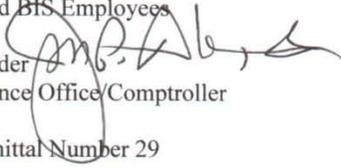




UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
Office of the Chief Financial Officer
Finance Office

October 4, 2011

MEMORANDUM FOR: All NOAA and ~~BIS~~ Employees
FROM: Jon P. Alexander 
Director, Finance Office/Comptroller
SUBJECT: Travel Transmittal Number 29

Purpose.

The attached travel transmittal updates:

- a. The new "Post As Approved" travel voucher submission process;
- b. Record retention policies for travel documents;
- c. Guidance on the pre-clearance process for gift or bequest travel; and
- d. Updated travel delegations.

Effective Date. The provisions of this transmittal are effective October 24, 2011.

Filing Instructions for the NTR.

Remove

Page 301-1-9 thru 301-1-17
Dated August 1, 2011

Page 301-52-1 thru 301-52-4
dated March 1, 2010

Insert

Page 301-1-9 thru 301-1-18
Dated October 24, 2011

Page 301-52-1 thru 301-52-6
dated October 24, 2011

Background.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Finance Office, in conjunction with the Office of the Chief Administrative Office (OCAO), is implementing procedures for the retention of travel records as part of the Integrated Travel Manager (ITM) Post As Approved project. These procedures are only applicable to Temporary Duty (TDY) and local travel documents and do not pertain to Permanent Change of Station (PCS).

Effective October 24, 2011 Travel Vouchers will no longer require hard copy submission to your servicing Finance Branch. This change does not apply to Travel Vouchers selected for audit and Travel Vouchers belonging to Excepted Employees and Invitational Travelers. Travel Vouchers

meeting one of the exceptions mentioned will continue to require hard copy submission to your servicing Finance Branch for payment.

Policy.

All ORIGINAL travel documents will be retained by the Line/Staff Offices. This also includes NOAA Corps travelers. It is recommended the Traveler, Voucher Preparer, and Approving Official retain a complete travel package for all electronically routed documents. A complete travel package is defined as an approved Travel Voucher, all associated receipts and any other necessary documents to support the claim. Each of these individuals will serve as Finance Office points of contact in the event documents need to be retrieved for Financial Statement (FS) audits, Office of the Inspector General (OIG) audits, Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests, etc. Having all three individuals retain a complete travel package mitigates the risk of not being able to retrieve a copy of the travel package while maintaining compliance with the Travel Record Retention Policy. Although the recommendation is to have all three individuals maintain a complete travel package, Line/Staff Offices may define which of these three individuals has the ultimate responsibility for retaining the documents so long as the office is in compliance with the record retention requirements as outlined below. Specific Line/Staff Office procedures will need to be documented, reviewed and approved by the NOAA CFO if they deviate from the recommended approach defined in this Policy.

Travelers, Voucher Preparers, and/or Approving Officials are designated as the document retention officials for travel documents and will be responsible for ensuring travel documents they prepare or approve are retained in accordance with both the NOAA Travel Regulation (NTR), Chapter 301-52.32, and Federal record retention requirements. As such these documents must be retained in accordance with Function Number 400 Maintenance and Disposition of Finance and Fiscal Functional Files of NOAA records control schedules. Specifically, NOAA, item 403-15, cites that travel files must be maintained for 6 years and 3 months after the period covering the account. These files must be shredded to safeguard against unauthorized disclosure of Personally Identifiable Information (PII) contained in the records. However, if these records are subject to an on-going investigation or pending litigation, then they cannot be destroyed until the litigation hold is lifted by General Counsel even if the retention period for these records has expired.

The policy for non-routing (Excepted and Invitational) travel vouchers remains in place as today with one slight modification. The current process requires the original document with ink signature to be forwarded to the servicing Finance Office. With the implementation of Post As Approved, a photo-copy of the signed voucher with receipts should be forwarded to the appropriate servicing Finance Office. Originals should be kept in the field.

If the Finance Office requires a copy of the complete travel package, the servicing Finance Branch will request the travel documents on an “*as needed*” basis for purposes to include but not limited to:

- a. Random audit sampling related to annual DOC FS audit;
- b. Congressional, Departmental and/or FOIA requests; and

c. Record retention compliance.

