

**Department of Energy
Guide for Use of Non-
Refundable Airfare**

July 2011

The program office and approving official are responsible for ensuring that the ticket is reused for official business on a future trip and is not used by the employee for personal use in the unanticipated event that the ticket is not used for the planned trip. The program office must maintain a list of unused and tickets and provide the Office of the Chief Financial Officer, Office of Finance and Accounting, Energy Finance and Accounting Service Center when requested.

SEATS

Non-refundable seats are NOT upgradable.

Non-refundable seat map very limited, seats may not be desirable by the traveler.

TRAVEL AUTHORIZATION must include:

- (1) #15 needs to show “No” to indicate that the traveler is on a non-contract carrier, (add under **Other Authorizations** in GovTrip);
- (2) #22 needs to provide a justification for use of the non-contract.

TAs must be emailed to ADTRAV at doedc@adtrav.com for the ticket to be issued.

WEATHER, MECHANICAL AIRLINE ISSUES

If traveler is bumped or flight canceled due to weather or mechanical problems, traveler will need to stay on the alternate flight assigned by the carrier. ADTRAV cannot assist without charging fees and assessing all penalties associated with non-refundable airfare. Carrier must accommodate traveler. Recommend the traveler stand in line at the same time while placing call to the carrier’s 800 number for assistance.

UNUSED NON-REFUNDABLE TICKET VALUES

Non-refundable is exactly that- if a traveler does not travel, or does not use all tickets, DOE will

not receive a refund as such when using a contract fare.

Fully unused ticket – value of the ticket available usually 1 year from date of ticket issuance (not date of travel). Some conditions vary. Penalties and fees apply when fully unused ticket applied

Outbound used, return unused – partial used tickets have NO value for future travel.

Only fully unused tickets will receive a credit, credits are not transferrable and only valid for one year from date of ticket issuance not dates of travel.

If the outbound is not taken, the return can never be used on a non-refundable ticket. The carrier will negate the value of the ticket and show the reservation as “no-show.”

Reservations must be cancelled or value of ticket is lost this applies to outbound and return segments. If you are late for your outbound flight, the carrier will indicate traveler as a “no show.”

If a traveler leaves the Department before using the credit, cost for the unused return is lost.

Useful Telephone Numbers and Websites:

AdTrav 1-888-205-2369
Fax # 205-444-4839
Email Address... doedc@adtrav.com
GovTrip Help Desk 301-903-2500
Option 4, then 2

Gov Trip On-Line Referece:
<http://gotravel.doe.gov>

DOE Travel Manual:
<https://www.directives.doe.gov/directives/archive-directives/552.1-DManual-1/view>

Federal Travel Regulation:
<http://www.gsa.gov/fttr>

The Department has selected to use non-refundable tickets when applicable within the Federal Travel Regulations. *For more information, please refer to the DOE Notice “Travel using the Government’s Contract City-Pair Air Fares and Non-Contract Air Fares (including non-refundable air fares)” for more information.* The principal source for Departmental policy on use of airline is Federal Travel Regulation (FTR) and DOE O 552.1A, “Travel Policy and Procedures,” and DOE O 552.1M, “Travel Policy Manual.”

Frequently Asked Questions

- Q. How do I find a non-refundable ticket?**
A. Call ADTRAV or research at FedTrav.com, Click on “All Flight Schedules” before initiating the search.
- Q. Can I purchase the ticket immediately if I find it?**
A. No, as a Federal employee, travelers must travel in accordance with the rules and regulations set forth in the Federal Travel Regulations (FTR) 301-2.1 [shown below]. The FTR states that you must have an approved Travel Authorization (TA). TAs will need to be approved within 24 hours to secure the non-refundable price, however, prices are not guaranteed.

§301-2.1 Must I have authorization to travel?

Yes, generally you must have written or electronic authorization prior to incurring any travel expense. If it is not practicable or possible to obtain such authorization prior
Frequently Asked Questions Cont’d

to travel, your agency may approve a specific authorization for reimbursement of travel expenses after travel is completed. However, written or electronic advance authorization is required for items in [§301-2.5\(c\)](#), [\(i\)](#), [\(n\)](#), and [\(o\)](#) of this part.

Q. After I have an approved TA, can I make the reservation myself?

A. No, Federal Travel Regulations (FTR) states that all government travel must be through a Travel Management Center under contract to the government, FTR 301-50.3 [shown below]. DOE HQ's TMC is ADTRAV.

FTR 301-50.3 Must I use the ETS or TMS to arrange my travel?

Yes, if you are an employee of an agency as defined in [§301-1.1](#) of this chapter, you must use the E-Gov Travel Service when your agency makes it available to you. Until then, you must use your agency's existing Travel Management Service (TMS) to make your travel arrangements. If you are an employee of the Department of Defense (DoD) or of the Government of the District of Columbia, you must arrange your travel in accordance with your agency's TMS. Your agency may grant an exception to required use of TMS/ETS under [§§301-50.4](#), [301-73.102](#), or [301-73.104](#) of this chapter.

Q. Why do we need to have a TMC?

A. GSA has the responsibility to report to Congress as to **ALL** government air travel, and GSA utilizes the TMCs to provide the information to meet its accountability and reporting/tracking requirements to Congress and provides critical data for its actual contractual discussions with the airlines each year. The TMC provides the agency with a

check and balance ensuring that the agency is meeting its legal requirements as set forth in the FTR.

Additionally, ADTRAV will conduct a side by side comparison between the contract fare and non-refundable fare to ensure that the lowest fare to the government is being ticketed.

Q. Why will the price change if not ticketed within 24 hours?

A. Non-refundable ticket prices are not guarantee as with contract fares. Carrier tariffs change frequently throughout a 24 hour period and are never guaranteed. The closer you get to departure, the higher the price.

Q. Does a contract fare change?

A. No, contract fares are the result of negotiations between the government through GSA and the airlines. The contract fares are set each October and are valid for that FY and do not change.

Q. Can the traveler be held financially responsible for the transaction?

A. Yes, the traveler can be held responsible:

1. The FTR states that the traveler can be held financially responsible for his/her travel transactions if the transaction is not in compliance with the FTR.

2. As to penalties and fees associated with any changes to a non-refundable ticket, please refer to DOE Notice "Travel using the Government's Contract City-Pair Air Fares and Non-Contract Air Fares (including non-refundable air fares)".

Q. How can I pay for a non-refundable ticket that has to be issued against my government credit card immediately if my travel is scheduled for a later date?

A. All tickets issued more than 30 days to

travel will be placed on the House Account. Traveler/Travel Arranger will need to call the Travel Desk at (301) 903-2500, Option 4, Option 2 to arrange for House Account approval.

Pointers in the Use of Non-Refundable Tickets

Travelers need to be 99.9% certain of itinerary.

The closer to departure date, the higher the price of a non-refundable ticket.

Non-refundable airfares should be ticketed within 24 hours of booking; however, this does not guarantee the airfare will be available. Carrier tariff's change frequently throughout a 24-hour period and are never guaranteed until ticketed

ADDITIONAL FEES

All changes to itinerary will result in airline penalties and fees which can consist of:
-Minimum \$150.00 change fee, i.e. change of departure/return, cancel
-Difference between the original ticket price and the new ticket price
-Full ticket plus cost of depart/return ticket when flight missed.

ADTRAV PROFILES

All travelers **MUST** have profiles in ADTRAV in order for ADTRAV to track unused tickets.

PROGRAM OFFICE ACCOUNTABILITY

The employee and approving official are to be fully aware of all of the terms and conditions of the ticket.