



# **Admin Guide: ASCENDER EmployeePortal Travel Reimbursement Setup**



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# Admin Guide: ASCENDER EmployeePortal Travel Reimbursement Setup

The Travel Reimbursement Requests feature allows employees to request reimbursement of mileage, lodging, meals, and incidentals stemming from official business travel.

The purpose of this document is to guide you through the necessary steps to set up the appropriate access for employee travel reimbursement requests via EmployeePortal while allowing employers to swiftly move employee travel reimbursement requests through a customized approval path to ensure timely reimbursement.

Some of the images and examples provided in this document are for informational purposes and may not completely represent your LEA's process.

This document assumes you are familiar with the basic features of the ASCENDER Business system and have reviewed the [ASCENDER Business Overview guide](#).

## Prerequisites

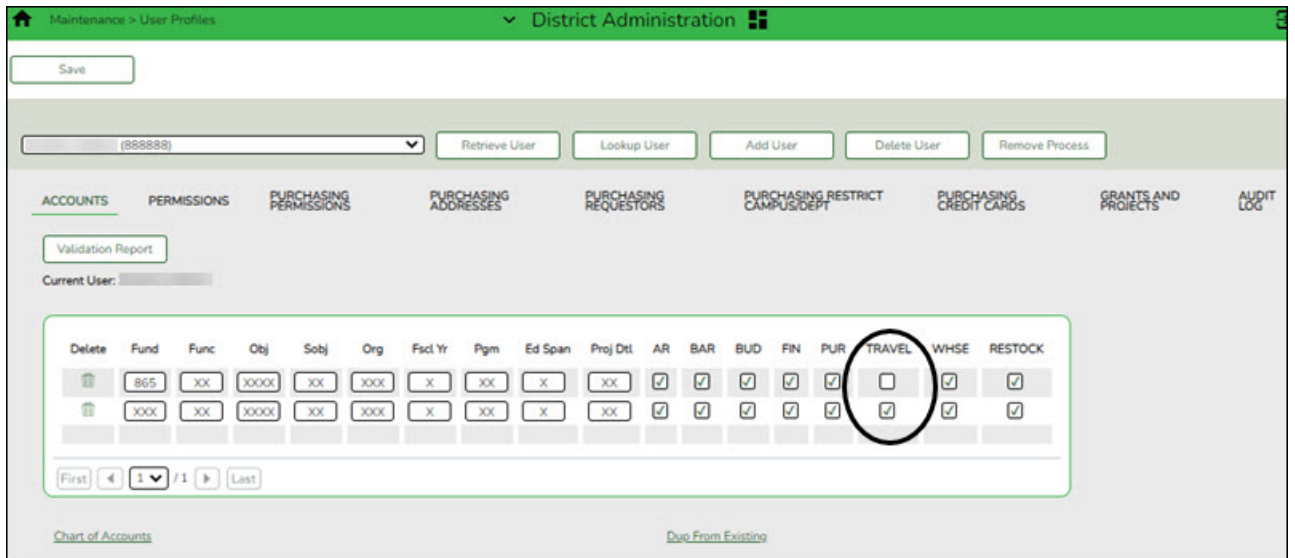
- Update roles/users in Security Administration to allow Travel Reimbursement permissions. You can add permissions to an existing role or create a new role.
- The **Automatic PA Number Assignment** field must be selected on the [Finance > Tables > District Finance Options > Finance Options](#) tab in order to create travel checks. If this field is not selected, the final approver in the travel approval path cannot approve the request.

## Set up District Administration Options

1. [Maintain user profiles as needed](#).

[District Administration > Maintenance > User Profiles > Accounts](#)

Create, modify, or delete user profiles as needed. You can allow and/or limit users to certain budget accounts. You can also mass assign travel accounts to user profiles by using the [District Administration > Utilities > Assign Travel Accounts](#) utility.



- Assign authorized accounts.
  - In the account code fields, add a new mask with all Xs to allow the user to have full access to all accounts.
  - Type the account code elements of the accounts to which the user authorized to access (e.g., 199 for all 199 account codes). The Account Description is displayed for accounts that exist in the Account Code table.
- Select **TRAVEL** to authorize travel reimbursement requests for the specified account.
- Click **Save**.

[District Administration > Maintenance > User Profiles > Permissions](#)

The screenshot shows the 'District Administration' interface for 'User Profiles'. The 'PERMISSIONS' tab is selected. A search bar contains '(888888)'. Action buttons include 'Retrieve User', 'Lookup User', 'Add User', and 'Delete'. A 'Print' button is also present. The permissions are organized into sections: 'Accounts Receivable' (Global Access checked), 'Budget Amendment Requests' (Allow Account Creation, Allow Multiple Functions on Expenditure Accounts, and Global Access all checked), 'Finance' (Allow JV Account Creation, Post to Locked Accounting Period, and Travel Global Approver all checked, with 'Travel Global Approver' circled in red), and 'Restock / Warehouse Requisition' (Global Access checked).

