Table of Contents

A. Logging on to FedTraveler 1

FedTraveler Website

New FedTraveler Account

B. Travel Research 1

Explore transportation and lodging options without booking

C. Create a Travel Authorization Document 1

Funding: Standard Travel vs. Non-VA Sponsored Travel

D. Travel Authorization Tasks 2

Purpose of Your Trip

Destination

Per Diem (Standard Rates, Actual Necessary 150%)

Return Home

Other Expenses (Non-Per Diem, Donated Funds)

Exclude Personal Days

Book Reservations (Flight / Hotel Options)

Travel Details Review (150% Per Diem Adjustments)

Complete Authorization / Financial Summary

Non-Fed Sponsor Details

Excluded Meals

E. Documentation 11

PDF File Attachments (VA Form 0893, 150% Per Diem Approval, Foreign Travel Docs)

F. Expense Reports 12

Edit expenses, submit receipts, and reconcile funding

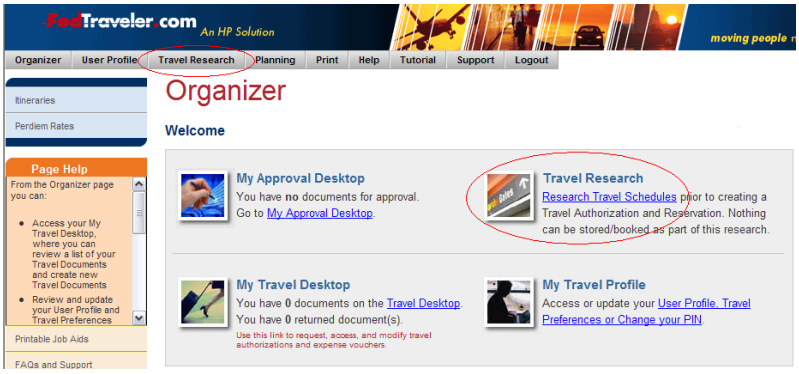
Appendix A. Required Receipts 14

A. Log on to your FedTraveler Account:

1. Open the FedTraveler website: https://www.fedtraveler.com/ and log on to your account.
2. If you do not have an account, contact the VA Fiscal office at (402) 995-4573 and request one. Note: Non-VA personnel may request an "Invitational Travel" account if travel has been determined to be in the VA's interest.

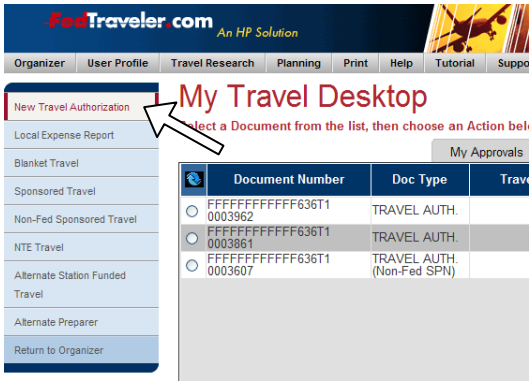
B. Travel research:

1. Before actually creating a "Travel Authorization" document, it may be advantageous to explore travel options through the "Look No Book" feature, also known as "Travel Research".

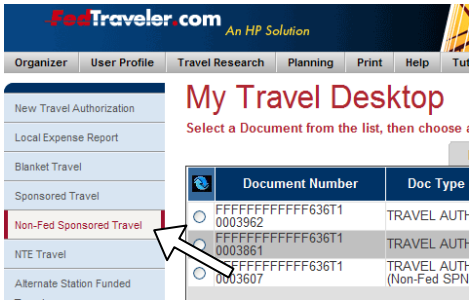


C. Create a Travel Authorization Document:

1. Click on "My Travel Desktop"
2. Funding:
   a. If travel is 100% VA funded, select "**New Travel Authorization**" from the left navigation pane:



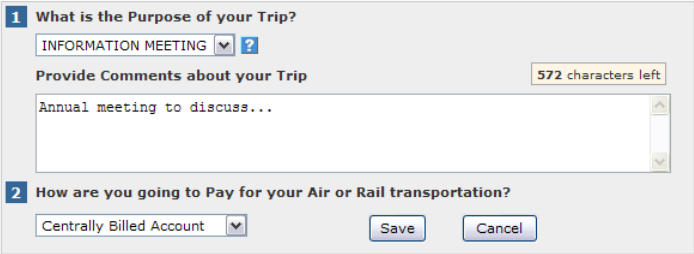
   b. If travel is paid for, in whole or in part, from non-VA funds (in-kind, or reimbursable to VA), select "**Non-Fed Sponsored Travel**" from the left navigation pane:



D. Travel Authorization Tasks:

1. Step 1, from the drop down list, select what best describes the purpose of your trip. Also provide a more detailed description about your travel (e.g. name and/or purpose of the event) in the Comments field.

2. Step 2, Select "Centrally Billed Account" from the drop down list (Never use Individually-billed Account).



3. Step 3, click the Start Your Trip button.

   a. Provide the "Leaving From" and "Going To" information. The "Time" field will help the "Booking Engine" search for the possible flight options that meet your preferrences.

   b. "Travel Mode" is typically limited to "Contract Flight", "Government Car", or "Privately Owned Vehicle". If choosing POV over an available government car, the traveler will be limited to a reduced mileage rate. POV travelers must also have with them an SF-91 (Operator's Report of Motor Vehicle Accident).

   c. Per Diem :

      No Per Diem: Non-Fed Sponsored Travel. Use this if a donor is covering meals & lodging and you expect to be reimbursed directly from the donor.

