

Travel Policy Training

January 2020



The content of this presentation was the most up-to-date information available at the revision date. However, policies, procedures and guidelines may be updated during an academic year. Please refer to the [University Policy website](#) for the most current version of these policies, procedures and guidelines.

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Learning Outcomes

- Understand the regulations associated with travel expenses eligible for reimbursement
- Identify the expenses allowed for prepayment
- Understand the reimbursement process
- Identify the expenses which require receipts and what information each receipt should contain
- Understand the process for requesting and reconciling a cash advance
- Locate additional resources and information regarding travel policy and the reimbursement process



General Information

- The travel regulations can be found on the State Accounting Office webpage
- Statewide Travel Regulations are issued by the State Accounting Office
- BOR allows institutions to implement additional policies which can be more restrictive. Institutional Guidelines and Procedures are on the Travel webpage.



Authorization for Travel

- Official Travel Authorization Form is required prior to travel for the following:
 - Prepaid airfare through West Georgia Travel
 - Prepaid lodging
 - Student group, team travel and study abroad
 - Job candidate travel
 - Direct bill local hotel lodging reservations (for non-employees)
 - Fiscal year end travel encumbrance process



Meal Reimbursement

General Information

- Employees will be paid a daily per diem amount designed to cover the cost of meals (including tax and tips)
- Not eligible for reimbursement of meals if one is provided by the hotel, meeting, conference or any other source. Includes continental breakfast and receptions



Meal Reimbursement

General Information

- Copy of official conference/meeting agenda is required to be submitted with expense report
- Summary page – “Schedule at a Glance” or “Program Summary”
- If reimbursement is requested for a conference meal that was provided or one that was considered not to be “substantial”, the employee must include a justification in the comments section of the electronic expense report
- If a separate written justification is provided, it must have the signatures of the traveler and the departmental approver



Meal Reimbursement

In-State Overnight Travel

- Employees are eligible for total per diem rate on the first and last day of travel
- Must reduce the per diem reimbursement amount for any meal that was provided
 - Example: If the per diem allows a \$28 total reimbursement and lunch was provided, the total allowable reimbursement for the day would be \$21 ($\$28 - \$7 \text{ lunch} = \21)



Meal Reimbursement In-State Overnight Travel

- The per diem amount is based on:
 - Departure Day: Where you spend the night
 - Return Day: Where you spend the night before returning to home base



Meal Reimbursement

In-State Travel

- Per Diem rate is \$28 or \$36 (high-cost) per day and does not include incidental expenses
- Incidental expenses (tips to porters, baggage carriers, etc.) are not included in the per diem rate and may be reimbursed separately
- High Cost Counties: Chatham, Cobb, Dekalb, Fulton, Glynn & Richmond



Per Diem Rates In-State (Normal)

Eligible Meals	Per Diem Amount
Breakfast	\$6.00
Lunch	\$7.00
Dinner	\$15.00



Per Diem Rates In-State (High Cost)*

Eligible Meals	Per Diem Amount
Breakfast	\$7.00
Lunch	\$9.00
Dinner	\$20.00

*Restricted to the following counties –
Chatham, Cobb, Dekalb, Fulton, Glynn and
Richmond



Meal Reimbursement

Out-of-State Overnight Travel

- Day of Departure/Return
 - Employees are eligible for 75% of the total per diem rate on the first and last day of travel
 - The per diem amount is based on:
 - Departure Day: Where you spend the night
 - Return Day: Where you spend the night before returning to home base



Meal Reimbursement

Out-of-State Overnight Travel

- If a meal is provided on departure or return day, the amount reimbursed is reduced by the full meal per diem rate **AFTER** the 75% proration
 - Example: If the per diem allows a \$56 total reimbursement and dinner was provided at no cost on a travel departure or return day, the total allowable reimbursement for the day would be \$16
 $(\$56 * .75 = \$42 \text{ less } \$26 \text{ dinner}) = \16



Meal Reimbursement

Out-of-State Travel

- Per diem rates follow the appropriate GSA per diem rates. These rates can be found on the Travel Services webpage
- Incidental expenses (tips to porters, baggage carriers, etc.) are not included into per diem rate and may be reimbursed separately
- Expense type “Emp Incidentals” should be used for incidental expenses.
- Must include a description of the incidental expense



