

For: FSA Employees

FY 2008 Instructions for De-Obligating Travel Obligations in the Online Travel System (TRVL)

Approved by: Associate Administrator for Operations and Management



1 Overview

A Background

Currently there is a need to reconcile travel obligations in TRVL. There is a significant difference between recorded obligations and expenditures. This is a result of:

- travel authorizations not being de-obligated
- all relocation obligations being charged against budget object class 2100 (2199 06).

Since FSA has switched from TRVL to GovTrip, it is important for offices to reconcile and de-obligate travel funds before the end of FY 2008. Funds not de-obligated will not be available for transfer to the “X” or “no year” account as part of FSA’s funding in FY 2009. In addition, funds that are obligated are unavailable to cover shortfalls in other areas of this FY.

It is, therefore, imperative that all offices:

- reconcile travel obligations
- de-obligate excess travel obligations for FY 2008 using TRVL.

B Purpose

This notice:

- instructs all FSA National, State, and County Offices to use Hyperion Reports (Detail Travel and GovTrip reports) for August 2008 when reconciling travel obligations
- informs all offices that travel funds must be de-obligated in TRVL.

Disposal Date	Distribution
November 1, 2009	All FSA Offices; State Office relay to County Offices

2 De-Obligating Travel Authorizations

A Types of Travel Authorizations

The following are descriptions of 5 different types of AD-202 authorizations in TRVL and their users.

- **Type A - Unlimited Open Authorization (Administrator only).** An unlimited open authorization permits travel for any official purpose for the entire year. Type A authorizations are issued annually and are approved by the Secretary or Under Secretary only.

Type A travel is used by the Administrator only.

- **Type B - Limited Open Authorization.** A limited open authorization is issued annually for employees required to perform frequent, routine, repetitive travel within a work-related geographic area (foreign or domestic).

Type B travel is used by STC, SED, DD, compliance specialist, FLP employees, warehouse examiners, and similar positions requiring frequent, routine, non-local travel within a specified work-related geographic area, such as a State, county, region, or district. For non-routine travel, a Type C authorization is required.

- **Type C - Trip-by-Trip Authorization.** A trip-by-trip authorization is issued for a specific trip that identifies purpose, itinerary, and estimated costs. This is the most commonly used type of travel authorization.

Type C travel is used by all other travelers for trips with specific non-local itineraries, including permanent change of station.

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2 De-Obligating Travel Authorizations (Continued)

A Types of Travel Authorizations (Continued)

- **Type L - Local Travel Authorization.** A local travel authorization permits employees of offices to be reimbursed for local travel and related expenses (mileage, tolls, parking, etc.). Local travel is official travel conducted within the boundaries of the official duty station. Type L authorizations are issued annually, and are renewed at the beginning of each FY.

Type L travel is used by employees traveling within the area of their official duty station.

A manual AD-202 is prepared at the beginning of each FY for COC to establish mileage that is paid through the T&A process. This manual AD-202 is for traveling purposes only and is not entered into the travel system.

- **Type N - Nationwide Travel Authorization.** A nationwide travel authorization can be issued to an official who would qualify as a Type B traveler, except whose responsibilities require regular, nationwide travel. Type N authorizations are also issued annually and are approved by the traveler's approving official.

Type N travel is used by Deputy Administrators, Special Approving Officials, and those positions designated by Deputy Administrators in writing.

B Reconciling Travel Obligations

Hyperion reports should be used to reconcile travel obligations and expenditures to actual travel documents on a monthly basis.

The National Office, Kansas City offices, APFO, State and County Offices shall refer to the **Travel Detail and GovTrip Travel Reports** when reconciling travel obligations in Data Warehouse.

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2 De-Obligating Travel Authorizations (Continued)

C Types B and C-TDY Authorizations

- **Type B authorization.** The type B authorization is issued for an extended period, often quarterly or annually for frequent, routine, repetitive travel. Funds are obligated at the time the authorization is established in the Online Travel System. When a travel voucher is processed against the authorization, the total amount of expenditures paid is recorded. Type B authorizations should have “N” entered in the “Final Voucher” field until the end of the travel period authorized; or until the employee will no longer travel under that authorization number. The remaining balance on the authorization is de-obligated when “Y” is entered in the “Final Voucher” field. “Y” should be entered in the “Final Voucher” field only at the end of the travel period and when the employee will no longer travel under that authorization number.

Note: If the type B voucher has “Y” in the “Final Voucher” field, the funds will automatically be de-obligated, which means no other voucher may be processed for that authorization number. If “Y” is entered into the “Final Voucher” field by mistake, a new type B authorization will be required.

- **Type C-TDY authorization.** The type C-TDY authorization is the most commonly used type of travel authorization; they are issued for individual trips. Funds are obligated at the time the authorization is established in TRVL. When a travel voucher is processed against the authorization, the total amount of expenditures paid is recorded. The remaining balance on the authorization is de-obligated when “Y” is entered in the “Final Voucher” field. In many cases throughout FY, this field is left blank or has an “N”.
- **Type C - Relocation** should remain obligated.

