



# *State of Oklahoma Travel Policy*

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*Issued by the:*

*Office of Management and Enterprise Services  
Central Purchasing*

## Table of Contents

1	STATE TRAVEL PROGRAM DESCRIPTION .....	3
2	DEFINITIONS .....	4
3	ORGANIZATION .....	6
4	TRAINING.....	6
5	TRAVEL ACQUISITIONS.....	6
6	INSURANCE .....	8
7	FREQUENT TRAVELER BENEFIT PROGRAMS .....	8
8	TRAVELERS WITH DISABILITIES OR MEDICAL CONDITIONS .....	9
9	MISCELLANEOUS EXPENSES .....	9
10	TRAVEL REIMBURSEMENT .....	9
11	NON-REIMBURSABLE EXPENSES.....	9
12	VEHICLE VIOLATION FINES AND TICKETS.....	10
13	THIRD-PARTY PAYMENT.....	10
14	STATE TRAVEL OFFICE CONTACT INFORMATION .....	10

# 1 STATE TRAVEL PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

## Program

The State of Oklahoma Agency Travel Program establishes the use of an online booking tool (OBT) through a Travel Management Company (TMC) for acquisition of travel services in support of official State business. The OBT is credit card driven to assist State Entities with tracking and managing travel purchases. All purchases shall be made in accordance with State statutes, administrative codes (rules), and this Policy, which include but may not be limited to:

- Central Purchasing Act, 74 O.S. § 85.1 et seq.
- State Travel Reimbursement Act, 74 O.S. § 500 et seq.
- Office of Management and Enterprise Services (OMES) Codified Rules 260:115
- State Purchase Card Procedures
- State of Oklahoma Travel Policy
- State Agency Internal Purchasing and Travel Procedures
- Statewide Accounting Manual

## Travel Program Objectives

- Safety and visibility of employees on state business
- Increased efficiencies from booking through reimbursement
- Reduction of the State's overall travel costs
- Streamline the booking and administrative processes
- Introduction of ancillary services

## State of Oklahoma Contract

The Office of Management and Enterprise Services (OMES), Central Purchasing is authorized to award a statewide contract for State travel services. The Statewide Contract number for travel services is SW210 and is a **mandatory** contract for state agencies. Lodging is not mandated through this contract at this time.

Oklahoma institutions of higher education and political subdivisions may choose to use the statewide travel contract.

## Travel Program Authorization

The State Travel Program is authorized by the Oklahoma Central Purchasing Act (74 O.S. § 85.45k).

## Conditions of Participation

State Entities, as a condition of participation in the Travel Program and use of the statewide travel contract, shall abide by the terms of this Policy unless a "Request for Exception" form is submitted to and approved by the State Purchasing Director. A request must be directed to the State Travel Manager and shall: (1) cite the specific paragraph(s) of this Policy for which the exception is requested; (2) include a description and justification for the exception; and (3) state the specific length of time for which the exception is necessary. The State Entity traveler or Travel Arranger and the State Travel Office shall keep approved exceptions on file. The Request for Exception to State Travel Procedures (OMES/Purchasing – Form 037) is located on the OMES website at [https://www.ok.gov/DCS/Central\\_Purchasing/P-Card\\_Information/P-Card\\_Forms/](https://www.ok.gov/DCS/Central_Purchasing/P-Card_Information/P-Card_Forms/).

Travel shall be purchased through either a designated Travel Arranger or by the traveler. State Entities must determine if P-cards will be issued to each traveler or restricted to designated Travel Arrangers.

## Travel Request Flow

A typical travel request consists of the following steps:

- a) Agency travel is planned and approved internally according to agency procedures and policies.
- b) The traveler or Travel Arranger accesses the OBT and makes travel and car rental reservations.
- c) Travel is confirmed and booked by the traveler or Travel Arranger by use of the State authorized purchase card (P-card), or employee's personal credit card.
- d) If utilizing a personal credit card, charges are submitted on the travel claim (OMES Form 19) for reimbursement.

## 2 DEFINITIONS

**“Agency Approving Officer”** means the elected or appointed executives of any state agency or their designated administrative employees with the authority to approve individual claims of the agency for payment of money from the State Treasury from any fund.

