

Spring/Summer 2022

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The Defense Travel Management Office serves as the single focal point for commercial travel within the Department of Defense; to establish strategic direction, set policy, and centrally manage commercial travel programs.



Director's Message

Jennifer McPherson-Todd | Director

With the warmer temperatures and increased family time that summer brings, it's a welcome time for most of us and I hope you're enjoying the season! This summer, I'm pleased to address you in my new role as DTMO Director, a position I've held now for several months. I originally started with DTMO in 2012 and am glad to return again in this new role, after a number of years away. My favorite thing about being back at DTMO is the people – our dedicated staff and you, our travel community. Helping my team to help you is what makes this job so rewarding.

It will come as no surprise to anybody who has traveled in the last few months that people are hitting the road again, catching up on business travel, and taking those family vacations that were delayed due to the pandemic. In fact, the headlines all say the same thing – that both business and leisure travel has exceeded 2019 pre-pandemic levels.

Unfortunately, the impact of this travel surge when combined with travel industry staffing shortages and summer weather issues means record flight disruptions. DoD travelers are caught up in the on-the-ground reality of these disruptions and the need to rebook their travel, often in the middle of a trip. The cascading result of these cancelled, delayed, and overbooked flights is long hold times with airlines, hotels, rental car companies, and with Travel Management

My favorite thing about being back at DTMO is the people – our dedicated staff and you, our travel community.

Companies (TMCs). In this edition, we've provided guidance for ways to minimize the impact of these long hold times ([see page 3](#)).

Also in this edition, you'll learn how travelers in organizations that have been brought onboard with MyTravel, our new state of the art travel system that will eventually replace our legacy Defense Travel System (DTS), will soon be required to validate which system – MyTravel or DTS – they should use to book their trip. Travelers who log into DTS to start their authorizations will be taken through a series of questions by the TravelBot and, based on their answers, will be directed to book in MyTravel or DTS. Travelers won't see the TravelBot unless their organization has been fully onboarded in MyTravel.

Finally, for those who were unable to join us for GovTravels Lite earlier this year, we've included a summary of the virtual event hosted by the National Defense Transportation Association, DTMO, and the General Services Administration. GovTravels Lite offered free access to a Travel Academy series and updates on a variety of DoD and government travel programs. One highlight of GovTravels is always the announcement of the annual Excellence in Practice Awards. These awards recognize individuals who are innovators and professionals who excel in their travel management fields, and you can read more about them and their successes in this issue.

There's a lot of useful information to learn and absorb in this issue. Happy reading!



Navigating Travel Disruptions

The good news is that the world is traveling again! Business and leisure travel have both exceeded pre-pandemic levels, giving the travel industry a great boost. If you've been on the road lately, either for official business or with your family on summer vacation, you know that the airports and hotels are busier than ever.

The bad news, however, is that this surge was unexpected, and the travel industry is struggling to meet the demand. Between the increased volumes, travel industry staffing shortages, and weather, travelers are experiencing changes to airline schedules, airline cancellations, and overbooked flights.

Airline call centers are experiencing high call volumes and travelers are facing long wait times. Likewise, when DoD travelers experience disruptions during travel and call their Travel Management Company (TMC) for assistance, they are also experiencing long hold times.

We have pulled together some tips to help DoD travelers navigate through the challenges of travel disruptions and minimize the time they spend on hold. These are just some of the highlights – for a full listing of options, see our [website](#).

We hope that you don't experience a service disruption when you travel, but if you do, use the tips on page 4 to minimize the delay in getting you back on your way!

1. Use the DoD booking systems (the Defense Travel System/MyTravel).

Both are available at all times and allow you to book, change, and cancel travel online. If your organization has been onboarded with MyTravel, don't forget to use the TravelBot to determine which system to use.

2. Sign-up for airline, rental car, and lodging loyalty programs in advance, for the travel companies you'll be using and download their apps.

This will allow you to interact directly with the service provider if you experience an excessive TMC hold time or there's a disruption and receive real time updates.

3. Once ticketed, confirm your seat assignment.

As soon as your airline reservations are ticketed and your invoice has been issued, confirm your seat assignment using the airline app or website. You only need your last name and airline confirmation number for most websites and apps. This can protect you in the event of overbooking.

If you experience disruptions when traveling and experience excessive TMC hold times:

1. Flight disruptions – rebook same airline.

You may interact with the airline directly to rebook your flight on the same airline, maintaining your government airfare. Using the airline app or self-service kiosk in the airport can help you avoid lines or hold times.

2. Flight disruptions – rebook different airline.

Check if your original airline can transfer your ticket and maintain your government airfare to the other carrier. If they cannot transfer your ticket, ask to be “protected/rebooked” on a government rate on another airline, then finalize your arrangements directly with the new airline.

