

## Quarterly Travel Coordinator Meeting - March 21, 2022

### Questions and Answers

#### CalATERS:

1. What should be the claim type to include a taxable item?

CalATERS is configured to correctly tax items based on the conditions used in each form. The form type, trip type and expense type determine taxability. If Tax is applicable outside of normal reimbursement circumstances, a 676P W-2 form will need to be submitted to the SCO W-2 Unit.

2. In the ever emerging telework and electronic environment, it was asked previously to the control Agencies, when teleworking first began, if we can accept electronic signature on the CalATERS expense claims. The response was no that it still needs to be a hard/wet signature on the hard copy expense claims. From a DGS and SCO standpoint, has anything changed with this, and can we accept electronic signatures on hard copy expense claims?

The system is designed for “electronic signature” in order to process claims electronically. If referring to the transmittal sheet available in the system, SCO CalATERS does not determine the signature requirement. This requirement will come from department accounting/travel policy based on adherence to travel policy. Many departments accept electronic receipts but ultimately a policy will need to be created in conjunction with SCO Audits requirements.

3. Will CalATERS eventually transition into having receipts uploaded along with transmittal and reduce the use of paper?

This would be a possibility for the CalATERS replacement project but currently CalATERS does not have plans to expand the current system to accommodate this feature.

4. Can out of state teleworkers book travel directly to where they are going and get reimbursed for the portion the state would pay for travel from their headquarters?

This would not be a policy created or enforced by CalATERS. If a department permits out of state telework, it would be up to them to determine reimbursement parameters.

5. Is there an update on the CalATERS replacement project?

Currently, the project does not have an estimated completion date. For updates, please refer [SCO | California State Payroll System \(CSPS\) Project](#) ([www.sco.ca.gov/csps.html](http://www.sco.ca.gov/csps.html)) or email [CSPShelp@sco.ca.gov](mailto:CSPShelp@sco.ca.gov).

6. Will there be any more training provided for CalATERS – for Travel Expense claims in the future? Is so, when? If not, when is CalATERS migrating to a different Travel Expense claim program?

CalATERS offers training to department accounting staff when necessary. We do not provide training for non-travel staff. If department travel staff requires training, they can reach out to us as [calaters@sco.ca.gov](mailto:calaters@sco.ca.gov) to set up an MS Teams meeting to conduct a customized training session.

7. When booking hotels in Concur, employees are booking at the allowed hotel room rates. When checking out, they often get charges for resort fees. How are we supposed to treat the resort fees on CalATERS? As part of the hotel room rate or as part of the taxes? It is unfair to ask employees to fill out an Excess Lodging form for hotel booking that they booked in Concur with the allowed room rate.

Based on the latest correspondence from the state travel manager, departments should instruct their employees to enter the resort fees into the tax field.

8. How does a traveler enter the tax portion in CalATERS for the airline tickets for the round trip since each ticket's taxes are a different amount? Should they key the tax for the round trip as one line or two separate lines?

The CalATERS expense should be entered to match the receipt/invoice.

### **CalHR:**

9. We have travelers who use transportation network companies and use reward points that they earn to make payment or have received gift cards from families and friends to make payment or use PayPal account which also gives them rewards. When the travel claim is submitted, we see PayPal or UberCash and we have to question the employee if they actually paid for this and show us their charges on their PayPal account or their credit card. This is the correct thing to do right? Also, when they submit the transportation network company receipts does it have to show to and from destination? Do we have to make sure that we only pay them for the actual cost not for rewards or gifts?

Example:

## Payments

	PayPal - [REDACTED]	\$7.93
	12/13/21 6:53 AM	
	PayPal - [REDACTED]	\$3.00
	12/13/21 7:14 AM	

A temporary hold of \$7.93 was placed on your payment method PayPal - [REDACTED]. This is not a charge and will be removed. It should disappear from your bank statement shortly. [Learn More](#)

Typically, reimbursements are for out-of-pocket expenses. Generally, as noted in HR Manual [section 2201 – Travel and Relocation Policy](#):

- Rewards points or credits do not translate to a cash value to be reimbursed by the state.
- Receipts must show the date, time, location, and cost of the expense.

Please educate the employee that traveling on state business is work travel (not personal travel) and that it may be prudent for the employee to use their rewards program points for their personal (not work related) travel.

However, if the employee is represented, there may be applicable MOU language. Please review the [MOUs](#) for relevant language and consult with your department's Labor Relations Office regarding MOU language questions. If your Labor Relations Office has questions, it may [contact](#) the CalHR Labor Relations Division and discuss this issue with them.

Please contact [travelmanager@calhr.ca.gov](mailto:travelmanager@calhr.ca.gov) with specific questions.

10. Can out of state teleworkers book travel directly to where they are going and get reimbursed for the portion the state would pay for travel from their headquarters?

Please contact your departmental labor relations office with questions related to out-of-state telework. If your departmental labor relations office has questions, it may reach out to [CalHR Labor Relations](#) ("LRO Assignment by Bargaining Unit").

