

Policy Title: **TRAVEL**

This policy provides guidelines for employees traveling within the United States on College business, including local travel. (Employees travelling internationally should refer to the International Travel policy.) Note that some grants include their own travel guidelines. Where they differ, the guidelines of the grant will take precedence over this policy.

Travel Procedures can be found on the [Financial Services Travel Information](#) page.

This policy is not intended to cover every possible situation. Please contact Accounts Payable for clarification as needed.

### **Employee Responsibilities & Compliance**

Employees must submit all forms and receipts related to their travel within a timely manner and may delegate responsibility for preparation of the forms. The employee always retains accountability of travel expenses. Employees must notify Accounts Payable of any cancellations and/or refunds for items purchased directly by the College.

### **Travel Authorization**

All travel requires prior authorization from an employee's manager and/or the manager whose budget is impacted. Travel arrangements should only be made after approval has been received. For professional growth activities, a Professional Growth Activity Tracking (PGAT) form is required before travel arrangements are made.

### **Reimbursement Requests**

In order to receive reimbursement for expenses, complete an *Employee Expense Report* form upon completion of the trip or after expenses are incurred and have it signed by the appropriate manager. Requests for reimbursement should be submitted to Financial Services as soon as possible and no later than either 90 days after the trip incurred or funding source closes, whichever is sooner. The College reserves the right to deny reimbursement for delinquent requests.

### **Receipts**

Receipts are required for all expenses except for meals and incidental expenses (M&IE) which are reimbursed on a per diem basis. (See section *Meals*.)

### **Manager Responsibilities**

Managers are ultimately accountable for the conservative use of College funds and must verify that all travel is budgeted and expenditures are charged to the proper chartfield sting(s). The employee's immediate supervisor or designee must sign each expense report, confirming that all travel expenses were necessary, reasonable, and consistent with this policy.

## **Types of Expenses**

### **A. Registration Fees**

Fees for conferences can be paid for by a purchasing card (P-Card), Accounts Payable, or paying for the registration fee personally and getting reimbursed.

### **B. Transportation**

While there are several acceptable methods of business transportation, employees are expected to use the most cost effective method possible. For assistance in determining the most cost effective transportation method, please contact Accounts Payable.

#### **1. Air Travel**

The College will only pay for the cost of coach accommodations. Airline tickets should be purchased through the College's designated travel agency, which charges directly to the College. Airline tickets purchased with personal funds will be reimbursed after the trip along with the other travel expenses to avoid additional processing costs and possible duplication of payment.

*Miscellaneous Airline Charges (Ticket Changes/Cancellations, Seat Assignment, Flight Internet Access, etc.)*

The College will pay for reasonable airline charges if approved by the manager. Document the business purpose for each additional fee in order to be reimbursed.

*Baggage Charges or Lost Baggage*

Employees will be reimbursed for any charges imposed by the airline for the first item of luggage. Excess baggage charges will be reimbursed only when traveling with heavy, bulky material or equipment that is required for business purposes. The College will not reimburse employees for personal items lost while traveling on business as airlines bear this responsibility.

*Airline Frequent Flyer Programs*

Employees may retain frequent flyer program benefits for their personal use. However, participation in these programs must not influence flight selection which would result in higher airfare. The College will not reimburse employees for tickets purchased with frequent flyer miles even if those tickets are purchased for business reasons.

*Airline Boarding Compensation*

Airlines occasionally offer free tickets or cash allowances to compensate for delays due to overbooking, flight cancellations or changes. Employees may volunteer for boarding compensation only if the delay in their trip will not result in any interruption of business or any additional costs to the College. Employees may keep the compensation for their own personal use.

### *Airport Delays*

The College will reimburse employees for reasonable expenses such as additional hotel and per diem costs incurred due to flight delays and cancellations that are beyond the employee's control. Include a brief description of the circumstances with the *Employee Expense Report*.

## **2. Rental Vehicle**

Car rental is generally the preferred mode of transportation when travelling within the state. For out of state travel, employees may use a rental car when other transportation is not available or when the use of a rental car provides cost savings. If a taxi, shuttle, subway or courtesy transportation is available to bring the employees to his/her final business destination, then a rental car shouldn't be used.

### *Gasoline*

The direct cost of gasoline will be reimbursed. Employees must fill the car with gasoline prior to returning it to the rental agency.

