

VETS Manual Series, Volume IV
Budget, Travel, Purchase Card, and Property
Management

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4.1 Overview

Note: New Core Financial Management System (NCFMS)

The New Core Financial Management System (NCFMS) has been initiated to modernize the Department of Labor's (DOL) financial management system.

NCFMS will replace the Department of Labor Accounting and Related Systems (DOLAR\$) with an approved Financial Management Line of Business Shared Service Provider (FMLoB SSP) using a commercial off-the-shelf (COTS) software package, Oracle Federal Financials. The COTS solution has been certified by the Financial Systems Integration Office (FSIO) and selection of the FMLoB SSP has followed OMB guidance.

The ability of DOLAR\$ to continue to meet both Federal and DOL requirements has been determined to be deficient and a performance gap exists between federal financial management requirements and DOLAR\$ capabilities.

Its core financial management functions and data are distributed and/or duplicated across multiple systems which forces staff to process batches of financial information manually. Maintaining sound financial management practices using DOLAR\$ has become challenging with the growing emphasis for increased accountability, standardized processes, and reporting transparency.

NCFMS will allow DOL to improve efficiency and effectiveness by reducing: 1) duplicate and manual processes; 2) system response time with real-time transaction and information capability; 3) total cost of ownership while increasing adoption of new technologies. This investment will impact up to 800 end users across the Department. The COTS solution contains a functioning financial system with integrated business functions to ensure compliance with federal requirements.

Our intent in this volume is to provide pertinent guidance to help regional and state staff carry out the processes of formulating and executing the annual "performance budget" within their regions and states, to manage travel resources, and to procure and manage government property.

The Federal budget cycle has three distinct, inter-related phases. The first phase, which culminates in the transmittal of the President's budget proposals to the Congress, is the budget formulation phase. In the next phase, appropriations, the Congress enacts laws that together constitute the enacted budget. Following the appropriations phase, executive agencies carry out their missions in the budget execution phase. An overview of the Department of Labor budget process which governs VETS' overall budget can be found in [DLMS 6](#).

VETS derives its annual operations budget through the Department of Labor's Performance Budget process. In the first phase, the agency projects and justifies to the Department and thereafter to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) the funding needed to attain the agency's program and operational goals and carry out required administrative responsibilities. That phase is followed by the Congressional appropriations process, in which the Congress determines through a series of hearings and question/answer exchanges whether to accept or modify the President's budget request. The last phase is the "pass back" to the agency by the OMB and Department of the fiscal year operating budget.

The VETS Performance Budget consists of five budget activities:

1. Jobs for Veterans State Grants – Provides funding for Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program (DVOP) specialists and Local Veterans' Employment Representative (LVER) positions, for Transition Assistance Program (TAP) workshop facilitation, and other costs of the State Workforce Agencies related to services for veterans.
2. Homeless Veterans' Reintegration Program (HVRP) Grants – Provides funding for competitively awarded grants to homeless program operators such as public agencies, for-profit/commercial entities, non-profit organizations, and community-based organizations. The program provides veterans with the employment and training services they need to re-enter the labor force such as resume preparation, career counseling, training, job development and job placement.
3. National Veterans' Training Institute (NVTI) Contract Funds – Provides funding for competency-based training to the various service provider staff that assist our Nation's veterans, Reservists and guard members.
4. Veterans' Workforce Investment Program (VWIP) Grants – Provides funding for competitively awarded grants to program operators to provide training, re-training and employment opportunities for veterans to meet the needs of employers for qualified workers in high demand industries.
5. Federal Management (also known as the Salaries and Expenses budget) – Federal Management budget activity provides VETS with funding for staff and other resources necessary to administer these programs that are delivered either by VETS staff themselves, or contractor personnel: the Transition Assistance Program, the Federal Contractor Program, the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA) and Veterans Preference compliance programs. This part of the budget also enables VETS to engage in special initiatives, such as the Recovery and Employment Assistance Lifelines (REALifelines) program.

The contents of this volume focus on the Federal Management (Salaries and Expenses) budget activity.