The Traveler, Voucher Preparer, and/or Approving Official as defined within this policy and/or the specific Line/Staff Office travel document record retention procedures will be required to forward a copy of the complete travel package in accordance with NTR, Chapter 301-52.32 to the servicing Finance Branch within five (5) business days of the audit request or within a reasonable timeframe if the records were transferred to the Federal Records Center (FRC).

To reduce the burden of paper storage, Travelers, Voucher Preparers, and/or Approving Officials may work with their Line/Staff Office designated NOAA Records Liaison Officer to transfer inactive travel files to the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) Federal Records Centers (FRC's) facilities located across the country for temporary storage. Although Line/Staff Offices have the option of storing these records in-house, they should consider retaining the inactive travel files in-house for 3 years, and then transferring them to the FRC for the remaining 3 years and 3 months to conserve space. Records scheduled to be destroyed within 1 year of the 6 year 3 month retention period should not be sent to the FRC.

Electronically scanning the original receipts and keeping them for the required retention period is an acceptable alternative to paper storage provided a file back-up process is in place for safeguarding records and NOAA policies regarding PII and sensitive data are followed. Please reference NARA General Records Schedule 20 – Electronic Records, Item 3 Electronic Records That Replace Temporary Hard Copy Records accordingly. Retrieval of electronically scanned copies must take into consideration the:

1. Ease of access if needed for audit or any other purposes; and
2. Ability to identify the travel voucher and traveler the receipts are associated with as they would need to be submitted together upon request.

Contact Information.

Policy updates regarding travel voucher submission/record retention are posted via this transmittal which is posted on the NOAA Travel Office (NTO) website at <http://www.corporateservices.noaa.gov/~finance/TR.trans29a.pdf>. Please visit our website to view or to update your NTR.

For policy questions, please contact:
Chasity.N.Donaldson@noaa.gov/ (301) 444-2129 or
Rachael.S.Wivell@noaa.gov/(301) 444-2136

For ITM system questions, please contact:
clientservices@noaa.gov/(301)444-3400, Option 2.

For additional information on record retention and record storage, please contact NOAA's Records Officer:
andre.sivels@noaa.gov/(301)713-3540, ext -213
For more information on records management please visit the NOAA Records Management webpage at http://www.corporateservices.noaa.gov/audit/records_management/.

NOAA TRAVEL REGULATION (NTR) CHECKSHEET FOR CHAPTERS 300 and 301

Following is a list of pages currently in effect in the NTR. This check sheet is to be used to verify the accuracy of the NTR.

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301-1.23 Who has the authority to authorize foreign travel?

Officials listed in *NTR, Chapter 301-1.20*
CFO/CAO, NWS
Director of the Office of Strategic Planning and Policy, NWS
CIO, NWS
Directors, Financial Management Centers, NWS
Chief Financial Officer/Chief Administrative Officer, OAR
Deputy Chief Financial Officer/Chief Administrative Officer, OAR
Director, Management and Organizational Development, OAR
Directors, OAR Laboratories, OAR
Deputy/Assistant Directors, OAR Laboratories, OAR
Division Directors, Earth System Research Laboratory, OAR
Director, National Sea Grant College Program, OAR
Director, Climate Program Offices, OAR
Director, Ocean Exploration and Research, OAR
Director, Office of Weather and Air Quality, OAR
Director, Policy, Planning and Evaluation, OAR
Chief Financial Officer, NMFS
Regional Administrators, NMFS
Science Center Directors, NMFS
Chief, of Staff, Office of the Assistant Administrator, NESDIS
Deputy Chief, of Staff, Office of the Assistant Administrator, NESDIS
Director, Strategic Planning Office, Program Planning and Integration (PPI)
Director, Office of Legislative and Intergovernmental Affairs (OLIA)
Associate Director, OLIA
Operations Manager, OLIA
Deputy Director, Marine and Aviation Operations (OMAO)
Deputy Director, Marine and Aviation Operations Center(MAOC)
Chief Financial Officer and Deputy Chief Financial Officer (OMAO)
Deputy Director, Marine Operations Center (MOC)
Director, Marine Operations Center (MOC)
Commanding Officer, Atlantic Marine Operations Center (MOC-A)
Commanding Officer, Pacific Marine Operations Center (MOC-P)
Commanding Officer, Aircraft Operations Center (AOC)
Director, Commissioned Personnel Center (CPC)

