

HEALTH SCIENCE CENTER HANDBOOK OF OPERATING PROCEDURES

Chapter 6	Fiscal Policies and Procedures	Effective:	May 2000
Section 6.2	Travel Policies and Procedures	Revised:	September 2008
Policy 6.2.5	Contract Airfares	Responsibility:	Assistant Vice President for Business Affairs

CONTRACT AIRFARES

Policy

The State Texas Building and Procurement Commission (TBPC), Division of Travel and Transportation, negotiates contracts for official State of Texas travel. The contract airfares must be used if available for the city and if no other less expensive fare is available for which the traveler qualifies.

The University policy is that all airfares for all University funded travel (without regard to source of funds) must be purchased through a University contract travel agency and must be paid for with a [State of Texas corporate card](#) account (either a University Paid Travel (UPT) or with a State issued travel credit card).

Contract Airfares

Contract airfare rates are available at <http://www.window.state.tx.us/procurement/prog/stmp/>.

Contract Airfare Features

Although travelers may find less expensive airfares as a result of airfare wars/promotions or through airlines' standard discount programs, such fares may have rigid advance purchase requirements and/or severe penalties for changes or cancellations. For destinations in which there is a state contract, such airfares can be very helpful to our travelers. Some of the key features of the state fares include the following:

1. No advance purchase is required.
2. There are no requirements for day or time of departure or length of stay.
3. There is no charge for changes to the flight schedule.
4. The fares are completely refundable.
5. No Saturday night stay is required.
6. The airlines guarantee last seat availability.

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Reimbursement

More than one airfare is listed for some San Antonio city pairs. In these cases, in addition to a "base" fare there is a "constructed" fare listed to give University travelers the widest possible set of options as they plan their travel.

The State Travel Management Program has secured contracts in international markets for the current fiscal year. The fares in these markets do not include taxes, segment fees, passenger facility charges (PFC's) or other mandatory fees.

Constructed fares consist of two back-to-back state contract fares. University travelers are encouraged to use the lowest state fare possible that meets the needs of their travel. For all travel to destinations in which a state contract airfare exists, reimbursement for airfares other than on a state contract carrier in that market will be limited to the highest contract amount for that city pair. All other airfares (i.e., airfares for destinations for which there is no state contract) have a maximum reimbursement of round-trip coach airfare for the business destination. Current State of Texas airfare rates are listed at: <http://www.window.state.tx.us/procurement/prog/stmp/>

Rules and Conditions

1. Airfare contracts are valid September 1 - August 31.
2. The domestic fares include the federal excise tax (but do not include segment fees) or other mandatory fees assessed by the agency, airlines, airports, and/or local governments.
3. Tickets must be issued by the University contract travel agency.
4. Contract airfares may be purchased only with a State of Texas credit card account (either a central bill account or an individual account billed to the employee). No other form of payment including cash is acceptable under the terms of the contract.
5. Contract airfares may not be used for personal travel.
6. The fare basis codes of "YCATX" and "_CATX" have been established to identify the state contract fare for the contract city

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pairs. The YCATX fare is last seat availability, made in the regular unrestricted Y or coach class. The _CATX fare basis code indicates capacity controlled, which means there are a limited number of seats available at the state contract rate.

7. In accordance with TBPC travel rules, state contract fares are required to be used by all executive branch state agencies including institutions of higher education. Specific exceptions must be documented by agency or institution. At the Health Science Center, such documentation of compliance with contract travel vendors is handled via the [State of Texas Travel Contractor Usage Statement](#) attached to each applicable [Travel Voucher](#).