**24d. GROWER LEADER TRAVEL PROCEDURES**

**(ASA/USB/USSEC Board Members)**

Updated 9/30/2017

 (**NOTE**: The following procedures apply to all USSEC, ASA and USB Grower Leaders, for all funding sources. USSEC prefers that all Grower Leader travel is arranged by a Logistic Specialist team member).

The appropriate Action Team lead will notify the appropriate Action Team Chair and ASA CEO of a Grower Leader trip and request designation of traveler upon receipt of the ADNOT from the Country Offices, (region) which is at least 50 calendar days in advance of the traveler’s departure date. ADNOTS are sent to the ADNOT email box at ADNOTS@ussec.org.

The Grower Leader’s name(s) must be provided to USSEC, to complete the ADNOT, prior to the traveler’s departure date. Work will not begin on the trip until a **fully completed ADNOT** is received.

**The USSEC Country Office (region) will complete the following:**

Country Office (region) arranges “Letter of Invitation” for visa, if applicable.

Country Office (region) will make the inter-country airline flights if applicable.

Country Office (region) arranges ground transportation and lodging for Grower Leader (s) while in country. This information should be forwarded to the LS.

Country Office (region) sends someone to meet the Grower Leader (s) at the airport upon arrival or provides arrival instructions, escort and support for the Grower Leader(s) while in-country.

**The Logistic Specialist (LS) will complete the following:**

File a copy in the **Q: \Marketing\Program Assistant\ADNOT received calendar year**. LS will confirm receipt of the ADNOT with the proper Project Manager.

An activity file will be set up. The file folder will be labeled with the Grower Leader’s name, project number, and travel dates. All correspondence or information relative to the activity is kept in this folder. The LS is responsible for maintaining all information relating to each Grower Leader’s trip.

The LS will email or call the Grower Leader to request prompt return of the Grower Leader’s departure city and any other relevant necessary information to make their travel arrangements (full name, date of birth, carrier preference, seat preference, frequent flyer information). A USSEC Travel Authorization Form will be created. The Travel Authorization Form is located at **Q: \Projects\Resources\Templates & Forms/ Travel Authorization Form.**

An approval, according to USSEC’s Delegation of Authority Matrix, must be obtained by a Project Manager prior to airline tickets being purchased. Once an approved form is received, a travel authorization number will be assigned to the travel request.

Prior to ticketing, the LS will provide flight options to the Grower Leader. Once the proper itinerary is selected, the LG will reach out to American Express Travel. American Express Travel will send a tentative itinerary to the travel@ussec.org email box for compliant review. Once it meets compliance, the tentative itinerary will be sent to the traveler for review and approval to ticket. Once approval is received, an email is sent to the travel company to issue the ticket. The electronic ticket/invoice is emailed to the Travel@ussec.org email box.

All airfare will be charged to the LS American Express corporate card or Diners Card with the exception of airfare charged during a flight if changes are necessary. These charges will go against the traveler’s card.

**Guidelines:**

* Domestic travel must be purchased **14 calendar** days prior to the traveler’s departure date.
* International travel must be purchased **30 calendar** days prior to the traveler’s departure date.
* If tickets are not purchased within these guidelines a **30 calendar day** Exception Memo of Justification is required prior to purchase which is located at **Q:\Marketing\Forms\Memo of Justification** and approved according to USSEC’s Delegation of Authority Matrix. The traveler is responsible for his/her memo. A ticket may not be purchased prior to receiving approval.
* A traveler should never be booked in First Class unless it is a complimentary upgrade which must be noted on the invoice. Always book airfare according to restrictions imposed by the funding source.

**Funding Sources**:

**USB** funded travel allows business class if scheduled travel time including up to two hours of layover exceeds eight hours. Flights on foreign air carriers are allowed if flights on an American Flag carrier are cost prohibitive. Restricted to lowest economy cost for travel less than eight hours.

**FMD** funded travel allows business class if scheduled travel time includes up to four hours of layover exceeds 14 hours and the origin and/or destination are outside the US. US travel is not permitted. All flights must be on an American or European Flag carrier for flights that begin and end in the US. Restricted to non-refundable economy cost for international travel of 14 hours or less. U.S. travel is permitted for teams.

 **MAP** funded travel must be on an American Flag carrier or European Flag Carrier when the flights begin and/or end in the U.S.  MAP funded travel is restricted to coach class unless the scheduled travel exceeds 14 hours beginning with the scheduled departure time, ending with the scheduled arrival time (maximum four hours layover), **AND** prior **approval from FAS** is granted prior to the purchase of the ticket.   In order to obtain the approval from FAS send an email request to Cheryl Huson (chuson@ussec.org) that includes a strong justification.  The request will be forwarded to FAS.

 **EMP** funded travel is restricted to coach class regardless of scheduled travel time.  All flights must be on an American Flag carrier or European Flag carrier. U.S. only travel is not permitted.

U.S. only travel is not permitted with the exception of one escort of a foreign trade mission.  **One** home office employee **OR** one state department of agriculture employee **OR** one board member may accompany foreign trade missions and technical teams while traveling in the United States.

**The following documentation is necessary for all business class travel:**

Itinerary must show both the fully refundable and non-refundable (if applicable) business class cost and coach on the business class itinerary. Itineraries are maintained in the files with all other necessary information.

* The ticket price must be lower than the maximum cost of airline ticket on the travel authorization form.
* Lowest airfare either business or economy must be purchased.
* Travel must be by a direct or usually traveled route.

All airline charges made by the LS are charged to their American Express Corporate credit card or Diners card. Any changes made in route are to be paid for by the traveler.

If the itinerary meets the compliant standards, including staying within budget limitations and funding restrictions specified on the Travel Authorization Form, then the itinerary is emailed to the traveler for approval to ticket.

If the itinerary is not compliant, the LS emails the American Express travel, dedicated agent to change the itinerary to be within the guidelines. The itinerary is resent to travel@ussec.org.

Once the LS has received approval to ticket, an email is sent to American Express travel agent to issue the ticket. The electronic ticket/receipt is emailed to travel@ussec.org.

All airfare booked by USSEC LS is charged to the LS American Express credit card or Diner’s Card. If the Contractor books his/her own ticket, all charges go against the traveler’s credit card.

**14 calendar days** prior to the trip, the LS will email the proper Project Manager, to request the Post Notification.

**10 calendar days** prior to the trip, the LS will send insurance, trip report guidelines, expense report guidelines, electronic ticket information, and lodging and ground transportation information.

**Passport or Visas**

The LS will verify whether or not the Grower Leader has a need for a passport or visa for their trip.

Passport applications/renewal forms can be obtained/processed at certain US Post offices or at Travel Documents website: [www.traveldocs.com](http://www.traveldocs.com).

**14 calendar days** prior to the trip, the LS will email the proper Project Manager, to request the Post Notification.

**10 calendar days** prior to the trip, the LS will send (via email) the electronic ticket, insurance declaration of coverage and plan features, electronic expense form, lodging information, ground transportation instructions and whether or not someone from the Country Office (region) will be picking up the traveler from the airport.