



Travel-N-Texas Update

No. 23

General Services Commission

June 1998

Travel Trivia

The hotels listed in this newsletter are the last additions for this fiscal year. (Since there were so few, we didn't consolidate them with the others.) Use the hotel list on the Feb. 1998 (pink) newsletter and those in this newsletter for a complete listing of properties added since the FY 97-98 Directory was printed. And remember: **Contracts/rates for all properties listed in these newsletters and in the 1997-98 Texas State Travel Directory expire on August 31, 1998.**

NEW HOTEL contracts for next fiscal year, that will be listed in the 1998-99 Texas State Travel Directory, went out in April. Information on ordering directories will go out to state agency travel coordinators in July. New directories should be distributed in August and September. *Travelers, let your travel coordinator know if you will need a Directory next fiscal year.*

DO YOU KNOW . . .

- ❖ where to find a list of approved exceptions?
- ❖ where to find information on the American Express charge card program?
- ❖ where to find out how to reserve a van with Avis?
- ❖ what the amenity numbers in the hotel entries mean?
- ❖ lots of other necessary and helpful travel information?

Answer: In the Travel Directory! It's not just a "hotel book!"

American Express: Retail Limit

Implementation

As most of you probably already know, we—the STMP—have implemented a \$200 limit on retail charges on all state-issued individual American Express cards. Notice of this action was sent to state agency and university heads and travel coordinators in April. It became effective May 6.

What does a retail spending limit mean? How does it work?

Quite simply, cardmembers can charge only \$200 in non-travel expenses per billing cycle. Attempting to charge more than \$200 will result in the charge being denied by American Express. **Travel expenses include air/rail, rental car, lodging, restaurant, some public transportation (taxis, buses), some gas stations/convenience stores, and some parking.** Sometimes, taxi, gasoline, and parking charges are coded with "retail" industry codes and will count as part of the \$200. (This is a result of the designation selected by the business at the time of sign-up with AmEx.) Example: If you charge \$150 for membership dues or office supplies, then travel and charge \$50 for "retail" taxi and another \$50 for "retail" parking, the last charge placed will be denied.



Guidelines/Suggestions

If you are charging anything that is not a travel expense as defined above, and it is not an emergency, **DO NOT PUT IT ON THE AMERICAN EXPRESS TRAVEL CARD.**

IF YOU NEED to pay membership dues, pay with a purchase order or the Procurement card or a personal card and get reimbursed. If you need office supplies, pay with a purchase order or the Procurement card or by some other means approved by your purchasing department.

THE STATE of Texas individual American Express card was intended as a tool to make traveling on state business easier on the travelers' pocketbooks.

Rental Car Reminders

Taxes

- ☞ The 74th Texas Legislature implemented the Prop./Title/Reg. tax. All rental car companies charge and **all rental car customers in Texas must pay**, regardless of the type of payment method used.
- ☞ The tax attorneys at the Office of the State Comptroller have ruled that **car rentals billed to individual charge cards are subject to and must pay all taxes charged**. Only car rentals in Texas that are direct-billed to state agencies are exempt from taxes.



Insurances

Vehicle rentals from **Avis** and **Advantage**, when rented under the provisions of the state's contract, include two types of insurance:

- ☞ L/DW or comprehensive, which covers any damage to the vehicle itself; and
- ☞ Primary Liability, which covers personal and property **OUTSIDE** the vehicle in the amounts of \$100,000 per person/\$300,000 per incident and up to \$50,000 for property damage.

There is NO INSURANCE included in the contract for persons or property INSIDE the rental vehicle.

- ☞ If a renter chooses to take insurance for persons and/or property inside the vehicle, **this will not be reimbursed**. This applies to both contract and non-contract vehicle rentals.
- ☞ If a traveler must rent from a non-contract rental car vendor—under an approved exception—the cost of L/DW insurance is reimbursable if the renter chooses to take it. **No other types of insurance will be reimbursed on car rentals**. (Exception: Mandatory insurances required when taking a rental vehicle into Mexico and Canada are reimbursable as "mandatory expenses.")

PLEASE SEE the State Comptroller's Travel Allowance Guide for specifics on all reimbursement questions.

