



How to Make Rail Reservations using DTS

March 07, 2025

Introduction

The [Joint Travel Regulations \(JTR\)](#), par. 020203 outlines the transportation types most advantageous to the Government. Per the *JTR*, par. 020203-A.2. *Preferred Transportation*. “When Government transportation is not directed, commercial travel by airplane, train, bus, or ship is generally the most advantageous method of transportation and should be selected when reasonably available.” The *JTR*, par. 020203-B. *Determination Factors* it provides the AO the factors to use for determining transportation most advantageous to the Government for TDY travel. Travelers must use economy or coach accommodations when booking travel by rail. Use of any other fare type requires the Authorizing Official’s (AO) approval prior to travel.

This information paper provides the steps for making rail reservations in the Defense Travel System (DTS) with the help of the Travel Management Company (TMC) for a CONUS location. AMTRAK (the only approved DoD rail passenger carrier in the Continental US) does not post live train availability to the Defense Travel System (DTS), so DTS can only display a static list of scheduled departures.

In the authorization, a traveler searches for a train, then uses the **Request TMC Assistance** option to send the information to the TMC who books the rail request and finalizes the reservations. The TMC returns the Passenger Name Record (PNR) to DTS. The PNR updates and DTS displays the rail information with the AMTRAK car numbers, dates, times, and costs along with other booked reservations (e.g., lodging). Once the authorization is approved, the TMC tickets the rail requests 3 business days prior to departure.

See the [DTS Guide 2](#) for more information on processing DTS documents. Refer to your local business rules for OCONUS rail requirements.

**In this information paper, unless stated otherwise, “you” are a traveler; however, the actions described also apply to anyone who creates documents for you, such as a Non-DTS Entry Agent (NDEA) or travel clerk.*

Getting Started

Begin by logging into the [Defense Travel System \(DTS\)](#).

1. From the **DTS Dashboard**, select **Create New Document** (Figure 1). The window expands. Select **Routine TDY Trip**.

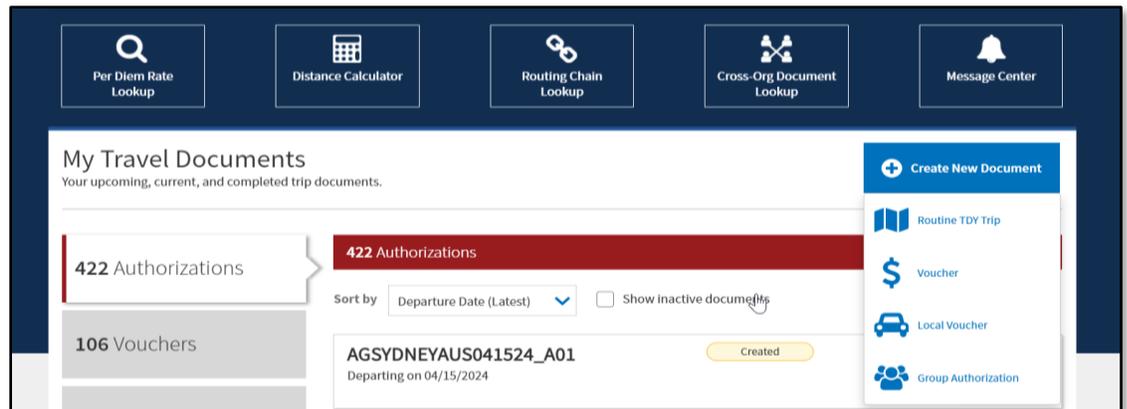


Figure 1: DTS Dashboard Screen

2. The **Create Itinerary** page appears (Figure 2).

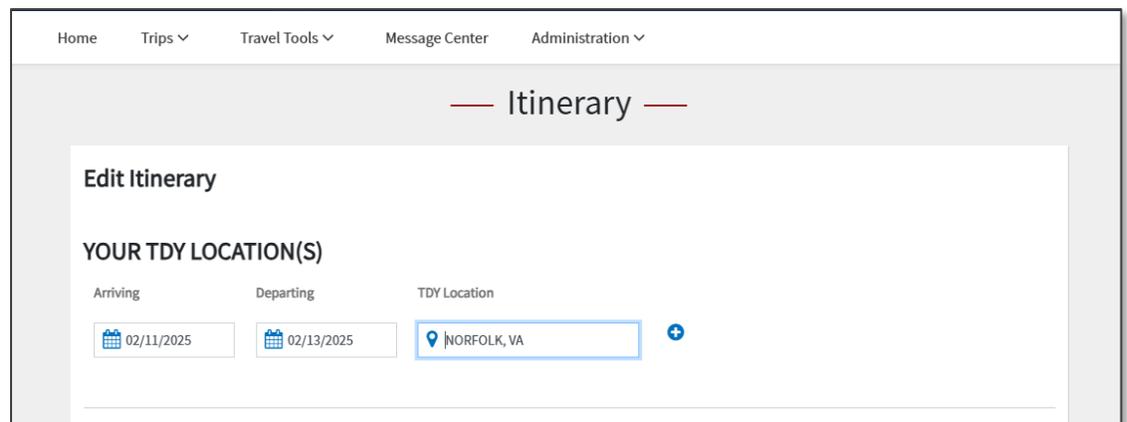


Figure 2: Itinerary Screen

- a. Under the **YOUR TDY LOCATIONS(S)** section:
 - i. Enter your **Arriving** and **Departing** dates.
 - ii. Enter your **TDY Location**.
 - iii. Use the drop down menu to choose the **Traveling By** method. For this trip, select **Rail**.
 - iv. Use the drop down menu to choose **Time of Day**.
 - v. Use the drop down menu to choose **No** or **Yes** for **Rental Car**.
- b. Under the **TRIP OVERVIEW** section:
 - i. Enter **Leaving On** and **Returning On** dates.
 - ii. Choose the radio button or the **Leaving From** and **Returning To** locations.
 - iii. The **Trip Duration** field populate after entering trip dates.
 - iv. The **Returning By** field populates from the **Traveling By** selection.

- v. The **Time of Day** field populates.
- c. Under the **YOUR TRIP DETAILS** section:
 - i. In the **Type** field **Routine TDY Trip** should appear.
 - ii. In the **Purpose** field choose the reason for traveling. For this trip, select **Mission - Operational**.
 - iii. (Optional) Enter comments into the **Description** field.
 - iv. Under the **Conference/Event Name** area, select the radio button for either **Not attending a conference** or if attending a conference choose **Other** or the conference name, if in the list.
- 3. Select **Continue** to save the information.

TSA Information

When you indicate commercial rail as a transportation mode on your itinerary, the **Enter Your TSA** (abbreviation for “Transportation Security Administration”) **Info for This Trip** screen (Figure 3) appears before DTS allows you to proceed with **Rail** requests.

Enter Your TSA Info for This Trip

Please enter the information below EXACTLY as it appears on your state or government issued identification card. When entering last name, do not include suffixes (e.g., Jr). As a Service member or DoD civilian, you qualify for TSA PreCheck for free. For more information on participation or the TSA privacy policies, visit the [TSA's website](#)

First Name * Last Name * Middle Initial

Sex* Male Female

Date of Birth *

Known Traveler Number

Redress Number

Save this TSA information to my profile

Got TSA Precheck?
Your DTS profile does not contain your Known Traveler Number (KTN), also known as your DoD ID Number. To take advantage of TSA PreCheck, you must opt-in by visiting the [Defense Manpower Data Center \(DMDC\) milConnect website](#). Once complete, update your profile with your KTN or DoD ID Number located on the back of your Common Access Card (CAC).

