

Travel Policy, Travel Advance and Expense Reimbursement

Management Directive, 14-02 (REV) | Revision Date: 01/03/2024

Overview

This Directive is applicable to all new and existing case-related referrals and administrative travel for staff and children to destinations outside Los Angeles County and its adjacent counties for County business.

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Version Summary

This management directive was updated from the 11/30/2021, 06/04/20 and 11/20/14 versions as part of the Management Directive Redesign. This version of Management Directive 14-02 has been revised to comply with the County Fiscal Manual, Board of Supervisors mandates and department policy.

POLICY

Policy

County business travelers are required to make reservations through a County-approved travel service agency. On October 1, 2011, the Board of Supervisors approved the New County Travel Services Program, which requires that all County-related business travel be arranged through a County-approved travel service agency.

The Travel Store, Inc. is the travel agency the State of California has contracted with to provide business-related travel services and is the State's only authorized travel agency. Concur is the secure online booking tool provided to the State of California. Designated Travel Administrators/Travel Coordinators (TA/TC) should use Concur to make travel reservations. Concur phone agents are available for more complex travel arrangements, which have higher transaction fees.

The traveler must have a profile on Concur at the time of booking. The TA/TC will initiate the traveler's profile creation process via an email link.

The Accounts Payable Unit (AP) will access Concur's Active and Inactive User list on a quarterly basis. The Business Information Systems (BIS) Division will run the list through the Department database to determine if the users are current employees. If any users are no longer employees, the AP will request that the Auditor-Controller (A-C) remove their access. The TAs/TCs are only permitted to make travel reservations for a traveler with the Travel Store; the only exception is when a traveler encounters an emergency while traveling. If an emergency occurs, the traveler may call the Travel Store for assistance. To make a travel reservation, TAs/TCs can go online at www.concursolutions.com or call the travel agent at (877) 454-8785 during normal business hours and (800) 639-9368 for after-hours emergency assistance. Transaction fees are only charged for the initial reservation and for all after-hours live agent transactions. Normal hours are from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday, excluding holidays. If an employee is traveling and needs to make emergency travel arrangements (i.e., flight changes or hotel stays), the employee should call the Travel Store for emergency assistance at (800) 639-9368.

The TAs/TCs are responsible for monitoring cancelled non-refundable travel reservations to ensure the Department is utilizing available travel credits. Travel credits are based on non-refundable travel reservations and are reserved under the traveler's profile for one year. The TAs/TCs should refer to the "Unused Ticket Report" from the AP, which is provided by the A-C, to ensure that available credits are used prior to booking new travel arrangements. In addition, Concur notifies the TAs/TCs of available credits for applicable travelers.

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County-related business travel booked outside of the Travel Store may only be reimbursed if approved by the A-C. The requestor must forward a Policy Exception memorandum to the Bureau of Finance and Administration (BFA) addressed to the Director, providing a detailed explanation of the reason(s) for the exception. The BFA will forward the memorandum to the Director who will review and forward to the A-C for final approval.

All DCFS employees traveling outside of Los Angeles County and its neighboring counties (i.e., Kern, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, San Diego, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara and Ventura) on County business must request and receive approved written permission prior to the commencement of any travel.

The TAs/TCs are to keep a log of all approved travel requests including detailed information regarding booking details. This log will be used to verify monthly County travel agency billing statements. AP will send out a monthly charge statement that must be verified and approved for payment by the assigned Service Bureau designee. All discrepancies must be brought to the attention of AP staff. The Regional Administrative Support Liaison (RASL) or office designee will assist the Regional Administrator (RA)/Office Head with examining process/control activities by: reviewing an adequate number of transactions on a regular basis (quarterly) to ensure they function as intended; documenting monitoring activity and retaining evidence so it can be subsequently validated; elevating material exceptions to management on a timely basis to ensure awareness of relative control risk; and ensuring appropriate corrective actions are implemented for adherence to this policy when making travel arrangements.

Administrative Travel

Administrative travel may include meetings with legislative and financial staff or attendance at seminars, conferences, business meetings or training sessions. Travelers must submit the PS1-85, Administrative Travel Request with the required signatures:

- Immediate Supervisor
- Assistant Regional Administrator (ARA), Children Services Administrator III if applicable
- Regional Administrator (RA)/Division Chief (DC)
- Deputy Director (DD)
- Bureau Chief of Finance and Administration (BCF)
- Director
- Travel Coordinator (TC) (if requesting authorization for vehicle, air, train or lodging reservations)

County Codes §5.40.060.B.1.a and §5.40.060.B.1.b allow County attendees, with prior approval, to take advantage of special conference lodging rates when the conference rate is lower than the rate available through the Travel Store. The hotel should be able to provide documentation of the special rate, which must be submitted with the expense claim as proof of the conference rate. If lodging is approved to be booked directly with the hotel at the special conference rate, ensure that all supporting documentation is retained for audit purposes.

Case-Related Travel

For case-related travel purposes, a DCFS 304, Case Related Travel Request is to be submitted with the required signatures:

- Supervising CSW (SCSW)/Immediate Supervisor
- ARA
- RA
- Deputy Director (only if the flight is \$800.00 and over)
- TC (if requesting authorization for vehicle, air, train or lodging reservations)

Case-related travel may include travel for purposes such as:

- Meeting child visitation requirements
- Completing a home evaluation of birth parents/relatives or prospective adoptive parents
- Making a home visit
- Returning a child to their legal residence
- Bringing a detained child back to Los Angeles County
- Transporting unaccompanied minors as well as caregivers/legal guardians

All aforementioned travel must be requested in advance using the appropriate travel request and must include all required signatures. Travel requests for the following day will only be approved for emergency travel provided the proper justification is given.

Administrative or case-related travel authorizations are not required for one-day trips within Los Angeles County and its neighboring counties. Travel within Los Angeles County or to its neighboring counties for one (1) day is eligible for mileage reimbursement, which is subject to the conditions of the [Mileage Management Directive](#). Current mileage reimbursement rates apply for travel to these counties for all employees.

