



Salem State University Business Travel Policy

Introduction

The university does not employ a travel agency for the purpose of arranging business travel for its employees when they are traveling as individuals. Employees are to make their own arrangements for business travel following the procedures outlined below. All group travel must be booked through the Durgin Travel agency, the university's authorized travel agent for this purpose.

Policy Statement

The Salem State University Business Travel Policy sets forth the procedures to be followed by university employees while traveling domestically or abroad on university business and the procedures governing reimbursement of all reasonable business expenses incurred by university employees while traveling on authorized university business.

All official travel should be prudently planned so that the best interests of the university are served at the most reasonable cost. Anyone traveling on university business is expected to exercise the same attention to economy that a practical person would exercise when traveling on personal business. Excessive or unjustifiable costs are not acceptable and will not be reimbursed. The individual requesting reimbursement from the university is responsible for insuring that his/her reimbursement request complies with all applicable procedures, is properly authorized, and is supported with necessary receipts and documentation.

All travel and entertainment expenses must, in addition to requirements and limits as the university may establish, meet the Internal Revenue Service accountable plan rules. Under the accountable plan rules, an employee may be reimbursed for certain travel expenses without incurring any tax liability provided the following three conditions are satisfied:

- advances and reimbursements must be for business expenses that are paid or incurred by the employee in connection with his or her service as an employee
- travelers must substantiate the amount, time, use and business purpose of each expense within a reasonable time after incurring the expense; and
- employees must return any advance amounts in excess of substantiated expenses within thirty days after completion of the trip.

The president and all other university officials are responsible for ensuring compliance with this travel policy in their respective areas.

Travelers and Travel Authorization

Travel involving university funds from any source, including but not limited to grants and contracts, requires prior authorization by the traveler's supervisor. All overnight or out-of-state travel must be approved by the appropriate area administrator on a Travel Authorization (TA). The traveler must provide his or her itinerary and other travel information (flights, hotel, phone contact numbers, etc.) as well as personal emergency contact information to his or her area administrator prior to departure. The traveler shall promptly notify his or her area administrator if travel plans change.

Travel in connection with a sponsored research or instructional project must always be authorized by the project director and area administrator on a Travel Authorization form (TA) and may require prior approval by the sponsor. The traveler shall be responsible for investigating and securing all required authorizations and approvals in connection with travel for a sponsored research or instructional project.

Travelers are encouraged to review Appendix A, Avoiding Online and Other Travel Charges, prior to confirming their travel plans.

Emergencies and Employee Injury

An employee shall, in any situation deemed by the employee to be an emergency, contact his or her supervisor or designee; if unable to reach the supervisor or designee, the employee shall contact Campus Police at 978.542.6111. For international travel, the employee can utilize the services of AIG International Services, our international insurance services provider, for emergency situations while on university business. If in the US or Canada, the contact information for AIG is 888.873.8394. To call collect from anywhere else, contact an AT&T international operator to place your call to Houston at 01.713.260.5539. Travelers should request an identification card from Purchasing prior to departure

If an employee is unable to return to campus because of a work-related injury sustained while traveling on university business, the employee must inform his or her supervisor and the Human Resources Office.

Reimbursement of Authorized Travel Expenses

Employees will be reimbursed for all reasonable business expenses incurred for authorized travel on university business up to limits established by the university. All requests for reimbursement of approved business expenses must be signed by the traveler and the traveler's supervisor.

The following travel expenses are reimbursable if deemed reasonable and necessary business expenses: ground transportation to and from the airport, train or bus station, plus parking and tolls; ground transportation at destination by cab, limousine, or rental car; fax, internet hookup, and business-related telephone calls; conference registration fee; meals (see meals section below); lodging at single occupancy rate; rental of conference or meeting rooms; copying charges; and trip cancellation insurance. When traveling by plane, coach accommodations must be used. Substantiation of the business purpose and reasonableness of all expenses is required. In addition, a detailed hotel folio (itemized receipt) is required for all lodging expenses. For all other expenses, original receipts are required for substantiation.

Meals, including tips, not covered by the conference fee will be reimbursed at actual cost up to the allowable maximum daily amount per specific union contract. This information is available on line at:

http://www.salemstate.edu/assets/documents/purchasing/Meal_Allowancesf.pdf

Non-reimbursable expenses include, but are not limited to, alcoholic beverages; meals and lodging for family and friends with the employee; and the cost of personal items. The value of meals included in a conference registration fee will be deducted from the daily meal allowance to determine the maximum amount that will be reimbursed for meals not covered by the registration fee.

Entertainment expenses, including meals and refreshments for guests or business contacts, are non-reimbursable unless deemed both necessary for the attainment of the purposes of the trip and reasonable. Most sponsors forbid charging entertainment costs to their projects under any circumstances.

