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New and Revised Travel FAQs

The E-Travel Management Team has been reviewing Travel FAQs, working on revisions to existing responses, and adding new questions.

Minor revisions have been made to the responses on the following questions:

- E-Travel 04
- E-Travel 06
- E-Travel 09
- Personal Travel 05

The new FAQs can be found under [Air Travel](#) and [E-Travel](#).

The new [Air Travel](#) FAQs relate to the rural air contract and rates.

- What is the rural air contract and who administers it?
- When booking rural travel, why is the “state contract rate” occasionally higher than the regular or published rate?
- How do I know which rural fare to book?

The new [E-Travel](#) FAQ relates to elite benefits for MVP Gold travelers.

- E-Travel reflects a sold-out flight, but I am able to get the last seat when I call the MVP Gold Desk. Can I make the change with the MVP Gold Desk or do I have to take what E-Travel has available?

The current list of FAQs can be found on the [travel website](#) under the FAQs tab.



E-Travel Satisfaction Survey

The quarterly [E-Travel Satisfaction Survey](#) is posted on the travel website under the Contract/Audit tab and in E-Travel Online. It will remain open until June 1.

The survey is used to evaluate customer service provided by USTravel and the online booking tool.

Comments provide an opportunity for the E-Travel Management Team and USTravel to make enhancements and to bring clarity to the travel program.

State employees who have contacted USTravel for travel arrangements, either by phone or in E-Travel Online, are encouraged to partake in the survey.

E-Travel Online Training

To sign up, contact your [Department Travel Coordinators](#)

April 10, 1:30 p.m.
April 21, 9:30 a.m.
April 24, 9:30 a.m.

See E-Travel Online User Home Page for more training opportunities by USTravel.

Flight Options Increase this Spring

This time of the year airlines are making changes to current flights schedules and adding more flights to accommodate for the influx of summer travelers.

The inventory and availability in E-Travel online is live and updated directly by the carriers. Both may fluctuate with market demands.

This summer Alaska Airlines

is offering double miles in some markets and have announced service to three new destinations: Tampa, New Orleans, and Detroit.

Delta has also recently announced new service. They are offering three more flights out of Anchorage and seasonal service out of Juneau and Fairbanks.

Travelers will have more flight options to choose from when traveling out-of-state.

Both carriers provide the state a contract discount off most published fares.



Travel E-Qs Quarterly Winner

Marian Morse
(DOT)



NOTE: Review the *Fare Rules* in E-Travel Online when comparing flights and fares. Each carrier has different restrictions that may increase the travel cost, such as baggage fees, change fees, and the flexibility for name changes.

Travel E-Qs

There will be a prize drawing held in July for answers submitted by April 18 to the E-Travel Management Team at doa.dof.e-travel@alaska.gov

1. How often do you refer to the list of FAQs, and do you find them helpful?
2. Do all carriers allow name changes?
3. What kind of information listed on the Preferred Hotel sheet is important to you?
4. Why would a mobile application be important to travelers?
5. What are the contracted car vendors, and are they mandatory?



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2014 Preferred Hotel Program

The 2014 [Preferred Hotel Program](#) has been posted to the travel website under the travel planner tab and in E-Travel Online.

Booking a preferred hotel is not mandatory. There may be other hotels which may offer lower rates or better suit the business need.

Note: Preferred rates may include amenities, such as shuttle, parking, or meals, which will save state money.

Amenities offered at each hotel are listed in the spreadsheet and filters have been added.

The statewide contract hotel savings for FY2013 was \$183,178.

Spring Travel Reminders

When a carrier notifies the E-Travel office about a schedule change, the revised itinerary is sent to email addresses in the profile. The name field on the itinerary will identify the notification as being a schedule change.

Arrangers should review the notification immediately and contact USTRavel if the change affects the traveler's business need.

Travelers should reconfirm reservations directly with carriers at least 24 hours prior to original departure.

TIP: Frequent travelers may take advantage of mobile applications, such as [TripCase](#), that send up-to-the-minute alerts directly to their smart phone.

Travelers should be aware of minimum check-in times which may vary by season, airport, and

*I believe that there is
a subtle magnetism in
Nature,
which, if we
unconsciously
yield to it,
will direct us aright.*

~Henry David Thoreau

carrier. There may also be different requirements if luggage is being checked.

Some airports (including Anchorage) have recently updated the check-in kiosks to print bag tags.

While you might be a pro that can swiftly attach the 2-foot long thermal bag tag with ease, the person in front of you may not be as skilled.

State Car Contracts

The use of state car contracts is **not** mandatory but recommended as they provide extra coverage and waived fees.

The rates are fixed so during high demand times the cost savings can be substantial.

The average contract savings during the summer in Alaska is \$15.00 per day.

The in-state Budget contract, available in Anchorage, Ju-

neau, and Fairbanks, offers the lowest contract rates and they accept the CTS authorization form.

The WSCA contract offers competitive rates nationwide with the following vendors: Hertz, National, and Enterprise.

Direct payment can be set up for non-profiled travelers with any WSCA vendor. Contact your Travel Coordinator for



more information about membership setup.