

Subject: INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL APPROVAL POLICY

1. PURPOSE: This Order sets forth U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT or the Department) policy for the planning of all DOT international travel and the approval of such travel by the Under Secretary, Assistant Secretaries, General Counsel, Administrators, and Secretarial Directors reporting directly to the Secretary, collectively referred to as Officials.
2. BACKGROUND: This Order converts and revises the Foreign Travel Policy memorandum, dated September 19, 2018, into an Order that formalizes departmental policy for the approval of certain international travel by the Department and its Operating Administrations.
3. REFERENCES: This Order supersedes DOT Order M 1500.6B Travel Order and Manual Section 1.1.2 regarding international travel. Notwithstanding any other DOT Order or policy pertaining to travel, this Order controls international travel requirements. Supplementary guidance may be issued in the future but will not supersede this Order unless explicitly stated.
4. POLICY: The Department's leadership and engagement with counterparts in multilateral organizations and in bilateral relationships is a critical part of its mission. It helps the Department accomplish several policy goals relating to safety, infrastructure development, system and procedure harmonization, influencing global standards and recommended practices, the safe integration of innovative technologies, and the safeguarding of the economic competitiveness of the U.S. transportation industry. In addition, the pursuit of many of the Department's international activities is critical to achieving broader U.S. foreign and trade policy objectives. To that end, Operating Administrations (OA) and the Office of the Secretary (OST) are encouraged to continue to support a strong international agenda. In doing so, they should plan associated travel responsibly, in a manner consistent both with the policy and programmatic goals of the Department and its responsible stewardship of taxpayer funds. All DOT-funded travel is subject to the availability of funds.
5. RESPONSIBILITIES:
 - A) POLITICAL APPOINTEE TRAVEL MEMORANDUM:
 - 1) Scope:
 - a. Under Secretary, Assistant Secretaries, General Counsel and Chief Counsels, Administrators, Deputy Administrators, and other non-career appointees and accompanying staff.
 - 2) Requirements:
 - a. For each of these trips, submit an approval memorandum in the format outlined in Annex I by delivering a signed copy and Word file to the Office of the Executive Secretariat (S-10) through the EDMS system. Include in the justification the role of each individual on the trip. All individual travel memoranda must include an attached program agenda and detailed travel itinerary that reflects the use of the traveler's time during the entire trip. Your

Agency's Executive Secretariat can provide assistance in transmitting these documents to S-10.

- b. For each of these trips, please also include a completed questionnaire in the format outlined in Annex II, submitted via EDMS with the approval memorandum.

3) Timeline:

- a. Travel memoranda must be submitted 35 days prior to travel for approval by the Assistant Secretary of Aviation and International Affairs and Chief of Staff.
- b. Memoranda received after the 35-day deadline must include a Statement of Lateness from the appropriate office explaining the delay. Late requests risk potential disapproval.
- c. Approval must be secured prior to departure. Approval will come in the form of the Assistant Secretary of Aviation and International Affairs and the Chief of Staff's signatures.

B) OPERATING ADMINISTRATION/OST TRAVEL POLICY REQUIREMENTS:

1) General policy:

- a. OST and all OAs must follow broad DOT guidelines and implement their own policies for approving international travel. International travel must be approved by the Assistant Secretary for Aviation and International Affairs, for OST, or the Administrator, for OAs, or their delegates.
- b. The OAs and OST will follow best practices in developing their international travel approval policies and will adhere to the requirements found in Order M 1500.6B and the Federal Travel Regulations, 41 C.F.R 300-305, keeping in mind that all travel must be a responsible use of public funds.

2) Questionnaire requirements:

- a. The OAs and OST's travel policies must require submittal of the form found in Annex II. This form includes multiple yes/no questions with the intent that most travelers should be able to answer yes to all.
- b. If a traveler answers no to any of the questions on the form, the trip must be submitted for Chief of Staff approval using the memo in Annex I and the procedures listed above. Full justification of the deviation from general travel policies must be provided.

C) OTHER REQUIREMENTS:¹

- 1) In addition, each OA and Secretarial Office is responsible for requesting country clearance and accreditation through the U.S. Embassy/Department of State (DOS) and for ensuring that Department officials travel on their official passports and have any appropriate visa.² The Office of International Transportation and Trade can provide assistance with these matters.

¹ A DOT employee going on official travel can request a reasonable accommodation, pursuant to DOT Order 1011.1B, "Procedures for Processing Reasonable Accommodation Requests from Job Applicants and DOT Employees with Disabilities."

² Office of Security (M-40) Passports and Visas (internal site), http://one10.dot.gov/office/ost/security/Passports_Visas/SitePages/Home.aspx.

- 2) Note that DOS requires Counter Threat Awareness Training (CTAT), formerly known as High Threat Security Overseas Seminar (HTSOS) training, for travel to many regions prior to international travel. Completion of the training will need to be noted in the country clearance. Online CTAT training can be taken on the internal DOT Learns site.
- 3) DOS also may require travel insurance policies that include medical evacuation.
- 4) For travel that is reimbursable by a source outside of the Department, in addition to the procedures outlined above, seek approval through your Office of Chief Counsel (OA officials) or the Office of the General Counsel (OST officials) prior to submission for approval.
- 5) Regarding policy coordination prior to attending international meetings or events, and the requirements to submit annual travel plans and monthly updates, refer to the DOT Order 1240.5A “Coordination Requirements for International Policy Activities and Meetings” dated July 29, 2022.



Pete Buttigieg
Secretary
Department of Transportation

Annex I
Format for Individual Trip Approval

Date

MEMORANDUM FOR THE CHIEF OF STAFF

FROM: (Name)
Administrator of XXX *(or designate)*

PREPARED BY: (Name)
Director of International Programs
xPhone Extension

SUBJECT: XYZ's* International Travel Request

ACTION REQUIRED:

I request your approval of XYZ's International Travel.

STATEMENT OF LATENESS: *(only include if necessary)*

SUMMARY/JUSTIFICATION:

Dates of Travel:

Operating Administration/Office:

Program Activity Title:

Travel Destination(s):

Routine or Non-routine:

Names and positions of Travelers(s):

Non-DOT Delegation Participants:

Purpose of Trip/Objective/Background:

Role of each Delegate at Event:

Estimated Cost/Person *(Itemized by airfare, lodging, M&IE, etc.)*:

Point of Contact:

Chief of Staff

Approved: _____

Disapproved: _____

Date: _____

Comments:

Attachment(s):

Annex II
Format for Travel Questionnaire and Attestation

Date

MEMORANDUM TO THE ADMINISTRATOR

FROM: (Name)
Traveler

SUBJECT: XYZ's* International Travel Request

SUMMARY:

Dates of Travel:

Operating Administration/Office:

Program Activity Title:

Travel Destination(s):

Names and positions of Traveler(s):

QUESTIONNAIRE:

1. Will this travel play an important role in fulfilling DOT's mission and priorities? Y/N
2. Are all travelers critical to fulfilling the goals of this trip? Y/N
3. Are the expenses associated with this travel a reasonable and justifiable use of public funds? Y/N
4. Was an effort made to minimize the length and expenses of the trip where possible? Y/N
5. Is the airfare economy—or, if premium travel (first or business class) is required, has the traveler received a medical justification for the purchase of this airfare. Y/N

If any questions are answered No, follow directions in DOT Order 1240.6 for submittal of approval memo to the Chief of Staff.

Signature:

Date: