

## **VA Learning University (VALU) Instructions to Traveler (ITT)**

Below you will find information regarding your upcoming VALU funded training and requirements for completing your Temporary Duty Travel (TDY) Travel Authorization and Expense Voucher.

Please provide a copy of this document to your station's Alternate Preparer.

### **Training information and requirements**

**Program Course Title:** Managing Conflict and Resolving Disputes through Mediation

**National Conference:** No

**Estimated Number of Attendees:**

#### **Program Location**

Training Site: Justice Center of Atlanta

Address: 976 Edgewood Ave, NE

City: Atlanta

State: GA

Phone: 404-523-8236

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**Travel Start Date:** Monday, March 12, 2012

**Program Start Date:** Tuesday, March 13, 2012

**Program Start Time:** 8:00 am

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**Program End Date:** Thursday, March 15, 2012

**Travel Return Date:** Friday, March 16, 2012

**Program End Time:** 4:00 pm

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#### **VALU Learning Consultant**

Name: Victor Geary

Email Address: [Victor.Geary@va.gov](mailto:Victor.Geary@va.gov)

Phone Number:

#### **Customer Training Coordinator/Registrar**

Name: Rita Reese

Email Address: [Rita.Reese@va.gov](mailto:Rita.Reese@va.gov)

Phone Number:

## **VALU TMS Requirements:**

You **MUST** register in the [VA Learning University Talent Management System](#) prior to submitting your Travel Authorization in FedTraveler.com. Additionally, you **MUST** self-certify in [VA Learning University Talent Management System](#) once training has been completed.

**Note:** If individuals are required to return to their station early due to a non-emergency situation, the employee's Station will refund VALU for the total costs of Training and Travel.

**Dress Code: Business Casual**

## **Special Instructions:**

**Hotel Information:** The host hotel is Hyatt Regency Atlanta, 265 Peachtree Street, NE, Atlanta, GA 30303 - 404-577-1234. The link to this hotel is listed in TMS for each class offering.

**Hotel Tax Exemption Information:** The following states are tax exempted; DE, \*FL, KS, MA, MO, \*NY, OR, \*PA, \*TX, \*Virgin Island and \*WI. Note: \*States that require a form. Click [here](#) to view the State Tax Exemption Website to determine the requirements for your TDY location.

## **Per Diem Information:**

**Is Lodging included in the registration fee: No: Per Diem is Authorized**

**Are Meals included in the registration fee: No: Per Diem is Authorized**

## **TDY Travel Instructions**

VALU has established specific requirements for processing VALU funded Travel Authorizations (TA) and Expense Vouchers (EV) in FedTraveler.com. These requirements are in addition to the established requirements in the Federal Travel Regulation and VA Travel Policy.

To prevent delays in the approval of VALU funded travel documents the following requirements must be adhered to:

- All VALU funded travel requires a TA to be created by a designated Alternate Preparer, and submitted through the Alternate Station-Funded Travel Authorization feature in FedTraveler.com using **“101 VA Corporate Training (VALU)”** organization.

- All organizations must ensure they have designated Alternate Preparers. A minimum of at least two Alternate Preparers are recommended who are trained on the use of the Alternate Station-Funded Travel Authorization feature. Click [here](#) for VALU Alternate Station-Funded Travel Authorization procedures.

Travelers **are not** authorized to create their own Alternate Station-Funded Travel Authorization.

If alternate preparer training is required, please contact the FSC VA-Wide TDY Travel Support Group at [vafscetravel@va.gov](mailto:vafscetravel@va.gov).

Alternate Preparers and/or Travelers should contact their FedTraveler.com Local System Administrators with questions regarding TA and EV procedures. Local System Administrators should follow the [Call Center Matrix](#) and send out the [Traveler Call Center Matrix](#) to all their FedTraveler.com users.

- **Combined VALU funded travel with station's official travel:** VALU funded travel **may not be combined** with station's official travel. Combined travel should be processed by the local station. After completion of the TDY, send an expenditure transfer request to VACO VALU Travel Policy Team at [valuttravel@va.gov](mailto:valuttravel@va.gov). The request must include the following information: amount of the expenditure transfer, station's cost center information, a copy of the approved TA, completed EV, all VALU required receipts (prorated amount for VALU funding) and a copy of the Training Instruction document.

VALU will review requests to ensure the expenditure transfer is valid and is processed in a timely manner. VA local stations are not authorized to process expenditure transfers against 101 VA Corporate Training (VALU) cost center.

