



Travel Card Questions and Answers

1. Q: What advantage does the Travel Card provide employees?

A: The main advantage the travel card provides employees is the convenience of making hotel, airline, and conference registrations. The card can be also used for meals while in business travel.

2. Q: Is it fair to expect an employee to accept the burden of carrying the charges on a personal card pending reimbursement? It appears that one who travels a great deal could have to pay a substantial amount of money. Why should an employee tie up his/her money? For some, this could be \$1,000/\$2,000 at a given period. Are there going to be cash advances made available to people?

A: An employee who files a timely and an accurately completed Travel Expense Voucher (TEV), with all required receipts attached, the latest by the 10th day of the month (i.e., 10 days after the billing cycle ending date), will **always** receive the funds to pay the credit card bill before the due date. (See Sections E.4. and E.5 of Travel Card Policies & Procedures); therefore, travel cash advances will not be granted.

Note: Since the billing statement is not required to be attached to the Travel Expense Voucher (TEV), employees do not have to wait for the billing statement to arrive before requesting reimbursement for travel.

3. Q: How will the Travel Card affect an employee's personal credit?

A: The travel card will not affect an employee's personal credit in any way.

4. Q: Will employees have to pay interest?

A: Since employees must pay the balance in full each month, interest will not accrue.

5. Q: Why do employees have to make the call to the credit card company, and then to the Travel Card Administrator, to report lost or stolen cards or erroneous charges? Why can't the employee just call the Travel Card Administrator?

A: If an employee loses his or her card, the credit card company must be notified immediately. Since the loss or theft may be discovered in the evening or on the weekend, it would not be practical to have the Travel Card Administrator place the call. In addition, the credit card company will have questions regarding when and where the card was last used legitimately, and the employee is in the best position to answer these questions. Similarly, employees are in the best position to answer questions about why a charge is erroneous.

Employees are asked also to contact the Travel Card Administrator so we can act quickly to have a new card reissued and are aware of any disputes.

6. Q: Is there a dollar limit on the card? If so, in cases of several trips made in close time proximity, what happens if the limit is exceeded?

A: The standard limit authorized is determined on the frequency of travel starting with a standard limit of \$1,000. However, if an employee believes that he or she may exceed the limit, the employee should contact the Travel Card Administrator to obtain a temporary increase.

7. Q: Do employees have to use the card or can employees be reimbursed from other receipts submitted?

A: Cardholders are not required to use the travel card. The employee can pay in cash or use his/her personal credit card.

8. Q: Is it a violation of the Travel Card Policy if an employee does not submit the Travel Expense Voucher (TEV) to the Travel Card Administrator by the 10th day of the month?

A: If an employee wants to be reimbursed before his/her bill is due, the Travel Expense Voucher (TEV) must be submitted the latest by the 10th day of the month. However, it is not a violation of the policy if requests for reimbursement are made after the 10th day.

9. Q: What happens if an employee is forced to cancel a non-refundable airline reservation or has to cancel a hotel reservation on short-term notice because of a higher priority project? Is the individual employee now liable for these expenses?

A: The policy for cancellations does not change with the implementation of the travel card. Mansfield University will pay for any costs that are not recoverable if an employee cancels his/her travel arrangements for a valid business purpose and the change is approved by the employee's supervisor.

10. Q: What advantage(s) does the proposed Travel Card have over placing the charges on one's own personal credit card?

A: The travel card provides the convenience of a credit card to employees without affecting and without regard for an employee's personal credit. In addition, the card is marked "Tax Exempt" so that sales tax will not be charged in Pennsylvania. Finally, for employees who travel frequently, the travel card allows an employee to collect all business expenses on one document (the billing statement).

11. Q: It seems that the Travel Card was implemented primarily for the University's benefit. If that is so, why is the employee required to assume the responsibility for travel card payments? A reasonable alternative may be that Mansfield University assumes responsibility for the monthly payments contingent upon the employee providing an approved Travel Expense Voucher and receipts to verify authorization of charges. (Employee writes a check to Mansfield University for unauthorized or personal expenses charged.)

A: Several years ago, the Office of the Chancellor provided fewer than ten cards to select employees. The Office of the Chancellor paid monthly payments to the credit card company contingent upon the employee providing copies of receipts and approved Travel Expense Vouchers. This was the most time-consuming function of Financial Management. Considerable time was spent contacting employees who did not attach receipts and/or filed incomplete vouchers. In addition, it was cumbersome and time consuming to track employees that owed for unauthorized expenses. For this reason, the Office of the Chancellor has established the current contract for travel cards; all PASSHE Universities are covered under the existing contract.

12. Q: Conference registrations and airline charges often need to be paid months before the conference and post to the credit card statement several months prior to the travel being completed. How do I get reimbursed for these expenses?

A: An employee does not have to wait until travel has been completed to request reimbursement. The employee should forward a completed Travel Approval Request (TAR) to the Travel Card Administrator with the itemized receipt attached.