Meal Reimbursement

Out-of-State

- If neither the city nor the county is listed for a particular state, the per diem rate is the standard federal per diem rate of \$50 for meals (\$55 - \$5 incidental rate)



Meal Breakdown

Out-of-State

M&IE	\$55	\$56	\$61	\$66	\$71	\$76
Breakfast	\$13	\$13	\$14	\$16	\$17	\$18
Lunch	\$14	\$15	\$16	\$17	\$18	\$19
Dinner	\$23	\$23	\$26	\$28	\$31	\$34
Total Meals	\$50	\$51	\$56	\$61	\$66	\$71
Incidentals	\$5	\$5	\$5	\$5	\$5	\$5



Meal Reimbursement

Single Day Trip

- No meal reimbursement is allowed for single day trips where the travel does not require an overnight stay



Meal Reimbursement

Foreign Travel

- Per diem rates for foreign travel and the breakdown of those per diem rates can be found on the Travel Services webpage
 - Federal Per Diem Rates
 - Breakdown of Per Diem Amounts by Meal



Lodging Expenses

- Reimbursement for lodging expenses is allowed when the travelers destination is located more than 50 miles from **both** their headquarters and residence
- Separate, written pre-approval from Dean/VP must be obtained when lodging is required within a 50 miles radius.
- Submit justification with expense report.
- Employees should ensure that the most reasonable lodging rates are obtained



Lodging Expenses

- Obtain a “zero-balance” receipt with an itemized breakdown of costs such as room charge, parking, internet, etc
- These itemized expenses (i.e. room, parking, internet, etc.) should be listed separately on the travel expense report



Lodging Expenses

- Lodging must be obtained from a hotel or motel
- NO reimbursements or direct payments are allowed to:
 - Management companies (i.e. Airbnb, VRBO, HomeAway, etc.)
 - Individuals



Taxes Associated with Lodging

- State and local government officials and employees traveling within the state on official business are exempt from paying the county or municipal excise tax on lodging (“hotel/motel” or “occupancy” tax)
- Employees are required to submit a copy of the hotel/motel tax-exemption form when they register at a hotel/motel
- Employees are required to pay any state/local sales and use taxes
- This does not apply to employees staying at an out-of-state hotel/motel



Taxes Associated with Lodging

- Effective July 1, 2015 a \$5 per night “State Hotel-Motel Fee” was implemented. This fee is **not** exempt for State employees
- “Resort” and other fees are sometimes charged by a hotel. These are not tax exempt fees and will be reimbursed



Taxes Associated with Lodging

- If the hotel refuses to exempt the tax, the employee should pay the tax. The tax should be noted on the travel expense statement and will be reimbursed
- Traveler should include a statement within the description section of the lodging expense line indicating that the hotel refused to exempt the tax.



Pre-Payment of Lodging Expenses

- Lodging facility must provide a “pro-forma” invoice
- Department must verify lodging facility is a valid vendor in PeopleSoft. If not, request Vendor Profile and W9
- Submit Check Request
 - Mark as “Special Handling” – check must be picked up by traveler from Cashier’s Office in Aycok Hall
 - Include pro-forma lodging invoice
 - Include approved travel authorization
- Traveler must present a Ga Sales & Use Tax Exemption Certificate and Hotel/Motel Tax Exemption Certificate to in-state lodging facilities
- Pre-Payment request must be greater than \$200
- Traveler is responsible for obtaining reimbursement (check made payable to UWG) from lodging facility should an overpayment occur



Transportation

General Information

- The most cost-effective method of transportation as determined by the employee and supervisor which will accomplish the purpose of the travel should be selected. There are many factors that play a role in determining the best value to the state



Transportation

General Information

- Employees should use a motor pool fleet vehicle if one is available
- If a motor pool fleet vehicle is available, but another form of transportation is to be utilized, the employee's supervisor must provide a business justification in writing in advance of the travel
- If motor pool fleet vehicle is **not** available, traveler may choose the most cost advantageous method of either:
 - Rental vehicle under the applicable mandated state contract – OR –
 - A personal vehicle to receive mileage reimbursement



Transportation

General Information

- Departments should maintain justification for the chosen mode of employee travel as audit support
- Traveler may be asked to present this justification to Travel Services for review
- The Cost Effective Transportation Form is an optional tool to assist the traveler in determining the most cost advantageous form of travel. The form is not required