Continue to Booking >

Figure 3: TSA Information Screen

 You must enter your **TSA Secure Flight Information** as part of air, rail, and rental car Passenger Name Request (PNR). It contains the **Secure Flight Personal Data (SFPD)** information

that DTS must transmit to the TSA for watch list screening. The fields populate with information from your DTS profile, but you can change them if necessary.

1. Enter or update your profile information, if needed.
2. (Optional) Check the **Save this TSA** information to my profile box to update your DTS personal profile. If unselected, the information effects only the current document.
3. Select **Continue to Booking**.

Rail Reservations

After the **TSA** information page, DTS automatically searches for trains and displays the search results. At any time, you can add a new rail reservation by selecting **Add to Trip > Add new rail** on the **Review Reservation Selections** screen. To open that screen, select **Review Reservations** on the **Progress Bar**. DTS brings you to the **Select a Train** page.

Searching for trains works a little differently than flights. The airfare is *live* availability whereas, rail is a *static* listing, so it takes a few extra steps to book rail.

Here is how you print your document:

1. On the **Select a Train** page, in the **Departing From** location your residence information from your traveler profile appears (Figure 4). Change the data to reflect the nearest Amtrak location. Enter a city (e.g., Washington, DC) in the **Departing From** location and not the 3-digit Amtrak code (e.g., WAS for Union Station, Washington, DC).

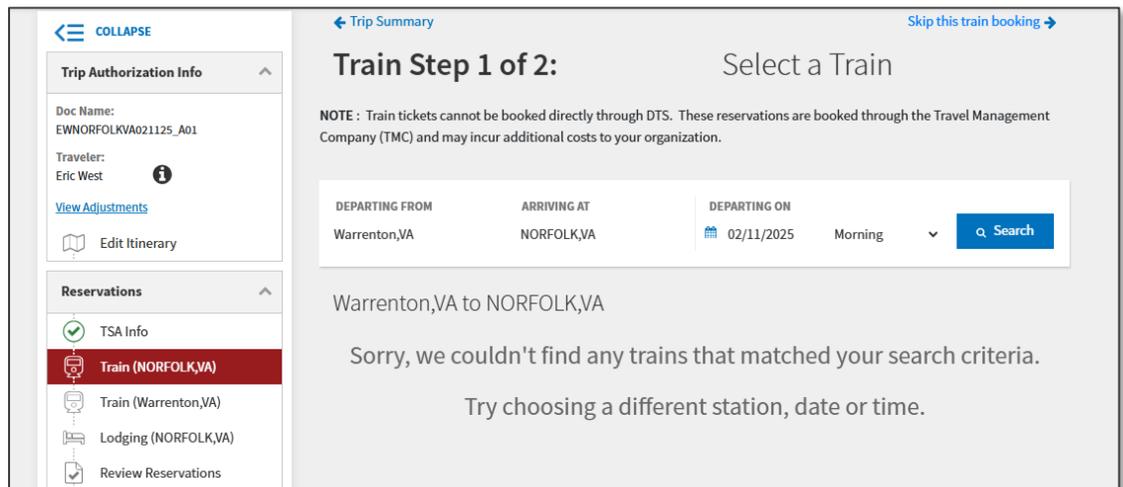


Figure 4: Train Step 1 of 2: Select a Train Screen

2. In the **Arriving At** location verify the arriving **Amtrak** location. Change the city, if needed.
3. The **Departing On** date is populated from the itinerary, so you don't need to enter the data.
4. Select either **Morning**, **Afternoon**, or **Evening** for departure time. **Note:** You may want to start with **Afternoon** first and then change to other times to search for trains.

5. Select **Search**. DTS searches for trains and returns the information (Figure 5).

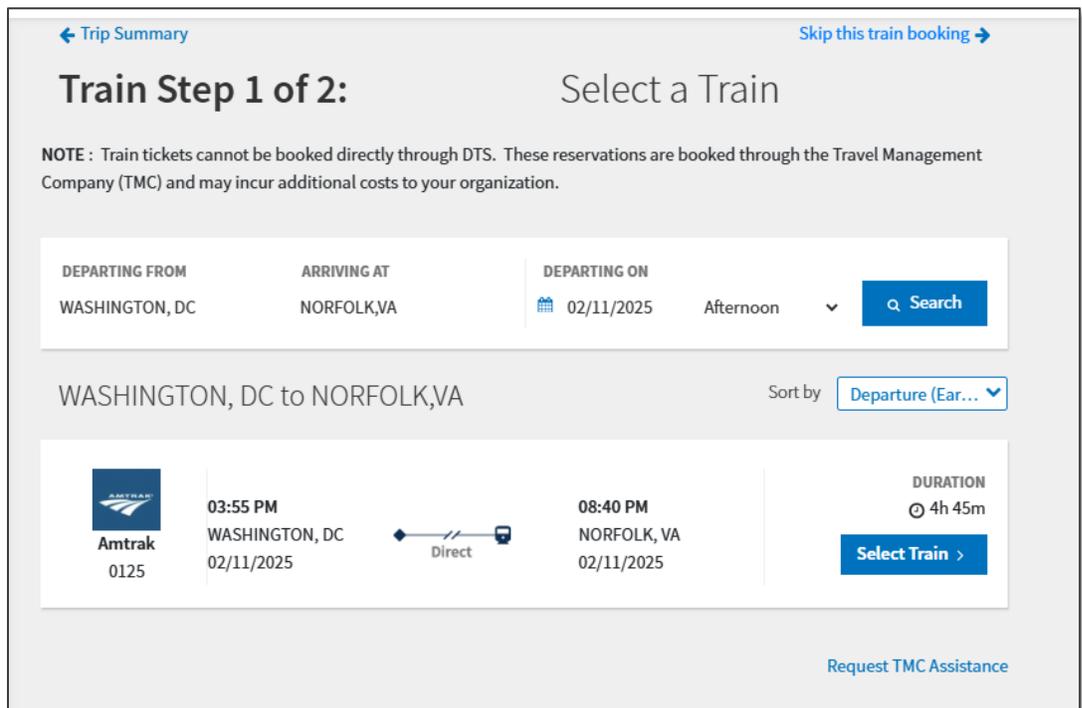


Figure 5: Train Step 1 of 2: Select a Train Screen (Updated)

