

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

POLICIES

MDHS ADMINISTRATIVE POLICY	
Revision Date November 12, 2010	AP -- 42 Revised

SUBJECT: MDHS TRAVEL POLICY

<u>PURPOSE:</u>	To provide uniform policies and procedures for in-state and out-of-state travel.
<u>ACTION:</u>	Division Directors shall ensure that a copy of this cover and attached policy are distributed to appropriate staff.
<u>APPLICATION:</u>	This policy is applicable to all divisions of the Mississippi Department of Human Services.
<u>CONTACT:</u>	Director, Division of Budgets and Accounting.
<u>EXCEPTIONS:</u>	As specified in the policy.
<u>EFFECT ON OTHER DIRECTIVES:</u>	Policies and procedures previously administered within divisions of MDHS with respect to travel are hereby superseded.

Distribution: MDHS Division Directors

11-12-10
Date:



Executive Director

Mississippi Department of Human Services Travel Policy

Employees of the Mississippi Department of Human Services (MDHS) are charged with the responsibility of providing the most effective and efficient delivery of services and benefits to the citizens of the state of Mississippi. This responsibility will be carried out in the most economical manner available within our agency's financial resources. It is for this reason that the following policies are established for use by MDHS' employees who are required to travel on official state government business.

An employee traveling on official state business is expected to exercise the same care in incurring expenses as would a prudent person traveling for personal reasons. Travel for business should be conducted at the least possible cost for achieving the purpose of travel. If needed, travelers shall request air, rail, hotel, and rental car reservations as far in advance as possible from the state contract travel agencies and shall utilize the lowest logical rates possible.

Policies

- Section 25-3-41, Mississippi Code of 1972, establishes travel reimbursement guidelines and procedures for employees and non-employees of MDHS. This law authorizes the Department of Finance and Administration (DFA) to issue rules and regulations to insure that state law governing travel expense reimbursement is carried out economically. Also, MDHS is authorized by DFA and state law to add its own rules and procedures to support the DFA rules.
- The DFA's State Travel Policy rules and regulations will be adhered to by MDHS employees when traveling on official business for the state. For a copy of the DFA rules and regulations, please refer to the DFA website: www.dfa.state.ms.us/purchasing/travel/travel.html.
- When official travel originates from the employee's home, the number of miles claimed should be from the base of operations or from home, whichever is less.
- The employee will use the odometer reading to measure travel mileage (Not to be recorded on travel voucher).
- Overnight travel will be allowed when the one-way mileage from an employee's official duty station to the location of his or her work assignment exceeds 75 miles and the work assignment exceeds one day. Exceptions may be approved on an individual basis by the Division Director or designee.

Mississippi Department of Human Services Travel Policy (Continued)

- When meal reimbursement is allowed, i.e. when there is an overnight stay, either actual expenses or a per meal allowance, whichever is lower, can be claimed. The per meal allowance is equal to the DFA per diem allowance for a complete day, but must be requested on a per meal basis as follows:

	State Reimbursement			
	Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner	Total
Non-High Cost Areas	\$4.00	\$11.00	\$16.00	\$31.00
High Cost Areas	\$6.00	\$14.00	\$21.00	\$41.00

- The above state reimbursement will change whenever the Federal Register Maximum Per Diem Rate changes and DFA changes the state rate. DFA rates are located at their website as follows: <http://www.dfa.state.ms.us/Purchasing/Travel/convertedrates.pdf>.
- Meal reimbursement is available only if the employee purchases the respective meal. Employees who stay at motels or hotels that offer complimentary breakfasts are encouraged to take advantage of them unless health reasons, etc. prohibit the employee from doing so.
- **Meal receipts are required whether actual expenses or per diem allowance is being claimed.**
- Employees' supervisors who approve travel reimbursement vouchers are responsible for insuring that forms are completed according to DFA and agency rules and regulations.
- **Intentional misrepresentations on employee reimbursement vouchers will subject employees to the penalties and remedies imposed by state law as stated on the travel reimbursement voucher immediately below the signature lines.**
- Employee travel reimbursement vouchers are subject to audit by the agency's Division of Program Integrity to insure compliance with DFA and agency rules and regulations
- Mileage reimbursement for state business travel using an employee's personal vehicle must be based on actual miles driven. At locations such as the state office where state-owned vehicles are available, the employee must attempt to use a state-owned vehicle unless one is not available or unless an exception is made by the employee's Division Director or other superior. Refer to Administrative Policy 9 (AP-9) for MDHS Vehicle use policy. If an employee uses their personal vehicle when a state-owned vehicle is available and no exception is granted, then the mileage reimbursement is at a lower rate. Refer to Memorandum # 7634 attached which is periodically updated.



