
CENTER MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION

GOVERNMENT TRAVEL CHARGE CARD PROGRAM

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PURPOSE This MAPP describes the policies and procedures for using the government travel charge card, currently American Express, and the Automatic Teller Machine (ATM) Cash Advance Program.

BACKGROUND

The Government Travel Charge Card Program was implemented to improve cash management by minimizing the amounts of cash advanced to government travelers without imposing financial burdens on them. The Automatic Teller Machine Cash

Advance Program (ATM) allows participating travelers to use their official government travel charge card to obtain authorized government travel advances for expenses that are not covered by the charge card.

APPLICABILITY

This MAPP applies to all CDER employees, all employees detailed to CDER, and PHS Commissioned Corps personnel assigned to Center programs.

REFERENCES

- Staff Manual Guide/Food and Drug Administration 2343.1, dated 11/29/96, containing
 - "Instructions for Implementing the Government Charge Card Program" and
 - "Policies and Procedures Governing the Use of Contractor-Issued Charge Cards"
 - Office of Management and Budget's (OMB) Bulletin No. 88-17
 - The American Express Government Program/Reference Manual
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DEFINITIONS

- **Approving Official.** The Director, Office of Management, is the person responsible for final approval or disapproval of the Government Card Application and Agreement.
- **Government Charge Card Coordinator (charge card coordinator).** A representative of the Division of Management Services, Administrative Management Team, coordinates the Government Travel Charge Card Program and acts as liaison to the Government Charge Card Contractor.
- **Administrative Contact.** The applicant's management officer or program specialist.
- **Government Charge Card Contractor (charge card company).** The charge card company for travel-related services presently serving the Federal government.

POLICY

- The government travel charge card may be used only for legitimate expenses directly related to official travel, including to purchase authorized transportation services from a travel agent providing services to the government under contractual arrangement with the General Services Administration or to obtain necessary cash advances related to such travel. Cash advances should include only estimated out-of-pocket expenses for meals and incidental expenses.

Note: An additional \$200,000 of life insurance coverage and \$1,250 lost baggage insurance coverage is automatically provided on all segments of the trip when a traveler's ticket is charged to their government travel charge card.

- All employees who travel for CDER should apply for and use a government travel charge card for expenses incurred in the course of official travel. Check advances will not be issued after the first official travel. Travelers who do not apply for a government travel charge card after their first official travel for FDA will not be allowed to submit an exemption to obtain a check advance. Exceptions include (1) first time travelers, (2) travel to a foreign destination that does not accept a government charge card, and (3) permanent change of station.
- Travelers are expected to use their government travel charge card at an ATM to secure cash needed for their official travel and may obtain advances up to the amount authorized on the Travel Order (HHS-1) no earlier than three business days prior to departure and no later than the last day of travel. Up to three withdrawal transactions are permitted per day. Daily withdrawals are limited to \$500, and withdrawals are further limited to a maximum of \$1000 in a 7-day period. However, each individual financial institution that participates in the ATM program may also impose further limits with respect to the number and dollar amount of withdrawals. Generally they have a limit of \$300 per day.
- The traditional travel advance procedure can no longer be used to fund registration fees. If a contractor is unable to accept a purchase order or a training authorization as payment for fees related to conferences or training, the government travel charge card or the IMPAC Visa Credit Card, a procurement card used for purchases of supplies and materials, should be used. For further information on the IMPAC Visa Credit Card, contact the administrative contact.
- Full liability for all charges rests with the cardholder. Although the government authorizes individually billed accounts to be established, the government accepts no liability and is not responsible for any charges made against individually billed accounts.

- Misuse of the government travel charge card, including unauthorized and/or excessive ATM withdrawals, is considered misconduct and may subject the cardholder to cancellation of the charge card and ATM privileges, as well as disciplinary actions that could include reprimand, suspension, or removal from Federal service.
 - Travelers who have had their card canceled due to misuse will not be authorized check advances.
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PROCEDURES

ATM Advances

- An ATM cash advance must be authorized on the Travel Order (HHS-1) and should specify the maximum amount to be obtained. Since employees are expected to use their government travel charge card to pay for lodging, the ATM cash advance should only cover meals and incidental travel expenses not normally purchased with the charge card. These types of expenses, which include expenses such as ground transportation and parking, should be indicated on #3 of the Travel Order under the heading "Other."
- While in travel status, there may be instances when a traveler has to make an emergency ATM withdrawal without prior approval. If an ATM advance is obtained without prior authorization on the Travel Order, a separate statement justifying the withdrawal should be made on the Travel Voucher (SF-1012) and signed by the approving official.