11. I understand that with Telework, your headquarters is still the State-Owned/Leased building that you would normally report to. Is there any movement, that is known to DGS, by Labor Relations to change this, in light of telework?

CalHR is researching this topic. Generally, if an employee is teleworking, their designated headquarters remains their appointing power's office location.

Please contact your departmental labor relations office with questions related to telework. If your departmental labor relations office has questions, it may reach out to [CalHR Labor Relations](#) ("LRO Assignment by Bargaining Unit").

12. Is it possible for us to do a blanket excess lodging rate for some or all coastal counties for a year? Have other agencies or departments done this and if so, any details you could share would be most appreciated.

I am not aware of any CalHR travel language that allows for general blanket excess lodging approvals based on geographic areas. There is a limited blanket excess lodging request that CalHR may approve in certain limited situations, such as emergency departmental responses (responding to natural disasters, etc.). Please contact [travelmanager@calhr.ca.gov](mailto:travelmanager@calhr.ca.gov) with specific questions.

13. How old can TECs be and still be accepted, 3 years, 5 years, or unlimited time?

I am not aware of any language in the [travel regulations](#) or in the relevant sections of the [HR Manual](#) (2201-2203) that requires departments to reimburse an excluded employee's travel expenses or a represented employee's travel expenses within specific timeframes. Please check with SCO and DGS to see if they have applicable timeframes.

It is my understanding that departments typically retain these types of documents for a certain period of time and that TEC reimbursements should only be issued for verifiable claims. I am not aware of any language that requires departments to reimburse unverifiable claims. I am not aware of any language that prohibits employee submission of claims to the [Government Claims Program](#).

Please note that, for represented employees, there may be applicable MOU language. Please review the [MOUs](#) for relevant language and consult with your department's Labor Relations Office regarding MOU language questions. If your Labor Relations Office has questions, they may [contact](#) CalHR's Labor Relations Division ("LRO Assignment by Bargaining Unit") and discuss this issue with them.

14. Our staff is exempt and are not represented. We have some staff that has relocated throughout the state due to the covid telework agreement. Their headquarters is the Sacramento office. When traveling, do they need depart from Sacramento or can they depart from the nearest airport? If I recall correctly CalHR requested that the traveler do a cost comparison and submit along with the travel expense claim. This was in the past (still covid) for a similar scenario. Is this still the case?

Please see the highlighted language below. Departments determine the need for and the method of travel that is in the best interest of the state. If, after a cost

comparison, the department determines that an employee's requested method of travel is in the best interest of the state in accordance with HR Manual section 2201 - Travel and Relocation Policy, then it may be reimbursable:

#### Method of Travel

**For BUs with an existing MOU, if the MOU contains state business, travel and relocation language that is in conflict with this policy, the MOU language shall be controlling.**

- Each state agency is responsible for determining the need for and the method of travel.
- Reimbursement for travel is governed by the terms of the applicable Memoranda of Understanding, the applicable Government Code sections, and CalHR Rules.
- Reimbursement for transportation expenses will be based on the method of transportation that is in the best interest of the state, considering both direct expense and the employee's time.
- If an employee chooses and is authorized to use a method of transportation that is not the least costly, not the typical method of getting from one location to the other, or not "in the best interest of the state," then a cost comparison shall be prepared and the employee shall be reimbursed only the amount that would have been reimbursed had the employee traveled using the least costly method.

Please contact your departmental labor relations office with questions related to telework and/or COVID-19. If your departmental labor relations office has questions, it may reach out to CalHR Labor Relations ("LRO Assignment by Bargaining Unit").

15. All our staff's headquarters is at the Sacramento office. Some staff have relocated due to the telework agreement and reside in So. Cal. They are looking to travel to a location in So. Cal. I know the rule is the traveler must claim mileage from home or the office whichever is the shortest distance. In order to claim mileage, the travel would have to incur 50 miles away. If they are traveling less than 50 miles from their home, are they able to seek reimbursement?

CalHR is researching the applicable mileage reimbursement language for excluded employees. I hope to have an update soon. I am not aware of any 50-mile rule for mileage expenses.

Please see the highlighted language below. It is my understanding that HR Manual section 2201 – Travel and Relocation Policy provides the following language specifically for meals and lodging expenses:



## Travel Delegation - 50 Mile Limit

This delegation is for the approval of the reimbursement of meals and/or lodging within 50 miles of home or headquarters when the employee is conducting state business away from the headquarters location. This delegation does not extend to the approval of meals or lodging at either the headquarters or home location.

It is not unusual or extraordinary for state employees to commute 50 miles or longer from their home to headquarters and back again on a daily basis. An employee who does not live in the immediate vicinity of his/her headquarters is not eligible to receive meals and lodging when required to work extended hours in the headquarters location. Likewise, an employee who must work at a site other than headquarters is not automatically considered to be eligible for meals and/or lodging simply by crossing the "50 mile line"....