The Agency Budget Officer (the Director of the VETS Office of Administration, Management, and Budget), upon receipt from the Department of the agency's authorized operating budget, issues budget execution planning guidance to the Regional Administrators for Veterans' Employment and Training (RAVETs). Current

OAMB budget guidance can be found in [DM 02-08](#). Each VETS region projects, by object class (e.g., personnel compensation, travel, equipment) its anticipated operating costs and the funding needed to meet region/state performance and outcome targets, in line with VETS' performance and outcome goals established in the VETS Strategic Plan.

4.2 Financial Management at the Field Level

Within VETS the functions of planning, directing, monitoring, organizing, and controlling the monetary resources of the organization devolve from the Agency Budget Officer through the Regional Administrators to the Directors for Veterans' Employment and Training (DVETs).

The VETS financial management system includes procedures to assure the effective and efficient management of funds, reasonable controls, and proper utilization of property and other assets. Agency managers at the national and field levels are expected to implement control activities to ensure that resources are used only for authorized programmatic and administrative activities and purposes.

The five basic financial management functions you must accomplish are:

Planning

Basic management function involving formulation of one or more detailed plans to achieve optimum balance of needs or demands with the available resources. The planning process (1) identifies the goals or objectives to be achieved, (2) formulates strategies to achieve them, (3) arranges or creates the means required, and (4) implements, directs, and monitors all steps in their proper sequence.

Examples: The VETS Performance Budget integrates VETS' performance goals with the budget and identifies key strategies to achieve acceptable results.

The **VETS Operating Plan** provides a framework for the Agency's budgeting and planning activities and serves as a road map for VETS managers to set priorities to maximize performance.

Organizing

Arranging several elements into a purposeful sequential or spatial (or both) order or structure.

Example: Accounting products (spreadsheets) are developed within regions that provide the means to monitor and validate expenditures within all object classes on a daily-weekly-monthly-quarterly-annual basis. Actual expenditures are cross walked to program activities to ensure that funding is being applied to appropriate functions, in appropriate amounts, to help ensure that program goals are met.

Note: For those regions that use the ATP spreadsheets/system, the cross walked expenditures are displayed in column V of the Regional Rollup spreadsheet.

Directing

Building an effective work climate and creating opportunity for motivation, supervising, scheduling, and disciplining.

Example: Annual directives that guide VETS staff through the myriad activities to satisfactorily project and execute an annual budget plan. This guidance is in the form of Director's Memoranda, RAVET Memoranda, Annual Travel Plan guidance, et cetera.

Monitoring

Supervising activities in progress to ensure they are on-course and on-schedule in meeting the objectives and performance targets.

Example: Regional and state managers and supervisors closely monitor the execution of annual operating budgets and make adjustments to planned spending as needed throughout the year to ensure program goals and changing priorities are met.

Controlling

Establishing benchmarks or standards, comparing actual performance against them, and taking corrective action, as required.

Example: Performance evaluations for regional and state managers/supervisors with an annual budget formulation and execution element built in. VETS typically requires Salaries and Expenses budget management to attain a 98% utilization level without exceeding the budget allocation in order to attain a Satisfactory rating.

4.3 Projecting Budget Requirements and Budget Execution at the Field Level

The satisfactory projection and execution of the VETS performance budget at the field level is reliant on the abilities of the Regional Office staff and State Directors for Veterans' Employment and Training (DVETs) to:

- develop and refine strategies for goal accomplishment,
- forecast needs and allocate resources effectively, and
- improve management decision-making.

Inherent in those processes are requirements to:

- fully understand VETS' performance outcome goals;
- know the Department's rules and procedures regarding financial management;
- be aware of the [Anti-Deficiency Act](#) and understand its implications in the budget process;

- understand how budget and performance are intertwined;
- project and execute an annual budget at their level; and
- understand and fulfill the responsibilities of managing, monitoring and reporting budget spending, activities, and results.