### *Insurance*

The College's insurance policy provides coverage for car rentals (except for 15 passenger vans) within the United States so it is not necessary to purchase additional insurance offered by rental agencies. If purchased, this cost will not be reimbursed.

### *Type of Vehicle*

The size of the rental car should be the least expensive model consistent with the number of employees and the business requirements of the trip. Minivans and SUVs should be used only if transporting large or bulky material or if four or more individuals are traveling together. Employees should **never** rent a 15 passenger van.

## **3. Other Transportation (Taxi, Shuttle, Rail, Subway, Metro, Bus, Car Services)**

Costs of transportation with reasonable tips will be reimbursed with a receipt. These expenses are allowed for transportation to, from, and between places of business, lodging, and the airport. Travel by limousine is generally not an acceptable mode of business travel. If utilized, documentation must be provided to justify this decision. Courtesy transportation should be utilized whenever possible.

## **4. Personal Vehicles**

Employees may use personal vehicles for official business travel when necessary and cost effective. Personal vehicles are not covered under the College's insurance policy. Any loss incurred while using a personal vehicle for College business will fall under the employee's personal insurance coverage and will not be reimbursed.

Reimbursement will be at the current IRS mileage rate and based on actual starting and ending locations. When the starting or ending location is your home, mileage will be reimbursed at the lesser of the actual miles driven or the mileage between your assigned campus location (as defined in the Employee Handbook) and the designated location.

Expenses associated with normal commuting between an employee's home and regular place of business are not reimbursable.

Additional reimbursement will be made for tolls and reasonable parking fees with receipts.

Employees will not be reimbursed for tickets, fines or traffic violations. No reimbursement will be made for vehicle repair costs regardless of whether it results from the employee's act or acts of others.

## **5. College Vehicles**

The College owns several vehicles that may be used for College business. See the College Vehicle Policy for more details.

## **C. Lodging**

The College will pay actual reasonable room costs, as supported by the detailed hotel bill, for each night that lodging away from home is required for business purposes.

### **1. Cancellations**

If it is necessary to change or cancel guaranteed reservations, it is the responsibility of the employee to cancel the reservation. The College will not reimburse any charges or fees assessed due to failure to cancel a reservation.

### **2. Lodging in a Private Residence**

Payments to individuals for lodging at their personal homes are not reimbursable.

## **D. Meals**

The College will reimburse employees for meal and incidental expenses (M&IE) incurred during official business travel using the per diem rates established by the federal government's General Services Administration (GSA). The rate includes meals, tips and incidentals such as fees for food and luggage-handling type services.

If a meal is provided as part of a hotel complimentary breakfast, sponsored training session, conference, or meeting, the employee must deduct the per diem for that meal(s) from their per diem for that day. If a meal is provided by a conference as part of the registration fee and an employee elects to purchase a meal independent of the conference, such meals will be considered a personal expense and will not be reimbursed.

In the event an employee travels to multiple cities and states during the same day of travel, the meal allowance for that day will be based upon the city where the employee spends the night.

In situations where business travel is combined with personal travel, reimbursement for meals will be limited to expenses incurred on days of official business. Travel days should be calculated as if the personal travel did not exist.

## **E. Business Meals**

Business meals are defined as meals taken with colleagues, students, donors or individuals from outside organizations during which specific College business takes place. These meals may

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occur locally or while in travel status. When two or more employees are traveling and dine together, the fact that they are dining together does not constitute a business meal. Please see the College's Business and Meeting Meals policy for more details.

### **Extended Stay/Combining Business and Personal Travel**

Employees may extend their travel or combine personal travel with business travel, provided the related time and expenses do not result in additional costs to the College. Incremental expenses incurred by family members or personal guests are not reimbursable.

When an employee deviates from the most direct travel route for personal reasons, reimbursement may not exceed the cost of the most direct route. Reimbursement for meals, lodging and other expenses will be limited to expenses incurred on days of official business and should be calculated as if the personal travel had not occurred. The rental vehicle contract that the College utilizes does not permit personal use.

### **Policy Exceptions**

Exceptions to this policy may be made in special circumstances or when in the best interest of the College. These exceptions should be infrequent and require the written approval of a member of the Executive Team or the College President.

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