16. Is there an update on contract negotiations for fringe benefits for travel?

CalHR Benefits does not comment on the status of collective bargaining proposals. CalHR Labor Relations handles collective bargaining.

17. With the current Telework situation, will there be an update on how mileage is calculated? Will office still be considered the HQ?

Generally, if an employee is teleworking, their designated headquarters remains their appointing power's office location. CalHR is researching this topic.

Please contact your departmental labor relations office with questions related to telework. If your departmental labor relations office has questions, it may reach out to [CalHR Labor Relations](#) ("LRO Assignment by Bargaining Unit").

18. An employee used Uber to travel from their home to a meeting. They used their home address as the point of travel. It was reevaluated and the distance from their home to their HQ was reimbursed. Is there any guidance on this other than existing policy?

CalHR needs to request additional clarification from this department prior to providing a response to this question.

Please note that, for represented employees, there may be applicable MOU language. Please review the [MOUs](#) for relevant language and consult with your department's Labor Relations Office regarding MOU language questions. If your Labor Relations Office has questions, they may [contact](#) CalHR's Labor Relations Division ("LRO Assignment by Bargaining Unit") and discuss this issue with them. Please contact [travelmanager@calhr.ca.gov](mailto:travelmanager@calhr.ca.gov) with specific questions.

19. When are they going to raise the hotel, meals, and incidental rates? The cost of hotels and food has tremendously increased over the last several years. These need to be changed.

CalHR is aware of the differences between the state's reimbursement rates and marketplace conditions. Please note that while CalHR Benefits may provide feedback, CalHR's Labor Relations team negotiates these rates with employee unions. HR Manual [section 2201 – Travel and Relocation Policy](#) provides information about the Excess Lodging Request process available to all employees.

20. What are the policies governing out of state and out of country travel? What steps does a department need to take on behalf of travelers in terms of seeking proper approvals?

Please review the current budget letter ([21-06](#)) from the Department of Finance for clarification on how to submit out-of-state and/or out-of-country travel requests to the Governor's Office ([ostrequest@gov.ca.gov](mailto:ostrequest@gov.ca.gov)) for review and approval.

HR Manual [section 2201 – Travel and Relocation Policy](#) also provides language regarding [Out-of-State Travel Policy](#) and [Out-of-Country Travel Policy](#).

21. What are state policies regarding alternative lodging such as Airbnb?

CalHR is researching the potential impact to employee use of short-term rentals, such as Airbnb, since Government Code section 19822.4 was repealed.

Please note that, for represented employees, there may be applicable MOU language. Please review the [MOUs](#) for relevant language and consult with your department's Labor Relations Office regarding MOU language questions. If your Labor Relations Office has questions, they may [contact](#) CalHR's Labor Relations Division ("LRO Assignment by Bargaining Unit") and discuss this issue with them.

22. What is my lodging rate if I share a room with someone? Can we exceed the state rate since each of us has an allowance up to a certain amount, and share the cost individual?

The room rate is the room rate (the rate is per room, not per person). If employees share a room, only one employee traveler (the one with the receipt in their name) can claim the room. If the room rate is more than the maximum state rate, then the employee claiming the room will need to submit an excess lodging request.

HR Manual [section 2201 – Travel and Relocation Policy](#) provides information on the excess lodging rate request process.

23. What is the update on increasing county rates for lodging as prices for hotels seem to be increasing and as a result more 255c forms are needed? From the last Quarterly meeting, there was discussion between CalHR, DGS and Union if it can match the federal rates?

CalHR is aware of the differences between the state's reimbursement rates and marketplace conditions. Please note that while CalHR Benefits may provide feedback, CalHR's Labor Relations team negotiates these rates with employee unions. HR Manual [section 2201 – Travel and Relocation Policy](#) provides information about the Excess Lodging Request process available to all employees.

24. Is there a rule, regulation or SAM Section that allows us to collect from employees that book hotels over the allowable state rate? For example, an employee travels to Sacramento for training. The allowable state rate for Sacramento is \$90.00 but the employee books \$120.00 and didn't submit a preapproved STD 255C Excess Lodging form. Can we collect the \$30.00 difference from the employee?

Departments may submit after-the-fact requests to CalHR. CalHR reviews after-the-fact requests on a case-by-case basis. All after-the-fact requests must be submitted to CalHR with three comparison quotes for the requested travel dates (if available) along with an explanation for the late submission. Please contact [travelmanager@calhr.ca.gov](mailto:travelmanager@calhr.ca.gov) with specific questions.

25. Is safety an allowable justification when submitting STD 255 when selecting higher lodging?

Departments determine the need for and the method of travel that is in the best interest of the state. I am not aware of any CalHR travel language that specifically addresses "safety" as a justification.

