

# ADMINISTRATIVE MANUAL

## CHAPTER 5

### BUSINESS TRAVEL

---

#### PART I – GENERAL POLICIES AND AUTHORITIES

##### A. PURPOSE

This Chapter sets forth the official travel policy of the Legal Services Corporation (LSC). Travel by any board member, employee (regular or temporary), independent contractor, or invited guest, paid for in whole or in part with LSC funds, regardless of whether payment is made directly or by reimbursement, is governed by the provisions of this Chapter.

##### B. GENERAL

Only travel which is necessary to accomplish LSC business shall be authorized and approved. An individual traveling on LSC business is expected to exercise the same care in incurring expenses that a prudent person would exercise if traveling on personal business.

The Government Services Administration Contract prohibits use of government rates for personal airline travel; see Part V (C) of this Chapter, Combining Official LSC Business Travel with Personal Travel for details.

##### C. AUTHORIZATION OF TRAVEL AND APPROVAL OF TRAVEL EXPENSES

All LSC travel must be authorized in accordance with the provisions of this Chapter. Except as otherwise provided herein, travel must be authorized in advance and in writing by the appropriate supervisor by use of the Travel Request Form. For an LSC employee, the authorizing official is the traveler's Director or Deputy Director, Vice President or the CAO. For an employee of the Office of Inspector General, the authorizing official is the Inspector General. For a Vice President and the CAO, the authorizing official is the President. For members of the Board of Directors, the authorizing official is the Corporate Secretary. For independent contractors, the authorizing official is the official who signed the contract. For invited guests, the authorizing official is the Director or Officer authorizing the invitation.

No advance authorization is required for the President's or Inspector General's travel.

Travelers will only be reimbursed for transportation, subsistence and other allowable travel expenses incurred in connection with authorized travel and after the approval of a Travel Expense Report (Expense Report) in accordance with the provisions of this Chapter. The authority to approve travel expenses is vested in the same persons who authorize travel.

Failure to secure the requisite authorization to travel, or to follow LSC's travel policy, will result in a traveler being personally liable for unauthorized and/or unapproved expenses incurred. (See Appendix IV.)

#### **D. TRAVEL WITHOUT PRIOR AUTHORIZATION AND APPROVAL**

Except in emergencies, no out-of-town travel shall occur prior to the completion and processing of the Travel Request Form (Travel Request). In emergencies, the Travel Request must be completed at the earliest date possible. If the traveler does not receive written authorization for the trip by the appropriate authorizing official, the traveler will not be reimbursed for the travel expenses and any advances and credit card charges must be reimbursed.

#### **E. RESPONSIBILITIES OF AUTHORIZING/APPROVING INDIVIDUALS**

It is the responsibility of all persons with authority to approve travel request and travel expenses to:

- Be familiar with LSC's travel policies and to comply with them;
- Make certain that funds are available in the appropriate budget prior to authorization of travel and/or approval of travel expenses;
- Ensure that a Travel Request Form has been completed and signed for each instance of authorized travel;
- Authorize only itineraries which will serve LSC's needs effectively by ensuring that the minimum number of personnel is assigned to accomplish the objectives of the travel; that the travel is limited to the shortest practical time; and that only such allowances for transportation, subsistence and other travel expenses are authorized and approved as can be justified by LSC's needs and the circumstances directly affecting the travel;
- Substitute less expensive means such as mail, e-mail, FAX, videoconferencing or teleconferencing to accomplish the purpose of the trip, when practical;
- Be aware of a traveler's intention to engage in personal travel in conjunction with LSC travel;
- Remind travelers of the need to submit Expense Reports within 30 days of completion of travel, review Expense Reports to ensure that the expenses listed are reasonable and appropriate, and take action to approve or disapprove the Expense Report within 7 business days; and

- Identify traveling board members and employees (regular or temporary) over the age of 70 and inform the Comptroller in such cases because of reduced coverage under LSC's insurance policy.

**F. TRAVELER'S RESPONSIBILITIES**

It is the traveler's responsibility to:

- Be familiar with LSC's travel policies and to comply with them;
- Inform the appropriate authorizing official of any intention to engage in personal travel in conjunction with LSC travel;
- Submit to the authorizing official a timely Travel Request Form prior to intended travel;
- Submit to the approving individual an accurate and factual Expense Report for reimbursement of travel expenses within 30 working days after returning from a trip;
- Not seek reimbursement for expenses disallowed under this Chapter; and
- Select transportation that is most advantageous to LSC, when cost and other factors are considered. Travel should be the most expeditious means of transportation practicable and commensurate with the purpose of the travel.

**G. ATTENDANCE AT NON-LSC SPONSORED EVENTS**

Attendance at non-LSC sponsored conferences, conventions or meetings by LSC representatives must be approved in advance in writing by an LSC Vice President, CAO, the Corporate Secretary for Board members, the President for Executive Team members, or LSC's Inspector General for representatives of the OIG. Failure to do so will result in disapproval of travel expenses.

**H. TRAVEL OUTSIDE THE CONTERMINOUS UNITED STATES**

Official travel by LSC board members, employees, independent contractors or guests of LSC outside the conterminous 48 states of the United States must be approved in advance in writing by the LSC President. Official travel by Office of the Inspector General employees, independent contractors or guests of the OIG outside the conterminous 48 states of the United States must be approved in advance by the Inspector General.

**I. ACCIDENTS/INJURIES OCCURRING ON TRAVEL AND TRAVEL INSURANCE**

If an LSC traveler is in an accident or is injured while on LSC travel, the traveler or an LSC staff member who has knowledge of the accident must notify the Comptroller immediately. A written description of the accident, along with a copy of the accident report (if any), must be submitted to the Comptroller's Office within 30 days of the incident. If a traveler sustains bodily injury requiring medical assistance, the Comptroller's Office must be notified by telephone as soon as practical. The Comptroller's Office will notify OLA, OHR, LSC's Officers, and LSC's insurance carrier of the accident.