4.3.1 Object Classes and Budget Management

The operating budget at the national, regional, and state levels is projected and executed by object classes (OC), which include:

- 111000 and 121000 – personnel compensation and benefits;
- 210000 – travel and transportation of persons;
- 220000 – travel and transportation of things;
- 231000 – rent, communications, and utilities
- 240000 – printing and reproduction
- 253000 – other services (includes operation and maintenance of equipment, training course tuition, and registration fees)
- 260000 – supplies and materials
- 310000 – equipment

The annual request for an allocated funding level by the six regions and their inclusive states is a detailed estimate of all the costs required to complete annual mission requirements.

Each month of the fiscal year, RAVETs are required to maintain regional accounting records to track expenditures in each object class and to reconcile the VETS' locally developed travel spreadsheets with the LE-071 User Travel Summary Report in the E2Travel System. DVETs may be held accountable for similar recordkeeping by their respective RAVETs. Generally, DVETs are held accountable only for travel fund management, as most other procurement and fund management authorizations are limited to the Regional Office level.

4.3.2 Development of the Annual Operating Budget Projections Within the Regions

Personnel Compensation and Benefits

The projections for these object classes (111000 and 121000) are normally calculated by the Regional budget management staff. Each RAVET decides whether DVETs are or are not involved in this process.

Travel

Official travel (OC 210000) is the area of the operating budget where DVETs and RAVETs have the most flexibility and responsibility for detailed planning. Travel

cost projections are to be based on what is needed to attain program performance goals, and for staff supervision and training activities.

The line items in Figures 1 thru 3 are not all encompassing, but rather a sampling of the types of travel-related activity that the agency expects will be included in annual travel budget plans.

Figure 1

TRANSITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (TAP) (Domestic/National Guard-Reserve)
Days Facilitated by VETS Staff – if any
TAP Monitoring/Evaluation Visits (minimum of one evaluation per year)
TAP Technical Assistance Visits - when requested by TAP Coordinator
Mini TAP/Employment Workshops for NG-RES - Conducted by VETS Staff
JOBS FOR VETERANS STATE GRANTS - DVOP/LVER
State Workforce Agency (SWA) Service Delivery Point (SDP) On-Site Validation Visits
SWA Technical Assistance/Training Visits
State Post Award Conference/New Grant Technical Assistance Meeting(s)
DVOP/LVER Conferences/Meetings
Federal staff Coordination Meetings with: (One Stop System Related)
-State Officials
-County Officials
-Private Entities
REALIFELINES (RLL)
RLL IPA Marketing Activities
RLL DVET/IPA On-Site Monitoring Visits
RLL SWA Technical Assistance/Training Visits Pertinent to REALifelines
RLL Job Fair Planning Meetings/Attendance
VETERANS WORKFORCE INVESTMENT PROGRAM (VWIP)
On-Site Monitoring Review
Technical Assistance Visits
HOMELESS VETERANS REINTEGRATION PROGRAM (HVRP)
On-Site Monitoring Review
Technical Assistance Visits
Stand Down (s)/Stand Down Activities/Meetings/Attendance
VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION AND EMPLOYMENT (VR&E)
DVET/ RA/DRA Scheduled/Unscheduled Meetings with VA Managers/VR&E Staff
DVET/ RA/DRA Meetings with State Managers - VR&E Related
VR&E Demonstration Activity within the Region
UNIFORMED SERVICES EMPLOYMENT AND REEMPLOYMENT RIGHTS ACT (USERRA)

USERRA Case Processing/w Travel Required
USERRA Outreach (Technical Assistance)
Mobilization-Demobilization Briefings for NG-RES - VETS Staff
Senior Investigator Technical Assistance to other Federal Staff
VETERANS PREFERENCE (VP)
VP Case Processing/w Travel Required
VP Outreach
FEDERAL CONTRACTOR PROGRAM (FCP)
Technical Assistance Activities/Visits
FCP Fact finding (on-site visits)

In addition to the line items listed above, there are also program support activities that you may need to perform throughout the FY. Some of the more common are:

