



Travel Card Manual

Travel Card Policies and Procedures

Overview

Purpose:

The purpose of this manual is to:

- establish operating procedures for the use of Travel Cards by district employees, board members or other authorized officials
- establish travel card allowable and non-allowable purchases
- establish card holder responsibilities and consequences for non-compliance

Forms:

All district forms and documents are italicized.

References:

- None

Introduction

The purpose of the travel card program is to establish a more efficient, cost-effective method of disbursing travel funds to employees. Rather than issuing a check to a hotel, we will assign a travel card to the traveler for the estimated hotel expenses. The travel card can be used, subject to the Travel Card Guidelines, with any hotel vendor that accepts MasterCard as a form of payment. The travel-related merchants that have been preapproved include: hotels and hotel parking. Every traveler will receive funds via ACH for estimated meal per diems as approved on a travel form; therefore, meals may not be purchased with a travel card. A *Travel Authorization Form* must be submitted for all estimated travel expenses as outlined in the BHISD Finance Manual.

A travel card is issued to a traveler before a travel event with preset dates and credit line. The travel dates are set from the documented departure date to the return date. The credit line is set to cover all anticipated hotel lodging and hotel parking expenses submitted on a *Travel Authorization Form*. A purchase requisition for ALL anticipated expenses is required

BEFORE all travel events.

If used to its potential, the travel card program should result in a significant reduction in the volume of travel-related checks.

General Information

These policies and procedures provide the general guidelines for using the travel card. Please read it carefully. Your signature on the *Employee Travel Card Agreement* shows that you understand the intent of the program and agree to follow the established guidelines.

The following important points should be reviewed before using the travel card: Your travel card is issued in the district's name. All purchases made on the travel card should be for pre-approved hotel lodging and parking expenses from your Travel Authorization Form. You are responsible for the security of the travel card and the transactions made with it. If you do not follow these guidelines when using the travel card, you may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of your employment with Barbers Hill ISD.

- You may use the travel card at any hotel that accepts MasterCard and is not on a restricted vendor list. It may only be used for school related travel expenses.
- The travel card may only be used to pay for travel costs that have been pre-approved on a *Travel Authorization Form*.
- All detailed original receipts for purchases must be submitted within **5 days of each purchase to the budget manager or designee.** *Note - Hotel reservations that require a one-night deposit must be submitted to the business office as part of the Travel Authorization and requisition process to ensure prompt payment of the pre-travel event expense.*

- The business office will reconcile the monthly statement received from Citibank to ensure that all charges are accurate. The statement will be reconciled using your detailed original receipts, so it is critical that all receipts are submitted on a timely basis.
- The travel card is not intended to avoid or bypass appropriate travel or payment procedures as outlined in Board Policy CH or the *Barbers Hill ISD Finance Manual*.

Duties and Responsibilities

Program Administrator – (Chelsea McDaniel, Business Manager)

The Program Administrator is designated to answer questions, address issues and oversee the administration of the program. The Program Administrator has a direct relationship with the Bank.

All travel card requests must go through the Program Administrator.

Accounts Payable Clerks – (Donna Campbell & Lisa Twidwell)

The AP clerks assist the Program Administrator in answering questions and ensuring compliance with fiscal guidelines. The AP clerks shall also reconcile the monthly statements and contact cardholders, as necessary, to resolve discrepancies and/or disputed charges.

Cardholder - A cardholder is designated by the budget manager via an approved *Travel Authorization Form* to utilize the travel card for travel related expenses. The cardholder is responsible for following the guidelines in regards to purchases, selection of vendors, security of the card and submission of receipts. **All detailed original receipts must be submitted to the budget manager or designee within 5 days of the return from the trip.**

Budget Manager – (Principal/Administrator)

The budget manager is responsible for designating cardholders by approving Travel Authorization Forms of cardholders to ensure they are within District policy. The budget manager or designee in monitoring adherence to travel card regulations. The budget manager or designee is responsible for retrieving travel cards in the event of the termination or change in the employment status of a cardholder under their supervision.

Travel Card Guidelines

Credit Rating & Liability

The program does not affect your credit rating in any way. The travel card program carries corporate, not individual credit liability.

Travel Card Controls & Procedures

Credit Limits

All travel cards have spending limits that are valid only for the days of travel. The limit is based on the pre-approved travel expenses on the Travel Authorization Form. Each cardholder will be given information on the limits of his/her card upon signing for the travel card.

Restricted Vendors

The travel card program is used for hotel lodging and hotel parking charges only. If you attempt to use the travel card for restricted purchases, the card will be declined. Travel cards may not be used to purchase meals. The district issues payments via ACH to the traveler for approved meal per diems.

Issuance of Travel Card

Travel cards will be distributed to employees through the budget manager's office. Prior to a travel event, the employee should request a travel card for all preapproved, hotel lodging and parking expenditures on the Travel Authorization Form. The budget manager or designee will complete the credit card check out process in Skyward Finance and the traveler will sign the *Employee Travel Card Agreement* every time he/she receives a travel card.