Mileage Reimbursement

- If a personal motor vehicle is calculated to be the most cost advantageous form of travel, reimbursement will be made at the **Tier 1** rate in effect for the travel date
- If another method of travel is the most cost advantageous form of travel but a personal motor vehicle is used, the employee will be reimbursed at the **Tier 2** rate



Personal Car Mileage Reimbursement Exception

- A University wide cost comparison is calculated on a semi-annual basis which allows reimbursement at the Tier 1 rate under certain circumstances
 - Under 250 miles – traveler may utilize personal car and claim Tier 1 mileage reimbursement without any individual cost comparison
 - 250-300 miles – traveler may utilize a personal car and claim Tier 1 mileage assuming a motor pool vehicle is not available. Documentation of this determination should be maintained by the department for audit purposes



Mileage Reimbursement

- If round trip miles are entered on one expense line, documentation must be submitted as to the places visited during the trip
- Personal/commuting miles should be entered in the appropriate field to be excluded from the mileage reimbursement



Determination of Miles Traveled

- Employees may be reimbursed for the mileage incurred from the point of departure to the travel destination. If an employee departs from their residence, mileage is calculated from the residence to the destination point, with a reduction for normal one-way commuting miles. If an employee returns to their residence, mileage is calculated based on the distance to the residence, with a reduction for normal one-way commuting miles



Exceptions

- If travel occurs on a weekend or holiday, mileage is calculated from the point of departure with no reduction for normal commuting miles
- If an employee does not regularly travel to an office/headquarters, the requirement to deduct normal commuting miles does not apply. Must indicate that employee has “no campus office” in the comments field
- If travel occurs on a day that is not considered a normal work day for the employee. “The requirement to deduct normal commuting miles does not apply”
- This exception does not apply to those working under the State’s telework policy. Therefore, if an employee works under the State’s telework policy and travels on a day covered by that policy, then the employee would be required to deduct normal commuting miles



Motor Pool Fleet Vehicles

- Motor pool fleet vehicles should be given priority when determining the method of transportation
- Vehicles can be reserved through Campus Planning & Facilities on the Motor Pool website. Click on “Fleet Vehicle Reservations”
- Traveler must participate in fuel card training prior to traveling in a motor pool fleet vehicle
- Upon completion of trip, cost will be calculated and charged to requesting department
- Personal use of a motor pool fleet vehicle is prohibited
- Friends and family members are not allowed to ride in the vehicle. (Passengers being transported in a motor pool fleet vehicle must have an official business relationship)



In-State Motor Vehicle Rental

- Employees should utilize the statewide contract with Enterprise or Hertz Car Rental
 - Enterprise Reservation Code: #03WESTG
 - Hertz Reservation Code: CDP#2018752
- Renting outside the state contract requires prior approval from DOAS
- Form #SPD-NI005 should be used to request this waiver
- Approved car rental sizes are: compact, intermediate and full size. Other sizes require written business justification approved by the Department Manager
- Vans may be rented for more than 4 passengers
- Personal use of a State rented vehicle is prohibited
- Friends and family members are not allowed to ride in the vehicle. (Passengers being transported in a rental car under State contract must have an official business relationship)



Out-of-State Motor Vehicle Rental

- Employees should utilize the statewide contract with Hertz Corporation
 - Hertz Reservation Code: CDP#2018752
- Renting outside the state contract requires prior approval from DOAS
- Form #SPD-NI005 should be used to request this waiver
- Approved car rental sizes are: compact, intermediate and full size.
Other sizes require written business justification approved by the Department Manager
- Vans may be rented for more than 4 passengers
- Personal use of a State rented vehicle is prohibited
- Friends and family members are not allowed to ride in the vehicle.
(Passengers being transported in a rental car under State contract must have an official business relationship)



Qualified Driver List

- Employees must be a qualified driver in order to qualify for
 - Vehicle related reimbursements (mileage, parking, rental vehicle)
 - Driving a golf cart
 - Driving a motor pool/fleet vehicle
- Must participate in annual vehicle safety training and declare as a routine or occasional driver
- Qualified driver list is found on the Training website on the Mandatory Employee Compliance Training page