Trips that require an overnight stay within Los Angeles County or its neighboring counties must be requested and approved by submitting the PS1-85 for administrative travel or the DCFS 304 for case-related travel prior to the commencement of any travel. An extended travel rationale must be provided by a supervising staff in section F of the Travel Request.

If a Department employee travels outside Los Angeles County and its neighboring counties and it is determined that the use of a personal vehicle is more cost-effective for the County (as opposed to renting a vehicle from the County-approved Agency), a PS1-85 or DCFS 304 must be completed and submitted for approval at least ten (10) days prior to the commencement of any travel. Management (i.e., DD, RA, and/or other manager who has the authority to provide approval) must ensure that the requested mode of transportation is justified before approving the request.

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For staff on approved travel, DCFS will reimburse travel expenses for attendance at seminars, conferences, business meetings or training sessions. Employees may receive reimbursement for transportation, lodging, registration, meals and any other allowable costs not to exceed the maximum travel expense reimbursements as set by the A-C. Refer to the latest [Travel Expense Reimbursement rates](#). Conference or registration fees must be submitted on a Request for Approval of Purchased Training and DCFS 250, Procurement Request.

Travelers may rent a vehicle at their destination when it is less expensive than other forms of transportation (e.g., taxi, airport shuttle, ride-hailing service) or if the nature of the travel requires it. It is the traveler's responsibility to make this determination prior to the trip and provide documented proof (e.g., a cost-out comparison of a vehicle rental vs. taxi) when submitting their expense claim to AP. All rental vehicle reservations must be made with the County-approved agency.

Travelers must work with the TAs/TCs to make the above determination prior to booking the trip.

The County's Business Travel Account should never be charged for upgrades. County travelers are expected to minimize travel costs to the County by taking advantage of any reasonable discounts or accepting alternate schedules. County travelers, barring approved exceptions, are expected to travel in coach/economy class and to seek the lowest logical airfare that meets their business needs through the Travel Store (refer to Section 13.3.6 of the County Fiscal Manual for more details). Travelers are required to provide a justification for not selecting the lowest logical fare. Reservations that do not comply with this policy are included on a monthly (Travel Activity) exception report, which is forwarded to AP for follow up. AP sends out a monthly travel activity report to the TAs to distribute to the TCs so charges can be verified and justified. Staff assigned to review the Monthly Exception Report will also be responsible to ensure that charges were appropriate, justified, and approved as well as reporting discrepancies to AP.

County business travelers are required to travel in coach/economy class and any exceptions must be approved in advance by the traveler's department management. Travelers may elect to upgrade at their own cost. To upgrade to a higher class or select another premium option, the traveler must contact the booked airline directly and pay for any upgrades at their own expense. All supporting documentation must be retained for audit purposes and is subject to Public Records Act (PRA) requests.

When traveling alone, the TA/TC should book mid-size vehicles or smaller, based on the need. Requests for exceptions, special needs or upgrades must be submitted to the traveler's regional management for approval. Travelers may upgrade the vehicle rental under the following conditions mentioned in Section 13.4.3 of the County Fiscal Manual. Unauthorized upgrades (airfare and ground travel, including vehicle rental) may result in staff reimbursing the County.

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Detailed information related to travel authorization, reservations, cancellations or unused tickets, lodging or hotel cancellation, meal reimbursement, capital city allowance, etc. is stated in the [County Fiscal Manual, Chapter 13 – Los Angeles County Travel Policy](#).

Airlines occasionally offer free tickets or cash allowances to compensate travelers for delays and inconveniences due to overbooking, flight cancellations, changes of equipment, etc. County business travelers must not volunteer for denied boarding compensation when traveling during normal County business hours. Travelers may volunteer for denied boarding compensation only if:

- Flying outside normal working hours
- The delay in their trip will not result in any County work interruption or additional cost to the County (e.g., additional hotel, rental vehicle, parking and/or meal expenses, etc.).

Should an airline delay necessitate an overnight stay, the traveler must first attempt to secure complimentary lodging from the airline. If not available, the traveler should contact the Travel Store's after-hours agent at (800) 639-9368 for lodging and/or vehicle rental needs.

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Extended Personal Travel

In the event that staff decides to extend an approved travel into a vacation by use of personal time, DCFS reimbursement will cover only those expenses incurred during the actual hours approved for conducting County business.

Under no circumstances will the County reimburse an employee for expenses incurred when the employee opts to extend his/her time at the destination for personal reasons. The County will not reimburse any expenses incurred after the end of the business related travel. Hotel and parking expenses must be prorated and only the portion related to County travel will be reimbursed. The County will not reimburse the cost of meals incurred after the end of the business related travel. Travelers will only be reimbursed for meal expenses incurred during the approved business travel period. It is the responsibility of the traveler to separate the costs to ensure the Department does not get charged for personal expenses.

Rental Vehicle Insurance

The County has made provisions for insuring rental vehicles against third party liability and physical damage to the rented vehicle. Therefore, travelers must decline all insurance coverage except coverage for additional drivers (when applicable) and coverage for drivers under 25 years of age (when applicable).

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If traveling internationally, the traveler should ask if the rental vehicle agency accepts the County's self-insurance. If not accepted, travelers should accept all insurance coverage when renting vehicles in a foreign country.

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PROCEDURE

The term “for completeness and accuracy” means the approver/reviewer of the Travel Request Authorization verified the following criteria before approval:

- Traveler(s) information
- Purpose of travel
- Destination of travel
- Travel period
- Proper approvals
- Other areas

Administrative Travel Authorization

Travel authorization to attend conferences, meetings or trainings must be requested using the PS1-85, when traveling:

- Outside Los Angeles and its neighboring counties
- For trips longer than one day to neighboring counties

Staff Requesting Travel Authorization Responsibilities

1. Complete all sections of the [PS1-85, Administrative Travel Request](#) including the Mode of transportation (section E), and forward to your Immediate Supervisor for review. Attach a copy of the approved training and/or conference agenda or materials.
 - The PS1-85 must be submitted and approved ten (10) days in advance of planned departure.
 - Travel Requests that require air travel should be submitted thirty (30) days prior to departure, if possible.
2. If the PS-1-85 is returned for corrective measures, make the appropriate corrections and resubmit for approval.