It is my understanding that if employees have reasonable and verifiable concerns about a lodging establishment (such as an establishment that may have outside facing doors that open up to a parking lot or some other public entrance that may be accessed by non-guests), departments may consider such substantiated concerns in determining the lodging that is in the best interest of the state. It is also my understanding that if employees are reporting issues with hotels listed in [Concur](#) or booked through [CalTravelStore](#) that their departments should notify DGS so that DGS may research these issues.

26. Are there different policies for traveling to border states?

Government Code section [11033](#) provides the following language:

No state officer or employee shall absent himself or herself from the state on business of the state without the prior approval of the Governor, except when the



absence is for less than five consecutive working days' duration and involves only travel into states bordering upon this state. This section shall not apply to elective state officers, employees of any legislative committee, or to the Legislative Counsel or his or her employees.

It is my understanding that the Governor's Office may issue related Executive Orders, such as N-13-21.

Please review the current budget letter (21-06) from the Department of Finance for clarification on how to submit out-of-state and/or out-of-country travel requests to the Governor's Office ([ostrequest@gov.ca.gov](mailto:ostrequest@gov.ca.gov)) for review and approval.

HR Manual section 2201 – Travel and Relocation Policy also provides language regarding Out-of-State Travel Policy and Out-of-Country Travel Policy.

**STP:**

27. Please explain the role(s) of the vendor representatives to the Travel Management team. (This is in reference to contacts such as David Fitzpatrick, Lisa Holmes, Megan Herring, etc.)

The purpose/role of vendor representatives for our contracts is to provide reporting to DGS and its clients, as well as to assist with general oversight of the entire contract between DGS and the vendor.

28. Can there be a designation of Manager/Supervisor in Concur as approvers?

Yes. Concur can be configured with an approval process in which the traveler's direct manager (or designee) must approve all travel before the reservation is completed. If your department would like to explore adding this configuration to your Concur site, please send a written request to [statewidetravelprogram@dgs.ca.gov](mailto:statewidetravelprogram@dgs.ca.gov).

29. Can employees keep a Concur account from the previous agency to use for a new agency?

No. Each agency has their own individual Concur site. If an employee leaves the agency, their Concur account must be deactivated. Once an employee relocates to a new agency, the employee will need to request a new Concur account from the agency's Travel Coordinator(s).

30. How can we pass a recent United MCO voucher from a separated employee to other staff if unsure who and when travel will take place?

Travel staff are to socialize the availability of the United Airlines MCO to agency/department staff who, in turn, would advise of their future travel plans that include travel on United Airlines. Once the travel staff is informed of a staff member's future United Airlines travel need, they or the staff member must call CalTravelStore and provide the travel agent with the full details of the MCO (PNR, Ticket Number, Airline, Estimated Remaining Value) and the travel agent will proceed with the new United Airlines flight reservation and will apply the value of the MCO to that new flight.

31. When making airline reservations for any staff member in our agency, why does the pop-up telling us that there are unused airline funds keep appearing?

The pop-up will continue to display until your agency has used all Universal Air Travel Plan (UATP) funds available. Once all UATP funds have been depleted, the pop up will be removed.

32. If someone has no plans of traveling and they have unused airline funds, what is the procedure of having another staff member use it and does the expiration of those funds remain the same?

To find out if an airline is offering any alternative options, send an email along with the Passenger Name, PNR/Record Locator, Ticket Number, Airline, Issued On Date and Estimated Remaining Value to CalTravelStore at [unusedtickets@caltravelstore.com](mailto:unusedtickets@caltravelstore.com) and copy [Letty.Santana@dgs.ca.gov](mailto:Letty.Santana@dgs.ca.gov). A travel agent will contact the airline and will respond with the options the airline is offering, within 5 business days.

33. When the UATP email was sent out in October 2021 by Letty Santana, I had issues with logging in to access DataMine despite being the travel coordinator and learned only a manager could only access this site. Why, as the travel coordinator, would I not have this access as I normally see this information in the monthly unused tickets notifications?

The UATP reporting system and the reporting system for the monthly unused ticket notifications are two different systems. When UATP was introduced, only Travel Managers were granted access to UATP. All Travel Managers were provided with instructions to add additional contacts such as Travel Coordinators; therefore, if someone is a Travel Coordinator and still needs access to UATP, simply contact the Travel Manager and request access to UATP.