LSC's Travel Accident Insurance Policy covers regular employees and LSC board members traveling on LSC business (temporary employees, independent contractors and other guests of LSC are not covered). This policy provides for an accidental death or dismemberment coverage of up to \$125,000. Regular employees and LSC board members over the age of 70 must be identified to the Comptroller's Office by the individuals responsible for authorizing travel because coverage decreases on a sliding scale for those individuals over 70 years of age. The Corporation's insurance benefits are limited to \$1,000,000 per incident and will be allocated subject to the decreasing coverage for those over 70 and equally among the remaining qualifying individuals involved.

Regular LSC employees are also covered for work-related injuries under both the Federal Employees' Compensation Act (FECA) and LSC's long-term disability insurance plan; temporary employees are covered for work-related injuries under FECA only. Certain limitations, exclusions and offsets will apply to beneficiaries eligible for both FECA and long term disability; additional information about insurance coverage is available from the Office of Human Resources. The Comptroller in consultation with the Office of Legal Affairs shall conduct periodic reviews of the Business Travel Accidental Death and Dismemberment Insurance Policy.

In addition, LSC SmartPay Travel Charge Cardholders will receive \$250,000 in Business Travel Accident Insurance coverage for accidental death and dismemberment for official trips lasting up to 30 days if the airline ticket is on the traveler's individual LSC travel card. **The insurance does not apply if the ticket is purchased on the centrally billed account from the LSC travel agency.** Coverage is effective from the time the traveler leaves home or office on a trip, or charges tickets on a common carrier, whichever is later. Cardholders are also covered for up to \$500 for checked baggage and up to \$1,250 for carry-on baggage on a common carrier in excess of carrier coverage. Additional information regarding the insurances and benefits are included in the cardholder Program Guide. Cardholders can call the toll free number 800-790-7206 for additional information.

---

## **PART II - TRAVEL FORMS AND PROCEDURES**

The two forms used for official LSC travel are the Travel Request Form (Request Form) and the Travel Expense Report (Expense Report).

### **A. TRAVEL REQUEST FORM**

Except as provided herein, prior to the commencement of travel, a Travel Request Form must be completed by the traveler or the office travel coordinator in consultation with the traveler. If, in emergencies, travel must take place prior to completion and processing of the Travel Request Form, the traveler must request that the office travel coordinator process the requisite form while the traveler is on travel status.

The Travel Request Form must be signed by the official authorized in Part I, Paragraph C of this Chapter and approved by the President as set out in that section. Except in emergencies or as otherwise approved, the completed Travel Request Form must be forwarded to the Comptroller's Office at least 48 hours before travel is to commence.

When the Comptroller's Office receives a confirmation of ticketing from LSC's travel agent, it will be matched to the completed Travel Request Form and a copy will be forwarded to the traveler or the office's travel coordinator.

An amendment to the Travel Request Form must be completed whenever a "significant" change in travel is made after tickets have been issued or travel has commenced. A "significant" change in travel is defined as a change in: the city of departure or destination; the beginning or ending date of the travel; the method of transportation; or the fare of more than 20% of the original price.

A traveler who makes changes while on travel status should immediately contact the supervisor and/or the office travel coordinator to request that an amendment to the Travel Request Form be completed and processed. If a change needs to be made after hours or on weekends, the traveler may call LSC's travel agency using the toll free number, provided the ticket was purchased through LSC's travel agent. If the ticket was purchased through an internet site or directly with the airline, the traveler must contact the airline to make changes. The standard Travel Request Form must be used and marked "amendment." The completed document must be promptly forwarded to the Comptroller's Office.

### **B. TRAVEL EXPENSE REPORT**

Each traveler is required to submit an Expense Report for each instance of travel detailing expenses properly chargeable to LSC and each time an airline ticket is purchased. It is recommended that travelers keep a record of expenditures, noting each item of expense and the date it was incurred, to be used in preparing the Expense Report. The Expense Report is due within 30 working days after returning from a trip

When the Comptroller's Office reviews an Expense Report and finds errors, it will be returned to the traveler or the traveler's approving official for correction. The corrected Expense Report must be returned within 10 days for processing. Board Members' Expense Reports will be returned to the Corporate Secretary. The Corporate Secretary or his/her designee is authorized to make minor corrections to the Board member's Expense Report, including but not limited to inserting direct bill expenses when they are omitted.

Travel advances received via check or credit card must be reported on the Expense Report for the same trip for which the money was requested. Unused travel advances must be returned at the same time the Expense Report is submitted to the Comptroller's Office. And, if credit card advances and charges exceed reimbursable travel expenses, the amount due must be submitted with the Expense Report.

**C. DELINQUENT EXPENSE REPORTS:**

1. Comptroller's Office staff will notify a traveler when an Expense Report is more than 30 days past due.
  2. If, after 45 days the Expense Report has not been submitted, the traveler and his/her director will be notified that an Expense Report is past due.
  3. If the Expense Report is not submitted within 60 days, the traveler's corporate credit cards will be suspended for 90 days and the traveler will not be eligible to purchase airline tickets using LSC's travel agency.
  4. During this 90-day period, if travel is required for the employee to perform their responsibilities, his/her personal funds will need to be used for travel expenses and any reimbursements will be held to satisfy past direct billed advances, until such time that the past due Expense Reports have been submitted and accepted.
  5. If an Expense Report extends to 90 days past due, the travel credit card will be suspended for an additional 6 months.
-

---

## **PART III – SUBSISTENCE AND OTHER EXPENSES, EXCLUDING TRANSPORTATION EXPENSES**

### **A. SUBSISTENCE AND OTHER ALLOWABLE EXPENSES DEFINED**

“Subsistence” refers to expenses for overnight lodging and meals.

“Other Allowable Travel Expenses” are defined as those ordinary and necessary expenses, other than transportation, overnight lodging and meals, which a traveler incurs and which are reimbursable in accordance with the provisions of this Chapter.

### **B. TRAVEL STATUS**

The cost of approved subsistence and other allowable travel expenses is reimbursable from the start of official LSC travel regardless of whether travel begins from the traveler’s office or residence. Travel status terminates upon return to the traveler’s office or residence, whichever occurs first.

### **C. AUTHORIZED LODGING**

Except for lodging paid directly by LSC, reimbursement for out-of-town travel requiring overnight lodging is limited to the GSA rate for a single room, excluding tax. Each traveler must provide a copy of the original hotel bill with all charges shown and a zero balance with the Expense Report.

