

## Updated FAQ's for MSU Travel in EBS

### 1. Where is the travel forms located?

Currently, the forms are located on the MSU Travel Office website, the New Financial System – Information and Documentation page, and the Controller's Office Forms Download. (Hint: Look under Travel)

### 2. Which travel worksheet do I attach to which electronic document?

Disbursement Vouchers are utilized for travel reimbursement when the traveler has not received a travel advance to support the expenses incurred on the trip. A Travel Reimbursement Worksheet (TRW) must be completed. The document and scanned receipts must be attached to a Disbursement Voucher (DV) e-doc.

If a travel advance was received, travel expenses will be reported on the Travel Advance Reconciliation (TAR). This document and scanned receipts must be attached to a Distribution of Income and Expense (DI) e-doc.

When a traveler needs a travel advance, a Cash Advance Form (CAF) must be completed. The CAF is attached to an Internal Billing (IB) e-doc.

### 3. Is Travel Authorization still required?

Yes. The paper form has been modified, but travel authorization is required prior to departure. If travel is local or in-state, colleges and departments may choose a separate method for approval. If travel is international, the travel authorization form must be completed in full, and the trip must be registered in the Travelers' Database.

Departments are expected to keep approved travel authorizations on file in their departments. Approved travel authorizations may be electronically attached to the relevant reimbursement electronic document (e-doc). The electronic version of the approved authorization is sufficient to serve as your original record and the paper travel authorization may be destroyed once the e-doc is in 'Final' status.

### 4. Are travelers permitted to have blanket travel authorizations? When?

MSU business travelers may have blanket travel authorizations if traveling locally or within the state during a short period of time (no longer than a semester). Travelers must have separate blanket travel authorizations for local and in-state travel. At a minimum, these should be reviewed and updated each semester.

### 5. Are there qualifications that must be met to obtain a travel advance?

Yes. In order to obtain a travel advance, MSU business travelers must meet the requirements set forth in the MSU Manual of Business Procedures, Section 70, Travel Advances. If the MSU business traveler qualifies, a travel advance may be obtained up to 7 days prior to departure.

### 6. How do MSU business travelers obtain travel advances?

- The advance recipient prepares a Cash Advance Form (CAF) detailing the amount and purpose of the advance.
- A department e-doc initiator (the advance recipient, the account Fiscal Officer (FO), etc.) will complete an Internal Billing (IB) e-doc to charge the \$15 advance fee expense to a department account string (object code **6489**) and credit revenue to account number **XT022906**, object code **4050**.
- In the 'Description' field of the IB, the initiator is required to enter "**Advance-LastName**".
- In the 'Explanation' field of the IB, the initiator is to include a brief reason for the advance request.
- The initiator is required to attach the completed CAF to the IB.
- The IB will automatically route for approval to the FO on the account charged (except if the FO is also the initiator). The FO's approval of the IB approves both: 1) the \$15 advance fee; and 2) the cash advance amount noted on the CAF.
- The FO will note the unique Document Number ("Doc Nbr") of the IB (financial system generated) and inform the advance recipient of the number and that the IB has been approved.
- Accounting will access the IB (via the Doc Nbr), verify the attached CAF, and that the proper account is being credited for the fee. The advance will not be issued until the IB is properly approved.
- Once an Internal Billing (IB) for a Travel Advance has been approved by the Fiscal Officer and travel is within 7 days of departure, the Advancee may come to **360 Administration Building** to pick up their advance. The IB will be approved by Accounting when the Advancee comes in for the advance.
- The advance recipient will then process the advance note through the Cashiers Office, 110 Administration Building.

7. *When will Accounting approve the Internal Billing for the advance to be issued?*

Internal Billings (IB's) for Travel and Research Advances will not be approved by Central Accounting until the Advancee comes to Room 360 Administration Building to pick up the Promissory Note. (When Accounting approves the IB a \$15 charge to the department's account is created. It is preferable to assess this fee when the advance is issued.)

8. *Do Advancees need to bring anything with them when they come to 360 Administration for their advance?*

Yes. Advancees must present picture ID and should have the Internal Billing (IB) electronic document number.

9. *How do I process travel reimbursement in EBS?*

If a travel advance was not received, Travel reimbursements (non-Travel Advance) should be processed by recording travel expenditures on a Travel Reimbursement Worksheet (TRW) and attaching it to a Disbursement Voucher (DV) e-doc.

If a travel advance was received, Travel reimbursements (with Travel Advance) should be processed by recording travel expenditures on a Travel Advance Reconciliation Worksheet (TAR) and attaching it to a Distribution of Income and Expense (DI) e-doc.

