



ETHICS *AND MORE* NEWSLETTER

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PROPER USE OF THE GOVERNMENT TRAVEL CARD

Basic Rule: Only official Government expenses incurred as a result of official business travel may be charged to the Government travel charge card (travel card). Financial Management Regulation, Vol. 9, Ch. 3, Sec. 0301.

Permissible expenses include: expenses related to meals, lodging, and transportation.

Dos

- **Read the Agreement between the Department of Defense employee and Bank of America.**
- **Use the travel card to pay for authorized official business travel expenditures.**
- **Submit payment in full for your travel card bill by the statement due date even if reimbursement has not been received.**
- **Be aware that misuse of the card could result in disciplinary action.**
- **Contact the bank customer service number if you have questions about your monthly bill.**

- Safeguard your travel card and immediately report a lost or stolen card to Bank of America at 1-800-472-1424, and to your local area travel card program coordinator.
- Request all necessary maintenance changes to your account (e.g., address changes).
- Become familiar with travel card regulations and policies (DoD Financial Management Regulation, DoD 7000.14-R, Volume 9; Office of the Comptroller 00-C-001, DoDEA Policy Memorandum, Government Travel Charge Card Program, March 20, 2001.)

DON'Ts

- Use the travel card to pay for personal expenditures not reimbursable on your travel voucher.
- Put another employee's travel expenses on your travel card.
- Allow another employee to use your travel card to charge purchases.
- Withdraw cash from an ATM for personal use by using your travel card.
- Use the travel card to purchase office supplies, training, conference registration fees or any other supply or service not authorized to be purchased with your travel card.
- Ignore errors listed on your monthly bill.
- Wait to report a lost or stolen card to the bank and to your local area travel card program coordinator.

Examples

1. Your co-worker will be leaving for official business travel tomorrow and he needs to make his hotel reservations. He forgot to bring his travel card with him, so he asks you for permission to use your travel card to make his reservations, and he promises to switch credit card information once he arrives at the hotel. Is this permissible?

No! You are authorized to use your travel card only in connection with your official business travel purposes.

2. After dinner, while on official business travel, you and some of your co-workers decide to go to bar to have a couple of drinks before retiring for the night. Is it permissible to use your travel card to purchase your drinks?

No! This outing is not an authorized official business travel expense; therefore, you and your co-workers are prohibited from using your travel card in this instance. You must pay for your drinks from your personal funds.

3. Which one of these three items are you not authorized to pay for with your travel card while on official TDY?

- a. car rental fee
- b. lodging
- c. conference registration fee

Answer: c – A conference registration fee should be charged to your organization's Government Purchase Card, not the travel card.

Case

A Department of the Army employee's **removal** was upheld on appeal by the Agency where the employee misused his Government travel card **67 times**, and was in a position in which he was responsible for handling and managing Government property of value. In addition, the employee did not show remorse for his admitted misconduct and did not exhibit potential for rehabilitation. *Brown v. Dept. of the Army*, 96 M.S.P.R. 232 (2004).

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We welcome your feedback on this Newsletter. Please contact us with your comments.

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