



Project Management & Construction Services

Standard Operating Procedures

Policy and Procedures Manual Travel SOP

Purpose

- Clearly define different travel processes from inception to completion and reimbursement of travel expenses to include: commercial air, rental vehicle, personal vehicle mileage, mass transit, and meals and lodging.

Travel Procedures

TRAINING OR REQUEST FOR TRAVEL AUTHORIZATION

- Obtain approved training/travel request and turn in to Sr. Admin. Assoc. for processing. Training and Travel Request forms are located in the References section of this SOP.

RTA

- Sr. Admin. will solicit an updated Travel Request from employees on August 1 for the upcoming fiscal year. Fiscal year time frame is September 1 of the current year to August 31 of the following year. Link: \\Flint\project_delivery\AE_Standards\A&E\Front Office\Travel Request.
- Sr. Admin. will need the following information in order to create a **VE5(RTA)**:
 - City or cities you will be traveling to for site visits/meetings
- The RTA provides the authorization to charge the specified account for centrally billed travel expenses, if applicable. Additional approvals or preparations may also be required.
- Prior approval for all business travel is required for absences of employees from the campus or other designated headquarters for periods of half a day or more during the normal working period, whether or not there is a cost to The University. An electronic Request for Travel Authorization (RTA) should be completed.
- An RTA includes:
 - Employee's name
 - Employee type (E for employee, P for prospective employee, N for non-employee, S for student)



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- Dates of travel
- Destination
- Purpose of travel
- Benefit of travel
- Disposition of employee's job duties
- Account to be charged for travel expenses, if applicable
- Appropriate arrangements for disposition of the staff member's normal duties must be made in advance of the travel.

CASH ADVANCES

- Cash advances may be available under special circumstances. Please see the Facilities Services / PMCS employee manual or speak with your department's travel coordinator for more information.

REGISTRATION FEES

- Conference/training registration fee is paid directly by our accounting department.

MEALS AND LODGING

Meals and lodging expenses are reimbursable to an employee with an overnight stay.

Meals:

- Meal values as determined by PMCS are: Breakfast - \$8.00, Lunch - \$12.00 and Dinner - \$21.00 for a total of \$41.00 meal allowance per day. If it is necessary to exceed \$41 per day for meals, itemized meal receipt(s) (a credit card receipt alone will not suffice) and a written explanation will be required to determine whether or not the excess meal expense will be approved for reimbursement.

Hotel Reservations:

- Currently, employees are to make their own hotel reservation unless the hotel is part of the conference package, in which case, it's paid by the University and guaranteed in advance.
- Whether travelers are staying at the conference hotel or not, conference reservations need to be made as soon as possible and the employee needs to request a confirmation email and provide a copy to the Sr. Admin.
- If two or more employees share lodging, the expense should be divided equally between the employees.
- **Overnight Travel in Texas** - Local accounts are limited to a combination of meal and lodging expenses not to exceed \$220 per day. If it is necessary to exceed \$41 per day for meals, itemized meal receipt(s) (a credit card receipt alone will not suffice) and a written

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explanation will be required to determine whether or not the excess meal expense will be approved for reimbursement.

- **Overnight Travel Outside Texas but in Continental U.S.** - Local accounts are limited to a combination of meal and lodging expenses not to exceed \$325 per day. If it is necessary to exceed \$41 per day for meals, itemized meal receipt(s) (a credit card receipt alone will not suffice) and a written explanation will be required to determine whether or not the excess meal expense will be approved for reimbursement.

TRANSPORTATION

Reimbursements for transportation expenses include commercial air, rental vehicle, mass transit and personal car mileage.

Airfare:

- Provide the Sr. Admin. with the date and time of day you would like to travel, airline preference, seat preference, frequent flyer number and the Sr. Admin. will obtain information on available flights and costs and forward flight information to the employee for review. Once employee approves the flights the reservation will be made and confirmed with Carlson Wagonlit. **All flights booked by the department are non-refundable. Any changes requested by the employee after the reservation confirmation has been made will be at the employee's expense.**
- Carlson will email the final flight itinerary, two copies will be printed one will be placed in the travel folder and one in the employee file folder.
- Reimbursement of Checked Baggage Fees: Some airlines have added fees for checked baggage. The State Comptroller's Office has now issued a statement about the reimbursement of those fees.

If an airline has a mandatory first bag fee for checked baggage, the expense is considered reimbursable as long as the bag meets airline weight requirements. Fees related to second bags are reimbursable only if the state agency or UT department verifies that the second bag is needed for business purposes and the bag meets weight requirements. If a second bag is used, documentation explaining why the baggage is necessary is required as part of travel approval.

For baggage fee reimbursements on both state and local accounts, the reimbursement voucher must contain a receipt for the baggage charge along with an explanation identifying the business purpose of any additional bags. Any reimbursement for overweight baggage must be accompanied by the additional explanation of the business purpose that required any weight overage.

