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

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of this Health Sciences Center Operating Policy and Procedure (HSC OP) is to provide information pertaining to State of Texas contracted vendors for travel purposes as negotiated by the Comptroller of Public Accounts Texas Procurement and Support Services (TPASS), and to outline procedures relating to compliance with the travel program regulations.

**REVIEW:** This HSC OP will be reviewed on December 1 of each odd-numbered year (ONY) by the Managing Director of Procurement Services, with recommendations for revisions forwarded to the Executive Vice President for Finance and Operations.

**POLICY/PROCEDURE:**

1. **General**

The State Travel Management Program has negotiated and executed travel contracts for airlines, corporate charge card services, hotels, rental car companies, and travel agencies

TTUHSC 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. At this time, TTUHSC has chosen not to exercise this option.

2. **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 reasons:

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 on the Travel Exceptions Form.

b. Airline fares should be obtained using the method that achieves lowest cost and maximum time efficiency, regardless of fund source. Currently American Airlines, Delta Airlines, and Southwest offer discounted airline tickets that may be purchased ONLY with TTUHSC's Central Bill 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 using state funds must use the State of Texas contracted Travel Agency National Travel Systems.

d. A State contracted vehicle rental agency should be used regardless of the funding source. The TTUHSC 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, 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 require a business justification.

3. **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.

b. The Travel Office will review travel expense reports for compliance with the State Travel Management Program. Reports which include expenses not in compliance with provisions of this program will be modified or returned to the department unprocessed.

4. **State Travel Management Program (STMP).**

Information regarding the required use of state contracts can be found in the Travel Resources Site.

5. **Travel Problems.**

The TTUHSC Travel Office should be notified at travel@ttuhsc.edu should problems occur with any of the State contract vendors.