6. Choose **Select Train**. The **Confirm Your Train Request** page displays (Figure 6).

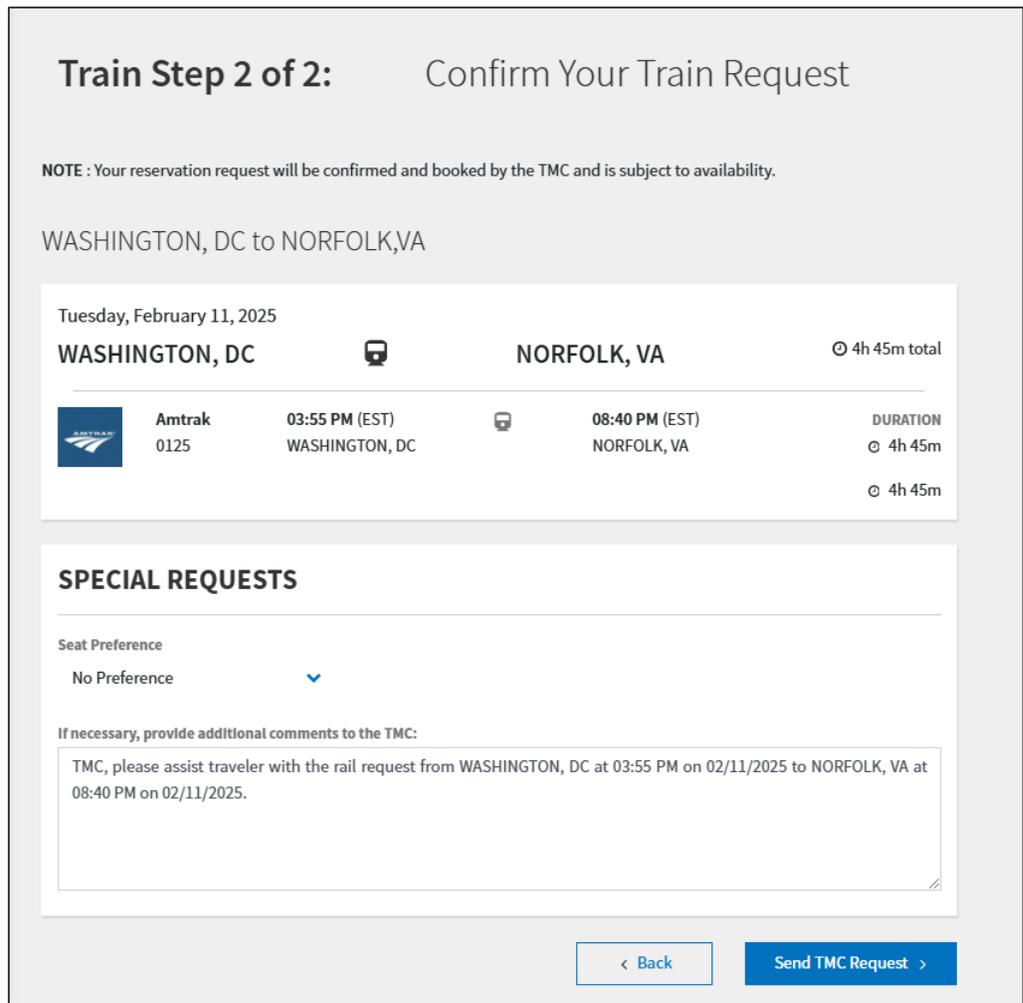


Figure 6: Train Step 2 of 2: Confirm Your Train Request Screen

7. In the first section of the page, the Amtrak train number, departure and arrival locations, date, and time appear. There is no cost yet associated with the rail request.
8. In the second section of the page, the **Special Requests** displays.
 - a. (Optional) Use the drop down menu to select **Seat Preference**.
 - b. In the **TMC Comments** box don't remove the system generated comments. You can add additional comments, if needed.
9. At the bottom of the page, select **Send TMC Request** (Figure 6).
10. After you make the departure selection, you need to make the return. DTS should automatically display the **Select a Train** page (Figure 7). If it doesn't display the **Select a Train** page, go to the **Review Reservation Selections** screen and select **Add to Trip > Add new rail**. DTS brings you to the **Select a Train** page.
11. In the **DEPARTING FROM** location the city should display. You will need to change the **ARRIVING AT** from your residence location to the Amtrak location (e.g., Washington, DC).

12. Select either **Morning**, **Afternoon**, or **Evening** for departure time.
13. Select **Search**. DTS searches the database and if there is a train listed displays the information (Figure 7).

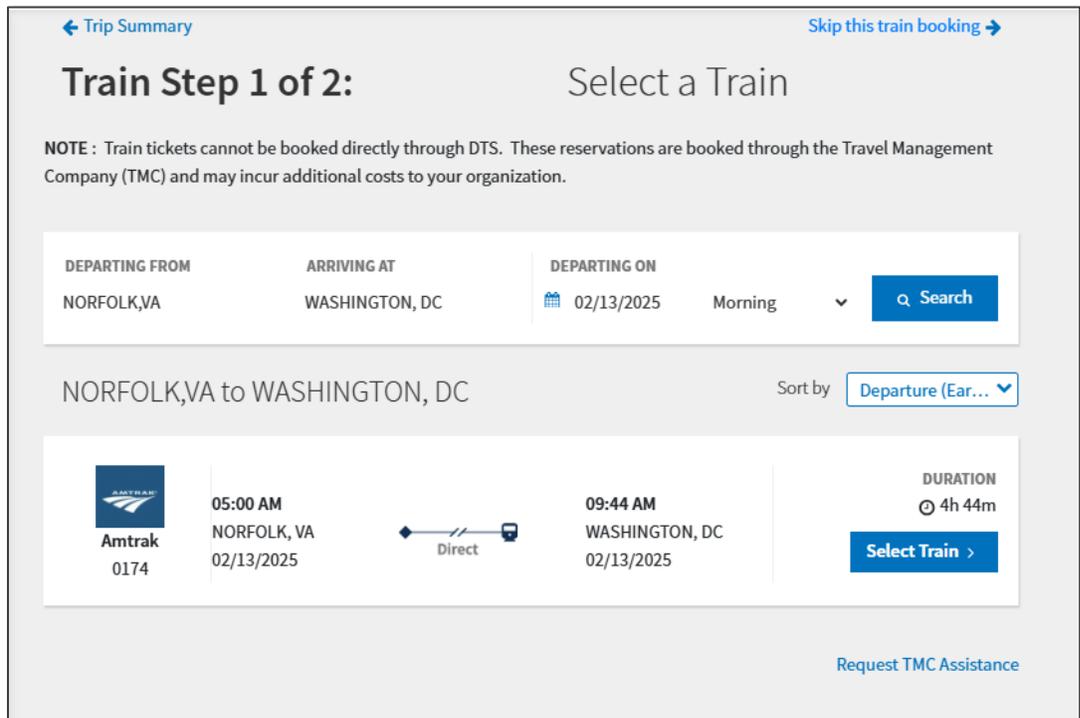


Figure 7: Train Step 1 of 2: Select a Train Screen

14. Choose **Select Train**. The **Confirm Your Train Request** page displays (Figure 8).

Train Step 2 of 2: Confirm Your Train Request

NOTE : Your reservation request will be confirmed and booked by the TMC and is subject to availability.

NORFOLK,VA to WASHINGTON, DC

Thursday, February 13, 2025

NORFOLK, VA	🚆	WASHINGTON, DC	🕒 4h 44m total
Amtrak 0174	05:00 AM (EST) NORFOLK, VA	09:44 AM (EST) WASHINGTON...	DURATION 🕒 4h 44m 🕒 4h 44m

SPECIAL REQUESTS

Seat Preference

No Preference ▼

If necessary, provide additional comments to the TMC:

TMC, please assist traveler with the rail request from NORFOLK, VA at 05:00 AM on 02/13/2025 to WASHINGTON, DC at 09:44 AM on 02/13/2025.