Immediate Supervisor Responsibilities

1. Review the PS1-85 and attachments for completeness and accuracy. Evaluate the purpose of the trip to determine if the trip is necessary.

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2. If applicable, ensure all travel upgrades are appropriate (i.e., booking in coach/economy class and also seeking the lowest logical airfare as defined by Section 13.3.6 of the County Fiscal Manual), justified and approved.
3. If approved, sign on the line for the Immediate Supervisor's signature and forward the PS1-85 to the ARA/RA/Division Chief for approval.
 - a. If incomplete or inaccurate, return to the requestor for corrective measures. Approve upon confirmation of corrective measures.

ARA/RA/Division Chief Responsibilities

1. Review the PS1-85 and attachments for completeness and accuracy.
2. If applicable, ensure all travel upgrades are appropriate (i.e., booking in coach/economy class and also seeking the lowest logical airfare as defined by Section 13.3.6 of the County Fiscal Manual), justified and approved.
3. If approved, sign on the line for ARA/RA/Division Chief's signature and forward the PS1-85 to the Deputy Director (DD) for signature.
 - a. If incomplete or inaccurate, return to the Immediate Supervisor for corrective measures. Approve upon confirmation of corrective measures.

Deputy Director Responsibilities

1. Review the PS1-85 and attachments for completeness and accuracy.
2. If approved, sign on the line for Deputy Director's signature and forward the PS1-85 to the Bureau Chief of Finance and Administration (BCFA) for signature.
 - a. If incomplete or inaccurate, return to the ARA/RA/Division Chief for corrective measures. Approve upon confirmation of corrective measures.

Finance and Administration Bureau Chief Responsibilities

1. Review the PS1-85 and attachments for completeness and accuracy.
2. If approved, sign on the line for Bureau Chief of Finance and Administration's signature and forward the PS1-85 to the Director for signature.
 - a. If incomplete or inaccurate, return to the Deputy Director for corrective measures. Approve upon confirmation of corrective measures.

Director Responsibilities

1. Review the PS1-85 and attachments for completeness and accuracy.
2. If approved, sign on the line for Director's signature.

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- b. If incomplete or inaccurate, return to the Bureau Chief of Finance and Administration for corrective measures. Approve upon confirmation of corrective measures.
3. Once all required signatures have been obtained, forward the original approved PS1-85 to the TA/TC.

Travel Coordinator Responsibilities

1. Upon receipt of the approved travel request, review the PS1-85 and attachments for completeness and accuracy.
 - a. Ensure all required approval signatures are annotated.
 - b. Complete the Method of Booking section (Section G) before signing and making travel arrangements.
 - The TC is required to have access to Concur before booking travel arrangements. A TA is responsible for adding and modifying a TC's Concur profile. Contact your TA for more information on creating a Concur Profile.
 - c. Acknowledge any travel upgrades on the PS1-85 (section G) to ensure every upgrade is justified and approved.
 - d. If accurately completed, sign on the line for TC's signature and provide a copy of the PS1-851 to the requestor. Work with staff and the County-approved agency to make national and international travel reservations for air, rail, bus, vehicle rental and hotel.
 - e. Work with staff if corrective measures are needed.
2. After booking travel arrangements, record reservation information in the Travel Log. The Travel Log should be updated after every reservation with the Travel Store.
 - The Travel Log (named "Travel Logs Data Entry" on the website) and Travel Logging Manual file can be downloaded from the following website link: [Travel Database Website](#).
 - If you are not able to access the above website to download the files, please ask your TA to contact APtravel@dcfs.lacounty.gov to request access.
 - For detailed instructions on how to log travel, please use the, "Travel Logging Manual," which can be downloaded from the website. The manual includes images to show where all the data is found and how to use the system step by step.
3. Create a new record for each individual traveler per trip and enter the following information:
 - Record Locator
 - Employee ID of Traveler (or if non-employee enter: 999999 for minor/youth, 999998 for Independent Living Program (ILP) youth, or 999997 for "Community Partners" such as youth's relatives or others assisting with transport)

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- Travel Departure Date
- Travel Return Date
- Transaction Date on which travel was purchased
- Traveler Name (should auto-fill for employees once employee ID is entered, for non-employees enter name in Last-Name/First-Name at).
- Three letter Destination Airport Code (if flying), Destination City, and Destination State
- Associated CSW employee ID – Only enter if the traveler is not the CSW assigned to the case. Enter the six-digit employee ID of the CSW associated with the case.
- Travel Coordinator employee ID – six-digit employee ID
- Transaction Charge amount – select from drop down menu
- Travel purpose – short description of the travel purpose
- Remarks/Memo – Add any notes you would like to add to clarify anything or keep notes for reference
- Air Reservation information:
 - Reservation number – enter only the last 10 numeric digits found on the itinerary. Do not include the first two leading letters.
 - Total air ticket price
 - “Canceled” checkbox – mark off if the reservation was canceled
 - “Credit” – if a credit was used to offset the price of the ticket, enter the credit amount here
- Vehicle Reservation Information:
 - Reservation number – enter only the first 10 numeric digits of the reservation number, do not include the word “COUNT”
 - Reservation approximate total cost – Do NOT enter the Daily Rate of the rental, enter the “Approximate total cost”
 - “Canceled” checkbox – mark off if the reservation was canceled
- Hotel Reservation Information:
 - Reservation number
 - Hotel rate
- Train Reservation Information:
 - Reservation number
 - Reservation price
- Finally, attach the relevant documents (Approved DCFS PS1-85, Travel Store Itinerary, and any other relevant documents) in the “Document Summary” section. Please see the “Travel Logging Manual” for detailed instructions on how to do this.

