

**NATIONAL SUPPLEMENT**

Between

Department of Housing and Urban Development  
and

American Federation of Government Employees Council #222

**SUBJECT: GOVERNMENT CHARGE CARD PROGRAM FOR OFFICIAL TRAVEL EXPENSES**

1. **SCOPE.** This supplement to the Master Agreement results from negotiations on the impact and implementation of HUD's proposal to issue a Government charge card to eligible employees for payment of official travel expenses.

2. **PURPOSE.** Implementation of the Government employee individual charge card program will improve service to HUD employees traveling on official Government business away from the permanent duty station. This will also limit the amount of cash advance for travel expenses.

3. **CENTRALLY BILLED.** Charges for airline tickets will be centrally billed through Travel Management Centers (TMC). Other charges will be individually billed to individual cardholders. HUD will give future consideration to central billing of lodging and rental car charges when GSA indicates that such billing is recommended.

4. **CARD ISSUANCE.** Diners Club Charge cards will be issued to permanent HUD employees who submit an application and (a) make two or more trips a year, and (b) who request a card when authorized to travel. Employees who decline to apply for the card will not suffer any sort of reprisal or discriminatory treatment for nonparticipation in the credit card program. Also, employees will not be promised or receive any benefit, beyond that established by the program, as an inducement to apply for the Diners Credit card.

5. **TRAINING.** Following completion of HUD briefings designed to fully acquaint employees with the program, to inform them of their rights and responsibilities, and to give them the opportunity to raise questions and concerns about program operations, employees applying for the credit card will sign form HUD-21017, Employee Acknowledgement.

6. **AUTOMATIC TELLER MACHINE (ATM).** As soon as ATM service is available from Diners Club, and within a reasonable period of time after the service is available, HUD will seriously consider providing this service for cardholders.

7. **LATE PAYMENT.** Management will not consider charge card payments past due if the late payment of the bill results from an untimely reimbursement by HUD of an employee's properly completed claim which was submitted on time. In the event of an emergency and the employee is unable to file a claim for reimbursement within 30 days after returning from the trip, she/he shall notify the Program Coordinator who may assist the employee in avoiding suspension/cancellation of the card.

8. **OUT-OF-POCKET EXPENSES.** Out-of-pocket expenses are those which cannot be charged to the card and must be paid with cash. Meals and incidental expenses, and miscellaneous expenses for taxis, tolls, parking, etc. will be considered out-of-pocket expenses.

A travel advance will be issued to any employee for out-of-pocket expenses in accordance with HUD Notice, Travel and Transportation Expense Payment System Government Charge Card Program for Official Travel Expenses. Should an employee decide not to use a Diners Club Government charge card for official travel, an advance cannot exceed the out-of-pocket expenses shown on the travel authorization. Employees will be provided a full travel advance when they meet the criteria contained in Section 17C, Parts 1 and 2 in the HUD Notice on Travel and Transportation Expense Payment System Government Charge Card Program for official Travel Expenses.

9. **TELEPHONE CHARGING.** The Diners Club card may be used to pay for telephone calls made in connection with official travel while away from the permanent duty station.

10. **EMERGENCY CHARGING.** Emergency circumstances, such as an official vehicle breakdown, may justify the use of the charge card for food, lodging, and other expenses covered under the Federal Travel Regulations while the employee is away from his/her permanent duty station in an official travel status.

11. **CREDIT CHECKS.** The parties understand that Diners Club credit checks will only be made when an employee requests reinstatement of a cancelled Diners Club card. HUD's involvement in the program will not be a basis for any cardholder's credit checks by HUD.

12. **CARD USE INFORMATION.** Monthly charge card reports are considered highly confidential material, subject to the privacy act, and must be secured from observation by any party other than persons who have a need to know.

13. **USE OF THE CHARGE CARD.** Use of the charge card does not relieve Management or the employee from observance of rules and regulations governing official travel as set forth in the Federal Travel Regulations and HUD Handbook 2300.2 REV-3, Travel, or successor.

14. **CARD SECURITY.** Each participant in the contractor-issued charge card program is responsible for safeguarding his/her card. This does not preclude cardholders from securing the card at their work stations.

15. **BLACKING OUT CARD NUMBERS.** Blacking out the account number from a receipt is a suggested precaution every traveler may observe.

16. **CUMULATIVE REPORTS.** Cumulative 9-month charge activity reports will be utilized for the purposes of determining whether or not employees meet program eligibility criteria, the level of participation and for establishing budget estimates for travel.

17. **REVOLVING ADVANCE.** Employees holding a revolving advance must liquidate the revolving advance within 30 days of receipt of the charge card or obtain a written certification from the appropriate Assistant Secretary/Regional Administrator that a legitimate need exists for continuing a revolving travel advance.

18. **TIMELY REIMBURSEMENT.** In order to facilitate reimbursement of the travel voucher under the credit card program, all travel vouchers for temporary duty (not relocation) will be processed in the following manner:

Vouchers for temporary duty travel (not relocation) will normally be processed and submitted to Treasury for payment within 18 workdays or less, after receipt by the immediate supervisor. This 18 workday period allows 3 workdays for the supervisor to approve the voucher and 15 workdays for the finance office to process the voucher to Treasury, after receipt of a proper voucher. In the event there is a delay in reimbursement, the accounting office will assist the employee to resolve the matter. Compliance with this provision will be monitored on a monthly basis and the Union will be provided with the results, office by office.

19. **DELAYED REIMBURSEMENT.** In the event of unanticipated delays in HUD processing of the voucher for reimbursement, and upon notification by the employee, the Program Coordinator may assist the employee in avoiding suspension/cancellation of the card.

20. **UNION INFORMATION.** HUD will provide the Union with a disk copy of the final version of the HUD Notice regarding the Government charge card program for official travel expenses. The

HUD Council President will be provided a quarterly statistical analysis on the processing time for the travel voucher.

21. **OBTAINING TICKETS.** Travelers will be informed that charging tickets more than a week in advance may result in employee receipt of the bill prior to HUD reimbursement.

22. **UNUSED TRANSPORTATION TICKETS.** Management will coordinate with Travel Management Centers (TMC) to develop a system which allows employees to attach unused tickets to the travel vouchers for forwarding to the Travel Management Centers for appropriate crediting.

23. **LOST/STOLEN TICKETS.** When a ticket is lost/stolen through no fault of the traveler, the refund application service charge shall be reimbursed. When a replacement ticket cannot be provided, the employee may, with supervisory concurrence, postpone or reschedule the trip.

24. **GRIEVANCE RIGHTS.** Employees may grieve HUD actions relative to the charge card program that fall within the scope of the negotiated grievance procedure.

25. **DEBT COLLECTION.** HUD shall provide no more "assistance" with the collection of Diners Club debts than is currently available regarding the collection of privately owed debts. Unpaid card debts will be treated as any non-work related debt.

26. **ACCOUNTING OFFICE PROCEDURES.** Travelers who use Diners Club charge card must submit all vouchers for reimbursement that include Diners Club charges to the appropriate accounting office for payment.

27. **LOCAL SUPPLEMENTS.** In accordance with Article 5, mid-term bargaining may be conducted at the local/Regional level concerning appropriate local/Regional issues.

28. **DISTRIBUTION.** This supplement will be distributed to employees during the briefing sessions on the Government contractor-issued charge card program for official travel.

29. **EFFECTIVE DATE.** The provisions of this supplement will become effective 30 days from the date of signing. This supplement will be incorporated in the forthcoming Master Agreement.

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