

BUDGET LETTER

		NUMBER: 26-04
SUBJECT:	OUT-OF-STATE TRAVEL REQUESTS—APPROVAL BY THE GOVERNOR'S OFFICE	DATE ISSUED: April 29, 2026
REFERENCES:	GOVERNMENT CODE SECTIONS 11032 AND 13030, STATE ADMINISTRATIVE MANUAL SECTIONS 0760-0765	SUPERSEDES: BL 25-05

TO: Agency Secretaries
Department Directors
Department Budget and Accounting Officers
Department of Finance Budget and Accounting Staff

FROM: The Governor's Office

Given the fiscal uncertainty the state continues to face, travel in the 2026-27 fiscal year shall be limited to essential travel **required** to conduct official state business. Agency Secretaries and Department Directors must exercise fiscal prudence when approving travel this year. To the extent that travel is in fact required, agencies and departments may submit an annual out-of-state travel (OST) blanket request to the Governor's Office pursuant to the provisions outlined in this Budget Letter.

All OST blankets must be submitted to the Governor's Director of Operations by **May 29, 2026**. This deadline provides adequate time to review and approve OST blankets for the 2026-27 fiscal year and should prevent travel disruptions by reducing the need for departments to submit individual trip requests for travel already included in a blanket that has not yet been approved.

OST blanket requests may be submitted to the Governor's Office by mail or dropped off at the Governor's Office reception desk during business hours. All submissions of an OST blanket must include, as a coversheet, the most recent version of the Blanket Approval for OST Travel [Form STD. 260](#), which can be found on the Department of General Services' website.

Each trip listed in a submitted OST blanket should contain the following information:

- Purpose of the trip and mission-critical criteria it meets (listed below).
- Destination (**Note:** Select the most cost-efficient destination, including location and/or virtual option.)
- Projected cost of the trip and the source of funding (**Note:** Include the name of the source funding as shown in the Governor's Budget and not the source code.)
- Number of travelers and role of each traveler. (**Note:** Limit travelers to the least possible number.)
- Impact if the trip is denied.
- Impact of the traveler's absence on regularly assigned duties.
- Approval by the Department Director **and** Agency Secretary is required.

Mission-critical criteria:

- Enforcement of California law (not training or meetings).
- Auditing.
- Revenue collection.
- A function **required** by statute, contract, or executive directive.

- Job-required training necessary to maintain licensure or similar standards **required** for holding a position, if comparable training cannot be obtained in California or a virtual option is not offered.
- Equipment inspection as **required** by a contract.
- Meetings or training **required** by a grant or to maintain grant funding.
- Litigation-related (depositions, discovery, or testimony).
- Requests by the federal government to appear before committees.
- A function **required** for the protection of public health, welfare, or safety.

Agencies and departments are required to submit individual OST requests for the Governor's Office approval when any of these criteria apply:

1. A department's OST blanket has been submitted but has not yet been approved by the Governor's Office.
2. A need to add people to a trip listed in the approved travel blanket.
3. The cost of a trip approved in a travel blanket will increase by more than 10 percent.
4. The trip is not covered by [SAM Section 0762](#).

Individual trip requests must be submitted using the most recent version of the OST Approval Request Form [STD. 257](#), which can be found on the Department of General Services' website. These requests must include a cost breakdown of the trip, and the fund source must be clearly identified (no acronyms). Requests must be routed through the respective agency and received by the Governor's Director of Operations **at least 14 days** before travel is scheduled to begin. Individual OST requests should be submitted electronically to the Governor's Office at ostrequest@gov.ca.gov.

If departments do not adhere to this time frame and if the forms are not filled out accurately and completely, the request may be denied, and individual employees will not be reimbursed for travel costs or may be subject to other consequences. Please refer to [SAM Sections 0761](#) and [0764](#) and [Government Code Section 13030](#) for additional information regarding non-compliance with OST requirements.

Please route through your Agency and submit all hard copy OST blanket requests by **May 29, 2026**, to the **Office of the Governor** as follows:

Hard Copy

ATTN: Director of Operations
Office of Governor Gavin Newsom
1021 O Street, Suite 9000
Sacramento, CA 95814

All requests must include the name of a contact person with e-mail and phone number, should follow up or clarifications be necessary. The Governor's Office will return only the STD 260 coversheet via email, so please include the name(s) and email address(es) of those who should receive the document. Please also keep a copy of your final submission, as it will not be returned.

/s/ Jennifer Whitaker

JENNIFER WHITAKER
Chief Operating Officer