

TRAVERSING THE GLOBE

Volume 5, Issue 6

by Debbie Gulliver, University Travel Manager

October 2008

Emergency Contact Info:

We need your assistance, please...

In preparation for international and domestic business travel on behalf of Michigan State University, all employees are asked to adhere to the following guidelines to put MSU in the best position possible to provide assistance in the event of a health or safety emergency.

Prior to their MSU business trip, employees should complete the Emergency Contact portion of the Travel Authorization and Emergency Contact form (found at <http://ctrl.msu.edu/download/forms/ex70d.xls>). In the event this information is not completed, the college/major administrative unit will be responsible for all costs incurred while resolving any travel related emergency situation involving faculty, staff, temporary or on-call employees. These costs may include, but are not limited to, legal fees, worker's compensation, and phone costs.

In addition the International Studies and Programs (ISP) Office maintains a database for faculty and staff traveling abroad, but who are not currently involved in a study abroad program. This system is called the Travelers Database. Currently, this system is not utilized regularly for those traveling abroad and we are requesting that you use this system when leaving the country. Please contact the designated Travel Arranger in your unit to find out how to enter your information into the Travelers Database. If no such person exists in your unit, you may contact Julie Friend, Travel Security Analyst, International Studies and Programs (friendju@msu.edu or 432-8686), to obtain this information.

If you are a participant or program leader in a Study Abroad program, you do not need to register in the Traveler Database as stated above. The Office of Study Abroad will administer your registration into the Study Abroad Database by contacting you directly after your paperwork is received by their office.

When traveling abroad, you should become familiar with the Foreign Travel Policy before your departure. Travel Regulations: <http://ctrl.msu.edu/COTravel/>
ISP Website for Travelers Database: <http://www.isp.msu.edu/resources/travel/emergencyContact.php>

Reimbursement Update:

MSU updates policy to allow reimbursement of up to 2 checked bags:

Per Section 70 of the Manual of Business Procedures: Most U.S. airlines are assessing fees for all checked baggage. Fees dramatically escalate when the individual bag weighs more than 50 lbs., has dimensions greater than 62 inches, or is the third or more bag being checked. Typically, baggage fees are assessed by the airlines for one way travel.

Travelers may be reimbursed for airline baggage fees for up to 2 checked pieces that meet the airlines' weight standard of 50 pounds or less and dimensions of less than 62 inches.

"Excess business baggage" must be documented (content/business purpose) if related transportation cost or tip expense is submitted for reimbursement. In addition, "oversize business baggage" must be separately documented when reimbursement related to its transportation/handling is requested.

Airlines have allowed exemptions for travelers with elite frequent flyer status. University travelers are encouraged to enroll in frequent flyer programs in order to avoid these additional fees.

Travel Authorizations:

Where are they stored?

So you or a traveler in your department has been approved to travel on behalf of MSU. The Travel Authorization and Emergency Contact form has been complete, signed, and the trip, if international, has been registered on the Travelers Database. Who keeps the Travel Authorization and for how long? This form is the property of the department and therefore, should be kept there. The only exception is if your college has a more strict policy.

When submitting the Travel Voucher, a copy of the Travel Authorization should be attached.



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Foreign Per Diems:

Ensuring Correct Calculations...

This year, the U.S. Department of State updated their website in the hopes of making it easier to use. While this has occurred, the changes have precipitated a number of calculation errors on travel reimbursement requests (Travel Vouchers).

From the MSU Travel Office Website at <http://ctrl.msu.edu/COTravel>, choose Foreign Per Diem Rates under the "Travel Reimbursement" heading. Upon your arrival on the U.S. Department of State website you are presented a choice: View "All Locations" or a specific country chosen from the drop down box.

Once the per diem rate table appears, you will see that there is a date box above it. This date should reflect the month in which travel occurred. For example, if you were preparing a travel voucher for travel to Paris, France, August 24 – 31, 2008, you would need to change the date to 08/01/2008. Do this by using the drop down box to choose your date and then left clicking on "GO". Rates go back as far as 1994, so be sure you've chosen the correct year.

By following these guidelines, you will ensure that the amount claimed for lodging and M&IE are correct on the Travel Voucher.

Travel Advances:

Please remember...

When obtaining a travel advance, the traveler must present the form in person with valid identification. Travelers should not mail requests to Voucher Processing or to the Travel Office and expect to have a travel advance waiting for them.

Also, once the Travel Advance has been processed by Voucher Processing, the Promissory Note should be taken immediately to the Cashier's Office, Room 110 Administration Building.

Please remember that vouchers are due within 90 days of the completion of travel. Your assistance is greatly appreciated!



Please direct any suggestions or comments to the University Travel Manager, Debbie Gulliver, at telephone (517) 355-0343, or email gulliver5@ctrl.msu.edu or fax (517) 432-4656. 2

Airline News:

Merger news...

Delta – Northwest Airlines Merger: The merger is on schedule. The stockholders of both companies have approved the merger and government approval is pending. Both airlines have been working together to identify the "best" attributes of each company. As the merger moves forward, both airlines hope to make it as seamless as possible with a transition timeline of approximately 18 months.

In the meantime, please be assured that it is business as usual for both Northwest and Delta. I will continue to push for quality customer service for our travelers.

Discount for all MSU Employees:

Northwest World Vacations is offering a new discount program to all MSU employees purchasing packages on NWA WorldVacations. The discount is 10% and there are no black out dates. This is a great way for MSU employees to save on vacation packages.

Products include and are not limited to: Airfare and Hotel Packages, Airfare and Car Rental Packages, and Hotel Only Bookings.

The link to the NWA WorldVacation site is:

<http://www.nwaworldvacations.com/corporatepromo/index.do?corporatePromoId=MICHIGANSTATE>.

When you enter the NWA WorldVacations site, you will need to register your email address to receive your E-certificate number. This number is required to receive the 10% discount. Each time you purchase a WorldVacation, you will need a new E-certificate number; therefore, you will need to register for a new E-certificate each time you plan a vacation on NWA WorldVacations.

MSU Travel Credit Card:

Migration from MasterCard...

Please be aware that if you currently have a University Travel Credit Card or GE MasterCard, your account will be changing to American Express. American Express purchased GE MasterCard earlier this year and are in the process of phasing out the MasterCard product.

Please stay tuned for upcoming announcements.