

TRAVEL CARD

Argyle ISD
Finance Department

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 and other travel-related expenses, we will assign a travel card to the traveler for the estimated travel expenses. The travel card can be used, subject to the Travel Card Guidelines, at any travel-related merchant that accepts MasterCard as a payment method.

The travel-related merchants that have been pre-approved include hotels, parking, and transportation, such as taxis, rental cars, and shuttles.

Airline flights may only be purchased by the business office.

Travelers will receive an accounts payable check for the estimated meal per diem as approved on an expense form; therefore, meals may only be purchased with a travel card with prior approval. If used to its potential, the travel card program should significantly reduce the volume of travel-related checks.

General Information

These policies and procedures provide the general guidelines for using the travel card.

The following important points should be reviewed before using the travel card:

- The travel card is issued in the district's name. All purchases made on the travel card must be made only by you. 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, including termination of your employment with Argyle ISD.
- The travel card may be used at any vendor or service provider 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 be used only to pay for travel costs pre-approved through the purchase order system.
- All detailed original receipts must be submitted within **five days**, along with the returned US Bank card.
- The business office shall reconcile the monthly statement received from US Bank to ensure that all charges are accurate. Statements are reconciled using the detailed original receipts, so cardholders must submit all receipts in a timely manner.

Travel Card Controls & Procedures

Credit Limits
Purchases are limited to the pre-approved district purchase order.

Restricted Vendors
The travel card program will be restricted to certain types of suppliers and merchants. If you present your travel card for payment to restricted vendors, the authorization request will be declined. Travel cards may not be used to purchase meals. The district shall issue a check to the traveler for the approved meal per diem.

Issuance of Travel Card
Travel cards will be centrally distributed through the business office. Prior to a travel event, the business office shall contact the traveler to issue the travel card for all pre-approved, estimated travel expenditures.

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. Itemized original receipts must be presented for all purchases – **the credit card charge slip is not considered adequate documentation**.

The charges may become the cardholder's responsibility if a receipt is not submitted to the business office.

State Tax, and Sales and Use Tax
Argyle ISD is a tax-exempt entity that does not pay state tax or sales tax for school-related expenditures in the State of Texas. The district is not exempt from city lodging taxes or other special use taxes charged by hotels.

The business office will supply travelers with a *Hotel Occupancy Tax Exemption Certificate* and a *Sales and Use Tax Exemption Certification* form. Both forms are also available on the finance department website.

The traveler must present the documents to the hotel upon check-in to avoid state taxes on lodging and sales taxes. The cardholder shall 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 resolve the issue directly with the merchant first. All credits and charge corrections must be applied to the credit card account; cash refunds are prohibited.

Security of the Travel card
The cardholder is responsible for the security of the travel card. The traveler should protect the travel card account number and keep the card in a secure location. It should not be posted in a work area, left in a conspicuous place, or be in the possession of anyone other than the employee. If the traveler loses or forgets to take the travel card during a travel event, they will be required to pay for all approved, travel-related expenditures with their own cash or personal credit card. Argyle ISD shall reimburse all approved, travel-related expenditures made with personal funds upon submission of the detailed receipts.

Violations & Consequences
Information regarding the Use of District-Issued Credit Cards is now included in the Employee Handbook. This section outlines employee responsibilities for proper use, restrictions, and accountability.

The only person authorized to use the travel card is the employee who was issued it. The card is to be used for school business purposes only and is not intended for personal use. Personal purchases, if any, shall be considered misappropriation of district funds, a criminal offense, and will be reported to the proper authorities.

Inappropriate use of the travel card or failure to abide by the Travel Card Policies and Procedures will result in revocation of the travel card privileges and appropriate disciplinary action, including termination of employment. If an employee's travel card privileges are revoked, the traveler shall pay for all travel-related expenses with his/her own cash or credit card. The travel-related expenses will be reimbursed with an accounts payable check after the trip, upon submission of all detailed receipts.

Lost or Stolen Cards
If a travel card is lost or stolen, immediately contact US Bank Customer Service (1-800-344-5696). After contacting US Bank, notify the Program Administrator, Nicole Stephens (nicole.stephens@argyleisd.com). Prompt action can reduce the district's liability for fraudulent activity.

Examples of Acceptable Purchases
- Hotel charges
- Parking charges
- Transportation charges include rental car, taxi, shuttle, etc.

Examples of Unacceptable Purchases
- Supplies
- Services (of any type)
- Meals, snacks, etc.
- Computer hardware or software
- Capital Items – any single item with a per-unit cost over $500
- Personal items
- Cash advances
- Alcoholic beverages

These examples are for illustration only. When in doubt, please contact the business office for clarification.