



STATE OF ALASKA
GOVERNOR MIKE DUNLEAVY

**Office of the
Deputy Chief of
Staff**

MEMORANDUM

TO: Governor's Cabinet
FROM: Rachel Bylsma, Deputy Chief of Staff [INITIALS ON FILE]
DATE: September 15, 2023
SUBJECT: TRAVEL REQUESTS

This memorandum repeals and replaces all previous travel memoranda and serves as the guideline for travel for all agency staff. Careful review of the current travel practices has revealed some opportunities for improved efficiency. Where any incompatibility in travel guidelines conflict, this memorandum shall take precedence.

As public servants, we are continually looking to deliver services and programs to Alaskans in the most effective and efficient way possible. The Governor expects Commissioners to be active managers of their respective agencies, furthering their agencies' core missions, and Governor Dunleavy's priorities while being judicious stewards of public funds.

Travel

The following outlines procedures for travel:

1. All in state agency travel will now be approved by the Agency's Commissioner, all other travel is outlined below:
 - a. In state travel approval authority cannot be delegated below the Director of a division.
 - b. In state travel not on the approved travel plan must be submitted to gov.cos.travel@alaska.gov with a justification on how it benefits the state.
 - c. All out of state travel not on the approved travel plan must be submitted to gov.cos.travel@alaska.gov for consideration with a justification on how it benefits the state.
 - d. All out of State Commissioner travel must be submitted to gov.cos.travel@alaska.gov for consideration with a justification on how it benefits the state.
 - e. All international travel must be submitted to gov.cos.travel@alaska.gov for consideration with a justification on how it benefits the state.
 - f. Travel waivers should be kept to one page when possible, using the approved template. The travel waiver template can be found here [Travel Waiver Request](#).
2. Agencies are, and will remain, responsible for tracking their travel budgets and staying within the amount in their approved budget / travel plan.
 - a. Each Agency will monitor its annual travel plan to ensure they are staying within the approved plan and are exercising all cost savings measures where possible.

Examples are: sending only one employee to a conference; attending events remotely; taking advantage of early registration, and purchasing transportation tickets in advance, etc.

- b. Expenditures in excess of the Agencies' travel budget require Office of Management and Budget (OMB) approval.
 - i. A justification memo directed to the OMB Director is required, along with the appropriate transaction to adjust their travel budget.
 - c. Semi-annual reporting will be coordinated by the ASDs and submitted to the Chief of Staff and Deputy Chiefs of Staff by the 15th day of October and January.
3. Membership organizations, conferences, and trainings provide important opportunities to inform Commissioners' department management and policy priorities, interface with peers on public policy ideas, and share best practices, to the benefit of the state.
- a. Commissioners will identify, and provide justification, submitted to the Chief of Staff and Deputy Chief of Staff, by September 30, 2023, and by July 15th each subsequent year, the singular group to which they will be a member and actively participate for the benefit of the state.
 - b. Commissioners' out of state travel requests we be focused on participating in their pre-identified group.
 - c. To facilitate the active management of their agencies, Commissioners are encouraged to dispatch their deputies, division directors, and subject matter experts to other events that benefit their agency and the State, subject to the requirements in this memorandum.

Commissioners shall continue to use the same essential purpose criteria when evaluating travel requests and all travel should meet one or more of the following criteria:

1. Federal Mandate
2. State Mandate
3. Promoting a Governor's Priority – identify the specific priority and benefit
4. Promoting or supporting an agency core mission(s) – identify the specific agency core mission(s) benefit
5. Life/Safety/Health/Emergency
6. Third-party payer with benefit to the State – identify the specific Governor priority/agency core mission(s) benefit

Please note, the travel waiver requests must include the specific criteria evaluated and met, and a justification regarding the benefit to the State; travel waiver requests received with no justification will not be considered.

All travel shall be subject to the same requirements and criteria regardless of the source of funds.

We also suggest quasi-independent State agencies adopt similar travel policies, including:

- Alaska Commission on Postsecondary Education
- Alaska Energy Authority
- Alaska Gasline Development Corporation
- Alaska Housing Finance Corporation
- Alaska Industrial Development and Export Authority
- Alaska Mental Health Trust and Trust Land Office
- Alaska Oil and Gas Conservation Commission
- Alaska Public Offices Commission
- Alaska Railroad Corporation
- Alaska Seafood Marketing Institute
- Commercial Fisheries Entry Commission
- Human Rights Commission
- Permanent Fund Corporation
- Regulatory Commission of Alaska
- University of Alaska

These processes are being updated to ensure each Commissioner has the authority to manage their agency. As Commissioners, it is expected that you will be present and manage your agency in the best interest of the people of Alaska and be prudent stewards of public resources. It is my sincere hope that streamlining these processes will be of direct benefit to the State and the public.

Thank you for your service, and for your careful attention to cost efficiencies.