

Travel Talk

DGS Statewide Travel Program (STP)

September 1, 2011
Volume 1, Issue 2

A Note from the Statewide Travel Program Manager

I am delighted to share with all of you some very good news in the area of travel. The Statewide Travel Program (STP) has been hard at work transitioning all Departments to one travel agency, CALtravelstore. The benefits of this transition include significantly reduced Travel Agency transaction fees, ownership of the State's travel data to now measure all State travel, and access to all travel itineraries to aid in location of State travelers in times of emergency or natural disaster. I would like to applaud not only my staff but all of the Department Travel Coordinators and travelers for all of their hard work during this transition. We realize change is not always easy and the fact that we have been able to successfully transition 270 departments to one travel agency speaks to your dedication and shows that all of the hard work has paid off.

Now that the transition is complete, we will continue to monitor Departments to make sure that your accounts are paid in full, offer assistance if they are not, share new training dates for your employees who need to learn the online booking tool, Concur, and continue to find new solutions to make travel easy for our government travelers. We are working on a number of new travel initiatives that we will be sharing with you in September at our Travel Coordinator Meeting.

One thing we are excited about is the fact that over the past two years we have been working to increase the participants in the State of California's Travel Program. We have added 35 city government offices, 21 county government offices and 15 public school districts. You may ask why this matters. As the customer base grows, travel volume grows. Increased travel volume allows leveraging of the travel industry, thereby providing greater discounts and cost savings for travel services for all State of California Government Travelers.

I'll see you at the Travel Coordinators Meeting in September.

*Donna Carey, Manager
Statewide Travel Program*

TRAVEL COORDINATOR MEETING – SAVE THE DATE!!!

The STP will be conducting a Travel Coordinator Meeting September 13, 2011 from 1:30-3:30 p.m.

Please mark your calendar and plan to join us in the Auditorium of the Ziggurat Building (707 3rd St, West Sacramento). Parking available in the garage adjacent to the building. (Cash or check only.)

The items to be covered will include the following:

- Special CalATERS Presentation
- Update on Contracts
- Customer Service Survey Results
- Southwest Phase II
- Taxi Payment Program
- Emergency Lodging Program

All Travel Coordinators should be in attendance! If you haven't already sent your RSVP, please email kelly.may@dgs.ca.gov. We look forward to meeting with you.



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Travel Reminders

- Effective July 1st, 2011, the personal vehicle mileage reimbursement rate for all State employees is 55.5 cents per mile.
- CALtravelstore office hours are 8:00 a.m-5:00 p.m. After-hours service is available for travel emergencies at an additional charge. Concur online booking tool is available 24/7!
- Monthly Concur training is available the last Wednesday of every month in the Auditorium of the Ziggurat building. (707 3rd St, West Sac)

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"Do not follow where the path may lead. Go instead where there is no path, and leave a trail."

Ralph Waldo Emerson

Hotel Tips to Keep You Safe While Traveling

When first entering your hotel room, use your baggage to prop open your door while you check the closet and restroom.

Use the "Do Not Disturb" sign on your door to discourage anyone from entering your room while you are away.

When possible, choose hotels with interior room entrances.

Make sure all door and window locks are secure and work properly upon arrival.

Bolt your door and do not open it for anyone without checking with the front desk first.

If you request maintenance assistance, leave the room while they are making any necessary repairs.

PLANNING AHEAD = SAVINGS \$\$\$

Did you know that doing something as simple as purchasing your airline ticket 14-21 days in advance could save the State of California up to 50% on your airline ticket?

A common misconception with advance purchases is that charges for changing the date or time of the flight may outweigh the savings for booking in advance. While change fees are definitely something that should be

considered, sometimes the savings are so significant that even if you have to change your plans, you may still experience cost savings.

The following airline fares demonstrate the possible savings for planning ahead:

Sac – Los Angeles

0-6 days notice - \$432
7-13 days notice - \$296 – (31%)
14-20 days notice - \$268 – (37%)
21-days or more - \$178 - (58%)

Sac – Washington-Dulles, DC

0-6 days notice - \$846
7-13 days notice - \$610 – (27%)
14-20 days notice - \$510 – (39%)
21-days or more - \$430 – (49%)

When you know the time and place for a meeting well in advance, check ticket prices. The savings may be worth the possibility of paying a change fee.



SURVEY SAYS!!!!

The STP, in an effort to improve service levels to meet and exceed the needs of government travelers, developed a customer service survey to collect feedback on Concur, the online booking tool, and CALtravelstore. A link to the survey was on every travel itinerary, the www.caltravelstore.com website as well as the www.dgs.ca.gov/travel site.

205 surveys were returned

and the following is a sample of some of the results received:

For Functionality of Concur, the Online Booking Tool:

52% of respondents were Completely Satisfied or Satisfied
42% of respondents were Somewhat Satisfied or Dissatisfied

When asked if Concur was user friendly and convenient:

15% said Always
42 % said Usually
26% said Sometimes or Rarely
15% said Never

For Overall Satisfaction with CALtravelstore:

63% of respondents were Completely Satisfied or Satisfied
36% of respondents were Somewhat Satisfied or Dissatisfied

Although the results were mixed, the information gained is invaluable for assisting us in establishing action steps in order to provide the best possible customer service. We will be discussing these results in more detail at the Travel Coordinator meeting on September 13.

AVOID TERMINAL CONFUSION

Sacramento International Airport's new Terminal B will be ready to serve passengers in October. The new Terminal B will have 19 gates and 11 TSA checkpoint lanes. This is 6 more gates and almost double the TSA lanes!

Southwest, Sacramento's busiest airline, will move to the new terminal along with American, Alaska, Jet Blue, Hawaiian and Horizon. United/Continental will move into Terminal A. After many years of heading to Terminal A for most flights, make sure you check your tickets to avoid showing up at the wrong terminal.

If you are interested in checking out the terminal, on **Sunday, October 2, 10:00am-4:00pm** take a tour of the new terminal, learn about the community art, and enjoy a taste from terminal restaurants at the **Sacramento International Airport, Terminal B, Community Day**. It is a free, family friendly event so go out and enjoy this one time opportunity to explore the new terminal without a boarding pass!

For comments or suggestions regarding "Travel Talk" please email Tasha Wilson at tasha.wilson@dgs.ca.gov.