

SECTION 11: TRAVEL, MILEAGE, & MOVING

Pretrip Approvals & Travel Advances

INTRODUCTION

Pretrip Approvals & Travel Advances provides procedures for obtaining approval in advance of a trip, and for processing a travel advance for an individual traveling on state business. Proper approvals must be obtained in accordance with the Alaska Administrative Manual (AAM) 60.030 before travel may occur, a travel advance processed, or transportation purchased.

All state business travel must be approved in writing prior to the actual trip. Historically travel has been pre-approved through completion of the appropriate fields on a Travel Authorization (TA). This includes the traveler's name, residence address, purpose of the trip, itinerary, and appropriate approval signatures. With the widespread use of email, many agencies have chosen to wait until after travel to complete a TA. This is appropriate as long as evidence of the prior written approval is included with the final TA.

An advance of estimated per diem and other travel costs may be made to a traveler and is also recorded on the TA. The traveler's costs are estimated by evaluating the nature of the travel and the location. Each agency establishes its own policy on whether the total estimated costs or a percentage of the costs are advanced to the traveler. A travel advance is typically paid to the traveler with a general warrant.

Each TA may be assigned a unique number for identification. Although an agency may establish its own numbering system, it is recommended that the first two digits of the TA number identify the department code (to prevent duplicate numbers being assigned by another department) and that two digits identify the fiscal year.

Every TA must be submitted for final payment and reconciliation of the travel advance within five business days of completion of the trip. Employees will not receive an additional travel advance until the previous travel advance and trip has been closed out. Refer to *Travel Expense Reimbursement* in this Section for procedures.

AKSAS TRANSACTIONS

310-xx: Add Warrant Request

FORMS

Travel Authorization (Form 02-027)
State Transportation Request (Form 02-019)

PROCEDURES

I. Obtain pretrip approval.

A. Pretrip approvals are obtained using a Travel Authorization Form 02-027 (TA):

The following procedure provides general guidelines for completing the appropriate fields on a Travel Authorization Form 02-027 (TA) for pretrip approval and/or a travel advance. For complete details on each field, refer to *Travel Authorization Form 02-027* at the end of this Section. For guidelines on pretrip approval when a TA is not used, see Step B.

1. In the **TRAVEL AUTHORIZATION NO.** field (at the upper right corner of the form), enter a TA number in accordance with your agency procedures. Enter today's date in the **DATE** field.
2. Complete the **Name of Traveler** and **Title** fields.

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3. In the **Employee Residence Address, City, State, and Zip Code** fields, enter the address of the traveler's primary residence. Refer to *AAM 60.020 - Travel Definitions* for the definition of a primary residence.
4. Complete the **Department, Division, and Bargaining Unit** fields.
5. In the **Work Station** field, enter the city name of the traveler's duty station. Refer to *AAM 60.020 - Travel Definitions* for the definition of a duty station.
6. In the **Purpose of Trip** field, enter a precise explanation of the purpose for this trip.
7. In the **PVN** field, enter the pay vendor number of the traveler. The traveler must have an active vendor number on the Vendor Master File in order to process an AKSAS warrant issued to the traveler. If a vendor number does not exist, obtain all information necessary to establish a vendor number. Refer to *Section 10: Vendors* for procedures on searching for an existing vendor number, establishing a new vendor number, or modifying an existing vendor number.
8. Complete the **ESTIMATED COSTS** fields. Enter estimated dollar amounts for the cost of **Transportation** (airfare, mileage reimbursement, etc.), **Per Diem, Other** costs (taxi fares, parking, etc.), and **Total Estimated Costs**.
9. Complete the **ITINERARY** fields. In the **From** and **Departure Date/Time** fields, enter the city from which the traveler is departing, and the date and time of departure. In the **To** and **Return Date/Time** fields, enter the city to which the traveler is going, and the date and time the traveler is expected to return from the trip.
10. Complete the **APPROVALS** fields. Obtain the signature of the division director or delegated approval authority in the **Division** field. Enter the authorization date in the **Date** field. If necessary, obtain authorized signatures in the **Department** and **Governor** fields and enter the authorization **Date** of each signature. Refer to *AAM 60.030 - Travel Approvals* for determination of proper approvals.