STATE OF MISSISSIPPI
HALEY REEVES BARBOUR, GOVERNOR
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
DON THOMPSON
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

MEMORANDUM

Memorandum # 7634

TO: All MDHS Employees
FROM: Earl Walker, Director *EDW*
Division of Budgets and Accounting
DATE: January 6, 2010
RE: Revised Mileage Reimbursement Rate

Section 25-3-41, Mississippi Code of 1972, mandates that State officers and employees traveling on official State business in their private automobiles be reimbursed at the same rate federal employees are reimbursed for official federal business in private automobiles.

The U.S. Government Services website currently lists the following for Privately Owned Vehicles (POV) mileage reimbursement rates effective January 1, 2010. Travel for January and future travel will be reimbursed as follows:

<u>Mode of Transportation</u>	<u>Automobile</u>	<u>Reimbursement Rate Per Mile</u>
If no Government owned vehicle available		\$0.50
If Government owned vehicle available		\$0.285

A list of the maximum state reimbursement rates for high cost areas has been pre-calculated and is available on the OPT Travel Information website at:

<http://www.dfa.state.ms.us/Purchasing/Travel/ConvertedRates.pdf>.

If you cannot find the city you are looking for, locate the county and use the amount listed. If neither the city or county is listed, the maximum state reimbursement is \$31.00/day. Because of the number of requests regarding high-cost areas in Mississippi, we are listing the high-cost cities and the daily meal allowance:

<u>City</u>	<u>Daily Meal Allowance</u>
Grenada	\$41.00
Gulfport/Biloxi	\$41.00
Hattiesburg	\$41.00
Robinsonville	\$41.00
Southaven	\$41.00
Starkville	\$41.00

If you have questions concerning this memo, please call Bea Sarrett at (601) 359-4706.

EDW:WF:ja

State of Mississippi



State Travel Policy Rules & Regulations

January 8, 2010

1.	In-State Vehicle Rentals	13
2.	Out-of-State Vehicle Rentals	13
3.	Vehicle Rental Insurance	13
4.	Regional Price Differentials	14
C.	State Owned Vehicle	14
D.	Calculating Reimbursement for Driving vs. Flying	14
109.	Public Carrier (Airplane)	15
A.	Airline Travel – General Information	15
B.	Frequent Flyer Program Awards	16
C.	Airline Penalty Fares	16
D.	Airline Reservation Changes	16
1.	Involuntary	16
2.	Voluntary	16
E.	Airline Travel Invoices	17
F.	Airline Traveler Profiles	17
G.	Cancellations/Refunds	17
H.	Flight Insurance	17
I.	Lost Airline Tickets	17
J.	Passenger Facility Charges (PFCs)	18
K.	Delayed or Canceled Flights	18
L.	Overbooked Flights	18
M.	Baggage Allowance Information – Domestic and International	18
N.	Delayed, Lost and Damaged Baggage	18

Section 4 - American Express Charges

110.	American Express Business Travel Account (BTA)	19
------	--	----

127.	Meal Tips	26
------	-----------	----

Section 9 - Contract Travel Agencies

128.	General Information	27
129.	Payment to Travel Agencies	27

Section 10 - Other Allowable Expenses

130.	Phone Charges, Postage, and Other Expenses	28
131.	Taxi Fares	28
132.	Miscellaneous Charges	28
A.	Baggage Handling	28
B.	Hotel/Airport Parking	28
C.	Laundry Charges	28