Before contacting the airline directly, you must attempt to contact the TMC. You can only contact the airline if the TMC is not available or you experience excessive wait times. If your original airline cannot “protect/rebook” you, you may book directly with an alternate airline. (Be sure to keep a record of your original unused ticket number.) Request to be booked on a U.S. Government airfare, if available, and make sure you have access to your travel orders (if applicable), and an active travel card. The lowest cost economy or coach class fares accommodations must be used. Any upgraded accommodations must be authorized or approved as stated in JTR, par. 020206-J.

3. Rental Car reservations – rebooking or new reservations in transit.

If you need a new rental car reservation or to rebook an existing reservation you may interact with the rental car company directly through their customer service number or in person at the rental car counter. Ask for the government rate under the U.S. Government Rental Car program and confirm that the Government Administrative Rate Supplement (GARS) fee (\$5/day) is included on the contract.

4. Hotel reservations.

If you need to change, cancel, or book a hotel reservation while in transit and you experience an excessive TMC hold time:

A. You can cancel or change the reservation directly with the hotel. Be aware of your hotel's cancellation policy and be sure to note the cancellation number, date/time of the call, and the name of the person who processed your change/cancellation. Hotel cancel policies may still apply, even in times of travel disruption.

B. You can book a reservation directly with the hotel. Check the local lodging per diem rate [here](#) before booking.

MyTravel or DTS? Which System to Use

The implementation of MyTravel, which will eventually replace the Defense Travel System (DTS), is well under way. The Defense Travel Management Office (DTMO) is working with organizations in the completion of their rollout and onboarding activities, and nearly all have “Gone Live,” but not all have completed onboarding their travelers (see related article).

We anticipate that MyTravel will support more than 80% of the various types of travel by October 2022 and more than 90% in FY23Q2. It is extremely important that travelers use MyTravel when they book qualifying trips. The starting point for accessing MyTravel is the TravelBot, which steps travelers through a short series of questions to determine if that the trip is within MyTravel’s scope. If not, it sends them to the DTS home screen.

To assist travelers to determine the correct system and to increase the adoption and usage of MyTravel when appropriate, TravelBot is scheduled to be implemented in DTS in mid-August 2022. All travelers in organizations that have “Gone Live” in MyTravel will need to complete the TravelBot questionnaire to determine whether the trip should be booked in MyTravel or DTS.

The DTS TravelBot re-direct will ensure that travelers who do not start with the TravelBot have the opportunity to verify they are booking through the correct travel system. When the TravelBot directs travelers to the DTS home screen upon completion of the questionnaire, they are able to continue in DTS. This process will repeat for any subsequent trip created.

TravelBot

Travelers and Non-DTS Entry Agents (NDEAs) whose organizations have been onboarded to MyTravel are required to complete the TravelBot questionnaire for every trip being created in DTS.

DTMO updates the TravelBot regularly to adapt to new MyTravel functionality, so travelers must use the TravelBot each time they book official travel, as travel that was previously out of scope may now be accommodated.

MyTravel Update

DTMO continues to focus on deploying MyTravel, the state of the art travel system that will eventually replace the Defense Travel System (DTS), to DoD organizations on the DAI Enterprise Resource Planning system. MyTravel uses advanced auditing technology to empower DoD travelers and authorizing officials to make travel decisions that benefit their organizations.

The MyTravel team has successfully onboarded 38 of the Organizations to date and they have processed nearly 1,000 expense reports using the MyTravel application.

These organizations are already benefiting from the easy-to-navigate MyTravel application, the streamlined request and expense approvals, and an embedded, dedicated Travel Management Company. And they continue to increase their efficiency with the updated functionality that MyTravel continues to deploy.

For example, earlier this year the MyTravel team introduced Detect for use within DTMO, an automated tool embedded in MyTravel that checks compliance in the post-payment review process, automatically identifying potential improper payments. This feature is “self-learning” and gets better at identifying issues to be corrected as it is used more and more. Increased MyTravel usage will leverage this self-learning capability and will allow the team to further deploy it as part of the pre-payment review process. Once DTMO validation is completed, the tool will be deployed to other organizations.

Recently, MyTravel began to support CONUS-Initiated OCONUS Travel. Travelers departing from and returning to the Continental United States can now use MyTravel for these trips. The team is also working to allow OCONUS-Initiated travel support to be available within the next quarter.

Soon, the MyTravel team anticipates implementing two major components of travel, the new Travel Allowance (TA) module and the on-base lodging reservation interface. The new TA module simplifies the entitlement process when creating a trip and expands the trip types that can be processed in MyTravel. This provides the ability to apply the Proportional Meal Rate (PMR), Government Meal Rate (GMR), and the OCONUS Incidental Expense Rate. It also improves the ease of entering multiple location itineraries. The military lodging reservation initiative will allow selection of on base lodging through the reservation system for all services.

