United States Department of the Interior

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
Washington, DC 20240

TAKE PRIDE IN AMERICA

JUL 08 2011

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT MEMORANDUM 2011-015 (Vol. X.A.)

To: Bureau Assistant Directors for Administration
Bureau Chief Financial Officers
Bureau Human Resource Officers

From: Douglas A. Glenn D.A. Glenn
Deputy Chief Financial Officer and Director
Office of Financial Management

Subject: Use of Premium Class Transportation to Reasonably Accommodate Persons with Disabilities

Department Manual 373, Chapter 15, states that the authority to review requests of reasonable accommodations of employees with disabilities is the responsibility of agency management. Each office must identify individual manager's who have the authority to approve the use of First and Business Class Travel Accommodations to facilitate the reasonable accommodation of an employee with a disability who is traveling on official business.

As stated in the attached FMM 2009-057, if the Business Class travel is being requested based on a medical necessity; the employee must provide current medical documentation from their medical provider supporting the request for business class accommodations. This certification must be updated annually, unless the physical impairment is a lifelong impairment, which would require a onetime certification. For a lifelong impairment, the doctor's medical documentation must state that there is a lifelong impairment.

Bureau Managers with this approval authority are to consult with their Human Resources office about requests for reasonable travel accommodation to facilitate official business, prior to approving such requests. All First Class Travel Accommodations must still be reviewed and approved by the Assistant Secretary – Policy, Management and Budget hereby delegated to the Deputy Assistant Secretary – Budget, Finance, Performance and Acquisition.

Approvals of Premium Class Travel Accommodations must be kept by the office of the Approving Official. Copies of the approval must be submitted to the individual Bureau Finance Offices and to the Department's Office of Financial Management. These approvals must be treated as sensitive information documents as the documents contain Personal Identification Information about the employee's medical condition. Therefore, they must be secure at all times.

Attached is the revised approval of Premium Class Travel document. When traveling using Premium Class, please make sure that this completed document is attached with all approved requests for both business and first class travel accommodations, whether the basis for approval is for medical reasons or any of the other required justifications.

If you have questions on this guidance please contact Robert Smith, at (202) 208-5684, or via e-mail at Robert_Smith@ios.doi.gov.

Attachments

cc: Financial Statement Guidance Team
Finance Officers Partnership

Cancelled FMMs: None

Additional FMMs on the Subject:
No. 2009-057 (X.A.), April 21, 2009

Request for Approval of First Class and Premium Class Travel

First Class Travel Accommodations for Air, Rail, or Ship must be approved by the Deputy Assistant Secretary-Budget Finance Performance and Acquisition. Requests for First Class Travel approval must be submitted well in advance of the expected travel dates to facilitate the review and approval process. The request for First Class Travel Approval must also be submitted with a memorandum detailing the need for this type of accommodation.

Premium Class or Business Travel Accommodations for Air, Rail, or Ship must be approved by the Bureau Head or their delegate. Requests for Premium Class Travel must be submitted well in advance of the expected travel dates, to facilitate the review and approval process.

Detailed justification along with supporting documentation must be attached to this request otherwise approval will be denied.

Reason for request of First Class Air Travel Accommodations

Please check the applicable justification:

____ Accommodate medical disability or other special need (Accommodation for Medical Disability of special need should be accompanied by a signed medical statement from a physician recommending the accommodation)

____ Is this a lifelong disability? Yes or No

____ Exceptional security circumstances exist

____ Required to meet agency mission

Reason for request of Premium Class Air Travel Accommodations

Please check the applicable justification:

____ Accommodate a medical disability or other special need (Accommodation for Medical Disability of special need should be accompanied by a signed medical statement from a physician recommending the accommodation)

____ Is this a lifelong disability? Yes or No

____ Exceptional security circumstances exist

____ Coach-class accommodations on an authorized/approved foreign air carrier do not provide adequate sanitation or health standards