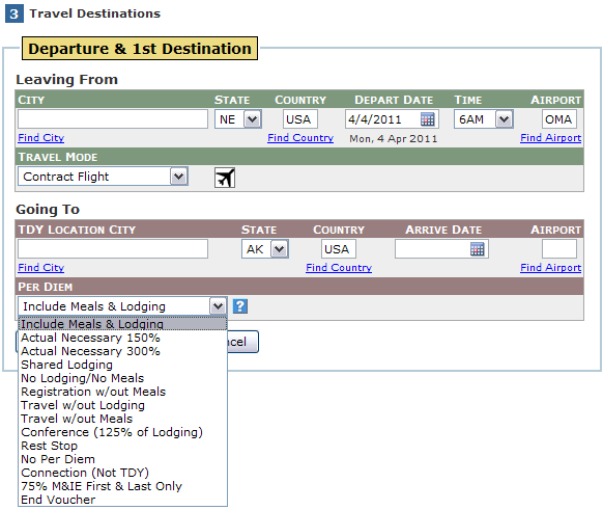
      Travel w/out Lodging: Non-Fed Sponsored Travel. Use this if a donor is covering lodging.

      Travel w/out Meals: Non-Fed Sponsored Travel. Use this if a donor is covering meals.

      Include Meals & Lodging: Per Diem rates are automatically calculated. Meals will be 75% of the max allowed for days where you are actually traveling (first and last day).

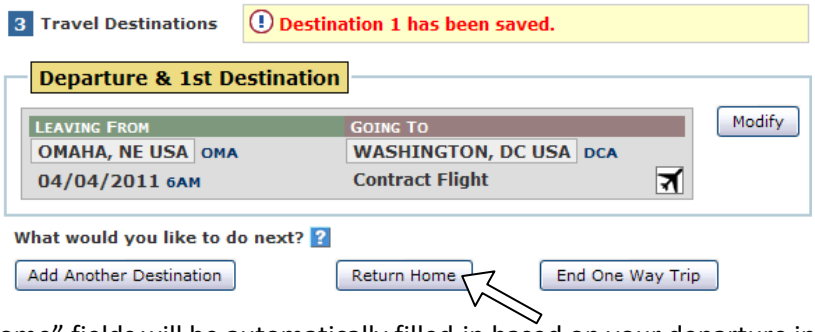
      Conference (125% of Lodging): Same as "Include Meals & Lodging", but it calculates your per diem at 125% of the usual max allowed rate when lodging expenses may exceed government rates.

      Actual Necessary 150%: Same as "Include Meals & Lodging", but it calculates your per diem at 150% of the usual max allowed rate when lodging expenses may exceed government rates. Prior approval must be obtained from the ACOS (e-mail authorization is acceptable).



   d. When finished with your departure and destination, click the "Save and Continue" button.

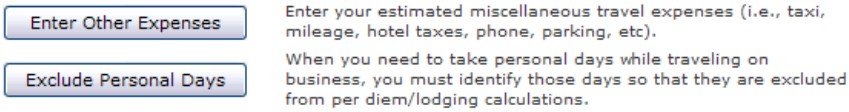
e. Usually, you will Click on the "Return Home" button. "Add Another Destination" is for situations that involve back-to-back travel events. "End One Way Trip" is typically used when other plans are made that are not on an official VA status.



f. The "Return Home" fields will be automatically filled-in based on your departure information. Adjust the "Date" and "Time" fields as appropriate.

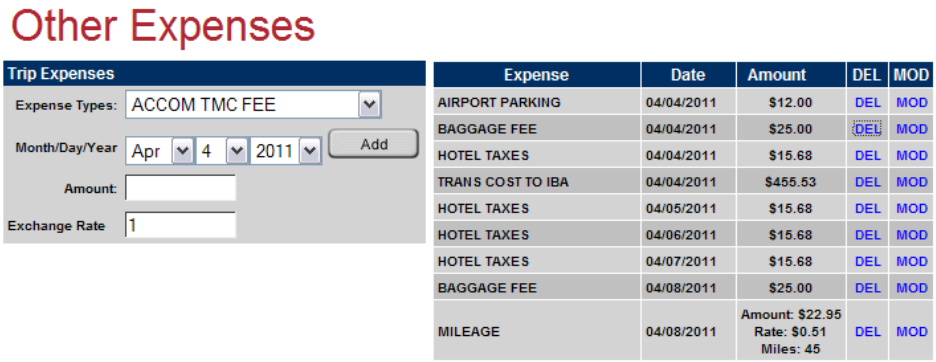
g. Click "Save and Continue"

4. Step 4, Do you need to:

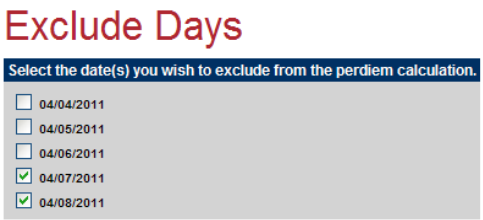


a. Enter Other Expenses Add your "Other Expenses". Itemized expenses that are not covered by your per diem. Per Diem includes meals and incidental expenses (M&IE - which includes meal related fees, tips, and taxes), and lodging (basic room rate, excluding taxes).

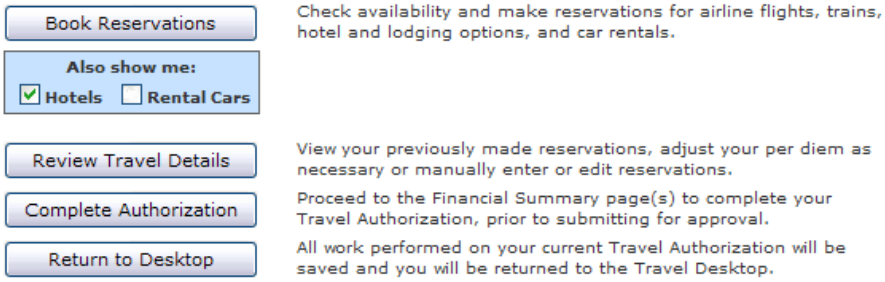
If travel costs are paid directly by the donor or reimbursable to you from the donor (e.g. airline ticket, lodging, meals), then be sure to include it as "TRANS COST TO IBA" (transfer cost to individually-billed account). This should match the amount indicated on VA Form 0893. This amount will show up under the financial summary page (see paragraph C.1.b) when you use the "Non-Fed Sponsored Travel" method as mentioned in paragraph C.2.b.



b. Exclude Personal Days Identify which, if any, days during your travel are being used for personal reasons unrelated to the purpose of the trip (i.e. Annual Leave (AL)). Example: Conference ends on April 6; you would normally return that day but you wish to take two days of vacation and return on April 8. Check the boxes for 04/07/11 and 04/08/11.

