

For: All FSA Offices

Agency Credit Limit and Activating/Deactivating Government Travel Charge Cards

Approved by: Deputy Administrator, Management



1 Overview

A Background

USDA is required by OMB to assess the credit worthiness of first-time government travel charge card applicants. As of March 1, 2006, FSA was required to use the new credit worthiness application. The new application allows 2 types of travel charge cards, restricted and standard. The:

- restricted travel charge card is given to applicants with a credit score less than 660 and has a credit limit of \$3,000 (\$1,500 cycle limit)
- standard travel credit card is given to applicants with a credit score more than 660 and has a credit limit of \$5,000 (\$2,500 cycle limit).

USDA has also undertaken a project to have each agency review the Federal travel charge card program to strengthen the agency’s internal control. One objective was to mitigate the level of risk for fraud and misuse by establishing an appropriate credit limit for each travel charge cardholder. As a result of this project, USDA recommended deactivating travel charge cardholders who travel less than 4 times a year.

B Purpose

This notice:

- reminds Agency program coordinators of the policy on activating and deactivating travel charge card accounts
- provides Agency program coordinators the required credit limit for creditworthiness applicants.

Disposal Date	Distribution
July 1, 2007	All FSA Offices; State Offices relay to County Offices

Notice FI-2766

1 Overview (Continued)

C Contacts

The following table provides contacts if you have questions about this notice.

IF located in a...	THEN contact the...
County Office	State Office.
State Office or the National Office	travel office at 703-305-1408.

D Labor Management Obligations

Where exclusive representation exists, bargaining may be requested to the extent allowed by applicable statutes. Where contract language already addresses these policies and procedures for bargaining unit employees, contract language prevails.

2 Action

A Completing the Travel Charge Card Credit Worthiness Application

Applicants should:

- obtain an application by doing the following:
 - go to <http://intranet.fsa.usda.gov/travel/travel.htm>
 - CLICK “Credit Card Application and Acknowledgment/Acceptance Statement” under Manuals, Notices and Applications
- read the agreement between the employee and Bank of America
- complete the application in its entirety and sign at the bottom
- initial beside either of the following options:
 - A to authorize a credit check
 - B to decline a credit check
- submit completed application to your Agency program coordinator.

Note: Employees who decline a credit check will be issued a restricted charge card.

Notice FI-2766

2 Action (Continued)

B Appropriate Credit Limit for Travel Charge Cards

Agency program coordinators should:

- review travel charge cardholders' accounts to ensure the credit limit is set as follows:
 - \$8,000 for all accounts opened before March 1, 2006
 - \$5,000 for standard accounts opened on and after March 1, 2006
 - \$3,000 for restricted accounts opened on and after March 1, 2006
- ensure the appropriate option set code is listed as follows on accounts:
 - 13034 for all accounts opened before March 1, 2006
 - 13033 for standard accounts opened on and after March 1, 2006
 - 13041 for restricted accounts opened on and after March 1, 2006
- **not** increase credit limits without a written justification signed by the employee's approving official

Note: Justification should state the employee's name, account number, last 4 digits of employee's social security number, timeframe of increase, and reason for increase.
- submit a copy of all requests to increase credit limits, signed by the approving official, to the Agency's travel staff

Note: Requests may be FAXed to Cynthia Chesley at 703-305-1147.
- ensure all credit limit increases are decreased to the Agency's default credit limits
- deactivate travel charge card accounts of employees who travel 4 or less times a year
- **not** deactivate travel charge card accounts, regardless of the 4 times a year criteria, for either of the following:
 - members of emergency response teams, Consent Decree Action Team, or similar positions
 - all supervisors
- **not** reactivate a travel charge card account without a written request signed by the employee's approving official approximately 7 calendar days before official travel begins

Note: Justification should state the employee's name, account number, last 4 digits of employee's social security number, travel dates, and travel location.

Notice FI-2766

2 Action (Continued)

B Appropriate Credit Limit for Travel Charge Cards (Continued)

- reactivate approved travel charge card accounts by entering “Activation and Deactivation” dates into the EAGLS system

Note: Enter a date 7 calendar days before the beginning travel date under the “Activation” column and enter a date 3 calendar days past the ending travel date under the “Deactivation” column (to cover unforeseen circumstances). This process will allow the cardholder to be activated and deactivated automatically.

- submit a copy of all requests to reactivate travel charge card accounts, signed by the approving official, to the Agency’s travel staff.

Note: Requests may be FAXed to Cynthia Chesley at 703-305-1147.

C Effective Date

This policy is effective immediately.