



August 1, 2017

MEMORANDUM FOR: ALL NOAA/BIS/EDA Employees  
FROM: Kim A. Darling *Kim A Darling*  
Director, Finance Office/Comptroller  
SUBJECT: Travel Advisory 17-3  
E2 Travel Reminders

The purpose of this travel advisory is to provide helpful tips and reminders on booking official travel in the new E2 Solutions (E2) travel system. Below are key issues/topics that have come through the NOAA Travel Office and the Client Services Help Desk since the E2 transition.

**Servicing TMC.** An employee's servicing Travel Management Center (TMC) is based on the employee's office location and not the employee's residence location. El Sol services employees whose duty stations are located in Alaska, Hawaii, Guam and American Samoa. SATO services employees whose duty stations are located in all other locations. For example, if an employee's residence is in Alaska, but their office/organization is located in Seattle, SATO would be their servicing TMC. If an employee's residence is in Seattle, but their office/organization is located in Alaska, El Sol would be their servicing TMC.

#### **TMC Contact Information.**

##### El Sol Travel:

Hours of Operation: 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. local time

Location: Anchorage, AK

Phone: (844) 355-0383

##### SATO Call Center:

Hours of Operation: 7:00 a.m. - 10:00 p.m. EST

Location: San Antonio, TX

Phone: 855-813-2844 (note new number)

**Airfare Ticketing.** Just as under our previous travel system, employees must have an approved travel authorization (TA) in place in order to be ticketed. The difference between Travel Manager and E2 is that employees will no longer submit their approved paper TA to SATO in order to be ticketed. Instead, once a TA is final approved within the E2 system, the employee is automatically ticketed. Because of this automated process within E2, SATO will no longer

accept paper TAs for ticketing. The following message in the E2 Trip History indicates that the TA has been approved for ticketing:

“TMC notified of event after Final Approval: Send Funding Data for Reservation {Record Locator Number} (will indicate date and time stamp)”

- **Ticket Invoice.** Employees who have been ticketed will automatically receive an e-invoice from the E2 system. **Employees who do not receive an e-invoice have not been ticketed and will need to log back into E2 to determine the status of the authorization (e.g. has not been Final Approved).** Employees are also strongly encouraged to log into the airline’s website 24 hours prior to departure to verify seat assignments and flight times as airlines may often delay or even cancel a flight due to weather, mechanical issues, etc.
  
- **Fare Types.** Airlines offer many different types of fares that carry varying restrictions and guidelines. For example, contract city-pair fares are negotiated each fiscal year and are guaranteed for the entire fiscal year for which they are awarded. Whereas, most non-refundable fares are offered at such a low price, the airlines will place a 24 hour expiration date on them. These tight restrictions allow the airlines to quickly resell the tickets that are not purchased within the 24 hour period. Airlines have the right to remove non-refundable fares, place ticketing time limit restrictions on them, as well as change the booking class of service, which results in the fare being lost. Below are the different fares with their ticketing restrictions:
  - **All Contract City-Pair Fares, (YCA/-CA)** are guaranteed for each fiscal year for which they are awarded and must be ticketed *48 hours prior to the departure date*. Please note that these fares cannot be ticketed until three days prior to travel in order to avoid unnecessary transaction fees from being assessed;
  - **Most Non-Contract Fares (Non-Refundable Fares)** *are not guaranteed and must be ticketed within 24 hours of making the reservation;*
  - **All other fares, including discount government (DG) fares,** *are not guaranteed until ticketed.*
  
- **Ticket Cancellations by the Airlines.** As mentioned above, airfare cancellation policies are driven by the airlines and are based on the type of fare chosen. **Any fare not ticketed within the airline’s guidelines will ‘Auto Cancel’ in E2 by the airlines. It is ultimately the employee’s responsibility to ensure that the TA is processed and approved in time for ticketing.** To avoid ‘Auto Cancel’, employees should pay close attention to ‘The Last Date to Ticket’ under the ‘Summary’ section within E2. In addition, SATO will no longer send e-mail notices reminding employees to get their TA approved for ticketing.
  
- **Airline Seating.** Employees will be able to make most of their seat choices

within E2. However, there are some flights where the airlines will not provide a seat assignment upon booking the reservation. In these cases, employees should visit the airline's website 24 hours prior to departure to see if the airline has released more seats. In situations where you cannot secure a seat on-line, it is important for employees to check in at the specified time given by the airline or they run the risk of losing their reservation.

- **Transaction Fees.** As a reminder, transaction fees are not assessed when reservations are made or changed prior to ticketing, but are assessed once the ticket is actually issued. Therefore, employees should ensure that their E2 travel reservations are firm before routing their TA for final approval.
  - **City-Pair Fare Early Ticketing.** Employees who require a city-pair fare to be ticketed sooner than 3 days prior to travel will incur a higher transaction fee since they will need to notify their servicing TMC to initiate early ticketing.
  - **City-Pair Fare Early Ticketing (Personal Reasons).** Employees who incur the higher fee for personal reasons are responsible for reimbursing the Government the difference between the on-line booking engine (OBE) transaction fee and the TMC transaction fee.
  - **Voucher Transaction Fees.** For each travel authorization processed in E2, a travel voucher **must** be processed, regardless if there are expenses to be claimed or not. As a reminder, there is also a voucher transaction fee charged for each local claim processed. Please visit the NOAA Travel Office web page for a list of E2 Transaction Fees:  
<http://www.corporateservices.noaa.gov/finance/documents/E2.FY17TransactionFees.pdf>.

**Foreign Travel Briefing.** Employees performing official TDY travel to a foreign location are required by the Department's Office of Security to conduct a [Foreign Travel Briefing](#) annually. In order to ensure compliance, the NOAA Travel Office (NTO) is in the routing list to approve all foreign travel authorizations. Please note: travel authorizations routed to the NTO for employees who do not have an up to date briefing and/or official passport on file will not be approved in E2 until the employee takes the necessary steps to update these documents. It is important that all Line/Staff Offices review the Passport/Briefing Listing sent by the NTO each month to ensure that documentation is up to date prior to making reservations in E2. As a reminder, employees who do not ensure their Foreign Travel Briefing and/or official passport are kept up to date run the risk of having their airfare 'Auto Cancel' in E2.

**Invitational Travelers.** Invitational travelers will **not** have access to E2. Only the travel arranger for the office responsible for inviting the invitational traveler will have access to the traveler's profile, reservations and travel documents in E2. Please visit the NOAA Finance Office E2 Travel Information website for detailed information on how to process invitational travelers in E2:

<http://www.corporateservices.noaa.gov/finance/docs/E2/InvitationalTravelSOP.pdf>.

**E2 Support.** For E2 system questions, please contact the Client Services Helpdesk: [clientservices@noaa.gov](mailto:clientservices@noaa.gov) or call (301) 444-3400, Option 2, Monday - Friday, 7:00 am - 5:00 pm (ET).

**Policy Support.** For policy related questions, please contact [Rachael.S.Wivell@noaa.gov](mailto:Rachael.S.Wivell@noaa.gov) on (301) 444-2136 or [Chasity.N.Grimm@noaa.gov](mailto:Chasity.N.Grimm@noaa.gov) on (301) 444-2129. In addition, please refer to the NOAA Travel Office web page for E2 Travel information: <http://www.corporateservices.noaa.gov/finance/RESERV.Airfare.html>