BCPO TRAVEL MEMO # 09-01

Date: September 25, 2009

Subject: Common SAP Travel Expense Report Errors

To: All Human Resource Directors for
              Agencies Serviced by the
              Bureau of Commonwealth Payroll Operations (BCPO)

From: David L. Kessler
              Director
              Bureau of Commonwealth Payroll Operations
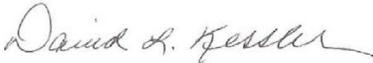
One of BCPO's responsibilities is the audit of Travel Expense Reports (TER) submitted by Commonwealth travelers. In doing so, we continue to find and question travelers on common errors. In an effort to reduce our costs associated with auditing TER's and your agency costs associated with responding to auditor requests, we would appreciate your assistance in reducing the following common errors.

Mileage

A common misconception is that when a state-provided or non-compensated vehicle (i.e. carpool) is used for business travel, mileage and location details are not needed on the TER because the traveler did not incur a related out-of-pocket expense. However, because other expenses depend on distance traveled, these details are necessary for all vehicle types and must be reported on the TER.

For all vehicle types:

- Mileage should be recorded on a daily basis. For example, if submitting a TER that contains mileage for multiple days, travelers should not claim a lump sum mileage total. Instead, the number of miles driven each day should be entered separately on the TER.

- Each daily claim for mileage should include a "from" and "to" address or location specific enough for an auditor to validate the distance traveled via a map or online mapping application such as MapQuest or Rand McNally.

In cases where building or field worksite abbreviations are used, there is a "Comments" area on the TER where the traveler or travel arranger can provide additional explanations to justify the mileage.

Start and End Times

A common error found is the trip "start" and "end" times are being recorded for multiple days as 00:00 to 00:00 and for single days as 00:00 to 00:01. Actual times in these data fields are required. For overnight travel or multiple "day trips" on one TER, the start time should be the departure time on the first date of travel and the end time should be the return time on the last date of travel.

Region Code

"USA" is the default Region Code populated by SAP. This code must be changed to a specific Region Code in order for SAP to permit increased allowances when travel is in designated high cost areas.

We recommend that you communicate this important message to your agency personnel responsible for the submission and approval of TERs, such as Travel Administrators, Agency Travel Approvers, Travel Arrangers, travelers and their supervisors.

This memo replaces BCPO Memo 07-01 issued February 8, 2007. Thank you for your attention to this matter. If you have any questions on the above, please feel free contact us at CO-TravelAudits@state.pa.us.

cc: Ms. Anna Maria Kiehl
        CO Bureau Directors
        Ms. Janice Sage
        Ms. Jeanne McDonald (OA-COTO)
        Mr. Stephen Burns (OB-BCPO)