

# TRAVEL POLICY SUMMARY

This Travel Policy Summary describes the basic rules and regulations contained in Business and Finance [Bulletin G-28](#), Policy and Regulations Governing Travel (Policy). It contains brief descriptions of the main sections of the Policy and is not intended to substitute for the Policy itself. *Travelers are encouraged to refer to the Policy for additional information.*

The Policy applies to all official University of California travel, including travel funded under federal grants and contracts. Department of Energy (DOE) Laboratory travel is also subject to the provisions of the Policy, except for certain areas that are governed by the Federal Travel Regulations. Campuses and Laboratories may also adopt more restrictive procedures, if desired.

All official University travel shall be properly authorized, reported, and reimbursed; under no circumstances shall expenses for personal travel be charged to, or be temporarily funded by, the University, unless otherwise noted in the Policy. It is the traveler's responsibility to report his or her actual travel expenses in a responsible and ethical manner, in accordance with the regulations set forth in the Policy.

Any exceptions to the Policy must be submitted to the Chancellor, Laboratory Director, or other University official, as defined in the Policy, for approval.

## **APPROVAL OF TRAVEL**

Travelers may not approve the reimbursement of their own travel expenses. In addition, an employee shall not approve the travel expenses of an individual to whom he or she reports either directly or indirectly.

## **PAYMENT OF TRAVEL**

Under guidelines established by campuses (including the Laboratories), corporate travel cards may be issued to employees who travel on official University business. Any traveler issued such a card should use the card to pay for all expenses related to official University business travel, including lodging and subsistence, except where the card is not accepted. Certain prepaid expenses such as transportation tickets and conference fees may be billed directly to the University.

Travelers are required to use their corporate travel card to obtain cash advances for expenses incurred in connection with official University business travel, if the card provides this feature. Reasonable fees charged for obtaining a cash advance using the corporate travel card are eligible for reimbursement.

## **TRANSPORTATION EXPENSES**

Transportation expenses shall be reimbursed based on the most economical mode of transportation and the most commonly traveled route consistent with the authorized purpose of the trip.

Transportation tickets should be procured in advance in order to obtain any discounts offered by the carrier or negotiated by the University. Such tickets should be purchased from the campus contract travel agency.

### ***Mileage Expenses***

Mileage shall ordinarily be computed between the traveler's headquarters and the common carrier or destination. Expenses for travel between the traveler's residence and headquarters (commuting expense) shall not be allowed. However, mileage expenses may be allowed between the traveler's residence and the common carrier or destination if University business travel originates or terminates before or after the traveler's working hours, or if travel originates or terminates during a regularly scheduled day off.

## ***Air Travel***

Coach class or any discounted class airfare shall be used in the interest of economy. The use of business or first-class or other higher cost services may be authorized only under the circumstances listed in the Policy.

## ***Automobile Travel***

- **Private Vehicles**

Travelers may use their private vehicle for business purposes if it is less expensive than renting a car, taking a taxi, or using alternative transportation, or if it saves time. See the Policy for limitations on private vehicle use.

- **Mileage Reimbursement Rate**

The standard mileage reimbursement rate is 58.5¢(1) per mile, which takes into account all actual automobile expenses such as fuel and lubrication, towing charges, repairs, replacements, tires, depreciation, insurance, etc. Under IRS regulations, travelers who claim this rate are not required to substantiate the actual costs of operating the vehicle.

Travelers with physical disabilities who must use specially equipped or modified vehicles may claim reimbursement at the standard 58.5¢ per mile. However, if the traveler incurred higher than standard operating costs, the traveler may seek reimbursement. The traveler must certify in a statement submitted with the Travel Expense Voucher that he or she incurred higher operating costs. The actual fixed and variable costs must be specified in the statement.

- **Surface Transportation Used in Lieu of Air Travel**

If advance approval has been obtained, a traveler may use surface transportation for personal reasons even though air travel is the appropriate mode of transportation. The cost of meals and lodging, parking, mileage, tolls, taxis, and ferries incurred while in transit by surface transportation may be reimbursed. Such costs shall not exceed the cost of airfare, based on the lower of the regular coach fare available for the location of travel from a standard commercial air carrier or the campus travel program fare, plus transportation costs to and from the terminals. See the Policy for limitations on the use of surface transportation in lieu of air travel.

- **Rental Cars**

A vehicle may be rented when renting would be more advantageous to the University than other means of commercial transportation, such as using a taxi. Advance reservations should be made whenever possible and a compact or economy model requested. The traveler is responsible for obtaining the best available rate commensurate with the requirements of the trip. ***The discount negotiated with car rental agencies by the University should be requested when available.***

Travelers are expected to use rental agencies with which the University has contracts that include insurance coverage. On contract rental vehicles used in the continental United States, charges for additional insurance are not allowable, including any charge for a collision damage waiver. The rental agency's University identification number should be given to the agency at the time of rental in order to ensure that the vehicle is covered by physical damage insurance.

Except for State of California pool cars, vehicle rental charges billed directly to the University shall not be authorized. Rental car charges should be paid with the traveler's corporate credit card.