Under **Finance**, select **Travel Global Approver** to allow the user access to view all travel reimbursement records for the LEA regardless of the user's account permissions.

Click **Save**.

## 2. [Mass create user profiles with assigned travel accounts.](#)

### [District Administration > Utilities > Assign Travel Accounts](#)

Mass assign account codes by primary campus, department code (optional), and year for employees using the travel reimbursement request feature in EmployeePortal.

After running this process, a user profile is created with the assigned account codes for each active person with the primary campus/dept on their Job Info record that matches the selection on this page.

When submitting a travel reimbursement request in EmployeePortal, employees will be able to use these account codes to indicate the budget to be charged for a travel reimbursement request.



**IMPORTANT:** If you are creating records for users by campus and department, you must select a campus, indicate the department, and click **Retrieve**. This must be done upon initial retrieval. Otherwise, select a campus and click **Retrieve**.

Field	Description
<b>Campus</b>	Click <input type="button" value="v"/> to select a campus.
<b>Dept</b>	Type a one-character department code. This field is optional.

- Click **Retrieve**. The campus/department record is displayed.
- In the **CYR/NYR** field, click  to indicate the year (Current or Next) to apply the changes.
- Type an account code or mask (X) in each of the account code component fields. Click **+Add** to add rows as needed.
- Click **Save** to save the record without executing the changes.
- Click **Execute** to execute the process. A user profile is created for each active person with the selected primary campus/dept. The user is assigned the selected accounts for the primary campus/dept and the **Travel** checkbox is selected to indicate that the user will have access to the assigned accounts when submitting travel requests in EmployeePortal.

3. [Set up travel reimbursement request workflows.](#)

Use the following pages to set up the applicable approval workflows for *Travel Reimbursement*:

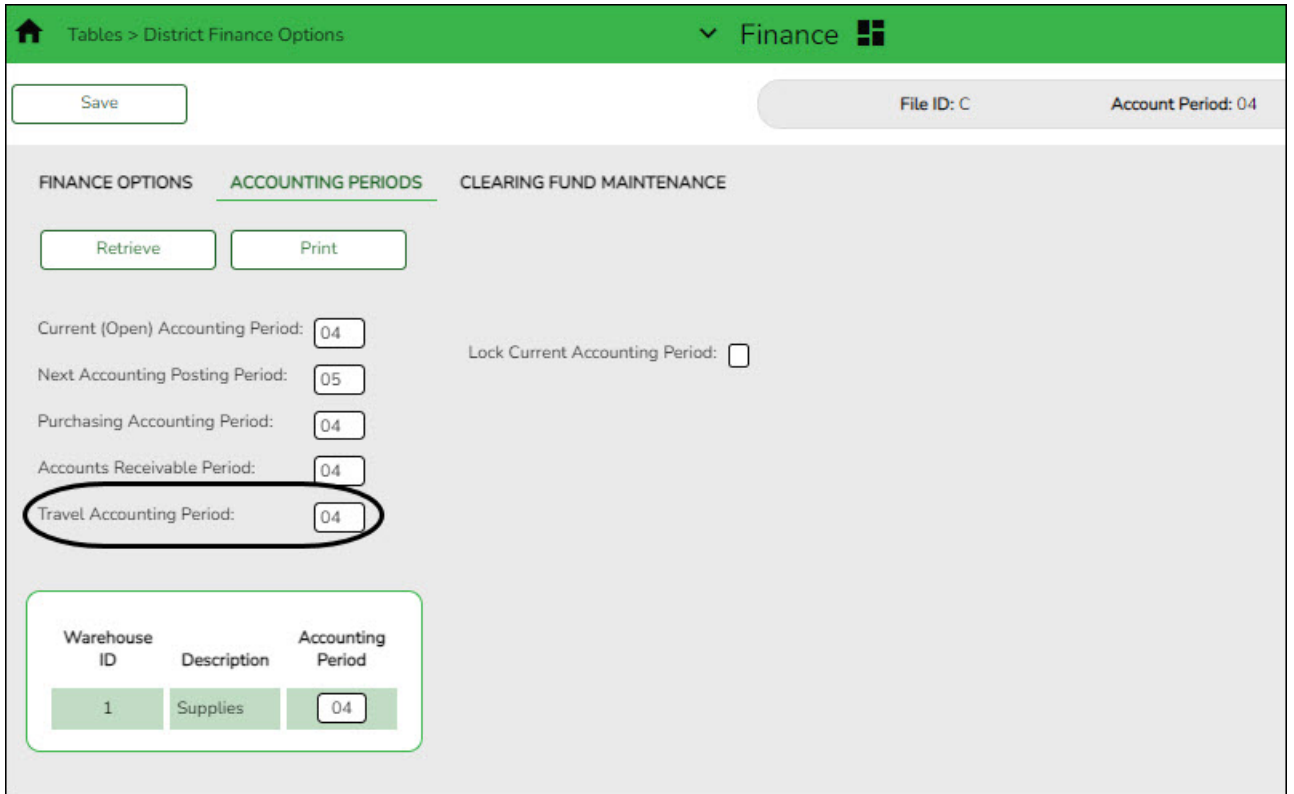
- o [District Administration > Workflow > First Approver](#)
- o [District Administration > Workflow > Approval Path](#)
- o [District Administration > Workflow > Approval Rules](#)
- o [District Administration > Workflow > Alternate Approver](#)