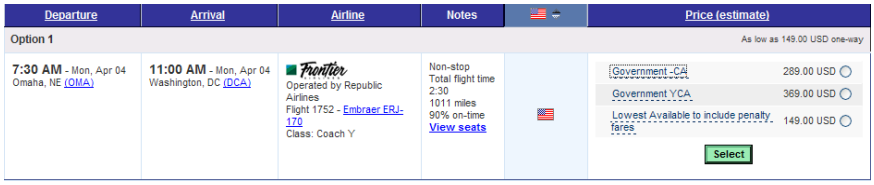


5. Step 5, What would you like to do next?

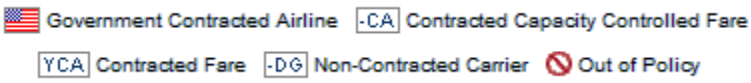


a. Book Reservations

1. Flight Reservations: The "booking Engine" will search for the available flight options that may meet your travel criteria. Select the most suitable option.
2. It is preferred that the most cost effective option is selected. However, work and event schedules may exclude some of the options available. For options that are outside of policy, be prepared to provide a clear justification why the selection was made over other options and plan accordingly when some "lowest fare" options may require 24 hour approval.



3. Select one of the pricing options under the price column for the flight you select. Refer to the descriptions below:



Contracted Capacity Controlled Fare: Government -**CA** fares are the lowest government contracted fares and are subject to availability. You may incur costs if you change your itinerary.

Contracted Fare: Government **YCA** fares are government contracted fares and have no restrictions. There are no additional costs if you change your itinerary.

Non-Contracted Carrier: Government -**DG** fares are non-contract carrier fares that match the GSA awarded airline fare. Book only when GSA contracted carrier is sold out or schedule does not meet mission requirements.

Lowest Available to include penalty fares: (Non-refundable). Based on your selection, the system searches for appropriate fare options.

4. Follow the process of selecting the preferred options, including seat selection, and finally confirming the itinerary chosen.

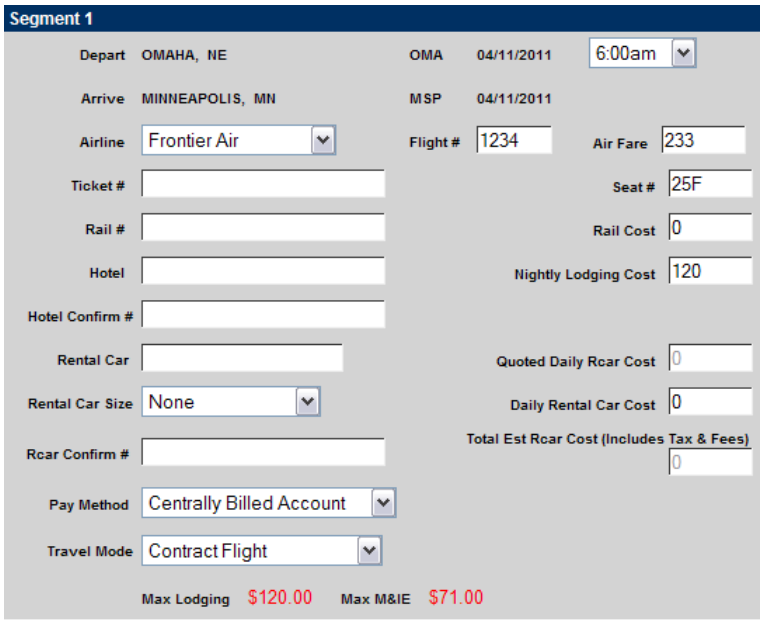
5. Hotel Reservations: Follow the same process for booking hotel reservations. However, in many cases, hotel accommodations may have already been arranged due to the location and/or season of the event. Many event sponsors will "block" a large number of rooms to help increase the ease of reserving them. This is one of the few exceptions allowed by the VA to skip the hotel booking process and reserve the room on your own credit card or VA-furnished travel card.

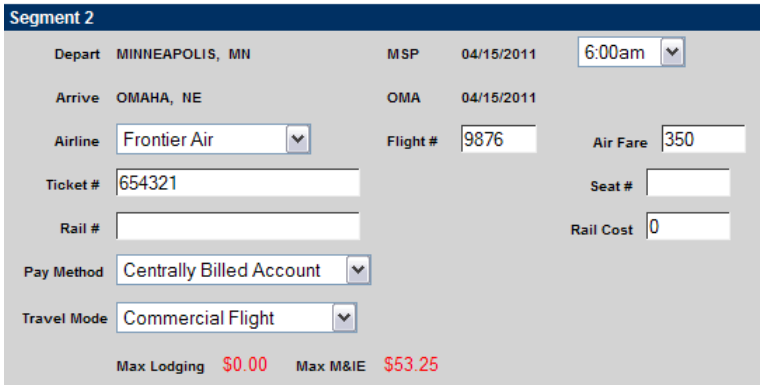
6. Rental Car: Highly discouraged and rarely authorized. If you choose to rent a car at your own cost, you can claim the standard POV mileage expense for official event travel.

7. In the case where you are reserving the room outside of FedTraveler, and the room rate is greater than the max allowed per diem, you may need to contact the hotel to request government pricing. If this is not possible, you can request up to 150% of the max per diem rate to cover the lodging. Approval is required from the ACOS of Research via an e-mail (this e-mail will need to be attached as a PDF to the travel authorization document in FedTraveler discussed in paragraph E). Based on this approval, you may select the "Actual Necessary 150%" option mentioned in Step 3.

b. Review Travel Details

1. Verify your travel information. It would be unusual to change any of the information that has been calculated unless the per diem was anything other than standard meals and lodging mentioned in paragraph D.3.c. The next paragraph describes the steps to account for 150% per diem.