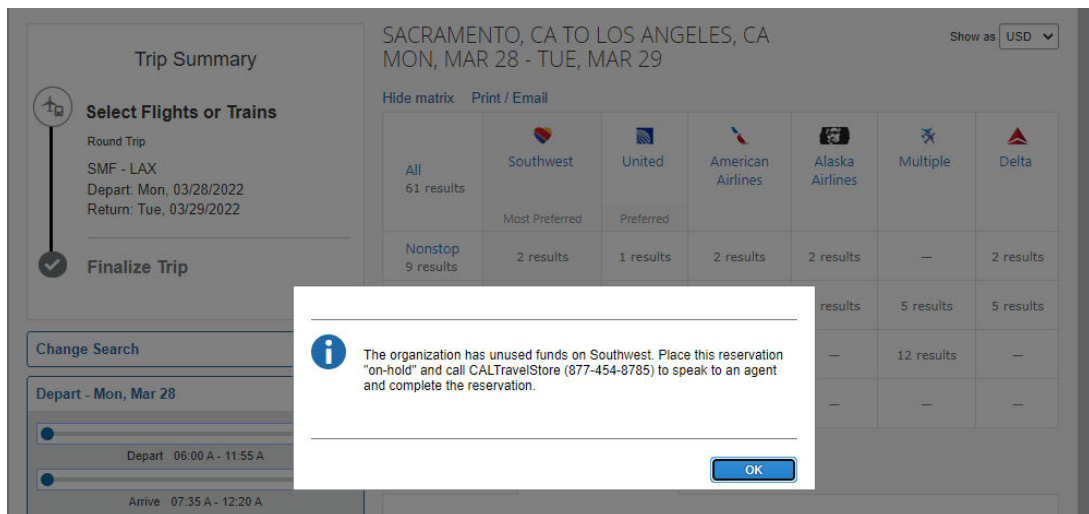
34. Our department sent out a Travel Bulletin (and currently working on sending another Travel Bulletin as a reminder) stating to call the CalTravelStore when

booking a Southwest Airlines flight and have it paid by our UATP funds on file, but some of them are still booked their Southwest flights in Concur. As a result, our department's corporate card was charged for all those Southwest Airlines flights instead of having them credited to our department's UATP account.

- Is there any way to have a pop-up message when opening Concur to alert travelers to book Southwest Airlines flight with CalTravelStore Travel Agent?

A Concur pop-up was activated in March 2021 to alert all travelers whose departments had UATP funds available. All travelers receive this pop-up and have to follow the instructions provided. If flights are being booked in Concur, then travelers are not following the guidance in the pop-up. Below is what the message looks like.

*"The organization has unused funds on Southwest. Place this reservation "on-hold" and call CALTravelStore (877-454-8785) to speak to an agent and complete the reservation."*



- Can we have those charges reversed and have them credited to EDD's UATP instead?

Flight charges cannot be reversed.

35. For the unused tickets from other Airlines such as JetBlue, Delta, United, Alaska, and American Airlines, can you please provide information if these Airlines have extended the tickets expiration date?

Unused Ticket Credits are assessed by each airline on a case-by-case basis. To find out if an airline is offering any options for a specific Unused Ticket Credit, please send an email along with the following unused ticket credit information, Passenger Name, PNR/Record Locator, Ticket Number, Airline, Issued On Date

and Estimated Remaining Value to CalTravelStore at [unusedtickets@caltravelstore.com](mailto:unusedtickets@caltravelstore.com) and copy [Letty.Santana@dgs.ca.gov](mailto:Letty.Santana@dgs.ca.gov). A travel agent will contact the airline and will respond with the options the airline is offering, within 5 business days.

36. Since travel in and out of state is still limited to specific mission critical criteria, some of these employees with unused tickets may not be able to travel. To alleviate the waste of paid airfare, can you please provide information on which other airlines can offer a transferrable voucher?

Unused Ticket Credits are assessed by each airline on a case-by-case basis. To find out if an airline is offering options in lieu of forfeiting the funds, please send an email, along with the following unused ticket credit information: Passenger Name, PNR/Record Locator, Ticket Number, Airline, Issued On Date and Estimated Remaining Value to CalTravelStore at [unusedtickets@caltravelstore.com](mailto:unusedtickets@caltravelstore.com) and copy [Letty.Santana@dgs.ca.gov](mailto:Letty.Santana@dgs.ca.gov). A travel agent will contact the airline and will respond with the options the airline is offering, within 5 business days.

37. What are the exceptions to booking travel in Concur? When is it ok for an employee not to book travel (lodging) in Concur?

Known exceptions to booking lodging in Concur are:

- A hotel room block reservation (conference rate);
- Use of a short-term lodging establishment such as Airbnb; or
- The hotel does not participate in the online booking tool.

38. There is a weakness with Concur where travelers can select anyone (not only managers) to approve their travel. This poses issues for Accounting to reconcile and verify which travel charges are manager-approved. Is there anything that we can do to eliminate this concern?

If employees are using a self-registration link to register, they have the ability to add any approving manager in their profile after their account is approved. If the Travel Coordinator creates their profile manually using the Travel Administration (User Administration) function in Concur, the Travel Coordinator can set up the Concur account and indicate who the approving manager is. Our recommendation to avoid anyone being able to add a manager would be to disable the self-registration link and have employees reach out to the travel unit anytime a new Concur account is needed, or if there is a manager name change.

The “Manager” field in Concur is a field that only a Travel Coordinator can change. Travelers cannot edit their Manager in Concur. If it appears a traveler has changed his or her Manager in Concur, please capture screenshots of the errors/issues, and send them to [statewidetravelprogram@dgs.ca.gov](mailto:statewidetravelprogram@dgs.ca.gov). Be sure to

include an explanation of what should be visible/occurring but isn't.

