



GAO Technical Bulletin

Arizona Department of Administration ♦ General Accounting Office

Subject:	<i>Untimely Filed Employee Travel Claims</i>	Issued:	12/01/11
Manual Section(s):	SAAM II-D	Effective:	12/01/11
Supersede(s):	SAAM II-D-IV-C-3; page 13	Page:	1 of 5

TO: Technical Bulletin Administrators
Travel Coordinators
All Agencies

FROM: D. Clark Partridge
State Comptroller

AUTHORITY

A.R.S. § 38-622.C Authorization for travel; claims
A.R.S. § 41-703 Duties of director
A.R.S. § 41-722 Powers and duties relating to finance
A.R.S. § 41-761 Personnel administration
A.R.S. § 41-763 Powers and duties of the director relating to personnel

DEFINITIONS

ADOA Director: The Director of the Department of Administration; the chief executive officer of the Arizona Department of Administration.

Agency: Any department, authority, board, commission, council, administration, court, registrar, office, institution, or other entity in the Executive, Legislative, or Judicial branch of Arizona State Government.

Agency head: The chief executive officer of any agency.

Authorized payroll system: Any method of recording and reporting upon employee compensation, withheld taxes, other deductions, etc. approved for use by any agency.

Claimant: One who makes a claim; in this context, the employee who, by filling out a travel claim, seeks reimbursements for travel expenses incurred on behalf of the State.

Employee: Any employee or officer of the State of Arizona.

File: In this context, to file a travel claim means:

- The claimant has appropriately completed a Form GAO-503EZ and any attachments, such as the Form GAO-503AEZ.
- The claimant has submitted any required substantiation, such as hotel bills, for the amounts claimed.

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- Agency management and supervisory personnel have reviewed and approved the expenditures as being ordinary, necessary, proper, correctly computed, appropriately documented, etc.
- Agency personnel have entered the claim into the appropriate authorized payroll system.

Form GAO-503AEZ: An attachment to the Form GAO-503EZ accommodating additional lines of information. This term extends to any approved, agency-specific form used for the same or similar purposes.

Form GAO-503EZ: A form entitled, “Travel Claim Form,” which is used by an employee to claim reimbursement for allowed expenses incurred in conjunction with business-related travel on behalf of the State. This term extends to any approved, agency-specific form used for the same or similar purposes.

Form GAO-503HRIS: A form, used by an agency in connection with its employees’ travel claims, to determine the appropriate pay codes to which reimbursements should be coded when entered into HRIS. This term extends to any approved, agency-specific form used for the same or similar purposes.

Form GAO-513: A form entitled, “Request to Process an Untimely Filed Employee Travel Claim,” used by an agency head to request the ADOA Director and the State Comptroller to process a travel claim that was not filed on a timely basis.

GAO: General Accounting Office; a division of the Arizona Department of Administration.

HRIS: Human Resource Information Solution; the principal automated system for payroll and personnel administration of the State. As may be applicable, this term extends, with suitable modification, to any authorized payroll system.

Long-term subsistence: Lodging, meal and incidental expenses related to long-term travel.

Long-term travel: A situation in which an employee traveling for the State spends at least thirty (30) consecutive days at least fifty (50) miles away from the employee’s residence and duty post. Reimbursements, policies and procedures relating to long-term travel to some extent differ from those relating to travel of shorter durations.

SAAM: The State of Arizona Accounting Manual; a principal source of State accounting, payroll, and other administrative policies and procedures.

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State Comptroller: A chief financial officer of the State of Arizona and principal executive of the GAO.

Travel claim: An employee's formal and appropriately documented request to be reimbursed for travel expenses. This request usually made using a Form GAO-503EZ.

Travel expense: Any expense incurred by an employee in connection with approved travel for the State. Such expenses include, but are not limited to: transportation, baggage, vehicle, lodging, meals, tips, etc.

Untimely filed employee travel claim: A travel claim filed more than three (3) calendar months after the completion of the trip to which they pertain.

INTRODUCTION

The timely filing of travel claims is in the best interest of the State since it supports, promotes, enables, enhances or results in:

- Reasonable internal control over travel and the authorization and verification thereof.
- Timely and accurate accounting for the State's expenditures and obligations.
- Better budgeting and planning, since the payment of costs is closer to the time when such costs were incurred.
- Decreased costs related to the processing of such claims by, among other things, reducing the need for preparing, reviewing and responding to requests for exceptions to policy.
- Faster reimbursement of employees.
- Less risk of loss of documentation and a reduction of the costs associated with finding, recovering or replacing lost documentation.
- Rapid receipt of grant proceeds.
- Properly timed reporting of grant expenditures.

The content of this technical bulletin supersedes the directives contained in SAAM Section II-D-IV-C-c relating to the timely filing of employee travel claims. It accelerates the deadline for what is considered a timely filing of a travel claim and introduces new policies and procedures related to the processing of travel claims that have not been filed on a timely basis.

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It is recognized that the processing of untimely filed employee travel claims, as outlined below, imposes an administrative burden on all involved.

POLICIES & PROCEDURES

1. All travel claims, including those for long-term travel and long-term subsistence, must be submitted within three (3) calendar months of the completion of the trip to which they pertain.
 - a. This period has been reduced from the periods cited in SAAM II-D-IV-C-3, page 13, dated January 1, 2008.
 - b. Sooner submission, as prescribed in SAAM-IV-D-C-3, continues to be encouraged.
2. Any travel claim filed later than three (3) calendar months of the completion of the trip to which they pertain will be considered an untimely filed employee travel claim.
3. An untimely filed employee travel claim may not be processed in the normal course of business by the agency employing the claimant. An untimely filed travel claim may only be processed as outlined immediately below:
 - a. A Form GAO-513 must be completed for any untimely filed travel claim. Completing the Form GAO-513 requires:
 - i. An explanation of why the travel claim could not have been filed on a timely basis.
 - ii. A description of the corrective action that will be taken by the agency to prevent future untimely filings.
 - b. The completed Form GAO-513 must be signed by the agency head employing the claiming employee.
 - c. An agency head may not delegate authority to sign a Form GAO-513 without the express, written permission of the ADOA Director and the State Comptroller.
 - d. The completed Form GAO-513 must be forwarded to the ADOA Director for approval.
 - e. If approved, the Form GAO-513 will be forwarded from the ADOA Director to the State Comptroller for countersignature and processing by the GAO.

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<http://www.gao.az.gov>

AREAS IMPACTED

All State agencies.

FORMS

All forms are available and may be downloaded from the GAO Website at:

<http://www.gao.az.gov/onlineforms/default.asp>

CONTACTS

If you have any questions concerning this Technical Bulletin, please contact your GAO Liaison. You may also e-mail questions or comments concerning State policy and procedure to us at:

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