10. *How do I process a Travel Reimbursement (non-Travel Advance)?*

Travel Reimbursement does require the completion of the Travel Reimbursement Worksheet (TRW) which must be attached along with supporting documentation to a Disbursement Voucher (DV).

11. When completing a Disbursement Voucher for Travel Reimbursement, which Payment Reason Code should I use?

Payment Reason Code "O" should be used to reimburse travelers for expenses incurred while on approved travel for Michigan State University. If payment is being made to a company, the Payment Reason Code should be "N".

12. What must I attach to a Disbursement Voucher in order to be reimbursed?

- a. Travel Reimbursement Worksheet (TRW)
- b. Paid Receipts
- c. Direct Billed Airfare Electronic Invoice (If applicable)
- d. If foreign travel, a copy of conversion used to calculated exchange rate
- e. Travel Authorization (optional)

13. What should I know about completing a Travel Reimbursement Worksheet?

- Section A requires direct billing information if airfare/rail was purchased through a MSU Preferred Travel Agency and charged to MSU.
- Section B must include transportation into/out of destination and any transportation while in travel status.
- Section C should contain any additional information to support travel expenses claimed on the TRW.
- Section D is where travel expenses are assigned to the MSU accounting string. Data in this section is to be entered on the DV.
- The total claim (or limit) in Section E must match the total of Section D.

14. What resource should I follow when scanning documents?

University Archives has established the following guidelines which must be followed:

[http://archives.msu.edu/records/scanning.php?records\\_scanning](http://archives.msu.edu/records/scanning.php?records_scanning).

In addition, the MSU Accounting/Voucher Processing/Travel Offices have established these Best Practices:

- a. Receipts must be in good order.
- b. Receipts must be complete, clear, and readable.
- c. Receipts that are smaller than a standard sheet of paper should be attached to an 8.5 x 11" white sheet of paper and imaged.
- d. Tape should not be placed over dates, amounts, or vendor name on the receipts.
- e. Multiple receipts may be placed on one sheet of paper.

- f. Receipts should all be right side up and facing the same direction.
- g. Receipts should be numbered and the corresponding amounts numbered on the Reimbursement Worksheet, Travel Reimbursement Worksheet, and Travel Advance Reconciliation. In addition, receipts should be scanned in numeric order.
- h. If receipts are in a foreign language, please identify the purchase and location of that purchase. Example: Hotel stay in Paris, France would be printed in French.

15. What guidelines should be followed when labeling electronic documents that will be attached to eDocs?

When labeling electronic documents that will be attached as supporting documentation, it is recommended that you follow the recommendations outlined on pages 11 and 12 of the document called "What do I do with my files in EBS" which is under the System Transition information on the New Financial System Information and Documentation website at: <http://ctrl.msu.edu/COAccounting/FinancialSystemTrans.aspx>.

From this, please see the example below, in which the documents are labeled according to date of travel, destination:

2011Jan10\_Paris\_Gulliver.Debbie\_TvlAuth  
2011Jan10\_Paris\_Gulliver.Debbie\_TRW  
2011Jan10\_Paris\_Gulliver.Debbie\_Receipts  
2011Jan10\_Paris\_Gulliver.Debbie\_dbairfare

Documents can be saved in a file folder labeled with the traveler's name. This helps the document preparer stay organized, and enables easy access to and attachment of the supporting documentation needed for payment in EBS.

16. Do we have to keep the paper receipts?

Departments must retain paper receipts until payment is posted to their ledger, at which time documents should be destroyed. The scanned receipts become the official record.

17. Who has to approve Disbursement Vouchers?

Workflow is set up so that the e-doc will route to the fiscal officer, Contracts and Grants (if applicable), and Central Accounting. If the traveler is a MSU employee, the traveler must "approve" the DV or DI for reimbursement. If the MSU employee traveler is the DV or DI initiator, this approval is completed upon submission of the e-doc. If not, the initiator must ad hoc route the e-doc to the employee and the employee must approve the e-doc before further routing will continue.

No ad hoc routing of the DV or DI is necessary for non-employees. Also, if the non-employee traveler is not already in the Vendor system, the traveler must be added (Vendor Type is "SP - Special Payments") prior to creation of the DV.

For all reimbursement related e-docs: If the Fiscal Officer (FO) is the payee or the custodian/recipient of a Cash Advance, the e-doc must be ad hoc routed and/or approved by FO delegate, a Dean/Assoc.-Asst. Dean, Director, Chair, or College-level budget officer.

18. Do travelers approve their reimbursement?

Yes, if they are MSU employees. If the MSU employee traveler completes their own Disbursement Voucher (DV) or Distribution of Income and Expense (DI), they indicate their approval of their eDoc by completing and submitting it.

