

For: State Offices, KCMO, KCCO, and APFO

Travel Management Center (TMC) Fee-Based Services

Approved by: Acting Deputy Administrator, Management



1 Overview

A Background

The airlines have imposed commission cuts on all travel agencies, which has forced travel agencies to charge transaction fees for service. This cost is transferred to the customer (Federal Government) and will be a part of all new and existing TMC contracts.

It is USDA and FSA policy that all USDA offices:

- must use TMC's
- are **not** authorized to deal directly with airlines or other commercial transportation vendors.

Notes: Most travel administrators are aware that GSA contracts with existing TMC's have expired or are expiring.

A new GSA fee-based contract was awarded on November 12, 1999.

FSA regional and FSA national contracts were considered; but, based on contact with GSA, these options are not feasible at this time. Therefore, each FSA Field Office:

- is required to select TMC to provide TMC services
- may be asked to pay a transaction fee for present and future TMC service.

Some offices have expressed satisfaction or dissatisfaction with their TMC services. Each FSA Field Office has the opportunity to select a new TMC that will provide the best service meeting the office's particular travel needs whenever a contract with TMC is renewed or amended.

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<p>Disposal Date</p> <p>February 1, 2001</p>	<p>Distribution</p> <p>State Offices, KCMO, KCCO, and APFO</p>
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1 Overview (Continued)

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Purpose

This notice provides:

- instructions to Field Offices on contacting the GSA representative in their area to arrange a task order
 - guidance on required GSA and FSA Procurement Office involvement in the establishment of a task order.
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2 Instructions

A

GSA Contact

Each FSA Field Office shall contact their GSA representative in their area to arrange a task order for new or renewed contracts. Only employees officially designated as Procurement Officers may enter into contract with TMC's on behalf of the Federal Government. Under no circumstances shall an agreement be made without the benefit of GSA and FSA Procurement Office interaction and guidance.

State Offices shall address and handle task orders for all FSA County Offices.

B

Task Order

Dollar limits on the volume of airline travel do not affect an agency's ability to issue a task order to GSA for TMC. Offices may pool together:

- to raise the dollar volume at which task orders are issued and negotiated
- with USDA offices, such as NRCS and RD, or other Federal Government agencies.

The GSA representative will ensure that small offices will be piggybacked with larger offices to meet GSA task order minimums. Although the Travel Management Center Services Guide states that agencies **should** pool their requirements to get the benefits of a better negotiating position because of higher projected volume, it is **not** mandatory that they do so.

It has come to FMD's, Accounting and Travel Policy Staff (ATPS), attention that some offices outside of FSA have been **persuaded** by GSA to enter into a pooled (by GSA) task order. If an office does not believe that the task order meets their requirements, or if there are special fees assessed because of requirements of the other pool members, an office does **not** have to participate in that task order.

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2 Instructions (Continued)

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Suggested Reading

FMD, ATPS, strongly recommends that all Field Office travel administrators review the Travel Management Center Services Guide, which summarizes contract terms, pricing tables, contractor offerings, and value added products and services. The guide is accessible on the Internet at <http://www.region9.gsa.gov/fss/tmcservices>.

The GSA web site also offers a standard boiler plate task order that may be used. However, each Field Office should **not** use the boiler plate task order unless it **truly** meets their travel needs.

D

Task Orders and Vendor Negotiations

There are various methods of paying for transaction fees. Discussions are being held to determine the most appropriate method of paying for transaction fees. Offices will be notified when FSA-wide payment methods have been established.

E

Special Note

FMD, ATPS, strongly recommends that each FSA Field Office:

- select a new TMC that will meet their particular travel needs
 - pool together with USDA offices, such as NRCS and RD, or other Federal Government agencies
 - review the Travel Management Center Services Guide
 - not use the boiler plate task order unless it **truly** meets their travel needs.
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Contact

If there are questions about this notice, contact FMD, ATPS at 703-305-1408.