Air Travel

- Commercial air transportation should be utilized when it is more effective and efficient to travel by air than by vehicle.
- Employees who travel by air should obtain the lowest available coach airfare to the specified destination
- Travelers should use nonrefundable fares when feasible
- Since penalties/change fees may only be paid/reimbursed when the change is required by the Institution, it is recommended that airfare reservations not be made too far in advance
- When selecting air transportation, traveler should consider the following:
 - Lower cost flights that are within two hours before or after preferred flight time
- Upgrade fees for reserved or priority seating are not reimbursable
 - Exception is if upgraded seating is the only economy seating on required flight; justification must be included with expense report submission



Prepaid Airfare

- University has contract with West Georgia Travel for employees to obtain airfare and have it billed directly to the University
- Submit completed and approved travel authorization to West Georgia Travel
- West Georgia Travel will book flight and issue invoice to University
- University will make payment on behalf of employee
- Expense will be charged to department at time of payment; no other action is required by traveler



Parking Fees, Tolls, Mass Transit, Taxis & Shuttles

- Should be recorded on the travel expense statement as Commercial Transportation
- Receipt is not required for expenses **less than** \$25



Miscellaneous Travel Expenses

- Telephone/fax expenses incurred for work related telephone and fax charges
- Internet usage charges for work related charges
- Stationery/supplies/postage for a work related project
- Baggage fees will be reimbursed for one (1) piece of checked baggage each way. If traveler is not charged for first piece of checked baggage, the State will not allow reimbursement for additional pieces
- Excess weight charges will not be reimbursed



Miscellaneous Travel Expenses

- Registration Fees for participation in workshops, seminars or conferences
- Visa/Passport Fees may be reimbursed when the employer necessitates the use of a passport/visa and the employee does not currently possess such a document



Unallowable Expenses

- Laundry (except when travel exceeds 7 consecutive days or for team uniforms)
- Valet services for parking when self-parking is available. (must provide explanation)
- Theater
- Entertainment
- Alcoholic beverages
- Visa/passport fees (except as noted on previous slide)
- Bank charges for ATM withdrawals (except for international travel)
- Refer to SAO travel policy for a complete list



International Travel

- With proper documentation, justification and approval, the following may be reimbursed:
 - Commission for currency conversion or traveler checks when deemed necessary
 - Bank charges for ATM withdrawals
 - Services of guides, interpreters, packers, or drivers when deemed necessary
 - Fees for the issuance of a passport, visa, vaccinations, inoculations, and affidavits when required for business international travel



International Travel

Meal Reimbursement

- Federal per diem rates applies to international travel
- International travelers are eligible for 75% of the total per diem rate on the first and last day of travel
- The daily incidental rate may be claimed to cover any incidental expenses incurred while traveling internationally.
- Incidental expenses include: tips to porters, baggage carriers, bellhops, hotel housekeeping, hotel staff, transportation to restaurants, etc.
- Incidental expenses do not include ground transportation



Air Travel - International

- Business class is reimbursable for international travel and travel to Alaska and Hawaii
- Prior written approval from Department Manager is required for this additional expense
- Federal regulations require that U.S. Carriers be used for foreign travel for trips funded by state and federally sponsored programs, unless a U.S. carrier is not available for the designated travel



Currency Conversion

- The following methods are acceptable for currency conversion:
 - Credit card statement: If the expense is charged, the credit card company will convert them to USD
 - Conversion charges via the internet. An acceptable site is Oanda Converter
 - Currency rate conversion based on actual cash exchange



Reimbursement Procedures

- Must submit reimbursement request using the Travel and Expense module of PeopleSoft Financials
- The electronic expense report should be entered and will automatically be routed through the proper approval process
- All receipts, conference agenda and supporting documentation should be attached to the electronic expense report
- Upon receipt of the approved electronic copy, Travel Services will validate the submitted expenses and process the reimbursement



Reimbursement Procedures

- Generally, all reimbursements will be direct deposited (via EFT) into the bank account setup through Human Resources
- Employees are responsible for timely and accurate accounting of their travel expense
- Travelers will only be reimbursed for their own expenses and not for expense incurred on behalf of another (exception is for group travel, team or Studies Abroad)



Reimbursement Procedures

- Expense reports should be submitted within 10 days of travel but no later than 45 days after completion of the trip or event
- Expense reports submitted between 45-60 days will require completion of the 45 Day Exception Form
- Expenses submitted in excess of 60 calendar days, if reimbursed, will require the completion of the 45 Day Exception Form and will be included on the traveler's W-2 form as taxable income



