



August 17, 2016

United States
Department of
Agriculture

Office of the Chief
Financial Officer

1400
Independence
Avenue, SW
Stop 9050

Washington, DC
20250

TO: Travel Policy Users Group

FROM: Peggy V. Javery
Director of Fiscal Policy Division

SUBJECT: Mixing Official Travel with Personal Travel

The Office of the Chief Financial Officer has been requested to clarify and provide further guidance regarding the Department's policy on mixing official travel with personal travel. As stated in the Agriculture Travel Regulation, "approving officials should not authorize travel that mixes official business and personal activity when there is an appearance that the focus of the trip falls under the latter category."

When mixing official travel with personal travel, USDA employees must book their official travel through the Department's electronic travel system (ETS) or Travel Management Center (TMC); booking personal travel within the Department's ETS is prohibited. Once the official ticket is issued, the employee may contact the TMC, or the applicable airline, to have it re-issued to accommodate the personal travel portion of their trip. The Government-issued travel charge card (GovCC) is for official travel expenses only; the traveler must pay for any additional cost using their personal credit card or funds. If the traveler receives a refund for exchanging the official ticket, the refund should be directed to the original form of payment (i.e. the GovCC or Central Billed Account). USDA travelers are prohibited from using the General Services Administration contract fares (City Pair Program fares) for personal travel. Government per diem is authorized only for official travel days; travelers and approving officials must ensure per diem is deducted for personal days taken in conjunction with official travel.

Additionally, when official travel and personal travel are combined, the traveler may not use a vehicle rented under the U.S. Government Car Rental Agreement for the personal portion of the trip; benefits offered under this agreement are restricted to 'Official Travel' only. Travelers should request the rental car vendor issue two separate rental contracts; one for the official travel period, the other for the personal travel period. If the rental car vendor cannot/will not provide two separate contracts, the traveler must return the rental car after the official travel period and enter a new contract for the personal travel period. Travelers are liable for any damages when using the rental car for other than official trips or while on personal travel.

If you have any questions, contact Marie Butler, Travel Policy Team Lead, at 202-690-0290 or Marie.Butler@cfo.usda.gov.