These are just a few examples of what’s being done to expand the capabilities and deliver a modern commercial solution that supports the DoD mission. Increased usage of MyTravel, along with the feedback received, aids in improving the application as we continue to roll out additional capabilities.



We would like to recognize organizations that have onboarded over 90% of their personnel to MyTravel:

Defense Technology Security Agency (DTSA) – 100%
Department of Defense Inspector General (DoDIG) – 100%
Defense Commissary Activity (DeCA) – 100%
Pentagon Force Protection Agency (PFPA) – 100%
Assistant Secretary of Defense Public Affairs Office (PAO) – 100%
Office of General Counsel (OGC) – 100%
Office of the Under Secretary of Defense Comptroller (OUSDC) – 100%
Director Operational Test & Evaluation (DOTE) – 100%
Director of Cost Assessment and Program Evaluation (CAPE) – 100%
Department of Defense Chief Information Officer (DODCIO) – 100%
Center for Counter Measures (CCM) – 100%
Office of Economic Adjustment / OLDCC – 100%
Test Resource Management Center (TRMC) – 100%
Office of Net Assessment (ONA) – 100%
Defense Microelectronics Activity (DMEA) – 99%
Defense Human Resources Activity (DHRA) – 97%
Washington Headquarters Service (WHS) – 97%
Defense Acquisition University (DAU) – 96%
Defense Technical Information Center (DTIC) – 96%
Assistant Secretary of Defense for Legislative Affairs (LA) – 94%
Office of Military Commissions (OSDOMC) – 94%
Defense Counterintelligence and Security Agency (DCSA) – 94%
Strategic Capabilities Office (SCO) – 93%
Office of the Under Secretary of Defense Intelligence (OUSDI) – 91%



In February and March, the National Defense Transportation Association (NDTA), the Defense Travel Management Office (DTMO), and the General Services Administration (GSA) presented GovTravels Lite, providing some of the content that had been planned for the in-person GovTravels 2022 event that was canceled due to the COVID-omicron variant surge.

The free virtual events provided updates on key programs, the start of a Travel Academy series (which continues into August 2022), and a number of other sessions of interest to government and industry stakeholders.

Day one featured a demonstration of DoD's new travel capability, MyTravel. Highlighting e-receipt capability, mobile functionality, and enhanced audit features, the live-action demonstration placed an emphasis on the features important to the travel industry: the reservation booking process and inventory and rate/fare display.

Also that day, DTMO and the GSA held a forum for the bus industry, providing industry partners with a forecast of bus move requirements for 2023 and updates on GOPAX, the U.S. Transportation Command tool used by DoD for booking bus moves.

Day two opened with a lively and informative panel discussion about ways in which the passenger travel industry is reimagining itself. Panelists provided their insights on a number of "hot topics" including "The tech enabled traveler," "Zooming to Nowhere," and "Government travel in a post-pandemic world." Moderated by Tony D'Astolfo (Sr. VP North America, Serko Ltd.), the panel consisted of:

- Dale Buckner, CEO, Global Guardian
- Tim Burke, SES, Executive Director, Office of Travel, Employee Relocation, and Transportation, Federal Acquisition Service, Government-Wide Category Management at the GSA
- William Mansell, Jr., SES, Director, Defense Support Services Center at Defense Human Resource Activity (DHRA)
- Bryan Scott, Chair, NDTA Government Passenger Travel Advisory Council and Asst. VP, Government Business, Enterprise Holdings

The panelists provided their thoughts on the evolving, ever-changing passenger travel industry and concluded with their predictions of ways in which the industry will continue to evolve.

Day three brought us Travel Academy sessions. Session one, Travel Compliance, featured Tom Serrano providing ethics training for industry and government, courtesy of the DHRA. Session two, Travel Partner Programs, provided insight into the airline City Pair Program, courtesy of the GSA.

Day four's DoD Connect session was hosted by Jennifer McPherson-Todd, Director, DTMO, who delivered an update on the state of the Defense Travel Enterprise. She highlighted her organization's continuous reform activities to simplify and streamline the delivery of travel services to the DoD.

If you missed GovTravels Lite, several open sessions were recorded and can be viewed on the [NDTA webpage](#).

Planning is underway for a full-scale, in-person GovTravels event in late February 2023, so watch for more information soon. We look forward to seeing you in person next year!

GovTravels Lite isn't over yet! There is still one more Travel Academy session on the schedule in August. It is open to all audiences and can be joined at the [NDTA GovTravels Lite Agenda webpage](#). See you there!

Wednesday, August 24, 1:30-2:30 pm EDT – Travel Academy #4, Travel Partner Programs: GSA Rideshare/Ride-hail Program Update, GSA

Mark Your Calendar

GovTravels will be held February 26 – March 2, 2023, at the Hilton Mark Center in Alexandria, VA. The theme for next year's event is, "On the Road Again – Industry & Government Travel Rebounds."

Registration opens in September.