Required Receipts

- Receipts required for the following expenses regardless of amount:
 - Airfare
 - Lodging, zero balance receipt with an itemized breakdown of costs such as room charge, parking, internet, etc.
 - Rail Fares
 - Registration Fees
 - Rental of motor vehicles
 - Supplies
 - Visa/Passport Fees
- Receipts required for the following expenses if \$25 or more:
 - Baggage Fees
 - Commercial Transportation
 - Gasoline purchased for rental vehicles
 - Parking



Required Receipts

- Travel Services website contains specific details regarding the minimal receipt requirements for lodging, airfare, and car rental
- Credit card slips or statements may not be accepted as proof of payment if they do not provide the needed level of detail
- Receipts should contain:
 - Name and address of the vendor
 - Date of service
 - Description of service
 - Amount paid for each individual item.



Missing Receipts

- Missing Receipt Form may be used to document lost/missing receipts for expenses equal to or greater than \$25
- The form must be approved by the department manager and attached to the travel expense statement



Cash Advances

- Minimum amount of cash advance is \$200
- Traveler can only receive a cash advance if traveler's current annual salary is \$50,000 or less
- Exception is team or group travel, a traveler with a salary of more than \$50,000 can obtain a cash advance for only the team/group portion of the expenses
- For specific University guidelines and procedures, please visit the Cash Advance guideline found on the Travel Services webpage



Cash Advances

- Traveler must reconcile outstanding advance before a new one will be issued (exception is when another trip begins within 5 working days of previous trip)
- If trip is cancelled, cash advance must be returned within 2 business days
- Cash advances are available for travel to an employee, regardless of salary level, for international travel
- May receive funds for anticipated meals, lodging and transportation costs



Cash Advances

- Submit request using the Travel Advance Authorization Form. Include travel authorization, itinerary and roster (list of team/group). Must be received at least 7 business days prior to the first day of travel
- An itinerary is a detailed record of your anticipated travel including dates and time of travel
- Supporting documentation for expenses included as part of cash advance must be current quotes



Cash Advances

- Travel Advance Authorization will be reviewed and approved by the Travel Services department
- Actual cash advance will be entered into PeopleSoft Expenses by Travel Services and routed for electronic approval
- Cash Advance will be issued via EFT or check depending upon payment method established within the PeopleSoft system
- Efforts will be made to not issue cash advance payments earlier than 7 business days prior to date of departure



Cash Advance Reconciliation

- Employee must reconcile (submit receipts) or return unused travel advance funds within 10 business days from the final date of travel
- Payroll deduction is an alternative should the advance not be reconciled in a timely manner
- Reconciliation of cash advance will be initiated by applying the cash advance to the expense report submitted by the traveler. Employee must provide all necessary receipts to substantiate stated expenses



Important Reminders

- Any exceptions to these policies should be noted in the description field or notes section of the expense report. If written explanation is submitted by the traveler, the appropriate Department Manager must approve prior to submission to Travel Services
- Retain the cost effective transportation documentation in the traveler's department



Important Reminders

- Do not list registration or airfare that UWG has paid on traveler's behalf as "prepaid" on the expense statement
- Have the hotel/motel/occupancy tax excluded or provide explanation
- Enter separate expense type/line for any parking, internet, phone or other charges appearing on lodging invoice. Do not include these as part of lodging expense



Important Reminders

- Electronically attach and submit all receipts, conference agenda and any other supporting documentation to the expense report.
- Electronically submit the expense report for approval after data entry
- Submit expense reports within 10 days of trip but no more than 45 calendar days from the last travel date



Important Reminders

- Submit receipts that indicate payment was made
- Submit the team/group roster and detailed itinerary with all cash advance requests
- Be sure funds are available in your budget before submitting the expense report



Important Reminders

- For auditing purposes, travelers and departments are encouraged to maintain travel expense documents (receipts, expense reports, etc.) in their original form for 2 years
 - Paper receipt = maintain paper copy
 - Electronic receipt = maintain electronic copy
 - Expense report = maintain electronic PDF of expense report



Additional Information

- Visit the Travel website for information or to find necessary forms
- Website also includes information about institutional specific guidelines



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