Section 11 - Forms

133.	Travel Forms	29
A.	MAAPP Form 13.20.20 – Travel Authorization Form	29
B.	MAAPP Form 13.20.10 – Travel Voucher Form	29
C.	Airline Credit Refund Log	29
D.	Travel Waiver Form	29
E.	Vendor Incident Form	29

101. Definitions

High Cost Meal Allowance

Cities designated in the Federal Register as having a maximum per diem rate of \$100 or higher. The Department of Finance and Administration, Bureau of Financial Control, will reimburse actual meal costs in those cities based on a sliding scale not to exceed the amount set forth in the Revised Mileage Reimbursement Rate memo (<http://www.dfa.state.ms.us/Purchasing/Travel/MileageRate.pdf>.)

International Travel

All travel to areas other than of the 48 contiguous United States and Alaska.

Meal Reimbursement

Reimbursement of actual cost of meals when an employee is in travel status. Reimbursement shall not exceed the amounts set forth in Section 8 of the Travel Manual.

Mileage Reimbursement

The rate set forth per Section 25-3-41, Mississippi Code of 1972, which mandates that state officers and employees traveling on official state business in their private vehicle be reimbursed at the same rate federal employees are for official federal business in private vehicle. The current reimbursement rate is set forth in the Revised Mileage Reimbursement Rate memo (<http://www.dfa.state.ms.us/Purchasing/Travel/MileageRate.pdf>.)

Official Duty Station

The city, town, or other location where the employee's regular place of work is located, or the city, town or location where the employee's primary work is performed on a permanent basis. If the employee regularly works in two or more areas, his official duty station shall be where the regular place of work is located. The regular place of work should be determined by the agency head or authorized designee based on total time ordinarily spent working in each area and the degree of business activity in each area.

Official Residence

The city, town, or other location where an employee maintains a residence which is used as a primary domicile by the officer/employee. Determination by the agency head or authorized designee regarding an employee's residence is to be based on items such as voter registration, ownership, or long-term rental of a personal residence, and the permanent address carried in the officer/employee's personnel file.

102. Administration & Responsibility

The State Travel Office is established in the State Department of Finance and Administration, Office of Purchasing and Travel, to administer the State Travel Management Program.

A. The State Travel Director will:

- Oversee the operations of the Travel Management office;
- Monitor contractor performance and agency compliance;
- Work with state departments, boards, commissions and institutions to ensure the effective and efficient operation of the Travel Management Program;
- Serve as liaison with state departments, boards, commissions and institutions for the appropriate resolution of problems and complaints; and
- Provide informational material concerning the State Travel Management Program to department travel coordinators and employees.

B. Department Directors will:

- Be responsible for ensuring compliance with Section 25-3-41, Mississippi Code of 1972, by providing adequate internal control over employee travel; and
- Designate an existing employee(s) to serve as a department travel coordinator(s) within the organization for the purpose of monitoring employee compliance with these regulations.

C. Department Travel Coordinators will:

- Monitor employee compliance in accordance with these rules and regulations;
- Provide assistance to employees concerning questions and problems with travel arrangements and reimbursement;
- Serve as liaison with the State Travel Director's office;
- Book airline/railway travel, vehicle rentals, and lodging reservations for that department's employees through one of the state contract travel agencies or by other methods. This is not meant to indicate that no one else can make such arrangements, but rather to suggest that it is easier to monitor employee compliance when travel is handled by one person; and,
- Ensure that all employees are aware of and familiar with the guidelines set forth in this manual and that they understand that they are required to adhere to the established state travel policies and contracts.

105. Waiver Request Form

The Waiver Request Form (<http://www.dfa.state.ms.us/Purchasing/Travel/Waiver.pdf>) is to be used to request a waiver from any standard travel procedures.

This form should be submitted for approval **prior to** making any reservations or commitments.

