Clearing Travel Encumbrances FY20

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the subsequent university travel suspension, departments may find a number of Travel Encumbrances that need to be liquidated or cleared. This document provide some tips to assist you with this process of removing the encumbrance.

Instructions for liquidating an encumbrance in Banner can be found on the Controllers Website here: Liquidate a Travel Encumbrance

**Background:**

Fully approved Pre-approvals create an encumbrance in Banner Account 638066 on the index listed in the Pre-approval report. The encumbrance is liquidated when the pre-approval is attached to an expense report and fully approved.

There are some instances where a pre-approval was not attached to an expense and the encumbrance is left open. Some reasons include:

- The expense owner or delegate fail to attach the pre-approval when the expense report is submitted.
- A trip was cancelled after the pre-approval was created resulting in no expenses to report.
- The only expenses incurred were department pre-paid expenses, resulting in an expense report not being created for the trip.

In these cases, the Fiscal Approver would need to manually liquidate the encumbrance.

To determine who the encumbrance belonged to, some departments would use the description of the encumbrance in order to locate this information. Unfortunately, when Chrome River was updated to the Mercury platform in December 2019, the function to provide the description was lost. *(Travel Services continues to work with Chrome River IT and hope a fix will soon be available)*. Below is a workaround process to help you locate the encumbrance owner and pre-approval details.

**How to locate the encumbrance owner when no description is available:**

The owner of the Travel Encumbrance can be determined by the Encumbrance Number. The Number is “T” plus the last 7 digits of the pre-approval number.

- **Example:** Encumbrance T0903108 = Pre-approval 0100-0090-3108.

A report of your Department’s Open Pre-approvals can be pulled thru ChromeRiver’s Analytics tool. Please contact Travel Services at Travel@vcu.edu to request access to this tool. *(No test or form is needed to be granted access)*

Once Access has been granted, the Analytics tab will appear on your Chrome River Dashboard. *(Note: Additional assistance using Analytics can be found using the Chrome River help menu. To Access ChromeRiver help, click your name in the upper right hand of ChromeRiver. Then navigate the menu on the left to the subject of Analytics.)*
Open Pre-approval Report Retrieval Instructions

1) Once Travel Services grants access to Analytics, Click on the menu icon on the top left of the ChromeRiver Dashboard and Scroll down to the Analytics section. There are two sections under the Analytics Section.
   - Reports: This is the simplified reporting Section
   - Analytics: This will take you to the full Analytics Reporting Tool

2) Click Analytics to go to the Full Reporting Tool.
3) In the Reporting Tool, Navigate to the Standard Reports tab at the top, then to “Expense”, then Choose “Pre-approval Request Status”. This will bring up Filter and Column options to build your report.

4) Add Filters as needed or leave the filters as general as possible to bring up a larger range report and filter within the report as needed.

   - **Submit Date:** This is the date the Pre-approval was created and submitted. It is best to use a broad date range if you are unsure the date the pre-approval was submitted.
   - **Status:** Choose Approved Status to include only unused Pre-approvals.
   - **Days Past to Date:** Leave as All
   - **Expense owner:** Option to filter by expense owner if needed. Otherwise leave blank.
   - **Wildcard Filter:** Option to filter by Pre-approval number if needed. The Pre-approval number is 0100-0 plus the 7 digits of the encumbrance number. Leave as “None” if you wish to search for all Pre-approvals for your department.

5) Add and remove Report Columns as needed. It is recommended to include the following columns

   - PA Status
   - PA Expense Owner
   - PA Submit date
   - Pa Date From
   - Pa Date to
   - School/Division
   - School/Division Code
   - Department
   - Department/Code

6) Once all Filters and Columns needed have been included click the desired output (Excel is recommended) and click “Run Report”
7) Once the report is processed you may open it and sort your department as needed.

Contact Travel Services at Travel@vcu.edu with further questions or assistance.