



DEPARTMENTAL TRAVEL GUIDANCE IN THE EVENT OF A LAPSE IN APPROPRIATIONS

as of September 28, 2023

DOC Travel Management

In the event of a lapse in appropriations, regular agency operations must be suspended except under limited circumstances. This guidance outlines the steps that will be taken both in preparation for a potential lapse in appropriations and in the event a lapse in appropriations occurs, including the responsibilities of relevant bureau management points of contact.

1. Travel Management Division Operations

- a. At least one week prior to the effective date of a lapse in appropriations, TMD will request a report from Carlson Wagonlit Travel (CWT) Sato of all scheduled or approved travel for the Department for a specified period. TMD will review, separate the data by bureaus, and send the report to the bureau Departmental Management Council (DMC) Point of Contact (POC).
- b. The night prior to the commencement of a lapse, TMD will send guidance to bureaus' DMC POCs, Chief Financial Officers (CFOs), and other designated POCs. The guidance will include the most current version of this document, Lapse in Appropriations Travel Approval form (attached), and the updated report of all scheduled or approved travel for a bureau for a specified period.
- c. Each subsequent night for the duration of a lapse, TMD will send guidance to bureaus' DMC POCs, CFOs, and other designated POCs (See Appendix 1, Email Examples). The guidance will include an updated report of all scheduled or approved travel for a bureau for a specified period and the Lapse in Appropriations Travel Approval form.
- d. TMD will work closely with CWTSato on all travel-related activities related to the lapse as well as ensure excepted travel is not impacted. This includes coordinating and approving cancellations, making reservations for excepted travel, and submitting approved paper travel authorization to CWTSato for ticketing.
- e. TMD will be available to provide assistance to bureaus with travel-related activities during a lapse in appropriations.

2. CWTSato Travel Management Center (TMC) Operations

- a. The CWTSato call center will remain open 24/7. To contact the call center, call **1-855-813-2844**.

- b. This message will be on the toll-free number for CWTSato:

*Due to the U.S. government lapse in appropriations, you may experience longer than expected hold times. If you have a cancellation only request please either contact your airline directly or forward your CWTSatoTravel invoice or flight details to the following email address for processing: **CWTSatoCancellations@CWTSatoTravel.com** Please include your contact phone number on your email in the event we need to reach you for any reason. We appreciate your patience. Please stay on the line and your call will be answered in the order it was received.*

- c. CWTSato will have contact information for the Director of the Office of Financial Reporting, Internal Controls and Travel (OFRICT) and the Director of the TMD in case of questions. Personnel excepted from furlough and undertaking approved travel during the lapse may also

contact these individuals in case of questions or an emergency. The OFRICT Director contact information is 202-482-0502 and the TMD Director contact information is 202-482-2715.

- d. CWTSato will provide full service to all DOC personnel who must return to their official stations in the event of a lapse in appropriations.
 - e. A week before a lapse, CWTSato will provide the Department with TMC reservations and ticketed reports for a one-week period and updates upon request.
 - f. The Department will provide CWTSato with a spreadsheet of excepted personnel that have been cleared to travel during a lapse in appropriations.
 - g. Each day during the continuance of a lapse, CWTSato will cancel all trips for non-excepted DOC personnel that are scheduled to depart on that day and coordinate with the Department's designated excepted POCs and/or notify travelers that have contact information in their E2 profiles, as appropriate. The cancellation process will continue each day that the lapse in appropriations is in effect.
 - h. CWTSato will not book or ticket any travel for any non-DOC personnel during a lapse without clearance from the OFRICT or TMD Director.
 - i. The E2 Solution Travel System will be operational, but the interface to the Core Financial System (CFS) will be off-line. Therefore, paper authorizations must be used.
3. Bureau DMC POCs or designee should:
- a. Ensure all travelers update their E2 profile with non-DOC contact information.
 - b. Run E2 travel reports no later than 3 days prior to an impending lapse in appropriations to identify excepted and non-excepted travelers who are scheduled for travel and those already in a travel status.
 - c. Identify non-excepted personnel who are scheduled to be on travel during the time of a possible lapse in appropriations and notify them that they may have to end their trips and return to their official stations as soon as practicable upon the commencement of the lapse. This includes all invitational travelers.
 - d. Ensure that all non-excepted DOC personnel and invitational travelers on travel at the start of a lapse in appropriations return to their official stations as soon as practicable. Inform these travelers that they must schedule return flights by calling CWTSato at **1-855-813-2844** as soon as possible on the effective date of the lapse in appropriations. CWTSato's call center is open 24/7. CWTSato has been directed to schedule/reserve the most cost-effective return trips available, ensuring all travelers return home as soon as logistically possible.
 - e. Immediately alert all travelers who are scheduled to travel after a lapse in appropriations commences and inform them their trips will be cancelled by CWTSato in the event of a lapse (unless the bureau obtains clearance and approval using the Lapse in Appropriations Travel Approval form as described in paragraph h. below prior to the start of travel).
 - f. Instruct travelers who booked hotels and rental cars outside of CWTSato that upon a lapse in appropriations, they must cancel all reservations prior to being charged late or cancellation fees.