Many Ways to Provide your Feedback

DoD Travelers receive requests for feedback from all directions after they travel. It's easy to lose track of the Defense Travel Management Office's (DTMO) requests for feedback in the barrage of post-travel airline, hotel, and rental car company emails.

Some travelers may think that their responses to our follow up don't matter or won't get our attention. Not so! Traveler responses to DTMO's follow-up polling

really do have an impact on the programs and services that travelers use regularly.

DTMO uses three tools to proactively collect customer feedback from DoD travelers. You can also submit your feedback 24/7 on the DTMO website – just follow the Help & Feedback link at the bottom of our homepage. Watch for our emails with links to provide your comments and help improve your experience!

Defense Travel Enterprise Customer Satisfaction Survey

Goes to a random sampling of travelers who have used two or more of:

- Commercial Airlines
- Rental Vehicles
- Travel Management Companies
- Government Travel Charge Card

The surveys are sent monthly to travelers who haven't received the survey recently. We identify shortfalls when traveler expectations have not been met or the required services are not delivered. When we identify trends, the data informs our decision-making to improve travel programs and services.

DoD Preferred Commercial Lodging Questionnaire

Sent to all travelers who booked DoD Preferred hotels and who completed their DTS voucher.

Travelers assess the quality, safety, security, and hotel experience for their stay. Results are scored to create a customer satisfaction score card for the hotel, which is then shared with the hotel and is a key factor in deciding which hotels should participate in the program in the future.

Travel Assistance Center (TAC) Feedback

We contact random end users who have reached out to the TAC and request feedback on wait time, responsiveness, courtesy, resolution outcomes, and contact method/preference. Responses inform process improvement and are reported and tracked monthly.

Excellence in Practice Award Winners

In March 2022, the Defense Travel Management Office (DTMO) awarded the top performers from across the Department who have excelled in travel program management within their organizations. The Excellence in Practice (EIP) Awards program recognizes the travel community for the value they bring and the services they provide to their travel programs. The recipients of this year's awards were recognized at GovTravels Lite 2022 and are featured on the DTMO EIP Award Winners [webpage](#).

THE CHAMPION

USAF Master Sgt. Alma Sarah Ducharme

JBSA Lackland AFB, TX

The Champion was awarded to a Lead Defense Travel Administrator (LDTA) whose wisdom, guidance, and commitment to their Organization Defense Travel Administrators (ODTAs) made a fundamental and long-term positive impact on their travel program.

This year's Champion Award recipient is Master Sgt. Alma Sarah Ducharme for her travel management support to the 433rd Airlift Wing, Finance Management Office at Joint Base San Antonio – Lackland, Texas.

Master Sgt. Ducharme serves the Air Force Reserve Command while on Active Duty orders and also trains the 502nd Comptroller Squadron Travel Office. As the Lead Defense Travel Administrator, she assisted over 3000 travelers, 60 Authorizing Officials, and 100 ODTAs who are military members, civilian employees and U.S. Air Force traditional reservists.

Master Sgt. Ducharme has excelled in service, training, and promoting an understanding of the travel system and



the travel allowances outlined in the Joint Travel Regulations.

She promotes knowledge sharing at all levels including Defense Travel Administrators, Authorizing Officials, and Reviewing Officials, and ensures valuable travel-related information is posted on her organization's SharePoint page so information is readily available to travelers. Master Sgt. Ducharme actively monitors her organization's travel weekly data report to identify unfilled vouchers, point out rejected vouchers, and assists with voucher corrections.

Her efforts to improve her organization's travel program and the personnel that support it, truly demonstrates that she is a champion!

THE ELITE

Portsmouth Naval Shipyard Travel Office

Kittery, Maine

The Elite was awarded to a local help desk team whose superior efforts resulted in continuous improvement and outstanding customer care. This year's award goes to the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard Travel Office located in Kittery, Maine.

Sixteen representatives from that office make up the team. They are pictured: Debra Beaupre, Mary Wilkinson, Nicole Marcin, Kara Capossela, Trish Ramos, Kelly Hickey, Patty Nolden, Misty Eastman, Karisa Durkee and not pictured: Cathy Neal, Sheree Hietpas, Celia Maurice, Kathy Genier, Kim Whitten, Dee Schussler, and Julie Trask.

Portsmouth Naval Shipyard is one of the Navy's largest standalone travel offices serving over 6,000 travelers and processing 3,000 DTS TDY trips in FY21. The Portsmouth Naval Shipyard Travel Office work is challenging due to the sheer volume of travel coupled the complexity and critical nature of its travel. Every year, the shipyard manages multiple Navy submarine maintenance projects that require hundreds of technical workers to be simultaneously on TDY. This requires the team to oversee the processing of a significant amount of DTS authorizations and also the multiple adjustments that come from changes in project production schedules.