< Back
Send TMC Request >

Figure 8: Train Step 2 of 2: Confirm Your Train Screen

15. In the first section of the page, the **Amtrak** train number, departure and arrival locations, date, and time appear. There is no cost yet associated with the rail request.
16. In the second section of the page, the **Special Requests** displays.
17. (Optional) Use the drop down menu to select **Seat Preference**.
18. In the **TMC Comments** box don't remove the system generated comments. You can add additional comments, if needed.
19. At the bottom of the page, select **Send TMC Request** (Figure 8).

Additional Reservation Selections

After you complete the **Rail** request, you should make any additional reservations based upon policy and your travel needs (e.g., rental car (if approved), lodging).

1. **Rental Car** -

- a. If you indicated a rental car (i.e., Create Itinerary), DTS displays **Select A Rental Car** screen. DTS defaults to the closest airport for rental car pick up. When using rail as the travel mode to the TDY location, you may need to use **TMC assistance** to book an off airport rental. See the [DTS Guide 2](#) for more information on booking a rental car in DTS.
 - b. If you didn't select **Rental Car**, DTS brings you to the **Select Lodging** screen.
2. **Lodging** -
- a. Based upon policy, DTS displays the lodging options on the **Select Lodging** screen (Figure 9). The default listing is by **TDY Location**, but you can change the search.

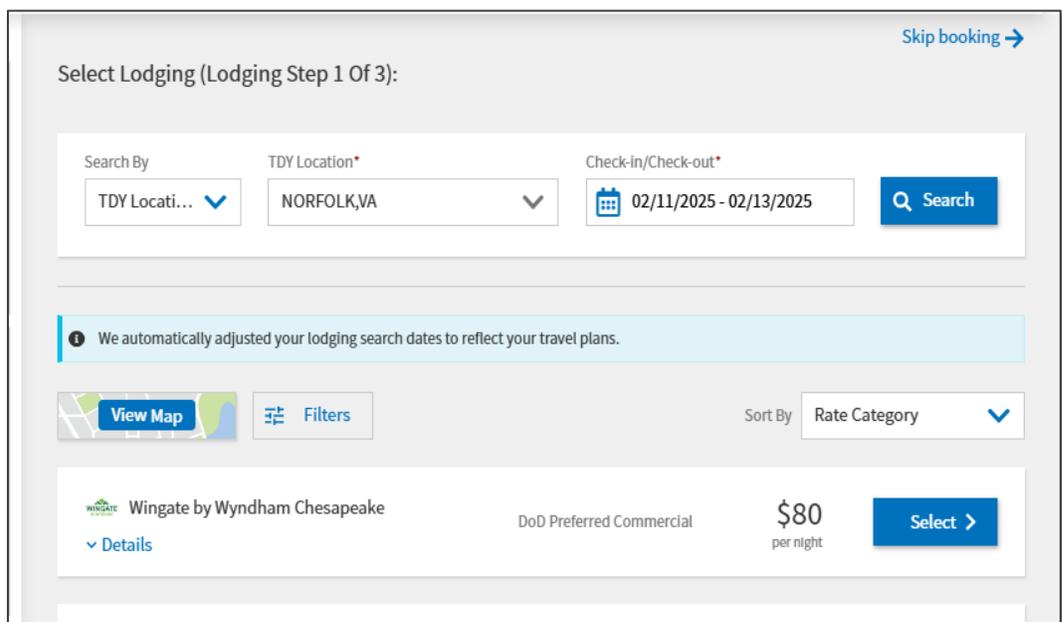


Figure 9: Select Lodging Screen

- b. Book your lodging according to the [JTR](#) and your travel needs. See the [DTS Guide 2](#) for more information on booking lodging in DTS. **Note:** In the **Per Diem** table, if the TDY location is identified as a *ILP Site*, DTS will alert the user.

Review Reservation Selections

View the reservation requests to ensure your choices meet your travel needs. To do so, on the **Progress Bar**, select **Review Reservations**. The **Review Reservations Selections** page appears.

1. The top of the page provides **Trip Details** including **Trip Type**, **Dates**, **DTS/TMC Confirmation ID** or **Passenger Name Record (PNR)** locator number(s), and **Lodging Cancellation History**, if applicable (Figure 10).

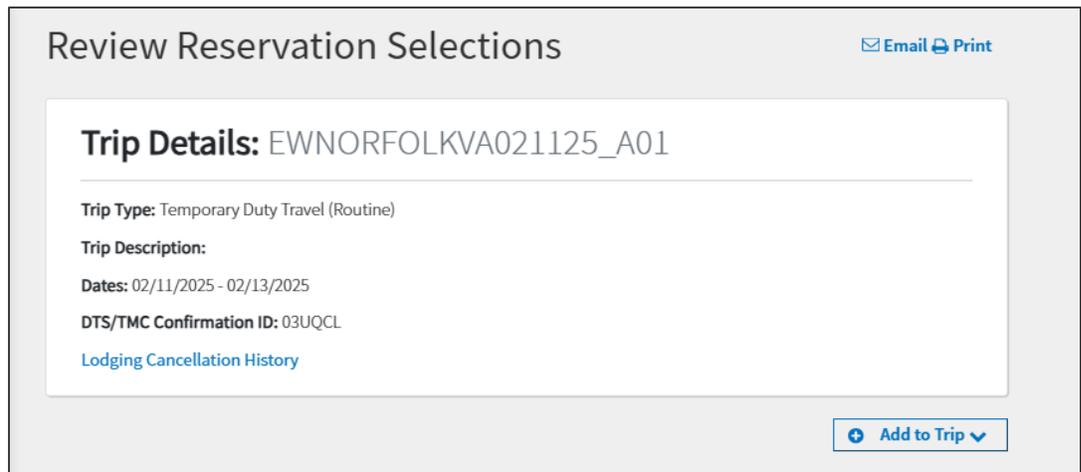


Figure 10: Review Reservations Selections Screen

2. **Add to Trip.** From this screen you can: **Add new flight, rental car, lodging, and rail.** For example, if you realized you needed to add a rental car, but did not so prior.
When rail is your mode of transportation and you are authorized to book a rental car, using the TMC Assistance option may be the best option if the train station is not co-located with the airport. In DTS, rental car pick-up and drop-off locations are based upon airport locations. If you need to book a rental car and you are not in the **Reservations** flow controller or went out of reservations then go back to the **Review Reservation Selections** page:
 - Select the **Add to Trip.**
 - Add **new rental car.**
 - The **Select a Rental Car** screen opens.
 - Enter the city or airport code and choose **Search** for rental cars (Figure 11). If the train station is co-located with airport, then select the rental car and book as normal. If the train station is not near an airport, the use TMC process.

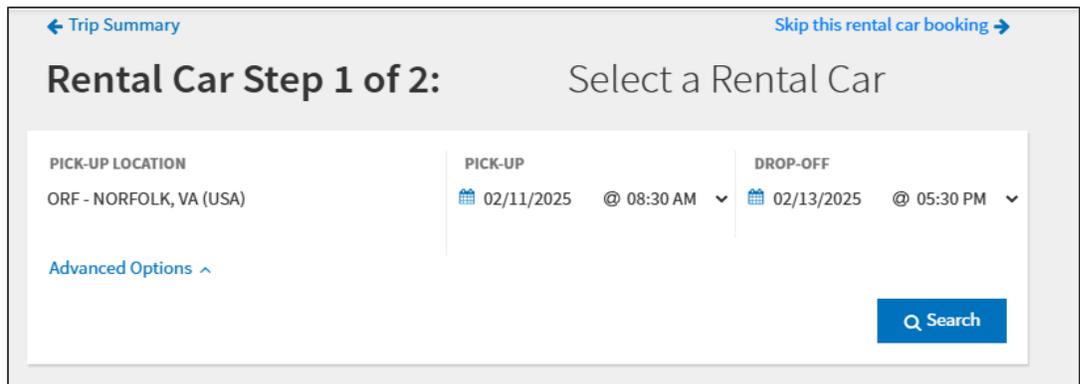


Figure 11: Select a Rental Car Screen

- Scroll down the page, select **Request TMC Assistance** (Figure 12). The **Request TMC Assistance** window opens.