**“Agency-direct payment”** means payments made by P-card or Purchase Order directly by a State Entity for State travel without the traveler personally incurring an out-of-pocket expense and seeking reimbursement.

**“Boarding pass”** means a document allowing a traveler to board an airline. A boarding pass may be presented in a digital form on a smart phone, iPhone, or other electronic device.

**“Folio”** means a document issued by a lodging facility detailing lodging charges.

**“Invoice”** means a document issued by a vendor to an organization to effect payment for goods and services purchased using the P-Card and are available via the bank's transaction system.

**“Itinerary”** means a document in which the places you will be traveling are listed.

**“Lodging facility”** means hotel, motel, hostel, etc. that provide resting accommodations for travelers.

**“Lodging rate”** means the amount a lodging facility charges for nightly accommodations. Allowable lodging rates for each State are listed on the Government Services Administration (GSA) website.

**“Online Booking Tool (OBT)”** means an application that assists Travel Management Companies and travel agents to cater economically and quickly to large numbers of travelers. Synonymous with “online booking engine (OBE).”

**“Entity P-Card Administrator”** means State Entity staff member designated to manage the P-card program for the Entity.

**“P-Card bank database/ledger program”** means the issuing bank P-card reconciliation program.

**“P-Card or State Purchase Card”** means an electronic transaction device used for making acquisitions.

**“Payment Confirmation”** means a transaction document that can be part of a receipt, which shows a payment was issued. Can be a confirmation number or order number.

**“Per diem”** means a standard daily allowance for expenses incurred while in travel status.

**“Reimbursement”** means compensation by the State of Oklahoma for authorized out-of-pocket expenses incurred by the traveler while conducting State business.

**“Single Transaction Limit”** means the maximum spending (dollar) limit a traveler or Travel Arranger is authorized to charge in a single transaction. For travel purposes, lodging and transportation are considered separate transactions.

**“Signature”** means a handwritten signature or an e-signature. E-signatures are considered original electronic signatures and acceptable by OMES.

**“State Business”** means business conducted for and in the interest of the State Entity and/or the State of Oklahoma. Synonymous with “official business.”

**“State Entity”** means a unit of state government. It includes, but is not limited to, any agency, office, officer, bureau, board, council, court and associated organizations, commission, institution, unit, division, or other units of state government, whether elected or appointed. It excludes only political subdivisions of the state. Synonymous with “Entity.”

**“State Entity Travel Approver”** means the designated person or persons within a State Entity who has been granted the authority to approve travel requests by the State Entity Director. Synonymous with “Travel Approver” or “Approver.”

**“State Entity Travel Coordinator”** means the designated person or persons within a State Entity who has been assigned the duty of booking travel for Entity employees for official State business.

**“State Travel”** means travel required in the process of conducting State Business. Synonymous with “official travel.”

**“State Travel Manager”** means the Central Purchasing staff member designated to assist the State Purchasing Director with implementation, management, and operation of the State Travel Program.

**“State Travel Office”** means the office within the Central Purchasing Division of OMES that provides overall guidance and direction for the State Travel Program.

**“State Travel Reimbursement Act (STRA)”** means the portion of Title 74 that governs the reimbursement of State travel expenses.

**“Statewide Contract”** means a contract issued by the OMES, Central Purchasing Division for specific acquisitions for a specified period, with a provision allowing the agencies and local governmental entities to place orders as acquisitions or services are needed for delivery, during the period specified.

**“Ticket”** means a document created by an airline or travel agent to confirm that a traveler has purchased a seat on an airline or other public means of transportation.

**“Transaction”** means a single purchase. A credit also constitutes a transaction.

**“Travel claim”** means a claim filed by a traveler on OMES Form 19 for reimbursement of out-of-pocket expenses incurred as a result of State travel.

**“Travel Management Company (TMC)”** means a contracted company that uses cost-comparing global distribution systems (GDS) to locate and book discounted flights and hotels for clients.

**“Travel status”** means the time period between the beginning of a trip and the end of a trip (including, but not exceeding 24 hours or 48 hours, as appropriate, prior to or after the “event”).

“**Traveler**” means an employee of a State Entity who travels on behalf of the State of Oklahoma and/or State Entity to conduct State business.

“**Works**” means the current bank database/ledger program used for P-card transaction reconciliation.