For assistance in identifying hotels that offer government rates, travelers may visit <http://www.usfa.fema.gov/hotel/index.htm> or <http://www.fedtravel.com/>.

The Comptroller is authorized to waive the per diem lodging rate, as set by GSA guidelines, when circumstances indicate that additional allowances are necessary and appropriate to cover expenses for the conduct of LSC business. A waiver of the maximum lodging rate must be requested in advance of travel. The Comptroller will return a copy of the approved request or an explanation of the denial. After the fact approvals may be granted if an explanation acceptable to the Comptroller is presented. A waiver of the lodging per diem and approval of actual expense is warranted under the following conditions:

1. Lodging is procured at a prearranged place such as a hotel where a meeting, conference or training session is held (e.g., the Equal Justice Conference and the NLADA Annual Conference), in which case the office director will make the determination of whether the value of staying at the conference hotel warrants the waiver;

2. Costs have escalated because of special events (e.g., natural disasters); lodging within prescribed allowances cannot be obtained nearby; and costs to commute to/from the nearby location consume most or all of the savings achieved from occupying less expensive lodging;
3. Because of mission requirements as explained in the waiver request;
4. The maximum amount that may be reimbursed for lodging under this provision is limited to 300 percent (rounded to the next higher dollar) of the applicable maximum per diem rate;
5. A waiver request must show comparable information from at least three hotels in the area and must demonstrate efforts to obtain the government rate from the hotels in question in addition to research published rates.

For OIG staff, the Inspector General is the authorizing authority.

**D. AUTHORIZED MEAL REIMBURSEMENTS**

Except as provided, reimbursement for meals is based on the GSA Per Diem guidelines for standard meal allowances. However, if an individual is on travel status for part of a day, either on the day of departure or day of return to the traveler's home or office, the standard meal allowance is pro-rated as follows:

<b>M&amp;IE ALLOWANCE</b>		
When travel is:		Your allowance is:
Less than 12 hours*		Reimbursement up to \$30 upon presentation of receipts
More than 12 hours less than 24 hours*		75 percent of the applicable M&IE
24 hours or more on	The day of departure	75 percent of the applicable M&IE
	Full days of travel	100 percent of the applicable M&IE
	The last day of travel	75 percent of the applicable M&IE

\*No meal reimbursement will be provided within the Washington, DC Metro Area, except by approval of the Chief Administrative Officer.

Anytime a meal is furnished to a traveler by a host or hotel, it is the traveler's responsibility to reduce the daily per diem following the table below, which is based on the GSA reductions and which is updated annually by GSA:

<b>M&amp;IE</b>	<b>\$39</b>	<b>\$44</b>	<b>\$49</b>	<b>\$54</b>	<b>\$59</b>	<b>\$64</b>
Breakfast.....	7	8	9	10	11	12
Lunch.....	11	12	13	15	16	18
Dinner.....	18	21	24	26	29	31
Incidentals.....	3	3	3	3	3	3

There is no meal allowance when all three meals are provided; however, the incidentals for each day will be reimbursed.

When traveling between cities while on official travel, the per diem is paid based on where the traveler spends the night. Daily itemization of meal expenses is not required when the requested reimbursement is based on the per diem.

Per Diem rates change October 1 each year and are seasonal in some areas. Refer to <http://www.gsa.gov> under Travel Resources to check Per Diem Rates for the current per diem and for an up-to-date breakdown of the meal offset when meals are provided by a host; refer to [www.gsa.gov/mie](http://www.gsa.gov/mie).

The Comptroller is authorized to waive the maximum meal rate when circumstances indicate that additional allowances are necessary and appropriate for the conduct of LSC business. A waiver of the maximum meal rate must be requested in advance of travel. The Comptroller will return a copy of the approved request or an explanation of the denial. Failure to obtain the requisite approval will result in the traveler being reimbursed at the established per diem rate. When authorization is approved to have meals reimbursed on an actual basis for one day or multiple days while on a trip, itemization of meal expenses and receipts are required. For the Office of the Inspector General (OIG) staff, the Inspector General is the authorizing authority for waivers.

**E. OTHER ALLOWABLE TRAVEL EXPENSES**

1. Lodging Taxes (applies only to overnight travel).

LSC is generally exempt from taxation when the SmartPay credit card is used. Travelers should request a tax-free rate when reservations are made. When the tax free request is not honored, lodging taxes paid by the traveler are reimbursable as a miscellaneous travel expense. However, when there is evidence that taxes are paid because one does not use their SmartPay credit card, the taxes will not be reimbursed.

2. Baggage Fees

Baggage fees are reimbursable based on the requirements of the carrier. Information on carrier baggage fees is available on the GSA Baggage Allowance Fact Sheet provided at

[http://www.gsa.gov/Portal/gsa/ep/contentView.do?contentType=GSA\\_BASIC&contentId=19374&noc=T](http://www.gsa.gov/Portal/gsa/ep/contentView.do?contentType=GSA_BASIC&contentId=19374&noc=T)

3. Personal Telephone Calls Per Day

The number of personal calls is unlimited as long as the daily amount does not exceed \$5 or \$15 when traveling outside the conterminous United States. Evidence of long distance calls must be provided through either a hotel bill or a home telephone bill before reimbursement is approved. Long distance calls from pay phones using coins will not be reimbursed.

4. Business Telephone Calls

When using an LSC calling card, each LSC business call must be identified as such on the Expense Report. If using a cell phone, this is not required.

5. Hotel Internet Services

Business use of the hotel internet services at the prevailing rate are reimbursable and evidence of this cost should be on the hotel folio.

6. Tips

- a. Taxis. LSC reimburses travelers for actual tips paid to taxi drivers up to 15 percent of the base fare.
- b. Hotel Courtesy Drivers. Tips are limited to the amount that is reasonable under the circumstances.
- c. Meals. Included in meal allowance.
- d. Help with conference/meeting materials. Tips for porters and bellmen who assist with handling large volumes of materials for meetings are allowed.

