

TRAVEL NEWSLETTER - #6

February 19, 2002

This Newsletter is being sent out early because of some breaking news you may find important that will not wait another week to pass on.

NEW LODGING RATES FOR WASHINGTON DC

There are new lodging per diem rates for Washington, DC, Seattle, WA & Portland, OR. The MI&E rates are unchanged. The new rates are effective as of February 15, 2002 and will be updated in the WBTA system as of Thursday, February 21nd. If you have traveler's going to these locations on or after 2/15/02 you can use the new rate when preparing their expense report even though the TA will probably have the old rate indicated.

The rates are: -- Washington, DC, \$150; Seattle, WA, \$143; and Portland, OR, \$91—

ADVANCES TO REIMBURSE EARLY REGISTRATION FEE PAYMENTS

A traveler can obtain a cash advance in order to pay their credit card statement when the registration fee appears on their statement and the statement due date comes before the traveler returns from the trip. To obtain a cash advance, prepare an addendum to the TA requesting a cash advance. Under the NOTES section, indicate a cash advance is being requested to pay registration fee charges. Be sure to get the addendum signed by an authorized approver. Attach a copy of the traveler's credit card statement showing the registration fee charge. Send the addendum to Travel. Later, when the expense report is prepared be sure to include the registration fee under traveler paid expenses, and subtract the cash advance.

WORLD CURRENCY CONVERSION RATES

Effectively immediate we have been authorized to use the website OANDA.com to obtain our foreign currency conversion rates. A reminder of how to determine what rate to use. Request the rate for the date the traveler arrived in country. That rate will be used to convert all expenses submitted while they were in that country. **Print and attach a copy of the conversion page to the expense report.** As before, if the traveler exchanged currency when entering the destination country and has an exchange slip with the rate indicated, that rate (if different from the website) may be used to convert the expenses.

AUTHORIZATION STAMP ON EXPENSE REPORTS

This is a reminder – when filing an expense report that does not have to be signed because it meets the TA expenditure guidelines be sure to place the “**SEE ATTACHED TRAVEL REQUEST FOR AUTHORIZATION**” stamp in the authorized approval box. In a recent audit we were cited many times for there being no signature or stamp.

LOCAL LODGING RATES

Negotiations with local lodging establishments were finalized on Valentine’s Day. A matrix with the 8 hotel/motel rates, their amenities, billing procedures, locations and reservation information will be handed out at the next Coordinator Roundtable on March 14.

COORDINATOR ROUNDTABLE

We are currently soliciting your input for topics of discussion at the roundtable to be held on March 14, 2002. Remember, this meeting is a 2-way exchange. We need your input, suggestions and ideas to make it a success. We will have a guest speaker and so far one Coordinator has brought up a topic for discussion. A proposed agenda will be sent out on March 11th.

GOOD ADVISE

(submitted by Pam Turk-who received it as an email from another JLab employee)

Place the contents of your wallet on a photocopy machine. Do both sides of each license, credit card, etc., so you will know what you had in your wallet and all of the account numbers and phone numbers to call to cancel. Keep the photocopy in a safe place. A corporate attorney sent this out to the employees in his company. I pass it along, for your information. We've all heard horror stories about fraud that's committed using your name, address, SS#, credit, etc. Unfortunately I (the author of this piece who happens to be an attorney) have firsthand knowledge, because my wallet was stolen last month and within a week the thieves ordered an expensive monthly cell phone package, applied for a VISA credit card, had a credit line approved to buy a Gateway computer, received a PIN number from DMV to change my driving record information online, and more. But here's some critical information to limit the damage in case this happens to you or someone you know. As everyone always advises, cancel your credit cards immediately, but the key is having the toll free numbers and your card numbers handy so you know whom to call. Keep those where you can find them easily. File a police report immediately in the jurisdiction where it was stolen, this proves to credit providers you were diligent, and is a first step toward an investigation (if there ever is one). But here's

what is perhaps most important: (I never ever thought to do this) - Call the three national credit reporting organizations immediately to place a fraud alert on your name and SS#. I had never heard of doing that until advised by a bank that called to tell me an application for credit was made over the Internet in my name. The alert means any company that checks your credit knows your information was stolen and they have to contact you by phone to authorize new credit. By the time I was advised to do this, almost 2 weeks after the theft, all the damage had been done. There are records of all the credit checks initiated by the thieves' purchases, none of which I knew about before placing the alert. Since then, no additional damage has been done, and the thieves threw my wallet away this weekend (someone turned it in). It seems to have stopped them in their tracks.

The numbers are:

Equifax: 1-800-525-6285

Experian (formerly TRW): 1-888-397-3742

Trans Union: 1-800-680-7289

Social Security Administration (fraud line): 1-800-269-0271

DATES TO REMEMBER

Travel Card Orientation	March 5, 2002	11:00 – 11:30am	VARC 47
Coordinator Roundtable	March 14, 2002	10:00 – 11:30am	CEBAF L102
Coordinator WBTA Training	March 19, 2002	10:00 – 11:30am	VARC 47
New Coordinator Orientation*	April 9, 2002	10:00 – 11:30am	VARC 47

*Requires advance sign-up to ensure enough materials are available.

And, don't forget St. Patrick's Day, March 17, 2002