4. After booking travel arrangements, give the traveler the electronic ticket provided by the Agency.

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- The Agency provides electronic tickets instead of paper tickets. Electronic tickets are emailed to the traveler and TC.
5. Notify the Agency if a travel reservation is to be cancelled. To ensure that proper credit is issued, also notify the A-C of any cancellations at: travel@auditor.lacounty.gov. Finally, update the Travel Log to show that the ticket was cancelled.
 6. Monitor cancelled travel reservations to ensure the Department is credited. Credits must be used before charging the Department.

Staff Requesting Travel Authorization Responsibilities

1. After receipt of the copy of the approved travel request, work with the office TC on the actual travel plan.
2. Travelers must work with the TC to notify the Agency if they need to cancel travel reservations. Travelers will not be reimbursed for any fees charged by the hotel for late cancellation or "no-show" unless they can document circumstances outside their control.

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Case-Related Travel Authorization

When case-related travel authorization for CSWs, attendants and children traveling to destinations outside Los Angeles County and its neighboring counties is requested using the DCFS 304, Case Related Travel Request the CSW is responsible for determining the need for an attendant.

Travel Requests should indicate whether the case meets transfer criteria or whether it meets courtesy supervision or Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children criteria; if so, the status of the transfer/courtesy supervision should be noted. If the case does not meet case transfer criteria or courtesy supervision, the reasons should be documented in the Travel Request.

It is the position of both the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) and the Los Angeles County Juvenile Court that transportation of a child is a case work decision to be approved by the RA and does not require a court order.

Staff Requesting Travel Authorization Responsibilities

1. Complete all sections of the [DCFS 304, Case Related Travel Request](#) including the Mode of Transportation (section E). The DCFS 304 must be submitted and approved (ten) 10 days in advance of the planned departure or as soon as possible for emergency or urgent situations. Travel Requests that require air travel should be submitted thirty (30) days prior to departure, if possible.

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2. Forward the completed DCFS 304 to your SCSW for approval. Provide any necessary supporting documentation, if appropriate.
3. If the DCFS 304 is returned for corrective measures, make the appropriate corrections and resubmit for approval.

SCSW/Immediate Supervisor Responsibilities

1. Review the DCFS 304 and attachments for completeness and accuracy.
2. If applicable, ensure all travel upgrades are appropriate (i.e., booking in coach/economy class and also seeking the lowest logical airfare as defined by Section 13.3.6 of the County Fiscal Manual), justified and approved.
3. If approved, sign on the line for Immediate Supervisor's signature and forward the DCFS 304 to the ARA for signature.
 - a. If incomplete or inaccurate, return to the requestor for corrective measures. Approve upon confirmation of corrective measures.
 - Anytime during the approval process, the original travel request should not be returned to the requestor.

ARA Responsibilities

1. Review the DCFS 304 and attachments for completeness and accuracy.
2. If applicable, ensure all travel upgrades are appropriate (i.e., booking in coach/economy class and also seeking the lowest logical airfare as defined by Section 13.3.6 of the County Fiscal Manual), justified and approved.
3. If approved, sign on the line for ARA's signature and forward the approved DCFS 304 to the RA.
 - a. If incomplete or inaccurate, return to the SCSW/Immediate Supervisor for corrective measures. Approve upon confirmation of corrective measures.
 - Anytime during the approval process, the original travel request should not be returned to the requestor.

RA Responsibilities

1. Review the DCFS 304 for completeness and accuracy.
2. If applicable, ensure all travel upgrades are appropriate (i.e., booking in coach/economy class and also seeking the lowest logical airfare as defined by Section 13.3.6 of the County Fiscal Manual), justified and approved.

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3. If approved, sign on the line for RA's signature and forward the DCFS 304 to the Deputy Director (if flight cost per traveler exceeds \$800.00) or the TC for signature.
 - Travel requests in which the flight cost per traveler exceeds \$800.00 requires the Deputy Director's approval and must be forwarded to the Bureau Office no less than twenty-five (25) days in advance of the travel. Non-routine travel (e.g., court ordered emergency travel, need to be forwarded to the Bureau Office within three (3) days of court notification. The court order must be attached to the request. TCs can get flight cost quotes from the Travel Store by emailing Statefax@caltravelstore.com or calling (877) 454-8785 at no charge to the Department.
4. If incomplete or inaccurate, return to the ARA for corrective measures. Approve upon confirmation of corrective measures.
 - Anytime during the approval process, the original travel request should not be returned to the requestor.

Deputy Director Responsibilities

1. Review the DCFS 304 for completeness and accuracy.
2. If accurately completed, sign on the line for Deputy Director's signature and forward the DCFS 304 to the TC for signature.
 - a. If incomplete or inaccurate, return to the RA for corrective measures. Approve upon confirmation of corrective measures.
 - Once all required signatures have been obtained, forward the original approved PS1-85 to the TA/TC. Anytime during the approval process, the original travel request should not be returned to the requestor.

Travel Coordinator Responsibilities

1. Upon receipt of the approved DCFS 304, review for completeness and accuracy:
 - a. Ensure all required approval signatures are annotated.
 - b. Complete the Method of Booking section (Section G) before signing and making travel arrangements.
 - TCs are required to have access to Concur before booking travel. A TA is responsible for adding and modifying a TC's Concur profile. Contact your TA for more information on creating a Concur profile.
 - c. Acknowledge any travel upgrades on the DCFS 304 (Section G) to ensure every upgrade is justified and approved.
 - d. If completed accurately, sign on the line for TC's signature and provide a copy of the DCFS 304 to the travel requestor. Work with staff and the County-approved Agency to make national and international travel reservations for air, rail, bus, vehicle rentals and hotel.