____ Coach-class accommodations are provided for regularly scheduled flights between origin and destination points

____ Transportation costs are paid in full through agency acceptance of payment from a non-Federal source

____ Origin and/or destination are/is OCONUS and the scheduled flight time (including stopovers and change of planes) exceeds 14 hours

____ An overall cost savings to the Government will be achieved by avoiding additional subsistence costs, overtime, or lost productive time

____ No space is available in coach-class accommodations in time to accomplish mission, which is urgent and cannot be postponed

____ Required to meet agency mission

Reason for request of Other than Coach Class Train Travel

Please check the applicable justification:

____ No coach-class accommodations are reasonably available (within 24 hours of proposed departure or arrival time)

____ Accommodate a medical disability or other special need

____ Exceptional security circumstances exist

____ Coach-class accommodations on an authorized/approved foreign rail carrier do not provide adequate sanitation or health standards

____ Required to meet agency mission

Provide a detailed explanation of the justification selected above:

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Please remember to attach all supporting documentation, such as Doctor's evaluations and recommendations, or other records.

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FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT MEMORANDUM 2009-57(Vol. X.A)

To: Bureau Chief Finance Officers
Bureau Assistant Directors for Administration
Director, National Business Center

From: Daniel L. Fletcher,
Director, Office of Financial Management

Subject: First Class and Business Class Travel

The Government Accountability Office (GAO) Audit (GAO-07-1268) on Premium Class Travel estimates that 67 percent of premium class travel is not properly authorized, justified, or both. As a reminder from that same report: "With the serious fiscal challenges facing the federal government, agencies must maximize their ability to manage and safeguard valuable taxpayers' dollars.

Recognizing the high cost of premium class travel, the General Services Administration (GSA) and federal agencies have issued a series of policies providing that such travel should be taken as a last resort." Interior has worked diligently towards demonstrating that we are prudent travelers when performing official travel and that travel policy is structured in support of that goal.

First class travel accommodations can only be approved by the Assistant Secretary – Policy, Management and Budget (PMB) per 205 DM 15. If the First Class travel is being requested based on a justifiable reason under Federal Travel Regulation 301-10.123, the detailed documented justification and request for approval must be routed for concurrence by the Director, Office of Financial Management with final approval by the Assistant Secretary-PMB.

If the First Class Travel is being requested based on a medical necessity, the approval memorandum will be additionally routed through the Occupational Health Program Manager, Office of Occupational Health and Safety. The employee must provide current medical documentation from their medical provider supporting the request for first class accommodations. This certification must be updated annually for any subsequent requests. The approval memorandum must first be signed by the employee's approving official, followed by concurrence from the Director, Office of Financial Management and the Office of Occupational Health and Safety, with final approval by the Assistant Secretary-PMB.

Business class travel and other classes which are higher than coach class and described in FTR 301-10.121, will be scrutinized as seriously as First Class travel from Fiscal Year 2008 onward by GAO, GSA, and Congress and must be reported. Interior

must take steps to curtail use of Business class travel accommodations indicative of our desire to travel in the most cost advantageous manner possible. Even if a foreign travel routing requires a flight of 14 hours or more, the recommended practice is to authorize a rest stop en route or a rest period upon arrival at the duty site to avoid the increased expense of Business class accommodations.

If the Business Class travel is being requested based on a medical necessity, the employee must provide current medical documentation from their medical provider supporting the request for business class accommodations. This certification must be updated annually, unless the physical impairment is a lifelong impairment.

In the rare event Business Class accommodations must be utilized under an authorized reason per FTR 301-10.124, the Bureau or Departmental office should have delegated approval authority at the Assistant/Associate Director of Administration level. A copy of the Travel Authorization documenting the reason for approval of Business Class travel should be sent to the Office of Financial Management in support of the annual report to GSA.

If you have any questions regarding this information or if you require additional information, please contact Robert Smith (Robert_Smith @ios.doi.gov) on 202-208-5684.

Replaces: FAM 2007-019