2. If Actual Necessary 150% is authorized, you are allowed 150% of your max per diem less the standard M&EI to cover lodging. From the example above for standard meals and lodging, max per diem is $191.00 ($120 + $71.00).

   a. To compute actual necessary 150%, multiply the per diem rate by 1.5 (150%). The M&EI is then subtracted from the product. The difference is the remaining maximum amount that may be reimbursed for lodging expenses.

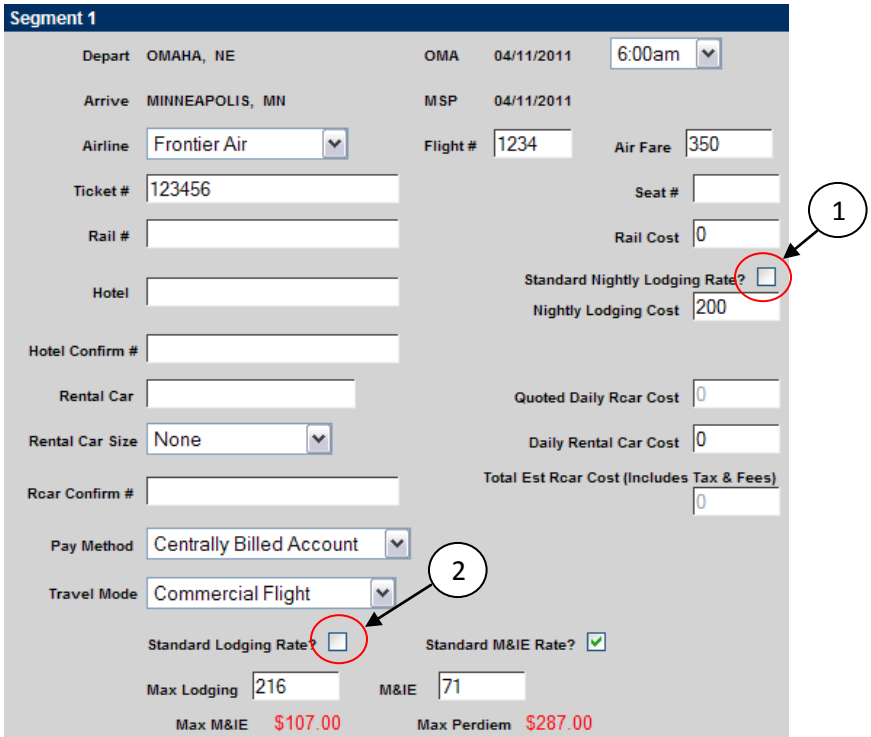
Example: Per Diem = $191 ($120 for lodging, $71 for M&IE)

(191 X 1.5) – 71 = $216

The traveler may be reimbursed for an amount not to exceed $216 for lodging. In the example below, the hotel's nightly rate is $200 which is more than the max lodging normally allowed at the standard, 100% rate.

① Deselect "Standard Nightly Lodging Rate" and enter the actual nightly lodging cost.

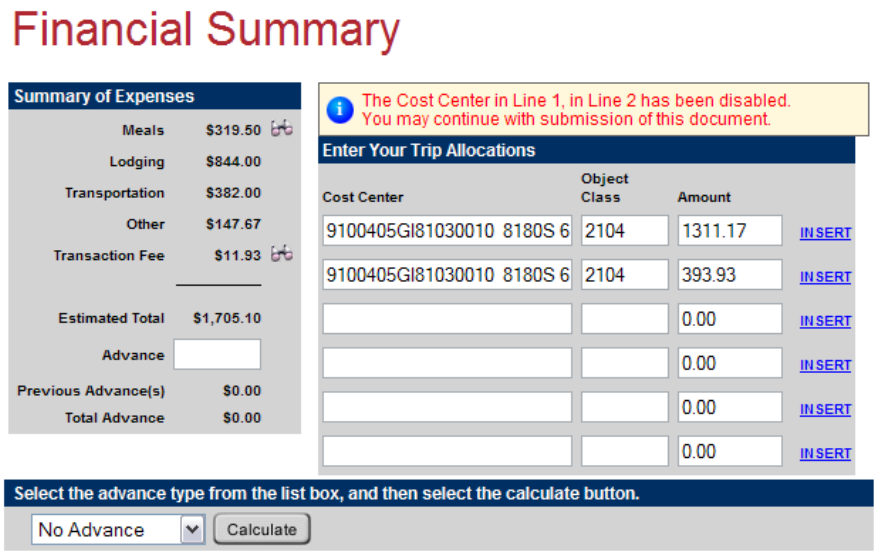
② Deselect "Standard Lodging rate" and enter the max lodging calculated for your trip using the steps above. The standard M&IE rate must be used, so that remains unchanged. The Max Lodging amount plus the standard M&IE amount should equal the Max Per Diem.



