INFORMATIONAL CIRCULAR NO. 99-A-004

DATE:	June 18, 1998
SUBJECT:	Travel Policy Changes
EFFECTIVE DATE:	July 1, 1998
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APPROVAL:	
SUMMARY:	This circular contains miscellaneous changes to state travel policy effective July 1, 1998, as recommended by the Travel Task Force.

State travel reimbursement policies and procedures are often thought to be cumbersome and some are perhaps outdated. As I have visited with agencies, this has been brought to my attention on numerous occasions. There is a need to strike a balance between stewardship of tax dollars by maintaining some controls over these reimbursements and the common sense of the rules regarding these reimbursements. A task force, composed of representatives from several state agencies and from the Department of Administration, was formed to examine the travel issues.

Based on the recommendations of this task force, and the subsequent approval of the Secretary of Administration, the following policy changes regarding travel will be effective for travel occurring on or after July 1, 1998. Please note that these changes are in addition to those previously outlined in Informational Circular 99-A-002 (method to calculate maximum lodging reimbursement), and 99-A- 003 (revised high-cost listing, and conference lodging).

Border City Designation:

In accordance with K.A.R. 1-16-18(3), the director of accounts and reports may designate any city in a state bordering or near Kansas as a "border city" and reimburse meal allowance and lodging at in-state rates. This designation is subject to the approval of the secretary of administration. Pursuant to this approval, the border city designation has been expanded to include all locations within 200 miles of the Kansas borders. An updated border city listing is attached to this informational circular. Informational Circular No. 99-A-004 June 18, 1998 Page 2

KTAG/Turnpike reimbursement policies:

With the implementation of KTAG, receipt requirements are no longer appropriate, or practical, in all cases. Therefore, the responsibility for accurate turnpike toll claims, and whether receipts are required for reimbursement is delegated to the agencies.

Local Transportation Receipts Not Required:

Receipt requirements for local transportation have historically been determined based on what the company providing the service chooses to call their business. For example, a shuttle in Seattle might be the equivalent of a taxi in Houston. Often when travelers ask for a receipt for local transportation, they are given a "blank" receipt with the driver's signature or the company's rubber stamp. The traveler completes the receipt by filling in the amount of the fare. Since the traveler often completes these receipts rather than the driver, and the traveler is ultimately responsible for claiming only true and actual expenses, the receipt requirement for local transportation will be eliminated. This is intended to eliminate confusion for the traveler regarding receipt requirements for local transportation.

Approvals required for Justification for Rental Car:

Current policy requires a separate justification be submitted with the payment voucher when an employee rents a vehicle at the travel destination. Effective July 1, 1998, the requirement for separate justification for rental cars will be delegated to the agency. The agency will be responsible for approving the use of a rental vehicle, and the separate justification will no longer be an audit requirement for the payment voucher. We recommend that the approval for the rental car be incorporated in the agency's travel approval process.

Airfare in lieu of mileage calculation - what should be used as the "airfare" comparison rate?:

Agencies are unclear about the appropriate airfare rate to use when reimbursing an employee driving a privately owned vehicle rather than using the fastest public transportation. The State Travel Center has agreed to provide written quotes for airfare upon request. Comparisons should be made based on the date the out-of-state travel request is signed.

Non itemized motel receipts / Lowest single rate available:

Division of Accounts and Reports policy is to reimburse travelers for single rate lodging only. Unless information included on the lodging receipt indicates that other than the single rate is claimed or that charges in addition to room and taxes are included in the lodging claim, the receipt provided by the lodging establishment is sufficient for reimbursement.

Express checkout:

Employees using express checkout at lodging establishments do not always have a receipt marked "paid" at the time the reimbursement request is submitted. The Division of Accounts and Reports policy is that provided the dates of the stay, the room rate, and total charges are in agreement, the receipt does not have to indicate "paid".

State employees sharing rooms:

It has been a long-standing practice that employees may not pay the travel expenses of another employee. Therefore, if two employees share a hotel room, an interpretation can be made that the cost must be split at the lodging establishment, and each person pay their portion and receive a receipt from the lodging establishment.

While employees are not required to share lodging accommodations with other state employee when traveling, we will no longer require separate receipts from the lodging establishment showing that each employee paid a portion of the room charge. When employees choose to share a room, one employee may claim the entire room charge. However, the two payment vouchers must continue to be cross-referenced.

Reduced Meal Allowance for Meals Provided at No Cost to the Employee:

K.A.R. 1-16-18(d) provides that "if the cost of meals is included within the cost of registration fees or other fees and charges paid by the agency or supplied without cost by another party, the meal expenses shall be reduced . . ." in accordance with the meal reduction schedule in Informational Circular 99-A-002. This policy will be clarified in paragraph 4301 of the Employee Travel Expense Reimbursement Handbook to state that meal allowance should be reduced for complimentary breakfasts provided to employees at lodging establishments, excluding light "Continental" breakfasts.

These policy updates will be reflected in the Employee Travel Expense Reimbursement Handbook available at www.ink.org/public/da/ar. The current Travel Handbook (9" x 6") will no longer be printed and made available to state agencies in its current format. We are exploring cost-effective options for providing this information to you. One copy of this handbook (as printed from the Internet) will be mailed to each state agency when revisions have been completed.