To overcome challenges with providing travel support to the shipyard workers, the Travel Office instituted a new process



where voucher material is submitted either electronically, in person, or by appointment. Travel Office personnel now act as a Travel Clerk, and then the traveler reviews and digitally signs their DTS voucher using a dual CAC reader system. This new process has saved considerable time, all but eliminated the use of the hard copy DD form 1351-2, and has been emulated by other large commands. Additionally, the team hosts monthly meetings with shipyard travel representatives to address issues and provides training to those who need it.

The team recently took an innovative approach by establishing a Community of Practice program where all representatives from Navy public shipyard travel offices discuss current operations, DTS system issues, workarounds, and audit topics. The community has been very beneficial for all the shipyards and has led to an overall better travel program.

THE ICON

USN, Naval Air Systems Command

Debra Gilmartin, Carey Robinson, Crystal Moeller

Patuxent River, MD



The Icon recognizes a major command or agency whose strategies and tactics enhance their travel program capabilities for their subordinate sites.

This year's award went to the Naval Air Systems Command's Debra Gilmartin, Carey Robinson, and Crystal Moeller from Patuxent River, Maryland.

Naval Air Systems Command is one of the Navy's larger budget submitting office/major command, conducting an average of 75,000 DTS trips per year.

The travel team has excelled in the area of communication. They use a carefully designed communications framework to ensure travel information relevant to the Command's travel community is centrally curated and promptly shared by

the Lead Defense Travel Administrator office. To expediently share information with travelers, the team uses distribution lists as well as the Naval Air Systems Command Travel Knowledge Management Portal site, which allows the travel community easy access to process tools, policy, best practices, and SOPs. The portal site also allows them to inform users of available training opportunities, conduct training, share resources, and monitor specific training requirements for completion.

THE PREMIER

Connie Lucas

U.S. Army Communications-Electronics Command

Aberdeen Proving Ground, MD

The Premier award recognizes the Government Travel Charge Card (GTCC) Agency Coordinator (APC) who demonstrates an extraordinary and exemplary commitment to cardholders and stakeholders through proactive education, effective communication, responsive customer service, and outstanding program coordination.

This year's Premier Award recipient is Connie Lucas from the U.S. Army Communications-Electronics Command at Aberdeen Proving Ground, Maryland.

Connie Lucas serves as the primary Agency Program Coordinator for the command.

Ms. Lucas was tasked with transitioning the Army Medical Logistics Command from the Army Material Command to her command. She worked with all lead program coordinators to ensure the transition was completed by the end of the FY2021. The transition was successful, and travel disruptions were avoided and travelers received excellent customer service.

Ms. Lucas leads her team of five to be a one-stop shop for both DTS helpdesk and travel card program. The team completed all required DoD program management activities including monthly tracking reports for delinquencies, misuse



monitoring, and maintaining training refresher documentation. She worked diligently with cardholder supervisors to address delinquencies, misuse, and abuse. She continues to demonstrate excellent customer service by contacting cardholders directly to discuss issues with their accounts, sending reminders to cardholders with expiring card accounts to review their mailing addresses to prevent lost cards, and emails travelers monthly with credit balances which helps prevent overpaid vouchers.

Further, Ms. Lucas has also implemented several efficient work processes to ensure her command's travel program runs smoothly. She is credited with converting the program from paper to soft copy, eliminating manual filing of required documents, and used the Command's SharePoint to ensure that all forms were in a centralized for each access. She also worked with the Command's G1 office to include travel card and DTS tasks in the command's in- and out-processing requirements.

Ten TSA Summer Travel Tips

The Transportation Security Administration (TSA) is managing increased travel volume from now until Labor Day and passenger volumes that are matching, and occasionally exceeding, those of 2019 for the first time since the pandemic began.

Follow these tips for a fast and efficient TSA checkpoint experience:

- 1. Face masks are optional, but recommended.** CDC provides health recommendations for domestic travel during COVID-19 and for international travel.
- 2. Follow the 3-1-1 rule for liquids.** Gels and aerosols are limited to 3.4 ounces or less in carry-on baggage. Hand sanitizer has a temporary 12-ounce limit.
- 3. Pack food in a clear plastic bag in your carry-on bag.** When you get to the security checkpoint, remove and place the clear bag containing your food into the bin.
- 4. Leave prohibited items at home.** See the “What Can I Bring?” page and the free MyTSA app.
- 5. Do not bring your firearm.** If necessary, you can fly with firearms only in checked baggage. All firearms must be properly packed and declared with your airline at check-in. Contact your airline for additional guidance.



