



# TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY HEALTH SCIENCES CENTER EL PASO

## Operating Policy and Procedure

**HSCEP OP:** 79.01, **Texas State Travel Management Program**

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of this Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center El Paso (TTUHSC El Paso) Operating Policy and Procedure (HSCEP OP) is to provide information pertaining to State of Texas contracted vendors for travel purposes as negotiated by the Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts Statewide Procurement Division (SPD), and to outline procedures relating to compliance with the travel program regulations.

**REVIEW:** This HSCEP OP will be reviewed on December 1 of each odd-numbered year (ONY) by the Director of Payment Services, with recommendations for revisions submitted to the Chief Financial Officer or designee by December 15.

### **POLICY/PROCEDURE:**

#### **I. General.**

As part of the State Travel Management Program (STMP), the Comptroller's office procurement staff has negotiated and executed travel contracts for airlines, corporate charge card services, hotels, rental car companies, and travel agencies.

TTUHSC El Paso employees must, when on official travel, use the contracted services for rental cars and hotels/motels as first choice when reimbursement for expenses will be requested through the submission of a travel expense report. The use of the services of the contracted state travel agency is optional for TTUHSC El Paso. At this time, TTUHSC El Paso has chosen not to exercise this option.

#### **II. Details of the contracted agencies and applicable rates may be found at <https://comptroller.texas.gov/purchasing/programs/travel-management/>. Procedures for Use of Contracted Services.**

A. The contracts for travel services should be used as required unless an exception is claimed as defined by the Texas Administrative Code, Title 34, Rule §20.303. A traveler may claim an exception for the following items:

- 1) Lower cost to the state
- 2) Unavailability of contract travel services
- 3) Special needs
- 4) Custodian of persons
- 5) In-travel status
- 6) Group program
- 7) Emergency response
- 8) Legally required attendance

The detailed definitions of the above exceptions may be found in the [Reference Material](#) links section of the Payment Services website.

B. Airline fares should be obtained using the method that achieves lowest cost and maximum time efficiency, regardless of fund source. The reimbursement may not exceed the cost of the lowest available airfare between the employee's designated headquarters and the employee's duty point. The STMP has established airline contract and offer discounted airline tickets that may be purchased ONLY with TTUHSC El Paso's Central Business

Travel Account (BTA) or an individual state travel credit card. No other form of payment is accepted for the contracted fares. These fares are designed for last minute and/or fully-refundable travel requirements.

- C. Travel arranged by a travel agency regardless of funding type must use the State of Texas contracted travel agency, National Travel Systems.
- D. A STMP rental car contract must be used regardless of the fund source. The TTUHSC El Paso identifier must be provided at the time of the reservation to ensure contracted rates are received. A valid exception must be documented on the submitted travel report to be eligible for rental car reimbursement that is in excess of the contracted daily rate. If no exception applies, the rental car reimbursement will not be issued in excess of the contracted daily rate for the same vehicle class obtained. Vehicles larger than a full-size car class requires a business justification. Car rental information can be found under the [Helpful Links](#) of the Payment Services website.

### **III. State Contracted Credit Card System.**

The STMP has contracted with a credit card company to provide charge cards for official travel use. The procedure outlining the use of the state travel card may be found in [OP 79.11 Use of State Travel Card](#).

### **IV. Compliance Policy.**

- A. It shall be the responsibility of each supervisor to review the travel arrangements and expense reports of each traveler to ensure any travel reimbursed from appropriated funds meets the requirements of the contracted travel services and these services are used for official travel. If these services were not used, the traveler must claim an exception on their submitted travel voucher.
- B. The Travel Services Office will check travel expense reports for STMP compliance . Reports which include expenses not in compliance with provisions of this program will be modified or returned to the department unprocessed.

### **V. State Travel Management Program (STMP).**

Information regarding the required use of state contracts can be found in the [Helpful Links](#) of the Payment Services Website.

### **VI. Travel Problems.**

TTUHSC El Paso Travel Services Office should be notified if problems occur with any of the State contract vendors.