If a cluttered desk is a sign of a cluttered mind, of what, then, is an empty desk a sign?
Albert Einstein

New Locations

Advantage Rent-A-Car has several new locations.

- Austin, 3300 South Lamar
- Bastrop, 515-B Highway 71 West
- Brownsville, in-terminal at the airport
- Laredo, in-terminal at the airport

Contract Hotel/ Non-contract Room

On hotel listings, only the rooms and rates shown are contracted.

IF YOU GO to a property that shows only single and double contract rates and request a suite, this is a non-contract room/rate and requires an approved exception. (See pages 8 and 9 in the Travel Directory.) In the case of extended stay properties (weekly rates), if there is no nightly rate listed, the nightly rate is not a contract rate and requires an approved exception.

SALE:

**While they last, the
1997-98 Texas State
Travel Directory is
\$3.25.**

Hotel Changes/Corrections

Newly Contracted Hotels

Valid through 8/31/98

SPANISH TRACE INN was Days Inn,
716 East Tyler, **Athens**. Rates unchanged. (Effect. 4/1/98)

HOLIDAY INN EXPRESS, 2400 Fourth Avenue, **Canyon**.
Will not open until 6/98.

SUPER 8, formerly La Quinta Inn,
55 Sam Perl Boulevard, **Brownsville**.
New owners; contract canceled. (Effect. 4/1/98)

TRAVELERS INN, 2377 North Expressway 83, **Brownsville**.
DO NOT supply complimentary breakfast. (No restaurant on property.)

EMBASSY SUITES, 9090 Southwest Freeway, **Houston**
New rates: single - \$70; double - \$91; \$10 addit. person
No suites on contract.

WARWICK PARK PLAZA, formerly Wyndham Warwick
5701 Main Street, **Houston**, 77005
Rates unchanged.

BARCELONA VALUE SUITES,
5215 South Loop 289, **Lubbock**.
New rates: single - \$62; double - \$72. (Effect. 2/26/98)

HOLIDAY INN PLAZA HOTEL,
3201 South Loop 289, **Lubbock**.
New rates: single - \$55; double - \$70 (Effect. 3/9/98)

SUPER 8, was Comfort Inn,
1206 Hwy. 281 North, **Marble Falls**.
Rates unchanged.

BEST WESTERN INN & SUITES,
correct address is 102 Burton Street, **Mount Pleasant**.
(Entered wrong on contract.)

INN BY THE FALLS, was Four Points ITT Sheraton,
100 Central Freeway, **Wichita Falls**.
New owners. Rates unchanged, but Exec./conc. no longer
available. (Effect. 5/1/98)



COURTYARD BY MARRIOTT (4/1/98)

5660 North IH-35, **Austin**, 78751
800-321-2211 ☎ 512-458-2340

Hotel; 3 miles from airport

Rates: single/double - \$70 Ask about possible lower rates.
Limited number of rooms at contract rate. Rates NOT available
during special events. Rates NOT extended for personal travel.
Cancellation fee charged.

Amenities: 1, 1a, 1b, 3, 4, 6, 9, 10, 12, 13, 16, 18, 19, 22, 24, 25, 28,
30, 31, 32, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 46, 47

COURTYARD BY MARRIOTT-SOUTH (4/1/98)

4533 South IH-35, **Austin**, 78744
800-321-2211 ☎ 512-912-1122

Hotel; 7 miles from airport

Rates: single/double - \$85 Ask about possible lower rates.
Limited number of rooms at contract rate. Rates NOT available
during special events. Cancellation fee charged.

Amenities: 1, 1a, 1b, 3, 4, 6, 9, 12, 13, 16, 18, 19, 22, 23, 25, 30, 31,
32, 33, 34, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 44, 46, 47

FAIRFIELD INN/MARRIOTT-NORTH (C) (4/1/98)

959 Reinli, **Austin**, 78751
800-228-2800 ☎ 512-302-5550

Hotel; 3 miles from airport

Rates: single/double - \$75 Ask about possible lower rates.
Cancellation fee charged.