### 3 ORGANIZATION

**State Purchasing Director** is responsible for the implementation, management, and operation of the State Travel Program.

**State Travel Office** is the State office that provides guidance and direction for State Travel.

**State Travel Manager** is designated by the State Purchasing Director to assist with implementation, management, and operation of the State Travel Program.

**State Entity Travel Arrangers** are designated by State Entities to book travel for Entity personnel conducting State business.

**State Entity P-card Administrators** assist Travel Arrangers and travelers with P-card transactions pertaining to travel.

### 4 TRAINING

It is recommended that travelers, Travel Arrangers, and Travel Approvers attend the travel training provided by the State Travel Office prior to utilizing the OBT.

P-card training is required prior to becoming a P-Card holder or P-Card Approver. Contact your Entity P-card Administrator for enrollment in the OMES P-Card training. Class dates are listed on the OMES website at [http://www.ok.gov/DCS/Central\\_Purchasing/P-Card\\_Information/P-Card\\_Training/](http://www.ok.gov/DCS/Central_Purchasing/P-Card_Information/P-Card_Training/).

Additional training for the OBT and P-card is available upon request made to the State Travel Office or State P-card Office.

### 5 TRAVEL ACQUISITIONS

- **Airfare** – The Travel Arranger or traveler shall pay the lowest logical airfare for coach airline tickets. The tickets should be purchased through the contracted TMC’s OBT. The Arranger or traveler shall retain all transaction documentation for coding in the P-Card ledger program and end-of-cycle reconciliation or travel claim filing. See 74 O.S. § 500.4 for purchase of international airfare. Trip or ticket insurance would be allowed only in the case where the combined total of the airfare and the insurance is less than or equal to the cost of a refundable ticket.
  - *Exceptions* – Documentation meeting the requirements of Title 74-85.45k for agency-determined exceptions of airfare shall be retained by the agency and available upon request by OMES. Statutory exemptions should be noted in Works.
- **Lodging** – Lodging purchases for state employees or authorized non-state personnel traveling on official business shall be made in compliance with the State Travel Reimbursement Act (STRA), OMES State Travel Policy and the State of Oklahoma P-card procedures. Lodging may be booked through the TMC’s OBT. For any type of lodging purchases exceeding \$5,000.00 the P-Card shall not be used.

- When required by the lodging establishment, the traveler's lodging stay may be posted to the P-Card in advance, *provided* there is a full refund cancellation policy in place, should the event be canceled by the sponsor. The lodging establishment's cancellation policy shall be retained by the Travel Arranger or traveler for reconciliation at the end of the cycle.
- The lodging establishment must provide a final detailed receipt (folio) to the traveler once lodging services have been provided, if lodging is not booked and paid through the OBT. It is the traveler's responsibility to obtain the folio. Folio must be retained by P-Card holder for uploading and attachment to the corresponding P-Card transaction, for manual reconciliation at the end of the cycle, or for the employees reimbursement claim.
- The STRA provides the OMES Director authority to approve **in-state** lodging expense up to 150% of the current GSA standard rate if it is determined that no lodging is available at the current GSA approved rate. Request for exception shall be submitted to the State Travel Office and approved prior to commencing travel. Form OMES-FORMS-CP-035 is located on the Central Purchasing website at [https://www.ok.gov/dcs/searchdocs/app/manage\\_documents.php?id=956](https://www.ok.gov/dcs/searchdocs/app/manage_documents.php?id=956). A copy of the approved exception must be uploaded and attached to the corresponding P-card transaction or retained for manual reconciliation at the end of the cycle.
- The Entity Travel Arranger or traveler shall verify the in-state lodging stay to be free of Oklahoma lodging tax, Municipality tax, City tax, Occupancy tax, and Tourism tax. State tax exemption information is located on the P-card website at [https://www.ok.gov/DCS/Central\\_Purchasing/P-Card\\_Information/P-Card\\_Tax\\_Exemptions/](https://www.ok.gov/DCS/Central_Purchasing/P-Card_Information/P-Card_Tax_Exemptions/).
- The State of Oklahoma is not exempt from Tribal Tax.
- The State of Oklahoma is not exempt from taxes assessed by other states.
- Airfare and lodging shall be booked by one of the following:
  - State Entity Travel Arranger: The Travel Arranger shall be issued a P-Card in the Arranger's name to book lodging and airfare on behalf of the State Entity. The Travel Arranger shall verify lodging establishment and pricing is in compliance with the STRA and OMES State Travel Policy (i.e., designated hotel, GSA established per Diem rates, etc.).
  - Traveler: The traveler may be issued a P-Card in the traveler's name at the Entity's discretion and placed in a travel profile by the Entity P-card Administrator. OMES P-Card training is required prior to issuance of the P-Card. The traveler shall verify lodging establishment and pricing is in compliance with the STRA and OMES State Travel Policy (i.e., designated hotel, GSA established per diem rates, etc.). Booking travel with either P-Card, personal credit card, or personal debit card is acceptable. Personal credit or debit cards shall be used for all incidental charges incurred during State travel.
- **Ground Transportation** – Ground transportation includes bus and rail transportation, taxicabs, rental cars, limousine, and shuttle service. Rental cars may be paid by any P-Card holder, but should be reserved at the time airfare, rail, or bus and lodging reservations are booked for the greatest efficiency.
  - Taxicabs and Limousine Service – is authorized if determined to be the most cost-effective means of transportation.
    - *As a means of containing travel costs for the state, employees are encouraged to use available courtesy transportation service furnished by hotels or host sponsor, to the maximum extent possible as the first source of transportation between the place of lodging and airport or other objective of travel point(s).*
  - Tips for ground transportation may be paid with the P-card or reimbursed, provided they meet the following criteria:

