Project Name: Travel Authorizations

The Problem

The previous travel authorization process was a consistent source of complaints from staff – it was seen as too complex, with multiple, i.e., redundant, approvals. This objection especially applied to low or no cost travel requests. The mere length of the approval process could also result in multiple proposed trips/travelers thinking they had access to the same funds, resulting in confusion and un-needed work by managers and accounting staff to find a way to pay for multiple trips that had been approved to use the same funds.

The Process

A new travel authorization form was designed that includes the information from two other, now obsolete, forms. A new approval process was designed that requires only one signature – who makes that approval depends on the number of travelers and the budget commitment.

It was found during the process that two forms could be eliminated by including the needed information in the new travel authorization form. A spreadsheet was imbedded in the new travel authorization form to lower the rate of arithmetic errors.

The Results

In summary, a traveler works out the budget with her/his supervisor and then gets a single approval signature for a proposed trip from the lowest feasible supervisory level – that necessary level goes “up the org chart” from the immediate supervisor to the Assistant Commissioner as the number of travelers and budget commitment rises.

Two forms have been eliminated by including the needed information in the travel approval form, the need for multiple approval signatures has been eliminated, and a quicker, single-signature, process has been put in place as of October 1, 2011.

Additionally, the Facility Services Unit has found benefit from the direct notification of travel approvals which they now receive, making their required annual reporting of state vehicle use much easier.

The Team

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