Amenities: 1a, 1b, 2, 3, 5a, 6, 10, 12, 15, 16, 18, 19, 21, 22, 23, 25,
28, 31, 33, 34, 36, 38, 39, 41, 42, 45, 46

FAIRFIELD INN/MARRIOTT-SOUTH (4/1/98)

4525 South IH-35, **Austin**, 78744
800-228-2800 ☎ 512-707-8899

Hotel; 9 miles from airport

Rates: single/double - \$70 Ask about possible lower rates.
Limited number of rooms at contract rate. Rates NOT available
during special events. Cancellation fee charged.

Amenities: 1, 1a, 1b, 3, 5a, 6, 9, 12, 13, 16, 18, 19, 22, 23, 25, 30,
31, 32, 33, 34, 39, 40, 41, 42, 47

RESIDENCE INN/MARRIOTT-SOUTH (4/1/98)

4537 South IH-35, **Austin**, 78744
800-331-3131 ☎ 512-912-1100

Hotel; 9 miles from airport

Rates: 1-bedroom suite - \$119; 2-bedroom suite - \$159

Ask about possible lower rates.

Limited number of rooms at contract rate. Rates NOT available
during special events. Cancellation fee charged.

Amenities: 1, 1a, 1b, 3, 5c, 6, 9, 11, 12, 13, 16, 18, 19, 22, 24, 25,
27, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 46, 47

HOMEWOOD SUITES-SOUTH (2/26/98)

4143 Governors Row, **Austin**, 78744
☎ 512-445-5050

All-suite; 8 miles from airport

Rates: single/double/1-BR suite - \$70; 2-BR suite - \$115
Limited number of rooms at contract rate. Rates NOT available
during special events. Cancellation fee charged.

Amenities: 1, 1a, 1b, 3, 5c, 6, 9, 12, 13, 15, 16, 19, 21, 22, 24, 28,
30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 36, 37, 38, 39, 41, 42, 43, 45, 46

OVER

RAMADA LIMITED (4/1/98)

1102 East 2nd Avenue, **Belton**, 76513

☎ 254-939-3745

Motel; 25 miles from Killeen Municipal Airport

Rates: single - \$36.51; double - \$46.75; addit. person - \$5

Limited number of rooms at contract rate. Rates NOT available during special events. Cancellation fee charged.

Amenities: 2, 3, 5a, 6, 9, 12, 15, 16, 22, 24, 32, 34, 38, 41, 42, 47

HOLIDAY INN EXPRESS (2/27/98)

555 Highway 290 West, **Brenham**, 77833

☎ 409-836-4590

Motel; 70 miles from Bush Intercontinental Airport - Houston;

70 miles from Mueller Municipal Airport - Austin

Rates: single/double/1-BR suite/2-BR suite - \$53;

addit. person - \$3

Limited number of rooms at contract rate. Rates NOT available during special events or holidays. Rates NOT extended for personal travel. Cancellation fee charged.

Amenities: 1, 1a, 1b, 3, 5a, 6, 15, 16, 24, 25, 31, 32, 34, 36, 37, 38, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46

LA QUINTA INN & SUITES-WEST (3/26/98)

4800 West Plano Parkway, **Plano**, 75093

800-531-5900 ☎ 972-599-0700

Hotel; 18 miles from Love Field-Dallas;

26 miles from D/FW International

Rates: single - \$60; double & Exec./conc. - \$70;

addit. person - \$10

Limited number of rooms at contract rate. Rates NOT available during special events. Cancellation fee charged.

Amenities: 1, 1a, 1b, 3, 5a, 6, 12, 13, 15, 16, 18, 19, 22, 24, 25, 30, 31, 32, 34, 38, 39, 41, 42, 44, 45, 46, 47

HILTON (C) (2/27/98)

113 South University Parks Drive, **Waco**, 76701

800-234-5244 ☎ 254-754-8484

Hotel; 7 miles from airport

Rates: single/double - \$70; 1-BR suite - \$325; 2-BR suite - \$375

Limited number of rooms at contract rate. Rates NOT available during special events. Rates NOT extended for personal travel. Cancellation fee charged.

Amenities: 1a, 1b, 2, 3, 4, 6, 9, 10, 12, 13, 16, 22, 24, 25, 27, 28, 30, 31, 32, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 42, 46, 47