# Verify Travel Accounting Period

- 1. [Verify travel accounting period.](#)

[Finance > Tables > District Finance Options > Accounting Periods](#)

Verify that the travel accounting period is accurate.



<b>Travel Accounting Period</b>	Type the Travel accounting period. The field is a two-digit number from 01-12. The period can be the same as the current accounting period or the next accounting posting period.
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**Note:** This accounting period is incremented after completing the EOM and Fiscal Year Close processes.

# Set up Travel Options

Perform the following tasks to ensure that the travel reimbursement request feature in EmployeePortal is set up properly and functions as intended for employees.

1. Set up Finance 2 options.

[Finance > Tables > District Finance Options 2](#)

Set up the appropriate parameters to be used for the LEA's travel reimbursement requests.

Field	Description
<b>Next Available Travel Request Number</b>	Type the next available travel request number. Or, click the <b>Next Available Travel Request Number</b> link to automatically populate the field with the last travel request number plus one. The field can be a maximum of six characters and can be alphanumeric. If only numeric values are used, the field is zero-filled to equal six digits when a partial travel request number is entered and you tab out of the field (e.g., you entered 123, the field is zero-filled to 000123). If alphanumeric values are used, the field is not zero-filled to equal six characters (e.g., you entered ABC2, the travel request number remains ABC2).
<b>Location Locking</b>	Select to lock (disable) the <b>Mileage</b> (Start, Stop, and Map) fields, <b>Point of Origin</b> , and <b>Destination</b> fields on travel requests and require employees to use the <b>Location</b> link to select an origin and destination location from the predefined list of travel locations and distances set up on the <a href="#">Finance &gt; Tables &gt; Travel &gt; Locations</a> and <a href="#">Finance &gt; Tables &gt; Travel &gt; Distances</a> tab.  The Location Locking feature is not available for extended mileage travel requests.
<b>Require Start/End Times</b>	Select to require the travel start and end times on travel requests. This option is only available for mileage travel requests. The start/end times are always required for extended travel as the times are necessary to determine meal rates and eligibility.
<b>Require Odometer Start/Stop Mileage</b>	Select to require the beginning and ending odometer readings on travel requests.
<b>Mileage Reimbursement Rate</b>	Type the mileage reimbursement rate (cents per mile).

Field	Description
<b>New Mileage Reimbursement Rate</b>	Type the new mileage reimbursement rate. This field is used when the mileage reimbursement rate is set to change on a scheduled date.
<b>New Mileage Reimbursement Date</b>	Type the date on which the <b>New Mileage Reimbursement Rate</b> takes effect. Use the MM-DD-YYYY format. This field is used when the mileage reimbursement rate is set to change on a scheduled date. When travel requests are entered in EmployeePortal, if the date the travel occurred is equal to or greater than this date, the new mileage reimbursement rate is used.
<b>Breakfast Amount</b>	Type the allowable limit for breakfast reimbursement.
<b>Breakfast Eligible Depart Time</b>	Type the time the employee must depart before in order to be reimbursed for breakfast on the first travel day. Use the HH MM format and click  to select AM or PM.  To be reimbursed for breakfast on the first travel day, the <b>Departure Time</b> on the travel request must be earlier than the <b>Breakfast Eligible Depart Time</b> .
<b>Lunch Amount</b>	Type the allowable limit for lunch reimbursement.
<b>Dinner Amount</b>	Type the allowable limit for dinner reimbursement.
<b>Dinner Eligible Return Time</b>	Type the time the employee must return after in order to be reimbursed for dinner on the last travel day. Use the HH MM format and click  to select AM or PM.  To be reimbursed for dinner on the last travel day, the <b>Return Time</b> on the travel request must be later than the <b>Dinner Eligible Return Time</b> .