The following are a list of possible reasons a Waiver Request Form may be needed:

- Requesting authority to pay an amount greater than the state contract
- Requesting authority to rent a vehicle with a cost greater than the intermediate size on state contract
- Requesting authority to purchase vehicle rental insurance
- Requesting authority to rent a vehicle not on state contract
- Requesting authority to pay a hotel other than the conference hotel
- Requesting authority to pay greater than the least expensive cost comparison for airline tickets

A clear explanation and necessary information should be provided that would prove the request to be economical or otherwise in the best interest of state. Failure to provide adequate information will cause delay and may potentially cause rejection of the request.

Approval of the Waiver Request Form will depend on the State Travel Office being able to clearly determine the anticipated cost to the state and/or any anticipated savings. All applicable cost information, such as contract fare, lowest available fare, conference hotel rate, actual rate paid, etc., should be provided.

The form should be completely filled out and signed by the agency head or his designee before submitting the form to the State Travel Office. The Waiver Request Form should be attached to the employees Travel Voucher when the voucher is submitted for reimbursement.

It is the responsibility of the agency to ensure their employees are familiar with and adhere to established state travel policies.

106. Travel Reimbursement Voucher

Agencies that use the Statewide Automated Accounting System (SAAS) can find the SPAHRS form for payment of travel expenses on the OPT Travel Information website at <http://www.dfa.state.ms.us/Content/DFAForms.htm>.

One state employee should not claim expenses for another state employee. **(Please note: IHL's may set written policies and procedures pertaining to claiming expenses for team/group travel.)**

Travel Vouchers should be typed or completed in ink and signed by the employee. The signature is a certification by the traveler that reimbursement is being requested for actual expenses that are valid business expenses.

Hotel/motel receipts must be itemized in order to be reimbursed.

The hotel bill submitted shall be the original form the hotel provides when the bill is paid.

Necessary travel expenses do not include personal expense items such as entertainment and trip insurance.

B. Rental Vehicle Used for State Business

When a rental vehicle is used in lieu of a personal vehicle for official state business within the state, only the actual cost of the rental vehicle and fuel can be claimed for reimbursement when such rental is less expensive than the current mileage reimbursement rate referenced in the Revised Mileage Reimbursement Rate memo (<http://www.dfa.state.ms.us/Purchasing/Travel/MileageRate.pdf>.)

The Bureau of Financial Control requires that you show the comparison of the total rental vehicle expense to the total mileage expense. Reimbursement for the lesser of the two expenses shall be shown and claimed on the Travel Voucher.

An intermediate size vehicle is normally the largest rental that will be reimbursed. Naturally, there will be occasions for which a larger vehicle will be required in order to carry out the state's business. A waiver request form should be submitted along with the Travel Voucher for reimbursement.

Charges for rental cars shall be allowed only when there is a demonstrated cost savings, including compensated employee time, over other modes of transportation such as buses, subways, taxi's, etc. The state **will not** reimburse for rental cars obtained for personal use, such as sightseeing or optional travel to and from restaurants while on official state business travel. Only the rental vehicle which is consistent with the size requirements of the business task to be performed will be reimbursed.

1. In-State Vehicle Rentals

The In-State Vehicle Rental contract is referenced on the OPT Travel Information website at <http://www.dfa.state.ms.us/Purchasing/Travel/Travel.html>. The contract references the coverage of insurance information. **The option to purchase insurance should always be declined when utilizing this state contract.**

Fill the vehicle with gasoline prior to return. You may be charged up to the amount per gallon as listed in the state contract referenced above for a full tank of gasoline even if the tank is 3/4 full when returned.

2. Out-of-State Vehicle Rentals

The Out-of-State Vehicle Rental contract is referenced on the OPT Travel Information website at <http://www.dfa.state.ms.us/Purchasing/Travel/Travel.html>. The corporate identification number listed in the contract must be referenced to obtain the state contract price. The contract also references the coverage of insurance information. **The option to purchase insurance should always be declined when utilizing this state contract.**

Fill the vehicle with gasoline prior to return. You may be charged up to the amount per gallon as listed in the state contract referenced above for a full tank of gasoline even if the tank is 3/4 full when returned.