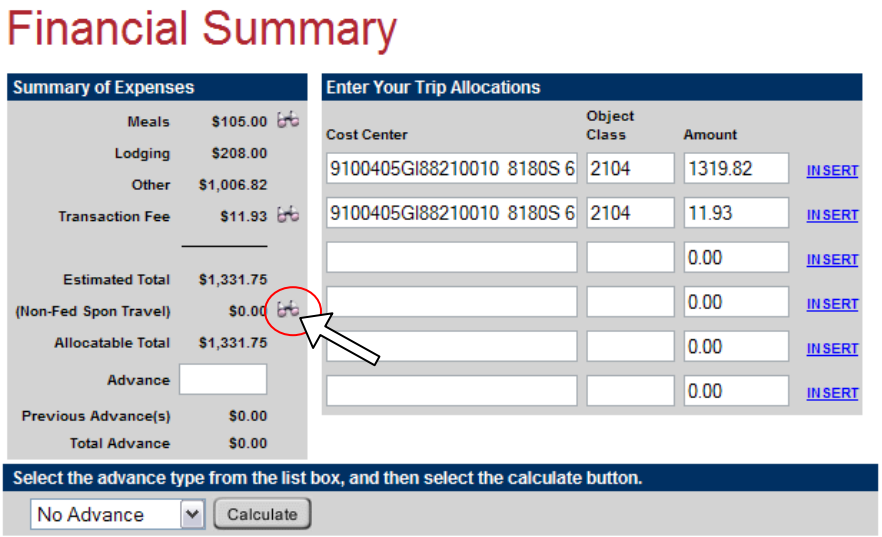
c. Complete Authorization

1. The Financial Summary page will be displayed. For the "New Travel Authorization" method, there will be no need to make any changes. The Cost Center information will be handled by Research Admin. For the "Non-Fed Sponsored Travel", it is necessary to disclose non-VA sources of funding.

   a. For "**New Travel Authorization**" method (from paragraph D)



   b. For "**Non-Fed Sponsored Travel**" method (from paragraph D), it is important to provided additional details about any donated funds. Click on the binoculars next to (Non-Fed Spon Travel)



2. Enter the required information about the donor:

   In the example below, UNMC offered to purchase the plane ticket only. In this case, the donor provided the airline ticket, therefore considered "in-kind". Otherwise use Reimbursable to Agency; The VA will reimburse your travel expenses and Research Admin will send a bill to the donor for reimbursement to the VA.

   Note: It is recommended that you consult the donor organization's travel rules and policies prior to your trip to ensure that prior approval is obtained and that the donor's travel reimbursement rules are thoroughly understood as they may be different than the VA's.

Sponsored Travel

Category	Estimated Amount	Sponsored Amount
M&IE	$105.00	0.00
Lodging	$208.00	0.00
Rental Car	$0.00	0.00
Transportation	$0.00	0.00
Other Expenses	$1,006.82	801.30

Sponsored totals broken out by payment types		Total left to break out
Total Payment In Kind	Reimbursable to Agency	
801.30	0.00	0.00

Additional Comments

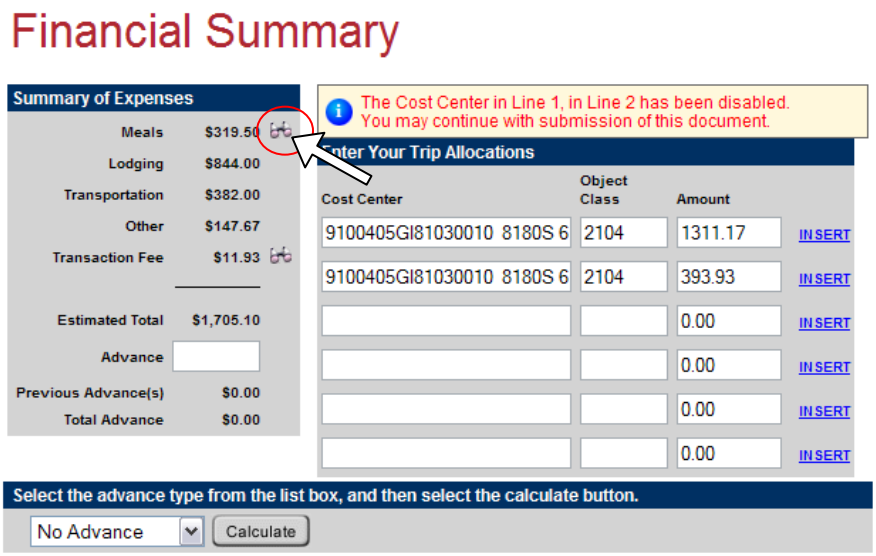
UNMC is covering the cost of the plane ticket ONLY

Sponsoring Organization Information

* Organization	UNIV OF NEBR MEDICAL CENTER
* First Name	JANE
Middle Name	
* Last Name	DOE
Suffix	
* Title	NONE
* Position	ADMINISTRATOR DIVISION OF RHEUMATOLOGY
* Address Lines	UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA MED CENTER
* City	OMAHA
* State	NEBRASKA
* Zip	68198
Country	UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
* Phone Numbers	(402) 559-8128
* E-Mail Address	JANE.DOE@UNMC.EDU

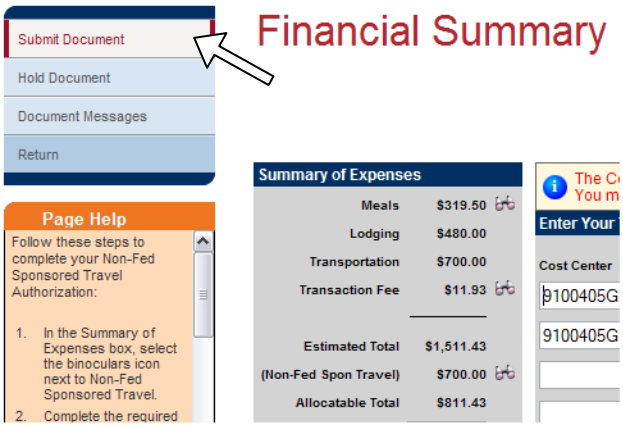
All items with the * are required!

