

SmartTax Customer Guide



State Taxes When You Travel

What is the GSA SmartPay Program?

The GSA SmartPay program is the world's largest commercial payment solution program, servicing more than 560 federal agencies, organizations, and Native American tribal governments. Customer agencies/organizations use purchase, travel, fleet, and/or integrated payment solutions to support their missions.

What are the Different Types of Federal Government Accounts?

- **Centrally Billed Account (CBA)** card expenses are directly paid by the federal government and should not be charged state taxes.
- **Individually Billed Account (IBA)** expenses are paid by the federal account holder and, depending on the state, may be eligible for state taxation exemption.
- **Tax Advantage Travel Account** combines IBA and CBA accounts. Expenses for rental cars and lodging are billed as a CBA and should not be charged state taxes. All other travel-related expenses (e.g., meals) are billed as an IBA.

When and Where Should You Pay Taxes While You Travel?

Each state determines the tax-exemption status for federal government travelers using a GSA SmartPay travel account. For more information about the tax-exemption status for specific states, please visit <https://smarpay.gsa.gov/smarttax>.



What Should You Do if a Vendor Exempts Taxes in a State that Doesn't Exempt Taxes?

Please pay the tax! Recognizing that a state does not exempt state taxes for transactions with the GSA SmartPay travel account is important because vendors will still be required to accurately assess taxes. Not paying the tax could cause future complications, including vendors potentially back-charging taxes owed.

What Should You Do Before You Travel?

- Visit the GSA SmartPay website to determine whether the state to which you are traveling exempts taxes for transactions with GSA SmartPay accounts. Bookmark the GSA SmartPay website, in case you need it during travel.
- If a state exempts IBA accounts, determine whether a tax-exemption form is needed. If it is, fill it out and take it with you when you travel.
- Take copies of travel authorization forms or your federal ID card to verify your status.
- Write down your card program manager's contact information, in case there are issues at the hotel check-in desk.
- Familiarize yourself with the applicable tax-exemption laws. If you are traveling to a state that exempts taxes, taking a printout containing that information with you may speed up the exemption process during your travel.
- When traveling to a tax-exempt state, contact a hotel or rental car company – **before you travel** – to verify that taxes won't be charged to your GSA SmartPay travel card.



What Should You Do When You Travel to a Tax-Exempt State?

- When applicable, please make sure you complete and submit a state tax-exemption form when you check in.
- If a hotel or rental car company does not recognize the tax-exemption status, please refer representatives to the GSA SmartPay website or to the state's taxation authority, to verify tax exemption. If the hotel or rental car company still does not recognize exemption, please pay the taxes and plan to reclaim the taxes assessed when you return from travel.
- If a hotel or rental car company in a tax-exempt state does actually assess state taxes, please notify your agency's card manager.
- For security reasons, do not allow anyone to photocopy your federal ID card.

What Should You Do After You Return from Travel?

- Maintain copies of all receipts to verify taxes assessed. Receipts should be maintained for 75 months (i.e., six years and three months).
- Maintain points of contact for vendors assessing taxes in tax-exempt states and notify your card manager to initiate the tax-reclamation process, which may differ from agency to agency.
- Keep track of your travel information – specifically, critical information such as travel dates, locations, vendors, and amount of taxes assessed.

- If you find state taxing authority publications with information about exemption and/or reclamation, please share them with your fellow travelers and card manager.
- In accordance with Federal Travel Regulation, please remember to use the GSA SmartPay travel card when you are on official federal government travel because all states will not exempt taxes on personal cards, and your agency will not have the ability to earn important refunds.

Contact Information for Contractor Banks

Account holders can contact their bank by calling the 800 or 888 number on the back of their card, or they can contact their Agency/Organization Program Coordinators (A/OPCs) for assistance.

For help with your GSA SmartPay account, please reach out to the appropriate contractor bank:

Citibank®:

<https://home.cards.citidirect.com>

(800) 790-7206 (within the United States)

(904) 954-7850 (outside of the United States)

U.S. Bank®:

<https://access.usbank.com>

(888) 994-6722 (within the United States)

(701) 461-2232 (outside the United States)

For More Information and Help

To learn more, visit our website at <https://smartpay.gsa.gov>.

If you have questions or need assistance, please contact the Center for Charge Card Management at gsa_smartpay@gsa.gov or **(703) 605-2808**.

Additional travel resources can be found in the GSA SmartPay Travel Card App, available in the Apple App and Google Play stores.

For specific issues, please contact your card manager.