

TRAVEL AUTHORIZATIONS

QUESTION: Is it necessary to complete the travel authorization before I travel?

ANSWER: Yes, federal travel regulations require that a travel authorization be completed and be signed prior to travel. We use the travel authorization to obligate funds for your trip.

QUESTION: Can I complete the travel authorization after the course and send it in with the travel voucher?

ANSWER: No, the travel authorization must be received by OLE prior the beginning the travel.

QUESTION: Where do I send my Travel Authorization?

ANSWER: United States Attorney Office employees and Executive Office for United States Attorneys employees will send their completed travel authorization to their Administrative Section for processing. Employees of other Department of Justice organizations, other Federal Agencies, state and local agencies, and non-government persons will FAX their completed travel authorizations to the Office of Legal Education on (803) 544-5110, ATTN: Travel Section.

QUESTION: Does my supervisor have to sign my travel authorization before I fax it to your office?

ANSWER: We ask that your supervisor sign your travel authorization to ensure that they are aware of your pending travel. We will also sign the travel authorization when we receive it.

LODGING

QUESTION: I will be attending courses at the NAC during consecutive weeks. Rather than flying home on Friday and returning to the NAC on Sunday can I stay in Columbia for the weekend.

ANSWER: Yes, you can stay at the NAC over the weekend. If there are no services available at the NAC you would be entitled to full M&IE for those days. However, please contact the program manager or program assistant for your course in advance of your stay, so that we can advise the front desk.

QUESTION: I will be attending course at the NAC during consecutive weeks. Rather than stay at the NAC for the weekend, I would like to rent a car and visit some relatives/friends in the area. Will OLE reimburse for the cost of a rental car in lieu of the lodging cost for the weekend?

ANSWER: No, the rental car expenses will not be reimbursed because the car is not being used to perform official agency business. If you stayed with relatives/friends over the weekend you would not be entitled to any reimbursement for lodging, since you could have been housed at the NAC. You will receive your Meals & Incidental Expenses.

QUESTION: I am scheduled to stay at the NAC. I want to bring my spouse with me. Can I stay at a hotel and be reimbursed by OLE for the lodging?

ANSWER: If we have a class that is scheduled to stay at an overflow hotel during the time of your course, we usually can arrange for your spouse to stay with you. However, if we aren't using any hotels during your stay, you can choose to stay at a hotel, but you will not be reimbursed for lodging and your M&IE would be reduced for 2 meals per day as if you were staying at the NAC .

MEALS AND MISCELLANEOUS EXPENSES

QUESTION: I did not eat lunch at the NAC on the day of departure. Am I entitled to claim an extra \$7.00 M&IE because I didn't eat lunch at the NAC?

ANSWER: No. The M&IE for your last day of travel is a fixed amount regardless of whether or not you eat lunch at the NAC.

TRAVEL DEVIATIONS

QUESTION: I will be attending a course at the NAC. I would like to fly to Columbia several days prior to the course (or stay after the course) for personal reasons. Can I do this?

ANSWER: Yes, as long as you fly into and out of the Columbia airport there is not impact on the Government contract airfare.

QUESTION: I will be attending a course at the NAC. I would like to fly to another city prior to (or after) attending the course. The government contract airfare is cheaper so the government would save money. Can I do this?

ANSWER: The Department's policy on travel deviation can be found on our web site at <http://www.usdoj.gov/usao/eousa/ole/travelpro.html> In brief, you are not be entitled to use government contract airfares if you do not fly the government contract carrier's direct routing from your post of duty to Columbia because no official government business will be performed in the other city you plan to visit. If you obtain airline tickets which are restricted in any way and you do not attend the course for any reason or the course is cancelled, you will be responsible for the tickets.

TRANSPORTATION

QUESTION: We are staying at an off site hotel. Can I claim taxi fare between the hotel and the NAC in the morning and evening?

ANSWER: Shuttle busses and/or hotel vans are available for transportation between the hotel and the NAC. If you miss the shuttle or chose not to take it, you will not be reimbursed for the taxi fares.

CONTRACT EMPLOYEES

QUESTION: We have a Dyncorp contract employee who has be accepted for a course at the NAC. How do we make the travel arrangement for this person.

ANSWER: Contract employees selected for training at OLE courses will make travel arrangements through their company and will be reimbursed through their company. The company will bill your office for the cost of the training. It is important that you indicate if you are nominating a contract employee on your course nomination documents.

We cannot make payments directly to contract employees.

TRAVEL VOUCHERS

QUESTION: Is there a specific form that I must use to claim by travel expenses?

ANSWER: Yes, we use the travel voucher form that is part of the FMIS2+ accounting system used by the Justice Management Division and the DOJ Legal Divisions and some other DOJ components. Travel Voucher forms can be found on our Web site and are available at our courses

QUESTION: When should I file my travel voucher?

ANSWER: You should file your travel voucher within 5 working days after the end of the course.

QUESTION: Can I fax my travel voucher to you rather than mailing it?

ANSWER: We must have an original signature in order to make payment on a voucher. Therefore, the voucher must be mailed to us at: Office of Legal Education, Travel Section, 1620 Pendleton Street, Columbia, South Carolina 29201. (USAO employees should submit their vouchers to their administrative office.)

QUESTION: What receipts or documentation do I need to support the amount claimed on my travel voucher?

ANSWER: Receipts are required for airfare, lodging and any items exceeding \$75 which are being claimed on the voucher.

QUESTION: Does my Supervisor need to sign my travel voucher?

ANSWER: We ask that your supervisor sign your voucher. This ensures that your supervisor is aware of your attendance at the course.