- Foreign travel for Presidential Appointees must be authorized by the Under Secretary and Administrator.
- Foreign travel for the Director, Marine and Aviation Operations Centers and Director, Commissioned Personnel Center will be authorized by the Director, NOAA Marine and Aviation Operations.
- Foreign travel for Assistant Administrators of Line Offices and Directors of Corporate Offices, will be authorized by the Under Secretary and Administrator, Assistant Secretary and Deputy Administrator, or the Deputy Under Secretary.
(All requests for foreign travel will be authorized and processed in accordance with DOC Travel Handbook, Chapter 306, and NTR, Chapter 306.)

301-1.24 Who has the authority to authorize domestic/non-foreign invitational travel?

Officials listed in *NTR, Chapter 301-1.20*
Directors, All NWS Headquarters Offices
Directors, All NWS Regions
Director, NWS Training Center
Director, NWS National Data Buoy Center
Chief Financial Officer/Chief Administrative Officer, OAR
Deputy Chief Financial Officer/Chief Administrative Officer, OAR
Director, Management and Organizational Development, OAR
Directors, OAR Laboratories, OAR
Deputy/Assistant Directors, OAR Laboratories, OAR
Division Directors, Earth System Research Laboratory, OAR
Division Chiefs, OAR Laboratories, OAR
Director, National Sea Grant College Program, OAR
Deputy Director, National Sea Grant College Program, OAR
Director, Office of Weather and Air Quality, OAR
Director, Climate Program Offices, OAR
Deputy Assistant Director, Climate Program Offices, OAR
Director, Ocean Exploration and Research, OAR
Deputy Director, Ocean Exploration and Research, OAR
Director, Policy, Planning and Evaluation, OAR
Chief, of Staff, Office of the Assistant Administrator, NESDIS
Deputy Chief, of Staff, Office of the Assistant Administrator, NESDIS
Regional Administrators, NMFS
Science Directors, NMFS
Office Directors and Deputies, NMFS

Laboratory Directors, NMFS
Chief of Enforcement and Deputy, NMFS
Special Agents in Charge, NMFS
Division Chiefs, NMFS
Director, NOAA Coastal Services Center, NOS
Program Manager, NOAA Coastal Services Center, NOS
Director, Center for Operational Oceanographic Products and Services, NOS
Director, National Centers for Coastal Ocean Science, NOS
Director, Center for Coastal Environmental Health and Biomolecular Research at Charleston, NOS
Director, Center for Coastal Fisheries and Habitat Research at Beaufort, NOS
Director, Office of Response and Restoration, NOS
Chief, Hazardous Materials Response Division, NOS
Chief, Coastal Protection and Restoration Division, NOS
Director, Office of Legislative and Intergovernmental Affairs (OLIA)
Associate Director, OLIA
Operations Manager, OLIA
Deputy Director, Marine and Aviation Operations (OMAO)
Deputy Director, Marine and Aviation Operations Center(MAOC)
Chief Financial Officer and Deputy Chief Financial Officer (OMAO)
Deputy Director, Marine Operations Center (MOC)
Director, Marine Operations Center (MOC)
Commanding Officer, Atlantic Marine Operations Center (MOC-A)
Commanding Officer, Pacific Marine Operations Center (MOC-P)
Commanding Officer, Aircraft Operations Center (AOC)
Director, Commissioned Personnel Center (CPC)
See FTR & NTR Chapters 301-1

301-1.25 Who has the authority to authorize domestic/non-foreign blanket travel?

