



GTCC NEWSLETTER

Volume VII Issue XI

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References

- COMDTINST M4600.18
- JTR, 010204
- FTR, Ch. 300
- DHS Financial Management and Accounting Section 3.2.4 Travel Handbook
- PPC Travel Resources

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Mandatory Use of GTCC

It’s time again to provide the references that mandate the use of the GTCC. While this may not be the all inclusive list of references, feel free to use this if you happen to encounter a cardholder who might think otherwise.

CIM4600.14D: All Coast Guard military members, active duty and reserve, and civilian personnel (including NAF Employees) who are authorized or directed to be issued a GTCC are hereby ordered to apply for a GTCC and use their GTCC only when in an official travel status.

CIM4600.18: Chapter 1: ...GTCC holders shall use their card for transportation tickets, lodging, rental cars, and meals...

JTR: 010204: A traveler is required to use the GTCC to...pay for all official travel expenses.

FTR: 301-51.7: You are required to use the Government contractor-issued travel charge card for expenses directly related to your official travel.

DHS Financial Management Policy Manual, Chapter 7. Section 7.8: All authorized travel expenses incurred while on official travel...must be charged to the travel card.

DHS Financial Management Policy Manual, Chapter 3. Part 3.2.1: The travel cardholder will use the travel card for official authorized travel expenses incurred only while on official temporary duty (TDY) travel...

Travel and Transportation Reform Act 1998: Sec. 2. ...shall require that Federal employees use the travel charge card...for all payments of expenses of official Government travel.

Other reasons to use the card include the availability of city pair fares through TMC/ADTRAV, insurance for car rentals, and the requirement of the split disbursement feature when processing the travel claim, making GTCC payments easier.

Travel Manager Tool

If you are a new Travel Manager (TM), you may not be aware there is a tool to help you with the required GTCC reporting. This tool will help you decipher cardholders between units. If you are a TM in D8 for instance, you will see over 3500 cardholder accounts across the entire hierarchy. But using this tool and routine reports from PaymentNet can help you narrow your scope of view to a more manageable number. Just follow the instructions on the [Travel Manager page](#) of the GTCC website. For current users of this tool, please ensure you’re using the most recent version of the program by verifying that the program name at the top center of the screen reads as “Travel Manager Tool (JAN 2017).” If you need to update your database, follow the update instructions in the above hyperlink.

[GTCC](#)

[Travel Charge Card](#)

[Web Page](#)

JPMC Travel Manager

Help Line

866-725-1184

Verification ID must be provided.

Escheated Funds

When the bank receives returned mail where they are attempting to issue a credit balance refund on an account, an email is sent to us to request the cardholder to reach out and update the account profile and retrieve the credit. If the bank is not contacted within a stated time frame, the credit balance will be forwarded to the state of the last known address on the account. Sometimes these credits are hundreds of dollars. A credit may be created by a merchant credit like an airline or an overpayment to the account.

Once funds are mailed out from the bank to the state, the cardholder must do the research to retrieve the money. That can mean using sites like missingmoney.com or unclaimed.org. Third party sites may also be an option for a fee. Each state will have its own process on how to search and retrieve 'lost' money.

As you review your cardholder profile report, notice any credit balance. Notify the cardholder and verify the mailing address. This is important as we move closer to the transition to the new travel card bank later next year. Balances on accounts will not be transferred to the new bank.



GTCC Cash Advance

GTCC policy, CIM4600.18 states that prohibited card use includes cash advances where expenses are not directly associated with official travel. GTCC policy reiterates the member responsibility to obtain cash from an ATM only to cover expenses that are directly related to official government travel which cannot be paid for using the travel card directly, and are reimbursable in accordance with JTR/FTR.

Obtaining cash to withdraw what might be considered as M&IE at the end of a travel period may not be a valid use of the card.

DHS travel card policy allows ATM withdrawals up to 3 days prior to official travel. This timeline is considered as we audit travel cards. Withdrawals prior to 3 days in advance of official travel will be considered misuse. This 3 day window only applies to cash withdrawals. Other than travel reservations, any other card use prior to the official travel is considered misuse.

Please remind cardholders to use the travel card wherever possible as long as it is valid travel expenses.



Good To Know

Who is required to have a travel card? All DHS personnel who travel two or more times a year shall apply for and use the GTCC for all official travel.