If MSU employee travelers do not initiate their own e-docs, preparers or initiators must ad hoc route e-docs to MSU employee travelers for approval. MSU employees will not be reimbursed without approving their e-docs in EBS. Initiators and Fiscal Officers must always be sure that employees are included on the ad hoc route where applicable.

If the traveler is not an MSU employee, the e-doc will not be routed to them for approval.

19. How will travelers be notified of the need to approve e-docs that are routed to them?

MSU employee travelers will receive e-mail notification of their need to log into the MSU portal and approve e-docs in EBS. E-mail notification preferences within the financial system can be set to individual preferences. Within the action list, users should select "preferences" to edit their workflow preferences.

20. When and how are e-docs routed to Contracts and Grants Administration?

When travel is international and being charged to a contract and grant account (RC) all e-docs (DV, DI, and IBs) must be routed to Contracts and Grants (CGA) as follows:

- a. Disbursement Vouchers (DVs) that fall within these parameters automatically route to Contracts and Grants for approval.
- b. The Internal Billing (IB) must be ad hoc routed to CGA when an "RC" account is paying for the advance fee.
- c. Distribution of Income and Expense (DI) must be ad hoc routed to CGA when a "RC" account is being charged for international travel expenditures associated with an advance.

21. How will I be reimbursed for travel expenditures reported on a Disbursement Voucher?

MSU employees with payroll Direct Deposit will be reimbursed via Direct Deposit only. Non-MSU employees will be paid by check.

22. Will travelers have the choice of receiving reimbursement as direct deposit or check?

No. If an MSU employee traveler is currently receiving payroll via direct deposit, travel reimbursement will be done the same way unless an advance is received. If an advance is received, MSU employees will receive travel reimbursement via check. Non-MSU employee travelers will also receive a check.

23. Will travelers receive remittance advices?

Yes, an e-mail will be sent to MSU employee travelers when ACH direct deposit payments are processed. The e-mail contains a remittance advice that looks much like those mailed out previously. The e-doc will reflect the processing of payment. At the time the payment is processed, the remittance advice will be created and sent to MSU employee travelers.

24. How will payments be processed to travelers who have travel reimbursement due if they discontinue employment with MSU prior to payment of reimbursement?

If the former MSU employee is still receiving payroll via direct deposit, the travel reimbursements will be processed through direct deposit. However, if the former MSU employee is no longer receiving payroll compensation, payment in the form of a check will be mailed to the address noted by the department on the e-doc.

25. Do non-MSU travelers and students still receive checks as payment for travel reimbursement?

Yes. They must first be established as Special Payment Vendors prior to any reimbursement being requested. Please use the Vendor Lookup to verify whether or not they are already set up as a vendor.

26. Will non-MSU and student travelers have to be set up as "Vendors" in the new financial system?

Yes. These travelers will need to be set up as "SP" or Special Vendors. MSU does not require tax identification information for this type of vendor. Central Accounting must approve these vendors prior to the DV e-doc being created.

27. How do I create a Special Payments Vendor in EBS?

MSU employees should be in the system already. If you are processing a travel reimbursement for an employee, you can skip this step and go straight to creating the disbursement voucher.

If you performed a search and didn't find the person you were looking for, you will need to create a new vendor.

A good habit to get in when doing searches is to always use the asterisk wherever you think there may be a space or special character. When returning search results, the system only brings back exact results. Names must also be spelled out exactly as they were entered into the system. For example you are trying to reimburse Bob Smith, he may be in the system as Robert Smith, and so you may want to try searching for him both ways. (i.e. \*Bob\*Smith\* and then try \*Robert\*Smith\*).

To create a new vendor, begin by clicking the **"Create New"** button. The vendor document opens.

This document looks long and complicated, but there are only a few fields you need to complete to create a vendor for travel reimbursement.

Complete the **Description** and **Explanation**. Indicate that you are creating this vendor to reimburse travel.

Enter the traveler's last name in the "**Vendor Last Name**" field and their first name in the "**Vendor First Name**" field.

You will only need to complete the two required fields in this section. The other required field on the screen **Is this a foreign vendor** defaults to No.

The first required field is the **Vendor Type**. By selecting **SP – Non-Employee Reimbursement/Refund**, you do not need to enter social security or tax ID information.

**Ownership Type** is the second required field in this section of the e-doc. Select Individual/Sole Proprietor from the drop-down.

The next section you need to complete is the address. In this section, you enter where the individual would like the check mailed.

Once you have completed the fields, click the **submit** button to submit the e-doc.

If you need to save the e-doc without submitting, click "**save**".

**Close** exits without making any changes.

**Cancel** will cancel the document even if you have saved it.

28. How can I find the new account numbers and object codes in EBS?

EBS Account Numbers and Object Codes are available on the EBS Financial System. By using hourglass look ups, you can use legacy account numbers and object codes to find the new ones.