7. Dry Cleaning, Laundry and Pressing

Reasonable and necessary costs incurred for dry cleaning, laundry and pressing are reimbursed when travel exceeds 4 nights or according to necessity, subject to approval by the traveler's authorizing official.

8. Appropriate Miscellaneous Expenses

- a. LSC reimburses travelers for miscellaneous expenses which are appropriate and reasonable. The traveler's authorizing official, in

consultation with the Comptroller, determines whether such expenses are reimbursable.

- b. Eligible clients, as defined in 45 CFR 1611, who are specifically invited to participate in LSC-sponsored activities may be reimbursed for child care expenses as set out in this Chapter at Part VIII, D.

#### **F. NON-REIMBURSABLE TRAVEL EXPENSES**

If a traveler stays with friends or relatives in lieu of commercial lodging, payment for such lodging is not a reimbursable expense. (Meal expenses in such circumstances will be reimbursed in accordance with the standard meal allowance policy contained in this Chapter).

While separately identified tips to Wait Staff, Airport Porters, Hotel Bellhops, and Maids are non-reimbursable travel expenses if a traveler is carrying conference materials, they will be reimbursed for tips of handling these materials.

**Travelers will not be reimbursed for travel expenses to and from restaurants except for an approved business meal. (See Chapter 4 B1.d)**

A Personal Accident Insurance (PAI) policy purchased by a traveler is not reimbursable. Travelers who purchase a PAI policy must treat this as a personal expense and should not include it on the Expense Report.

When use of a rental car is approved, insurance coverage is provided through the GSA contracts with National Car Rental and Budget. Some coverage is also provided through the SmartPay travel charge card, when used. Accordingly, a traveler will not be reimbursed for costs related to the election of the collision damage waiver when renting a car. **NOTE: All collisions and damage to rental cars must be promptly reported to the Comptroller. (See Appendix III)**

LSC does not reimburse travelers for the cost of alcoholic beverages. When reimbursement for meals is being made on an actual expense basis, the traveler must deduct any charges for alcoholic beverages included on a meal tab when submitting the Expense Report.

---

## **PART IV – MODES OF TRANSPORTATION AND TRANSPORTATION EXPENSES**

### **A. SELECTION OF MODE OF TRANSPORTATION**

Travel is to be completed by the means of transportation most beneficial to LSC and the traveler considering cost, time and other pertinent factors. Travel by common carrier is presumed to be the most advantageous method of transportation and must be used when reasonably available. In selecting a particular mode of transportation, consideration is given to the transportation cost using the contract carriers under the GSA contract, subsistence expenses, overtime and lost work time. All costs must be reasonable and necessary to the conduct of LSC business.

The selection of a certain mode of transportation or a specific airline or flight is based on the benefits to LSC and not on the traveler's personal preference or minor inconvenience. When a traveler, for his/her own convenience, travels by an indirect route or interrupts travel by direct route, the traveler bears any extra expense. Reimbursement will be made only for such charges as would have been incurred by the most direct and cost efficient route.

### **B. TRAVEL OUTSIDE THE CONTERMINOUS UNITED STATES**

Travel on LSC business outside the conterminous United States is required to be on United States flag ships and/or air carriers. Foreign ships or air carriers may be used only in conformance with the Fly America Act and only with the prior approval of the Comptroller. The completed Travel Request Form must include a detailed explanation of why foreign ships or air carriers are to be used. (See Federal Travel Regulations Section 301-10.131 et seq.)

### **C. LOCAL TRAVEL**

#### **1. Defined**

Local travel is defined as travel within the city/area where an individual is working either temporarily or permanently and where overnight lodging is not required.

#### **2. Cost of Transportation**

The cost of buses, streetcars, subways and taxicabs incurred for local LSC business travel will be reimbursed. Original receipts are required for any taxicab fares over \$25. If a personal automobile is used, reimbursement for mileage will be available at the established rate, as set forth in Appendix II.

#### **D. COMMUTING TO AND FROM AIRPORTS**

Travelers are requested to use public transportation when practical in commuting to and from airports. Courtesy transportation service furnished by hotels/motels should be used to the maximum extent possible as a first source of transportation between a common carrier terminal and the place of lodging. Reimbursement will be allowed for tips when courtesy transportation service is used. (See Part III, Section E. (4) for policy on tips.) Reimbursement will be allowed for the use of airport shuttles and taxicab fares plus tips when courtesy transportation is not available or practical. Travelers should limit the use of taxicabs where less expensive transportation is available.

If a traveler chooses to drive his/her automobile to a terminal and park, reimbursement for mileage at the current rates as set forth in Appendix II, toll charges and parking (receipts are required, and the most economical parking lot should be used) will be allowed. Reimbursement for mileage, toll charges and short-term parking is also allowed if any privately-owned vehicle is used to take a traveler to or from the terminal. **The total reimbursement is limited to the cost of a taxi to the terminal plus tip whether the trip starts from home or office and returns to home or office.** The Comptroller is authorized to waive this limit when there are extenuating circumstances,

#### **E. FIRST-CLASS ACCOMMODATIONS**

Only the LSC President and Inspector General have the authority to approve first-class or business-class travel accommodations. Written approval to use such accommodations must be obtained in advance and must accompany the Expense Report. Approval of such accommodations will be based upon the following:

1. No coach class accommodations are reasonably available; “reasonably available” means available on a carrier that is scheduled to leave within 24 hours of your proposed departure time, or scheduled to arrive within 24 hours of your proposed arrival time; or
2. When use of first or business class is necessary to accommodate a disability or other special need. A disability must be substantiated in writing by a competent medical authority; or
3. When exceptional security circumstances require first-class travel. Exceptional security circumstances include when use of other than first-class accommodations would endanger your life or Government property; or
4. Regularly scheduled flights between origin/destination points (including connecting points) provide only first-class and business-class accommodations and you certify such on your request; or
5. No space is available in coach-class accommodations in time to accomplish the mission, which is urgent and cannot be postponed; or

6. Coach-class accommodations on an authorized/approved foreign air carrier do not provide adequate sanitation or health standards; or
7. The use results in an overall cost savings to the Government by avoiding additional subsistence costs, overtime, or lost productive time while awaiting coach-class accommodations; or
8. Your transportation costs are paid in full through LSC acceptance of payment from a non-LSC source; or
9. Where the origin and/or destination are outside of the continental United States and the scheduled flight time, including stopovers and change of planes, is in excess of 14 hours. (In this instance you will not be eligible for a rest stop en route or a rest period upon arrival at your destination.)