Officials listed in *NTR, Chapter 301-1.20*
Directors, All NWS Headquarters Offices
Directors, All NWS Regions
Director, NWS Training Center
Director, NWS National Data Buoy Center
Chief Financial Officer/Chief Administrative Officer, OAR
Deputy Chief Financial Officer/Chief Administrative Officer, OAR
Director, Management and Organizational Development, OAR
Directors, OAR Laboratories, OAR

Deputy/Assistant Directors, OAR Laboratories, OAR
Division Directors, Earth System Research Laboratory, OAR
Division Chiefs, OAR Laboratories, OAR
Director, National Sea Grant College Program, OAR
Deputy Director, National Sea Grant College Program, OAR
Director, Climate Program Offices, OAR
Deputy Assistant Director, Climate Program Offices, OAR
Director, Ocean Exploration and Research, OAR
Deputy Director, Ocean Exploration and Research, OAR
Director, Office of Weather and Air Quality, OAR
Director, Policy, Planning and Evaluation, OAR
Regional Administrators, NMFS
Science Directors, NMFS
Office Directors and Deputies, NMFS
Chief of Enforcement and Deputy, NMFS
Directors, Center for Operational Oceanographic Products and Services, NOS
Director, Office of Response and Restoration, NOS
Chief, Hazardous Materials Response Division, NOS
Chief, Coastal Protection and Restoration Division, NOS
Director, National Centers for Coastal Ocean Science, NOS
Director, Office of National Geodetic Survey, NOS
Director, Office of Coast Survey, NOS
Director, Office of Aeronautical Charting and Cartography, NOS
Director, Office of Legislative and Intergovernmental Affairs (OLIA)
Associate Director, OLIA
Operations Manager, OLIA
Deputy Director, Marine and Aviation Operations (OMAO)
Deputy Director, Marine and Aviation Operations Center(MAOC)
Chief Financial Officer and Deputy Chief Financial Officer (OMAO)
Deputy Director, Marine Operations Center (MOC)
Director, Marine Operations Center (MOC)
Commanding Officer, Atlantic Marine Operations Center (MOC-A)
Commanding Officer, Pacific Marine Operations Center (MOC-P)
Commanding Officer, Aircraft Operations Center (AOC)
Director, Commissioned Personnel Center (CPC)
See NTR, Chapter 301-2.

NOAA TRAVEL REGULATION

Chapter 301--Travel Allowances

301-1.26

301-1.26 Who has the authority to authorize actual expenses for domestic/non-foreign travel?

Officials listed in *NTR, Chapter 301-1.20*

OFA Office Directors

Directors, All NWS Headquarters Offices

Directors, All NWS Regions

Director, NWS Training Center

Director, NWS National Data Buoy Center

Chief Financial Officer/Chief Administrative Officer, OAR

Deputy Chief Financial Officer/Chief Administrative Officer, OAR

Director, Management and Organizational Development, OAR

Directors, OAR Laboratories, OAR

Deputy/Assistant Directors, OAR Laboratories, OAR

Division Directors, Earth System Research Laboratory, OAR

Director, Climate Program Offices, OAR

Deputy Assistant Director, Climate Program Offices, OAR

Director, National Sea Grant College Program, OAR

Deputy Director, National Sea Grant College Program, OAR

Director, Ocean Exploration and Research, OAR

Deputy Director, Ocean Exploration and Research, OAR

Director, Office of Weather and Air Quality, OAR

Director, Policy, Planning and Evaluation, OAR

Director, Office of Research Technology and Applications, OAR

Regional Administrators, NMFS

Science Directors, NMFS

Office Directors and Deputies, NMFS

Laboratory Directors, NMFS

Chief of Enforcement and Deputy, NMFS Chief Financial Officer (CFO)

CFO/CAO, NESDIS

CIO, NESDIS

Director, Integrated Program Office, NESDIS

Director, Office of Satellite Operations, NESDIS

Director, Office of Satellite Data Processing and Distribution, NESDIS

Director, Office of Research and Applications, NESDIS

Director, Office of Systems Development, NESDIS

Director, National Climatic Data Center, NESDIS

Director, National Oceanographic Data Center, NESDIS

Director, National Geophysical Data Center, NESDIS

Director, Office of Legislative and Intergovernmental Affairs (OLIA)

Associate Director, OLIA

Operations Manager, OLIA

Deputy Director, Marine and Aviation Operations (OMAO)
Deputy Director, Marine and Aviation Operations Center (MAOC)
Chief Financial Officer and Deputy Chief Financial Officer (OMAO)
Deputy Director, Marine Operations Center (MOC)
Director, Marine Operations Center (MOC)
Commanding Officer, Atlantic Marine Operations Center (MOC-A)
Commanding Officer, Pacific Marine Operations Center (MOC-P)
Commanding Officer, Aircraft Operations Center (AOC)
Director, Commissioned Personnel Center (CPC)
See FTR & NTR, Chapters 301-11

301-1.27 Who has the authority to authorize a conference lodging allowance for a Government sponsored conference?

