

Policy Title: **INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL**

This policy provides guidelines for employees traveling internationally on College business and seeking reimbursement for business expenses. International travel is defined as travel outside of the United States and U.S. territories and possessions. 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 and Expense Reimbursement](#) 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 detailed, itemized 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 & Safety**

Safety is a high priority for the College. Travel arrangements should only be made after the completion of the following three steps:

1. Approval from an Executive Team member.
2. Submission of the External Professional Growth Form- International Travel
3. Review of the International Travel Checklist, with consultation with Human Resources

Both the International Travel Checklist and the External Professional Growth Form – International Travel can be found in the Staff Development Center under [External Professional Growth](#) in the International Travel section.

If international travel is grant funded, verify the applicable grant guidelines before planning the trip. Many granting agencies require specific processing and/or prior approval before international travel is allowed.

**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 60 days after the trip occurred or funding source closes,

whichever is sooner. The College reserves the right to deny reimbursement for delinquent requests.

### **Receipts**

Detailed, itemized 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 accounts. 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 utilizing your department's purchasing card (P-Card), the College's purchasing card (contact Accounts Payable), or by paying for the registration fee personally and requesting reimbursement upon completion of the event.

#### **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**

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

*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**

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. Note that some countries may require an international driver's license.

#### *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.

#### *Insurance*

Employees should purchase the rental agency's additional insurance for international rentals. Cost for these expenses will be reimbursed.

#### *Gasoline*

The direct cost of gasoline will be reimbursed. Employees must fill the car with gasoline prior to returning it to the rental agency (the refueling option should not be elected)

## **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.

## **C. Lodging**

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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 U.S. Department of State. 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 countries during the same day of travel, the meal allowance for that day will be based upon the city where the employee spends the night or if the flight is more than one day where the longest layover is.

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 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.

## **F. Tipping**

Tipping should be reasonable; no more than 25% will be reimbursed.

## **G. Other Costs**

### **1. Passports**

Costs associated with obtaining a passport are not reimbursable.

### **2. Immunizations**

Required and recommended immunizations can be found by visiting [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov). These immunizations are reimbursable.

### **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.

### **Currency Exchange**

Expense reports for foreign travel must be submitted in U.S. dollars using the exchange rate in effect during the dates of travel. Currency exchange rates can be found at several web sites. If purchases were made via credit card, use the exchange rate provided by the credit card company. Credit card transaction fees associated with currency conversion will be reimbursed with appropriate documentation.

### **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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