Travel Reimbursements

05.182

Authority: Vice Chancellor of Business Affairs


Source of Authority: Office of State Budget and Management

Related Links: Appendix A ‘Rate Table – Transportation, Lodging and Meals; UBusiness

Responsible Office: Controller’s Office/Disbursements

I. Purpose

Explains policy and procedures for the reimbursement of travel costs.

II. Scope

Applies to all university departments or activities.

III. Policy

A. General Policy Statement

1. The university reimburses travel expenses in accordance with the regulations of the State of North Carolina Office of State Budget and Management.
2. Reimbursement is limited to personal out-of-pocket costs and allowances incurred while on authorized university business by the individual making the claim.
3. Travel by non-state employees requires a Travel Pre-Approval in Chrome River for reimbursement.
4. Non-state employees are bound by the same statutory reimbursement regulations, documentation requirements, and other conditions as state employees unless otherwise indicated.
5. The Travel Pre-Approval cannot be re-opened once it has been used/expired in Chrome River.

B. Approval of Travel Reimbursement Requests
1. **Budget Authority**
   For travel costs to be reimbursed, the appropriate Travel Expense Report must be approved by the department head or chairperson having budget authority for the university fund(s) providing the reimbursement. Additional approvals are required as indicated below.

2. **Supervisor Approval for State Employee Travel and Department Head for Non-Employees**
   Approval of the traveler's immediate supervisor is required when the lodging is higher than the state per diem.

3. **Other Approvals**
   a. Additional approvals may be required as follows:
      1) There are special departmental or divisional approval requirements.
      2) Travel costs are split between two or more university funds.
   b. Approval by the Grant Officer is required for travel reimbursements using grant funds.

C. **Timely Submittal of Travel Reimbursement Requests**
   The Travel Reimbursement must be submitted to the Disbursements Office within the designated time period after the travel period ends (see procedures below). Failure to submit the reimbursement request in the designated time period could result in rejection of the reimbursement request.

D. **Documentation Substantiating Travel Reimbursements**
   All documents substantiating travel shall be on file with the Disbursements Office. Receipts must be uploaded to the Travel Expense Report when the Expense Report is submitted to the Disbursements Office.

IV. **Procedures**

A. **Submittal of Travel Expense Report**
   1. Complete the appropriate Travel Expense Report in Chrome River.
   2. The Pre-Approval for the trip should be applied to the Travel Expense Report in Chrome River before submitting. Include only the Travel Expense Report items that the traveler has paid for out of pocket. Expenses that are prepaid, such as registrations paid by a check request or wire, airline tickets purchased with UNCW Travel Agencies, and Enterprise Direct Bills, should be marked as “company paid” when they are added to the Expense Report. These items are not out-of-pocket costs.
   3. Include travel advances, if given to the employee.
   4. Upload required receipts or other appropriate documentation, as specified below.
   5. Obtain required approvals and submit the Travel Expense Report in Chrome River within the time period below.
B. Time Period for Submittal
1. Submit reimbursement requests for repetitive local travel by the tenth of the succeeding month for the prior month’s travel.
2. Submit fiscal year end reimbursement requests by deadline given each year (generally mid-June).
3. All other reimbursement requests must be submitted and approved within 30 calendar days following the return date of the trip.

C. Required Documentation
Upload required original receipts to the Travel Expense Report before submitting them to the Disbursements Office.

1. Air Transportation
   a. Justification (approved in writing by the Chancellor) is required for first-class airline accommodations for exceptional circumstances.

2. Ground Transportation
   a. Receipt for required repairs when driving a state car.
   b. Justification for deviations from reasonably expected mileage.
   c. Receipt for taxi (one-way trip at destination).
   d. Receipt for airport shuttle (one round trip between campus and airline terminal at point of departure).
   e. Justification for use of common carrier or public transportation when a state car or private car is used.
   f. Receipt for rental car showing a zero balance.
   g. Justification for use of a taxi in an emergency for inter-city transportation.
   h. Receipt for airport parking. Excessive parking rates and those that are incurred only for the convenience of the traveler are not reimbursable. An example of excessive or inappropriate parking is the use of an airport’s hourly parking lot for an overnight trip.
   i. Receipts for tolls, miscellaneous parking, and storage fees, etc.

3. Meals and Lodging
   a. Itemized receipt from commercial lodging establishment.
   b. Actual departure and arrival dates and times to document meal and lodging eligibility.
   c. Meals included in other related activities such as registration fees, conference costs, hotel registration, etc. may not be claimed as part of the traveler’s reimbursement.

4. Other Expenses
   a. A receipt must be uploaded in Chrome River for registration, if claimed on a Travel Expense Report.
   b. Receipt or copy of telephone bill for telephone calls. Calls over $3.00 must be identified as to point of origin and destination.
   c. Receipt for internet fees and explanation of business purpose.
D. Travel Advances for Team/Student Group Travel

Indicate any travel advances issued on the Travel Expense Report in Chrome River. Travel advances are not provided to non-state employees.

1. Travel Advances Less Than Actual Trip Expenses
   a. Enter all out of pocket expenses into the Travel Expense Report.
   b. Enter the travel advance dollar amount under “Cash Advance” as a negative.
   c. Submit the Travel Expense Report in Chrome River and upload all supporting documentation.
   d. The Disbursements Office will issue a payment to the employee for the difference between the actual trip costs and the amount of the travel advance check.

2. Travel Advances in Excess of Actual Trip Expenses
   a. Enter all out of pocket expenses into the Travel Expense Report.
   b. Enter the travel advance dollar amount under “Cash Advance” as a negative.
   c. A negative amount will appear for the reimbursement amount at the bottom of the Travel Expense Report. This is the amount due back to the university.
   d. The employee must reimburse the university for the difference between the actual trip costs and the amount of the travel advance.
   e. Submit the Travel Expense Report and the required documentation in Chrome River.
   f. Checks are not to be sent in campus mail.
   g. Disbursements Office will deposit the check back to the departmental fund and account originally charged.

3. Advances Equal to Actual Trip Expenses
   a. Enter all out of pocket expenses into the Travel Expense Report.
   b. Enter the travel advance dollar amount under “Cash Advance” as a negative.
   c. Submit Travel Expense Report and supporting documentation in Chrome River.