Submitting Vouchers

- When a travel advance is obtained from an ATM, a receipt will be issued indicating the date, location of the ATM, and the amount of the transaction. These receipts should be retained to submit with the Travel Voucher (SF-1012) at the end of the travel trip. ATM cash advances will appear on monthly card statements with other travel expense transactions.
- Indicate the amount of the ATM transaction fee under "Other" in the "Amount Claimed" column on the Travel Voucher. The transaction fee is currently 2.75 percent of each authorized amount withdrawn. For example, a withdrawal of \$160 would have a transaction fee of \$4.40 ($\$160 \times 0.0275 = \4.40). Some financial institutions and networks assess surcharges for use of their ATMs. This surcharge

is in addition to any fee that the Government Charge Card Contractor assesses for cash withdrawals. These surcharges will be included as part of the amount withdrawn for a given transaction. Cardholders are responsible for the surcharge payment and should include the surcharge on their expense reports.

- Claims for ATM fees will not be allowed when (1) the travel authorization does not authorize an ATM withdrawal; (2) withdrawals exceed the amount authorized; (3) withdrawals are made after the last day of travel; (4) the voucher does not indicate and show approval for an emergency withdrawal; and (5) no other ATM authorization exists on the travel order.
- If an ATM advance is obtained and the trip is subsequently canceled, upon receipt of the bill, a check should be sent to the charge card company for the amount of the advance. In addition, so that the ATM fee may be reimbursed, a Claim for Reimbursement for Expenditures on Official Business (SF-1164) claiming the fee and explaining the circumstances of the trip cancellation should be submitted to the Office of Financial Management, Travel Audit Section, HFA-123 (through your administrative contact). A copy of the Travel Order and Amendment of Cancellation should be attached.

Delinquent, Suspended, And Canceled Accounts

- At 30 calendar days past due, a delinquency notice will appear on the billing statement. The employee should report any discrepancies on the statement to the attention of the charge card company.
- In accordance with the GSA contract, cash withdrawal privileges are automatically suspended when a charge card balance is 60 days past due. Account suspension procedures may be initiated by the charge card company on or after the 60th calendar day from the billing date for nonpayment of undisputed amounts owed to the charge card company by the employee.
- The charge card company will also notify the individual cardholder, in writing, of the impending cancellation action. Within 10 working days after the charge card company has transmitted this written notice, the individual cardholder must pay the undisputed amount in full or the account may be canceled.
- The charge card company will exercise its contractual option to report to the national credit reporting bureau any government cardholder whose account was canceled for 120 days delinquency with a balance greater than \$100.

- If the cardholder is transferred within the government, the cardholder must notify their new charge card coordinator that they have a Government Charge Card Account and have the accounting data transferred to the new location.
 - Upon separation of a cardholder from the government, the cardholder must notify and turn over their government travel charge card to the administrative contact or charge card coordinator to have the account canceled immediately.
 - The charge card company will provide reports to each designated charge card coordinator who is responsible for monitoring usage and indicating any potential abuses.
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RESPONSIBILITIES

Employee

- Completes the employee portion of the Employee Government Card Application and Agreement (Attachment A), the Employee Charge Card Obligation Acknowledgment (Attachment B), and the Agreement Between Agency/Organization Employee and Government Charge Card Travel Related Services (Attachment C). These forms may be obtained from the administrative contact.
- Submits package to immediate supervisor for approval and signature on the Employee Charge Card Obligation Acknowledgment (Attachment B). The package is returned to the employee who forwards the package to the administrative contact.
- Submits the travel voucher and supporting documents to the administrative contact within five workdays after completing travel.
- Turns in their government travel charge card to the administrative contact or charge card coordinator upon separating from government.

Supervisor

- Ensures that card applicants are required to travel as part of their official duties by signing the Employee Charge Card Obligation Acknowledgement (Attachment B).
- Looks into possible employee misuse of the card when notified by the charge card coordinator or administrative contact.