39. Due to Enterprise's rental car shortage, our customers reserve cars at the state rate of \$37.75 but are provided with upgraded vehicles because that is the only type of vehicle available at the time. We are then charged for the upgraded vehicle, and our staff spends a significant amount of time researching and disputing the charges. We have raised this issue with DGS and Enterprise, and the extra costs have been repaid, yet the problem persists month after month. We've been dealing with this problem for over 8 months and are looking for any additional information and resolution. Are other agencies also experiencing this issue with Enterprise?

Renters should always review their invoice/receipt before leaving the rental counter to detect issues and get immediate resolution – this will ensure a billing issue doesn't reach the department's monthly invoice. In these cases where the issue is not detected at the time the vehicle is returned, department Travel Coordinators will need to work directly with Enterprise. When a discrepancy like this is discovered in the monthly invoice, Travel Coordinators need to follow the process for disputing an Enterprise invoice, which is in the monthly file received from the vendor. The monthly invoice is an Excel file containing a tab for disputes with instructions on submitting the dispute. If you need additional assistance with this process, please contact [Donnie.Rivelle@dgs.ca.gov](mailto:Donnie.Rivelle@dgs.ca.gov).

### **Questions and Answers (Q&A Chat from the Live MS Teams Meeting):**

1. Are Virtual Card Accounts (VCA) and Meeting Card Accounts (MTG) per department? Or per traveler?

VCA's are set up per department. MTG cards can be set up in the department's name or in an individual's name. Both accounts are central billed accounts. VCA's are ghost accounts while MTG cards are physical plastic cards. Please email [Lori.Wasson@dgs.ca.gov](mailto:Lori.Wasson@dgs.ca.gov) and [Nhan.Cao@dgs.ca.gov](mailto:Nhan.Cao@dgs.ca.gov) for additional information on these card account types.

2. Will the Virtual Card Number (VCN) cover valet parking if that's the only available parking option?

Yes, if valet is the only option for hotel parking. The policy still applies - least expensive parking.

3. For the VCN training, is it until the end of the fiscal year or calendar year?

VCN training will be offered until the end of the 2022 calendar year. All departments that are already live with VCN have been notified of the training and



how to register. If your department is not live with VCN yet but is interested in attending, please email [Nhan.Cao@dgs.ca.gov](mailto:Nhan.Cao@dgs.ca.gov).

4. Is there a service fee charged during business hours?

During business hours (Monday through Friday, 8am to 5pm), there is a service fee if a travel agent assists with making a booking.

5. What are the hours to avoid the \$16 fee?

After-hours fees are \$16 per call. To avoid paying the \$16 fee, travelers should call during normal business hours (Monday through Friday, 8am to 5pm). After-hours should only be used for extreme emergencies. It should never be used for general inquiries.

6. What if we have unused flight credit from an employee who is no longer with us, is the credit transferable?

It depends. Department Travel Coordinators should always contact CalTravelStore to explore options for unused credits. Please email [unusedtickets@caltravelstore.com](mailto:unusedtickets@caltravelstore.com) and copy [Letty.Santana@dgs.ca.gov](mailto:Letty.Santana@dgs.ca.gov).

7. If we have airline credits (United and Delta), do we call CalTravelStore to use them?

Yes. To apply unused airline credits, the traveler or the travel coordinator must call CalTravelStore, requesting that they be applied toward the reservation.

8. Did you say we should contact CalTravelStore if the employee doesn't plan to use the credit within the next 6 months?

Yes, please email [unusedtickets@caltravelstore.com](mailto:unusedtickets@caltravelstore.com) to inquire about available options and copy [Letty.Santana@dgs.ca.gov](mailto:Letty.Santana@dgs.ca.gov).

9. Universal Air Travel Plan (UATP): Can this be used for any traveler that did not receive the credit directly (credit not due to the traveler but others)?

Yes, if your Concur site has a pop up indicating you have UATP funds, any traveler can use those funds. The traveler should pause their booking on Concur and call an agent to request to use the UATP card for their Southwest flight.

10. How can we verify that the unused ticket credit was used?

Always check your monthly reports to see if the traveler and the credit is still appearing. You can also look at the traveler's itinerary. If you still need

assistance, please email [unusedtickets@caltravelstore.com](mailto:unusedtickets@caltravelstore.com) and copy [Letty.Santana@dgs.ca.gov](mailto:Letty.Santana@dgs.ca.gov).

11. How is DGS sending the airline policy exception report to department heads since last August? Is it via email? Is the travel coordinator being copied on it?

The reporting is still being fine-tuned and has not yet been sent to departments. It will be sent, once ready, via email to department heads. Travel Coordinators will be copied on the email.

12. What if the airfares from other non-contracted carriers are much cheaper than Southwest and United? Can an employee use the non-contracted carriers?