3. If any meals are provided during your travel with the exception of those provided on a flight, you must disclose those. In the Financial Summary, select the binoculars next to "Meals"



4. Select the binocular for each day that one or more meals might be excluded:

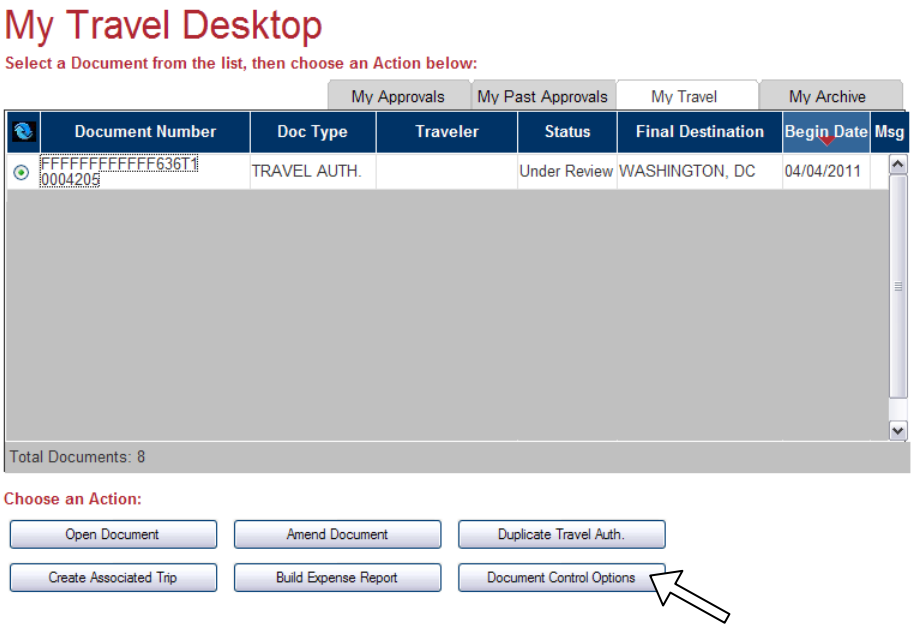
5. Select "Submit Document". An email notice will be sent to those in the approval process and you will be notified via e-mail, the status of your travel authorization.



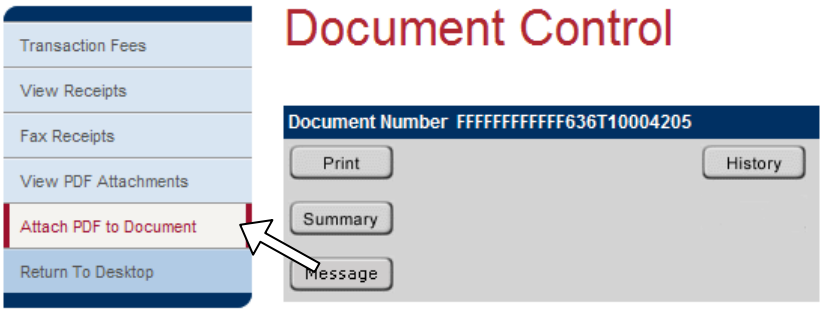
Important! - Even though you have submitted your travel authorization for approval, you must attach applicable supporting documents that cover donated funds (VA Form 0893), and 150% per diem authorization. Your travel will not be approved without these completed documents (paragraph E).

E. Documentation:

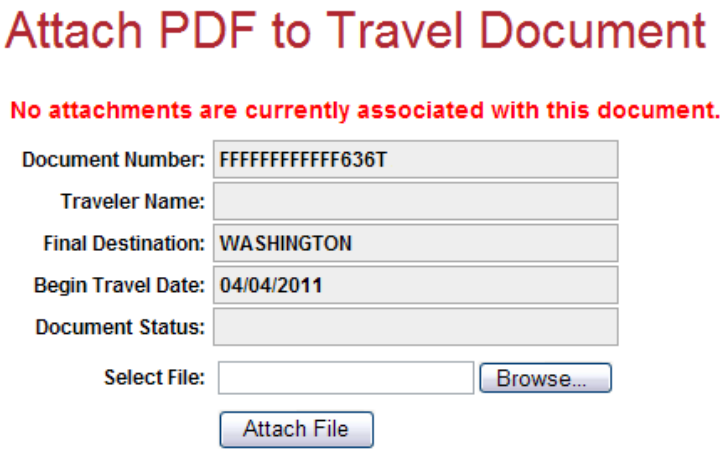
1. Back on your Travel Desktop, select the document, which should be under review, and then press the "Document Control Options" button.



