

TRAVELING ON UNIVERSITY BUSINESS

Introduction

This job aid is designed to provide an overview of policies related to traveling on University business. Travelers are expected to know the full travel policy, found at travel.umn.edu.

Travelers are responsible for ensuring that travel expenses are:

- *for valid University business-related purposes,
- *in accordance with policies and procedures,
- *a prudent use of public and University funds.

Travelers are also expected to choose the least costly method of transportation that meets the traveler's scheduling and business needs.

Air Transportation

Travelers should purchase economy-class tickets. When the total flight time from departure to arrival is 8 hours or more, travelers may (with pre-approval from their unit) upgrade to the next most economical class of travel (business class in most cases; first class in cases where business class is not available.)

Combining Business and Personal Travel

When combining business and personal travel, expenses must be clearly documented.

Reimbursement for airfare may not exceed the lowest available cost of travel for the business portion only. Documentation (such as screen prints of online fares) should be obtained at the time of booking the airfare.

Fly America Act and Open Skies

There are federal laws and guidelines that dictate what airlines must be used when federally-sponsored funds are used for air transportation. Check with your grant administrator for the current laws.

Per Diem Meals

Travelers are reimbursed up to the M&IE per diem specific for that city and time of year of the travel according to the federal GSA website (for domestic cities) or the federal State Department website (for international cities). Meals included with a conference are not reimbursed. The first and last days of travel are reimbursed at 75% of the full day rate.

International Travel

While authorization for an employee to travel on University business remains at the local collegiate or departmental level, all employees on University business must register their international travel in advance of the trip by going to <http://global.umn.edu/travelregistry/>.

Reimbursable/Nonreimbursable Travel Expenses

- *Baggage fees are allowable for the first bag only. The approving authority may approve baggage fees for a second bag if the second bag is needed for business reasons, such as transporting papers for a conference.
- *Trip insurance may be allowed for business purposes as determined by the approving authority.
- *Spousal travel expenses are unallowable.
- *Ground transportation to/from the airport must be the least expensive method of transportation. Mileage to and from the airport cannot be more than the cost of a round-trip taxi.
- *Automobiles should be rented (instead of flying) only when absolutely necessary or when doing so reduces the overall transportation costs.
- *Personal vehicles may not be used unless the traveler has prior approval from their supervisor. When used for University business, personal vehicles are not covered by University insurance. Employees are responsible for ensuring that their personal vehicle is insured at the minimum levels required by University policy.

Lodging

Travelers may not exceed 150% of the lodging maximum rate for that city as referenced on the federal GSA website (for domestic cities) or the federal State Department website (for international cities).

The lodging rate does not apply to conference travel, if the traveler is paying a pre-negotiated rate that is offered by the conference. Proof of this (such as a website print-out) should be included in the reimbursement documentation.

PCard and Reimbursement

The pcard may be used for airfare, car rental, and conference registration. It may not be used for lodging and meals while traveling.

Employees should not be reimbursed for expenses that have been, will be or are expected to be paid for or reimbursed from another source.

Travelers should submit detailed itemized receipts for all expenses of \$25 or more (excluding per diem meals). The receipts should be submitted with the Employee Expense Worksheet within 30 calendar days of the trip return date.

Frequent Flier Miles

Any frequent flier miles earned while traveling on University business must be used for University business travel only. It is the responsibility of the traveler to track these miles. *State Statute.*

Policy Exceptions

Circumstances warranting an exception to policy arise occasionally. In such cases, every effort should be made to obtain pre-approval, and even approved exceptions may result in unallowability on some funding sources.