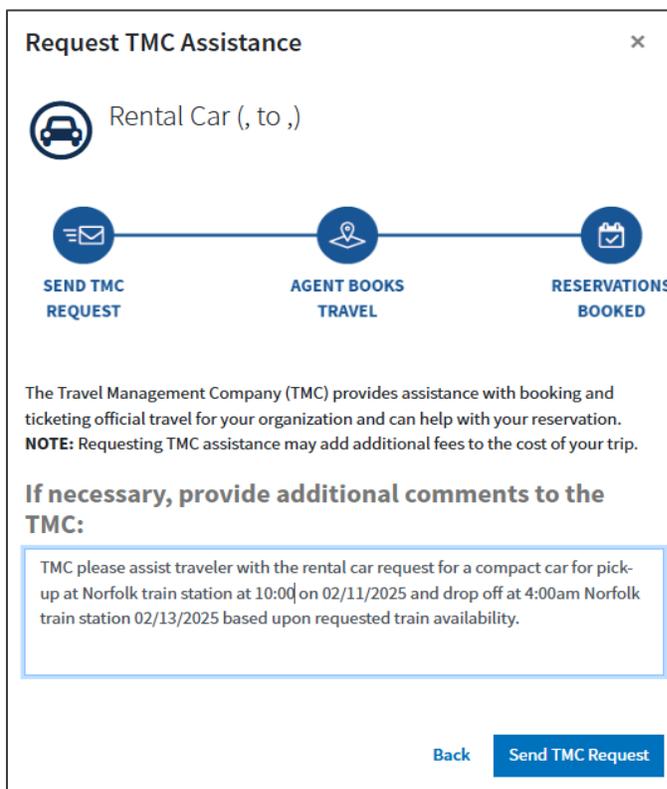


Figure 12: Request TMC Assistance Screen

- In the comments box to the TMC request, leave the beginning remarks in place for the compact car, then ask the TMC to find a pick up location closest to the rail location. Provide the date and time of arrival that you requested for rail booking. Then add the return date and arrival that you requested for booking.

- Send the request forward.
- Return to the **Review Reservations Selections** page.
- The **TMC Assistance Requested** information should appear on the **Review Reservations Selections** screen.

The next section displays your reservation selections (Figure 13). This includes any **TMC Assisted Requested** reservations as well as booked reservations.

3. Review the information.

- For **Rental Car**, DTS displays **Booked**, **costs**, and the **Confirmation Number** provided, or as in our example **TMC Assistance Requested** (Figure 13). After TMC books the reservation and document updates in DTS (**CTO BOOKED**), be sure to return to the document, review the location pick up and drop location, costs, and other specific details.

▼
February 11, 2025

RENTAL CAR

TMC Assistance Requested

Pick-Up Date	Drop-Off Date	Pick-Up	Drop-Off
Tuesday February 11, 2025	Thursday February 13, 2025	ORF - Norfolk International Apt	ORF - Norfolk International Apt

TMC please assist traveler with the rental car request for a compact car for pick-up at Norfolk train station at 10:00 on 02/11/2025 and drop off at 4:00am Norfolk train station 02/13/2025 based upon requested train availability.

Method of Payment*

Government Travel Charge Card (GTCC)
▼

Does this reservation not work for you?

✕
Cancel TMC Assistance

Figure 13: Review Reservations Selections Screen (Continued)

- For **Lodging**, DTS displays **Booked**, the **Confirmation Number**, **Daily Cost**, and **Estimated Total (Lodging) Cost** (Figure 14) along with other specific hotel details.



LODGING in Chesapeake

Booked!

Confirmation:
80582EC026760-

2 nights total
[Additional Lodging Info](#)

FEMA Approved ⓘ

Tuesday February 11, 2025 - Thursday February 13, 2025

CHESAPEAKE, VA
23320

Courtyard
Chesapeake Gre
 Standard Studio ▾
[Address & Contact](#) ▾

Check-In
Tue. 02/11/2025

Check-Out
Thu. 02/13/2025

Frequent Guest Number

Frequent Flyer Number

Method of Payment*

Daily Cost	Estimated Total Cost
\$99.00	\$198.00
	excludes taxes and fees

Does this reservation not work for you?
✘ [Cancel Lodging](#)

Figure 14: Review Reservations Selections Screen (Continued)

- c. For **Rail**, the departing train is first followed by the return train request. DTS displays **Pending**, there is no Confirmation Number, and the **Total Cost** is zero (Figure 15 and Figure 16). The request is awaiting **TMC Assistance**.

 **RAIL** to Norfolk **Pending**

Tuesday February 11, 2025 4 h 45 min total

Washington, DC (WAS)  **Norfolk, VA (NFK)**

 Amtrak 0125	03:55 PM (Eastern Standard Time) Washington, DC WAS-WASHINGTON, DC		08:40 PM (Eastern Standard Time) Norfolk, VA NFK-NORFOLK, VA
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Method of Payment*

Government Travel Charge Card (GTCC) 

Total Cost
\$0.00
Includes taxes and fees

Does this reservation not work for you?
 **Cancel Rail**

Figure 15: Review Reservations Selections Screen (Continued)

