

PURCHASING NOTES-JUNE 2017

New Travel Guidelines

Trip Optimizer

Effective July 1, 2017, Section 25-3-41, Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated, will include language that requires state agencies to use a Trip Optimizer System developed and administered by the Department of Finance and Administration that computes the optimum method and cost for travel by state officers and employees using a motor vehicle where travel will exceed one hundred (100) miles per day, and is not in a state-owned or state-leased vehicle available to the officer or employee. This will provide that the maximum authorized amount of travel reimbursement related to motor vehicle usage will be the lowest cost option as determined by the Trip Optimizer.

Basically, this will determine if it is less expensive to rent a vehicle or to take your privately owned vehicle, after it has been determined that no state vehicle is available. The Trip Optimizer is an Excel spreadsheet that will be available on the OPTFM Travel Information website <http://www.dfa.ms.gov/dfaoffices/purchasing-travel-and-fleet-management/purchasing-andtravel/travel/> on or before July 1, 2017.

After the variables have been entered and a determination is made a copy of the worksheet must be submitted with the travel reimbursement voucher as well as kept on file at the agency in order for vehicle travel to be reimbursed, or if no reimbursement is requested, must be kept on file at the agency. If renting a vehicle is the less expensive option, there are several in-state vendors to choose from on state contract.

The Vehicle Rental Services contracts are on the OPTFM Travel Information website at: <http://www.dfa.ms.gov/dfa-offices/purchasing-travel-and-fleetmanagement/purchasing-and-travel/travel/>. Simply click "Travel Contracts" and choose Vehicle Rental Services. Note: This shall not apply to travel by state officials in motor vehicles driven by the official or in vehicles used for the transport of the official. The exemption in this paragraph applies only to the state official and not to the staff or other employees of the state official. State official" means statewide elected officials and the elected members of the Public Service Commission.

An employee traveling on official state business is expected to exercise the same care incurring expenses as would a prudent person traveling for personal reasons. Travel for business should be conducted at a minimum cost for achieving the success of the mission. Travelers shall request any and all reservations as far in advance as possible and shall utilize the lowest logical rate available. Detailed instructions on use of the system will be available soon and will be provided to each agency's Travel Coordinator."