"Cost" is not an allowable exception to booking a non-contracted carrier. Our contracts with United and Southwest cover all state travel, both domestic and international. There will be occasional situations in which a non-contracted carrier is attempting to pull business away from our contracted carriers. To maintain the integrity of our contracts and continue to receive deep discounts, selection of flights with contracted carriers is required.

13. Was the monthly Air Policy Violation Report sent to the Deputy Administrative Directors of our department?

The reporting is still being fine-tuned and has not yet been sent to departments. It will be sent, once ready, via email to department heads. Travel Coordinators will be copied on the email.

14. How far in advance can we book a flight?

Unless your department's travel policy states differently, there is no restriction on how far in advance you can book a flight.

15. Can employee rent an electric vehicle even its rate is higher?

Yes. A justification is no longer required to rent an electric vehicle.

16. Is the Short-Term Vehicle Justification form (DGS OFAM 100) still posted on Concur?

Yes, there is a link to the form on Concur. It is also on the STP website. You can customize your Concur site to add additional verbiage or links to your department's intranet site.

17. From the Enterprise invoice, how can one tell if the charge is for an electric vehicle or another type?

There will be a section in the invoice identifying the "Class Received".

18. Is there a rate for refueling electric cars?

Electric Rental Vehicles – It is my understanding that expenses related to charging an electric rental car while traveling on approved state business may be similar to expenses related to fueling a non-electric rental car while traveling on approved state business. Please contact [statewidetravelprogram@dgs.ca.gov](mailto:statewidetravelprogram@dgs.ca.gov) with specific questions regarding rental vehicles.

Electric Personal Vehicles – Generally, HR Manual [section 2202 - Mileage Reimbursement](#) provides the following language:

**For BUs with an existing MOU, if the MOU contains state business, travel and relocation language that is in conflict with this policy, the MOU language shall be controlling.**

When the Appointing Power or designee authorizes employees to operate a privately owned vehicle on state business, reimbursement will be made at the FSMR. Mileage reimbursement expenses cover the maintenance and use of the vehicle, including but not limited to: gasoline, up-keep, wear and tear, tires, all insurance including liability, collision and comprehensive coverage, breakdowns, towing and any repairs, and any additional personal expenses that may be incurred by employees as a result of mechanical breakdown or collision.

Please note that, for represented employees, there may be applicable MOU language. Please review the [MOUs](#) for relevant language and consult with your department's Labor Relations Office regarding MOU language questions. If your Labor Relations Office has questions, it may [contact](#) the CalHR Labor Relations Division and discuss this issue with them.

Please contact [travelmanager@calhr.ca.gov](mailto:travelmanager@calhr.ca.gov) with specific questions.

19. Does an Unused Ticket Credit have to be booked for travel dates prior to the expiration?

Typically, yes. But there may be flexibility or other options available, depending on the airline. This is why we strongly recommend that you stay in regular communication with CalTravelStore regarding unused ticket credits. Please email [unusedtickets@caltravelstore.com](mailto:unusedtickets@caltravelstore.com) to explore options for the ticket credit and copy [Letty.Santana@dgs.ca.gov](mailto:Letty.Santana@dgs.ca.gov).

20. In lieu of the DGS OFAM 100 form, can travelers use their own department's car rental justification form?

No. State policy requires that the DGS OFAM 100 form is always completed.

21. If a car rental agreement is lost, where can the traveler get a copy of it?

The traveler can call Enterprise to have a copy emailed, or they can locate a copy of the receipt via Enterprise.com.

22. We generally receive the new rental car contract rate in March. Have these been announced yet for 3/1/22?

The current contract and rates go through February 2024. Unless there is a contractual change, there will be no update to the rates until then.

23. Do employees need to provide a car rental agreement AND receipt when submitting a Travel Expense Claim (TEC)?

Yes, you will need to include the receipts and rental agreement when submitting a TEC unless your department policy says otherwise.

24. Do employees need a justification when they rent an electric vehicle because of the higher rate?

No. Employees do not need a justification when renting an electric vehicle.

25. Long-term cars are approved once a year in October. What is needed to approve payment for long-term cars in the interim?

Contact [famssupport@dgs.ca.gov](mailto:famssupport@dgs.ca.gov), or by phone at (916) 928-4604. OFAM can walk you through what is needed for the long-term process.

26. Does it matter if it's a supervisor signing or a branch chief signing the car rental justification form?

Each department will have their own signing policy. If your department allows your direct supervisor to sign, then that is acceptable. Some departments require someone higher up in leadership to sign the form.

27. Should lodging rates over \$250 be emailed to the CalHR Manager email address for prior approval?

Yes. All Excess Lodging Rate Requests for amounts above the delegated amount of \$250 per night continue to require CalHR approval in advance. HR

Manual [section 2201 – Travel and Relocation Policy](#) provides information about the Excess Lodging Request process available to all employees.

28. Will DGS be auditing the departments with staff who violate the airline policies in the near future, or should we just continue gathering justification in case we're audited?