- g. Instruct travelers not to access E2 to cancel travel authorizations (only tickets should be cancelled). The travel authorization may be necessary if a cancellation or no-show fee is assessed.
 - h. For any travel for which travel authorizations were issued before the lapse that relates to an activity that may be continued during a lapse in appropriations under an exception to the Antideficiency Act, prepare a Lapse in Appropriations Travel Approval form for clearance and approval for each traveler or travel event (*i.e.*, multiple travelers undertaking the same travel/going to the same event) as soon as practicable. Clearance and approval of previously authorized travel should be sought on a rolling basis as a lapse continues, ideally at least 48 hours ahead of the scheduled travel. Forms should be sent to the Office of the General Counsel's General Law Division (generallaw@doc.gov) with a copy to the TMD central mailbox (ofm-doctravelpolicyhelpdesk@doc.gov). Once cleared by OGC, the form will be provided by TMD signed and approved by either the TMD Director, OFRICT Director, or the DCFO/OFM Director. If cleared and approved, it will be returned by the OFRICT or TMD Director to the respective bureau POC. Travel not cleared and approved through this process will be cancelled as provided in paragraph 2.g., above.
 - i. For any new travel to undertake activities within an exception to the Antideficiency Act that needs to be authorized during a lapse in appropriations, similarly prepare a Lapse in Appropriations Travel Approval form for clearance and approval as described above. Forms should be sent **with as much lead time as possible**, ideally at least 48 hours ahead of the scheduled travel. This form must be completed, and clearance and approval obtained, prior to the issuance of any travel authorization. No travel authorizations may be issued, nor can travel start, until the bureau receives the approval from the OFRICT or TMD Director.
 - j. For any new travel approved under the preceding paragraph, create a new travel authorization within E2 (which should only be accessed by excepted personnel during the lapse). Because the interface to the Core Financial System (CFS) will be off-line, the travel authorization should then be printed out and forwarded to travel authorizing official (*i.e.*, the bureau head or their designee or for OS only the OFRICT Director). All travel authorization packages must include the cleared and approved Lapse in Appropriations Travel Approval form.
 - k. Travel to return a traveler to their official station after the start of a lapse as a part of the orderly shutdown of regular agency operations does not need to be cleared or approved using the Lapse in Appropriations Travel Approval form.
 - l. Ensure that cancellations by travelers are only done through the CWTSato call center at **1-855-813-2844** or by email at CWTSatoCancellations@CWTSatoTravel.com.
4. Government travel cards will remain active during a lapse in appropriations; however, employees are reminded their travel cards are to be used **only** while on official travel. Employees who use their travel card for unauthorized purchases or cash advances will be subject to disciplinary actions. Government travel card coordinators will review transaction activity once the lapse in appropriations ends and will report misuse to the cardholder's supervisor and Human Resources Office.
5. All DOC travelers are expected to make payments on their individually-billed travel card accounts in compliance with the terms of the cardholder agreement.
6. Vouchers will not be processed until the lapse in appropriations ends.

