OVATION
T R A V E L   G R O U P

An American Express Global Business Travel Company

TRAVEL POLICY
PRINCIPLES

As circumstances continue to rapidly evolve within the travel industry, Ovation is here with you through it all. Our people are in contact with many industry providers to keep our clients up to date on the latest changes, restrictions, and preparations for future travel. With that in mind, we've identified a few key areas of a travel policy that may be worth revamping as we look forward to the return to business travel.

POLICY PARAMETERS:

First and foremost, as you begin to evaluate your travel program it is important to identify policy parameters. To start, we recommend that you encourage your team to book all travel through Ovation. Booking within the platform helps them adhere to your travel policy and corresponding parameters.

- Decide if you will define "essential" vs. "non-essential" travel.
- Similarly, will you specify acceptable reasons to travel? (i.e. client-facing trips vs. internal trips)
- Going forward, what levels of approval do you plan to implement? (i.e. notification only or leader approval before booking? Approval only required for various high-risk areas? International only?)
- Will you document and retain approvals for auditing purposes down the line?
- Will you require a differentiated policy for levels/divisions? Will this update or replace an existing policy?

HR CONSIDERATIONS:

The policy should support HR strategy factors such as heightened corporate responsibility, a requirement for increased visibility, traveler engagement, and travel risk management.

- We suggest reevaluating healthcare accessibility for both domestic and international trips.
- What mandatory compliance measures (e.g. approval policies, channel compliance, etc.) are considered critical?
- Will your company allow employees "health restriction" exclusions?
- What will happen if an employee refuses to travel?
- What healthcare will travelers have access to while abroad?
- Will travelers be expected to quarantine after traveling? Is there a plan in place should a traveler be required to quarantine or fall ill upon return?
- What will be the contingency plan if an employee is ill or required to quarantine at their destination and unable to return home?
- How will you communicate with travelers pre and post trip?
- Lastly, will you plan to implement a post-travel employee survey to gather feedback after their journeys are complete?

PRE-FLIGHT:

It is critical that travelers have additional support in preparing for their trip.

- Before booking, consider how traveler contact information can be gathered, maintained, and shared (e.g. in their profile and/or HR feed).
- Anticipate the impact of reduced capacity (due to limited route availability, as well as in-flight physical distancing protocols) by encouraging or mandating that travelers secure reservations in advance.
- When choosing a supplier, consider whether travelers should select one with social distancing measures in place.
- Ahead of arrival at the airport, have travelers familiarize themselves with the latest destination information and travel advisories.
- Additionally, specify that travelers may need to submit travel and health documentation via an electronic travel authorization program, as outlined by the International Air Transport Association.

AT THE AIRPORT:

Evaluate your policy as it relates to flights to help your travelers navigate the new changes and regulations at airports.

- Travelers should be advised to arrive with additional time to spare as enhanced security and altered boarding processes may require more time to complete.
- Advise travelers that they might need to be prepared to follow enhanced security measures, such as temperature screenings or face coverings. Travelers may need to check with IATA, local government security organizations (i.e. TSA, CAA), and/or airport advisories to understand new or enhanced processes and how to abide by them.
- Consider if your policy covers pre-flight meal expenses due to food & beverage restrictions on flights. This may be of special concern to travelers with specific dietary/health requirements.

RENTAL CAR/PRIVATE CAR:

With more travelers looking to ground transportation in light of flight concerns and restrictions, consider policy changes that may be necessary for those that opt to use rental or private cars.

- Specify to travelers if private hire cars (i.e., taxi or limo service) are acceptable versus ride sharing or public transportation.
- Consider stipulating which specific providers are permissible and what sanitization steps are recommended.
- Specify to travelers if they are encouraged to utilize a personal vehicle to drive short distances.
- Will travelers receive expense reimbursement or car allowance?
- What is the maximum mileage travelers can drive their own car and submit for reimbursement?

OVERNIGHT ACCOMMODATIONS:

Examine changes to be made with lodging to help prioritize safety standards when it comes to staying overnight.

- Collaborate with risk/security teams to align on minimum safety requirements for hotel stays. Then, work with preferred hotels to ensure they meet those requirements.
- Consider adding extended stay accommodations as additional options.
- Travelers should be made aware that many hotels are adjusting operations to facilitate social distancing.
- Evaluate whether travelers should be required to stay at pre-selected properties, chosen for their adherence to sanitation standards. If so, decide who will be responsible for determining those standards.
- Additionally, it is recommended that travelers are encouraged to use contactless options like mobile check-in and/or electronic room key on hotel apps.

RAIL TRAVEL:

You might also want to encourage travelers to use rail transportation for shorter trips which means modifying your policy to include rail travel allowances and booking preferences.

- Will you encourage travelers to opt for rail transportation over air travel on shorter trips to avoid the costs and/or exposure associated with air travel?
- Does your policy need to be reviewed to cover allowances for rail travel as an alternative to miles driven or miles flown?
- Finally, when travelers do book rail travel, will you suggest that travelers book off-peak times or select individual seats at least one place apart from other passengers to avoid crowding?

PERSONAL TRAVEL:

Similarly, discuss if it may be worth adding components regarding your team's personal travel into your travel policy.

- Consider whether employees should be required to report personal travel to hot spot areas where they face increased risk of exposure.

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