- Local Travel **will not** be funded by VALU. According to [VA Travel Policy Local Travel Chapter 7](#), local travel is defined as travel within a 50 mile radius of the participant's duty station or the geographic boundaries as defined by the station. Local travel expenses will be paid by the participant's facility or office in accordance with the participant's local standard travel policy and procedures.
- TAs should be submitted no sooner than four (4) weeks before the travel start date with the exception of national conferences. TAs for national conferences should be submitted no sooner than eight (8) weeks before the travel start date.
- To ensure the TA is approved in a timely manner, the following steps must be accomplished. These steps are in addition to the normal steps required to complete a TA.

1. Enter the below comment in the "Travelers' Comments" section of the travel authorization:

(Insert Name) has been approved to attend the “(Insert title of training or conference)” using VALU funds.

2. Special Needs: When there is a request for Special Need accommodations, the following statement must be entered in the traveler comment field:

“Employee has documentation authorizing Special Need requirements for the following items: (enter item/s)”.

Note: DO NOT enter, fax or attach sensitive information to any travel documents in FedTraveler.com.

For additional information refer to [Travel under Special Circumstances Chapter 5](#).

3. Fax or attach a copy of the Training Instructions into FedTraveler.com prior to submitting the TA.
  4. When making Travel Arrangements "Restricted" fares or fares that must be approved within 24 hours or sooner should not be selected if "Non Restricted" fares are available. For additional information refer to [Travel Policy Transportation Expenses Chapter 3](#).
  5. If the traveler uses an alternate mode of transportation for personal convenience or takes personal leave in conjunction with official travel, a cost comparison worksheet must be completed and attached to the TA. Click [here](#) to access the cost comparison worksheet.
  6. **Rental cars are not normally authorized using VALU funds.** For exceptions, contact VALU Travel Policy Team at [valutavel@va.gov](mailto:valutavel@va.gov).
  7. **Personal phone call expenses are not normally authorized using VALU funds.** For exceptions, contact VALU Travel Policy Team at [valutavel@va.gov](mailto:valutavel@va.gov).
  8. **Miscellaneous Expense type is not authorized using VALU funds.** For exceptions, contact VALU Travel Policy Team at [valutavel@va.gov](mailto:valutavel@va.gov).
  9. **Other Expenses** must be listed separately. Remember, these are estimates and the **actual expenses will be itemized on the EV.**
- Below are some of the common “Other Expense” items that should be entered, if applicable. For additional information refer to [Travel Policy Miscellaneous Travel Expenses Chapter 4](#) and [Travel Policy Transportation Expenses Chapter 3](#):
- ❖ **Airport Parking:** Use the most cost advantageous form of parking.

- ❖ **Hotel Taxes:** The following states are tax exempted: DE, \*FL, KS, MA, MO, \*NY, OR, \*PA, \*TX, \*Virgin Island and \*WI. Note:\* Indicates States that require Travelers to provide the hotel a completed form upon check-in. Click [here](#) to view the State Tax Exemption Website and to obtain the required forms.
- ❖ **Resort Fees:** Resort fees that are mandatory are authorized.
- ❖ **Baggage Fees:** Standard baggage allowances are listed below:
  - One piece for 1 week of TDY
  - Two pieces for 2 weeks of TDY
  - Three pieces for 3 weeks or more of TDY
- ❖ **Excess Baggage (weight) Fees:** Approving officials may authorize excess baggage allowance over the standard baggage allowance. Excess baggage (weight) may be approved after the fact with proper justification. For example, a traveler returns from a training conference with additional training materials received at the training location. Use the most cost advantageous form of shipping training material, FedEx/UPS shipping fees vs. Excess Baggage (weight) Fees. Click [here](#) to view GSA's Baggage Allowance website.
- ❖ **ATM Fees:** The TA must have ATM authorized using the ATM withdrawal feature on the Financial Summary Page in FedTraveler.com. ATM fees are authorized for Individually Billed Account (IBA) travel cards only, not personal credit cards. Click [here](#) for additional information.
- ❖ **Taxi or Shuttle:** Must provide an official receipt with company's name phone number, and date of service.
- ❖ **Tips for Taxi & Shuttle:** Must be listed separately from the taxi and shuttle fares. Note: A "reasonable tip" as defined by VA Travel Policy is no more than 15% of the total cost of the fare. Reimbursement of tips for courtesy transportation will be limited to \$2 per trip and is restricted to transportation from airport to hotel and hotel to airport.
- ❖ **Hotel Parking:** Non-Valet Parking.  
Note: Only the driver of Government Owned Vehicles (GOVs) or POVs are authorized this "Other Expense"
- ❖ **Valet Parking:** Requires a justification to be entered.  
Note: Only the driver of GOVs or POVs are authorized this "Other Expense"
- ❖ **Internet Connection:** Requires a justification to be entered.
- ❖ **FedEx/UPS shipping fees:** Use the most cost advantageous form of shipping training material, FedEx/UPS vs. Excess Baggage (weight) Fees. Click [here](#) to view GSA's Baggage Allowance website.
- ❖ **POV Mileage:** Mileage from residence or office to the common carrier terminal for the most direct route or two round trips to drop off and/or pick up a traveler. [MapQuest](#) is VA's official application to determine mileage.
- ❖ **Tolls:** Receipts are not required, unless the amount exceeds \$10.00 per transaction.
- ❖ **Metro:** Receipts are not required, unless the amount exceeds \$10.00 per transaction.
- ❖ **Cost Comparison (Cost Com) to Traveler, if applicable:** If the traveler uses an alternate mode of transportation for personal convenience or takes personal leave in conjunction with official travel, a cost comparison worksheet must be