Officials listed in *NTR, Chapter 301-1.20*
OFA Office Directors
Directors, All NWS Headquarters Offices
Directors, All NWS Regions
Director, NWS Training Center
Director, NWS National Data Buoy Center
Chief Financial Officer/Chief Administrative Officer, OAR
Deputy Chief Financial Officer/Chief Administrative Officer, OAR
Director, Management and Organizational Development, OAR
Directors, OAR Laboratories, OAR
Deputy/Assistant Directors, OAR Laboratories, OAR
Division Directors, Earth System Research Laboratory, OAR
Director, Climate Program Offices, OAR
Deputy Assistant Director, Climate Program Offices, OAR
Director, National Sea Grant College Program, OAR
Deputy Director, National Sea Grant College Program, OAR
Director, Ocean Exploration and Research, OAR
Deputy Director, Ocean Exploration and Research, OAR
Director, Office of Weather and Air Quality, OAR
Director, Policy, Planning and Evaluation, OAR
Director, Office of Research Technology and Applications, OAR
Regional Administrators, NMFS
Science Directors, NMFS
Office Directors and Deputies, NMFS
Laboratory Directors, NMFS
Chief of Enforcement and Deputy, NMFS

CFO/CAO, NESDIS
CIO, NESDIS
Director, Integrated Program Office, NESDIS
Director, Office of Satellite Operations, NESDIS
Director, Office of Satellite Data Processing and Distribution, NESDIS
Director, Office of Research and Applications, NESDIS
Director, Office of Systems Development, NESDIS
Director, National Climatic Data Center, NESDIS
Director, National Oceanographic Data Center, NESDIS
Director, National Geophysical Data Center, NESDIS
Director, Office of Legislative and Intergovernmental Affairs (OLIA)
Associate Director, OLIA
Operations Manager, OLIA
Deputy Director, Marine and Aviation Operations (OMAO)
Deputy Director, Marine and Aviation Operations Center(MAOC)
Chief Financial Officer and Deputy Chief Financial Officer (OMAO)
Deputy Director, Marine Operations Center (MOC)
Director, Marine Operations Center (MOC)
Commanding Officer, Atlantic Marine Operations Center (MOC-A)
Commanding Officer, Pacific Marine Operations Center (MOC-P)
Commanding Officer, Aircraft Operations Center (AOC)
Director, Commissioned Personnel Center (CPC)
See FTR & NTR, Chapters 301-11

301-1.28 Who has the authority to authorize air, train, and/or ship, premium-class travel accommodations (business and 1st class) for both foreign and domestic/non-foreign travel?

Officials listed in *NTR, Chapter 301-1.20*
Chief Financial Officer/Chief Administrative Officer, OAR
Directors, OAR Laboratories, OAR
Deputy/Assistant Directors, OAR Laboratories, OAR
Division Directors, Earth System Research Laboratory, OAR
Director, National Sea Grant College Program, OAR
Director, Climate Program Offices, OAR
Director, Ocean Exploration and Research, OAR
Director, Policy, Planning and Evaluation, OAR
All premium class travel must be approved on a CD-334, "Request for Approval for Other than Coach-Class Accommodations" in accordance with FTR & NTR, Chapter 301-10.

301-1.29 Who has the authority to approve group travel?

1) Domestic group travel: Memoranda of request for groups of twenty or more employees, from the same bureau, including invitational travelers, traveling to the same location or event, must be submitted to and approved by the Deputy Under Secretary or their designee,

2) Foreign and non-foreign group travel: Memoranda of request for groups of ten or more employees, from the same bureau, including invitational travelers, traveling to the same location or event, must be submitted to and approved by the Deputy Under Secretary or their designee.