- *Reasonable tip expense shall be not more than \$1.00 if the reimbursable fare charge is \$5.00 or less; or 15 per cent (15%) of the reimbursable charge when it exceeds \$5.00. If the 15% calculated tip amount is less than \$1.00 or is not a multiple of 5, the reimbursable tip amount may be rounded up to \$1.00 or up to the next \$.05, as applicable.*
- *Parking fees paid by P-Card or included on the lodging folio are limited to the lesser of either self-parking or valet parking charges, if free parking is not provided by the lodging establishment.*
- **Travel related expenses** – Food, including room service; phone charges (non-business related); internet charges (non-business related) are **NOT** allowed on the P-Card. Justification and proof of business related phone and internet expenses is required. State employees and authorized non-state personnel traveling on official business are responsible for paying out-of-pocket for all other travel-related expenses. In the case of inadvertent personal charges, the traveler shall obtain a credit from the lodging establishment or reimburse the State for any and all personal expenses charged to the P-Card (i.e., phone calls, room service, movies, in-room bar, etc.). If a credit is not possible on the P-Card, the traveler shall reimburse the State Entity. Such repayment can be made by actual check or cash to the State Entity. See the State Purchase Card Procedures for required P-card ledger information. Non-repayment of personal expenses to the State by the Traveler shall result in the Traveler's loss of P-Card travel acquisition privileges and other disciplinary or criminal actions.
  - *Agencies with statutory exemptions related to food, should include the statute number in the description field on their P-Card transaction.*

## 6 INSURANCE

- **In-State Vehicle Liability Coverage** – The State of Oklahoma is self-insured through the Risk Management Division of OMES. A copy of your Entity's Certificate of Coverage may be obtained from your State Entity Risk Management Coordinator.
- **Out-of-State Vehicle Coverage** – The commercial insurance policy provided through the Risk Management Division of OMES provides liability coverage for out-of-state travel, however an additional physical or collision damage waiver (CDW) is advisable if not renting a vehicle from the statewide contract vendor(s). Personal accident insurance (PAI), personal effects insurance (PEI), and other supplemental liability insurance are considered personal expenses and are not reimbursable.
- **Foreign Vehicle Coverage** – It is strongly recommended that a CDW be purchased from the rental company if renting a vehicle in a foreign country.
- **Foreign Travel Coverage** – All foreign travel should be reported to the Risk Management Division in the annual foreign travel survey, or at least 30 days prior to overseas travel for area specific insurance coverage information.

Contact the State Risk Management Division of OMES for additional information related to foreign travel or any other insurance issue at (405) 521-4999 or [http://www.ok.gov/DCS/Risk\\_Management/index.html](http://www.ok.gov/DCS/Risk_Management/index.html).