29. How can I find all of the "travel-related" object codes in EBS?

Object Codes may be found either in the eDoc or by looking up on the Main Menu under Object Code. On the look up page, users should type 6\* in the Object Code box and Travel\* in the Object Code Name box. This will give you 22 options. Please note that Conference fees are object code 6397.

30. When I put in the legacy object code of 026, the new object code is for non-MSU employee international travel. The traveler is an MSU employee. How do I glean the correct object code?

When you know the type of travel, you can add this to narrow down your results.

Either in the e-doc or by looking on the Main Menu under Object Code, type 66\* in the Object Code box and \*International\* in the Object Code Name box.

31. I received an advance prior to departure, how should I report my expenditures?

MSU travelers should report their travel expenditures on a Distribution of Income and Expense (DI). There are three outcomes possible:

- a. **The traveler spends exactly the amount of the advance.** In this case, the TAR and receipts are attached to the DI and submitted through the required workflow as outlined below. There will be no traveler reimbursement or refund to MSU.
- b. **The traveler owes MSU money because the entirety of the travel advance was not spent.** In this case, the traveler writes a check to MSU which is deposited by the traveler (referencing the Advance Number) in the Cashier's Office, 110 Administration Building. The TAR and receipts are attached to the DI and submitted through workflow as outlined below.
- c. **The traveler is owed money because the travel expenses were greater** than the travel advance. In this case, the TAR and receipts are attached to the DI and submitted as outlined below. Once Accounting approves the TAR and DI, Accounting will process a reimbursement for the balance due the traveler. Travelers who are MSU employees with payroll Direct Deposit will be reimbursed via Direct Deposit only.

32. What should I know about completing a Travel Advance Reconciliation Worksheet?

- a. Preparers must note the Travel Advance number at the top of the TAR.
- b. Section A requires direct billing information if airfare/rail was purchased through a MSU Preferred Travel Agency and charged to MSU.
- c. Section B must include transportation into/out of destination and any transportation while in travel status.
- d. Section C should contain any additional information to support travel expenses claimed on the TRW.
- e. Section D is where travel expenses are assigned to the MSU accounting string. Data in this section is to be entered on the DI.
- f. The total claim (or limit) in Section E must match the total of Section D.

33. *What amount do I report on the DI in the "To" and "From" accounting lines?*

The total amount expended as reported on the TAR should be recorded in the accounting lines. The totals for both (To and From) should be the same.

34. What account numbers should I record and where does the dollar amount on the Distribution of Income and Expense?

The Accounting Line "From" is used to relieve the Controller's Office account of the travel advance expense.

- o Account Number: XZ052171
- o Object Code: 6173
- o Amount: Total from TAR, Section D

The Accounting Lines "To" must match Section D on the Travel Advance Reconciliation Worksheet. Travel expenses will be charged according to the information on the DI. Be sure to choose the correct Object Code.

35. What must I attach to a Distribution of Income in order to close my open travel advance?

- o Travel Advance Reconciliation Worksheet
- o Paid Receipts
- o Direct Billed Airfare Electronic Invoice (If applicable)
- o If foreign travel, copy of conversion used to calculated exchange rate
- o Travel Authorization (optional)
- o Cash Advance Form (optional)

36. *What documentation should be in the Description of the DI?*

When completing a Distribution of Income and Expense (DI), initiators should note the Advancee's name and Advance Number in the Description. This will assist in identifying the purpose of the transaction on the departmental account Operating Statement (ledger).

37. Do Advancees have to approve their DI?

If the traveler is a MSU employee, the traveler must "approve" the DI for travel advance reconciling. If the MSU employee traveler is the DI initiator, this approval is completed upon submission of the DI. If not, the initiator must ad hoc route the DI to the employee and the employee must approve the DI before further routing will continue.

If the Traveler is not a MSU employee, please check "Other" in Section A of the TAR. No ad hoc routing of the DI is necessary for non-employees.

38. *Must DI's be "ad hoc" routed to CGA?*

Yes, but only when travel is international and the account(s) begin with "RC" (grant accounts), Contract and Grant Administration must approve the DI. The DI initiator must ad hoc route the DI for approval to the group "CGA Processor Level 1" if under \$25,000 and "CGA Processor Level 2" if over \$25,000.

39. Will Distributions of Income and Expense be disapproved?

If the TAR or the DI is incorrect, the DI will be disapproved by Accounting. A new DI must be created with all required attachments and submitted through the required workflow. However, accounting will work with the department to correct the eDoc whenever possible.

40. What happens if a traveler doesn't spend his entire travel advance?

The traveler is expected to deposit any remaining funds in the Cashier's Office. It is important that the traveler reference their travel advance number when doing so.