Figure 2

OTHER PROGRAMMATIC RELATED ACTIVITIES
Hire Vets First Presentations
Presentations to Veterans Service Organizations
Inter-Agency Liaison Meetings
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) - Department of Defense (DOD) - Office of Personnel Management (OPM) - Employer Support for the Guard and Reserve (ESGR) - Employment and Training Administration (ETA) - Etc.
Regional Staff Internal Oversight Visit To VETS' Staff at the State Level
VETS' Staff Oversight Visit to Grantee(s)
Joint ETA - VETS' Monitoring Visit
PROGRAMMATIC SUPPORT/ADMINISTRATIVE TRAVEL FOR:
Region Sponsored Conference (include Multi-Regional)
Job Fair Planning Meetings/Attendance (other than RLL)

Formal training is important not only to the staff for career progression, but also to ensure staff members are trained to do the job for which they were hired. Figure 3 below illustrates common types of training for which travel must be planned:

Figure 3

STAFF TRAINING
Programmatic Training @ the National Veterans Training Institute:
USERRA Basic
USERRA Investigator
VP/Discrimination

VR&E Training
TAP Facilitation
Off-Site NVTI Training at State Locations Within Region
Training (other than NVTI):
Computer
Leadership/Management
Internal Mentoring
Personal Career Enhancement/Development

Travel costs to be computed into the overall training projections include:

- transportation (common carrier or rental vehicle conveyance)
- mileage allowance for privately owned vehicle
- tolls
- parking
- lodging
- meals and incidental expenses

Supplies

Some states – but not all – provide some common supplies, e.g. paper, pens, folders, paper clips, staples, tape, et cetera to the DVET office per 20 CFR.

(See http://www.dol.gov/dol/cfr/Title_20/Chapter_IX.htm)

Otherwise, supplies are procured per regional office guidance.

Although formal inventory documents for office supplies are not required to be maintained, it is important that supplies are stored and organized so stock can easily be inventoried. Invoices from preceding years can be helpful in projecting the types and quantities of supplies needed. Projected costs typically are estimated using the vendor on-line catalog(s) approved for use in the region.

The regional budget manager typically will provide a spreadsheet with guidance for projecting supply needs for the upcoming FY.

Equipment.

DVETs must determine what equipment they will need for the following FY.

Typically, RAVETs have authority to procure small types of equipment such as calculators and filing cabinets. Procurements of computers and communications devices are subject to higher level review.

The RAVET and budget management staff will review all DVET submissions and:

- accept as submitted - or require modification along with justification for re-submission;
- roll up all the state requests when satisfied with submissions;

- compile the regional office projections, and
- forward to VETS' OAMB for final approval.

4.4 Budget Closeout at the End of a Fiscal Year (FY)

Although DVETs are not the principal players in this activity they may be impacted by how it is accomplished. Closeout activities usually begin in late July or early August of each fiscal year, so VETS operations may be affected.

The DOL Office of the Chief Financial Officer (OCFO) normally provides closeout guidance during the month of July, which filters down through the VETS and OASAM channels. The example provided below is from the Chicago OASAM Regional Finance Office (RFO), and lists typical steps that budget managers follow to satisfactorily close out the operating budget for a FY:

DL-1-280

This form is used to process a reimbursement between agencies. The deadline for submission to RFO is 9/8/2010.

Blanket Purchase Agreement (BPA)

All orders placed against the BPA require a call record which must be submitted to the RFO by 9/17/2008 in order to be obligated before yearend cutoff.

Cash Awards

Cash awards for PP18 must have final approval in PeoplePower by 9/12/2010.

FY 2010 cash awards that are processed after the 9/12/2010 cutoff must be in PeoplePower by 9/26/2010. You must send FM a Miscellaneous Obligation Record (MOR) to cover the award amount by 9/17/2010.

Travel

Travel during September can create problems if the vouchers are not completed satisfactorily and submitted as soon as possible after the travel is completed.

Efforts should be made to clean up the individual E2 records, closing out remaining open vouchers.