- Consults with the Division of Employee and Labor Management Relations (HFA-430) to initiate or take appropriate corrective, disciplinary and/or adverse action when apparent misuse has occurred.
- Notifies the charge card coordinator, either directly or through the administrative contact, to cancel any cards held by nontravelers or by repeat misusers.

Administrative Contact

- Supplies the applicant with the appropriate government charge card forms.
- Reviews the application package for completeness and accuracy. Completes the Agency portion of the Government Card Application and Agreement (Attachment A).
- Forwards the completed package to the charge card coordinator.
- Mails or faxes the approved Government Card Application and Agreement (Attachment A) to the charge card company after the package has been approved and returned by the government charge card coordinator.
- Notifies the charge card coordinator of any changes regarding a cardholder's employment status (e.g., transfer to another Agency or separation from Government, changes in name or address).
- Receives the government travel charge card from the separating employee, cuts the card in half in the presence of the employee, and forwards the destroyed card to the Coordinator.

Charge Card Coordinator

- Reviews each government card application package for accuracy and completeness.
- Forwards the complete charge card package to the approving official for approval or disapproval.
- Returns the original to the administrative contact after the approving official has approved or disapproved the application.
- Notifies the charge card company of any changes regarding cardholders employment status (e.g., transfers to another Agency or leaves the Government, changes in name or address).

- Conducts a review of the monthly reports received from the charge card company (i.e., “Activity Report, Report of Accounts, Suspension Report, and Cancellation Report”).
- Verifies employees’ travel status with the administrative contact and/or supervisor when a possibility of misuse exists.

Approving Official

- Approves or disapproves the applicant’s government charge card application.
 - Returns application to the charge card coordinator.
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EFFECTIVE DATE

This guide is effective upon date of publication.

ATTACHMENT A

**AMERICAN EXPRESS GOVERNMENT TRAVEL PAYMENT PROGRAM
GOVERNMENT CARD APPLICATION & AGREEMENT**

For Employees of the United States Government

To be completed by Employee

Name _____				Social Security No. _____			
First	Middle	Last					
Agency/Organization _____				Title/Rank _____			
Employee's Mother's Maiden Name (for security purposes) _____							
Home Address _____							
Street		City		State		Zip	
Office Address _____							
Street		City		State		Zip	
Bill to: Home		Office		Home Phone No. () _____		Office Phone No. () _____	
(Check One)				Area Code		Area Code	
<p>By signing below, I (a) request that a government card be issued in my name, (b) agree to use the card for official travel and official travel related expenses and to be bound by the terms and conditions of the attached agreement governing my use of the government card and (c) authorize American Express to verify information supplied on this application. PLEASE RETAIN ATTACHED AGREEMENT FOR YOUR RECORDS.</p>							
Employee Signature _____						Date _____	

To be completed by Agency/Organization Coordinator

Agency/Organization Name _____				Control Account No. _____			
Agency/Organization Address _____				Cost Center _____			
Building		Room Number/Mail Stop					
Street		City		State		Zip	
				FIPS # _____			
ATM Cash Limit: Every Rolling 7 Days _____				Daily _____			
<p>By signing below, I hereby authorize, on behalf of the agency/organization indicated above, that a government card be issued to the employee named above.</p>							
Name of Agency/Organization Official _____				Signature _____			
Title/Rank _____				Date _____			

ATTACHMENT B

FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION

CENTER OR OFFICE _____
DIVISION AND/OR BRANCH _____

EMPLOYEE CHARGE CARD OBLIGATION ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I certify that I have received, read, and understood FDA's 1996 Staff Manual Guide 2343.1 stating the instructions for implementing the government charge card program and "Policies and Procedures Governing the Use of Contractor-Issued Charge Cards" (also in 2343.1) . I will abide by the rules, regulations and other instructions issued by the FDA and American Express pertaining to the use of any card issued to me for the purpose of conducting official Government travel.

Employee Signature and Date

Name and Title (or Grade) (Type or Print)

SUPERVISOR'S AUTHORIZATION. I certify that this employee is required to travel as part of his or her official duties and that issuing a charge card is appropriate.

Signature

Name and Title (Type or Print) Phone No.

NOTE: This acknowledgment is to be returned with each employee's completed Government travel charge card application to the designated official authorized to approve charge card applications for the Department of Health and Human Services.