D Implications If Not De-Obligated

When vouchers for types B, C, and N authorizations are processed and “N” is entered in the “Final Voucher” field, the amount remaining on the authorization will not be de-obligated making the funds un-usable for other travel. For type C-TDY authorizations, this can occur throughout the FY; and for type B authorizations, this tends to occur towards the end of the FY. More importantly, all offices that do not timely de-obligate types B and C-TDY travel not only run the risk of being over obligated but also severely limit the agency’s ability to transfer the remaining funds to the no year account for use in the following FY.

Note: Although NFC’s de-obligation program is run approximately 30 calendar days after the FY closes, **it is imperative that all offices de-obligate all travel obligations that will not be used by September 22, 2008.** In an annual year appropriation, this means that all travel funding that is de-obligated after September 30 must be returned to Treasury versus being available for transfer to the no year account for the following FY. Offices that de-obligate their excess travel funds on internal office logs or records do not accomplish the desired results. De-obligation **must** be reflected in TRVL and ultimately in the Agency’s accounting system. These funds will then become available for transfer to the no year account.

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2 De-Obligating Travel Authorizations (Continued)

E De-Obligating Travel Funds

For FY 2008, under the Foundation Financial Information System (FFIS) accounting, if final travel vouchers are submitted using “Y” in the “Final Voucher” field, the system will automatically de-obligate outstanding balances. Therefore, if offices are preparing final vouchers for processing, “Y” should be placed in the “Final Voucher” field. This will result in an automatic de-obligation of remaining funds on the travel authorization.

Throughout the FY, it is important to monitor travel and ensure that unneeded funds are de-obligated. Offices who use Type B, C, and N travel authorizations generally estimated their need at the beginning of the FY. With the FY almost complete, it is suggested that the estimate be updated, and if it is determined that the need should be reduced, AD-202’s can be amended thereby de-obligating unused funds.

3 Action

A De-Obligating Type B, C, and N Authorizations

Travel funds for types B and C-TDY authorizations may be de-obligated using 1 of the following 2 methods.

Method 1

IF...	THEN...
travel is complete and all expenses have been claimed on the travel voucher	ENTER “Y” in the “Final Voucher” field (block 54 of the travel voucher). This will de-obligate the unused funds from the authorization.
voucher has already been submitted and should have been marked final , but was not	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • review the authorization in TRVL; note the dollar amount in Section D, "Un-liquidated Obligation" • amend type B authorizations if additional travel will be charged against the authorization, changing the final dollar amount of the authorization to reflect the remaining amount; if there is no other travel under the B authorization, place a “Y” in the “Final Voucher “ field <p>Note: Type C authorizations should be canceled to de-obligate unused travel funds.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • amend the type B, C, and N authorization, changing the final dollar amount of the authorization to reflect the remaining amount <p>Example: If the remaining funds are \$245, reduce the total of the authorization by that amount.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • when the amended authorization has been signed, release the document in the Online Travel System; de-obligating the \$245.

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3 Action (Continued)

A De-Obligation Types B, C, and N Authorizations (Continued)

Method 2

IF...	THEN...
attempting to de-obligate funds without expiring the type B or C-TDY authorization	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• review the authorization in TRVL; note the dollar amount in Section D, "Un-liquidated Obligation"• amend the type B, C, and N travel authorization for that dollar amount. When the amended authorization has been signed, release the document in TRVL. Travel funds are then de-obligated and the travel authorization is still in an active status.

Note: Method 1 is the preferred method to de-obligate funds. It is **recommended** that "Y" be entered in the "Final Voucher" field to de-obligate travel funds.

If a voucher authorization was prepared but the travel was cancelled, then cancel the C-TDY authorization, print, and release.

For employees that have left the Agency but funds need to be re-obligated, contact your respective Budget Analyst

B All Office Action

Because of a high level of obligated travel funds, offices are requested to review all travel type authorizations to ensure that there are no remaining balances. If there is a balance, take appropriate steps to de-obligate these funds. Also, do the following:

- project the travel requirements that have not yet been obligated using GovTrip
- ensure that the amount of travel obligated is in line with the projected need.

All offices shall:

- de-obligate all travel obligations that will not be needed in FY 2008 no later than **September 22, 2008**
- make corrections directly into the TRVL system by amending Type B, C, and L travel authorizations.

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3 Action (Continued)

D Contacts

If there are questions about this notice, contact **1** of the following, as applicable:

- Vernell Jones, BUD, at 202-720-5149 **for Federal travel**
- Christine Pyles, BUD, at 202-720-8511 (**SEA and NEA**) (federal)
- Tracey Blom, BUD, at 816-926-3447 (**NWA, MWA, and NWA**) (federal)
- Kim Floehrs, BUD, at 202-720-3356 (**SEA, NEA, and MWA**) (non-federal)
- Beth Hill, BUD, at 202-720-9862 (**NWA and SWA**) (non-federal)
- Terry Luehrs, FAD, at 816-926-1142.