Click **Save**.

2. [Define travel locations.](#)

[Finance > Tables > Travel > Locations](#)

Define a list of travel locations. These locations can be used on the [Finance > Tables > Travel > Distances](#) tab to predefine a list of distances between to/from travel locations. If the Location Locking feature is enabled on the [Finance > Tables > District Finance Options 2](#) page, the **Mileage** (Start, Stop, and Map) fields, **Point of Origin**, and **Destination** fields are disabled on EmployeePortal travel requests and employees will need to use the Locations link to select from the predefined list of locations.

This is an optional method for maintaining a list of locations.



☐ Click **+Add** to add a row.

<b>Location ID</b>	Type a unique user-defined location ID. This field can be a maximum of twenty alphanumeric characters. This is a required field.
<b>Location Name</b>	Type a user-defined location name. This field can be a maximum of thirty-five alphanumeric characters. This is a required field.
<b>Address</b>	Type the street number and name for the location. This field can be a maximum of 35 characters.
<b>City</b>	Type the city name for the location. This field can be a maximum of 30 characters.
<b>St</b>	Click  to select the state for the location.
<b>Zip</b>	Type the five-digit zip code for the location.
<b>Zip 4</b>	Type the additional four digits of the zip code.

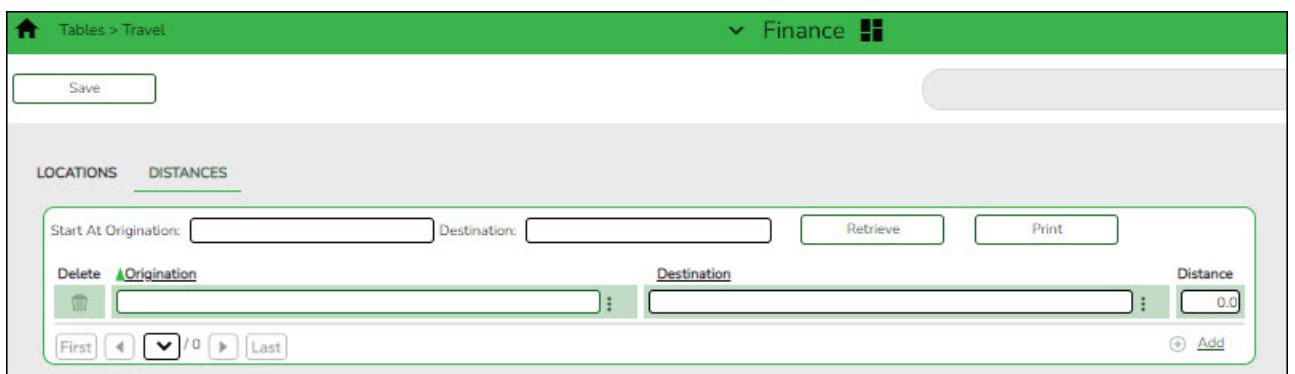
☐ Click **Save**.

### 3. Calculate to/from location distances.



[Finance > Tables > Travel > Distances](#)

Add a list of distances (in miles) between possible predefined to/from travel locations. These locations are set up on the can be used on the [Finance > Tables > Travel > Locations](#) tab. If the Location Locking feature is enabled on the [Finance > Tables > District Finance Options 2](#) page, the **Mileage** (Start, Stop, and Map) fields, **Point of Origin**, and **Destination** fields are disabled on EmployeePortal travel requests and employees will need to use the Locations link to select from the predefined list of locations.

This is an optional method for maintaining a list of locations.



☐ Click **+Add** to add row.

<b>Origination</b>	Click  to open the <a href="#">Location lookup</a> and select a starting location.
<b>Destination</b>	Click  to open the <a href="#">Location lookup</a> and select an ending location.
<b>Distance</b>	Type the number of miles from the <b>Origination</b> (starting) location to the <b>Destination</b> (ending) location.

☐ Click **Save**.

# Create and Link Employee/Vendor Records

1. [Create an employee vendor record.](#)

[Finance > Maintenance > Vendor Information > Vendor Name/Address](#)

Create a vendor record for the employee.

- Click **Add**.
- Complete the applicable fields.

