

**OFFICE OF THE COMPTROLLER AND AUDITOR GENERAL OF
INDIA, 9, DEENDAYAL UPADHYAY MARG, NEW DELHI-110124
INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS DIVISION**

OM No. **52**/SOP/Travel/IR/2025/E-362324

Dated: - 24.10.2025

(For exclusive use of IA&AD only)

OFFICE MEMORANDUM

Subject: Ticket Booking, Passport, Visa, and Accommodation Support.

(This memorandum outlines the procedures adopted for facilitating ticket booking, passport and visa assistance, and accommodation arrangements etc. for international official travel.)

On the issuance of the nomination orders by the Principal Director (Personnel), the International Relations Division (IRD) assumes responsibility for all travel-related arrangements for the respective tour. For all international travels initiated, processed, and entrusted to the International Relations Division, the following steps are involved to ensure hassle-free travels:

International travel for officers will follow specific guidelines based on funding sources, entitlements, and procedural requirements. The funding sources include Government of India (GoI), United Nations (UN), fully funded hosts (such as INTOSAI, ASOSAI, and IDI), and partially funded arrangements where expenses are shared by the host and GoI/UN.

Passport

As per the Ministry of External Affairs's guidelines, the type of passport required for any short-term visit abroad is determined by the officer's Pay level under the 7th CPC, as outlined below:

Pay level up to 13: Official Passport

Pay level 14 and above: Diplomatic Passport

Travellers must ensure their passport has at least six months of validity before the planned travel date. To apply for a new or re-issue of expired passport, please use the following link for the online application and instructions in this regard:

<https://services2.passportindia.gov.in/psp>

The travelling officer should follow the instructions given on the above link scrupulously failing which the issue of passport is liable to be delayed/denied. The IRD will assist in applications for new passports or renewals by providing guidance and form submission with CPV Division of MEA.

Visa

For all international travel initiated, processed, and managed by the IRD, the Division will handle all aspects of visa facilitation. The Ministry of External Affairs has posted a list of countries with which India has Visa Exemption Agreements for holders of Diplomatic and

Official passports. For reference, the link to this information is: <https://www.mea.gov.in/bvwa-menu.htm>

Visa Facilitation Process: The IR Division will notify the officers traveling when they need to be in New Delhi for visa and biometric processing. Officers should be prepared to travel on short notice for the visa procedure.

Personal Data in Visa Application: All information in the visa application should be entered carefully to avoid errors or discrepancies that could result in rejection. No Visa Facilitation for Family/Friends: The IRD will not process visa requests for family members, relatives, or friends of the officer traveling abroad.

Visa Processing Time: The IRD does not control the decision-making or processing times at Embassies/High Commissions. Applicants are instructed to submit their visa application or biometrics on time to avoid delays.

Political Clearance from the Ministry of External Affairs

Obtaining political clearance is a mandatory requirement for any government servant traveling abroad in their capacity as an employee of the Government of India. The IR Division is responsible for handling this process and obtaining clearance from the Ministry of External Affairs.

Note Verbale

A Note Verbale is a recommendation letter for visa issuance, serving as an official communication between the CPV Division (Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi) and the Diplomatic-Consular Representations of the visiting country in India. This document is issued based on the information provided during the application for political clearance. Therefore, it is essential for the traveling officer to provide accurate and complete details in advance, including information about the intended stay, transit countries, post-assignment plans, or ex-India stay. Obtaining a revised political clearance and Note Verbale later can be a complex process, so all details must be finalized beforehand.

Clearance from Ministry of Home Affairs

In cases where funding or hospitality is attracted under the Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act, 2010, clearance from the Ministry of Home Affairs is required. This is applicable only when 'hospitality' from a foreign host is involved. The IRD will contact/ assist the officer in facilitating the process.

Ticketing

1. Approved tour Program should be invariably submitted to IR by the concerned touring officers before the commencement of ticketing process
2. Travel entitlements are determined by pay levels [1]. Hospitality cases adhere to the host's offer or GoI norms where unspecified.
3. Return tickets, travel on shortest routes and economical options shall be provided for the Officials.
4. Before conforming the itineraries, IRD will share the suggested itineraries with the officials concerned.

