

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
RURAL DEVELOPMENT
HARRISBURG, PENNSYLVANIA

TO:		ISSUE NO. 314
State Office	STATE PROCEDURE	
Area Office	NOTICE	DATE: March 10, 2010

RURAL DEVELOPMENT MANUAL CHANGE

RD Instruction 2036-A, para. 2036.10 (a) (1, 5)

GENERAL: The purpose of this PN is to provide guidance to Rural Development Pennsylvania employees on purchasing non-refundable airfares and to implement the use of the “Non-refundable Airfare Acknowledgement”.

INSERT:

PA PN 314, 2036.10 (a) (1, 5), “Process for purchasing non-refundable airfares for official Government travel.”

PA PN 314, Exhibit A, “Non-refundable Airfare Acknowledgement”

RD Instruction 2036-A

§ 2036.10 Transportation Expenses.

The purpose of this PN is to provide guidance to Rural Development Pennsylvania employees on purchasing non-refundable airfares and to implement the use of the “Non-refundable Airfare Acknowledgement”.

(a) Common carrier transportation.

(1) Contract air service. and (5) Supersaver fares.

Employees are required to complete and sign the “Non-refundable Airfare Acknowledgement” and scan or fax it into their travel authorization in the GovTrip system before purchasing a non-refundable airfare. If an employee is using a non-refundable airfare because it is more cost effective to the government, they must also create a cost comparison and scan or fax it into their GovTrip travel authorization. Any fees incurred due to changes or cancellations of a non-refundable airfare for personal reasons are solely the responsibility of the employee. However, changes required by the agency which incur fees, will be reimbursed (i.e., mission cancellation or deviation in travel plans due to changes in schedules, etc.). Supervisors are responsible for ensuring that non-refundable airfares are utilized. If a non-refundable airfare is not used, the employee is responsible for notifying their supervisor within 1 business day and providing a written explanation as to why. The supervisor will then submit the explanation, within 1 business day, to the Budget Analyst in the State Office, who will then submit it to the State Director within 1 business day. If the State Director approves the explanation, within 2 business days, the Budget Analyst will forward to the National Office Travel Unit for approval.

Non-refundable Airfare Acknowledgement

Airline fees for reservation changes or cancellations made for personal reasons will be strictly borne by the traveler, i.e., earlier departure, personal leave, etc. Fees for changes made by the agency will be reimbursed, i.e., mission cancellation or deviation in travel plans due to changes in schedules, etc.

Checking one or more of the following reasons will meet the exceptions outlined in the General Services Administration, "Federal Travel Regulation," Section 301-10.107.

Check all that may apply:

- Seating aboard a contract flight is not available in time to accomplish the purpose of the travel.
- A contract flight is not scheduled in time to accomplish the purpose of the travel.
- Use of a contract airfare is not available and would result in additional overnight lodging costs being incurred and increase the total cost for the trip.
- The contractor's flight schedule is inconsistent with explicit policies of the agency with regard to scheduling travel during normal working hours.
- A non-contract carrier offers a lower airfare, the use of which will result in a lower total trip cost to the Government.
- Smoking is permitted on the contract flight and the non-smoking section of the aircraft for the contract flight is not acceptable.
- Travel is occurring as part of a group of 10 or more travelers that are together on the same day, on the same flight, for the same mission, requiring group integrity and identified as a group.
- A non-contract airfare is offered at a lower cost which is available to the general public, the use of which will result in lower total trip cost to the Government.

I understand that I will be personally responsible for payment of any penalties or fees associated with cancellation or changes due to personal reasons.

Printed Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

This signed document must be scanned into the GovTrip travel system as an attachment to the Travel Authorization when a non-refundable airfare is selected.