2. From the left navigation pane, select "Attach PDF to Document".

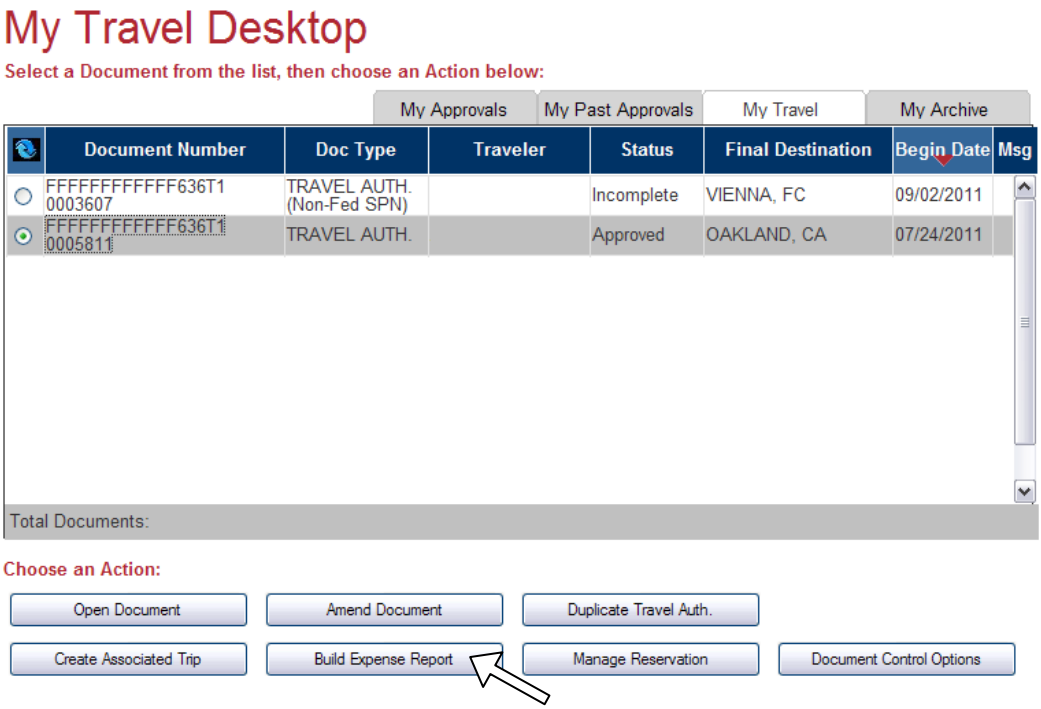


3. Follow the instructions provided and add each PDF file, one at a time. Please note the size and quantity limitations (max file size: 500Kb, 5 max PDF files). Please make sure that your documents are complete and accurate. <u>Once a file has been attached, it cannot be removed</u>. However, amended documents may need to have any previously attached files re-attached.



F. Expense Reports:

1. Back on your Travel Desktop, select the approved travel document, and then press the "Build Expense Report" button.

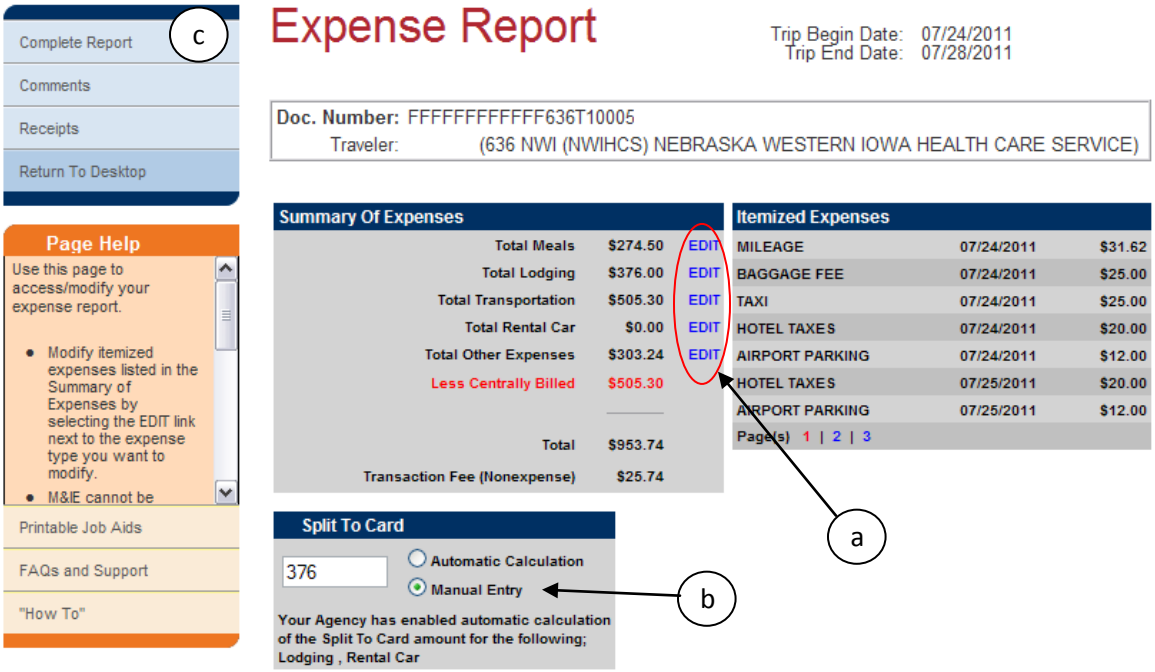


2. Review expenses:

   a. Edit expenses, as appropriate, to reflect actual events.

   b. For travel card use, select "Manual Entry" under "Split to Card" and enter that total amount of authorized expenses that the card was used for on this trip. Note: the automatic calculation typically indicates the total lodging costs based on the nightly room rate only.

   c. Press the "Complete Report" when finished.



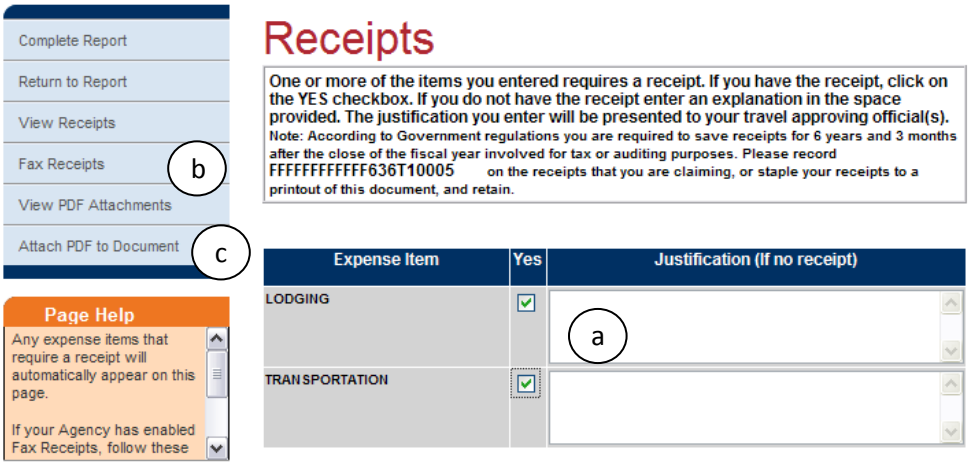
3. Receipts:

   a. Indicate that you have receipts or explain, in detail, why receipts cannot be provided. The approving official may require alternate forms of documentation (e.g. bank or credit card statements) for reimbursement. Donor organizations will often have their own expense report requirements. Appendix A outlines what receipts must be provided in order to receive VA reimbursement. As a general rule of thumb, travelers are encouraged to provide all receipts (including transportation and lodging), with the exception of meals & incidental expenses normally covered by authorized per diem. This may help in avoiding reimbursement delays where there may be uncertainty about claims and a lack of documentation.

   b. Receipts can be faxed in. Select "Fax Receipts" for a cover letter with detailed instructions. Faxed receipts are scanned and made available, electronically, for approvers.

   c. Receipts can also be submitted as a PDF file. Paragraph E describes steps for attaching PDF files to the travel document.

