

# State Travel Office News



## In The Spotlight

### Clarification of Personal Travel Deviation Changes

There continues to be confusion on how to arrange travel when a traveler deviates from the State authorized portion of the trip. The STO no longer handles companion coupons, travel deviation with a routing change, or personal forms of payment.

What if the traveler wants to change the routing of the business trip for personal deviation or use a companion coupon?

- Prior to travel, obtain an air fare quote from the STO for the business portion of the trip for reimbursement calculation. On the BRF, fill in the State Authorized Travel Box with business dates, time, and destination. Do not fill in the Air Travel Request section.
- Hotel and car reservations can be made through the

STO at the same time as the fare quote request.

- Air travel arrangements must be made outside the STO and purchased with a personal form of payment.
- Ticket receipt showing the cost and the STO quote must be submitted for reimbursement calculation.

What if the deviation is for personal extension with NO routing change?

- This travel will be purchased through the STO using a State form of payment when there is no additional cost, or the department opts to initially pay for the additional cost.
- Obtain an air fare quote for the business portion of the trip from the STO for reimbursement calculation. On the BRF, fill in the State Authorized Travel Box with

business dates, time, and destination. Fill in the Air Travel Request section with the actual travel as requested.

- Prelim will be returned with business travel fare quote and personal extension fare quote.
- If the deviation travel costs more than the business fare quote, add "approved deviation on state credit card" when sending in the approval.
- If the department chooses not to purchase, follow the process for deviation with a routing change outlined above.

The BRF has been updated with new language to help clarify the process.

*Effective February 2, 2009  
STO rate remains \$19*

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### Special Point of Interest:

*Now that STO does not accept personal forms of payment, it is advisable to delete personal credit card information from travel profiles.*



Presidents Day

## Upcoming Travel Desk Training

Date: February 19, 2009  
From: 1:00 pm to 4:30 pm

In Juneau

Sign up when posted at:  
<http://fin.admin.state.ak.us/dof/training/index.jsp>

Out of Juneau  
Conference line available,  
but limited.

Email:  
[kathy.adair@alaska.gov](mailto:kathy.adair@alaska.gov)

### AAM 60.220 Travel Expenses and Required Receipts

Travelers returning from a business trip are required to submit receipts in order to be reimbursed for authorized travel expenses.

The following must be attached to travel authorizations when submitted for final payment:

- Copy of the final itinerary
- Original itemized commercial lodging receipts
- Cash receipts for expenses exceeding \$25
- ATM receipts
- Rental car agreement
- Leave slips, if the trip

includes leave

Though expense receipts of \$25 or less are not required, the cumulative total of reimbursable expenses without receipts can not exceed \$30 per trip. Receipts are strongly encouraged.

All expenses claimed are subject to review. Reimbursement of unsupported expenses may be disallowed.

The following travel related expenses are not reimbursable:

- Lost or stolen articles
- Alcoholic beverages
- Damage to personal cars, clothing, or other items
- Services to gain entry to a locked car
- Movies on hotel bills
- Personal negligence of the traveler, such as fines, parking tickets and traffic citations
- Entertainment expenses
- Tips and gratuities
- Towing charges
- Personal expenses

The above is not all-inclusive.

## 2009 PREFERRED HOTEL PROGRAM

### STATE TRAVEL OFFICE

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Division of Finance  
400 Willoughby Avenue, 3rd floor  
PO Box 110232  
Juneau, AK 99811-0232

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(907) 465-8281  
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See us on the Web!  
<http://fin.admin.state.ak.us/dof/sto/index.jsp>

To subscribe - sign up at:  
<http://list.state.ak.us/guest/RemoteListSummary/travelofficeinfo>

Test your STO Knowledge  
\$25 Starbucks Card  
January Winner

Robin Gardner  
DF&G Kodiak

### Test Your STO Knowledge

There will be a random drawing for a prize from the answers submitted by February 15, 2009 to:  
[doa.dof.statetraveloffice@alaska.gov](mailto:doa.dof.statetraveloffice@alaska.gov)

1. Can the STO book personal travel using a companion coupon?
2. Name three types of receipts that must be submitted for reimbursement.
3. What is the amount of last quarters hotel savings to the State?
4. United Airlines tickets issued prior to what date will remain open for rebooking?
5. Why are minimum connection times established?

Prize winnings from the contest are considered non-cash compensation, and will be included as W2 earnings.

The 2009 Preferred Hotel Program spreadsheet has been posted to the travel website. During the Hotel RFP process, USTravel discovered some hotels who did not want to participate due to the direct bill acceptance requirement. Although the State decided to discontinue use of direct bills for hotels booked through the STO, there are still a number of hotels that did not participate.

The State receives a rebate from the use of the State credit cards, so the direct bill process actually results in a loss of money to the State. Direct bills that are not paid

on time also cause a hardship on the relationship between the hotel vendor and the State.

Hotels booked through the STO must be held using a traveler's State One Card or with a department or division Hotel CTS or Super CTS.

Hotels must be booked through the STO, except for hotel only bookings or conference hotels that require an alternative process to obtain savings.

Once a hotel is reserved, if a department wants or needs to, they can contact the hotel directly to arrange for an alternate form of payment. This may be necessary for out of state hotels when the traveler does not have a One Card.

The Preferred Hotel Program has garnered the State real savings and will continue to do so. The savings the State received for the past calendar year quarter was \$9,043.

FY 2009 QTR	TOTAL BOOKED COST	GOV'T RATE COMPARISON	SAVINGS
OCT-DEC 2008	\$1,029,765	\$1,038,808	\$9,043

## United Airlines Nonrefundable Tickets

United Airlines began enforcing their non-refundable ticket cancellation policy beginning January 2009.

Passengers holding non-refundable tickets must cancel their flight reservations on or before the travel date or the value of the ticket will be lost.

In the past, business travelers were able to cancel the reservation and past dated tickets were held in "open" status until the traveler was ready to book another reservation.

United granted a short grace period of January 1 - 15 before implementing the enforcement of this policy.

Only tickets issued prior to January 15 will be allowed to maintain an "open" status until the traveler books a new reservation.

*A man travels the world over in search of what he needs and returns home to find it.*

George Moore

## Airport Minimum Connection Times

It is important to be aware of minimum connection times established at airports and between carriers when planning a trip.

Minimum connection times are established so that travelers and their luggage have enough time to transfer to the next flight.

Connection times may vary between airports and airlines. Typically, a smaller airport will have shorter mini-

mum connection times than a larger airport. Connections to the same carrier may be shorter than when connecting to a different carrier.

Airlines and travel agencies will not book itineraries that do not meet the standard minimum connection times. Likewise, travel arrangers should not request itineraries that fall under the minimum connection time.

Connection flights that do

not have a "legal" connection time will not show on a flight selection list. Although flights can be selected manually, it is not advisable to do so as it can cause a hardship on the traveler.

The airlines will not be responsible for any amendments to the traveler for illegal connection times that may cause missed flights or lost luggage once they arrive at their destination.