3. Vehicle Rental Insurance

The current vehicle rental contracts **include** unlimited mileage and free CDW/LDW insurance. ***The option to purchase insurance should always be declined when a vehicle is rented utilizing the state contract.*** Insurance purchases will not be reimbursed as per the above information. The

If the driving expenses will be held to the lowest unrestricted air fare, that fare should be checked and noted that reimbursement is being restricted to that amount, or if it is evident that driving is cheaper than flying, such as (to/from New Orleans, Memphis, Mobile, Birmingham), no further authorization is required.

If a cost comparison must be made between driving vs. flying cost, the cost of flying should be multiplied by the number of passengers and compared to the cost of driving.

109. Public Carrier (Airplane)

A. Airline Travel – General Information

House Bill 1488, effective July 1, 2002, allows city and county officers and employees to utilize the State of Mississippi Travel Agency Services contract administered by the Office of Purchasing and Travel. This bill allows state agency employees to make reservations for all travel arrangements, using a state contract travel agency or booking flights over the Internet. A receipt (passenger receipt) and itinerary shall accompany the request for reimbursement.

For all flights which are not booked through one of the contract travel agencies, the state agency must maintain in its files a cost comparison showing a minimum of two (2) fares. This cost comparison must show the fare and any issuance cost and must show a savings, and shall be submitted along with the employees Travel Voucher.

If the employee must book a flight at a price in excess of the lowest rate on the cost comparison, the agency must, prior to booking the flight, submit a Waiver Request (<http://www.dfa.state.ms.us/Purchasing/Travel/Waiver.pdf>) to the Office of Purchasing and Travel and include the amount of cost and the justification of using that fare on the waiver.

When traveling by regularly scheduled air service, travelers are to utilize their local airport. Use of the local airport is assumed to result in travel costs that are most economical to the state.

The criteria for determining which airport or mode of transportation to use should be based on travel costs that are most economical to the state. All costs should be considered, i.e., travel, labor, lodging, meals, mileage reimbursement, etc., in making the determination.

The least expensive routing shall be used. In calculating the difference between airfare and travel by personal vehicle, factor in additional lodging and meal expenses, taxi fares, parking, and other airport related expenses. Delays enroute that will not delay the traveler's arrival at the destination by more than 3 hours actual travel time within the same day travel was begun and that result in a substantial cost benefit to the state will be used.

Alternate departure and return dates and times will be proposed to all travelers when they will result in lower fares. It is incumbent upon the traveler to provide information to the travel agent which could result in lower fares. If routing or accommodations other than the most economical are required, the agency head or designee may specify alternate routing and accommodations and Waiver Requests (<http://www.dfa.state.ms.us/Purchasing/Travel/Waiver.pdf>) shall be submitted to the Office of Purchasing and Travel.

"Direct" does not mean nonstop. It only means that you will not be changing aircraft. Choose the flight with the fewest stops for fewer chances for delay. A "direct" flight with only one stop might be preferable to connecting nonstop flights, however.

needed and attach a note of explanation to the Travel Voucher. Necessary waivers should be submitted upon return from the trip to the Office of Purchasing and Travel.

E. Airline Travel Invoices

Airline tickets purchased from a state contract travel agency shall be directly billed to the department's American Express Business Travel Account (BTA), corporate, or personal credit card. The travel agent will not issue invoices for later payment. Contract employee's travel can be charged to the American Express Business Travel Account and coded to contract travel. State agencies are reminded that American Express statements should be paid immediately whether or not travel has been performed. If the invoice is not paid within 45 days, the department owes American Express 1.1/2% penalty of the amount charged, for late payment. When requesting a Warrant for a late payment, a statement is required explaining the reasons payment was not made within 45 days.