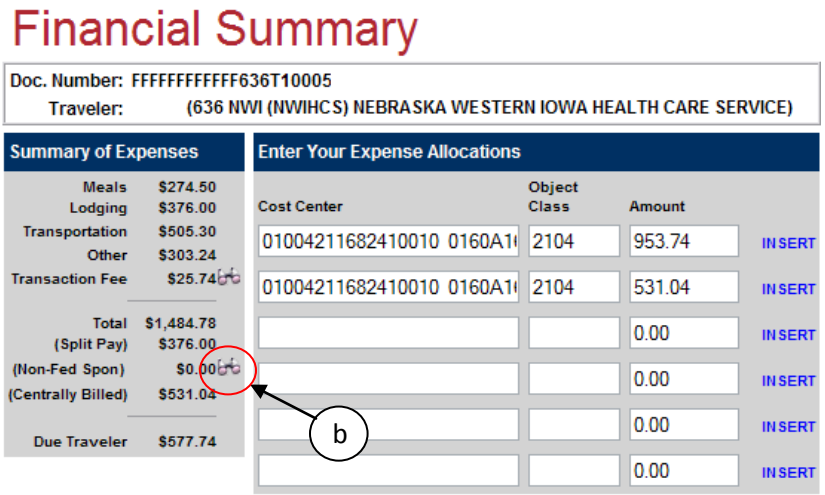
   d. Select "Complete Report" to move on to the next step toward submission.



4. Financial Summary

   a. Expense allocations are automatically assigned and any modifications will be handled by the fund certifier or final approver.

   b. Verify the amounts under the Summary of Expenses. Make any necessary changes. For Non-Fed Sponsored Travel (donated travel funds), make sure it matches the actual donated amount entered for "Other Expenses" as mentioned in paragraph F.2.a. Click the binoculars next to "Non-Fed Spon" to make changes.



   c. When complete, select "Submit Document". During the review process, you will still be able to fax or attach PDF documentation (see Paragraph E).

Appendix A – Required Receipts IAW NWIHSC Employee Travel Policy and Procedures, FIS-001

A. Receipts will be faxed or PDF files attached to the ETS. Where it is impracticable to furnish receipts, the failure to do so must be fully explained on the expense voucher. Mere inconvenience in the matter of taking receipts will not be considered.

B. Receipts are required for the following expenses, regardless of amount, and authorization or approval is required by the official who authorized the travel:

Baggage Expenses – a receipt is required for all baggage expenses associated with the movement of Government and/or personal property of the traveler for official travel.

- Authorized excess (exceeding weight, size, or number of pieces carried free by the carrier) – receipt must show weight of baggage and points between which moved. Where the carrier charges for first and/or carry-on baggage, a receipt only showing the expense will suffice.
- Transfer, checking, and storage for handling Government property – receipt must show that storage was solely on account of official business and that charges or tips at transportation terminals are for handling Government property.

Common Carrier Transportation – ticketed itineraries for the use of commercial air, rail, or bus service.

Commercial Communication Services (pre-paid phone cards, cell phones, internet connections, long-distance calls when Government services are not available) – receipt must show total amount paid and a justification that services were used for official business. Note. When cell phone is used for official communication, each call must be documented showing additional cost incurred outside of the normal usage covered in the cell phone contract.

Dry-cleaning and Laundry – reasonable costs for personal laundry, dry-cleaning and/or pressing of clothing incurred during temporary duty or relocation travel (not after returning to/arriving at official station) are a separately reimbursable expense when travel within CONUS requires at least 4 consecutive nights of lodging. A receipt is not required for coin-operated dry-cleaning and laundry machines.

Foreign Travel

- Fees for cashing U.S. Government checks or drafts reimbursing traveler for travel expenses only incurred in foreign countries.
- Commissions for conversion of currency in foreign countries.
- Fees in connection with issuance of passports and visas, costs of photographs for passports and visas, costs of birth, health, and identity certificates, affidavits, and inoculation which cannot be obtained at a Federal dispensary.

Hire of special conveyance such as livery, boat, and automobile – receipt will show the service hired and rendered, rate of compensation by day (hour or other unit) and subsistence if included in the cost.

Lodging – to support all lodging costs for which an allowance is claimed under the lodging-plus per diem system. A statement instead of a receipt may be accepted for the fee or service charge incurred for the use of Government quarters.

Parking – all parking expenses for which an expense is claimed, unless parking is coin operated self-parking. Tips to valet attendants, when such parking accommodations are determined to be advantageous to the Government.

Rental Car – all rental car costs for which an allowance is claimed, including gasoline, insurance for OCONUS travel, etc.

Services and Processing Fees (Transaction Fees) – Includes clerical assistance, computers, printers, fax machines, scanners, room rental, guides, interpreters, packers, drivers of vehicles, and for arranging official transportation, rental car and lodging accommodations through the ETS and TMC.

Shipments of Government Property by Freight or Express – when property needed by the traveler exceeds the baggage allowance. If a Government Bill of Lading is not used, the traveler must explain the circumstances for the use of freight or express. The receipt will show original point of shipment, destination, number of packages, contents, and separate weight of each package, rate, and amount(s) paid.

Taxicabs – when used locally or while in travel status

- From or to the common carrier or other terminals to or from place of abode (e.g., home, hotel) or place of business.
- Between place of abode and place of business or between places of business.
- Not incidental to subsistence, to obtain meals at nearest available place, where nature and location of work at temporary duty station is such that suitable meals cannot be procured there.

C. Receipts are required for all other travel expenses when the amount is in excess of $75 or <u>when required by the approving official</u>.