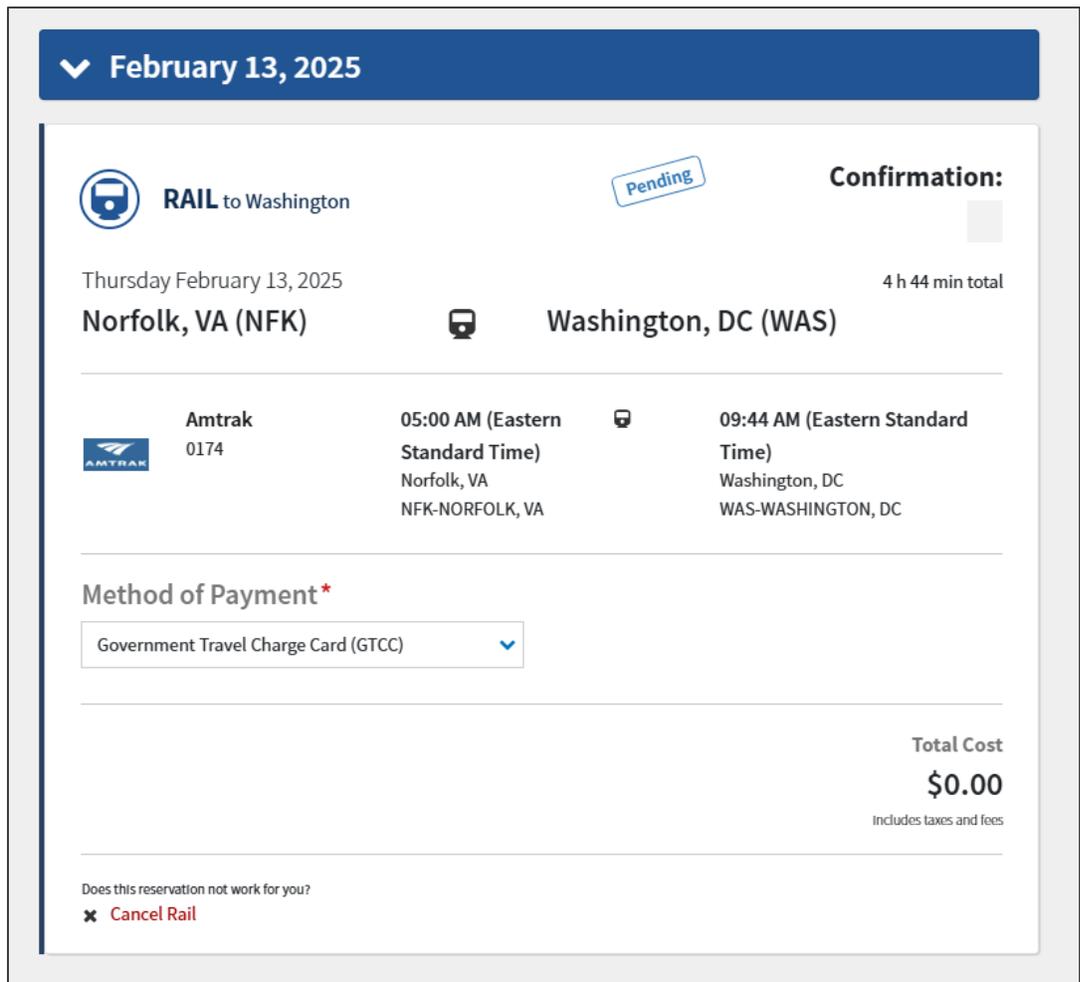


Figure 16: Review Reservations Selections Screen (Continued)

4. If you need to remove a reservation you can do so by first locating the reservation.
 - a. Select the red **Cancel** <reservation type> link.
 - b. Confirm reservation removal.
 - c. Add the new reservation.
 - d. Return to the **Review Reservations Selections** page and confirm the information is correct.
5. The bottom of the **Review Reservations Selections** page provides the **SUMMARY OF TRIP COSTS** (Figure 17).

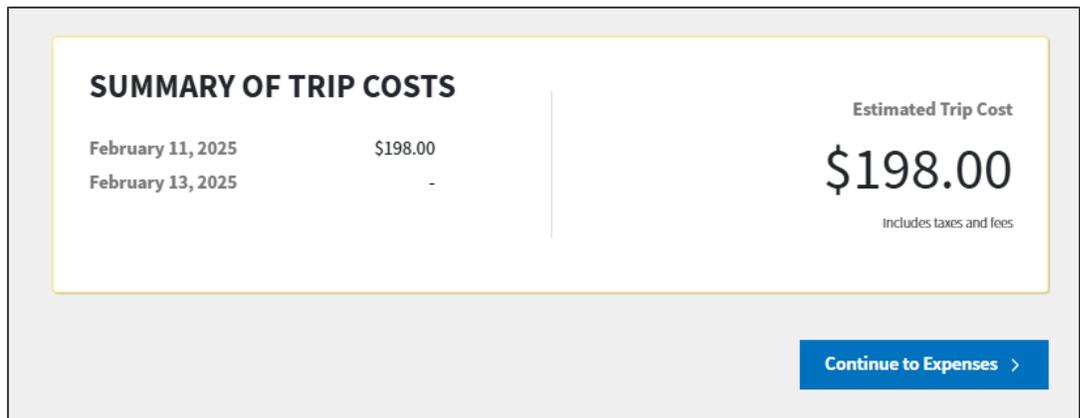


Figure 17: Review Reservations Selections Screen (Continued)

6. **Continue to Expenses.** You will add expenses based upon your trip, see the *Finalizing the Authorization* section.
7. The **Estimated Trip Cost information** will change and after the TMC works the reservations and the PNR information updates in DTS (**CTO BOOKED** stamp).

Finalizing the Authorization

Once you complete the reservations, you finalize the authorization using the standard process. See [DTS Guide 2](#) for more details on processing authorizations.

1. At any time on the **Progress Bar**, select **Expenses**. The **Enter Expenses** page displays for you to **Add** estimated expenses.

If you need attach documents or receipts use these steps depending upon the type of material (e.g., memo, leave forms, receipts).

- a. On the **Enter Expenses** page, select **Add** and the **Add New** window appears.
- b. In the **Expense Category** window, choose **Documents**. Select the appropriate document type such as a **Constructed Travel Worksheet** (e.g., CTW) or **Memo**.
- c. Select **Attach Document**.
- d. Enter **Notes**.
- e. Select **Add**.

OR

To add a receipt to an **Expense** use these steps.

- a. On the **Enter Expenses** page, select **Details** to attach a record or receipt to an entered **Expense**.
- b. **Browse** for or drag and drop to include an attachment.
- c. Select **Details** again to close the window.

2. View the **Per Diem** table. Edit the appropriate lodging row, if you have leave or other items affecting your lodging and M&IE amounts.
 - a. If your TDY location is a *ILP* Site, DTS provides a notice in the **Review Per Diem Amounts** screen (Figure 18).

Review Per Diem Amounts [Reset all adjustments](#) **Adjust Per Diem Amounts**

Click "Adjust Per Diem Amounts" to make adjustments based on your travel orders or duty conditions. See the [GSA State Tax Exempt List](#) to find out if your lodging costs are exempt from state sales tax.

Group similar days [Expand all](#) [Collapse all](#)

TDY: NOSC NORFOLK, VA (3 days)

i The TDY Location is to an Official Integrated Lodging Program (ILP) Site. Per the JTR, if you do not choose DoD Lodging or DoD Preferred Commercial Lodging, then your lodging reimbursement may be limited to the allowed ILP rate unless an exemption (as outlined in the JTR) applies. You may confirm the appropriate rate here: [Integrated-Lodging-Program-Sites](#)

DATE	LODGING COST	LODGING ALLOWED	M&IE ALLOWED
> 02/11/2025 First Day	\$99.00	\$99.00	\$51.00
> 02/12/2025	\$99.00	\$99.00	\$68.00
> 02/13/2025 Last Day	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$51.00

PER DIEM SUMMARY

Total Lodging Cost	Total Lodging Allowed	Total M&IE Allowed
\$198.00	\$198.00	\$170.00

Figure 18: Review Per Diem Amounts Screen

3. (Optional) **View Accounting.** Select **Add LOA** to choose a line of accounting for the trip based upon your local business rules.
4. Select the **Review Trip Authorization** page. Check the information and then proceed.
5. Review the **Other Auths and Pre-Audit** page. Justify any flags and add comments were appropriate.
6. Continue to **Sign and Submit** page. The **Digital Signature** screen opens. View the information.
 - a. Under **DOCUMENT STATUS**, check the box next to, **I agree to SIGN this document.**
 - b. (Optional) **Add Comments to the AO.**
 - c. Select **Submit Completed Document** to attach the displayed stamp. Unless DTS detects a problem with the document, it provides a successful message.

Note: Reservation requests go to the TMC first before the document routes for approval.

Monitoring the Authorization

Once you stamp the authorization **SIGNED**, you need monitor your trip.