**NOTE:** You may upgrade to first-class at your personal expense, including through redemption of frequent flyer benefits, but this must be documented with your Expense Report.

**F. CONTRACT AIR CARRIERS**

Except as provided herein, travelers are required to use contract air carriers for LSC air travel between cities designated "city-pairs" by the GSA unless a less expensive fare has been found by the traveler (see Section G). Government rate tickets on contract air carriers are available through the LSC-approved travel agency. For contract carrier rates, refer to <http://www.fedtravel.com/>. The Comptroller is authorized under the conditions set forth below to grant exceptions to the rule requiring the use of contract air carriers. A traveler requesting an exception to this rule must indicate accordingly on the Travel Request Form and provide an explanation of why a non-contract carrier must be used. (In emergencies, where the requisite authorization could not be obtained on the Travel Request Form and an amended Travel Request Form was not processed pursuant to Part II of this chapter, the traveler must include a justification on the Expense Report and forward a photocopy of the Expense Report to the Comptroller.) Generally, the conditions for exceptions are:

- Space is not available in time to accomplish LSC business; or
- Flight schedule would require additional overnight lodging; or
- Flight schedule would require travel during other than LSC's normal working hours; or
- Flight schedules do not meet LSC business requirements; or
- Flight origin and termination points result in excessive local travel time and costs.

## **G. INTERNET FARES**

Prior to booking a government rate ticket, travelers must first inquire about internet or other air fares for the travel anticipated. If a fare is identified that is at least \$150 less than the government fare, the traveler should book the less expensive fare. Internet travel may be booked by the traveler to the traveler's LSC credit card or may be booked by the LSC-approved travel agency.

If there is a **high** probability of change in the traveler's itinerary, and the government fare is within \$150 of the internet fare, the traveler may book the ticket with the government fare.

## **H. CHANGING TICKETS THAT HAVE BEEN ISSUED**

If the traveler has not yet departed and there is a need to modify a ticket that has already been issued, it is the traveler's responsibility to contact the LSC travel agency at once to modify the ticket. If the ticket was booked on-line, the traveler must contact the airline directly to make the needed changes.

If a trip is **cancelled**, the traveler is responsible for contacting the travel agency or airline at once, so they can take action to minimize any cancellation expenses.

If a traveler is already on a trip and needs to make a change -- for instance, desiring to return earlier than scheduled on the same routing -- the best process to achieve this is to go to the airport and tell them you are holding space on a later flight but would like to know if you can get on an earlier flight. It is important before doing this to call the airline and ask about seat availability on the earlier flight. At the airport, you can tell the agent the new flight number on which you wish to re-book, and that you have checked availability and have been told space is available. It is **NOT** advisable to try to change your ticket over the phone. That is an invitation to get the administrative services charge invoked plus additional charges for the new ticket.

Though it is unofficial with most major carriers, they will book you on an earlier flight when space allows and will often waive all fees to change the ticket. Most major carriers have an official policy of levying an administrative service charge to change a non-refundable ticket.

Travelers may make changes without prior approval to tickets that incur no additional costs, or for which additional costs are \$100 or less. If the cost is more than \$100, approval must be obtained from the official who authorized the travel.

If for any reason, a ticket or portion of a ticket will not be used, the traveler should notify the airline as soon as possible for credit. The traveler should account for the full amount of the ticket on the expense report with a notation that a credit exists and for which airline. The traveler is responsible for using the credit within the allotted time. If the credit is not used because LSC business does not require additional travel, then a memorandum will need to be provided documenting this fact or the traveler will be responsible for returning the funds to LSC.

## **I. USE OF AMTRAK**

Amtrak Regional coach service should be utilized when it is advantageous to LSC. Tickets at the Government discount rate must be purchased before the traveler boards the train. If the regular fare is paid, the traveler can claim reimbursement only for the amount of the Government discount fare on the Expense Report. The use of the lowest class of service on any AMTRAK Acela or Regional train service is deemed advantageous to LSC and no special approval is needed.

## **J. CAR RENTALS**

### **1. Approval**

Car rentals must be authorized by the appropriate authorizing official and noted on the Travel Request Form that is sent to the Comptroller's Office prior to the commencement of travel.

### **2. Procedures**

Arrangements for car rentals shall be made by the traveler or the office's travel coordinator directly with the LSC travel agency or directly with one of the rental car companies. Under the Federal Travel Program, LSC's travel agency will reserve cars with a commercial car rental agency having a contract with GSA. If no contract automobile is available, the lowest cost commercial company may be used.

### **3. Rental Car Accounts**

Rental car charge cards are available to LSC Board Members and employees from National Car Rental and Budget. See Part VI of this Chapter for more information on the LSC rental car company charge card program.

### **4. Collision Damage Waiver (CDW)**

Insurance coverage for rental car use is provided through the GSA contract with each car rental company. Some coverage is also provided through the SmartPay travel charge card, where used. Accordingly, travelers should not accept or request a CDW. Travelers will **NOT** be reimbursed for costs related to the election of the CDW.

### **5. Traffic Citations**

A traveler operating a rental vehicle is personally liable for all traffic citations received for violations of traffic and parking ordinances.

6. Returning Rental Cars

If the rental car company requires the vehicle to be returned with a full tank of gas, it is the traveler's responsibility to do so. If failure to refill the gas tank results in LSC incurring a surcharge that is substantially greater than the cost of the gasoline to fill the tank, the traveler will be held responsible for the additional surcharge. If the rental car company provides the driver with the option to prepay for gasoline, the traveler may elect this option, if in the exercise of good judgment, that traveler believes that he or she will be returning the car with a substantially empty tank of gas. If a traveler elects a prepay option in circumstances in which it is unlikely that he/she would return the car with a substantially empty gas tank, the traveler may be held personally liable for and may not be reimbursed for some or all of the prepay charge.

