

Airfare Cost Savings – Best Practices

Purpose The purpose of the Department of General Services' (DGS) Best Practice Guide is to provide employees with guidelines and industry standard best practices relative to the establishment of a lowest useable airfare policy. These are recommendations to achieve airfare cost savings.

This guide should be used in conjunction with the Department of General Services Management Memo 14-03 and Executive Order B-06-11.

Lowest Usable Fare Travelers must book the lowest usable airfare whenever possible considering the following types of fares in order to maximize savings.

- Non-refundable fares - travelers should consider these fares if the trip dates/times are fixed and there is a low probability of a change in plans; this will save 40-60 percent off the cost of a fully refundable fare. Frequent travelers should always consider non-refundable fares since there is a high probability the unused funds will be used for future travel within the expiration period.
- Refundable fares – a refundable ticket may be the best option if plans are likely to change.
- Contracted fares, such as YCAL or Capacity Controlled Fares.
- Southwest internet fares with state contracted discount available through the Concur Travel tool.
- Promotional fares offered on the Concur Travel tool or through CalTravelStore.

Consideration of the following parameters and fares will also provide significant cost savings:

- Other Cost Saving Factors**
- **Routing Options** - Consider taking flights that include stops so long as these layovers don't significantly impact business or delay travel times. These flights often offer savings of over \$100.
 - **Flexible Flight Window** - Being flexible with earlier or later departure times can often save significant amounts of money.

**Other Cost
Saving
Factors
(cont.)**

- **Advance purchase** - Advance purchase fares of 7, 14 and 21 days prior to departure. Planning ahead can save the state up to 50 percent off airline costs.
- **Alternate Airports** – Significant savings can be achieved through the use of close-proximity alternate airports.

Questions

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