



Coming Fall 2011 Post As Approved Travel Voucher Processing

Since the implementation of Integrated Travel Manager (ITM) 9.0 in November 2008, we continue to make improvements to the travel application system and are pleased to announce a major shift in submission and payment of your Travel Vouchers (TVs). This Fall, we will implement "Post As Approved" (PAA) voucher processing in order to expedite payment and reduce the use of paper for travel.

We will continue to update you and provide additional information regarding PAA throughout the Summer. In the meantime, here are the key highlights of our progress. You may also contact your servicing Finance Office (FO), the Eastern or Western Operations Branch (EOB or WOB), should you have any questions. See the NOAA Travel Office (NTO) web-site for information on your servicing FO:
<http://www.corporateservices.noaa.gov/~finance/TS.AOD.docx>.

What is PAA?

PAA is the current phase of the overall travel paper reduction project. As we discuss approvals in this document, it is important to distinguish between stamping a document as "Approved" in ITM vs. posting a document as "Approved" or "Unapproved" for payment in the Core Financial System (CFS). Unless otherwise noted, this discussion refers to posting TVs in CFS and not to approval stamping in ITM.

Currently, all TVs post to CFS as "Unapproved" for payment and require 100% paper submission to your servicing FO.

Once deployed, PAA will post most TVs to CFS as "Approved" for payment and paper submissions to your servicing FO will not be required. Exceptions to this rule are:

1. TVs Selected for Audit
2. Non-Routing TVs for:
 - a. Excepted Employees (certain bargaining unit employees)
 - b. Invitational Travelers

TVs meeting one of the exceptions above will continue to post to CFS as "Unapproved" and require hard copy submission to your servicing FO for payment.

What are the Benefits of PAA?

- ❖ Provides consistent policies for the submission/retention of hard copy documentation for both routing and non-routing TVs
- ❖ Eliminates the ink signature requirement and duplicate submission effort for all electronically routed TVs
- ❖ Expedites travel reimbursements for electronically routed TVs not selected for audit by eliminating the time it takes to mail and manually review/process TVs. Payments for electronically routed TVs should disburse within 2 business days of posting as approved in CFS

- ❖ Allows photo-copy submission of signed non-routing vouchers

How will I know if a hardcopy version of my TV must be submitted to my servicing FO?

Two different system generated notifications will occur when a TV meets one or more of the exceptions on page 1 and will require the submission of hardcopy documentation to your servicing FO for payment:

- ❖ Instantaneous - ITM on-screen messaging
Once the Approving Official (AO) stamps the TV “Approved” in ITM a message will appear on the screen indicating a copy of the voucher and supporting documentation must be submitted to your servicing FO
- ❖ Subsequent - E-mail messaging
When the TV processes through the interface into CFS, the preparer will receive an e-mail message indicating the TV must be submitted. The employee and the AO will also receive a copy of the e-mail message.

Who will be Responsible for Record Retention?

Upon implementation of PAA, record retention responsibilities will shift from the servicing FO to the Line/Corporate Offices. **Line/Corporate Offices will retain ALL ORIGINAL travel documents, including receipts, in accordance with federal record retention requirements.** When required, only PHOTO-COPIES of TVs and supporting backup documentation should be sent to your servicing FO.

We are working closely with the Line/Corporate Offices and as we draw closer to the implementation date, we will communicate further guidance on record retention procedures.

How will PAA impact ITM Users?

Overall, the impact to ITM Users should be minimal and will vary depending on User Role. The fundamentals of TV data entry remain unchanged. However, we are implementing new pre-audits that will assist preparers and minimize some common data entry errors. As noted above, AO’s will receive an on-screen message when a photo-copy of the TV along with any necessary backup documentation must be submitted to your servicing FO for payment. Additionally, a new Status stamp will appear in the stamping history when a TV is selected for audit.

In order to mitigate risk with implementing PAA, we are increasing the audit criteria while reducing the percentage of TVs selected for audit. Document Preparers should understand and be cognizant of proper data entry in ITM. Preparers and AO’s are **strongly encouraged** to familiarize themselves with the FTR and **consider taking FTR training** offered through the General Services Administration (GSA): <http://www.gsa.gov/portal/category/27204>.