**TIPS:**



- Under **EIN/SSN**, the **Type** must be *SSN* and the **Number** must match the employee's SSN on the Personnel > Maintenance > Staff Demo > Demographic Information tab. It is important that this information matches as this is the link between the employee's vendor and demographic record, and determines the availability of the copy bank information from payroll functionality on the Vendor Miscellaneous tab.
- The **EFT Email** is required.


- Click **Save**.

2. [Add bank information.](#)

[Finance > Maintenance > Vendor Information > Vendor Miscellaneous](#)

Add bank information for the vendor/employee.

- Under **Bank Information:**

<b>Bank</b>	Begin typing a bank code or name. As you type the data, a drop-down list of corresponding data is displayed. The bank information must exist on the <a href="#">Finance &gt; Tables &gt; Bank Codes</a> tab. Select a bank code. If the bank code or name is not known, click  to select a bank from the <a href="#">Banks lookup</a> or press the SPACEBAR to view a list of banks.
<b>Bank Acct Nbr</b>	Type the corresponding bank account number for the selected bank.
<b>Bank Acct Type</b>	Select the account type for the selected bank and bank account number.  <i>2 Checking account</i> <i>3 Savings account</i>
<b>PreNote</b>	Select to generate a <a href="#">prenote</a> to the bank.

☐ Click **Copy from Payroll** to copy the employee's bank information from the [Payroll > Maintenance > Staff Job/Pay Data > Pay Info](#) tab.

- The vendor must have an **EFT Email** listed on the Vendor Name/Address tab to save the record.
- The bank information on the Pay Info tab must have a zero **Bank Acct Amt** in order to be copied.
- This button only displays if the vendor and employee SSN records match. On the [Finance > Maintenance > Vendor Information > Vendor Name/ Address](#) tab, under **EIN/SSN**, the **Type** must be *SSN* and the **Number** must match the employee's **SSN** on the [Personnel > Maintenance > Staff Demo > Demographic Information](#) tab.

☐ Click **Save**.

### 3. Update employee's commute distance.

[Personnel > Maintenance > Staff Demo > Demographic Information](#)

Indicate the employee's commute distance. This information is used when calculating travel distances for travel reimbursement requests.

The screenshot shows the 'Demographic Information' tab for a staff member. At the top, there is a 'Save' button. Below it, an 'Employee' ID field is populated with '000009'. To the right are buttons for 'Retrieve', 'Directory', 'Add Emp', and 'Docum'. A navigation bar includes tabs for 'DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION', 'CREDENTIALS', 'VERIFICATION', 'INSURANCE', 'SERVICE RECORD', and 'RESPONSIBILITY'. The 'DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION' tab is active, showing 'Staff ID/SSN' and 'Texas Unique Staff ID: 5960847611'. The 'Name' section has fields for 'Legal' and 'Former' names, with sub-fields for Title, First, Middle, Last, and Generation. The 'Addresses' section includes 'Mailing' and 'Alternate' address fields with sub-fields for Number, Street/P.O. Box, Apt, City, State, and Zip. At the bottom left, the 'Travel Commute Distance' field is circled in black and contains the value '0.0'.

In the **Travel Commute Distance** field, type the commute distance (the number of miles between the employee's home and assigned work location). Valid values are 0-999.9.

This field can also be updated by the employee via the **Commute Distance Change** link on the Travel Reimbursement Requests page in EmployeePortal.

Click **Save**.

## Enable the Travel Reimbursement Request Feature

### 1. Set up district EP options.

[Payroll > Tables > District EP Options > EmployeePortal Options](#)

Set up the following EP options to allow employees to view the Travel Reimbursement Request menu in EmployeePortal.

The screenshot shows the 'District EP Options' configuration page. The 'EMPLOYEEPORTAL OPTIONS' section is active. Under the 'Enable' section, the following options are checked: EmployeePortal System, Calendar Year to Date, Current Pay Information, Deductions, Earnings, Leave Balances, W-2 Information, Self-Service Demographic, Self-Service Payroll, W-2 Electronic Consent, 1095 Information, 1095 Electronic Consent, Leave Request, **Travel Reimbursement Request**, and WorkJournal. The 'Messages' section has a radio button selected for 'Travel Reimbursement Request'. A message box on the right contains the text 'This is a travel message for all employees'.

Under **Enable**, select **Travel Reimbursement Request** to enable the travel reimbursement

request feature in EmployeePortal.

- Under **Messages**, select **Travel Reimbursement Request** to enable employees to view a preset message on the Travel Reimbursement Requests page in EmployeePortal.
  - Type the applicable message in the text box.
  - The message is displayed in red at the top of the Travel Requests page in EmployeePortal after the record is saved.
  
- Click **Save**.



After the above steps are completed, employees can submit travel reimbursement requests in EmployeePortal.