GTCC LMS Challenge: Refer cardholders and card applicants to the [training access guide](#) if they encounter issues accessing this mandated training. The issue is usually a system compatibility issue.

DHS Compliance Audits: We have been advised that these monthly random audits will focus on offline (non-TMC-ADTRAV) use. This can include air, car and lodging. Please remind travelers of the requirements to use ADTRAV for all official travel. Offline travel reservations will be considered misuse.



MCC Overrides

It's been almost a year since we addressed issues of declining MCCs. MCC is the merchant category code. These codes are set up between the merchant and the bank. Codes that are travel related are updated in PaymentNet, such as lodging, restaurants, airlines, etc. If a transaction declines for an MCC reason, something is amiss. Is the transaction actually travel related? Is it a new chain of hotels that has not been updated in PaymentNet? Or is it not a valid travel item, such as tuition, entertainment, postage or car repairs for example?

If the transaction is valid, per the travel order (such as a conference fee) then an MCC override may be necessary.

The process for overriding an MCC can be managed by you, the Travel Manager. The process entails calling JPMC with your Verification ID number. You need to provide the bank with the cardholder information. You will need the Merchant Name, MCC and amount of the transaction for which the override is requested (or has been declined). Next you or the cardholder need to contact the vendor to have them call 888-685-2896 BEFORE processing the transaction. Some vendors may state they will not contact the bank. However, they must if they want the transaction to go through since this cannot be done by the cardholder. Note - These overrides are only valid for a specific timeframe so if the vendor does not run the charge within that period you will need to do this again.

Please be cautious when a member or vendor requests a bank override (request) for MCC code that is rejected. There are reasons behind the blocks. Walk through your decision process so when asked, you can explain the reasoning you used based on your understanding of policy used to confirm appropriate use of the card for a specific purchase. Keep in mind, a note on the travel order does not serve as a waiver to travel or GTCC policy. If you are unsure of a charge, research JTR, FTR, DHS Travel and COMDTINST 4600.18.

For the transaction, the question to ask is: can the charge be claimed and reimbursed on a travel claim settlement? Expenses such as postage, training course fees, movement of team gear or similar items that may be considered as valid official Government expenses but are not authorized reimbursable travel expenses. These non-travel expenses need to go through the acquisition/PR process.

If you are at all unsure about a MCC override, don't hesitate to contact our office.

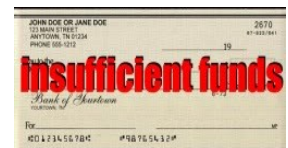
Payment Reversals

Is it really a bounced check or something else?

While some payment reversals are for valid insufficient funds (NSF), some reversals are due to an entry error by the cardholder when attempting to make a payment. Sometimes this is through a phone call or by automated phone entry, but this payment reversal can occur when the account information is incorrectly entered. This is different than a correct entry which is returned for insufficient funds. To identify a specific payment reversal, you need to call the bank. PaymentNet does not indicate any difference between an entry error and an actual NSF payment.

In both scenarios, the bank can collect a \$25 fee for the attempted payment.

When an account is closed for 2 NSF payments within a 12 month period, the bank will send us a letter. Upon receipt of that letter, we forward this to the command for appropriate action. Accounts closed for NSF payments are not eligible for reinstatement consideration for 36 months.



GOVERNMENT TRAVEL CARD PROGRAM MANAGERS

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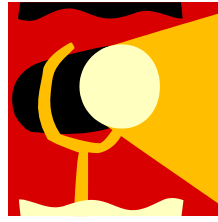
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REMEMBER * ALWAYS PROTECT PII

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In the Spotlight

Way to go
Travel Managers!

Ms. Deanna Morris-provided details and samples of the application process that she send to the field

YN2 Jessica Hebert-asked how to recover fees for a cancelled travel orders

Great questions! Thanks for asking.

Keep up the great work!

Happy
New Year!

Prohibited Card Use

A general reminder of frequent travel card transactions that may be considered as potential misuse:

- * Team Gear or movement of equipment for a group that is not exclusively for the cardholder
- * Card use during PCS travel that exceeds 15 days
- * Personally procured move such as U-Haul
- * Card use for postal or courier services
- * Purchases for others such as meals, lodging or airfare
- * Card use within local area of PDS
- * Cash withdrawal to liquidate a credit balance
- * Tuition for training courses even if called registration or conference fees

Inquiries regarding what may be considered authorized reimbursable expenses should be directed to PPC Travel.