

# Travel Policies and Procedures



# Travel Policies

- ☞ Tennessee Board of Regents (TBR) Policy 4:03:03:00
  - All travel must be consistent with the educational, research, and professional needs of the TBR System. Employees must conduct all travel with integrity, in compliance with applicable laws, policies, and procedures, and in a manner that excludes considerations of personal advantage. Employees must exercise good judgment and conduct all aspects of travel in a cost-efficient manner.
- ☞ Employees should always choose the most cost-efficient mode of travel. For example, an employee cannot choose to drive due to personal preference and get full reimbursement if it is cheaper to fly versus drive a personal vehicle or rental car to the destination. They will only be reimbursed for the cost of a comparable flight.
- ☞ Employees should, under normal circumstances, make flight and lodging arrangements at least a month before the travel to ensure reasonable costs. Arrangements made on short notice should have an explanation as to the business reason for not making arrangements at least a month ahead.

# General Policies

- ∞ Reimbursement will not be made for travel to and from an employee's residence and official station of employment.
  - The official station is the area where the majority of employment activity occurs, such as campus, or designated location in the field.
  - The official station should be designation by the appointing authority.
- ∞ An employee is on official travel status at the time of departure from the employee's official station or residence for the purpose of business travel.
  - Reimbursement of per diem is only allowed when an employee stays overnight for travel outside the county of the employee's official station or residence.
  - En route lodging will be allowed for only one day each way on trips that require more than 10 hours of continuous travel. (However, lodging will not be reimbursed if the employee's choice of travel is not the most cost-efficient.)

# General Policies cont.

- ☞ All receipts for reimbursement should be itemized. Credit card receipts only showing total charged are not sufficient.
- ☞ Internet travel sites such as Expedia, Travelocity or Kayak can be utilized to purchase single travel services such as an airline ticket. Internet travel sites cannot be used to purchase a package of more than one travel service. Purchases of travel packages that combine services such as lodging, airline, or vehicle rentals are not allowed. These package deals do not usually provide sufficient itemized pricing for each service purchased and therefore do not allow for proper comparison to CONUS or conference rates as required by policy.

# In-State Travel Authorization

## ∞ In-State Travel

- All employees must obtain prior authorization for in-state travel by the employee's appropriate approving authority.
- Written authorization may not be necessary for in-state travel where the expected expenses will not be substantial, or when circumstances necessitate travel on short notice, and such travel is approved orally. In most situations, written approval is not necessary for in-state travel.
- Employees whose employment requires frequent in-state travel may obtain blanket authorization in writing for such travel.

# Out-of-State Travel Authorization

## ∞ Out-of-State Travel

- All employees must obtain prior written authorization for out-of-state travel by the employee's appropriate approving authority.
- The authorization must show:
  - Name of the person traveling
  - Purpose of the trip
  - Destinations
  - Date of departure and return
  - Mode of transportation
  - Estimated expenses
  - Availability of funds
- This authorization can best be completed using a travel requisition; however, emails or memos are also sufficient as long as all items listed above are included.

# Out-of-State Travel Authorization cont.

- ∞ If, in the normal course of official business, the employee must routinely travel into another state and back in the same day, such travel will be considered in-state travel and shall be subject to the in-state travel provisions.
  - This exception applies for trips which do not exceed 50 miles into another state.
- ∞ Employees whose employment requires frequent out-of-state travel may obtain blanket authorization in writing for such travel.

# Travel Authorizations

- ☞ Authorization for travel by an employee to Alaska, Hawaii, and all out-of-country travel shall be subject to written approval by the President.
  - A memo to the President should be submitted before travel arrangements are made. The same items required for out-of-state authorizations should be included in the memo.
- ☞ Travel authorizations not completed on a requisition do not need to be submitted with the travel claim to Accounts Payable for reimbursement for in-state or out-of-state travel.
- ☞ The approved memo to the President for out-of-country travel must be submitted with the travel claim for reimbursement.
- ☞ Travel authorizations are done to protect the employee. Employees that have not obtained prior approval may not be reimbursed. Accounts Payable does not audit travel authorizations for in-state and out-of-state travel.

# Transportation

- ∞ All travel must be by the most direct or expeditious route possible. If an indirect route is taken, then any extra expense is a personal expense.
- ∞ When work is performed by an employee in route to or from the official station, reimbursable mileage is computed by deducting the employee's normal commuting mileage from the actual mileage driven in performing the work in route to or from the official station.
  - For example, if an employee normally commutes 10 miles (20 miles round trip), and performs work on the way home from the official station which results in 12 miles driven, the mileage reimbursement will be for 2 miles only, as that is the amount of mileage in excess of the employee's normal commute.

