TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY HEALTH SCIENCES CENTER

Operating Policy and Procedure

HSC OP: 79.05, **Business Travel Account (BTA) Requests and Travel Advances**

PURPOSE: The purpose of this Health Sciences Center Operating Policy and Procedure (HSC OP) is to establish the guidelines for corporate travel credit cards and the advancement of funds which may be used to cover a portion of official travel expenses.

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. **Use of the Business Travel Account (BTA)**

   a. A BTA request is designed to assist employees whose applications for a State Travel Card were denied and they do not have a personal credit card available to them to purchase an airline ticket. This request is handled through the Emburse Enterprise System when submitting the travel pre-approval report (see HSC OP 79.02).

   b. Airfare arranged by a travel agency must use the State of Texas contracted travel agency National Travel Systems.

   c. An employee *does not* qualify for a BTA if the employee:

      - Does not wish to apply for a state travel card;
      - Has a state travel card but does not wish to use the card;
      - Has had a state travel card that was cancelled for non-payment or misuse;
      - Has a hold in the State Comptroller's Texas Payee Information System (TPIS). (NOTE: Reasons why an individual is on TPIS hold include being in default on a Texas Guarantee Student Loan, indebted to the state or a state agency, delinquent on state tax, not paying child support, or owing a reimbursement for unemployment taxes.)

   d. Use of the BTA to purchase airline tickets may be requested for prospective employees and non-employee speakers or participants.

   e. Cancelled BTA airline tickets must be expensed to a local funding source. Departments are responsible to ensure cancelled BTA airline tickets are only used for future TTUHSC business travel, refunded by the BTA travel agency or reimbursed by the traveler.

2. **Request for Travel Advances.**

   a. A Cash Advance request is designed to assist employees whose applications for a State Travel Card were denied and they do not have a personal credit card available to them for travel that requires an overnight stay outside of their designated headquarters. Cash advances will be issued no sooner than 5 days prior to the trip start date. A person who is not an employee of TTUHSC, i.e., students, prospective employees, speakers, participants, may not receive a cash advance.

   b. Cash advances must be realistic relative to the largest, actual expenses that will be incurred. An advance will be issued to cover only the largest anticipated travel expenses, such as lodging and/or vehicle rentals. Advances will not be issued to cover individual meals costs or other incidental expenses. TTUHSC will reimburse the difference between the advance and actual expenses of the trip.

Advances will be denied if after two trips, the employee is sending to the Travel Office checks for overpayment of an advance instead of the employee receiving reimbursement from TTUHSC for the remaining expenses of the trip.

c. An employee *does not* qualify for a cash advance if the employee:

- Does not wish to apply for a state travel card;
- Has a state travel card but does not wish to use the card;
- Has had a state travel card that was cancelled for non-payment or misuse;
- Has an outstanding travel advance from a previous trip;
- Has a hold in the State Comptroller's Texas Payee Information System (TPIS)

d. A Prepaid Advance request is designed to assist employees who have used their state travel card or any personal credit card to purchase airline tickets or hotel deposits paid in advance and receive a billing statement from the credit card vendor prior to the actual travel date. Additional "proof of payment" requirements are necessary. A copy of the credit card/debit card bank statement must be included on the submitted travel expense report in order to receive advance reimbursement. Retain the original airline ticket receipt for filing with the final travel report.

e. A travel expense report must be received in the Travel Office no later than fifteen working days after the completion of the trip if the employee received a travel advance. Any one violating this time frame for more than two trips will be denied any requests for advances on future trips. Should extenuating circumstances arise, the Travel Services Office should be contacted immediately.

f. If an advance reimbursement exceeds the total amount of allowable travel expenses incurred by the employee, the employee must repay the difference to the institution by check or money order. Travel Office personnel will verify the amount owed when the travel expense report is received and reviewed. Payment must be sent directly to the Travel Office with the travel expense report number identified.

g. If the allowable travel expenses incurred by the employee exceeds the original advance amount received, a reimbursement will be issued to the individual for the difference.

3. **Registration Fees.**

Registration fees that are required in advance must be paid directly to the vendor by using the Purchasing Card. A travel advance is not used for this type of payment. If a fee is paid at the conference, reimbursement may be claimed on the travel voucher when claiming all other expenses.