

From: [Brown, James](#)
To: [Fielder, Jennifer](#)
Subject: FW: Blue Book Travel Policy - with comments
Date: Thursday, June 23, 2022 4:58:00 PM
Attachments: [...Travel.docx](#)
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I asked staci to review the travel policy...here are comments, which are substantively productive.
President Brown

From: Litschauer, Staci
Sent: Thursday, June 23, 2022 4:38 PM
To: Brown, James ; Wilkerson, Erik ; Limesand, Tina
Subject: FW: Blue Book Travel Policy - with comments

Good afternoon,

I have comments about the new travel policy as noted below.

Thank you for considering them and please let me know if you have any questions.

Staci

We currently have nine silos – five commissioner silos for out of state travel, one for pipeline, one for railway, one for staff in state (this also includes commissioner in state travel), and one for staff out of state. Is this changing the commissioner silo to include both in and out of state travel, and the staff travel to also combine in and out of state?

BALANCED ALLOCATION OF TRAVEL FUNDS:

The agency's annual travel budget shall be divided into **eight silos, one for each of the five commissioners, one for the pipeline safety program, one for the railway safety program, and one for other staff travel**. The amount budgeted into each Commissioner's travel silo shall be equal to that of the other Commissioners.

There could be times when there is budget left over in a commissioner's silo but there is not carryforward left over in the agency or the carryforward is slated to be used for something else. It might be wise to state that it may be carried forward if available or not used for other commission business. Or possibly consider removing this from the proposed policy. For the job side of this, it will be more difficult to track the travel portion of carryforward. And it should also be clarified whether the carryforward is for one year or two. We could have two years being tracked in one year plus regular travel. An example of this is if we have \$30,000 in unused travel from FY 2020, and \$30,000 in carryforward, it would all have to go to commissioner travel and they would be allowed to use it in FY 21 and FY 22. In addition, if they didn't travel in FY 21, we would have carryforward dedicated to that travel and it could also be used in FY 22 and FY 23. In FY 22, the commissioner could use all carryforward and no regular budget and could always be requesting carryforward be dedicated to travel rather than agency spending.

UNUSED TRAVEL FUNDS:

The Business Manager may reallocate unused funds within a Commissioner's silo prior to the end of a fiscal year with the concurrence of the Commissioner whose silo will be depleted.

At the end of each fiscal year unused funds within each travel silo shall be carried forward to the extent allowable by law and credited to the same silo in the subsequent fiscal year.

The Business Manager is mentioned several times throughout the policy and perhaps it should be clarified to Business Manager or Accountant. Currently, my position does what this policy is directing the Business Manager to do.

- A travel expense voucher must be completed and submitted to the Business Manager for all travel authorized by the Department. The voucher must itemize all allowable expenses.
- Receipts for all expenditures must be attached to the travel expense voucher and must be provided to the Business Manager no more than 30 days after completing travel unless there are extenuating circumstances.

BUSINESS MANAGER: Shall maintain an accounting of travel silo balances; verify that applicable laws, ~~policies~~policies, and procedures are followed; and facilitate proper completion, routing, authorization, payment, and filing of required forms and documentation.

The traveler should always receive a copy and should be required to attach the documentation to the travel voucher. The voucher should be complete with all receipts when it is submitted for payment.

ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT STAFF: Administrative support staff shall establish and maintain an efficient system for processing requests for travel arrangements, verifying approval of travel requests, using a state procurement card to pay for travel related expenses, or otherwise facilitating approved travel related activities. Administrative support staff shall provide all related receipts generated by their activities to the Business Manager for inclusion with the appropriate travel expense voucher, and also shall provide a copy to the traveler upon request.

From: Trooien, Patricia <ptrooien@mt.gov>

Sent: Thursday, June 23, 2022 3:01 PM

To: Litschauer, Staci <slitschauer@mt.gov>

Subject: Blue Book Travel Policy

Staci,

This is the most UpToDate policy, see attached.

Thank you,

Patricia Trooien

Commission Secretary

Montana Public Service Commission

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