# Mode of Transportation

- ∞ Transportation for employees traveling singly should be by common carrier (air, train, or bus) whenever practical.
- ∞ The use of air travel is recommended when time is an important factor or when the trip is so long that other methods of travel would increase the subsistence expense.
- ∞ When travel is by common carrier, the fare must not exceed the regular coach fare charged the general public, and advantage must be taken of round trip rates when available.
  - The procard can be used to purchase advance airline tickets.
- ∞ Automobile transportation may be used to save time when common carrier transportation cannot be satisfactorily scheduled, or to reduce expenses when two or more employees are making the trip.
- ∞ Reimbursement for personal vehicle use may be claimed at the standard mileage rate provided that the cost of such reimbursement is less than comparable cost of commercial transportation including taxi fares and/or limousine charges.

# Automobile Travel

- ∞ When travel by automobile is appropriate, employees may use TTU-owned automobiles whenever available and feasible. However, TTU-owned vehicles should be used only on official business.
- ∞ TTU-owned automobiles
  - When transportation is by a TTU-owned automobile, tolls, parking, gasoline and storage expenses are allowable.
  - When using motor pool automobiles, employees will be furnished with courtesy cards for purchase of gasoline, oil, and other automobile services, and such expenses should not be claimed by employees as travel expenses.
  - Emergency out-of-pocket expenses, such as towing or emergency repairs, will be reimbursed but must be accompanied by proper receipt identifying the automobile and itemizing the services.
  - Such expenditures must be of an emergency nature when immediate service is required and access to a state facility is not possible.
  - Major repairs should be approved by campus officials prior to work being performed. Such expenditures are allowed but should be filed for reimbursement separately.

# Automobile Travel cont.

## ∞ Personally-owned automobiles

- The mileage reimbursement rate is currently \$0.47. This rate is determined by the State Department of Finance and Administration and is periodically changed. Any changes will be communicated to Departmental Representatives by email and in Tech Times.
- The authorized mileage allowance includes all operating expenses such as gas, oil, and repairs which means no claims for such expenses will be reimbursed separately.
- Accounts Payable uses the Rand McNally website to determine mileage. If any other website is used, then please provide documentation with the travel claim.
- If an employee begins or ends his/her trip at his/her residence without stopping at his/her official station, reimbursable mileage will be the lesser of the mileage from the employee's residence to his/her destination or his/her official station to the destination. On weekends and holidays, the employee may typically be reimbursed for actual mileage from his/her residence to the destination.
- If an employee travels between destinations without returning to his/her official station or his/her residence, reimbursable mileage is the actual mileage between those destinations.

# Limousine and Taxi Service

- ✎ When travel is by common carrier, reasonable limousine and taxi fares will be allowed for necessary transportation.
- ✎ Bus or limousine service to and from airports will be used when available and practical.
- ✎ After arrival at destination, necessary taxi fares for traveling between hotels or lodging and meeting or conference will be allowed.
- ✎ No receipt is required for reimbursement of reasonable taxi fares.

# Car Rentals

- ☞ Charges for automobile rental shall be allowed whenever it is more economical than alternative methods of transportation or it is the only practical means of transportation.
  - A memo documenting the cost comparison and/or business reason for a car rental must be submitted with all travel claims that include reimbursement for car rentals.
- ☞ If an employee flies to a conference, then a business purpose is needed to rent a car at the conference location. Normally, a shuttle to and from the hotel is much cheaper than renting a car. Most conference hotels also have a restaurant which would eliminate the need to drive to other locations for meals. Therefore, a business purpose such as several business meetings at a location other than the conference hotel would be needed. You would still need to justify that it was not cheaper to use other modes of travel such as taxis or that other modes of travel were not available.

# Car Rentals cont.

- ⌘ Charges for insurance, upgrades, or road-side assistance for rented automobiles are not reimbursable. Reimbursement for GPS will not be made unless a business purpose is established.
- ⌘ Whenever possible, employees should refuel before returning vehicles.

# Tolls, Ferry, and Parking Fees

- ☞ Reasonable tolls and ferry fees will be allowed when necessary.
  - No receipt is required for reimbursement of tolls and ferry fees.
- ☞ Employees required to utilize commercial parking facilities or airport parking while on travel status, will be allowed reimbursement for actual costs.
  - A receipt is not required if the fee is \$8 or less per day.