ATTACHMENT C

AMERICAN EXPRESS GOVERNMENT TRAVEL PAYMENT PROGRAM

**Agreement Between Agency/Organization Employee and
American Express Travel Related Services Company, Inc.**

IMPORTANT: Before you sign or use the American Express Government Card, read this Agreement thoroughly. By either signing, using or accepting the Government Card, you will be agreeing with us to everything written here.

DEFINITIONS

As you read this Agreement, remember that the words "you," "your," or "Government Cardholder" mean the Agency employee named on the Government Card. The words "American Express," "we," "our" and "us" refer to American Express Travel Related Services Company, Inc. The word "Agency" means, the United States federal agency, bureau, division, office, or other organizational entity participating in the American Express Government Program under the General Services Administration contract no. GS00F34139 ("GSA Contract") that has authorized American Express to open an account (the "Card Account") for the Agency employee (the "Government Cardholder"). A Card issued to a Government Cardholder is called a Government Card.

1. PURPOSE OF THE CARD AND THE ACCOUNT

You agree to use the Government Card only for official travel and official travel related expenses away from your official station/duty station (lodging, meals, incidentals) and submit the charges for same for Agency reimbursement in accordance with Agency policy. You understand that the Card and the Account are not to be used for personal purposes.

2. RENEWAL AND REPLACEMENT CARDS

The Card will be valid through the expiration date printed on the face of the Card unless otherwise suspended or canceled. We will continue to issue renewal or replacement Cards, until you or the Agency tell us to stop or the Account is suspended or canceled. If for any reason you need a Card replaced, we suggest you call the toll-free number on reverse side.

3. USE OF CARDS

Do not use the Card before the valid date or after the expiration date printed on its face. No other person is permitted to use the Card issued to you for charges or for any other reason. We will look to you for payment of all charges made with the Card issued to you, to the extent allowed by applicable law, even if you have let someone else use the Government Card or relinquished physical possession of the Government Card. You must retrieve the Card from that person to avoid further liability.

4. ACCEPTING THE AGREEMENT

By using the Card Account you agree to be bound by the terms of this Agreement and should sign the Card as soon as you receive it. If you do not wish to be bound by this Agreement, cut the Card in half and return the pieces to us. Unless you do so, we will assume that you have accepted this Agreement.

5. CANCELLATION PROCEDURES

You may cancel the Government Card at any time by notifying American Express and cutting the Card in half and returning the parts to American Express. The Card and the Account will be automatically canceled upon the (a) termination of your employment with Agency regardless of the reason; (b) termination or expiration of the GSA Contract; (c) request of the Agency; (d) request of American Express with the permission of the Agency; or (e) cancellation by American Express for delinquency as provided for

below. Upon cancellation, you will return the Card immediately, cut in half, to American Express.

6. LIABILITY FOR CHARGES

You agree to use the Government Card only for official travel and official travel related expenses away from your official station/duty station in accordance with Agency policy. Official travel and travel related expenses charged to the Government Card will be reimbursed by the Agency under the Agency's expense reimbursement procedures applicable to you. You also agree to report your expenses promptly to the Agency in accordance with its expense reimbursement procedures. You, as the Government Cardholder, are responsible for making payment to American Express.

You are not permitted to use the Government Card to incur charges for any other purposes (including personal purposes). Such charges shall be considered as unauthorized charges but you will nevertheless be personally liable to us for them, and we will look to you for payment.

7. PAYMENT

All amounts charged to the Card Account including, without limitation, purchases, cash advances or fees will be called "Charges" in the Agreement. Charges also include any purchases in which you have evidenced an intent to incur a Charge, regardless of whether you have signed a Charge form. We will send monthly statements of all charges to you. All Charges are due upon your receipt of the monthly billing statement. You should notify us immediately of any change in your billing address by calling the number indicated in Section 14 or by completing and returning the change-of-address form on the back of the monthly billing statement. Payments must be made in U.S. currency, with a money order payable in U.S. dollars, or with a draft or a check drawn on a bank in the United States and payable in U.S. dollars. If we decide to accept a payment made in some other form, payment will not be credited to you until your payment is converted into one of the forms just mentioned. We can charge you the costs we incur in converting your payment. We may accept late payments, partial payments or any checks or money orders marked as being payment in full or being a settlement of any dispute without losing any of our rights under this Agreement or under the law. If we accept such payments, this does not mean we agree to change this Agreement in any way.