***NOTE:** Any deviation from the most direct and efficient means of travel for employee convenience requires prior approval by the appropriate supervisor or designee. Refer to AAM 60.050 - Interruption or Deviation of Travel for Traveler Convenience.*

B. Pretrip approvals are obtained when a TA is not used:

Based on the judgement of their finance officer, agencies may choose to document pretrip approvals for travel in a form other than an interim copy of the TA. Such approvals must be written and attached to the final TA for processing. No signatures are required for intradepartmental approvals as long as the approving individual is evident from their email address.

All essential aspects of the travel must be included in the written pretrip approval:

- Purpose of the trip
- Itinerary including destination(s) and dates
- Estimated costs
- Related leave requests
- Travel advance information

II. Complete transportation purchase information.

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If transportation is being purchased for the traveler, purchase information must be included on the TA. Refer to *AAM 60.040-150* for detailed information about the purchase and types of transportation. Payment for transportation can be made using one of the following methods:

- CTA
- CARD
- State Transportation Request Form 02-019
- AKSAS general or field warrant

A. Transportation is purchased by the state for the traveler:

If transportation is being purchased by a State Transportation Request (STR), refer to *State Transportation Request Form 02-019* in this Section for procedures.

1. For each type of transportation purchased, enter information in the following fields on the TA:

NOTE: When transportation on the Alaska Marine Highway System is purchased with an STR (in accordance with AAM 60.150), the traveler's department is billed by the Department of Transportation through a 430-40: Interagency Journal Entry transaction. Refer to Section 9: Journal Entries for more information about interagency transactions.

a. **CTA, CARD, STR, Wrnt or Trip Ticket NO.** - Enter one of the following:

- **CTA** If purchased with your agency's CTA number.
- **CARD** If purchased with employee-issued state MasterCard.
- **STR Number** If purchased with a State Transportation Request (STR).
- **Warrant Number** If purchased with a general or field warrant.

b. **Issued To** - Enter the name of the company or person from whom the transportation was purchased.

c. **Amount** - Enter the dollar amount of the purchase.

d. **Date** - Enter the date the transportation was purchased.

2. Determine if a travel advance is requested.

- If the traveler has requested a travel advance, check the **YES** box in the **Travel Advance Requested** field and go to Step III.
- If the traveler is **not** receiving a travel advance, check the **NO** box in the **Travel Advance Requested** field. File the TA in a pending file until the traveler completes the trip.

III. Enter travel advance information on the TA.

A. If a travel advance should be issued, following agency procedures, determine the portion of the traveler's estimated costs (Step I.H) that may be paid in advance.

B. In the **Travel Advance Requested** field, enter the dollar amount determined in Step A.

C. Complete the financial line fields if required by your agency.

IV. Process a 310-xx: Add Warrant Request transaction to issue the travel advance.

- A. Using a financial batch, access the 310-xx: Add Warrant Request transaction screen and complete the fields as described in *Section 8: Payments, Add General Warrant Request* and the following criteria:
 - 1. Enter a reference line for reference type **TA** (travel authorization).
 - 2. In the financial line **ACCT** field, use the appropriate lower level of account 72000 (Travel).
- B. In the blank box in the lower right corner of the TA, enter the batch and sequence number of the warrant transaction for certification purposes.
- C. Press <Enter> to display online errors. Correct errors until the message NO ONLINE ERRORS TO DISPLAY is received. Press <Enter> again to submit the transaction for certification and processing. Refer to the *Appendix* for a list of online errors, warning messages, and corrective actions.

***NOTE:** Review any WARNING messages displayed. If these messages do not require correction, press <PF3> to override.*

V. Archive/file processed transactions.

- A. If a travel advance was processed, enter the warrant number in the **Warrant #** field immediately below the **Travel Advance Requested** field on the TA.
- B. Attach a photocopy of the TA or alternative pretrip approval as back-up documentation for the Financial Transaction (FTP) Register.
- C. Maintain copies of the processed transactions and related backup according to department procedures.