F. Airline Traveler Profiles

State employees who travel frequently may expedite reservations and ticketing by having a "traveler's profile" on file at the travel agency. The profile will list such items as: passenger's name as it appears on frequent flier files, seating preference, credit card number, special meal requirements, and telephone numbers for home and office. The contract travel agency which your agency chooses to use will provide this form for your travelers.

G. Cancellations/Refunds

Tickets returned to a travel agency for cancellation/refund may be assessed a charge. Check the Travel Agency Services contract (<http://www.dfa.state.ms.us/Purchasing/StateContracts/TravelContract962.pdf>) for applicable fees. This charge will be applied to the account used for the original ticket invoice.

H. Flight Insurance

When a ticket is purchased with the state agency's American Express Business Travel Account (BTA) account or with an American Express Corporate Card, automatic Travel Accident insurance is included for any scheduled airline transportation. Some of the state contract travel agencies (<http://www.dfa.state.ms.us/Purchasing/StateContracts/TravelContract962.pdf>) also provide free insurance with tickets. No other flight insurance will be reimbursed.

Airlines automatically insure each ticketed passenger's luggage. Any excess valuation must be declared and paid at check-in. Check with the airline or the travel agency for procedures and amounts. Excess valuation for business related items may be a reimbursable expense by your agency. Personal items such as clothing and incidentals are not a reimbursable expense.

If tickets are purchased with the American Express Business Travel Account (BTA) or corporate card, both carry-on and checked baggage are insured.

I. Lost Airline Tickets

The fee that airlines charge for searching and refunding lost tickets is the responsibility of the person to whom the ticket was issued when lost after delivery is accepted by the traveler or agency. When the ticket is lost, the employee must file a lost ticket application with the travel agency or the airlines. There may also

Section 4 - American Express Charges

110. American Express Business Travel Account (BTA)

All airline tickets purchased through a state contract travel agency will be charged to the department, board, commission or institution's American Express Business Travel Account (BTA), personal or corporate charge card. The BTA is an American Express charge vehicle which operates without the issuance of a plastic card with procedures as follows:

Air or train arrangements may be made with a state contract travel agent over the phone and tickets and invoices will be delivered according to the usual procedure.

When reservations are made by one of the state contract travel agencies, tickets not charged to the employee's personal or corporate charge card may be billed to a central account number assigned to each agency by American Express. No special procedures or cards are required.

American Express will bill each agency, board, commission or institution for all BTA transactions once a month in a consolidated statement itemizing account activity and providing transaction receipts. American Express' statements will include passenger name and airline ticket number for each billed trip as well as airline name and ticket amount. Credits and an account summary will also appear on the statement.

Billing information will be sorted by ticket number by passenger name, within agency BTA accounts.

All airline expenses will appear on one comprehensive monthly statement and after reconciliation with invoices from the state contract travel agency, the agency will pay American Express with a single check.

Only airline and train tickets can be charged to the BTA.

Employees ticketed under this program are also automatically covered by the American Express Card's Travel Accident Insurance. This coverage begins when the employee boards a flight, ends when they arrive back at their home, covering the employee on the ground and in the air.

You will still receive a zero balance invoice from the contract travel agency, and will need to retain these invoices and reconcile them with the statement from American Express, taking whatever credits are due the department for returned refundable tickets, and submit one Payment Voucher for all airline tickets issued by the travel agency, payable to American Express.

Each department, board, commission and institution has appointed a Program Administrator, normally a Comptroller or Finance Officer, to receive the American Express billing and reconcile it with the invoices from the travel agency. This is the contact person who will also be responsible for signing American Express applications and for the resolution of any billing disputes for the individual corporate cards

American Express has developed a form to record airline credit refunds. (<http://www.dfa.state.ms.us/Purchasing/Travel/AirlineCreditRefundLog.pdf>) for use as follows:

Obtain credit card refund notices from the travel agency for each refundable ticket sent back for refund. You may request that this notice be sent to you by fax.

Section 5 - Conferences, Seminars, Workshops

112. In-State/Out-Of-State/International Conferences

Section 25-1-83 of the Mississippi Code requires written approval from the department head for employee attendance at any convention, association or meeting in order for expenses to be reimbursed. Such reimbursed expenses must then be annually reported to the Legislature.