- 6. Give yourself plenty of time.** Account for airport traffic, parking, rental car, airline check-in counters, and at the TSA checkpoint.
- 7. Empty your pockets.** Place items inside your carry-on bag instead of into a bin to reduce touchpoints.
- 8. Listen for guidance from TSA officers.** Have a valid ID ready.
- 9. Contact TSA with questions/ comments.** Tweet to @AskTSA or via Facebook Messenger, weekdays from 8 a.m. - 6 p.m. EST. You can also call the TSA at 866-289-9673 from 8 a.m. - 11 p.m. EST or 9 a.m. - 8 p.m. on weekends and holidays.
- 10. Enroll in TSA PreCheck®.** It's free to DoD civilians and service members. Avoid removing shoes, belts, liquids, laptops and light jackets. Most new enrollees receive a Known Traveler Number within five days and membership lasts for five years. Click [here](#) to join today.

DTMO's Website Redesign is Advancing

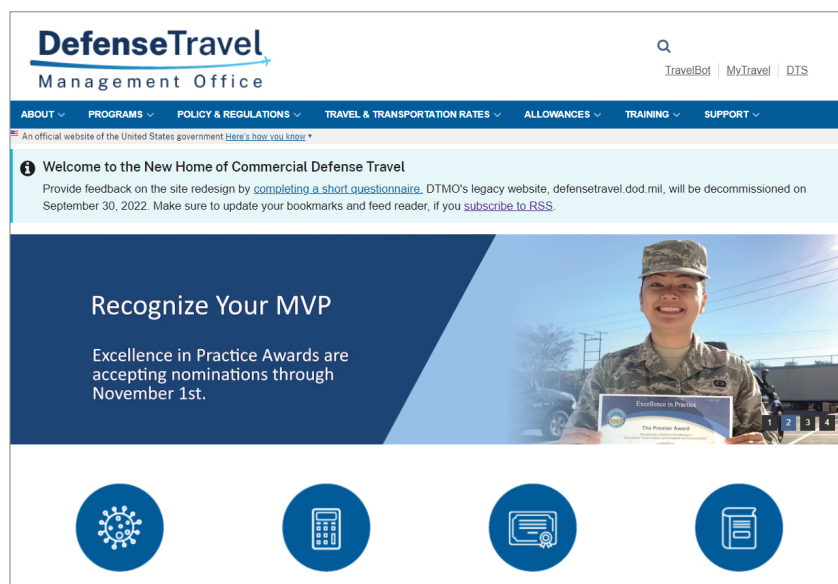
The DTMO website is about to undergo some big changes to better meet the needs of Defense travelers, travel administrators, and other stakeholders. The goal of the redesign is to improve and modernize the interface so that it's both more intuitive for users to navigate and more consistent with the DTMO brand. The new site, which will be hosted at a new URL, travel.dod.mil, is expected to launch in early fall of 2022.

DTMO's redesign effort kicked off more than a year ago with help from the design and technology office of the General Services Administration. The consultation helped DTMO assess current technological pain points and map the path forward for a traveler-centric design. The new site will utilize the Defense Media

Activity's content management system which is the same platform hosting Defense.gov and many other U.S. Military sites, including the Air Force, Marine Corps, Navy, Space Force, National Guard, and U.S. Coast Guard.

Currently, DTMO is finalizing layouts and refreshing content. In the next phase of the project, the redesign team will test the site's usability and functionality across mobile devices, and continue to collect feedback from users in the field. If you have already registered to provide feedback as a beta tester, be on the lookout for an email from dodhra.mc-alex.dtmo.mbx.communications@mail.mil regarding next steps. If you haven't registered to help us test the site, you can still sign up.

Get a first look at the new website by [signing up](#) as a Beta Tester



Our current website and Passport applications will be down for maintenance for 1 - 3 days over a yet-to-be-determined weekend in August. Some applications may be down a bit longer. Additional information will be shared when it is available and guidance will be issued for workarounds.



Welcome to DoD Dine Smart Traveler Rewards!

When it comes to mealtimes, there's eating, when just about any food will do, and then there's strategic dining, when you really want to make the most of your experience. This is especially true now, as DoD travelers are on the road again for temporary duty travel!

Big news! Travelers can earn reward points that they can redeem for gift cards when they eat at participating restaurants while traveling on official business!

"It's a win-win," explains Jade Powell, DoD Dine Smart Program Manager. "While DoD travelers are already required by policy to use their Government Travel Charge Cards (GTCC) to pay for meals when on official travel, this program gives them a way to earn rewards for themselves, as they help offset DoD travel expenses. You don't have to show your military ID at any restaurant – you don't even have to turn in any receipts – all you have to do is enroll in the program. Everything else happens automatically."

So what does strategic dining mean? According to Powell, there are three main

factors: food that you enjoy; dining in a comfortable, safe setting; and earning rewards for your meal.

How can DoD Dine Smart help? By offering a variety of choices and a mobile app to find the perfect dining option when you're on the road.