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- e. Work with staff if corrective measures are needed.
2. After booking travel arrangements, record reservation information in the Travel Log. The log should be updated after every reservation with the Travel Store.
 - The Travel Log (named “Travel Logs Data Entry” on the website) and Travel Logging Manual file can be downloaded from the following website link: [Travel Database Website](#).
 - If you are not able to access the above website to download the files, please ask your TA to contact APtravel@dcfs.lacounty.gov to request access.
 - For detailed instructions on how to log travel, please use the, “Travel Logging Manual,” which can be downloaded from the website. The manual includes images to show where all the data is found and how to use the system step by step.
 3. Create a new record for each individual traveler per trip and enter the following information:
 - Record Locator
 - Employee ID of Traveler (or if non-employee enter: 999999 for minor/youth, 999998 for Independent Living Program (ILP) youth, or 999997 for “Community Partners” such as youth’s relatives or others assisting with transport)
 - Travel Departure Date
 - Travel Return Date
 - Transaction Date on which travel was purchased
 - Traveler Name (should auto-fill for employees once employee ID is entered, for non-employees enter name in Last-Name/First-Name at).
 - Three letter Destination Airport Code (if flying), Destination City, and Destination State
 - Associated CSW employee ID – Only enter if the traveler is not the CSW assigned to the case. Enter the six-digit employee ID of the CSW associated with the case.
 - Travel Coordinator employee ID – six-digit employee ID
 - Transaction Charge amount – select from drop down menu
 - Travel purpose – short description of the travel purpose
 - Remarks/Memo – Add any notes you would like to add to clarify anything or keep notes for reference
 - Air Reservation information:
 - Reservation number – enter only the last ten (10) numeric digits found on the itinerary. Do not include the first two (2) leading letters.
 - Total air ticket price
 - “Canceled” checkbox – mark off if the reservation was canceled
 - “Credit” – if a credit was used to offset the price of the ticket, enter the credit amount here
 - Vehicle Reservation Information:

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- Reservation number – enter only the first ten (10) numeric digits of the reservation number, do not include the word “COUNT”
 - Reservation approximate total cost – Do NOT enter the Daily Rate of the rental, enter the “Approximate total cost”
 - “Canceled” checkbox – mark off if the reservation was canceled
 - Hotel Reservation Information:
 - Reservation number
 - Hotel rate
 - Train Reservation Information:
 - Reservation number
 - Reservation price
 - Finally, attach the relevant documents (including DCFS authorization, Travel Store Itinerary, and any other relevant documents) in the “Document Summary” section. Please see the “Travel Logging Manual” for detailed instructions on how to do this.
3. After booking travel arrangements, give the traveler the electronic ticket provided by the Agency.
 - The Agency provides electronic tickets instead of paper tickets. Electronic tickets are emailed to the traveler and TC.
 4. Notify the Agency if a travel reservation is to be cancelled. To ensure that proper credit is issued, also notify the A-C of any cancellations at: <mailto:travel@auditor.lacounty.gov>. Finally, update the Travel Log to show that the ticket was cancelled.
 5. Monitor cancelled travel reservations to ensure the Department is credited.
 - Credits must be used before charging the Department.

Staff Requesting Travel Authorization Responsibilities

1. After receipt of the copy of the approved travel request, work with the office TC on the actual travel plan.
2. Travelers must work with the TC to notify the Agency if they need to cancel travel reservations. Travelers will not be reimbursed for any fees charged by the hotel for a late cancellation or "no-show" unless the employee can document circumstances outside his/her control.

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DCFS Independent Living Program (ILP)-Eligible Youth Travel Authorization

Travel authorization for ILP-eligible youth is requested using the [Youth Development Services Division \(YDSD\) – Request for Funds \(RFF\)](#) for travel to locations outside Los Angeles County and its adjacent counties.

Transition Coordinator Responsibilities

1. Confirm the youth’s ILP eligibility and document the need before completing the YDSD – RFF. Forward the completed YDSD – RFF to the YDSD Program Manager for review and approval. The YDSD – RFF must be submitted and approved ten (10) days in advance of the youth’s planned departure.

Program Manager Responsibilities

1. Review the YDSD – RFF for completeness and accuracy. If accurately completed, sign on the line for Program Manager’s signature and forward the YDSD – RFF to the TC.
 - a. If incomplete or inaccurate, return to the Transition Coordinator for corrective measures. Approve upon confirmation of corrective measures.
2. If applicable, ensure all travel upgrades are appropriate (i.e., booking in coach/economy class and also seeking the lowest logical airfare as defined by Section 13.3.6 of the County Fiscal Manual), justified and approved.
3. Once all required signatures have been obtained, forward the original approved YDSD - RFF to the TC.

Travel Coordinator Responsibilities

1. Upon receipt of the approved YDSD – RFF, review for completeness and accuracy. Ensure all required approval signatures are annotated and complete.
 - a. If accurately completed, provide a copy of the YDSD – RFF to the Program Manager. Work with staff and the County-approved Agency to make national and international travel reservations for air, rail, bus, vehicle rentals and hotel.
 - b. Work with staff if corrective measures are needed.
2. After booking travel arrangements, record reservation information in the Travel Log. The log should be updated after every reservation with the Travel Store.
 - The Travel Log (named “Travel Logs Data Entry” on the website) and Travel Logging Manual file can be downloaded from the following website link: [Travel Database Website](#).