Continue to gather your information and justifications. DGS Audits does not audit airline policy violations at this point.

29. If an employee did not receive the rental agreement when the car was checked out, what can they do?

Generally, Enterprise will email it to them. Otherwise, they will need to call the rental branch to request a copy.

30. For the STD 255C Excess Lodging form, if the rate is above the state rate, but below \$250, is CalHR approval required?

Effective March 7, 2018, CalHR delegated authority to departments to make determinations regarding Excess Lodging Rate Requests up to \$250 per night. All Excess Lodging Rate Requests for amounts above the delegated amount of \$250 per night continue to require CalHR approval in advance. HR Manual [section 2201 – Travel and Relocation Policy](#) provides information about the Excess Lodging Request process available to all employees.

31. Can the short-term justification form still be accepted after the TEC is submitted, not prior to the trip?

No, it is not acceptable. All justification forms must be submitted and approved prior to the rental vehicle being booked.

32. For the next Quarterly Travel Coordinator meeting, will DGS provide a call-in number for employees as an option if an employee is having challenges with the link, logging on or other technical issues?

We suggest logging on 15 minutes beforehand to ensure all is working. You can call our main line at (916) 376-3974 up until the meeting starts. Once the meeting starts, all staff are logged into the meeting and unable to assist. You should be able to click the link and access the training. If you are having any audio issues, it helps sometimes to log out of the meeting and log back in. The meeting is also always recorded, and the recording will be distributed to all registered attendees.

33. For TEC's, are a copy of receipts emailed for backup acceptable now that most employees work remotely, or do they still need to mail the originals in?



This would be set by your department. You may want to reach out to your department's travel unit, or accounting office for clarification.

34. Will electronic signatures be allowed for Travel Expense Claims?

This would be set by your department. Please reach out to your department's accounting office.

35. If a short-term justification form is not acceptable after the trip concludes, what would be the next step? Do the employees have to pay the difference out-of-pocket?

The DGS OFAM 100 needs to be signed and approved by a supervisor prior to the trip being booked. The form is approving the overage in cost, so no, the employee would not pay the difference out of pocket unless the employee did not provide a valid justification.

36. What if an employee uses their credit card rewards to pay for lodging? Can we reimburse the employee for that payment?

Please contact [travelmanager@calhr.ca.gov](mailto:travelmanager@calhr.ca.gov) with specific questions.

37. For retiring or transferring employees, should we continue to terminate their Concur accounts? Doing so removes all their travel history with the agency.

Yes. Please continue to terminate Concur accounts if the employee is no longer employed. Email [statewidetravelprogram@dgs.ca.gov](mailto:statewidetravelprogram@dgs.ca.gov) if you need assistance with deactivating Concur accounts.

38. CalATERS is already set up for taxable items, but when the employee combines the TEC for two, one day trips, CalATERS will not trigger it as taxable.

An employee should not be combining trips in CalATERS for that specific reason.

39. For CalATERS, the approval on the system serves as the signature. Is there any change to that?

Yes, that is correct. The electronic signature is when their claim is approved. Not necessarily changed due to emergency telework.

40. I work with executives that prefer I submit their travel expense claims on their behalf. Are we able to do that?

Yes, you can submit the TEC on their behalf.

41. How about any training that is taxable such as CME? How will the system know it should be taxable?

Trip type, claim type and expense type determine taxability. If there is a need to apply tax outside of the system, departments should use Form 676P.

42. If an employee requests reimbursement for short-term parking, provides justification, and it gets denied, what is State Controller's Office (SCO) rule for denial?

You need to reach out to your SCO claim auditor for further information on why the claim was denied.

43. What was that section again in CalHR Manual?

<http://hrmanual.calhr.ca.gov/Home/ManualItem/1/2201>

44. Can an employee attend an online training from a prohibited state per AB1887? The employee is not traveling but just attending the training from California.

AB 1887 is only for travel to banned states. Please refer to the OAG [website](#) for more information.

45. Can mileage from home to destination be allowed for telework based employees?

Please contact your departmental labor relations office with questions related to telework. If your departmental labor relations office has questions, it may reach out to [CalHR Labor Relations](#) ("LRO Assignment by Bargaining Unit").

46. When 2 employees are sharing a room over the state rate, can the employees divide the room rate into two and each claim their portion?

The room rate is the room rate (the rate is per room, not per person). If employees share a room, only one employee traveler (the one with the receipt in their name) can claim the room. If the room rate is more than the maximum state rate, then the employee claiming the room will need to submit an excess lodging request.

HR Manual [section 2201 – Travel and Relocation Policy](#) provides information on the excess lodging rate request process.

47. Who do we contact at DGS with hotel issues?

Please email [statewidetravelprogram@dgs.ca.gov](mailto:statewidetravelprogram@dgs.ca.gov) and provide detailed information, including but not limited to, hotel name, traveler name, dates of travel, and the issue/problem encountered.