7. Use of Cell Phones

LSC travelers are not permitted to use cell phones while operating vehicles on LSC business.

8. More than One Traveler

A traveler must list additional LSC travelers accompanying the traveler in the car on the Expense Report.

**K. USE OF PERSONAL AUTOMOBILE FOR LSC TRAVEL**

1. Local Travel

A personal automobile may be used for local travel (See C.1. above for definition of "local travel") if approved in advance by the authorizing official. If proper approval is received, reimbursement at the established rate for operating expenses with additional reimbursement for parking fees, tolls, etc. will be made.

2. Long Distance Travel (In Lieu of Common Carrier)

A personal automobile may be used for long distance travel in lieu of common carrier transportation. However, mileage reimbursement, subsistence, and other expenses will be limited to the cost of using a common carrier. In addition, any travel time via personal automobile during work hours which substantially exceeds normal travel time via common carrier may, at the discretion of the Director, Vice President or Inspector General for the OIG, be charged as annual leave.

**L. USE OF CAR SERVICES**

The use of car services is restricted to those occasions when the Chief Administrative Officer determines that such services are necessary for the efficient conduct of LSC business. The traveler must provide, in advance, a request for the use of the car service with a justification as to how the use of the service is in the best interest of LSC. The request must include a cost comparison of the car service with other available forms of transportation, such as taxis and common carriers. To the extent that the justification for the use of the service includes the ability of the traveler to work while traveling, the nature of the LSC work being performed must be stated. To the extent that, without the service, an additional employee would have to drive the traveler, the time of that employee may be included in the cost comparison. A request for the use of a car service must be submitted to the Comptroller for review of the cost comparisons then forwarded to the Chief Administrative Officer for approval or rejection.

There are occasions when a car service is equal to or less than a taxi fare. When this occurs, no additional analysis needed.

**M. USE OF CONVEYANCES NOT ADDRESSED ABOVE**

Use of conveyances other than those addressed above, e.g. private airplanes, must be approved in advance by the Comptroller.

---

---

## **PART V - SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION**

### **A. PAYMENTS FROM AIRLINES FOR OVER-BOOKING**

#### 1. Penalty Payments

Any penalty paid by an airline for failure to provide confirmed reserved space (denial of boarding) for travel scheduled during normal working hours belongs to LSC. The traveler shall remit the penalty payment to the Comptroller's Office. If boarding is denied for a flight scheduled other than during LSC's normal working hours, the traveler may keep the penalty paid.

#### 2. Voluntarily Vacating a Reserved Seat

A traveler may only voluntarily give up a seat if it will not adversely affect the conduct of LSC business. A traveler who voluntarily gives up a seat on an overbooked flight may keep the compensation paid by the airline, provided that the traveler shall pay any additional travel cost resulting from giving up the seat.

### **B. UNUSED OR DOWNGRADED TRANSPORTATION SERVICES AND ACCOMMODATIONS**

#### 1. Unused Transportation Services and Accommodations

When a traveler knows that guaranteed accommodations will not be used, the traveler must ensure that the reservations have been cancelled. Failure to cancel reservations will result in the traveler being personally liable for any expenses incurred.

#### 2. Downgraded Transportation Services and Accommodations

If the transportation furnished is different from or of a lesser value than that authorized on the ticket, or a trip is terminated short of the destination specified, LSC is due a refund. The traveler shall report these facts to the Comptroller's Office promptly to prevent losses to LSC. Failure to follow this procedure may subject the traveler to personal liability for any resulting loss.

#### 3. Adjustments in Cost and Refunds

Travelers are not authorized to receive funds, credits or any negotiable documents for unfurnished services or unused tickets (or portions thereof). In the case of common carrier transportation, the traveler should obtain a receipt, ticket refund application, or other written acknowledgment of a fare adjustment and request that the carrier send the refund, credit or negotiable document to the LSC Comptroller. The traveler shall deliver to the Comptroller's Office all unused tickets (including portions thereof), coupons,

refund receipts or applications, notices of fare adjustments, etc. with a written explanation of the circumstances. The traveler shall also make an appropriate notation on the Expense Report. The traveler may be personally liable for the cost of unused tickets not submitted to the Comptroller's Office within 45 days of the original return date.

C. **COMBINING OFFICIAL LSC BUSINESS TRAVEL WITH PERSONAL TRAVEL**

1. **General Policy**

Under the Federal Travel Policy, Government rates can only be utilized for official business travel; this rule is strictly enforced. The Federal Travel Policy permits LSC to distinguish between the combination of personal and business travel at the same location and at different locations. (This distinction is discussed in 2., 3. and 4. below.)

2. **Personal and Business Travel at Different Locations**

If personal and business travel is combined, the traveler is personally responsible for any additional transportation cost over that which LSC would pay for business travel alone.

If a contract "city-pair" (government) ticket is needed for the trip, the travel agency will ticket the traveler for the business travel and charge the LSC account. The agency will then reissue the ticket for the business and personal travel, and the traveler will pay the additional charges as discussed in 5 below.

An example of how a traveler will be charged when combining personal and business travel is as follows:

Example: Terry is authorized to attend a conference scheduled for a Tuesday in Los Angeles and decides to spend the weekend preceding the conference in Chicago. Terry will have to pay the difference in airfare between departing from Chicago, instead of Washington, D.C. This difference could be substantial since the city of authorized departure is Washington, D.C. and not Chicago, and the traveler could not utilize the contract "city pair" (Government) rate between Chicago and Los Angeles. Consequently, Terry would have to pay the difference between the contract fare from Washington, D.C.-Los Angeles-Washington, D.C. and Terry's own itinerary. The fact that Chicago is a routine stopover for this trip is irrelevant since Terry is extending the stopover.

Payment of the additional transportation expense shall be made in compliance with section 5 below. All other personal travel expenses (subsistence, rental cars, etc.) must be paid by the traveler directly to the provider of the service. None of these additional travel expenses shall be charged to LSC on the Expense Report.