7. Passports/visas will not be processed during the lapse in appropriations. Bureaus should forecast who will need passports or visas and try to get them processed before a lapse. In addition, bureaus should make sure they publicize their pick-up and hand-carry process when the traveler needs to work directly with the State Department, Embassies, and TMD.
8. Bureaus need to send TMD all Passports and Visa that are upcoming or pending completion at least one week prior to an anticipated shutdown, updates as needed and the day of the shutdown - such as pending dates and products (such as Letter of Authorization, DIP notes, etc.) for pick-up and where and who the POCs are, expedites, visa fees/receipts, POCs, who the Bureaus have been collaborating with (forward to the central mailbox if personal emails were used, etc.) to the central mailbox OFM-OCPassportVisaHelpdesk@doc.gov. Make sure that the Bureau POCs are aware of all pending actions as well. The Bureau Visa/Passports POC need to provide the OFRICT Director and TMD Director their POC list to include dates and hours of availability will need a complete list of the hand-carry travelers to include their POC information, expectation or needs, and requirements completed and depending actions.
9. For pick-ups and hand-carries, please make sure that you have the following:
 - a. Passports:
 - i. Proper identification
 - ii. A letter that authorizes you to pick up the passport from the State Department that is signed by the Bureau Passport Acceptance Agent (PAA) and Bureau Authorizing official. If you are picking up for someone, you will need documentation from them authorizing you to pick-up their passport up as well. TMD has a template for this letter of authorization. Remember the State Department prefers to only work with the DOC (authorized) couriers.
 - iii. Coordinate it with the Bureau PAA, who will coordinate and send all the required correspondence and communication to the TMD team and so that the DOS SIA office is aware of the date and time of your arrival and expectation.
 - iv. Required supporting documentation (as applicable to the pick-up or drop off) – reference DOS website
 - b. Visas:
 - i. Proper identification
 - ii. A ticket maybe required to pick up your Visa at the Embassy.
 - iii. Coordinate with the Bureau PAA, who will coordinate and send all the required correspondence and communication to the TMD team.
 - iv. Reference Embassy website and/or telephone number
10. **For DOC Overseas travelers:** All overseas travel is subject to Departmental clearance using the Lapse in Appropriations Travel Approval form, and copies of travel authorizations/orders must be sent to the OFRICT Director or TMD Director or emailed to ofm-doctravelpolicyhelpdesk@doc.gov, to ensure that they have an accurate list of all Department-wide travel occurring during a lapse in appropriations.
11. Employees who received a Permanent Change in Station (PCS) travel authorization prior to the lapse in appropriations and are en route to their new duty station should continue travel and report to the new duty station. No PCS travel authorizations may be approved once a lapse in appropriations commences unless cleared using the Lapse in Appropriations Travel Approval form.

Appendices:

- 1.) Examples of Email Guidance
- 2.) Justification Form

Appendix 1

Examples of Email Guidance

Example #1 - Sent the night prior to the Lapse:

Good evening,

In the event of a lapse in appropriations and to be prepared for the potential requirement of an orderly shutdown of agency operations, we need your assistance.

Attached is your bureau's list of travelers scheduled to depart on *Month Dates* along with a spreadsheet to populate with which travelers are excepted. All travel during a lapse in appropriations (other than travel to return non-excepted travelers to their official stations as part of the orderly shutdown or regular agency operations) must be approved using the Lapse in Appropriations Travel Approval form attached. Upon instruction by the Office of Management and Budget to implement the Department's lapse plan due to the commencement of a lapse in appropriations, the Department will instruct CWTSato starting around 6:00 am **Day, Month Date, Year**, to begin canceling all trips for DOC (non-excepted) personnel that are scheduled to depart on that same day and coordinate with or notify the travelers, as appropriate. Cancellation of scheduled travel will be performed each day.

Also, if the lapse in appropriations is not resolved tonight, please instruct all non-excepted employees currently in a travel status to return home as soon as practicable.

TMD will work closely with your designated points of contact for authorizing travel for excepted personnel. Thanks!

Example #2 - Sent the next day

Greetings,

The attachment represents your bureau's employees booked travel departing on **Day, Month Date, Year**. If the lapse in appropriations is not resolved tonight, please instruct the non-excepted employees to cancel their Day of week departure reservations with CWTSato as part of the orderly shutdown of regular agency operations due to the lapse in appropriations. To ensure that all Month Date departures are canceled, we will continue to work the cancellation process with CWTSato for all travelers that are not coded as excepted. We will ensure that excepted employees travel plans remain active.

If you have any questions, please feel free to reach out to the Director for TMD at 202-482-2715, or the Director for OFRICT at 202-482-0502 or ofm-doctravelpolicyhelpdesk@doc.gov.