STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE

Business Travel Booking SOP

Document no.	SOP-ADM-006
Revision	1.0
Owner	Office Manager
Effective date	September 15, 2026
Review cycle	Every 12 months

1. Purpose

To book business travel that is approved, within policy and budget, and to give travelers a clear itinerary and support if plans change while they are away.

2. Scope

Applies to employee air, rail, hotel and ground transportation booked for company business. Post-trip expense reimbursement is covered in the separate expense reimbursement SOP.

Definitions

Travel policy	The company's rules on approved booking classes, preferred vendors and spending limits for business travel.
Itinerary	The document listing a traveler's confirmed flights, hotel, ground transport and key contact numbers for a trip.

3. Responsibilities

Travel Coordinator	Books flights, hotels and ground transport, issues itineraries and handles changes.
Employee	Submits the travel request, follows travel policy, and confirms the itinerary meets their needs.
Department Manager	Approves travel requests and budget for their team.
Office Manager	Maintains the travel policy and preferred vendor list and supports emergencies.

RACI matrix

Activity	Travel Coordinator	Employee	Department Manager	Office Manager
Submit a travel request	I	R/A	C	-
Approve travel and budget	I	-	R/A	C
Book travel and issue itinerary	R/A	C	I	-
Handle changes and cancellations	R/A	C	I	-
Support travel emergencies	R	C	I	A

R = Responsible, A = Accountable, C = Consulted, I = Informed

4. Materials and PPE

Materials, tools and systems

- Travel request form
- Company travel policy
- Preferred airline, hotel and car rental accounts
- Corporate travel card program
- Itinerary template
- Emergency travel assistance contact

5. Procedure

Step	Task	Owner	Done
5.1	**Submit the travel request** The employee submits a travel request with the business purpose, destination, dates and any preferences, at least the number of days ahead required by the travel policy.	Employee	☐
5.2	**Approve the trip and budget** The department manager reviews the business purpose and estimated cost and approves or declines the trip before any booking is made. **Checkpoint:** No booking is made until the department manager's approval is recorded on the request.	Department Manager	☐
5.3	**Check travel policy and preferred vendors** The travel coordinator checks the approved request against the travel policy for booking class, spending limits and preferred airlines, hotels and car rental vendors.	Travel Coordinator	☐
5.4	**Book flights and ground transportation** The travel coordinator books flights and any ground transportation using the preferred vendors and the company's travel accounts, matching the traveler's approved dates and preferences.	Travel Coordinator	☐
5.5	**Book hotel accommodations** The travel coordinator books hotel accommodations within the policy's nightly rate limit, choosing a location convenient to the business purpose of the trip.	Travel Coordinator	☐
5.6	**Arrange travel documents if needed** For international travel, the travel coordinator confirms the employee's passport is valid for the trip and advises on any visa or entry requirements well ahead of departure. **Warning:** International bookings should not be finalized until passport validity has been confirmed.	Travel Coordinator	☐
5.7	**Issue the itinerary** The travel coordinator sends the traveler a complete itinerary with confirmation numbers, check-in times and key contact numbers, at least a few days before departure.	Travel Coordinator	☐
5.8	**Confirm corporate card or advance** The travel coordinator confirms the employee has an active corporate travel card or, where used, arranges a cash advance for expenses not covered by direct billing.	Travel Coordinator	☐
5.9	**Handle changes to confirmed travel** When trip dates or details change, the employee notifies the travel coordinator as soon as possible, who rebooks or cancels the affected reservations and reissues the itinerary.	Travel Coordinator	☐

Step	Task	Owner	Done
5.10	**Support a travel emergency** If a traveler faces a missed connection, illness or other emergency, the travel coordinator or office manager works with the traveler and the emergency travel assistance line to rebook and support them.	Office Manager	☐
5.11	**Confirm trip completion** After the trip, the travel coordinator confirms the traveler returned as scheduled and closes out the booking record, noting any changes made during the trip.	Travel Coordinator	☐
5.12	**Hand off for expense reimbursement** The travel coordinator reminds the employee to submit any out-of-pocket expenses through the expense reimbursement process, since travel booking and reimbursement are handled separately.	Travel Coordinator	☐

6. Quality checks

- No trip is booked before department manager approval is on record.
- All bookings follow the current travel policy for class and spending limits.
- International itineraries include a confirmed passport validity check.
- Every traveler receives a complete itinerary before departure.

7. Records

- Approved travel request
- Booking confirmations and itinerary
- Corporate card or advance documentation
- Change and cancellation notes

8. KPIs

- Average booking cost against policy benchmarks
- Percentage of trips booked within the requested lead time
- Number of last-minute changes or cancellations per quarter

9. Common mistakes

- Booking travel before the trip is approved.
- Ignoring preferred vendor agreements and booking directly at a higher cost.
- Not checking passport validity early enough for international trips.
- Sending an itinerary too close to departure for the traveler to review it.

10. Revision history

Revision	Date	Description	Reviewed by
1.0	September 15, 2026	Initial release	Alexa Uskova

Approval

Prepared by	Approved by	Date

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