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### Special Note of Interest

USTravel has switched their reservation system from Apollo to Sabre. Since **ViewTrip** is connected to Apollo, ViewTrip is being phased out. Only reservations that were made in Apollo will be accessible in ViewTrip.

**Virtually There**, Sabre's equivalent to View Trip, will house all reservations made in Sabre. Currently, Virtually There is unavailable for an unspecified period of time. USTravel and Sabre are working to prepare the site for state use and they will advise when it is ready to launch.

### E-Travel Online Training

Contact [Department Travel Coordinators](#) to sign up.

**December 20 9:45 am**

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

## *New FAQ / Personal Travel*

A new frequently asked question (FAQ) has been added to the travel website [FAQ section](#) under Personal Travel. **FAQ #21** clarifies what, if any, additional costs there would be to the state when travelers cancel their deviation to the business itinerary after the state has purchased the ticket.

[21. If an extended-stay personal deviation request is approved and purchased, and then the traveler later chooses to not to exercise their deviation, what, if any, additional cost would there be to the State to reschedule the travel?](#)

There should be **no additional cost** to the state. [AAM 60.080](#)

states that "any additional time or expense resulting from an interruption or deviation for traveler convenience shall be borne solely by the traveler." Assuming there is no change in the business need for travel, the state authorized fare quote from the original minimum business itinerary (created when the extended-stay deviation travel request was approved) sets the standard for the trip (airfare cost, need for lodging and rental vehicles, defines length of travel status for meal periods, etc.). This original minimum business itinerary remains valid even though a traveler may with-

draw their deviation request after travel has been purchased.

If a traveler withdraws their deviation request *after* a ticket is purchased, additional costs may be incurred to reschedule their travel including change fees, a difference resulting from a higher ticket cost than the original minimum business itinerary fare quote, or extra per diem costs resulting from full flights that do not allow the traveler to return per the original minimum business itinerary. These additional costs are a direct result of a personal deviation modification and should be borne solely by the traveler.

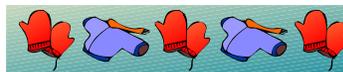
## *E-Travel Surveys*

As a follow-up to the [E-Travel Audit](#) that was completed this fall, a [State of Alaska Managed Travel Survey](#) was created and emailed to department Travel Coordinators and Travel Contacts. The intent of the survey is to use the constructive feedback to help improve the services provided by E-Travel.

The survey is very short and will take only a few minutes to complete. It will be available for your participation through December 30. By providing your name, the E-Travel Management Team (ETMT) will have the ability to respond to

specific issues identified by you in the survey. All names will be held confidential and will not be shared outside of the ETMT.

The E-Travel Audit and the State of Alaska Managed Travel survey are posted to the [travel website](#) under the Contract/Audit tab, Audit Information.



The State of Alaska Managed Travel survey does not replace the [E-Travel Satisfaction Survey](#), which is the quarterly sur-

vey used to measure the services provided to the state by USTravel. The E-Travel Satisfaction Survey is divided into two parts:

1. for those who use E-Travel Online, and
2. for those who have contacted USTravel directly.

USTravel and the ETMT would appreciate hearing about your most recent experiences with USTravel and using E-Travel Online. Your feedback and comments are important to help maintain a high quality of customer service.

**E-Travel****USTRavel**

**E-Travel Online Help Desk**  
(907) 500-4290 / 877-500-4290  
Email: e-travelhelp@ustravel.us

**Reservation Call Center**  
(907) 500-4292 / 866-762-8728  
FAX: (907) 465-8288  
Email: e-travelaprvl@ustravel.us

**Research**  
Email: soaresearch@ustravel.us

**ETMT**

Kathy Adair  
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doa.dof.e-travel@alaska.gov

**See us on the Web!**  
<http://statetravel.alaska.gov>

**Travel E-Qs**

There will be a random quarterly drawing in **December** for a prize from the answers submitted by December 15, 2011 to: [doa.dof.e-travel@alaska.gov](mailto:doa.dof.e-travel@alaska.gov)



1. If a traveler withdraws their deviation request AFTER a ticket is purchased, who pays the additional costs associated with the deviation?
2. Currently, there are two active surveys. What is the difference between the two?
3. Why do hotel guests end up in a smoking room when they request a non-smoking room?
4. How should a hotel conference room rate be booked in E-Travel Online?
5. What document explains a carrier's obligation to their travelers?

**Contest prize winnings are considered non-cash compensation, and will be included as W2 earnings**

## Hotel Issues

### **Why did I get a smoking room when I requested a non-smoking room?**

Preferred hotel room types can be saved in a traveler's profile in E-Travel Online and requested when reservations are made directly with USTRavel. The problem is that just because you reserve a non-smoking room, it does not mean that you will get one.

Many hotels do NOT guarantee that a requested room type will be available at check-in. Hotels try to accommodate guests in their preferred room type (non-smoking), but once they fill up, the hotel will provide another alternative (smoking room).

USTRavel will only reserve the traveler's preferred room type unless otherwise instructed.

Travel planners can override the room type preference in E-Travel Online, so care should be taken to read the room type description prior to reserving

hotel rooms. The room type is displayed on Prelim and Final itineraries in the hotel reservation section for some hotels.

For those who do not want to risk ending up in a smoking room, another alternative is to choose a hotel that does not permit smoking in any of their guest rooms. Many hotel properties are beginning to enforce a no-smoking policy.

### **How do I book a hotel conference room in E-Travel Online?**

Hotels do not place conference rates in the Global Distribution System (GDS), therefore conference rates will not show up in booking tools.

To book a conference rate in E-Travel Online, enter the hotel name, location, and the conference name and rate in the special instruction box, which requires agent assistance to book. Please do not book the hotel room at one rate and then

request the conference rate in the special instruction box. This may cause duplicate reservations and unnecessary extra work, since the booking has to be cancelled and then rebooked at the conference rate.

The [E-Travel Service Information and Standards](#), (under E-Travel Services & Requirements, When is E-Travel Optional?) provides another option for booking conference room rates - by booking directly with the hotel. Sometimes additional coordination with the conference is required to qualify for conference rates, therefore it is allowable to book a conference rate directly with the hotel.

**Winter is the time for comfort,  
for good food and warmth,  
for the touch of a friendly hand,  
and for a talk beside the fire:  
it is the time for home.**

**Edith Sitwell**

## Winter Travel Tips

Winter air travel can test anyone's patience during unexpected weather delays and flight cancellations.

When flights cancel due to weather, airlines have policies to re-accommodate travelers, but not all airlines offer the same compensation. Alaska Airlines re-accommodates travelers to their destination on the next available flight. See the airline's Contract of Carriage to find out about the carrier's obligations to you. Most contracts can be found with a "Google" search. (Example: [Alaska Airlines Contract of Carriage](#))

Travelers who elect to cancel their trip should immediately contact USTRavel to document the carriers' weather cancellation, as unused portions of a ticket may qualify for a refund.

Check the flight status frequently before heading to the airport, and check-in online when possible.

Pack extra essentials in carry-on bags, including extra clothing, snacks, and all medication in case checked luggage is delayed.

Allow extra time to get to the airport and to clear through security.

Know what is allowable to [bring through security](#) and what items are [prohibited](#) on the aircraft. See the complete list on TSA's website.

Be sure to bring a credit card for in-flight services, emergency overnight stays, and purchases.

Notify your hotel when you are arriving late to avoid them giving your room away before you arrive.

During the holidays, everyone seems to be in a hurry, so slow down, take a deep breath, and stay safe.