See DOC Travel Handbook, Chapter 301-81

301-1.30 Who has the authority to approve travel of an immediate family member to attend award ceremonies?

Officials listed in *NTR, Chapter 301-1.20*
Regional Administrators, NMFS
Science Center Directors, NMFS
Office Directors, NMFS

301-1.31 Who has the authority to approve Commercial Aviation services (CAS)?

See NTR, Chapter 301-10

301-1.32(a) Who has the authority to approve the use of cash to pay for common carrier transportation exceeding \$100?

Memoranda of request for the use of cash to pay for common carrier transportation exceeding \$100 must be submitted to and approved by either the Director, Financial Policy & Compliance Division, Finance Office, if the travel voucher is processed by the Eastern Operations Branch (EOB), Germantown, MD, or by the Chief, Western Operations Branch (WOB), Finance Office, if the travel voucher is processed by the WOB, Seattle, WA.

See FTR, Chapter 301-51

301-1.32(b) What information must be included in a memorandum of request for the use of cash to pay for common carrier transportation exceeding \$100?

Memoranda of request must come from the authorizing official and must fully explain why cash was used and must be accompanied by:

- A copy of the travel authorization;
- A copy of the passenger's ticket coupon; and
- Original travel voucher or reclaim travel voucher.

301-1.33 Who has the authority to change policy and/or add travel delegations to the NOAA Travel Regulations?

Memoranda of request to change policy and/or add travel delegations to the NOAA Travel Regulations must be submitted to and approved by the Director, Finance Office/Comptroller.

301-1.34 Who has the authority to request exemptions from the mandatory use of the JPMC Government travel card?

Memoranda of request for exemptions from the mandatory use of the JPMC Government travel card must be signed by the Line Office Chief Financial Officer (CFO)/Management and Budget Chief, or Corporate Office Director, and be submitted through the Director, Finance Office/Comptroller, to the NOAA CFO. The NOAA CFO will forward requests to the DOC Chief Financial Officer and Assistant Secretary for Administration for approval. DOC must report all exemptions to General Services Administration (GSA).

See NTR, Chapter 301-51

301-1.35 Who has the authority to authorize acceptance of payment from a non-Federal source for travel expenses over \$35,000?

Secretary of Commerce

301-1.35(a) Who has the authority to authorize acceptance of payment from a non-Federal source for travel expenses under \$35,000?

The Authorizing Official of the travel authorization.

301-1.35(b) Who has the authority to authorize an in-kind donation for travel which exceeds by \$500 the value of an expenditure (i.e., for accommodations or transportation) available under the DOC Travel Handbook? ("Exceeds by \$500" is defined as an in-kind donation which exceeds maximum allowances for official travel by \$500.)

Chief Financial Officer and Assistant Secretary for Administration, DOC

301-1.35(c) What form(s) authorizes acceptance of payment for travel expenses from a non-Federal source?

The Form CD-210 is used to authorize acceptance of payment for travel expenses from a non-Federal source. This includes gifts of travel valued at less than \$250. The Form SF-326, Semiannual Report of Payment Accepted from a Non-Federal Source for Travel Expenses must also accompany the CD-210 whenever the payment exceeds \$250. Note, the CD-210 replaces the CD-342 when reporting acceptance of travel gifts from foreign governments.

See NOAA Finance Handbook, Chapter 4, Section 4.04.07:

<http://www.corporateservices.noaa.gov/~finance/Chapter%204.pdf>, and FTR, Chapter 304. Also see NTR, Chapter 301-2 for travel authorization/travel voucher requirements.

301-1.35(d) How do we know when it is appropriate to accept payment from a non-Federal source for official travel?

Office of General Council, Ethics Law and Program Division (OGC, ELPD) (ethicsdivision@doc.gov/(202)-482-5384) reviews all gifts via the SF-326 process and will order re-payment of any gift deemed contrary to law, regulation, and/or policy.