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- If you are not able to access the website to download the files, please ask your TA to contact APtravel@dcfs.lacounty.gov to request access.
 - For detailed instructions on how to log travel, please use the, "Travel Logging Manual," which can be downloaded from the website. The manual includes images to show where all the data is found and how to use the system step by step.
3. Create a new record for each individual traveler per trip and enter the following information:
- Record Locator
 - Employee ID of Traveler (or if non-employee enter: 999999 for minor/youth, 999998 for Independent Living Program (ILP) youth, or 999997 for "Community Partners" such as youth's relatives or others assisting with transport)
 - Travel Departure Date
 - Travel Return Date
 - Transaction Date on which travel was purchased
 - Traveler Name (should auto-fill for employees once employee ID is entered, for non-employees enter name in Last-Name/First-Name at).
 - Three letter Destination Airport Code (if flying), Destination City, and Destination State
 - Associated CSW employee ID – Only enter if the traveler is not the CSW assigned to the case. Enter the six-digit employee ID of the CSW associated with the case.
 - Travel Coordinator employee ID – six-digit employee ID
 - Transaction Charge amount – select from drop down menu
 - Travel purpose – short description of the travel purpose
 - Remarks/Memo – Add any notes you would like to add to clarify anything or keep notes for reference
 - Air Reservation information:
 - Reservation number – enter only the last ten (10) numeric digits found on the itinerary. Do not include the first two leading letters.
 - Total air ticket price
 - "Canceled" checkbox – mark off if the reservation was canceled
 - "Credit" – if a credit was used to offset the price of the ticket, enter the credit amount here
 - Vehicle Reservation Information:
 - Reservation number – enter only the first ten (10) numeric digits of the reservation number, do not include the word "COUNT"
 - Reservation approximate total cost – Do NOT enter the Daily Rate of the rental, enter the "Approximate total cost"

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- “Canceled” checkbox – mark off if the reservation was canceled
 - Hotel Reservation Information:
 - Reservation number
 - Hotel rate
 - Train Reservation Information:
 - Reservation number
 - Reservation price
 - Finally, attach the relevant documents (including DCFS authorization, Travel Store Itinerary, and any other relevant documents) in the “Document Summary” section. Please see the “Travel Logging Manual” for detailed instructions on how to do this.
4. After booking travel arrangements, give the Program Manager and the case-carrying CSW a copy of the itinerary for their file and the electronic ticket provided by the Agency.
 - The Agency provides electronic tickets instead of paper tickets. Electronic tickets are generally emailed to the traveler and the TC within two (2) days of ticketing.
 5. Notify the Agency if a travel reservation is to be cancelled. To ensure that proper credit is issued, also notify the A-C of any cancellations at: Travel@auditor.lacounty.gov. Return a copy of the completed YDSD – RFF to the Program Manager for filing in case folder. Finally, update the Travel Log to show that the ticket was cancelled.
 6. Monitor cancelled travel reservations to ensure the Department is credited.

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Case-Related Travel Rental Vehicle Authorization

Travelers may rent a vehicle at their destination when it is less expensive than other transportation (e.g., taxi, airport shuttle, etc.) or if the nature of the travel requires it. All rental vehicle reservations must be made with the Travel Store. Vehicle rental requests for home visits will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis by the RA to determine the cost effectiveness of the rental.

Staff Requesting Rental Vehicle Responsibilities

1. Complete the [DCFS 304](#), specify the rental vehicle option and forward to your Immediate Supervisor for review.
 - The DCFS 304 must be submitted and approved ten (10) days in advance of the planned departure.
2. Follow the steps under the section titled [Case-Related Travel Authorization](#).

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Case-Related Travel Personal Vehicle Use

If a Department employee traveling outside Los Angeles County and its neighboring counties opts to use his/her personal vehicle, a DCFS 304 must be completed and submitted for approval prior to the commencement of any travel. Management (i.e., RA, DD, and/or other manager who is providing approval) must ensure that this mode of transportation is justified, by verifying that it is the most cost effective form of travel, before approving the request.

CSWs will be reimbursed for use of personal vehicles for business purposes in accordance with current County mileage reimbursement provisions.

Staff Using A Personal Vehicle Responsibilities

1. Complete the [DCFS 304, Case Related Travel Request](#), specify the personal vehicle option and forward to your immediate supervisor for review.
2. The DCFS 304 must be submitted and approved ten (10) days in advance of planned departure.
3. Follow the steps in the section titled: [Case Related Travel Authorization](#).

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Travel to Los Angeles County and Neighboring County Airports and Commuting in Destination Cities

Employees who travel on County business are required to take the most economical mode of transportation to and from airport, bus and rail terminals. The following modes of transportation should be considered:

- Public Transportation (buses, subways, taxis, ride hailing services, etc.)
- Hotel and airport shuttle services
- Personal vehicle

Travelers are expected to minimize costs to the County by taking advantage of any reasonable transportation options or accepting alternate schedules. Travelers are expected to demonstrate the cost-effective option of transportation when submitting claims for reimbursement of expenses.

Ground Transportation To and From Terminals

For transportation to and from airports, bus and rail terminals within Los Angeles County and its neighboring counties, travelers are expected to drive their personal vehicles. Travelers will be reimbursed the associated [mileage costs](#) plus parking expenses incurred at designated [airport parking lots](#) while performing official County business.

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- A traveler must be certified as a mileage permittee to be eligible for reimbursement for the mileage claimed.
- A traveler is required to file all mileage claims via the Mileage Authorization and Reimbursement System (MARS) located in LA Kids.
- A traveler will be reimbursed for mileage driven when incurred from their home/office to the transportation terminal or from the transportation terminal to their home/office.
- Mileage reimbursement will be allowed from the traveler's home to the terminal if equal to or less than the distance from the traveler's headquarters to that location. Similarly, mileage reimbursement will be allowed from the terminal to the traveler's home if equal to or less than mileage from the terminal to the traveler's headquarters. The MARS application applies the Shortest Distance Rule, which is only triggered when commuting to or from home.
- Mobile workers are subject to [LA county Code 5.40.200](#), "Under such conditions, the permittee so authorized to establish his home as headquarters shall travel to and from his home and shall be compensated only for that mileage, according to existing rates, which is in excess of 25 miles each way."

If travelers opt to use an alternate mode of transportation (e.g., Airport Shuttle, Uber, Lyft, Taxi, etc.), it is their responsibility to provide proper justification along with the expense claim documents before forwarding to AP. Claimant must clearly demonstrate that the alternate mode was more cost effective compared to claiming mileage.