Consider submitting an MOR to cover local travel expenses that may be incurred in September but not claimed by the traveler until early October. This is particularly crucial if you are in an agency that does a lot of local travel or if you have very tight travel budgets. As you probably know, E2 does not create an obligation in the NCFMS System for local travel until a claim is submitted. Sending an MOR to your servicing OASAM will ensure that funds are available to pay local travel claims when they are submitted. In fact, if your TDY travelers tend to create skeleton records in

E2,¹ you may want to submit a MOR to cover the additional costs that will be claimed on TDY vouchers. Use "1NOVEND" as the EIN for these MORs.

Any travel taken the week of September 29th that begins in the current FY and ends in the next FY must be prorated between these fiscal years. In other words, if a traveler begins her trip on 9/30 and returns on 10/1, half of the trip will need to be charged to the current FY code and the other half to the next FY code. To do this, the traveler will need to create a Specific Trip in E2 as this is the only feasible way to split a trip across two fiscal year accounts.² The target date for Travel MORs to Chicago is 9/19/2008.

Citibank Purchase Card

A MOR should be submitted covering FY 2010 expenses that have been ordered and will not be charged on the September 28, 2010 statement.

9/19/2010 – Target date for Citibank MOR to regional finance office(RFO)

Unliquidated Obligations

Reports will be provided by RFO around 8/20/10.

9/5/2008³ – Confirm Report of Undelivered Orders Over \$2,500 and Unliquidated Obligations (with no change) Report with RFO. All new obligations, deobligations and edits (coding sheets) must be in by this date.

Recurring Services

Any recurring monthly bills which you do not expect to receive before the end of September must be covered by an adequate obligation of funds. Provide a list of Document Numbers with estimated recurring monthly charges. The due date for accruals of estimated recurring charges is 9/12/2008.

Invoices, Generally

Through the end of the FY, **please route invoices to Finance on a flow basis rather than in batches.** If the invoice represents a final action, clearly mark the invoice as "FINAL" so that Finance knows to de-obligate any remaining funds.

Your regional OCFO may provide somewhat different guidance, but most regions will be the same and will have similar target dates.

¹ "Skeleton records" are those trips for which the traveler uses E2/Get There to book air reservations, say, but don't use E2/Get There for hotels and/or rental cars and fail to put placeholder figures in the authorization phase. A \$400 authorization for a week-long trip to DC (which is likely to cost \$1000 or more) is an example of a skeleton record.

² Recall that Open Authorizations are defined by a fiscal year. Any trips extending beyond 9/30 cannot be established using existing Open Auths.

³ Stated date assumes that the reports will be available to you on or around 8/20/08.

Although most of the actions listed above will be accomplished at the regional office level it is extremely important that DVETs and other VETS staff comply with the following: It bears repeating:

Travelers should try to be as accurate as possible when creating TDY trips in E2 during September. They should include close estimates for hotels, rental cars, and even miscellaneous expenses when creating trips in E2 to establish reasonably accurate obligations in DOLAR\$. Efforts should be made to clean up the individual E2 records, closing out remaining open vouchers.

4.5 Purchase Card Use

The objectives of the DOL purchase card program are to:

- Reduce the time necessary to obtain small-dollar (\$3,000 or less) items;
- Reduce the cost of processing purchase/delivery orders, etc.;
- Replace or provide an alternative to the use of the Standard Form 44 (SF-44), "Purchase Order-Invoice-Voucher"; and
- Replace the imprest fund operations with bank convenience checks.

Procedures for Use of the Government Purchase Card for Micro-Purchases are outlined at:

<http://www.labornet.dol.gov/workplaceresources/financialproperty/purchasecard/index.htm> and Purchase Card User Handbook at:

<http://labornet.dol.gov/workplaceresources/financialproperty/purchasecard/dol-pc-handbook.htm>

Additional information for users and administrators can be found at:

Office of Procurement Services Bulletin: D1 – Use of Purchase Card (P-Card) for Micro-Purchases

<http://labornet.dol.gov/workplaceresources/financialproperty/procurement/eps/Procurement/OPS-Bulletin-D1.doc>

4.5.1 Prohibited Micro-Purchases

Purchase cards make it easy to purchase goods and services. Therefore, it carries with it the very real opportunity for fraud, waste and abuse. To ensure that you don't place yourself in jeopardy, please read and familiarize yourself with the restrictions listed below.