The DoD Dine Smart program is operated by Dinova, a dining network with more than 18,000+ participating restaurants throughout the United States. Dinova's DoD-approved mobile app helps DoD travelers locate dining options, filtering for type of food, location, and safety protocols. Whether carrying out to take to the hotel or sitting down for a leisurely meal, they've got every appetite covered, and all transactions at participating restaurants counts for points, including tax and tip. "When you throw in the wide range of restaurant options," Powell adds, "Our travelers are going to start thinking about their restaurant choices in a whole new way."

The app displays all participating restaurants on a map, and its search tools

help travelers find conveniently located restaurants that accommodate dietary needs, understand the restaurant safety protocols (mask requirements, outdoor dining options, carryout availability, indoor partitioning, etc.), and get directions.

Powell concluded, “The app makes it possible for DoD travelers to better manage their dining options. Dining while away from home now carries additional considerations that may be affected by local conditions and new individual preferences, of which we are well aware. The pandemic isn’t over, but it has generated a new set of travel norms. The ability to locate quality restaurants, order ahead, use outdoor seating, or carry out and eat in the comfort of a hotel room, while earning rewards points that can be redeemed for gift cards: that’s strategic dining.”



DoD Dine Smart restaurants include DoD traveler favorites like: BJ’s Brewhouse, Bonefish Grill, California Pizza Kitchen, Carrabba’s, Jersey Mike’s, Outback Steakhouse, Panda Express, Pizza Hut, Potbelly Sandwich Shop, Red Lobster, and many more.

DoD Dine Smart Traveler Rewards program enrollment is required to earn points. Take two minutes to sign up for the program and start earning rewards today at dod.dinova.com.

With the DoD Dine Smart Traveler Rewards Program: enroll, eat at participating restaurants when on official travel, pay with your GTCC, and earn rewards points.

Program benefits:

- 1) DoD earns rebates, which support travel budgets; and
- 2) Travelers earn personal rewards, which can be redeemed for gift cards to popular restaurants and retailers.

State Sales Tax Exemptions for Lodging

Did you know that in most states you're not automatically exempt from paying state sales tax on your hotel stay? Only fourteen states and territories offer DoD travelers exemption from state sales taxes for lodging, and even then, many travelers will still need to pay local taxes.

Here's how it works:

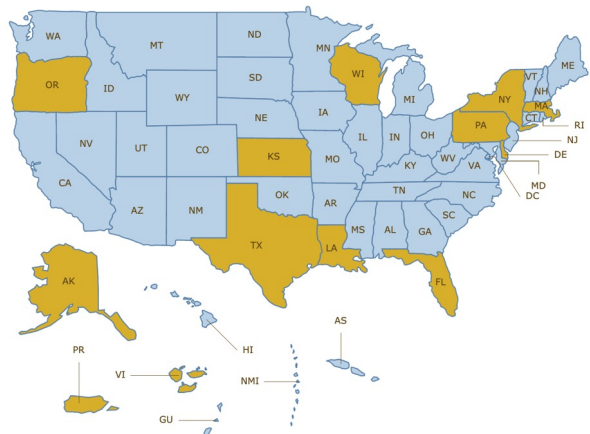
- If you stay in one of the state/territories listed below and
- You pay for your stay with your Government Travel Charge Card (Citibank Visa starting with 4614) and
- You complete the required forms*

...you may be able to claim exemption from certain taxes.

Download forms ahead of your trip from the General Services Administration [website](#).

*For exemption in Louisiana you must download and complete the form ahead of your travel.

The only states that qualify for some type of tax exemption are:



Alaska, Delaware, Florida, Kansas, Louisiana, Massachusetts, Missouri, New York, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Puerto Rico, Texas, U.S. Virgin Islands, Wisconsin

If you are not staying in one of these 14 states or territories, you must pay all state and local taxes. Even if you are staying in one of these states, you still may need to pay some local taxes.

Learn more about state sales tax on our YouTube video, [Tips for Travelers: State Tax on my Stay](#). Just scan the QR code with your mobile device to go directly to the video or visit the [Defense Travel Management Office YouTube channel](#).



Tips for Travelers: State Sales Tax on my Stay

DoD Preferred Commercial Lodging Highlights

The 2022 DoD Preferred Commercial Lodging program is well under way and we thought we'd share a little about the hotels participating this year.

Each year, we start with a clean slate and require that all interested hotels apply for participation. Even hotels already in the program must re-apply, which makes the program competitive, ultimately benefitting the traveler. Hotels compete with rates, amenities, and flexible policies.

The DoD Preferred team uses those criteria, as well as in-person site visits, customer satisfaction scores, and traveler feedback to select the highest quality hotels for the program each year.

There were no new locations this year, we remained at 71 CONUS sites. We did review every single response to our solicitation to select the hotels for the 2022 program.