## 7 FREQUENT TRAVELER BENEFIT PROGRAMS

- State Entities must determine if they will allow their employees to accrue frequent flyer miles to offset future State travel purchases. Per the STRA (74 O.S. § 500-15) "*no travel claim shall be awarded if the filer of the claim has benefited from the personal receipt of frequent travel miles unless those miles are used to offset future claims against the state.*"

- State entities must determine how the frequent traveler benefits will be tracked and must make the tracking information available upon request to the State Travel Office and/or the State Auditor's office.
- Pre-check (Pre ✓) program offered by Transportation Security Administration (TSA) for expedited security screening may be used by travelers. Any fees that may be associated with this program are the responsibility of the traveler and are not reimbursable expenses. The "Known Traveler Number (KTN)", if applicable, may be included in the traveler profile, but must be entered in the appropriate field when making a reservation. If the KTN is not printed on the airline ticket, the program cannot be used for that trip.

## **8 TRAVELERS WITH DISABILITIES OR MEDICAL CONDITIONS**

Employees with documented disabilities or medical conditions may be authorized to incur baggage assistance or other disability-related expenses. For passengers of size requiring additional space during travel, consult the airline's policy. Travel requiring the booking of an additional seat will need to be made by phone through the TMC's toll-free number . It is recommended that a written exception approval be obtained prior to traveling to ensure smooth processing of the travel voucher. Submit request explaining the special situation to [steve.wilson@omes.ok.gov](mailto:steve.wilson@omes.ok.gov).

For additional information related to authorized disability-related expenses, contact the Transaction Processing Dept./Central Accounting & Reporting/OMES.

## **9 MISCELLANEOUS EXPENSES**

Reimbursement of parking fees, toll fees, checked baggage fees (1 bag limit for domestic flights), and other miscellaneous business-related expenses are limited to actual out-of-pocket costs. Paid receipts or other evidence of payment must be provided for payments of \$25.00 or more.

Currency conversion for foreign travel may be reimbursed. Additional information may be required related to conversion factors.

## **10 TRAVEL REIMBURSEMENT**

Travel reimbursement is governed by Title 62 and Title 74-500 et seq. Travel claims approved by the agency approving officer are to be submitted on OMES Form 19 (or OMES Form 18 can be used by agencies authorized actual & necessary expenses) until the paperless reimbursement module becomes available.

## **11 NON-REIMBURSABLE EXPENSES**

There are several travel expenses that the traveler may wish to incur, however they may not be reimbursable. These expenses include, but are not limited to:

- Late check-out/room guarantee charges
- Baggage tips (with the exception of baggage assistance related to a known disability)
- Coat check fees
- Entertainment
- Parking tickets or other traffic tickets (see section on Vehicle violation fines and tickets)
- Frequent traveler membership fees
- Tip amounts exceeding authorized amounts
- Airline seat preference charges (unless documented disability or medical condition exists and authorized by

- employing State Entity)
- Valet services (unless pre-approved by the Transaction Processing Dept./Central Accounting & Reporting/OMES).

## 12 VEHICLE VIOLATION FINES AND TICKETS

Parking tickets or moving vehicle violation fines are the personal liability of the traveler and are not reimbursable expenses (except tickets for broken lights, etc. on state vehicles when employee is not at fault). All fines shall be paid to the ticketing entity by the traveler. Fines charged to the State P-Card by rental car agencies will incur additional administrative charges from the rental company. The traveler is responsible to reimburse the State Entity for the total amount charged to the P-Card for the violation. Habitual violations may restrict a traveler's ability to use the P-Card for vehicle rentals.

## 13 THIRD-PARTY PAYMENT

Occasionally, the host of a conference may select a State employee as a guest speaker. In the event the host chooses to pay the airfare and lodging for the employee, the travel claim is filed without seeking reimbursement for those expenses. A travel voucher would be filed for other authorized expenses (per Diem, registration, etc.), however, it must be documented on the voucher that there will be no airfare and lodging claimed (see OMES Statewide Accounting Manual, Chapter 50.30.2, subcategory, 'Exclusion of Major Category of Expenses').

## 14 STATE TRAVEL OFFICE CONTACT INFORMATION

State Travel Office  
[agency.travel@omes.ok.gov](mailto:agency.travel@omes.ok.gov)

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