Begin by logging into DTS.

1. From the DTS **Dashboard**, under **My Travel Documents**, locate the authorization.
2. To view the document, go to the **Review Trip Authorization** page. Verify TMC action:
 - a. Under **Trip Details for:** Review the **Comments From Travel Agent** (Figure 19).The TMC typically provides the details below, but is based upon your specific TMC contract.
 - i. Rail ticket cost.
 - ii. Information on ticketing and ticket by date to prevent loss of reservations.
 - iii. Amtrak cancellations and changes rules.

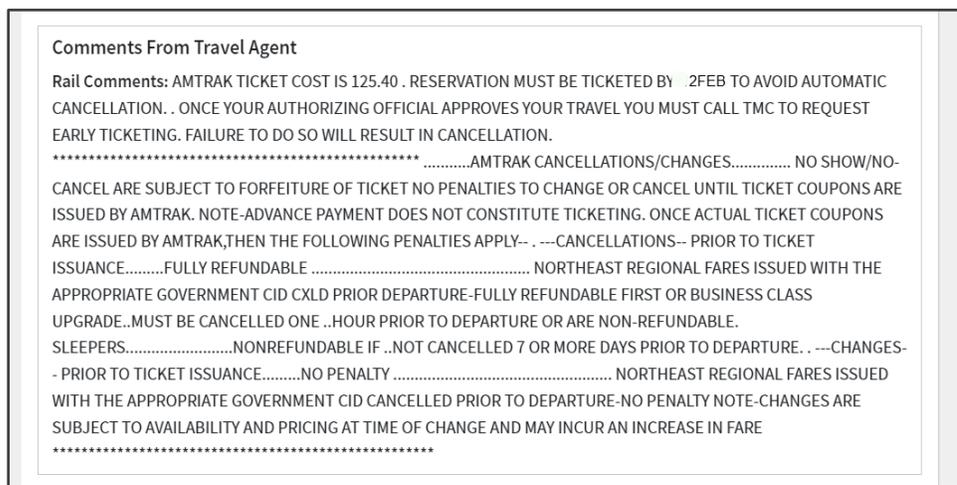


Figure 19: Review Trip Authorization (TMC Comments) Screen

- b. Under the **TDY Location 1**, DTS reflects the following (Figure 20):
 - i. The status bubble **Rail Booked**.
 - ii. The **Confirmation Number**, **Amtrak Car Number** (e.g., 0125), and **Estimated Total Cost**.
 - iii. The TMC books the round trip travel and PNR updates information in DTS. DTS displays **Estimated Total Cost** displays on the first Train segment row.

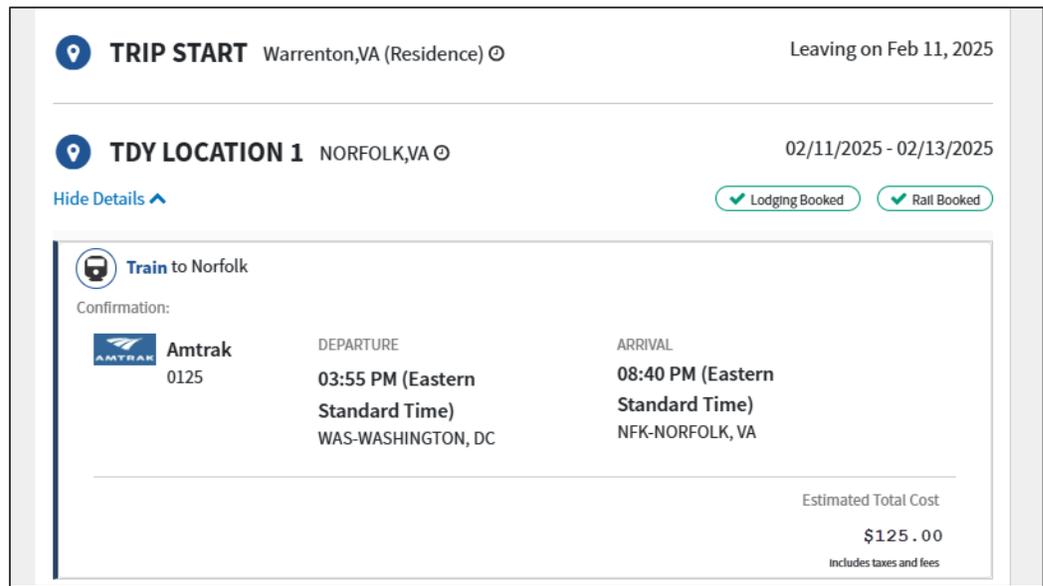


Figure 20: Review Trip Authorization (Rail Cost Displays) Screen

- c. Under the **Reservation Expenses** section, the **Train** information appears. If the cost is \$75.00 or more, DTS indicates Receipt Required along with date, payment method, and costs on the rail row.
3. View the **Digital Signature** page for the **CTO BOOKED** stamp (Figure 21).
 - a. You should see following stamps **CREATED**, **SIGNED**, **CTO SUBMIT**, and **CTO BOOKED**.

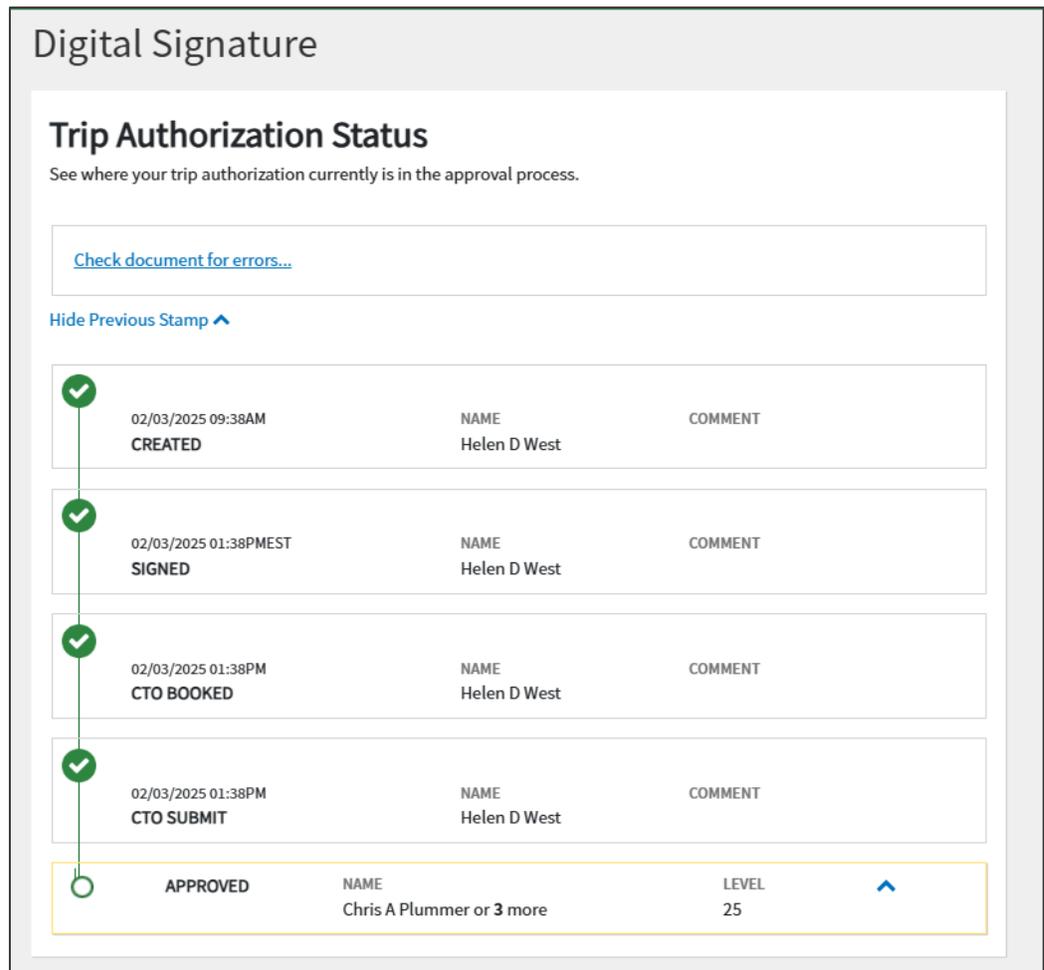


Figure 21: Review Reservations Selections Screen (Continued)