Some quick program numbers:

- 1,215 hotels received the solicitation
- 367 hotels were accepted into the program (30% of those solicited)
- 17.64% is the average discount off of per diem
- 87% of the hotels include breakfast in the room rate
- 100% of the hotels offer complimentary in-room Wi-Fi
- 100% of the hotels offer same day cancellation of 4:00 pm or later, no early check-out fees, and no resort/urban destination fees
- The majority of hotels that charge for parking have either waived or discounted the parking fee

On January 1, 2022 the maximum reimbursable amount changed in many sites, so be sure to consult the updated rate chart on our website. An updated listing of participating hotels is also posted and program hotels are automatically displayed in the defense booking systems. All program hotels offer comfort, quality, and flexibility for your next TDY trip to a DoD Preferred hotel.

Enjoy your stay!



Two wins from the passage of NDAA



The Defense Travel Management Office (DTMO) scored two wins related to travel and transportation authorities in the Fiscal Year 2022 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA), which was signed into law on December 27, 2021.

The NDAA included DTMO's submitted language within Section 603, "Expansions of Certain Travel and Transportation Authorities". This provision amended title 10 and 37, United States Code, to make permanent several existing travel and transportation authorities that were set to expire after December 31, 2021, ensuring that the Department can continue to pay these allowances moving forward. Section 603 ensures that the Department can continue to provide lodging in kind to reserve component members performing training (who are not otherwise authorized travel and transportation allowances), as well as continue to reimburse mandatory pet quarantine fees incident to a Permanent Change of Station (PCS) move.

Additionally, the provision allows the Department to reimburse travel by a Service member's eligible dependent from an outside the continental United States (OCONUS) permanent duty station to (or, in the case of a member stationed in Alaska or Hawaii, within) the United States to attend secondary (9th-12th grade), undergraduate, graduate, or vocational education. Furthermore, the Department can continue to transport the dependents of Service member's incident to a ship being constructed, inactivated, or overhauled away from the Service member's home port.

Lastly, the NDAA included Section 604, "Repeal of Expiring Travel and Transportation Authorities". This provision repeals travel and transportation authorities (which were set to expire at the end of 2021) in subchapter III of chapter 8 of title 37, United States Code. Section 604 eliminates any confusion about the controlling law after December 31, 2021.

Mid-Year Adjustment to Mileage Reimbursement Rates

Mileage rates for using a privately owned conveyance (POC) for local/TDY and PCS travel are reimbursed as a rate per mile in lieu of reimbursement of actual POC operating expenses. Effective July 1, 2022, see the basic TDY mileage rates

for the three POC types (Car, Motorcycle, and Airplane) and the PCS MALT rate for which the government provides a mileage allowance. The Other Mileage Rate is used in certain instances. For specific applicability and details, refer to the [JTR](#).

TDY Travel				PCS Travel (MALT Rate)		Other Mileage Rate	
Effective Date	Car	Motorcycle	Airplane	Effective Date	MALT RATE/ POC	Effective Date	Other Mileage Rate
01 JUL 22	\$0.625	\$0.605	\$1.81	01 JUL 22	\$0.22 / Mile	01 JUL 22	\$0.22

Do You Have Paper Currency From England?



Check around the house... it's time to either spend your £20 and £50 notes or convert them to U.S. dollars! The Bank of England is removing the paper notes from circulation after September 30, 2022. You will not be able to use them after that date. They are being replaced with new polymer £20 banknotes featuring artist J.M.W. Turner, and polymer £50 notes featuring scientist Alan Turing. The polymer material makes them more durable and difficult to counterfeit.

GSA Announces FY23 City Pair Fares

The U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) Federal Acquisition Service announced July 12, 2022 the award of the Fiscal Year 2023 City Pair Program (CPP) contracts to 8 airlines: Alaska, American, Delta, Hawaiian, JetBlue, Silver, Southwest, and United. This sets airfares for the coming year for commonly traveled federal traveler routes. CPP fares allow the federal government maximum flexibility for immediate travel and includes benefits such as no cancellation or change fees, last seat availability, and no blackout dates.

This City Pair Program contract award represents one of the largest government-wide contracts awarded by GSA each year, and it's the single largest strategically sourced procurement for negotiated airfares in the world. Leveraging the government's buying power, the City Pair Program is projected to save the federal government an estimated \$1.288 billion in FY 2023.



Highlights of the FY23 award:

- Awarded to 12,139 markets (9,422 Domestic and 2,717 International), covering 87.6% of government trips
- 2,327 markets awarded with non-stop service, CPP solicited all eligible non-stop service markets traveled by government travelers awarding 91.4%.
- CPP fares benchmark 45% lower than commercial like fares with no exchange fees, fully refundable, last seat availability, and no blackout dates.
- CPP results in 92.5% (or 11,237) of all awards with two discounted fares, unrestricted and restricted

To decide whether a traveler should use a restricted air fare when a City Pair Program fare is available, Approving Officials much complete the [Restricted Airfare Checklist](#).

Awards are live on the City Pair [website](#) now.

For the GSA press release click [here](#).

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