

Office of the Commissioner
State of Louisiana
Division of Administration

JOHN BEL EDWARDS
GOVERNOR



JAY DARDENNE
COMMISSIONER OF ADMINISTRATION

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Jan. 21, 2016

CONTACT

Cody Wells
225.342.7031
cody.wells@la.gov

COMMISSIONER DARDENNE HALTS MANDATORY USE OF HOTELPLANNER.COM

Louisiana government agencies are no longer required to use an out-of-state company to book hotel accommodations for their employees who travel in and out of state.

Commissioner of Administration Jay Dardenne ended the mandatory use of HotelPlanner.com, saying the Jindal administration policy has not produced budget savings and has harmed the state's hotel and lodging businesses.

Dardenne sent a memo to cabinet officials reading, in part: "Based on my experience and input from other departments and agencies, my first act as commissioner is to enable you to use the least expensive and most convenient option for arranging travel for state employees."

Dardenne fought to change the travel policy when he served as lieutenant governor, saying it was harmful to the state's travel industry, a sentiment shared by Louisiana Hotel and Lodging Association executive vice president Bill Langkopp. Langkopp said Dardenne's action is a "win-win for the hotel industry and the state. He is creating an environment where state employees will have a better selection of lodging accommodations and will be able to negotiate better rates."

Langkopp also said Louisiana hotels will no longer have to pay an unnecessary commission to the out-of-state company for the bookings made through the system's on-line portal. HotelPlanner.com got the contract in mid-2013. There was no cost to the state, with the company operating on commissions from those businesses it dealt with as it handled hotel reservations for individuals and groups. The contract also called for the state to receive a small—2 to 2.5 percent rebate—from the business. To date, the state has received about \$140,000 over the course of the contract.

With his decision, Dardenne said agencies are free to pursue “a more efficient and less expensive way to book state travel.”

Although the contract was non-exclusive, the Jindal administration made the use of the HotelPlanner booking portal mandatory in October 2014, claiming the move would, among other things, “promote better negotiations” and “yield higher savings for the State of Louisiana.”

– doa.la.gov –