Acceptable forms of justification include, but are not limited to:

- Providing a memo with a detailed explanation for using the alternate transportation.
- Providing a cost out comparison of mileage plus terminal parking expenses and costs associated with the chosen alternative.

Ground Transportation at Travel Destination

Once at the destination, travelers may rent a vehicle (which was booked through the Travel Store, Inc. prior to the date of departure) when it is less expensive than other forms of transportation (e.g., taxi, airport shuttle, ride-hailing service, etc.) or if the nature of the travel requires it. It is the traveler's responsibility to make this determination prior to the trip and provide documented proof (e.g., a cost-out comparison of a vehicle rental vs. taxi) when submitting their expense claim to AP. All rental vehicle reservations must be made using the County-approved Agency. Travelers should book mid-size vehicles or smaller (based on need) when traveling alone and any requests for upgrades, exceptions or special needs must be annotated on the appropriate Travel Request form (DCFS 304 or PS1-85) and submitted for approval.

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Requesting a Travel Advance

A travel advance is a sum of money received prior to travel that is an advanced reimbursement for anticipated expenses, such as event registration, transportation, lodging, capital city incidental expenses and meals. The costs of specific categories may not exceed the amounts shown in the latest Travel Expense Reimbursements rates, which are per-day and per-person allowances. The A-C issues updates for travel expense reimbursements, as necessary. Refer to the [Travel Expense Reimbursements](#) sheet and [A-C memorandum](#) located on LAKids.

The qualifying length of travel for an advance is at minimum, three (3) days and two (2) nights. Any discrepancy between anticipated and actual expenses is corrected after travel through the DCFS 95A, Expense Claim.

- The DCFS 875, Request for Travel Advance may be used for both the transportation of children and when attending a conference. In addition, the Request for Approval of Purchase Training should be used to pay for registration while the Request for Travel Advance is to be used for travel expenses.

Staff Requesting a Travel Advance Responsibilities

1. Complete a [DCFS 875, Request for Travel Advance](#) no later than eight (8) business days before the warrant request date.
2. Forward the DCFS 875, along with a copy of the approved PS1-85 or the DCFS 304 to the ARA/RA/Division Chief for approval.
3. Reconciliation between Expense Claim and Travel Advance:
 - Failure to submit an Expense Claim to Fiscal Operations Division covering a trip within thirty (30) calendar days after the DCFS 875 was received may result in a full deduction of the amount advanced from staff's payroll warrant.
 - a. If the Expense Claim amount is larger than the amount of the Travel Advance, state on the DCFS 95A the difference between the two amounts and submit your claim for the balance.
 - b. If the Expense Claim amount is less than the amount of the Travel Advance, state on the DCFS 95A the difference between the two amounts and submit a check or money order for the difference, payable to the County of Los Angeles, DCFS, with your DCFS 95A.
 - c. If the Expense Claim amount is equal to the amount of the Travel Advance, indicate on the DCFS 95A that the travel expense was equal to the advance.

ARA/RA/Division Chief Responsibilities

1. Review the DCFS 875 and attachments for completeness and accuracy.

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2. If accurately completed, sign on the line for ARA/RA/Division Chief's signature. Forward a signed copy to the staff requesting the Travel Advance and submit the original to the Bureau Chief of Finance and Administration for final approval. The request is to be submitted no later than seven (7) working days in advance of the warrant request date to: APTTravel@dcfs.lacounty.gov

Fiscal Operations Division Staff Responsibilities

1. Review the DCFS 875 for completeness and accuracy.
2. Call the staff person requesting travel authorization to pick up the Travel Advance warrant when the request has been processed.
 - Only seventy-five percent (75%) of the estimated travel expenses will be advanced to the traveler.

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Requesting Travel Expense Reimbursement

Reimbursement of travel expenses incurred by DCFS staff is claimed via the DCFS 95A, Expense Claim. The DCFS 95A must be completed and submitted to Accounts Payable (AP) no more than **two (2) weeks** after completion of the County business trip.

- Expense claims received more than **two (2) weeks** after the completion of travel may be subject to delayed process time or rejection. If any supporting documents (e.g., travel authorization, expense receipts, proof of training conference, etc.) are not available, submit a signed memo from the RA/DC explaining the reason for the missing document(s).

Capital City Allowance

The Capital City Allowance, per County Code Section 5.40.090 (a), is intended to reimburse additional lodging and meal expenses associated with traveling to certain capital and primary cities. The Capital City Allowance is only claimable to the extent incurred and not claimable for travel to any other cities unless approved in advance by the Auditor-Controller or Chief Executive Officer.

The Capital City allowance is only claimable to the extent incurred and the traveler must have been required, for business purposes, to be physically present in the capital or primary cities listed on the [Travel Expense Reimbursements](#). The Board of Supervisors has authorized expansion for Capital City incidental expenses to other cities on a case-by-case basis, with approval by the A-C.

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Meal Reimbursement

[Meal reimbursements](#) shall not be allowed in the County of Los Angeles or on one (1) day trips to its neighboring counties.

Reimbursement for meals shall be made when travel extends for a minimum of 4 hours during the employee's workday.

For purposes of determining eligibility for meal reimbursement, travel is considered to begin when the traveler departs their residence or office and ends when the traveler arrives at their residence or office after the conclusion of the trip. To be reimbursed for the cost of meals, travel should begin and end by the following times:

Meals	Travel Begins	Travel Ends
Breakfast Only	▪ 6:00 am or earlier	▪ 10:00 am or later
Breakfast and Lunch	▪ 6:00 am or earlier	▪ 1:00 pm or later
Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner	▪ 6:00 am or earlier	▪ 7:00 pm or later
Lunch Only	▪ 11:00 am or earlier	▪ 3:00 pm or later
Lunch and Dinner Only	▪ 11:00 am or earlier	▪ 7:00 pm or later
Dinner Only	▪ 5:00 pm or earlier	▪ 7:00 pm or later

Tips

Gratuities and tips may be reimbursable when directly related to an otherwise reimbursable travel expense (lodging or meals). The combined gratuity and travel expense reimbursement cannot exceed the maximum reimbursement rate for the particular travel expense. There is no reimbursement of gratuities for taxi services or similar services.