113. Conference Airlines

Check conference materials to see if special airline discounts are offered. When a special airline discount rate is offered and conferees are instructed to go directly to an airline or a specific travel agency to obtain the discount fare, all fare and file number information may be given to a contract travel agency. They will then attempt to obtain the conference rate, or lower rate, for the employee. The employee may make these reservations per House Bill 1488, effective July 1, 2002. Any time a lesser rate is obtained, no waiver is required.

114. Conference Hotels

When hotel rooms are blocked for a conference, seminar, etc., and a special discounted hotel rate provided, the employee should go through the conference housing bureau or directly to the hotel to obtain lodging. The state contract travel agencies will not make reservations for conference hotels. **A copy of the conference literature showing the conference hotel and rate or the registration form which often includes the housing reservation must be attached to the Travel Voucher in order to be reimbursed.** A memo from the employee is acceptable if there are no rates listed on the brochure. A waiver request form (<http://www.dfa.state.ms.us/Purchasing/Travel/Waiver.pdf>) is required for any lodging reimbursement greater than the conference rate and shall be attached to the Travel Voucher for reimbursement.

Reimbursement to employees for hotels guaranteed prior to completion of travel can be authorized using the PTE (Prior to Trip Expense) referenced in Section 103 of the State Travel Policy Rules & Regulations.

115. Conference Meals

Meals shall not be claimed as a separate item of expense on the Travel Voucher when included in the conference registration fee. If special circumstances exist, for example, a food allergy prohibiting one from eating the meal provided, an exception will be made if noted by the employee and signed by the agency head or designee and reimbursement will be provided for that meal.

Fees charged for attending the official meetings of a convention or seminar where the meeting includes a meal which causes the employee to exceed the daily maximum meal allowance will be reimbursed if supported by a receipt from convention officials.

Alcoholic beverages are not reimbursable.

The meal reimbursement rate shall be paid at the rate for the conference city location.

Section 7 – Lodging

119. General Information

Primary responsibility for the reasonableness of amounts charged rests with the agency head or his designee. "Government rates" must always be requested by all travelers and the rate confirmed both at the time reservations are made and at check-in. If lodging is within the state of Mississippi, "state rates" should be asked for rather than "government rates." See Section 122 for more information.

Since hotels charge for unkept reservations, changes in travel plans must be communicated to the hotel as soon as possible. These charges will not be reimbursed if the traveler has been negligent in canceling reservations, or if the change is due to a personal decision after the deadline for cancellations. Exceptions may be made for emergencies beyond the employee's control.

Lodging other than hotels/motels, such as apartments, dormitories, etc., may be used when they result in a lower cost, and an itemized receipt is required.

When a contract travel agency makes lodging reservations, they will provide written confirmation of the reservation and rate. The rate quoted on the written confirmation is guaranteed by the contract travel agency, but any claim for discrepancy in rates must be documented with a copy of the confirmation and hotel bill. Proof that the hotel reservation was made by a contract travel agency must accompany the Travel Voucher.

120. Lodging Shared With Someone Not a State Employee

If a member(s) of the state employee's family or other non-state employee travels with the officer or employee, the employee shall claim reimbursement at the single hotel/motel room rate only. Express check-out receipts which do not provide an itemized hotel bill are not acceptable.

121. Lodging Shared With State Employee

If more than one employee shares a hotel/motel room, each employee may report a pro-rata share of the costs on his travel reimbursement request, or all lodging expenses may be shown on one reimbursement request, provided that both travelers note the sharing of the room on their individual reimbursement requests. Separate hotel receipts may be requested when registering. If the employee does not have an original hotel receipt, he shall write and sign the following statement on the copy, "This is a true and correct copy of the hotel receipt."