Although pre-clearance of a travel gift is not required, upon request, OGC will review any travel gift prior to travel. Pre-clearance of a travel gift must be submitted to OGC using the following "4-09, Appendix D: NOAA Travel Gift Questionnaire:

<http://www.rdc.noaa.gov/~finance/Chapter%204%20Appendices.pdf>

PART 301-52–CLAIMING REIMBURSEMENT

- 301-52.30 How will I process my travel voucher?
- 301-52.31 Who has the authority to approve travel vouchers?
- 301-52.32 What is a “complete travel voucher package”?
- 301-52.33 How do I submit my travel voucher to the Finance Office for payment?
- 301-52.34 What are the record retention guidelines for travel vouchers?
- 301-52.35 What documentation is submitted to the Finance Office whenever a travel voucher is selected for audit prior to payment?
- 301-52.36 What are the responsibilities of Document Retention Officials?
- 301-52.37 How many years do Document Retention Officials have to retain the original “complete travel voucher packages”?
- 301-52.38 What are the receipt retention requirements for travel vouchers?
- 301-52.39 What is a proper travel voucher?
- 301-52.40 Who is responsible for determining if a travel voucher is proper?
- 301-52.41 What happens when an approving official deems my travel voucher improper?
- 301-52.42 What happens when the Finance Office deems my travel voucher improper?
- 301-52.43 Within how many calendar days after I submit a proper travel voucher must NOAA reimburse my allowable expenses?
- 301-52.44 When does an approving official resolve or document disagreement with the claimant’s signature date or any other travel voucher information which will affect the payment of interest?
- 301-52.45 How will interest be paid on a travel voucher reimbursement?

301-52.30 How will I process my travel voucher?

You **must** use Integrated Travel Manager (ITM) to process your travel voucher **within 5 working days upon completion of travel, or every 30 days for employees on extended temporary duty (TDY) travel.**

301-52.31 Who has the authority to approve travel vouchers?

Electronic and hard copy travel vouchers are legally binding documents and may be approved by the employee’s approving official provided that the travel authorization has been authorized by the authorizing official from the funding office.

Note: Post-approved expenses on the travel voucher must be authorized by the authorizing official from the funding office in the remarks section of the travel voucher.

301-52.32 What is a “complete travel voucher package”?

A “complete travel voucher package” consists of the approved travel voucher, receipts, and any other necessary documents to support the claim.

301-52.33 How do I submit my travel voucher to the Finance Office for payment?

Excepted employees and invitational travelers (non-routing) will process their travel vouchers in ITM, but will not electronically route and approve them in ITM. Once the voucher has been created in ITM, a photocopy of the approved travel voucher with ink signatures, along with copies of receipts and any other necessary documentation, i.e., a “complete travel voucher package” must be submitted to the Finance Office for payment. **Please note that a hard copy submission of the travel voucher is always required for excepted and invitational travelers, regardless of whether the voucher is selected for audit or not.**

All other employees (routing) must use ITM to electronically route and approve travel vouchers to the Finance Office for payment and will no longer submit any hard copy travel voucher documentation to the Finance Office unless selected for audit. Please note, that travel vouchers properly approved and submitted to the Finance Office in ITM will generate a “Document History” page, stamped “signed” and “approved”, which completely replaces the ink signature requirement on hard copy travel vouchers.

301-52.34 What are the record retention guidelines for travel vouchers?

The traveler, travel document preparer, and the Approving Official are designated as the “Document Retention Officials” for travel documents, unless otherwise authorized by NOAA’s Chief Financial Officer (CFO). Document Retention Officials will be responsible for ensuring that the travel documents they prepare or approve are retained in accordance with the federal record retention requirements, NOAA retention requirements, as well as the requirements in this section.

301-52.35 What documentation is submitted to The Finance Office whenever a travel voucher is selected for audit prior to payment?

Whenever a travel voucher is selected for audit prior to payment, a **photocopy version of the “complete travel voucher package” must be submitted to the Finance Office** within 3 business days of approval in ITM. The Document Retention Official must retain the original version of the “complete travel voucher package” in accordance with record retention guidelines established by the office funding the travel.

301-52.36 What are the responsibilities of Document Retention Officials?

