

Managing Central Travel Accounts

OVERVIEW

University departments should use Central Travel Accounts (CTAs) to purchase airline, rail, and bus transportation for University travelers. CTAs are used to purchase only airline, rail, and bus transportation. CTAs are managed and maintained at the departmental level. Each department uses an online web application to view CTA activity.

CTAs are charge accounts with a private financial organization. This organization also issues travel charge cards. See *BPPM 95.03* for information about travel charge cards.

APPLICATION

CTA Application Process

To establish a CTA, contact Travel Services; telephone 509-335-2034.

CTA Users

After Travel Services trains the departmental CTA user, the CTA number and online password are sent to the department.

Notifying Travel Agency

For internal control purposes, Travel Services recommends that the department send a memorandum to the travel agency indicating the names of no more than three departmental employees who will make purchases using the CTA number(s). The memorandum indicates the account number of the applicable CTA. The department retains a copy of this memorandum.

The employing department sends a replacement memorandum when an employee terminates employment, changes departments, or changes responsibilities. The memorandum lists all individuals who are authorized to purchase tickets with the CTA. The department retains a copy.

USING A CTA

Authorization

Before purchasing a ticket with a CTA, an authorized University official must approve the travel plan (see *BPPM 95.01* and *95.05*).

Allowable Use

Authorized departmental personnel use CTAs to purchase airline, rail, and bus tickets for official University travel.

Expenditures for unofficial travel that constitutes an *incidental or minimal* portion of an official trip may be included in the total travel package purchased with a CTA. The traveler is responsible for promptly reimbursing the University for unofficial travel. The traveler writes a check payable to WSU. The department deposits

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the check as a recovery of the original expenditure. See *BPPM* 30.53 for deposit procedures.

Purchasing Tickets

To purchase a ticket, a CTA user provides the travel agent with his or her name, the CTA number, the name of the traveler, and necessary travel information.

Online or Telephone Purchases

An authorized CTA user can use the web or telephone to purchase tickets directly from an airline. The user must contact the airline through the official airline website or the official airline reservations telephone number. The CTA user enters the CTA number as a credit card number.

Logging the Transaction

Travel Services requires that each CTA ticket transaction be logged. The department must log each transaction by one of the two following methods:

- Create a CTA Reconciliation Report using the issuing bank's online software tool. (Travel Services recommends that departmental CTA users use this method.) For instructions, see the WSU PaymentNet 4 CTA website at:

purchasing.wsu.edu/employee-training-resources/paymentnet-4-cta

- Complete a CTA Log Sheet (PDF version).

The department logs the following information:

- Date of purchase
- Name of traveler
- Travel destination
- Amount charged
- TA number (if available)

This log is an internal control device for the department. The log is used to reconcile CTA accounts. The log also provides the signature of an authorized expenditure authority for logged transactions. Do not forward the CTA Reconciliation Report or the CTA Log Sheet to Travel Services.

Authorizing Payment

The department is responsible for accessing the CTA web application and reconciling and authorizing payment of CTA expenditures. The department performs the online reconciliation each day during periods of CTA activity.

Review

Departmental personnel compare the online charges with the CTA Log Sheet entries and receipts noted at the time of purchase.

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Corrections	If departmental personnel find discrepancies, they contact the financial organization directly to correct billings. The financial organization provides a toll-free telephone number.
Code Charges	Using the online web application, departmental personnel code each transaction with University account numbers. Budget, project, and object (04 for travel) are entered. After coding each transaction, the user marks the review box.
Travel Services	Travel Services pays all reviewed CTA transactions, enters the expenditures into the University's financial system and initiates payment to the bank.
Authorize Log Sheet	A departmental employee with expenditure authority for the supporting University account(s) signs and dates the CTA Log Sheet. See <i>BPPM 70.02</i> for an explanation of expenditure authority.
Monthly Statement	Once a month, the bank sends a CTA statement directly to the department. A departmental employee compares the CTA statement with the CTA Log Sheet and receipts to ensure that all charges are appropriate.
Records Retention	The department is responsible for retaining the monthly statement and the CTA Log Sheet for six years after the end of the current fiscal year. See <i>BPPM 90.01</i> for records retention schedules and procedures.