4. Later, check your document for Authorizing Official (AO) action.
 - a. View the **Digital Signature** page for the **APPROVED** stamp.
 - b. Reach out to the AO, if you are close to the departure date and your authorization is not yet **APPROVED**.
5. Check your document for the TMC action. After your document is **APPROVED** and three business days prior to travel, the TMC tickets the reservations. **Note:** Unapproved documents with reservations are subject to reservation cancellation.
 - a. View the Digital Signature page for the **CTO AMENDMENT** stamp. **Note:** Your document may reflect **CTO BOOKED** again instead of **CTO TICKETED** for **Rail** documents.
 - b. Verify you receive the TMC email with a copy of the invoice.
 - c. Retain the TMC invoice for voucher purposes.

Printing a Document

DTS provides the option to print your approved documents under **My Travel Documents** or print when you're inside a DTS document. The DTS **Default** version is the only printable form version.

Here is how you print inside the authorization:

1. Log into DTS. From the DTS **Dashboard**, under **My Travel Documents**, locate the travel authorization.
2. Select **View** or **Edit** depending upon the document status.
3. The document opens on the **Review Trip <document type>** screen. **Note:** This would be Authorization, group authorization, Voucher, or Local Voucher.
4. In the upper right hand corner is a **Print** icon. Locate the icon (Figure 23).

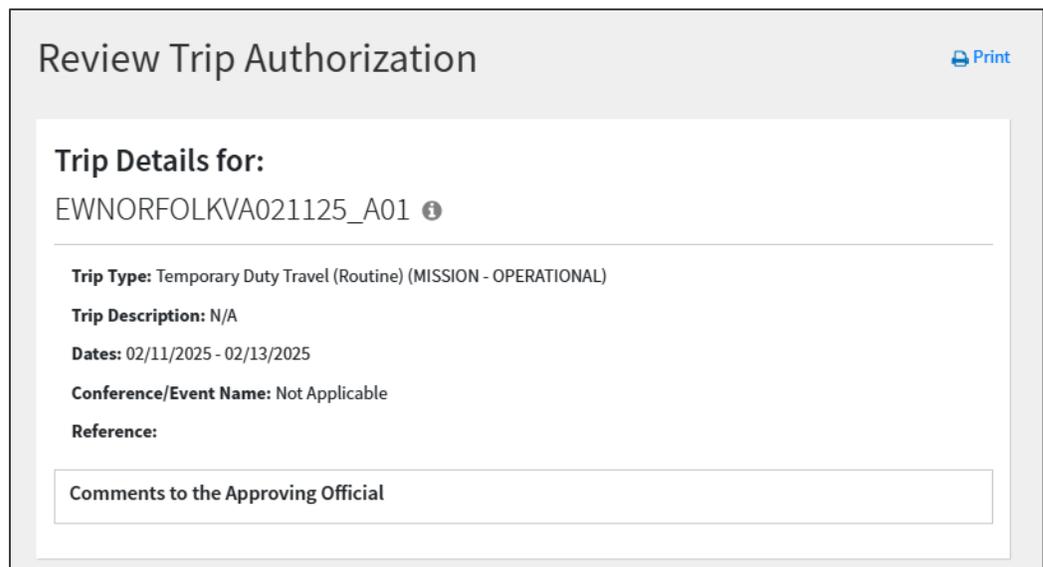


Figure 23: Review Trip Authorization Screen - Print Icon

5. Select the **Print** icon.
 - a. The browser window opens displaying a running list of data. **Note:** The data is broken down by sections based upon what is entered into the actual travel document (e.g., profile info, itinerary, reservations, expenses, per diem, etc.).
 - b. Within your browser window, download and save or print the pdf and store to your preferable location. **Note:** Remember to safeguard PII data.

DTS also provides you an option to print just your reservation details. To do so, after you book the reservations and within an authorization or amended authorization:

1. On the **Progress Bar**, select **Review Reservations**.
2. When the **Review Reservation Selections** page opens, from the upper right hand side of the screen, select the **Print** icon (Figure 24).

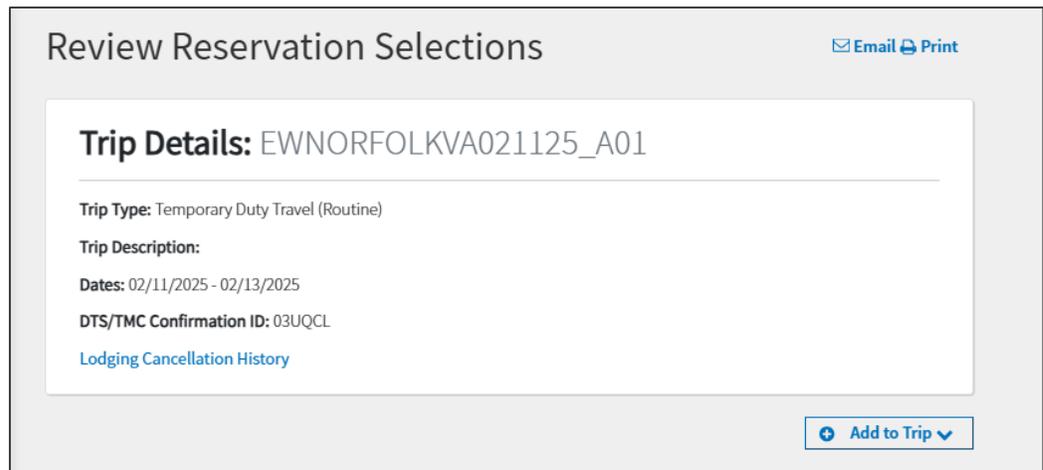


Figure 24: Review Reservation Selections Screen

3. The browser window opens. You can either **Print** or save the pdf.
4. In addition, on the screen you have an option to **Email** your reservations as well.

Resources

The DTMO provides a variety of resources in the **Training Search Tool** at <https://www.travel.dod.mil/Training/Training-Search/>. You can find the specific resources addressed in this document and many more on the DTMO website.

- For more information on logging into DTS, see [DTS Guide 1: Getting Started](#)
- For information on authorizations, see the [DTS Guide 2: Authorizations](#)
- Trifold, [Update Authorization](#)
- For information on vouchers, see the [DTS Guide 3: Vouchers](#)
- Trifold, [Update Voucher](#)