



DOE Travel: Frequently asked questions

For information related to traveling with students, please refer to the [Chancellor's Regulation A-670\(Open external link\)](#).

Q: What is TRAC?

A: TRAC stands for Travel Request and Approval Certification. TRAC is the system that is used to request both permissions to travel and post-travel reimbursement for travel-related expenses.

Q: How do I access the TRAC portal?

A: The TRAC portal can be accessed by logging into the tool [TRAC - Login \(finance360.org\)](#) using DOE Outlook credentials.

Q: Who submits a TRAC?

A: Every DOE employee who is requesting to travel out of town must submit a TRAC prior to the date of departure.

Q: If I am traveling within the five boroughs, do I need to submit a TRAC?

A: If a traveler is traveling locally and is requesting reimbursement for traveling via personal car, mass transit, or parking, a TRAC must be submitted after the date of travel.

Q: Can I use my car for local traveling?

A: To use your personal vehicle to conduct DOE business, a car request must be submitted through the TRAC portal prior to the date of usage. Once a car request is submitted, the system will generate a car number.

Q: What is a Car number?

A: A Car number is a number assigned to your Request to Use Personal Vehicle application, as submitted via the TRAC system. If you meet the criteria for local travel and must use your own personal vehicle, this application must be submitted. Once submitted, a Car number is generated. When applying for reimbursement of your local travel expenses, you will select the Car number associated with your trip as found on the TRAC Expense Details screen (your Car number will be found in a drop-down menu). Once selected, you may then add in the mileage used during your trip so that you may be reimbursed for this expense.

Q: What is a PE document number?

A: PE number is a number assigned to your request to travel application, as submitted via the TRAC system (PE stands for “projected expenses”). While completing your TRAC application, you will be required to include your projected expenses, if any. Once your TRAC application is submitted, a PE document number will be generated. The PE number is used to identify and locate your application as it moves through the approval process.

Q: What is a TR number?

A: TR number is a “travel reimbursement” number assigned to your request when you claim reimbursement of travel expenses, as submitted via the TRAC system. A TR number is used to identify and locate your reimbursement application as it moves through the approval process.

Q: Can I make my own travel arrangements?

A: All out-of-town travel accommodations for air, train, and lodging must be made through the DOE’s contracted vendors. For Vendor information, contact the Travel Unit at travelunit@schools.nyc.gov or (718) 935-5000 option 4.

*Please note: Travelers have the option of making their own lodging arrangements however the nightly rates must be made in accordance with U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) guidelines found on GSA’s Web site <https://www.gsa.gov/travel/plan-book/per-diem-rates>

Q: What is the GSA rate?

A: The U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) is an independent agency of the United States government that supports the basic functioning of federal agencies. The GSA establishes the maximum per diem meal and lodging rates for government and city employees that are allowable while traveling when conducting business for an employee’s agency. DOE employees should not exceed these rates when traveling for business. If expenditures exceed the per diem rate for a particular location, the traveler will be required to provide an adequate explanation in their application for reimbursement (found in the TRAC application) as to why an exception should be granted.

Q: How do I pay for traveling and lodging?

A: Travel and lodging are paid for by creating a Purchase Order to DFO, vendor number BOS04000, and then the DOE will pay for travel and lodging using the DOE corporate card.

Q: How long are quotes provided good for?

A: Quotes provided by the travel agency are subject to price change within 24 hours.

Q: Once I have the Purchase order created and it is approved by the Travel Unit, am I done?

A: No. Approval of a purchase order by the Travel Unit does not mean that travel has been approved, nor does it mean that ticket(s) will be issued, or hotel reservation(s) confirmed. Following approval of a Purchase order, the traveler is responsible for providing supporting documentation to justify travel expenses. Once received and approved, the Travel Unit will notify the travel agency so that it may complete the reservation process.

Q: What is “supporting documentation”? What exactly do I need to submit to the Travel Unit?

A: Once you have requested a purchase order from your school’s FAMIS administrator or division’s financial officer, you must submit supporting documentation to the Travel Unit to substantiate your request to travel. The Travel Unit reviews this documentation prior to notifying the travel agency of approval. The documentation should be scanned in as One PDF document and emailed to travelunit@schools.nyc.gov

Travel Unit Required Documentation

- Travel cover sheet- If the cover sheet is needed, it can be requested by emailing the travel unit.
- An approved and printed purchase order
- Approved and printed TRACS
- An agenda of the trip that shows the dates of the trip.
- Student Roster (If it is a school trip)
- Copy of the selected quote from the travel (airfare train) **(highlight the selected quote)**
- Copy of reservation confirmation from the hotel (if independently made)
- Travel packets will be discarded if they do not have all the required documents.
- Failure to provide the requested documentation may delay travel approval, and result in increased airfare quotes, railway way quotes, and lodging quotes.

Q: How do I pay for registration?

A: Registration can be paid for in two ways. A traveler can pay out-of-pocket and be reimbursed through the TRAC portal for the out-of-pocket expense. Or a PO can be created if the conference has an active DOE vendor number.

Q: Can I use a P-card to pay for my trips?

A: No. P-cards cannot be used to secure travel. You must use a purchase order (PO).

Q: Who should I contact if an outside entity is paying for travel and lodging accommodations?

A: If an outside entity is paying for travel and lodging and no DOE funding will be used to pay for the trip, the Ethics Committee will need to review and approve the trip prior to attendance.

Q: If another organization is paying for all or part of my travel, do I still need to complete a TRAC request?

A: Yes, all DOE employees must have an approved TRAC application prior to commencing out-of-town travel, even if another organization is paying for all or part of the trip.

Q: How do I get reimbursed for my eligible travel expenses once I return from my trip?

A: There are several steps that either you or your school's FAMIS administrator must take prior to reimbursement. The steps are as follows:

- Upon return from the trip, the traveler must submit a travel reimbursement request in the TRAC application.
- Select Out-of-Town Travel Reimbursement, enter the PE number that was assigned when you began the travel process, and enter your actual expenses. Actual expenses must be entered even if they are the same as the estimated expenses you provided when you initiated your request to travel.
- Entering the actual expenses will generate a TR document number which is necessary for reimbursement.
- Upload all supporting documentation (receipts) into the TRAC system to substantiate your travel expenses.
- The person whom you named as the approver in the TRAC Approvers Detail screen must approve the actual expenses entered for travel.
- Your school's FAMIS administrator must post the funding to the TR document in FAMIS > miscellaneous > TRAC admin.
- Your school's FAMIS administrator must approve your TR document for payment processing.
- Within seven to ten business days from the receipt of your supporting documentation (not including weekends and holidays), you should expect to receive your reimbursement check at the address you provided when first initiating your request to travel.

REFERENCES

Chancellor's Regulation A-670: <https://www.schools.nyc.gov/docs/default-source/default-document-library/a-670-english>

U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) Per Diem Rates: <https://www.gsa.gov/travel/plan-book/per-diem-rates>

Travel and Safety Administration: <http://www.tsa.gov>

TRAC system: [TRAC - Login \(finance360.org\)](http://finance360.org)

New York State Tax Exemption Certificate for lodging: [Form ST-129](#)

Travel DFO's Standard Operating Procedure (SOP): <https://infohub.nyced.org/nyc-doe-topics/Policies/finance-standard-operating-procedures/travel-and-conferences>