Staff Requesting Travel Expense Reimbursement Responsibilities

1. Complete the [DCFS 95A, Expense Claim](#) immediately after the completion of the trip.
 - Indicate your correct full name and office address for proper check distribution.
2. Claim only the dates approved on the Travel Request ([PS1-85](#) for Admin and [304](#) for case related travel) for lodging, meals, ground transportation, capital city incidental expenses, parking and porter expenses.
 - The maximum allowable travel reimbursement rates are indicated on the [Travel Expense Reimbursement Rates sheet](#).
3. Attach a copy of the approved Travel Request, travel itinerary, supporting documents and all expense receipts to the DCFS 95A.

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- Itemized payment receipts are required for meals, transportation, parking and lodging.
 - Receipts are also required for any training materials purchased at the training site whether paid by the County or traveler.
 - Receipts must be submitted with the other required documentations within the required time frame.
 - A printout of the credit card statement highlighting the charge in question will be accepted in lieu of a receipt.
 - When a receipt is not available, prepare a policy exception memo with the approval signature of the ARA/RA/Division Chief, containing a full explanation of the expense and the reason for the missing receipt.
 - If an unforeseen circumstance or event during travel results in a policy violation, prepare a memo with the approval signature of the **RA/Division Chief**, fully explaining the particular circumstance and include a formal documentation of the event.
4. Forward the original DCFS 95A and attachments to the ARA/RA/Division Chief for approval. Retain copies for your files.
 5. If the DCFS 95A is returned for corrective measures, make the appropriate corrections and resubmit for approval.

ARA/RA/Division Chief Responsibilities

1. Review the DCFS 95A and attached supporting documents for completeness and accuracy. If accurately completed, sign on the line for ARA/RA/Division Chief's signature and forward the DCFS 95A and supporting documents to:

DCFS – Fiscal Operations Division
Accounts Payable
510 S. Vermont Ave. 14th Floor
Los Angeles, CA 90020

2. Ensure the approved mode(s) of transportation and lodging on the Travel Request forms (DCFS 304 for case related and PS1-85 for Admin travel) are the same as those being claimed on the DCFS 95A.
3. If any discrepancy is found, the claimant must submit an affidavit signed by the ARA/RA/Division Chief explaining the discrepancy.
 - a. If the DCFS 95A and attached supporting documents are not approved, return the claim documents to the expense claim approver, and not the requestor, to avoid alterations or potential fraud.
 - b. Ensure approved expense claims are not returned to, or accessible by, the requestor, and that requests for missing claim information/support are routed to the approver or appropriate supervisor (if the approver is not reachable).

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Fiscal Operations Division Staff Responsibilities

1. Review the DCFS 95A and attachments for accuracy and completeness. If approved, process for payment.
 - a. If incomplete or inaccurate, complete the Return Notice of Expense Claim from AP and return the DCFS 95A with all attachments to the ARA/RA/Division Chief (not the claimant), for corrective action.
2. Process the approved DCFS 95A through the electronic Countywide Accounting Purchasing System (eCAPS). The reimbursement warrant is issued by the A-C approximately two (2) business days after all required eCAPS are applied and will be mailed directly to staff by the A-C. However, the warrant can also be requested by the staff to be picked-up at AP.

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APPROVALS

Immediate Supervisor Approval

- PS1-85, Administrative Travel Request

SCSW Approval

- PS1-85, Administrative Travel Request
- DCFS 304, Case-Related Travel Request

ARA Approval

- PS1-85, Administrative Travel Request
- DCFS 304, Case-Related Travel Request
- DCFS 875, Request for Travel Advance
- DCFS 95A, Expense Claim

RA Approval

- DCFS 304, Case-Related Travel Request (if applicable)
- DCFS 875, Request for Travel Advance
- DCFS 95A, Expense Claim

Division Chief Approval

- PS1-85, Administrative Travel Request
- DCFS 875, Request for Travel Advance
- DCFS 95A, Expense Claim

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Deputy Director Approval

- PS1-85, Administrative Travel Request
- DCFS 304, Case-Related Travel Request (if applicable)

Bureau Chief of Finance and Administration Approval

- PS1-85, Administrative Travel Request

Director Approval

- PS1-85, Administrative Travel Request

Travel Coordinator Approval

- PS1-85, Administrative Travel Request
- DCFS 304, Case-Related Travel Request
- YDSD – Request For Funds

Transition Coordinator Approval

- YDSD – Request For Funds

Program Manager Approval

- YDSD – Request For Funds

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HELPFUL LINKS

Forms

LA Kids

[DCFS 95A](#), Expense Claim

[DCFS 304](#), Case Related Travel Request

[DCFS 875](#), Request for Travel Advance

[PS1-85](#), Administrative Travel Request

References

Los Angeles County Code (LACC) [Sections 5.40.060.B.1.a and 5.40.060.B.1.b](#) - allows County attendees, with prior approval, to take advantage of special conference lodging rates when the conference rate is lower than the rate available through the Travel Store.

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LACC [Section 5.40.090 \(a\)](#) - The Capital City Allowance is intended to reimburse additional lodging and meal expenses associated with traveling to certain capital and primary cities.

[Los Angeles County Fiscal Manual \(LACFM\) Section 13.3.6](#) – States that County travelers, barring approved exceptions, are expected to travel in coach/economy class and to seek the lowest logical airfare that meets their business needs through the Travel Store.

[LACFM](#) Chapter 13 – Los Angeles County Travel Policy: Provides detailed information related to travel authorization, reservations, cancellations or unused tickets, lodging or hotel cancellation, meal reimbursement, capital city allowance, etc.

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