Caution - Specific transactions that **cannot** be made using the Purchase Card include the following:

1. Travel and travel-related services:
 - Tickets (airline, boat, bus, or train);
 - Lodging, meals, or drinks;
 - Rental or lease of motor vehicles, including supplies, equipment, and accessories

- Gasoline, oil, equipment, accessories for vehicles (Leased or GSA), generators, trailers, boats, etc.; or
 - Cash advances.
2. Advisory and assistance services.
 3. Recurring services over \$3,000 (for the fiscal year) shall be acquired through another procurement mechanism and the purchase card should not be used for procurement purposes.
 4. Non-recurring services (one-time transaction) over \$3,000 shall be acquired through another procurement mechanism and the purchase card should not be used for procurement purposes.
 5. Subscriptions, licenses, equipment, maintenance, and non-recurring telephone line services provided via the Federal Telecommunications System Contract (FTS2001).
 6. Rental or lease of space at hotels, convention centers, universities, etc. (meeting/training room facilities and equipment) by cardholders other than those individuals specifically granted authority by the DOL Purchase Card Program Coordinator.
 7. Repair of GSA, Department or commercially leased vehicles.
 8. Clothing and footwear other than personal protective equipment, approved safety equipment, and other devices necessary to protect government employees except by cardholders other than those individuals specifically granted authority by the DOL Purchase Card Program Coordinator.
 9. Supplies, furniture, and equipment available through mandatory sources of supply and services (including items contained on the Procurement List published by the Committee for Purchase from People Who Are Blind or Severely Disabled). Contracting Officers are permitted to use the purchase card as a method of payment for purchases made via GSA schedules where the merchant permits payment via purchase cards.
 10. Fragmented micro-purchases, which refers to the splitting of agency requirements which in the aggregate exceed \$3,000 merely to use the purchase card. Fragmentation also includes splitting purchases through the use of several smaller transactions in order to avoid the micro-purchase limit, regardless of whether the same or different merchants are used. Split transactions are prohibited and are a violation of federal procurement regulations. Requirements that fall into this category will be forwarded to the Contracting Officer for competition. (FAR 13.003(3)(c)).
 11. Copying, printing, duplicating, and reproduction services.
 12. Any other items that require specific approval(s) by officials above the level of the cardholder.

Should you have questions and/or doubts about any other pending transactions with the purchase card please contact your purchase card administrator in the regional office before you put yourself and the agency at risk.

Preventing Waste, Fraud, and Abuse in Use of Government Purchase Card:
<http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d08333.pdf>

4.5.2 Making Your Purchase

You can use the Purchase Card similarly to a credit card. At a store, take your items to the sales clerk and identify the purchase as an OFFICIAL GOVERNMENT PURCHASE. The purchase is therefore totally exempt from federal taxes and, in most cases, also exempt from state or local taxes. However, be sure you bring a copy of the [State Tax Exemption letter](#) from the [GSA SmartPay® website](#). When making an over-the-counter purchase: The sales clerk should itemize your purchases.

1. Sales taxes should not be charged on your order
2. You should sign the receipt
3. Get a copy of the itemized receipt
4. Upon return to your office with your purchases, place the receipt in a safe place until your monthly invoice statement arrives, or follow the guidance provided by the regional budget manager.

You also can order right from your desk. To place your order by phone or fax:

1. Contact the merchant and identify yourself as a government employee who is making a purchase with a government purchase charge card
2. Indicate that the purchase will be tax exempt
3. Note the total purchase price after going over the price of individual items
4. Be careful in giving out your purchase charge card number
5. Identify the items to be purchased and reach agreement as to the price of each item (including shipping charges)
6. Note the purchase in your purchase log
7. Give your name and address for shipping, making sure your name appears on the mailing label and making sure that an itemized shipping document or invoice is included in the shipment
8. When the item arrives, make sure you have what you ordered, at the price you agreed to pay
9. If there is any discrepancy, call the merchant immediately
10. Keep your records until receipt of your monthly invoice statement, or follow the guidance provided by the regional budget manager.