Salem State University provides authorized employees with a ProCard at university expense that can be used for certain business travel and entertainment expenditures. A ProCard will be issued after a completed Acceptance Statement is signed by the employee and countersigned by the dean, director, or department head responsible for the individual's area and the appropriate university officers. The card may be used for certain reasonable business expenses incurred while traveling on university business as described above.

Travel Advances

The university does not provide advances for individual travel. With the exception of those travel-related expenses that can be charged to the ProCard, travelers should pay all costs of the trip and seek reimbursement after the travel has been completed.

Room Accommodations

Reservations for room accommodations should be made by using the traveler's personal credit card. Lodging should be at the single occupancy rate. A detailed hotel folio (itemized receipt) is required for all lodging expenses. Please review the list of non-reimbursable items found at the end of this document.

Air Travel

Airline reservations are the traveler's responsibility and are to be made through the traveler's respective department. Reimbursement will be made at the lowest logical standard or discounted rate for the period of business travel. Reservations should be made a minimum of 14 days in advance of travel in order to get the lowest possible fare. In relation to air travel, the university will reimburse reasonable baggage fees with appropriate receipts. Trips that include additional personal stops are not authorized. Air travel booked using frequent flyer miles will not be reimbursed. When a trip is cancelled after a non-refundable ticket has been issued, the ticket can be applied to a trip in the future by that traveler on that airline minus a change or cancellation fee. The unused ticket value must be used toward a business trip for the university in the future. Responsibility for monitoring use of unused tickets and/or airline credits resides with the Department Head. Change fees are not reimbursable unless the trip was changed/cancelled for a business-related reason. Air fare may be charged to a university-issued ProCard or may be paid by the traveler and included as an expense on a travel reimbursement form.

Personal and Rental Vehicles

The use of an employee's personal car is permitted when authorized, and mileage will be reimbursed in accordance with the mileage reimbursement rate set by the university. Consult the Purchasing Office Web page for the current rate. Other reimbursable expenses related to the use of personal cars include tolls and parking fees, with appropriate receipts.

When driving a personal auto on university business, the driver must have automobile liability insurance. The university does not provide comprehensive or collision insurance for an employee who drives his/her personal vehicle on university business. The employee is responsible for primary auto liability insurance and for comprehensive and collision insurance with deductibles and limits as determined by the employee.

Vehicle rentals for local, domestic, and international use should be obtained through the university's preferred contract vendor, Enterprise Car Rental, where available. Rental vehicles may be used if authorized on the approved Travel Authorization (TA) for the trip. Vehicle rentals are not allowed when the sole purpose is for transportation to and from the destination airport or when shuttle or taxi services are available.

University travelers are expected to rent compact or midsize class vehicles unless sharing the rental with more than two other university business travelers. Rental of sport utility vehicles, minivans, or other kinds of specialty vehicles is prohibited. Exceptions require justification and prior authorization from the traveler's supervisor. Rental of luxury vehicles is not permitted. University travelers are highly encouraged to rent hybrid and fuel efficient vehicles when available and rental costs are similar to those of conventional vehicles.

Rentals for business travel must be made through our contract vendor where available. Legitimate car rental costs include daily rental fees, local and state taxes, concession fees, mileage fees, and drop off fees if returning the rental vehicle to a destination other than the pickup location. Other reimbursable expenses related to rental car travel include gasoline, tolls, and parking fees, with appropriate receipts. Navigation systems are reimbursable only if traveling in remote locations and if a business justification is provided and approved. Payment for rental vehicles and associated gasoline purchases should be made using the traveler's personal

credit card. Itemized car rental/gasoline receipts should be included on the travel reimbursement form. The university will not pay for any rental day on which the vehicle is used for personal purposes.

When renting a passenger vehicle or van on university business, the university and its employees are not covered under the university's business automobile insurance policy for physical damage to the vehicle or van.

The employee must purchase the Collision Damage Waiver (CDW) or Loss Damage Waiver (LDW) from the car rental company unless renting from Enterprise. If renting from Enterprise, CDW is included, and you will have coverage no matter where you rent a car under the State of Massachusetts contract, but *you must use the right account numbers at the time of rental*. The university's normal Enterprise account number, **STMA147**, should be used for any rentals originating in Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Maine and Rhode Island. For any other nationwide location, the account number to be used is **NASTMA**. The same rates and rules apply. The charge for the CDW purchased from rental companies other than Enterprise is eligible for reimbursement. If an employee's personal credit card provides CDW coverage, this card may be used instead of purchasing coverage.

Although the university maintains a business automobile insurance policy with coverage as set forth above, it is subject to certain limitations and requirements. The employee must report any accident immediately to the rental agency and the university's Human Resources / Equal Opportunity Office (978-542-7243). In addition, the employee must cooperate with the university's insurance carrier in the defense and resolution of any claim.

The university's insurance policy does not provide coverage for an employee's personal property should it be damaged in or stolen from a rented vehicle. The employee is responsible for his/her own personal property including any insurance coverage that he/she may want for it. The rental company's charge for coverage of personal effects and personal accident coverage is not reimbursable.