5. Officials should send the confirmation within 48 hrs of receipt of itineraries, failing which the concerned/relevant tickets will be issued.
6. Air tickets are exclusively booked by IRD through the authorised agents as per the Government of India's Instructions.
7. No direct request of officials to the authorised agent for booking shall be entertained.
8. All international travel must begin and end in New Delhi, except in case of UN funded tours with the domestic segment governed by existing rules [2].
9. For Ex-India leave, officers must promptly notify the International Relations Division to secure Political Clearance (PC) and adjust ticket bookings accordingly. Any differential airfare resulting from personal deviations or leave taken must be borne by the officer. All differential fare payments must be promptly settled to avoid recoveries with penalties. The approximate cost implication will be communicated prior to the finalization of tickets; however, the amount reflected in the final invoice shall be treated as final and binding.
10. The difference in cost due to the choice of airlines opted by the officer (regardless of the reason), in comparison with the option provided by the authorised agent/IRD will be treated in the same manner as mentioned above.
11. Upgradations beyond the entitled travel class are not permitted, and post-facto approvals will only be considered in emergencies, subject to approval of the Deputy CAG (IR) in submission of supporting documentation and valid reason thereof.
12. Round-trip tickets are mandatory unless unavailable or due to official exigency as decided by DG/PD (IR).
13. The IRD or authorized travel agent cannot decide on international air baggage. Therefore, the airline's policy will apply, and extra baggage will be allowed only for official reasons (as explained below).
14. Extra baggage of 5 kgs in addition to free baggage allowance, will be allowed to all team members for UN Audit teams, travelling on economy class, if the duration of the tour exceeds 15 days, including days of transit but excluding ex-India leave. Extra baggage as per actuals for GoI Tours will be reimbursed/arranged, for carrying official documents/gifts/mementos etc. on certification of the same by the team leader/head of delegation/IRD. In case of UN-funded tours, the cost of excess baggage, limited to the difference between the international free baggage allowance and the free baggage allowance admissible on the domestic sector, will be reimbursable.
15. It is mandatory that after the completion of the tour, for the officer to submit a "Self-Declaration Certificate for Completion of Journey" (Annexure-I) to IRD.

For International assignments funded by Government of India (GoI), accommodation and other arrangements will be made:

For tours funded by the Government of India, the IRD will arrange accommodations with the support of Indian Missions abroad. Officers should refrain from suggesting hotels or alternative arrangements. Special requests not part of entitlements is strictly prohibited. Local transportation will be provided by the Mission abroad (including airport transfers). Daily Allowances [3] are usually disbursed by the Missions abroad on arrival. In exceptional cases

where disbursement by the mission is unavailable, payment in India will be arranged on confirmation by the Mission. SIM cards [4] are provided by the Mission abroad, except for those officers, opting for international roaming, who can claim the entitled mobile phone expenses on submission of their TA bills.

Tours Funded by United Nations

The United Nations (UN) provides a Daily Subsistence Allowance (DSA), which covers lodging, meals, gratuities, and other expenses. Prior to departure, the officer will receive an advance payment of up to 90% (rest of 10% on submission of TA bill) of the anticipated DSA for the entire tour, paid in US Dollars. This advance will be provided through a Travellers card or in cash as per the requisition of the officer. The procedures for settling domestic travel between the officer's duty station and New Delhi, including for UN Audit training, Visa matters, or other related activities, will remain unchanged [5]. However, the field office should provide the copy of calculation sheet along with the Assurance Memo Cum Authority submitted for settling the domestic travel claims.

The production of Taxi bills and baggage invoice or self-certification supported with the payment confirmation proof, will be mandatory, while submitting such claims with the TA bills.


As per the SOP for audit of DEA managed UN Organizations, the team members may be required to stay in IR Division for up to 5 working days. However, stay beyond 05 working days will require approval of the DG (IR) on the recommendation made by the concerned Team Leader.

The calling and relieving officials will be monitored by setting up of a temporary attendance register/system. Field offices may insist for relieving orders issued by IRD, from the team members, before processing their Domestic TA bill claims.


Director General (International Relations)

Copy to: -

1. All Heads of Department in the IA&AD are requested to widely circulate this OM, in all offices including Attached/Subordinate Offices under their control.
2. Director General (Staff)
3. All IA&AS Officers.


Director General (International Relations)

[1] First Class for Pay Level 17 and above, Business Class for Levels 14 to 16, and Economy Class for Level 13 and below

[2] Circular No.739-Budget/RE-BE/01/2016 dated 07.11.2016, 261-Budget/RE-BE/01-2018 dated 16.07.2018 & 46- Staff wing/2017 No.1603-Staff (Entt. - I)101-2017 dated 31.10.2017

[3] No. Q/FD/695/03/2000 GoI, MEA (FD Section) dated 25th September 2023 and circular dated 14th February 2020

[4] extracts of the O.M. dated 26th March 2018 of Department of Expenditure)

[5] Circular No.739-Budget/RE-BE/01/2016 dated 07.11.2016, 261-Budget/RE-BE/01-2018 dated 16.07.2018 & 46- Staff wing/2017 No.1603-Staff (Entt. -I)101-2017 dated 31.10.2017