

How to upgrade your Travel Policy





A travel policy is THE how-to for business travel at your company. Can anyone book business class flights, or only in certain circumstances? Stick it in the policy. Would you prefer your colleagues book a certain hotel? When the policy is clear, it makes the travel experience much smoother.

It's a different world now. Flexibility, facts and communication are vital. Travelers want to know that you care about them when they travel. Your travel policy needs to reflect this new world of agility, health and safety. Without a well-planned travel policy, you are at risk of missing out on savings and leaving your company exposed to complications.

10 critical questions to start with:

1. When and where should staff be permitted to travel?
2. Who can fly which class, and does the traveler's title, route or journey length factor?
3. What channels are available for booking travel – online or direct with an Agent?
4. Is there a per diem or daily allowance and if so, what is it?
5. When is authorization required to travel, and who is responsible for authorizing?
6. Who are our preferred partners when it comes to transportation and accommodation?
7. What measures are in place to prevent non-compliance?
8. What is the process for expense management and any reimbursement requirements?
9. How are we helping travelers stay safe while minimizing risk?
10. What continuous review process is in place?



We are seeing a resurgence of business travel, as countries all around the world are lifting restrictions and opening up. While we are optimistic about these reopenings, there is no doubt that business travel remains complex with a level of risk associated with it for organizations and travelers alike. This is why, now more than ever, a structured travel program is crucial.

Amanda Vining,
President, Corporate
Traveler USA





Through our partnership with Crisis 24 and Melon's reporting dashboards, we've got organizations covered when it comes to proactive duty of care. We're able to push travel alerts when needed for travelers on the road, get a bird's eye view of who is travelling and where, while also preparing organizations for future travel with our COVID-19 dashboards.

Matthew DeMaris -
Global Product Leader
| Safety and Risk



Taking care of your people

Internal Comms

Travelers will need clarity on what's changed and what hasn't. Try to get ahead of any questions your travelers might have, such as:

- Do I need approval from anyone before I book?
- What vaccine certificates and tests do I need to travel to this destination?
- Where can I find up to date information about travelling to this country?
- Am I still expected to book through the online tool?
- Has the expense policy changed?
- What happens if my travel plans change before or during my trip?

Let's talk health and safety

We get it, medical history is not something many people have been happy to share with their employer or travel companies. However, with the introduction of vaccine certificates and different mandates by countries, there are some questions you need to be thinking of to make sure your next trip is a smooth one. Here are some questions to think about:

- Should staff need to be fully vaccinated to travel?
- Should unvaccinated staff need to provide a negative test to travel?
- Which airlines and hotel chains offer the best cleanliness solutions?

Traveler Tools

Have you visited our Travel News site? **FCTG Travel News** is your one-stop-shop for all things travelling right now. Find information on hotels, airlines, where to get a COVID test when abroad and more.

Ever wonder, can I go there? Do I need a negative test on entry? Do I need to be vaccinated? We've got a tool for that on our Travel News site as well – our **COVID-19 Travel map** powered by Sherpa. Simply enter where you're from, vaccination status and the journey you're looking to take, and Sherpa will tell you exactly what you need to know about your next trip.

Taking care of your people cont.



✈ DEPARTURES ✈

11:40	BERLIN	B0	082B	CANCELLED
12:00	KIEV	K8	005K	CANCELLED
12:05	HONG KONG	H5	087H	CANCELLED
13:00	DAKAR	D3	009D	CANCELLED
13:30	NAIROBI	N8	072N	CANCELLED
14:00	NEW YORK	N1	006N	CANCELLED



If our travelers have a question, we have the answer, or we'll get it for them ASAP. Our team is made up of an army of travel experts and people who genuinely care. I always say the best thing about Corporate Traveler is our people, who are now complimented by Melon. One of my favourite features of Melon is the many ways it allows clients to communicate with their team at Corporate Traveler – through chat, email or on the phone anytime, anywhere 24/7.

Dan Campbell-Lavis,
VP Operations



Risk management

Imagine your sales team is at a workshop in Mexico. Their Twitter feeds are filled with news about a hurricane, and they're worried. They try to call the airline, but the lines are busy. Where do they turn next? Well, either someone at your company, or your TMC. This is where the value of a TMC is really demonstrated.

Once they've spoken to someone, the sales team feels much more confident about their options. Whatever is needed is instantly sorted. Flights are rebooked, extra hotel nights arranged, airport transfers secured.