Document Retention Officials will serve as the Finance Office points of contact and will be required to submit photocopies of “complete travel packages” to The Finance Office on an “as needed” basis for purposes to include but not limited to:

- Random audit sampling related to annual DOC Financial Statement (FS) audits;
- Congressional, Departmental and/or Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests, Office of the Inspector General (OIG) audits; and
- Record retention compliance.

Requests for photocopied versions of “complete travel voucher packages” must be submitted within 5 business days of the request or within a reasonable timeframe if the records were transferred to the Federal Records Center (FRC). In addition, the Document Retention Officials must also retain the original version of the “complete travel voucher package” in accordance with record retention guidelines established by the office funding the travel.

301-52.37 How many years do Document Retention Officials have to retain the original “complete travel voucher packages”?

NOAA Record Management Schedule 403-15 requires that travel files be maintained for 6 years and 3 months after the period covering the account. Upon expiration of the record retention date, files must be shredded to safeguard against unauthorized disclosure of Personally Identifiable Information (PII) contained in the records. However, if these records are subject to an on-going investigation or pending litigation, then they cannot be destroyed until the litigation hold is lifted by General Counsel even if the retention period for these records has expired. See NOAA Record Management Schedule 403-15:

http://www.corporateservices.noaa.gov/audit/records_management/schedules/chapter_400_finance.pdf

301-52.38 What are the receipt retention requirements for travel vouchers?

You can either retain a hardcopy version of the original receipts with the “complete travel voucher package” or you can electronically scan the original receipts as long as they:

- Are easily accessible for audits;
- Can be easily matched to the traveler and their travel voucher and submitted as a “complete travel voucher package” when required by the Finance Office;
- Have a file back-up process in place that safeguards records and ensures that NOAA policies regarding PII and sensitive data are followed; and
- Are retained within the retention requirements in 301-52.37.

301-52.39 What is a proper travel voucher?

A proper travel voucher must meet the requirements in *FTR, Chapter 301-52 and DOC Travel Handbook, 301-52.101* and be submitted in the format described in this section.

301-52.40 Who is responsible for determining if a travel voucher is proper?

Both the approving official and the Finance Office are responsible for determining if a travel voucher is proper.

301-52.41 What happens when an approving official deems my travel voucher improper?

When your travel voucher is not proper, your approving official must return the travel voucher to you with an explanation on how to make it proper. Once it's been corrected, you will need to resubmit your travel voucher to your approving official for approval. Your latest signature date is the date the Finance Office will use for purposes of calculating interest, in cases where interest may be due.

301-52.42 What happens when the Finance Office deems my travel voucher improper?

If your travel voucher is not proper, the Finance Office will notify you via e-mail within 24 hours of disallowing any unauthorized expense(s) and reimburse you for expenses that were properly authorized. You may submit a reclaim voucher for any expenses previously disallowed as long as the reclaim properly authorizes such expenses.

301-52.43 Within how many calendar days after I submit a proper travel voucher must NOAA reimburse my allowable expenses?

For excepted employees or invitational travelers, NOAA must reimburse you within 30 calendar days of the ink signature date on your hard copy travel voucher, and if that's missing, the "received date stamp" will be used by the Finance Office instead.

For all other employees, NOAA must reimburse you within 30 calendar days of your latest electronic signature date which appears in the "Document History" field of your electronic travel voucher.

NOTE: The Finance Office will return your travel voucher to you if both your signature and date are missing. In those cases, your latest signature date will be the date the Finance Office uses for purposes of calculating interest, in cases where interest may be due.

301-52.44 When does an approving official resolve or document disagreement with the claimant's signature date or any other travel voucher information which will affect the payment of interest?

An approving official must resolve or document disagreement with the claimant's signature date, and annotate any other travel voucher information which will affect the payment of interest **prior** to submission of the travel voucher to the servicing Finance Office.

301-52.45 How will interest be paid on a travel voucher reimbursement?

When interest is due, the Finance Office must pay interest using the prevailing Prompt Payment Act interest rate, beginning on the 31st day after the electronic signature date on your electronic voucher. If you are an excepted employee or invitational traveler, the Finance Office will use the ink signature date on your hard copy travel voucher to reimburse you any interest due. Your servicing Finance Office will issue one payment for both the travel voucher reimbursement and interest.