completed and attached to the TA. Click [here](#) to access the cost comparison worksheet.

If POV is the most advantageous form of transportation, enter the below information on the TA:

- Enter Travel Mode "**Privately Owned Vehicle**"
- Enter Private Automobile Type "Advantageous to the Govt"
- Enter total number of "Miles"
- Enter other expense amount to be reimbursed to Traveler under "Other Expense"
- Attach the cost comparison worksheet to the TA and EV

**Note: A cost comparison worksheet is not required if the mileage is less than 150 miles one way or if traveler refuses Government Automobile.**

If Common Carrier is the most advantageous form of transportation, enter the below information on the TA:

- Enter Travel Mode of the common carrier "**Contract Flight, Train, Bus, etc.**"
- Enter the total amount to be reimbursed to Traveler as an Other Expense "Cost Com To Traveler"
- Attach the cost comparison worksheet to the TA and EV

- Within five (5) business days of the last day of travel, an EV must be created and submitted. The traveler, not the alternate preparer, is required to review and submit the EV.
- Travelers or Alternate Preparers are required to fax or attach **all receipts regardless of amount** (unless otherwise noted above) into FedTraveler.com and ensure receipts are legible prior to submitting the EV.
- A valid receipt is a written acknowledgement that indicates the amount paid for goods or services. It will show the name of the traveler, date, and the company providing the goods or services.
- Expense amounts claimed must be accurate and match the receipts.
- **Copy of the Ticketed Itinerary:** The ticketed itinerary under "View Itinerary" is only retained for 366 days and does not meet the receipt requirements. Ticketed Itinerary is a required receipt regardless of the payment method, which must be faxed or attached into FedTraveler.com.
- **Hotel Receipt:** Compare the hotel receipt to the authorized amount. Adjust the EV accordingly (if actual hotel cost was less than the authorized amount, reduce the lodging amount to the actual amount paid).

- Travelers are authorized the use of taxi for the following reasons: To obtain meals at the nearest available place where the nature and location of the work at a TDY location are such that meals cannot be obtained there. For additional information refer to [Travel Policy Transportation Expense Chapter 3, 030210](#).

- If receipts are lost, misplaced or cannot be obtained from the vendor, the traveler must fax or attach a signed document into FedTraveler.com with the following information:

I (enter name) made every attempt and was unsuccessful in obtaining receipts for the following expense/s incurred during my travel to (enter location):

Name of Vendor:

Description of expense: (taxi, shuttle, baggage fees, etc.)

Date expense incurred:

Amount:

Signature of traveler:

- Travelers are not authorized to use their IBA travel card for ATM withdrawals without prior approval on the TA.

The Alternate Preparer should select "ATM Withdrawal" from the drop down menu on the Financial Summary page and enter the amount allowed which cannot exceed the amount of Meals and Incidental Expense, and Other Expenses.

### **Contact Information:**

1. Alternate Preparers and/or Travelers should contact their FedTraveler.com Local System Administrators with questions regarding TA and EV procedures. Local System Administrators should follow the [Call Center Matrix](#) and send out the [Traveler Call Center Matrix](#) to all their FedTraveler.com users.
2. Local System Administrators should contact the FSC VALU Review Team with questions related to VALU requirements for specific training conferences, alternate station-funded features, required corrective actions to resolve returned travel documents and determine who the assigned alternate preparers are.

Hours of Operation: Monday through Friday 7:00 am – 5:00 pm CST

- Phone: 1-866-533-0188 (Prompt #3)
- Email: [vafscetravel@va.gov](mailto:vafscetravel@va.gov)

**This document has been approved by VALU Travel Policy:**

**Name: Randy Keuten**

**Date: February 6, 2012**