

TRAVERSING THE GLOBE

Volume 3, Issue 2

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March 2006

Airfare Direct Billing...

More popular than ever!

Our three Cluster Travel Agencies: Anderson Travel, Spartan Travel, and STA Travel, offer full service travel agent assistance Monday through Friday with after-hours service available in the evenings and on weekends. While travel agency full service fees eat up a chunk of our budgets, the on-line booking products offer lower service fees. Whether booking your airline ticket with one of the travel agents or on-line, you have access to our airline discounts. Best of all, you can bill the cost of your airline ticket directly to a MSU account number.

In order to utilize direct billing, you must have either Direct Bill Authorization or a Direct Bill Profile approved by your Unit and authorized by the University Travel Office. To find out more about this program, please visit the Travel Office website at ctlr.msu.edu/travel. The Direct Bill Manual has recently been updated. See the next article for further details.

Website Updates...

New and improved Airfare Direct Bill Manual

Often the answers to your questions are right at your fingertips, but knowing where to look is the key to finding those answers. The Travel Office website (ctlr.msu.edu/travel) offers a bounty of information about Michigan State University's travel program.

Recently, the Direct Bill Manual was updated so that answers to your questions could be more easily found. In the near future, new examples will be added to reflect changes in ticketing, our travel forms, and updated processes. I encourage you to take a few moments to review the Manual and share it with your staff. As soon as all of the new examples are available on the Travel website, I will send out notification via the Travel List Serve.

Airfare Direct Billing Status...

Who can have it and what options are available?

In updating the Airfare Direct Bill Manual and processing Direct Bill Applications each day, it became apparent that an explanation of Direct Bill Authorization and Direct Bill Profile were necessary.

First, let's talk about who is eligible for direct billing. Direct billing is for regular faculty and staff of Michigan State University to utilize as a means of paying for business related air or train travel. Further, regular faculty and staff with direct bill authorization may reserve and direct bill airfare for persons traveling on MSU business.

Direct Bill Authorization allows the MSU Business Traveler or Travel Arranger to make airline reservations and authorize the Direct Billing of that airfare to a MSU account number(s). Regular employees whose departments are permitting them to reserve and authorize Direct Billing to an MSU account number need to check the "Direct Bill Application" box at the top of the Direct Bill Authorization/Profile Application. Travel Arrangers will want to, with Departmental approval, seek Direct Bill Authorization. This will enable the Travel Arranger to reserve and Direct Bill airfare/rail travel for others traveling on MSU business, including University employees, students, incoming lecturers, researchers, collaborators, interview candidates and potential recruits.

A Direct Bill Profile allows the MSU Business Traveler to make airline reservations. If this option is chosen, the MSU Business Traveler will not be authorized to Direct Bill airfare to a MSU account number(s). Someone with Direct Bill Authorization for the account which is being charged must authorize the Direct Billing of the airfare booked by the MSU Business Traveler. A MSU regular employee who will only be permitted by their Department to make airline reservations through one of the Cluster Travel Agencies needs to check the "Profile Only" box at the top of the Direct Bill Authorization/Profile Application.

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How Many?

Copies of the Travel Voucher should I send???

When submitting a Travel Voucher for reimbursement, please attach one copy of the Travel Voucher. The copy is processed with reimbursement, stamped with a check number, and sent back to the payee with their paper check or direct deposit notification. Thank you for your assistance with this process.

The Kellogg Center...

Has a lot to offer.

Our very own Kellogg Center is located on Harrison Road, just minutes from Capital City Airport and the State Capitol. Its location makes the Wharton Center, Spartan Stadium, the Breslin Center, Munn Ice Arena, and downtown East Lansing, all within walking distance.

The Kellogg Center offers accommodations that include: wireless and high speed internet access, room service, guest laundry and dry cleaning, complimentary local telephone calls, on-site fitness center, gift shop, and access to MSU fitness facilities, tennis, and golf.

Thirty-two meeting/banquet rooms can accommodate any size group. These rooms are equipped with wireless and high-speed internet access, video satellite conferencing, and on-site audio/video staff is available. The Kellogg Center also has a beautiful patio area and gazebo for those special events you might be planning.

Fine dining is available in the State Room or in one of three private dining rooms. KC's Lounge is a popular stop for a quick bite to eat and The Coffee Bar is prepared to whip up your favorite drink.

For further details, check out their website at www.kelloggcenter.com or call 517 432-3086.

I Wonder Why...

The Total Claim box on my Travel Voucher is Yellow?

Imagine you are completing a travel voucher. You have completed Sections A,B, C, D, E, and even added comments to Section F. You think you're all done (finally) and ready to print the Travel Voucher, attach receipts, and obtain signatures. As you complete your final review, you notice that the Total Claim box at the bottom of Section E is **Yellow**. Do You....**A.** Ignore it, there's got to be something wrong with this form but you keep forgetting to call the Travel Office and tell that Travel Manager to fix it...**Or....B.** You double check your numbers to make sure your Total Claim matches your Total Amount to be Charged (Section B).

If your answer was "B", then you chose the correct action and probably found that the amounts didn't match. If you chose "A" and your Travel Voucher made its way to Voucher Processing, you will be seeing that Travel Voucher again. Please be aware that the Total Claim, unless you have a limit, must be the same as the Total Amount to be Charged. If there is a limit, then the Total Limit must match the Total Amount to be Charged.

Saving \$\$ on Air Travel...

CNNMoney publishes their top 5...

Recently, CNNMoney published their 5 tips for saving on the cost of airfare. Their first recommendation is to book online. By booking your airline ticket on line, you avoid paying fees for the full service an airline or travel agency charges by telephoning to make your reservation. Second, if traveling with children under 2, buy them their own seat. Why pay extra for them to sit on your lap and both of you be uncomfortable? Third, know what the airline baggage limits are. Most airlines have weight, size, and number limits posted on their websites. Be prepared to pay extra if you go over. Fourth, pack your own amenities. Some airlines charge for pillows, blankets, and extra legroom. Last, know where to go to book those lower fares and avoid fees. Discount airlines generally don't impose booking fees and have more lenient baggage limits.