Before placing an order online, familiarize yourself with the on-line service's general information for placing orders. If the procedure for placing orders is acceptable, register your purchase charge card and the expiration date with the on-line service. To place an on-line order:

1. Identify the merchant you wish to use and bring up the merchant's ordering screen
2. Make sure the site is a secure website before transmitting any information
3. Enter the requested data
4. Make it clear that you are a government employee
5. Use your business address only, and indicate your purchase is tax exempt
6. Make sure the merchant will include an itemized shipping document or invoice with the shipment
7. Record the purchase in your purchase log
8. When the items arrive, make sure you are satisfied with the purchase. If not, notify the merchant immediately
9. Keep your records until you receive your monthly invoice statement, or follow the guidance provided by the regional budget manager.

4.6 Travel Management

An overarching rule all VETS' staff must be aware of and comply with when using Federal funds for official business travel is the "**Prudent Person Rule**":

An employee traveling on official business is expected to exercise the same care in incurring expenses that a prudent person would exercise if traveling on personal business. Excess costs, circuitous routes, delays, or luxury accommodations and services unnecessary or unjustified in the performance of official business are not acceptable under this standard. Employees will be responsible for excess costs and any additional expenses incurred for personal preference or convenience.
FTR 301-2.3 and FTR 301-2.4

4.6.1 Travel Regulations

The Code of Federal Regulations (FTR), 41 CFR Chapters 300 – 304, is available at <http://www.gsa.gov/Portal/gsa/ep/channelView.do?pageTypeId=8199&channelId=-14863>. Other travel-related guidance is at <http://www.gsa.gov/Portal/gsa/ep/home.do?tabId=11>

The Department of Labor Manual Series, Volume VII, ([DLMS-7](#)) complies with the Government-wide Federal Travel Regulations (FTR). When required by the FTR, the Department of Labor (DOL) has supplemented the FTR regulations. DOL has also added text in order to clarify regulations, as interpreted by the Government Accounting Office (GAO) or the Government Services Administration (GSA) interpretative rulings or, in a few cases, DOL-specific instructions.

DOL has compiled a guide to routine travel duty assignments that is in an easy question and answer format. This manual has not been updated to reflect current mileage rates or information about E2 travel. However it still remains an excellent

resource for clarification on travel issues, such as “what to do if you are bumped off a flight”.

<http://labornet.dol.gov/workplaceresources/financialproperty/procurement/travel/eGov/reports/TDY-Guide.pdf>

4.6.2 E*2 Travel

In late 2006, DOL migrated to an electronic travel service as part of the OMB e-government initiative. This automated travel service allows travelers to electronically generate and submit travel authorizations for approval and book online reservations through the Department’s Travel Management Center (operated under contract by the Carlson Wagonlit company). Obligations and disbursements are electronically managed to allow for a more efficient and streamlined approach to travel management operations. Information pertinent to travelers, arrangers, authorizers and approvers is available at:

<http://labornet.dol.gov/workplaceresources/financialproperty/procurement/travel/eGov/index.htm>

4.6.3 Travel Authorizations

All VETS staff must have an approved travel authorization before commencing travel. Each travel authorization should include the dates of travel, purpose of travel, trip location, and mode of transportation. The travel authorization also includes estimated costs for lodging, meals, transportation and incidentals to assist in the budget process. There are two types of travel authorizations.

Blanket. A blanket authorization is usually prepared for a specific fiscal year of travel. Blanket authorizations are usually provided to RAVETs, DVETs, and other VETS staff who travel frequently during the year. These authorizations allow staff to travel throughout a designated geographical area without further authorization for specific, individual trips.

Specific. A specific authorization is prepared for someone who travels infrequently or to assign the cost of the trip to another accounting code. Specific travel authorizations are (as the name implies) specific to one trip and are usually for one day to one week in duration.

