

# TRAVERSING THE GLOBE

## U.S. Passport Office:

*New Office to Open in Detroit...*

The U.S. State Department will open an emergency passport agency in Detroit this year. The new passport agency is to open by October and be located in downtown Detroit. Detroit was chosen due to its close proximity to Canada. The agency will cater to people traveling within 2 weeks who need last-minute passport or whose passport has not arrived in time.

Timing couldn't be better as stricter passport laws go into effect in 2009 which will require everyone to have a passport to cross U.S. borders, including Canada and Mexico.

Just last week, the Michigan Legislature passed legislation to create an optional enhanced driver's license that citizens can use instead of a passport at land borders. Governor Jennifer Granholm is expected to sign the legislation.

The new driver's license would cost \$50.00. Drivers would not have to wait until their current, standard license expires to obtain the enhanced license. A Michigan resident would be required to provide a Social Security number, birth certificate or proof of legal U.S. status, and other recognized identification.

**The enhanced driver's license may not be used to travel by air.** Ultimately, a passport can take you anywhere in the world. Stay tuned for updates to the status of the enhanced Michigan driver's license.

## Travel Authorization:

*Required...*

Authorization to travel on behalf of Michigan State University is required. Approval should be sought and given prior to incurring any travel expenses or departing on the University business trip. This rule applies to anyone, MSU employee or non-employee who is traveling for the University.

Travelers are encouraged, but not required, to use the Travel Authorization form provided by the Controllers Office. (<http://ctrl.msu.edu/download/forms/ex70d.xls>).

*Foreign Travel...*

When traveling outside of the United States for Michigan State University, please be sure you have a MEDEX card with you. MEDEX is medical evacuation and repatriation insurance available to all MSU international travelers. Insurance cards and brochures are available from the Travel Office, Voucher Processing and Risk Management. For further details, please visit the Risk Management and Insurance website at <http://ctrl.msu.edu/combp/mbp35.aspx#rmi13>.

*International Traveler Database...*

If your department has international business travelers, your travelers should be registered on the International Traveler Database. This database is a secure website which requires a sign-in and password. If your department does not have and needs a registered user, please contact Julie Friend, Travel Security Analyst for Michigan State University. Her email address is: [friendju@msu.edu](mailto:friendju@msu.edu).

Julie provides our international travelers with the latest travel information about their destination. More importantly, if there were an emergency of any sort, University officials would be able to verify that our international travelers are alive and well.

**More Travel News on Page 2...**

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## Travel Vouchers...

### *Submission...*

Please remember to submit an original travel voucher with original receipts. Attached to this should be one copy of the travel voucher.

### *Reimbursable...*

If you are in travel status and incur internet or telephone charges, they are reimbursable if use was for MSU business reasons. Travelers seeking reimbursement are asked to document who was contacted and the business purpose. (Reimbursement Chart)

### *Business Meals...*

When claiming business meals on travel vouchers, the business purpose and the attendees along with their affiliation need to be documented. If any authorized MSU travelers are in attendance, copies of their travel vouchers must be attached to the payees travel voucher. In addition, an itemized receipt is required for reimbursement. If alcohol is served it may only be reimbursed if your department has a pre-approved MSU account number. In addition, your college may require a Dean's signature as well. (MBP 45)

### *Conference Schedules...*

If you have attended a conference or meeting, please attach a copy of the agenda or schedule to your travel voucher. If an agenda or schedule is not available, please document this in Section F of the Travel Voucher. Travelers should also document meals that were included as part of the conference.

## Direct Billing Airfare:

### *Special Edition coming soon...*

Explanation of direct billing, who is eligible, benefits of the program, and how to apply and remain eligible will be coming in a special edition of "Traversing the Globe". Currently, we require participants to utilize the same application form with no differentiation of travelers and travel arrangers, direct bill authorization or direct bill profile. The nuances of the direct billing of airfare/rail will be outlined as well as recommendation for departments to

Please direct any suggestions or comments to the University Travel Manager, Debbie Gulliver, at telephone (517) 355-0343, or email [gullive5@ctrl.msu.edu](mailto:gullive5@ctrl.msu.edu) or fax (517) 432-4656. 2

## Fly or Drive?

### *Making Sense of Travel...*

University travelers choose to drive to meetings, conferences, research centers, etc. for many different reasons. Sometimes, however, the cost of driving or mileage reimbursement makes the trip expensive. Therefore, the following practice has been established:

If round trip mileage is greater than 800 miles, travelers should obtain a written airfare quote for the same travel dates and attach it to the travel voucher. The traveler will be reimbursed the lesser of the two: mileage or airfare.

Conversely, driving may make more sense. For example, airline tickets roundtrip from Lansing to Chicago start at approximately \$362.00 on non-direct flights, with a Saturday night stay in Chicago, to over \$600.00 on direct, non-stop flights with no Saturday night stay. In this particular illustration, mileage reimbursement would be approximately \$220.00 (440 miles \* \$.50) and makes the trip costs more reasonable. If you prefer not to drive your personal vehicle, Vehicle and Transportation Services (Motor Pool: 353-5280) and National Car Rental (<http://ctrl.msu.edu/COTravel>) offer car rentals so that you do not have to use your vehicle. Amtrak also offers service from Lansing to downtown Chicago for even less.

**Bottom line:** Review your options and choose a cost effective method to travel to your destination that makes sense taking into consideration the business traveler's objectives, cost, and time. (MBP Section 70, II, 3).