

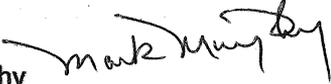


THE Ames Laboratory  
Creating Materials & Energy Solutions

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

DATE: October 1, 2009

TO: Travelers

FROM: Mark Murphy   
Chief Operations Officer

SUBJECT: Travel Policy Changes

Dr. King will announce the following travel policy changes in an upcoming Director's Message. Until such time that the Ames Laboratory Travel Policy may be updated and formally approved the following will provide the policy guidance necessary for travelers to comply with the changes.

Effective October 1, 2009 the Travel Policy will change as follows:

- 1. Personal Purchase of Airline Tickets:** The traveler is allowed to purchase on-line air tickets for a domestic trip in which personal time and business travel are not mixed without special permission from the COO. The final language will be similar to that contained in the ISU Travel Policy. It states:

*"Travelers are allowed to order air tickets through Internet sites by using either their personal credit cards or the American Express corporate card. Although significant savings sometimes can be realized through Internet sites, travelers need to be aware of the site's policies regarding ticket exchanges, refunds and transfers before making a purchase. Travel advances will not be made to facilitate ticket purchases. Reimbursement must wait until the conclusion of the trip."*

In the case of Ames Laboratory, the lowest available fare is required by the contract. The following examples are provided as guidance for the traveler's benefit.

- a. If the cost of the ticket is \$350 or less the traveler only needs to provide a copy of the internet receipt that includes the itinerary and the price of the ticket.
- b. If greater than \$350, in addition to the ticket receipt, the traveler should provide documentation of available options. Examples include a quote from T&T showing the price they would have charged for a similar ticket, or a list of the available flights from the internet site. If the internet site has tickets that cost less than the ticket purchased the traveler will need to justify the cost difference and seek approval of the excess cost in order to receive full reimbursement. Appropriate examples include times that interfere with the traveler's work responsibilities, layover intervals, flight duration compared to direct flights, etc. Preference for certain airlines is not an allowable justification.

- c. If the traveler uses the internet to purchase tickets departing from Omaha, Kansas City or other nearby cities the entire cost of travel to the cities will be included in the cost comparison. The traveler will need to supply documentation for the cost of the ticket out of Des Moines along with the costs involved in travel to the other cities. The traveler does not have to seek preapproval if this option does not extend the number of calendar days of travel but the traveler's reimbursement will be limited to the lowest cost option. Contact the Travel Office if you want help understanding the comparison process.
2. **Conference Meal Documentation:** Travelers are required to provide conference registration information with the travel worksheet in order to document meals provided in the registration costs. Only those pages that provide evidence of meals (or lack thereof) need to be provided.
3. **Travel Documents:** The Travel Office will send travel documents via email to reduce the amount of paper used in the travel process.
4. **Internet Services:** The cost of internet services while on business travel will not require separate justification. Travelers are encouraged to seek out hotels that provide free internet access or utilize free access provided at certain businesses.
5. **Miscellaneous Receipts:** The receipt requirement for miscellaneous expenses is raised from \$25 to \$75. Sections 13 and 15 of the Travel Policy explain which costs are covered by the \$75 rules and which costs require receipts no matter what the cost.
6. **Travel By Personal Vehicle:** Claims for reimbursement must indicate the origin and destination of the trip. Any substantial deviations (greater than 110%) from the distance shown in an internet mapping service must be explained and approved to be reimbursed.
7. **Travel Expense Voucher Spreadsheet:** The spreadsheet has footnotes provided for meals provided by Federal Hosts, Conferences, or meals skipped. It is necessary to know the nature of a "blank" meal in order to determine the proper meal reimbursement limit for each day.