Travel Card Receipts

Cardholders must obtain a receipt when using the travel card. It is every cardholder's responsibility to ensure there is an original receipt for each purchase. Detailed original receipts must be presented for purchases – **the credit card charge slip is not considered adequate documentation.**

After approval by the budget manager or designee, receipts should be submitted to the AP Clerks in the business office. All detailed original receipts will be reconciled with monthly statements and filed for audit purposes after the appropriate payments have been made to Citibank. If a receipt is lost or stolen, the cardholder should obtain duplicate copies of the receipts. In some cases, a written, certified statement from the cardholder may be accepted as acceptable documentation. If a receipt or acceptable written, certified statement is not submitted to the business office, the charges may become the personal responsibility of the cardholder. All reimbursements from cardholders should be submitted to the business office within 30 days of the purchase.

Lodging, Sales and Use Tax

The District is a tax-exempt entity and does not pay sales tax for school-related expenditures in the State of Texas. The cardholder should present the appropriate tax exemption form when making a school-related purchase.

The traveler must present a Hotel Occupancy Certificate to the hotel upon registration to avoid state taxes on lodging at the hotel. The District is not exempt from city lodging taxes. The Hotel Occupancy Certificate does not apply to lodging outside the state of Texas. **A copy of the Hotel Occupancy Certificate can be found on the District's Business Department Information webpage.**

If the cardholder fails to present a Hotel Occupancy Certificate at the time of registration and taxes are charged on the travel card, the cardholder will be personally liable for reimbursement of all taxes.

Returns, Credits, and Disputed Charges

Should a problem arise with a travel-related charge, every attempt should be made to first resolve the issue directly with the merchant. All credits and/or corrections to charges must be reimbursed by crediting the credit card account; cash refunds are prohibited. Credit receipts, if any, should be submitted to the business office.

Security of the Travel card

The cardholder is responsible for the security of the travel card. The traveler should guard the travel card account number carefully. It should not be posted in a work area or left in a conspicuous place. It should be kept in a secure location. If the traveler loses or forgets to take the travel card during a pre-approved travel event, he/she will be required to pay for all approved, travel-related expenditures with his/her own cash or personal credit card. The District shall reimburse all pre-approved, travel related expenditures made with personal funds upon receipt of the detailed receipts.

Department travel cards should be kept by the budget manager or designee in a secure and locked location at all times.

Violations & Consequences

The only person authorized to use the travel card is the cardholder who is issued the travel card. The card is to be used for school business purposes only. The card is not intended for personal use. Personal purchases, if any, may be considered misappropriation of district funds, a criminal offense.

Inappropriate use of the travel card or failure to abide by the travel card policies and procedures may result in revocation of travel card privileges and appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment. If an employee's travel card privileges are revoked, the traveler may be required to pay for all travel-related expenses with his/her own cash or credit card. The travel-related expenses will be reimbursed after the trip and when all detailed receipts have been submitted.

Lost or Stolen Cards

If a travel card is lost or stolen, immediately contact Citibank Customer Service (1-800-248-4553).

After contacting the Citibank, notify the Program Administrator, Chelsea McDaniel @ cmcdaniel@bhisd.net. **Prompt action can reduce the district's liability for fraudulent activity.**

Examples of Acceptable Purchases (Charges) – Note all charges should be preapproved on a purchase requisition before the travel event.

Hotel Lodging

Hotel Parking charges

Examples of Unacceptable Purchases

Transportation charges such as a rental car, taxi, shuttle, Uber, etc.

Supplies

Services (Of any Type)

Meals, snacks, etc.

Computer Hardware or Software

Capital Items – any single item with a per unit cost over \$500

In room entertainment

Personal Items

Cash Advances

Alcoholic Beverages

These examples are for illustration only. When in doubt, please contact the Program Administrator, Budget Manager or Accounts Payable for clarification.

BARBERS HILL ISD

EMPLOYEE TRAVEL CARD AGREEMENT

I, _____, hereby request a Barbers Hill ISD Travel Card. As a cardholder, I have read, understand and agree to comply with the policies and procedures in the Barbers Hill ISD Travel Card Manual. I fully understand that misuse or abuse of the travel card may result in revocation of the card and appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including termination of my employment.

_____ I agree to use this card for official approved school related hotel lodging and hotel parking expenses only.

_____ I agree that I will not use this card to pay for unauthorized travel expenses, such as:

- state hotel taxes for lodging within the state of Texas,
- meals and tips, or
- any other expense prohibited in the district's travel card guidelines.

_____ I agree that I will not use this card to pay for personal expenses such as alcoholic beverages, expenses for family members, entertainment, or my personal travel expenses before or after the official travel dates.

_____ I agree to submit the travel card to the appropriate budget manager or designee upon return from my business travel.

_____ I agree to submit proper documentation (detailed original receipts) to the budget manager or designee within 5 days after returning from my business travel.

_____ I agree that if the travel card is lost or stolen, I will immediately notify Citibank (1-800-248-4553) and the Barbers Hill ISD Program Administrator (Chelsea McDaniel @ cmcdaniel@bhisd.net) verbally and in writing.

Employee Signature

Campus/Department

Date

Budget Manager or Secretary

Date

Travel Card Number (last 4 digits):

Purchase Order #: