

Federal Travel Regulation
GSA Bulletin FTR 13-07

TO: Heads of Federal Agencies

SUBJECT: Emphasizing Federal Travel Regulation (FTR) Opportunities for Achieving Reduced Travel Costs through Use of City Pair Program (CPP) Contract and Non-Contract Airfares

1. What is the purpose of this bulletin? To provide clarification on the Federal Travel Regulation (FTR) policy for use of both CPP contract and non- contract air carriers.
2. What is the background of this bulletin? The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) issued Memorandum M-12-12, "Promoting Efficient Spending to Support Agency Operations" to the heads of executive departments and agencies on May 11, 2012. The memorandum outlined a series of policies and practices related to travel and conference activities and expenses that agencies should take to improve operations. Specifically M-12-12 requires that each agency "promote the identification and use of non-contract carriers, that, if used, results in a lower total trip cost to the Government."
3. What should agencies do as a result of this bulletin? Agencies should review internal travel policies to ensure they incorporate the use of both CPP contract and non- contract air carriers in a way that results in an overall cost savings to the Federal Government and complies with the FTR. Any cost savings must include processes for mitigating associated risks in the selection of CPP contact air carriers and non-contract air carriers.
4. May agencies authorize use of a non-contract air carrier for Federal employee travel? FTR § 301-10.106 requires Federal employees on official travel to use CPP contract airfares. Additionally, when a CPP contract carrier offers the same or lower fare as the non- contract carrier and has seats available, Federal employees must choose the CPP contract carrier. Federal agencies may authorize use of non-contract airfares, pursuant to FTR § 301-10.107, when:
 - A non-contract carrier offers a lower fare to the general public that, if used, will result in a lower total trip cost to the Federal Government (the combined costs of transportation, lodging, meals, and related expenses considered).
 - Space on a scheduled contract flight is not available in time to accomplish the purpose of your travel, or use of contract service would require you to incur unnecessary overnight lodging costs which would increase the total cost of the trip.
 - The CPP contractor's flight schedule is inconsistent with explicit policies of your Federal department or agency with regard to scheduling travel during normal working hours.

5. What factors are included when calculating the lowest total trip cost? In accordance with the FTR § 301-70.101, when authorizing a particular method of transportation, agencies must consider all direct and indirect costs associated with travel. Examples of direct costs include but are not limited to: per diem, actual transportation cost, ground transportation, and related expenses. Indirect costs may include but are not limited to: overtime, mandatory compensatory time off for travel, lost work time, total distance of travel, and the number of points visited on trips with multiple destinations as it relates to duration of the travel. As stated in 5 U.S.C. § 5733, and implemented in FTR §§ 301-10.4 and 301-70.101, "travel of an employee shall be by the most expeditious means of transportation practicable and shall be commensurate with the nature and purpose of the duties of the employee requiring such travel."
6. What risks should be mitigated with non- contract airfare? Agencies must manage their internal procedures to assess the risk associated with the use of non- contract airfares. If the non- contract fare is non-refundable, restricted, or has other eligibility requirements, the agency/traveler must know and reasonably anticipate, based on the travel requirements, that the traveler will use the ticket. The agency must advise its authorizing officials of the potential financial risk in the event that a non-contract/non-refundable ticket is canceled and establish policy and procedures for managing these risks.
7. How will travelers know which airfare to select? Agencies should contact their E-Gov Travel Service (ETS) administrator to configure their agency's system to reflect the agency's policy on use of CPP contract and non-contract airfares to achieve the lowest total trip cost. All travel airfare, including CPP contract and non-contract airfare, must be booked and ticketed through the appropriate ETS booking channels regardless of fare type, as stated in FTR § 301-50.3.
8. What is the effective date of this bulletin? This bulletin is effective upon signature and will be posted on our web site (www.gsa.gov/fttr).
9. Whom should I call for further information? For clarification of content, please contact: Mr. Craig Flynn, Office of Governmentwide Policy, at (202) 501-5306 or by e-mail at travelpolicy@gsa.gov.



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