4.6.4 Travel Vouchers

A travel voucher is the mechanism for obtaining reimbursement for your government travel. E2 simplifies the reimbursement process by automatically transferring all estimated expenses from the travel authorization to the voucher. At this point, one can accept, delete, edit or add any expenses that were unexpected or differ from the estimate. All receipts that total more than \$75.00 must be attached to the voucher.

4.6.5 Local travel

Local travel reimbursement is a separate voucher process within E2. *Departmental policy (DLMS-7, 1-7.5) defines local travel to be within a 40 mile radius of the employees' residence and within 25 miles of the employee's temporary duty station (location/building where they work). So any official travel destination within these mileage radii is considered local travel. Local travel is not based on whether or not there is an overnight stay- the mileage radii is the only consideration.*

Local travel does not require a trip authorization. Vouchers for local travel are generally prepared every 30-60 days and may include numerous entries for mileage to and from the temporary duty site.

4.6.6 Agency Fees

E2/Carlson Wagonlit charges the following fees (November 2010) for E2 usage:

- Agent-Assisted Reservations for Air (including hotel and car rental - **\$31.49**)
- Agent-Assisted Reservations for Hotel and/or Car Rental only - **\$12.00**
- Online Reservations for Air (including hotel and car rental - **\$6.49**)
- Online Reservations for Hotel and/or Car Rental only - **\$4.50**
- Voucher Transaction Fee - **\$14.00**
- Local Travel Claims Transaction Fee - **\$6.00**

Note: E2 Fees may change throughout the year. To determine the most current please go to:

<http://labornet.dol.gov/workplaceresources/financialproperty/procurement/travel/eGov/index.htm>

4.6.7 Travel Card Use

If your job requires that you travel more than twice a year, you must obtain a Government contractor-issued charge card, and use the card to charge all of your authorized official travel expenses. The Travel and Transportation Reform Act of 1998 requires use of your charge card to purchase transportation, lodging, food, and other travel related services. Travel card use information for users is available at:

<http://labornet.dol.gov/workplaceresources/financialproperty/procurement/travel/eGov/reports/Citibank-Travel-Charge-Card-Guide.pdf>

4.7 Property Management

The provisions of this chapter apply to all DOL agencies and offices nation-wide. The DOL Property Management Chapter can be found at:
<http://www.dol.gov/oasam/foia/DLMS-Chapters/dlms2-0506.htm>

In VETS field offices, property management is primarily a responsibility of the Regional Administrator. The RAVET may be the Property Management Officer (PMO) or may have delegated that authority and assigned the PMO responsibilities described in the aforementioned DOL guidelines, including those referred to below, to someone else in the Region.

In general, supervisors are responsible for:

Establishing administrative measures for ensuring the proper use, care and safeguards of all Government property within their span of control. A supervisor is held liable for loss, damage, or destruction of such property when there is conclusive evidence that the loss or damage resulted from negligence, carelessness, or dereliction of duty on his or her part.

Formal inventories of certain property are required in VETS, and are maintained in the Regional Offices.

In general, employees are responsible for:

ensuring the proper use and care of assigned Government property by notifying the Property Management Officer (PMO) immediately when receiving property shipments at a departmental location. In no case shall such property be used for other than official purposes, except in emergencies or by legal authorization. An employee is liable and may be required to repay the Government when his or her negligence, carelessness, or dereliction of duty contributes to the loss or damage of Government property as determined by the Survey Board.

Reporting any incident involving the loss or theft of accountable property to the Agency Property Officer (APO) and Federal Protective Service or local police where Federal Protective Services does not have a presence in the area. VETS staff whose duty stations are not in Federal buildings should follow instructions from the Region's PMO regarding the reporting of such incidents.

Returning all assigned property to the supervisor when permanently leaving the accountable area. All property removed from an accountable area on a temporary basis must be accompanied by a Property Pass (Optional Form 7) and a Custody Receipt (DL Form 73) for temporary (long term) basis from the PMO and/or designee.

END