8. DELINQUENCY/SUSPENSION/CANCELLATION

When any undisputed amounts are first included within an unpaid "Previous Balance" on any monthly statement, they will be considered delinquent. Once they have been included within an unpaid "Previous Balance" a second time, they will be considered seriously delinquent (sixty (60) calendar days from the billing date) and may result in suspension of Card privileges. With the consent of the Agency, the Card Account may be canceled if the undisputed amount is not paid in full within 120 days of the date of the first billing statement on which the Charge appears. Court costs and reasonable attorneys' fees, not to exceed fifteen percent (15%) of the amount owed, may be added to the Card Account if American Express must refer all or any part of the Account to an outside attorney or agency for collection.

9. USE OF ATM

You may be authorized to use the Card in ATMs to obtain cash. If so, we

will have a separate agreement with you concerning use of the Card in connection with the ATM Program. Please refer to that agreement for the rights and duties relating to the use of the Card.

10. LOST OR STOLEN CARDS

You agree to notify us at once if the Card is lost, or stolen, or you suspect it is being used without your permission, at the toll-free number indicated below.

11. CHARGES MADE IN FOREIGN COUNTRIES

Charges made in a foreign currency will be converted into U.S. Dollars. The conversion rate used will be at least as favorable as an interbank rate, a tourist rate or, where required by law, an official rate, which rate is in existence within twenty-four hours of the time that the Charge is processed by us or by our authorized agent. Amounts converted by common carriers such as airlines will be billed at rates the carriers use.

12. BILLING INQUIRIES AND DISPUTES

If you have any questions, problems or disputes concerning the monthly statement we send you, you should contact us and we will take reasonable and appropriate steps to provide the information you request or to resolve your dispute. In the case of a dispute, that charge will be suspended and not due until it has been resolved. However, if after our investigation we are unable to resolve the dispute in your favor, you must pay us and settle the dispute directly with the establishment.

13. TELEPHONE MONITORING

You and the Agency agree that we may monitor telephone calls between you and us to ensure the quality of the customer service we provide.

14. TOLL-FREE NUMBER

For address changes, billing inquiries, billing disputes, reporting lost or stolen Cards, and problems with goods and services call 1-800-492-4922 or call collect at 602-492-4922.

15. You agree to our disclosure of all necessary account information to an outside attorney, collection agency or a credit bureau if we refer all or any part of the account for collection in accordance with the contract with GSA. By signing this agreement you are providing your prior written consent to the disclosure of such information.

PRIVACY ACT NOTICE

In accordance with the Privacy Act (5 U.S.C. 522a), the following notice is provided: The information requested on the charge card application form is collected pursuant to Executive Order 9397 and chapter 57, title 5, United States Code, for the purpose of recording travel expenses incurred by the employee/member and to claim entitlements and allowances prescribed in applicable federal travel regulations. The purpose of the collection of this information is to provide Government agencies necessary information on the commercial travel and transportation payment and expense control system which provides travelers with charge cards for official travel and related expenses, attendant operational and control support and management information reports for expense control. Routine uses which may be made of the collected information are as follows: (1) transfers to appropriate Federal, State, local or foreign agencies when relevant to civil, criminal, administrative, or regulatory investigations, (2) pursuant to a request of another Federal agency in connection with hiring, retention, issuing a security clearance, reporting an employee investigation, clarifying a job, letter or contract or issuing a license, grant, or other benefit, (3) to a Member of Congress or to a Congressional Staff Member in response to an inquiry of the Congressional Office made at the request of the individual about whom the record is maintained, (4) to officials of labor organizations when necessary to their duties of exclusive representation, (5) to a Federal agency for accumulating reporting data and monitoring the system, (6) GSA contract travel agents assigned to agencies for billing of travel expenses, (7) listings, reports, and records to GSA by the contractor to conduct audits of carrier charges to the Government, and (8) any other use specified by GSA in the system of records entitled "Travel Charge Card Program GSA/GOVT-3," as published in the Federal Register periodically by GSA. The information requested is not mandatory. Failure to provide the information will nullify the application and a charge card will not be issued to the employee/member.

Government Cardholder Signature

Name - Please Print

Date