- **Miscellaneous Automobile-related Expenses**

Charges for ferries, bridges, tunnels, or toll roads may be claimed by the vehicle operator. Reasonable charges for parking while an employee is on travel status or on University business away from regular duties will be allowed as specified in the Policy.

### **Other Forms of Transportation**

Rail or bus transportation may be used when required by the destination or by business necessity. If a traveler's destination is served by a regularly scheduled airline, the use of rail transportation shall be reimbursed in accordance with the procedures specified under Surface Transportation in Lieu of Air Travel. Local public transportation is allowed; taxi fares, including tips, are allowed only when the use of public transportation or airport shuttle service is impractical or unavailable.

## **SUBSISTENCE EXPENSES**

Subsistence expenses incurred while on travel status consist of charges for lodging and meals and incidental expenses (M&IE). Incidental expenses include tips and fees for services.

- **Travel of Less Than 24 Hours**

For travel of 12 hours or less, M&IE shall not be reimbursed; an exception may be allowed when the meal is an integral part of a business meeting and must be substantiated as specified in the Policy. For domestic travel that lasts more than 12 hours but less than 24 hours, reimbursement is limited to the actual cost of lodging. Actual M&IE shall be reimbursed up to a maximum of \$42.

- **Travel of Less Than 30 Days**

For travel assignments of less than 30 days within the continental United States, the reimbursement of daily subsistence expenses shall be based on the actual reasonable amounts incurred for lodging. Actual M&IE shall be reimbursed up to a maximum of \$64 per day. *The M&IE cap shall not be treated as a per diem.* Lodging expenses must be supported by original itemized receipts.

Foreign travel of less than 30 days shall be reimbursed in accordance with the Federal Maximum Travel Per Diem Allowances for Foreign Areas. Travel within Alaska, Hawaii, and U.S. possessions shall be reimbursed at the per diem authorized for non-foreign localities.

- **Travel of 30 Days or More**

The long-term daily expense rate shall be authorized when a traveler can reasonably be expected to incur expenses in one location comparable to those arising from the use of establishments catering to long-term visitors, and when the traveler is expected to be in one location for 30 or more consecutive days *but not in excess of one year*.

For domestic travel assignments of 30 days or more within the continental U.S., the **per diem** allowance authorized for subsistence expenses is based on an estimate of actual daily expenses, computed according to the procedures specified in the Policy. Reimbursement of such expenses shall be limited to a daily amount of up to 55% of the applicable federal per diem rate established for travel within the continental U.S.

For foreign travel and for travel within Alaska, Hawaii and U. S. possessions, reimbursement shall be up to 55% of the federal per diem rates authorized for those areas.

- **Travel in Excess of One Year**

Refer to the Policy for provisions covering travel lasting more than one year in a single location.

## **MISCELLANEOUS TRAVEL EXPENSES**

Miscellaneous expenses are reimbursable when they are ordinary and necessary to accomplish the official business purpose of a trip. The Travel Expense Voucher must include an explanation of why such expenditures are being claimed. Miscellaneous expenses may include business office expenses, special fees for foreign travel, and registration fees for conferences and professional meetings.

## **INSURANCE FOR TRAVELERS**

Employees: All University employees are routinely covered 24 hours a day, worldwide, against accidental death or dismemberment while on an official University business trip.

Vehicles: When private vehicles are used on University business, the appropriate campus officials are responsible for requiring that employees have adequate liability insurance coverage. The minimum prescribed liability coverages are specified in the Policy. Travelers using rental cars are expected to use rental agencies with which the University has contracts that include insurance coverage.

## **REPORTING TRAVEL EXPENSES**

A Travel Expense Voucher (Form U85 or equivalent, or an electronic version) reporting all expenses and advances pertaining to a particular trip must be submitted to the campus accounting office within 21 days of the end of the trip. For trips lasting over 90 days, the traveler must submit a quarterly report of expenditures to the campus accounting office. *Except for direct billing arrangements that have been approved in advance, a Voucher must be processed even if no reimbursement is due the traveler.*

Substantiation of expenses must include the following:

- Date and time of departure from and return to the traveler's headquarters or residence;
- Origin and destination of the trip and the route taken;
- Purpose for travel or the nature of the business benefit derived as a result of the travel; and
- Amount of each expenditure, listed by date and location.

The original of the following receipts must be submitted with the Travel Expense Voucher:

- All airline expenses
- All *itemized* lodging expenses for domestic travel
- All rental car expenses
- M&IE and miscellaneous expenses of \$75 or more
- Gifts provided to a host costing \$25 or more

Electronic receipts are acceptable provided that the detail contained therein is equivalent to the level of detail contained in an acceptable paper record.

The traveler **must** sign the Travel Expense Voucher certifying that the amounts claimed are a true statement of the expenses incurred on official University business and that the original of all required receipts has been submitted. The Travel Expense Voucher or electronic equivalent must be approved for payment by the traveler's department head or by a person to whom the Chancellor has delegated such authority.

Please refer directly to the Policy for more information.