Rental Car:



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- Sr. Admin. will secure rental car reservation for the employee through the UT travel agency, Carlson Wagonlit or AVIS rental online.
- Rental car(s) will be shared when groups from PMCS and FS are traveling to the same destination.
- The employee should never accept “specials” offered to them by an AVIS counter agent. Any “special” offered by an AVIS counter agent will not include insurance and if you were to be responsible for an accident, UT would be liable. Our contract with AVIS is set at a certain price that includes insurance and is direct billed to UT. A UT employee will never need to put an Avis car rental on their personal credit card.
- The employee will be reimbursed for parking expenses for a rental car while attending conferences, receipt requested.

Other Means of Transportation:

- If the employee uses other forms of transportation they will be reimbursed. Other forms of transportation may consist of: taxi, subway, commuter train, city bus and airport shuttle.

Personal Vehicle:

- If the employee used their own personal vehicle they will be reimbursed the mileage from their Austin work site or to the conference site city and back. The reimbursement expenses for use of an employee’s personal vehicle must be equivalent to or less than round trip airfare, rental car and rental car fuel.

Airport and Conference Parking Fees:

- The employee will be reimbursed airport parking fees for their personal vehicle while attending a conference out of town, receipt requested. Employee will also be reimbursed parking fees for conferences out of town or in Austin using their personal vehicle, receipt requested.

TRAVEL TO PROJECT SITES

Single Site Multi-Trip Travel:

- A certain number of Project Managers make numerous site visits per year to the same project locations. The most common locations are Marine Science Center (MSI) in Port Aransas, McDonald Observatory (MCD) in Ft. Davis, Sam Rayburn Library (SRL) in Bonham, and Winedale Historical Center in Winedale (several building codes involved).
- The employee is required to submit the following information to the Sr. Admin. after they have taken a trip.
 - Date(s) of Travel
 - Site Location



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- Purpose of Trip
- CP Number
- Itemized Receipts (if applicable)
- Itemized receipts may consist of gas receipts if they used a rental car, if they stay overnight they will have an itemized hotel bill and meal receipts but only if they exceed the \$41.00 dollars allowed per day. If it is necessary to exceed \$41 per day for meals, an itemized meal receipt(s) (a credit card receipt alone will not suffice) and a written explanation will be required to determine whether or not the excess meal expense will be approved for reimbursement. If the employee used their own personal vehicle they will be reimbursed the mileage from their home address to the site city address and return mileage.

Single Site Multi-Trip Travel within Austin:

- **Employees are encouraged to use University/PMCS/FS vehicle(s) as a primary resource and only use their personal vehicle if no other University vehicle is available.** (Note: University driven vehicles requires acceptable UT Driver Status)
- Mileage reimbursement within Austin requires a new pre-approved VE5 in August for the upcoming fiscal year. The most common locations are UT Main Campus, Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center (JWC), Lake Austin Center (LAC), Pisano Ranch (PRH) and J. J. Pickle Research Center (PRC).
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- Sr. Admin. will need the following information in order to create a **VE5(RTA)**:
 - City – Austin for multi-trip site visits/meetings
 - CP #(s) of site(s) you will be visiting within Austin
- The employee will be responsible for keeping a daily mileage log and this log will be used to fill out the “Mileage Reimbursement Form” for reimbursement purposes. At the end of each month the employee will complete the form, sign the form, have their supervisor sign the form and turn it into the Sr. Admin. Assoc. for processing. Website where the form(s) can be located: Link:
- \\Flint\project_delivery\AE_Standards\A&E\Front Office\Mileage Log
- \\Flint\project_delivery\AE_Standards\A&E\Front Office\Mileage Reimbursement Log
- Reimbursement Form.



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- Sr. Admin will print **VP5**, attach to the “Mileage Reimbursement Form” and place it in the employee’s mail box for signature. The employee will sign and date the document and return the paperwork to the Sr. Admin. for further processing. The travel reimbursement documents will be delivered to accounting for processing by the Sr. Admin. Processing usually takes anywhere from five to ten days. A copy of the signed paperwork will be placed in the employee’s mailbox for their file.

REFERENCES

- Rules and regulations covering travel reimbursement come from several sources. The University of Texas is governed by the State of Texas *Travel Regulations Act*, the *General Appropriations Act*, *Rules and Regulations* of the University of Texas System Board of Regents, and official interpretations of the *Travel Act* as made by the State Comptroller of Public Accounts. Rules for local accounts differ from state accounts.

University of Texas Travel Reimbursement Policy:

http://www.utexas.edu/business/accounting/hbp/11_trav/trav5-1.html

Training Request:

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Travel Request:

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Mileage Log:

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Mileage Reimbursement Log:

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UT Austin Travel Management Services:

<http://www.utexas.edu/travel/about.php>