



# Authorizing Official Responsibilities and Checklist

July 1, 2010

**The Authorizing Official (AO) has the responsibility for the mission and is given the authority to obligate funds to support TDY travel for the mission.**

An AO:

- authorizes only travel necessary to accomplish the mission
- must be appointed in writing as an accountable official and, as such may be held pecuniarily liable for erroneous payments resulting from the negligent performance of their duty
- must consult regulations and policies that assist in the performance of their duties

Additional Responsibilities:

- Review the lines of accounting (LOAs) for a specific trip
- Assure the traveler has access to digitally sign authorizations and vouchers
- Approve non-ATM advances and scheduled partial payments (SPPs)
- Approve amendments related to CBA charges initiated by the local TO or CBA Specialist
- Process all requests for premium class travel outside DTS IAW service directives
  - If approved, ensure a copy of the premium class approval is attached as a substantiating record

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## Authorization Checklist

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This partial checklist includes reminders for the AO when processing authorizations in the Defense Travel System (DTS).

An AO should verify:

### Transportation

- A city pair flight is selected or justification is provided if not used

- It is highly recommended that AOs complete training on DTS Document Processing and Temporary Duty Travel Policy. These courses are available in a variety of formats within the Traveler Explorer located at <https://www.defensetravel.dod.mil/Passport>

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## References

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An AO must know and understand the regulations and policies that govern the performance of their duties. Some examples are listed below:

- Joint Federal Travel Regulation/Joint Travel Regulation (JFTR/JTR)
- DoD Financial Management Regulation (DoD FMR), Volume 9, Chapters 2 and 3

Links for travel policies and regulations can be located at <http://www.defensetravel.dod.mil/Sections/PolicyRegs.cfm>

For document processing assistance, see the DTS Document Processing Manual located at [http://www.defensetravel.dod.mil/Sections/RL\\_DocLib.cfm](http://www.defensetravel.dod.mil/Sections/RL_DocLib.cfm)

**Per the Joint Federal Travel Regulation/Joint Travel Regulation (JFTR/JTR), Authorizing Official (AO) responsibilities include the following:**

**In general, the AO has broad authority to determine when TDY travel is necessary to accomplish the unit's mission, authorize travel, obligate unit travel funds, approve trip arrangements, and authorize travel expenses incurred in connection with that mission and in accordance with the JFTR/JTR.**

- **Use the cost estimate on the trip record to determine if the travel budget can support the travel. If the standard arrangements made in compliance with travel policies using GOV'T negotiated airline, lodging, and rental car rates do not meet mission needs, the AO may authorize other travel options requested by the traveler, provided they conform to law, regulation, policy, and contractual obligations. The AO authorizes the cost estimate.**
- **Obtain information on policies relating to transportation and travel arrangements from**

**the Commercial Travel Office/Travel Management Center (CTO/TMC) and Transportation Officer (TO), command channels or Service headquarters to assist in future travel decisions.**

- **Determine if the traveler has access to a Government Travel Charge Card (GTCC) or a CBA (Centrally Billed Account) if the traveler does not have a GTCC. Refer inquiries about card usage to the local GTCC program coordinator or the TO.**
- **Adhere to policies and procedures, use good judgment in obligating unit funds, and ensure the traveler receives adequate reimbursement IAW the JFTR/JTR.**

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- Mode of travel is advantageous to the government or the traveler's reimbursement has been limited
- Traveler used the appropriate form of payment for all reservations
- If a rental vehicle was approved, a compact car was selected or justification for not selecting a compact car is provided
- Sufficient justification for each travel policy exception is included in the pre-audit section

#### Per Diem (M&IE and Lodging)

- \*Per diem location is correct
- \*Meal rate is correct
- Lodging rate is at or below the published rate
  - If not, the traveler will pay for the difference unless actual lodging is authorized
- Selected lodging is in accordance with DoD regulations (FEDROOMS, FEMA approved)
- \*If leave was requested or meals were provided, per diem entitlements were adjusted correctly on the Per Diem Entitlements screen
- If an overnight flight(s) is used, per diem entitlements were correctly adjusted
- Sufficient funds are available
- A correct line of accounting (LOA) is selected
- If "variations authorized" is required, it is selected and appropriate comments are entered
- If the military traveler is going TDY to a military installation, military quarters are selected or a non-availability number is provided

#### Miscellaneous Items

- TDY trip is necessary
- Traveler used their Government Travel Charge Card for reimbursable expenses
- If the trip is to a foreign country, the traveler has proper theater and country clearances

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### Voucher Checklist

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This partial checklist includes reminders for processing vouchers in the Defense Travel System (DTS).

An AO should verify:

#### Documentation

- \*Receipts were included in Substantiating Records for lodging and all individual expenses of \$75.00 or more (to include airfare)
- \*Receipts are valid and legible
- \*If signed by an NDEA, a DD 1351-2 or SF1164 is attached

#### Per Diem (M&IE and Lodging)

- \*Daily lodging rate matches receipt
- \*Lodging was not claimed twice (double reimbursement)
- \*Taxes for CONUS and non-foreign OCONUS lodging were claimed on the Non-Mileage Expenses screen
- \*Per diem was not paid on excessive travel days
- Any meals that were provided (e.g. as part of a registration fee) are properly accounted for using proportional meal rate
- If the estimated cost of lodging was different than actual cost, lodging costs were adjusted on the Per Diem Entitlements screen
- \*Per diem was not paid on leave days

#### Transportation

- Travel agent fee was not automatically entered by DTS and also claimed under Other Transportation unless more than one ticket was issued
- Airfare
  - \*Amount claimed matches receipt
  - \* Airfare was not claimed twice (double reimbursement)
- Rental Car
  - \*Traveler did not claim rental car reimbursement for unauthorized travel days
  - \*Claimed rate matches receipt
  - \*Traveler claimed correct gasoline/fuel amount (if not using government fuel)
  - \*Rental car was not claimed twice (double reimbursement)
- Mode of transportation was consistent with the approved authorization
- \*Mileage paid correctly per DTOD

- \*Traveler did not claim mileage on the Mileage Expenses screen, and also gasoline/fuel on the Non-Mileage Expenses screen for POV use (typically only mileage reimbursement is authorized for POV use)
- \*Constructed Travel is paid correctly
- Unused paper or electronic tickets were returned to the Commercial Travel Office (CTO) per local policy

#### Other Reimbursable Expenses

- \*Authorized reimbursable expenses were claimed for the correct amount (registration fee, ATM/charge card fees, laundry/dry cleaning, tips, taxi/shuttle/train/bus/ferry, excess baggage, exit tax, tolls, parking fees, phone/internet/fax, etc.)
- \*Currency conversion rate provided and done correctly
- \*Claimed expenses are travel related

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### Local Voucher Checklist

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- Traveler requires expenses reimbursed for local travel
- \*Receipts were submitted in accordance with local policy
- No future expenses were claimed
- Mileage expenses claimed were only for travel to the event and exceeds normal commuting distances
- \*If signed by an NDEA, a DD 1351-2 or SF 1164 is attached

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### AO Helpful Tips

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- Any recent charges on a traveler's GTCC can be viewed in DTS through a link on the Non-Mileage Expenses screen.
- AOs cannot authorize travel when the should-cost estimate exceeds the amount of funds available in the LOA(s) associated to the travel document. If this should occur, the AO must contact their Finance Defense Travel Administrator (FDTA) for further guidance and additional funding.
- Consult your organization's local business rules for supplemental items relating to local travel policies.

\* Most common errors found in the DFAS audit