3. Personal and Business Travel at the Same Location

If a traveler arrives at the location where business is to be conducted prior to the time required to fulfill LSC responsibilities, or remains at the location after business has been concluded, the traveler will not incur any personal transportation expense provided that the cost of the transportation is the same as if the traveler had arrived or departed at the time required to conduct LSC business. The traveler is personally responsible for all expenses (subsistence, rental cars, etc.), which would not have been incurred, if the travel had been strictly business. These additional expenses must be paid directly to the provider of the service. If any additional transportation expense is incurred, it must be paid in compliance with sections 4 and 5 below.

4. Payment of Personal Travel Expenses When Using the Internet

Because the LSC credit card is restricted to official business, any travel arrangements that are made by the traveler through the internet, or through a personal travel agent that combines business and personal travel, the airline ticket must be paid with a personal credit card. A separate accounting will then need to be detailed and must accompany the traveler's Expense Report documenting the cost for the business portion of the trip. LSC's cost will be limited to the relevant internet cost obtained by other travelers on the same trip.

5. Payment of Personal Travel Expenses

As a result of the strict Federal Travel Policy, all travelers combining LSC business travel with personal travel will have to charge the personal travel to a personal credit card at the time the travel reservations are made.

---

---

## PART VI –LSC TRAVEL CHARGE CARD PROGRAMS

### A. SMARTPAY TRAVEL CHARGE CARD PROGRAM

LSC is a participant in the U. S. Government Travel Charge Card Program ("Program"), SmartPay. Under this Program, a GSA SmartPay travel charge card ("Card") is available to any board member or regular employee traveling on LSC business. The general rules governing this Program are set forth below. Individuals who join the Program will receive additional card information from the bank issuing the Card.

1. Important facts about the U.S. Government SmartPay Travel Charge Card Program.
  - a. There is no annual fee to join the Program and no personal credit check is conducted of the individual requesting the Card.
  - b. The Card is issued directly in the individual's own name and is valid for a two-year period from date of issue and renewed automatically.
  - c. The Card may only be used for the Cardholder's individual LSC business-related travel. Use of the card for non-business-related purposes is prohibited, violates the GSA contract and could subject the user to suspension or termination from employment. Misuse of the card will be reported to the OIG, when necessary.
  - d. When purchasing airline or Amtrak tickets or renting cars with the Card, the traveler receives such insurance as is normally provided as a benefit of the Card program.
2. Eligibility to receive a Card
  - a. Board Members and LSC regular employees are eligible to receive a Card.
  - b. To receive a Card, the Corporate Secretary (on behalf of Board Members) or the employee's Director, Vice President or the CAO must submit a request in writing (including email) to the Comptroller or the Accounting Manager that a Card is to be provided. The Board Member or employee must then provide to the Comptroller's Office his/her full name, mailing address, and social security number. This information will be provided to the bank issuing the Card via a secure website for the account to be established and a Card issued.

3. Use of the Card

- a. The Card may be used to obtain travel-related cash advances at Automatic Teller Machines (ATM) of the bank issuing the card or other ATMs on the same bank network. Charges for cash advances obtained at other banks, other network ATMs or private ATM machines will **NOT** be reimbursed.
- b. The Card may only be used for expenses incurred in conjunction with LSC business travel. There is a \$6,000 preset charge limit. This limit may be increased or decreased based on business necessity.
- c. Travelers should use the Card to the maximum extent possible to charge LSC business-related travel expenses. Travelers are encouraged to charge such expenses as lodging, meals and rental cars. If necessary, common carrier tickets may be charged to the traveler's Card.
- d. Personal and family member use of the Card is forbidden. However, common or shared services or facilities (rooms, meals, etc.) with family members or business associates may be charged to the Card if the Cardholder is on LSC business. Only the LSC business portion of the charge expense may be claimed on the Expense Report.

4. Billing practices

- a. Cardholders will receive monthly statements from the bank issuing the Card for any month in which there has been activity on the account. Statements will be mailed to the Cardholder's attention at LSC. The Comptroller's Office will also receive a control statement with all charges for the month.
- b. The current month's balance is paid directly by the Corporation to the bank. Cardholders must use the current travel Expense Report (See Appendix IX) to capture their credit card expenses, where it is netted against their total expenses. Cardholders should continue to review their monthly statements for billing errors, etc. If they agree with the statement, it should be signed and forwarded to the Comptroller's Office.
- c. If a Cardholder disputes a charge, it is that Cardholder's responsibility to make every attempt to resolve the problem with the merchant. For unresolved disputes or billing errors, the Cardholder may contact the bank issuing the Card's GSA SmartPay unit or the Comptroller's Office to initiate the dispute process.
- d. Except as otherwise provided herein, Cardholders are personally liable for all charges incurred regardless of whether the charges exceed the amount properly reimbursable under this Chapter.

5. Security of the Card

- a. Cardholders are responsible for exercising the same care for the security of the Card as they would for a personal charge card.
- b. The Card may not be loaned to others.

6. Lost or stolen Card

- a. If a Card is lost or stolen, the Cardholder shall immediately notify the bank issuing the Card by calling the number provided at the time the Card was issued. The Cardholder shall notify the Comptroller's Office at the same time. The Comptroller's Office will notify the OIG that the card has been stolen.
- b. The Cardholder is not liable for any charges not made by the traveler if the Card is lost or stolen or the Card account number is fraudulently used by a third party without the knowledge or permission of the Cardholder, provided the bank issuing the Card and the Comptroller's Office are promptly notified.
- c. If the Card is lost or stolen, a replacement Card will be issued promptly to the holder.

7. Return of the Card

When a Cardholder's association with LSC terminates, the Cardholder must return the Card to the Comptroller's Office.

8. Cardholder's rights

Under the terms of the GSA SmartPay Travel Charge Card program, the bank issuing the Card may not:

- a. Sell or otherwise provide Cardholder names or addresses to other commercial interests;
- b. Charge membership, interest or late payment fees;
- c. Include commercial advertisements or other forms of solicitation with monthly billing statements; or
- d. Issue or cancel a Card without the concurrence of the LSC Comptroller.

