

Airline Best Practices

Purpose

The purpose of the Department of General Services' (DGS) *Airline Best Practices* guide is to provide government business travelers with guidelines and industry standard best practices relative to the establishment of the Airline Reservation Requirements policy ([State Administrative Manual \(SAM\) section 4117.1](#)). These are recommendations to achieve airfare cost savings and policy compliance.

Executive Branch Agencies only: This guide does not supersede state travel policies outlined in SAM sections 0700 (Travel) and 4100 (Transportation Services). This guide is to be used in conjunction with SAM and Budget Letter (BL) 23-27.

Best Practices

Use the following best practices when booking airfare:

- Use the state's contracted airlines for all flights (link to airline contracts located on [Airfare](#) resources website under Airline Contracts)
- Book all domestic flights 7 days or more in advance
- Book all international flights 30 days or more in advance
- Book non-refundable fares (outbound and return):
 - These fares are typically 40-60 percent off the cost of a fully refundable fare. Frequent travelers must always book non-refundable fares since there is a high probability any unused funds generated from a cancelled flight will be used for future travel within the expiration period.
- Book roundtrip flights only; one-way flights are not allowed unless there is a business reason for not flying round trip
- Be aware of all cancellation rules and any applicable penalties before booking your flight. Travelers are responsible for knowledge and understanding of these rules and subject to all penalties set forth by each airline.
- Refundable fares may only be used if:
 - Traveler does not travel more than once a year
 - Travel is being booked for a non-government traveler, or an individual that is not employed by the agency
 - Only refundable fares available at time of booking

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