Insurance for third party bodily injury liability and property damage may be, but usually is not, provided by the rental car company. If provided, it is usually limited by the state's minimum liability limit. The university's business automobile insurance policy is excess of the rental car company's liability coverage.

The university prohibits employees, offices or departments from renting 15-passenger vans for any reason.

Travel by Train

Train travel is reimbursed at coach rate. A paid train receipt must be attached to the travel reimbursement form.

International Travel

The travel and travel reimbursement policies described above also apply to international travel. Additionally, reimbursement will be made for the cost of acquiring passports, visas, tourist cards, required photographs and birth certificates; the reasonable cost of required inoculation, immunization and health cards; the reasonable cost of conversion of funds to foreign currencies; and the reasonable cost of hiring guides, interpreters, drivers and similar services performed by non-US citizens outside the United States when deemed necessary to accomplish the university's business. Unless substantiated by actual currency conversion receipts, foreign funds expended will be reimbursed at the exchange rates published in the Wall Street Journal or available on the Wall Street Journal website at: http://online.wsj.com/mdc/public/page/2_3021-forex.html for the applicable dates on which expenditures were incurred. Note that international travel charged to federal grants and contracts requires the use of American flag carriers.

Travel on university business to countries declared by the State Department as not suited for travel is prohibited. Employees are urged to consult the State Department website for current information prior to making any travel arrangements.

In addition, travelers on university business have access to the international global assistance services provided by AIG International Services. If emergency medical and/or security assistance becomes necessary during the trip, AIG should be contacted. If in the US or Canada, the contact information for AIG is 888.873.8394. To call collect from anywhere else, contact an AT&T international operator to place your call to Houston at 01.713.260.5539.

Conference Registration

Registration fees for workshops, seminars, conventions or conferences are reimbursable when required for participation. Employees should obtain prior authorization on a Travel Authorization (TA) from their supervisor in order to attend the event and be reimbursed for the registration fee. Separate costs for banquets, receptions, etc., should be deducted from the daily meal allowance provided by the Commonwealth. All meal expenses exceeding the allowable maximum daily amount are considered personal and not reimbursable.

Optional activities such as sight-seeing and field trips are not reimbursable unless related to university business and approved in advance on a Travel Authorization (TA). Fees associated with personal business and side trips are not reimbursable.

The preferred method of payment for registration fees is the ProCard. If credit cards are not accepted, the expense should be directly paid by the traveler and reimbursed on a travel reimbursement form. A copy of the conference brochure or agenda must be attached to the ProCard reconciliation or travel reimbursement form. If paying by personal check, include a receipt from the conference and a copy of the brochure/agenda with your travel reimbursement form. If a receipt is not available you may use a copy of your cancelled check (front and back) or a copy of your credit card statement to document your expenditure for registration fees paid in advance. Conference registration paid using a personal credit card or check may be reimbursed in advance of travel with appropriate documentation.

Non-Reimbursable Items

All university travelers should familiarize themselves with items that are considered personal expenses and *not* reimbursable by the university.

The Financial Services Office has developed the following list, which is illustrative and not comprehensive, of the types of items that are not reimbursable. Should you have questions about an item, please contact the Financial Services Office for clarification. University travelers will not be reimbursed for the following miscellaneous expenses:

- Airline club membership dues
- Air phone usage
- Alcoholic beverages of any kind
- Annual fees for personal credit cards
- Auto repairs for rental or personal vehicles
- Baby-sitting or pet care services
- Barbers and hair salons, nail salons, spas, massage or similar services
- Personal cell phone monthly fees
- Clothing or toiletry items
- Personal credit card delinquency fees or finance charges
- Club memberships for business, pleasure or recreation
- Exercise room fees or health club fees
- Expenses related to vacations or personal days taken before, during or after a business trip

- Golf fees, ski lift tickets, spa charges, etc.
- Items confiscated by airport security
- Frequent flyer upgrades
- Laundry charges
- Loss or theft of airline/rail/bus tickets or any personal funds or property
- Medical expenses while traveling (if the result of injury while on university business, file a Worker's Compensation claim in the Human Resources Office)
- Mini-bar items
- In-room or in-flight movies or game rentals/on-demand orders
- "No-show" charges for hotels or any other reservations
- Optional travel or baggage insurance
- Parking tickets or traffic violations
- Personal entertainment, reading materials or telephone calls
- Rental car options such as LDW, CDW, PAI, liability, etc., within the US
- Rental car upgrades to full-size, premium and luxury classes
- Shoe shines
- Souvenirs/personal gifts or evening wear rentals
- Travel costs of an employee's spouse, partner or dependents
- Gifts and gift certificates are not reimbursable as travel expenses.

Exceptions

Exceptions to this Travel Policy are not desirable or anticipated but may nevertheless be necessary in unanticipated or very unusual circumstances. All exceptions must be reasonable, both as to arrangements and amounts, and must be approved by the President or the appropriate executive area administrator.

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