From: Business Services Advisory Grp on behalf of Jennifer D Collins
To: BSAG-L@LISTSERV.UGA.EDU
Subject: Item 66: Use corporate travel cards for travel expenses
Date: Tuesday, April 19, 2016 8:32:41 AM

TO: BSAG Members

FROM: Travel Committee

RE: Item 66: Use corporate travel cards for travel expenses

Good morning BSAG members. As discussed previously, the Department of Administrative Services for the State of Georgia manages the state's corporate travel card contract. The current contract is with American Express and is an individual liability card program, which means the travel credit card is in the cardholder's name and the cardholder is responsible for charges and payments to the card similar to a personal credit card. This program does not provide any benefit to the University, such as having the credit card charges billed directly to the University. After conversations with several units on campus, as well as the BSAG group, we have been exploring other options.

UGA currently offers travelers the ability to direct bill rental cars and airfare directly to the University, alleviating the traveler from having to initially pay for these expenses with personal funds. Over the past year, the University has been piloting a program with Global Escapes travel agency that allows employees to direct bill lodging. This process allows travelers to make lodging arrangements through Global Escapes and Global Escapes provides the Travel & Encumbrance office with a bill for payment processing.

UGA and Global Escapes are ready to expand the ability to direct bill lodging to other units; however, neither Global Escapes nor the Travel and Encumbrances office can accommodate a huge increase in volume of these types of transactions since there is a manual process for both entities. **Utilization of this option should be needs based and not routine in nature**.

Please be mindful of a few things listed below as you engage with direct billing of lodging:

- Global Escapes is only allowed to direct bill the room rate. Travelers may still be required to provide a credit card for incidentals, damage, etc.
- Global Escapes charges a $25 service charge per transaction for direct billing lodging accommodations to the University.
- Travelers will still need to provide Global Escapes with a valid, approved Travel Authority number. In the event that arrangements are needed within the State of Georgia, travelers are encouraged to contact the hotel establishment directly to set up a direct billing agreement between the UGA unit and the hotel.

Adding the ability to direct bill lodging to the University, along with the ability to direct bill airfare and car rentals, eliminates travelers from having to use personal funds to initially pay for some of the larger travel expenditures and seek reimbursements.

With the introduction of direct billing for lodging through Global Escapes, the Travel Committee will

close item 66 on the BSAG Process Improvements list. Accounts Payable will continue to discover other opportunities with new corporate travel card programs that may benefit the University with travel expenditures and reimbursements processes.

Questions can be directed to Jennifer Collins at jfinch@uga.edu

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