# Lodging

- ☞ In-State lodging will be reimbursable up to the maximum TBR policy rates per city/county. See Addendum in TBR Policy.
- ☞ Out-of-State lodging will be reimbursable up to the maximum CONUS rates per city/county.
  - [www.gsa.gov](http://www.gsa.gov) – CONUS rates
    - Click on the Per Diem Rates link on the left hand side
    - Enter city or ZIP code and click Find Per Diem Rates
    - Lodging and per diem rates are shown
  - Print-outs of the CONUS rates for travel should be included in the documentation submitted with the travel claim.
- ☞ Sales taxes on lodging costs will be reimbursable.

# Lodging cont.

- ☞ Higher rates for lodging at the location of a convention or conference will be allowed, without special approval, up to the amount indicated in the convention or conference brochure or conference website.
  - Documentation of the conference rate MUST be included with the travel claim when submitted.
  - It is encouraged that this documentation be obtained before travel is completed. Often this documentation is on the conference website, which may not be available after the conference.
  - The President must approve in writing any rate higher than CONUS rates, if documentation of conference rate cannot be provided.
- ☞ Conference lodging arrangements should be made as soon as possible as special rates are often booked up quickly. Arrangements made on short notice should have an explanation as to the business reason for not making arrangements at least a month ahead.

# Shared Lodging

- ☞ In the event of double occupancy for employees on official travel, both employees should attach an explanation to his/her travel claim detailing dates and other employees with whom the room was shared.
- ☞ The lodging cost may be claimed by the employee who incurred the cost, or one half the double occupancy charge may be allowable for each employee.
- ☞ If a room is shared with anyone other than an employee, actual cost subject to the maximum allowable rates will be allowed
- ☞ The receipt for the entire amount should be submitted with the travel claims.

# Per Diem (Meals and Incidentals)

- ☞ Meals while on authorized travel will be reimbursed through per diem rates allowable by TBR Policy (in-state) and CONUS (out-of-state).
  - Current in-state per diem is \$51 per day, except Davidson County which is \$59 per day.
- ☞ The maximum per diem rates include a fixed allowance for meals and for incidental expenses (M&I).
- ☞ The M&I rate, or fraction thereof, is payable to the traveler without itemization of expenses or receipts.
- ☞ Incidentals are intended to include miscellaneous costs associated with travel such as tips for baggage handling, phone calls home, etc.

# Per Diem cont.

- ☞ Reimbursement for meals and incidentals for the day of departure and day of return shall be three-fourths of the appropriate M&I rate (either the in-state rate or CONUS rate for out-of-state travel) at the rate prescribed for the lodging location.
  - [www.gsa.gov](http://www.gsa.gov) – CONUS rates
    - Click on the Per Diem Rates link on the left hand side
    - Enter city or ZIP code and click Find Per Diem Rates
    - Lodging and per diem (Meals & Inc. Exp.) rates are shown
    - Below the table click on the link for Breakdown of M&IE Expenses
    - The breakdown for each possible rate is shown.
- ☞ Reimbursement for meals provided at a conference should not be made. Per diem should be reduced per the breakdown for each day.

# Miscellaneous Expenses

- ☞ Expenses for entertainment (employee or others), laundry, tips and gratuities, etc., are personal expenses and will not be reimbursed in excess of the incidental portion of the M&I rate.
- ☞ Charges for local and long distance telephone calls, internet, and/or fax on official business will be allowed.
- ☞ Registration fees for approved conferences, conventions, seminars, meetings, etc., will be allowed including cost of official banquets and/or luncheons. The procard can be used to purchase advance conference fees.
- ☞ Fees for the handling of equipment or promotional materials will be allowed up to \$20 per hotel.

# Out-of-Country Travel

- ☞ For out-of-country travel, if expenses are in a foreign currency, then the conversion rates should be documented and attached to the documentation submitted with the travel claim.
  - Any common conversion website can be used.
- ☞ All expenses should be entered on the travel claim in dollars.
- ☞ Lodging charges are reimbursed at actual rates rather than CONUS rates.
- ☞ Out-of-country meals are reimbursable at the maximum CONUS per diem rate for out-of-state travel.

# Cost Comparisons

- ∞ When preparing cost comparisons, searches for flights should be at least a month from the date you are completing the search. Next day flights are VERY expensive and not reasonable comparisons. Searches should be done on a website such as Expedia.
- ∞ Conference lodging arrangements should be made as soon as possible as special rates are often booked up quickly. Arrangements made on short notice should have an explanation as to the business reason for not making arrangements at least a month ahead.