122. In-State Lodging

The State Travel Office maintains an updated agreement with various Mississippi hotels for state employee rates for official business travel. The contract for hotels/motels (<http://www.dfa.state.ms.us/Purchasing/StateContracts/Hotels/HotelMotelContract962.pdf>) is a convenience contract. Although it is not mandatory by DFA that state employees stay in a hotel on this list, most agencies require it. Check with your travel coordinator to find out your agency's position on this issue.

The providers referenced above have agreed to charge a rate lower than, or no more than, the maximum rate set forth in the Federal Register, referenced on the OPT Travel Information website at

Section 8 - Meal Allowances

124. General Information

Officers and employees of the state and political subdivisions shall be reimbursed the actual cost of meals incident to official travel, not to exceed the daily maximums for the specific location of assignment.

The amount allowed for individual meals when traveling within the continental United States (including Alaska) shall be at the discretion of the governing authority or the department head, provided that the total does not exceed the maximum state reimbursement rate listed in the Revised Mileage Reimbursement Rate memo (<http://www.dfa.state.ms.us/Purchasing/Travel/MileageRate.pdf>.) Expenses incurred for meals during international travel are reimbursed on actual expenditures and do not require receipts by the Bureau of Financial Control.

Meal reimbursements are not allowed within the official duty station.

Alcoholic beverages are not reimbursable.

125. High Cost Area Meal Allowances

In-state and out-of-state high cost areas are those cities designated in the Federal Register as having a prescribed maximum per diem daily rate of \$100.00 or higher. Reimbursement shall be made based on the following sliding scale, which always remains constant, not to exceed the following rates.

Federal Register Maximum Per Diem Rate	Maximum State Reimbursement Rate
\$0 - \$99	\$31.00
\$100 - \$124	\$36.00
\$125 - \$149	\$41.00
\$150 – up	\$46.00

A list of the maximum state reimbursement rates for high cost areas has been pre-calculated and is available on the OPT Travel Information website at: <http://www.dfa.state.ms.us/Purchasing/Travel/ConvertedRates.pdf>. If you cannot find the city you are looking for, locate the county and use the amount listed. If neither the city nor county is listed, the maximum state reimbursement rate is \$31.00/day.

Note: Travel to Alaska is considered within the continental limits of the United States and would be reimbursed at the maximum state reimbursement rate allowed.

Section 9 - Contract Travel Agencies

128. General Information

The Office of Purchasing and Travel has approved a list of travel agencies (<http://www.dfa.state.ms.us/Purchasing/StateContracts/TravelContract962.pdf>) to provide travel services for the officers and employees of the State of Mississippi. This multiple award contract is based on proposals received from various agencies.

Each state agency may choose one or more state contract travel agencies to handle its travel requirements. It is our recommendation that the agency advise its employees which travel agency(s) is to be used and designate a liaison to work with the travel agency(s).

House Bill 1488, effective July 1, 2002, allows city and county officers and employees to utilize the State of Mississippi Travel Agency Contract administered by the Office of Purchasing and Travel. This bill also allows state agency employees to make reservations for all travel arrangements, either through one of the state contract travel agencies or by other methods. See Section 109 for complete details.

When travel arrangements are handled by a state contract travel agency an itinerary form will be attached to the inside of the ticket jacket which will include all travel confirmations. A copy of this itinerary form must be attached to the Travel Voucher for reimbursement. Travelers should keep their copy of the ticket itinerary/invoice to avoid fees charged by the travel agency for additional copies.

The state contract travel agencies are not required to enforce state rules and regulations, only to administer them, and will book arrangements as specified by the traveler.

129. Payment to Travel Agencies

The only approved methods for paying the contract travel agencies for air travel tickets are through charges on the American Express Corporate Card, the employee's personal credit card, or the American Express Business Travel Account (BTA). Payment for other travel agency services may be made using the American Express corporate charge card, or the employee's personal credit card.

Section 11 – Forms

133. Travel Forms

- A. MAAP Form 13.20.10 – Travel Voucher Form
- B. MAAP Form 13.20.20 – Travel Authorization Form
- C. Airline Credit Refund Log
- D. Travel Waiver Form
- E. Vendor Incident Form