24/7 customer support

Scenarios like the above are never in our diaries. That's why 24/7 assistance is important. No matter what day or time, travelers need to know they can pick up the phone and will get the help they need, from a real-life human being. That's peace of mind.



Approval

(this is a big one nowadays!)

Trip approval workflow

Before COVID-19, there might not have been a need for approvals. It's different now. We've heard many companies talking about approval processes now that health is in the picture.

- **Who** says yes and no to approvals
- **What** do travelers need to submit
- **Where** does the approval process apply to – destinations and trip type
- **Why** is this approval process important
- **When** do they have to submit an approval and how long will it take to get an answer
- **How** do travelers submit their approval

Utilize the tools available to help speed the approval process along. One example is **Melon's Recommended Spend** feature (A.K.A. the price to beat). This AI Tuner generates a recommended flight or hotel spend based on live prices and availability. The algorithm can be completely adjusted for any person or department, balancing savings against convenience in alignment with your company's business objectives.

Travel inventory

As travel rebounds at an accelerated pace, more flights are being added and hotel rooms are filling up. With inventory not what it used to be, our travel managers have had to think outside the box. They have proven to be creative, knowledgeable and fully capable of getting your travelers where they need to be, but they also have the support of technology to provide access to all the fares and rates. Your policy will need to include direction as to what your travelers are allowed to book. An effective policy helps make that crystal clear for your travelers.

All the options out there for flights, hotels and car rentals can be overwhelming! We've incorporated some AI within **Melon Rank**, so that search results are surfaced based on relevance, loyalty preferences, and company savings potential. You'll also have access to **Melon Exclusive Deals** thanks to great relationships we've fostered with the airlines, hotels and car rental companies over the years.

Your travel, your choice.

Technology

Technology certainly makes life easier in many ways. Immediate access, instant updates and travel risk management are all standard, but there are plenty of other ways you can incorporate tech solutions to support bookers and travelers. Your policy can include options so that your team members have the power to choose.

- Create and manage your traveler profiles with ease. Save them in one place, including all those little things they love, like their loyalty club numbers, whether they like the window seat and that they're a vegan.
- Define and operate a flexible travel policy that considers certain flexibility for employees. After all, a hotel in New York might cost more than in Ottawa and you need your travelers to feel confident they are upholding the policy.
- Understand how your TMC can help in a risky situation. Safety dashboards accessible to you show where your colleagues have travelled to and can alert them if there is a risk to them. For example, if a snowstorm is affecting New York City, you can get a broad view of how many travelers you have in the area.
- Define your approval process and decide who needs what level of access.
- Help travelers download and use your TMC's mobile app so that they have support at their fingertips.

Personalized service – The people behind the bookings

You don't have to manage everything on your own. Sometimes it's just easier to speak to someone and talk through your options. Our business has been built on the service levels and knowledge of our army of travel experts. We've handled plenty of complex itineraries and late-night bookings over the years. Actually, it's what we do best.

Let your travelers know there are experts to help, anytime, anywhere. Experts that will know who and where your travelers are and can recommend what to do next. By including contact details in your policy and tools, travelers can have peace of mind if things go sideways. It also prevents your internal team receiving phone calls from distressed travelers late at night.

Melon is our proprietary travel platform where you can look, book, report and more, all in one platform — it's the one stop shop for any travel program and created with YOU in mind. With travel policy more important than ever, you'll want tech that does it all, powered by people who have your back. Walk this way.

MEET MELON



Post-Travel Analysis



Accurate travel and spend reporting

Your CFO asks for a report about how much your company spent on flights in the last six months. Or your security colleagues want to know how many people are currently in Europe. By having all travel booked through one company, you can create a report like that at the click of a button.

A good policy is founded on data, and that is what our reporting solutions offer. You'll be able to see and analyze your travel data as often as you like, and we also offer support and direction with ways to improve. It's important to be able to adapt and improve when you can see slight tweaks and adjustments that will help your travelers stay safe, while also saving your business time and money.

You aren't alone!

Travel policies have always been a unique cocktail for every travel company. A blend of company procedures and traveler expectations with a dash of preparing for the unexpected. The ingredients of your travel policy are hand-picked with what you crave – from personalized service to technology. All customized to your taste. Just don't forget that creating this new cocktail is only half the job – you've got to make sure it's delicious too!

Business travel is more complex these days, but it doesn't have to be difficult. We're here to help.

 Ready to get started? [Get in touch today.](#)

One final thought

Already got a policy, but wondering if it's up to scratch? **Benchmark your policy now with our benchmarking tool to see if there are any gaps.**



[BENCHMARK YOUR POLICY](#)