# Cost Comparison Example

## Flight Expenses

Airline Ticket	\$350.00
Mileage to/from Airport	78.88
Parking at Airport	40.00
Shuttle to/from Hotel	50.00
Baggage Fees	50.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$568.88</b>

## Driving Expenses

Mileage to/from (650 miles)	\$611.00
Parking at Hotel	40.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$651.00</b>

# Preparing Travel Requisitions

- ☞ Prepare travel requisitions on one sheet of white paper.
- ☞ All requisitions should be typed rather than handwritten to ensure legibility.
- ☞ For the beginning balance on travel requisitions, insert the available balance for travel for the account number (index) to be charged for the travel claim. The account number and appropriate account code should also be noted on the requisition.
- ☞ Subtract the total estimated amount of the travel from the available balance.

# Preparing Travel Requisitions cont.

- ✎ Insert the name of the college, school, or department and the name of the person submitting the requisition for travel (claimant).
- ✎ Complete the estimate of expenses by indicating all proposed methods of travel and expenses.
- ✎ Obtain proper signatures. The requisitions must be signed by the claimant and the appropriate approving authority.
- ✎ After the travel is completed, the "actual" section of the requisition should be completed. The requisition for travel, the completed claim, and all supporting documentation should be forwarded through appropriate channels to the Business Office.

# Preparing Travel Claims

- ☞ The "Travel Expense Claim" form shall be used for reimbursement of expenses. If any travel expenses were paid for through a Tennessee Tech procard, then the "Travel Expense Claim with Procard Activity" form shall be used for reimbursement of expenses.
- ☞ Prepare travel claim forms on one sheet of white paper.
- ☞ All claim forms should be typed rather than handwritten to ensure legibility.
- ☞ The claim form shall be signed by the claimant and the appropriate approving authority before submission for reimbursement.
- ☞ Do not print forms, backup documentation, or receipts double-sided. Print only on one side of a sheet of paper.

# Preparing Travel Claims cont.

- ☞ Documentation required to be submitted with travel claim:
  - All required receipts, such as, hotel, baggage fees, parking, airport shuttle, or other receipts as required by policy.
  - A print out from [www.gsa.gov](http://www.gsa.gov) of the appropriate CONUS rate should be attached for each city/county traveled.
  - Accounts Payable uses the Rand McNally website to determine mileage. If any other website is used, then please provide documentation with the travel claim.
  - A print out from conference website or conference brochure should be attached to travel claim to substantiate conference hotel rate and conference dates.
  - Documentation of flight itinerary should be included with travel claim even if airline ticket was paid by procard. Any travel expenses paid on procard should be noted in the Procard Activity section on the travel claim.
  - Car rental memo substantiating business purpose for car rental or cheaper mode of transportation.

# Preparing Mileage Claim Form

- ☞ The "Mileage Claim for Use of Personal Vehicle" is for the reimbursement of mileage and parking expenses only when using a personal vehicle for official business travel.
- ☞ This form may not be used for overnight trips or any expenses other than mileage and parking reimbursement.
- ☞ Multiple trips may be included on one form.
- ☞ Each day of mileage should be listed on one line.
- ☞ This form does not require a requisition for processing.

# Preparing Documents for Scanning

- ∞ All requisitions, travel claims, and supporting documentation will be maintained as scanned copies once processed for payment. Originals will be shredded.
- ∞ All receipts submitted must be legible once scanned.
- ∞ The claimant is responsible for maintaining receipts in a manner that prevents fading, tearing, or wrinkling of receipts.
- ∞ All receipts smaller than 8½” x 11” should be taped to a plain white 8½” x 11” sheet of paper.
- ∞ Tape should not cover amounts, dates, vendor names, or other relevant information on the receipt, since tape potentially can blank out the information once scanned.
- ∞ If a receipt is submitted for reimbursement that is illegible once scanned, then reimbursement may not be made for that expense.

# Direct Deposit

- ☞ All employees are required to receive reimbursements from Accounts Payable through direct deposit rather than check.
- ☞ Students may also sign up for direct deposit through Accounts Payable.
  - If a student does not sign up for direct deposit, then the check will be mailed to the student's home address that must be provided when the claim is submitted.
- ☞ Accounts Payable has a separate direct deposit authorization form. This must be done even if a student or employee is signed up for direct deposit for payroll or student refunds.

# Top Ten Takeaways

- 1) Include CONUS rate printouts from [www.gsa.gov](http://www.gsa.gov)
- 2) Include documentation of conference hotel rate (documentation showing conference hotel is not sufficient)
- 3) Note on travel claim when hotel is not claimed but provided or shared with another employee
- 4) Include mileage documentation when Rand McNally is not used
- 5) Include car rental memo when car is rented
- 6) Break out of per diem not required - it is preferred that amount claimed per day be noted in the Dinner column
- 7) Note all expenses paid on procard for trip in the Procard Activity section on travel claim
- 8) Include flight itinerary even if paid on procard
- 9) Original, itemized receipts are required
- 10) Do not tape over important information on receipts