## **B. CAR RENTAL CHARGE CARDS**

Arrangements have been made with National and Budget Car Rental companies for the issuance of car rental charge cards to LSC employees. All requests for the issuance of these charge cards to employees who are required to travel extensively on LSC business shall be directed to the Comptroller's Office by the employee's Director, Vice President, or the CAO (or Inspector General for employees of the OIG).

The Comptroller's Office shall maintain a log of all car rental charge cards acquired, which reflects the name of the car rental company, card number, date of issuance, to whom issued, and date of cancellation, when appropriate. Invoices for car rental charge card charges shall be reviewed and approved by the Comptroller for payment.

Lost or stolen rental charge cards must be reported without delay to the Comptroller's Office so they can be cancelled promptly. The OIG will be notified by Comptroller's Office.

LSC employee travelers authorized for the trip, under the GSA program, can use the car during the rental and they have GSA insurance coverage. **National and Budget Car Rental agencies have advised us that if LSC consultants need to use the car while on the trip, they must be present with their driver's license when the car is rented; there will be no additional driver's charge.** If there is an accident or the car is damaged in any way, the traveler turns in the car with the police report and the rental car company takes care of repairs.

If an employee uses their SmartPay credit card to pay for a car rental, they do not have the GSA insurance coverage. The employee has the coverage associated with the credit card and that information was provided to each traveler in a pamphlet when their credit card was issued. (A copy is appended to this Chapter.) **All additional drivers who will be using the rental car during the trip must be present when the car is rented and the required driver's fee paid.** If there is an accident during the rental, the employee who rented the car will be responsible for any liability, which includes getting any required repair estimates and dealing with getting the car repaired at their cost. If there is an unauthorized driver involved with the accident, the employee who rented the car will be responsible to the rental agency for any liability.

Upon termination of employment, car rental charge cards must be returned to the Comptroller's Office.

---

## **PART VII - TRAVEL ADVANCES**

### **A. POLICY**

Travel advances will be held to a minimum and only allowed when an advance is clearly necessary. When an employee has a GSA SmartPay travel charge card, no travel advance will be given unless approved by the Comptroller or IG for the staff of the OIG.

### **B. AUTHORIZATION**

LSC officials designated to approve travel may also authorize advances to travelers entitled to subsistence, mileage allowances and other reimbursable items necessary for the conduct of LSC business. Such items include, but are not limited to, lodging and rental cars.

### **C. REQUEST FOR ADVANCE**

The Travel Request Form must be approved before a travel advance can be requested. A travel advance request, approved by the authorizing Director, must be submitted by memorandum to the Comptroller's Office with a copy of the Travel Request Form seven (7) full working days prior to the travel. The reason for the advance and a calculation of how the requested amount was determined should be included.

### **D. AMOUNT OF ADVANCE**

Travelers who do not possess a GSA SmartPay travel charge card may request a travel advance for an amount of \$100 or more, not to exceed \$1,000. In no case shall the maximum amount of an advance exceed the estimated reimbursable expenses to be incurred on the trip for which the advance is required.

### **E. LIQUIDATION OF ADVANCE**

An outstanding travel advance shall be liquidated by one of the following methods:

- Offset or reduction in the amount of the reimbursement claimed on the Expense Report for the same trip that the advance was given;
- Direct refund by the traveler to LSC; or
- Offset against the traveler's salary or other reimbursement or monies, if the traveler has not voluntarily accounted for a travel advance within 45 days of the date on which the advance was issued.

**F. CANCELLATION OR INDEFINITE POSTPONEMENT OF TRAVEL**

Upon notification of cancellation or indefinite postponement of travel, an individual who received a travel advance must immediately return it to the Comptroller's Office.

---

---

## **PART VIII - EVENTS SPONSORED BY LSC**

### **A. TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS**

Travel arrangements for LSC-sponsored events shall be made by the sponsoring office. It is the responsibility of the sponsoring office's travel coordinator to secure the most economical lodging, local transportation and group meal rates. When possible, the sponsoring Office's travel coordinator should arrange for direct billing to LSC.

### **B. COMPLIANCE WITH LSC TRAVEL POLICY**

Invited guests for whom travel expenses are being paid are required to comply with LSC's travel policy and to follow the established procedures for the preparation and processing of all LSC travel forms. Invited guests are generally not permitted to rent cars at LSC's expense. In addition, costs for meals provided to attendees will be deducted from the daily subsistence allowance, according to the schedule in Part III. Due to budgetary restraints, LSC may limit the reimbursement to LSC-sponsored events by a written notification to the participants.

### **C. RESPONSIBILITIES OF SPONSORING OFFICE'S TRAVEL COORDINATOR TO THE COMPTROLLER'S OFFICE**

Within five (5) working days after the conclusion of the event, the sponsoring office's travel coordinator must provide the Comptroller's Office with:

- Details of the arrangements made with the facility where the event was held;
- A list of the attendees broken down by participants, staff (regular and temporary), independent contractors, board members, and other authorized attendees;
- The cost of meals provided to attendees; and
- Details of the arrangements made for overnight accommodations.

### **D. CHILD CARE EXPENSES OF ELIGIBLE CLIENTS INVITED TO PARTICIPATE IN LSC-SPONSORED ACTIVITIES**

Eligible clients of LSC grant recipients, as defined in 45 CFR 1611, who are specifically invited to participate in LSC-sponsored activities may be reimbursed for child care expenses under the following conditions:

- The client must be entitled to and receive no compensation other than travel and subsistence expenses;

- The client must have no other adult or child in the household who is able to provide child care and/or supervision;
- The client must be away from home for a period of time exceeding normal daily absences (e.g. overnight); and
- The child/children requiring care must be 13 years of age or younger or an older child with special needs and have child care customarily provided during the absence of parent(s).

Reimbursement for child care expenses is made on an actual cost basis up to a maximum of \$150.00 per twenty-four hour day. Expense claims must be accompanied by a signed receipt from the provider of the child care services, which:

- acknowledges receipt of the fees;
- indicates the relationship of the provider to the LSC traveler; and
- shows the number of days and time that care was provided.

Expenses for child care should be claimed by the client on an LSC Expense Report. The Expense Report must be approved by the appropriate officer or LSC's Inspector General, who authorized the attendance before it is forwarded to the Comptroller's Office for payment.