

System-wide Policy: FI0531 - Travel Cards	
Version: 3	Effective Date: 12/07/2023

SECTION 1. Policy Statement

I. Generally

- A. The University maintains a travel card program to allow employees to make travel-related purchases when the employee is traveling for official University purposes. Eligible employees may utilize a travel card to reduce their out-of-pocket costs when traveling for official University purposes.
- B. The University does not require employees to obtain or utilize a travel card. Accordingly, employees who prefer to utilize their personal credit cards or debit cards when traveling for official University purposes may continue to utilize their personal credit or debit cards.

II. Types of Travel Cards

- A. The University maintains two types of travel cards:
 1. Travel cards issued to a cardholder for individual travel. The default spending limit on an individual travel card is \$5,000.
 2. Travel cards issued to an individual responsible for paying the travel expenses of more than one individual, such as an athletic team or for a group of students studying abroad. The default spending limit on a group travel card is \$15,000.

III. Suspension and Cancellation

- A. The University may suspend or cancel a travel card at any time, for any reason.
- B. Generally, the University will suspend or cancel a travel card when the following circumstances arise:
 1. The cardholder seldom or never uses the travel card.
 2. The University suspects that fraudulent transactions have been made with the card.
 3. The travel card transactions have not been processed within 30 days from the trip end date.
 4. The cardholder is under investigation for misuse or has been placed on leave involuntarily.
 5. The cardholder is no longer employed by the University.
 6. The cardholder fails to comply with applicable policies and procedures.
 7. Excessive personal/non-reimbursable items are being charged to the card, even if these items have been repaid.
 8. **The cardholder fails to utilize the University's preferred travel agency for airfare purchases (cardholders may not utilize their travel card to purchase airfare through any other platform, including through websites like Expedia or an airline's website).**
 9. Any airfare other than standard economy.
 10. The cardholder fails to provide receipts for travel card transactions.
- C. When the University suspends a card due to a cardholder's failure to comply with applicable policies and procedures, the cardholder is not eligible for another card or

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cash advances, and the cardholder will be responsible for purchasing any business-related travel expenses using personal funds and requesting reimbursement.

- D. If a cardholder fails to report fraudulent charges in a timely manner (within 60 days of the transaction date), the University may cancel the cardholder's travel card. Further, if a cardholder fails to report fraudulent charges within the 60-day period, the cardholder might be personally responsible for the charges.

IV. Payroll Deduction

- A. The University will deduct personal charges from the cardholder's pay.

V. Eligibility

- A. UT System Administration Accounts Payable will not provide travel cards to independent contractors, temporary employees, students, or any non-employee without permission from the applicable Chief Business Officer and the UT System Administration Accounts Payable Office designated employees. Before requesting approval, the department must create a procedure to track the temporary employee's employment and the department will terminate the card when the temporary employee leaves the University.

- B. The University's employees, including student employees, may utilize a travel card, provided that the employee meets the following criteria:
1. Maintain regular and active employment status, in good standing;
 2. Obtain the approval of their department head and their campus/institute travel-card coordinator; and
 3. Review travel-card training materials and successfully complete the travel-card questionnaire (which includes the travel cardholder agreement).

VI. Responsibility; Compliance with Policies and Procedures

- A. Cardholders are responsible for all charges placed on travel cards assigned to the cardholder.
 B. Cardholders must never give their travel card to occasional travelers, students, or guests.
 C. Cardholders must comply with all applicable University policies and procedures.

VII. Occasional Travelers, Students, and Guests

- A. Travel Card cardholders may utilize their travel card to make business-related travel expenses on behalf of occasional travelers, including employees, students, and official University guests. When doing so, cardholders must maintain possession of their Travel Card. Examples include airfare for a guest traveling to the University for a job interview or airfare for a student to present at academic events.

VIII. Acceptable Purchases

- A. Cardholders may utilize the travel card for business-related travel transactions.
 B. Acceptable travel-related transactions include, but are not limited to, the following:
1. Air, rail, bus, ground transportation, and shuttle transportation (airfare other than coach-class airfare is prohibited) **all airfare purchases must be made through the University's travel agency and from no other source;**
 2. Car and van rentals (when available, campus motor pools must be utilized for local rentals);

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3. Gasoline for rental vehicles (UT's fuel card must be used for UT cars);
4. Hotel deposits and reservations including those for student and employee groups and official University guests. The travel card may be used even if a contract exists.
5. Miscellaneous business expenses such as parking, internet, and office supplies that are needed for conducting University business while in travel status;
6. Business meals while in a travel status (see the meal per diem section in the Travel Card Procedures for additional information);
7. Business meals and entertainment at your official location. Departments purchasing business meals and entertainment must comply with FI0715 - Entertainment and Group-Arranged Events, and, if applicable, campus/institute procedures;
8. Conference registration fees (including local training events);
9. For groups that are traveling the following are acceptable charges, even if a contract exists:
 - i. Group meals,
 - ii. Event tickets,
 - iii. Meeting space,
 - iv. Transportation.

IX. Prohibited Purchases

A. The University prohibits the following types of transactions on travel cards:

1. Items prohibited by the University's Travel Policy FI0705, including but not limited to:
 - i. Airfare other than standard economy;
 - ii. Local car rentals (unless documentation exists that the motor pool was not able to provide a vehicle);
 - iii. Rental of luxury vehicles.
2. Gas for personal vehicles, if mileage is also being claimed;
3. Gas for UT vehicles (employees will use the WEX gas card);
4. Personal expenses;
5. Travel expenses for:
 - i. University employees' spouses/partners, or family members
 - ii. Guest travelers' companions.;
6. Souvenirs;
7. Gift cards;
8. Cash and cash refunds;
9. Equipment needed while traveling that exceeds \$1,500;
10. Goods or services that are not needed while traveling;
11. Expenses associated with house hunting or moving allowances. These are taxable payments and must be processed in accordance with FI0450 - Moving Stipend;
12. Credit card convenience fees in excess of \$100 that are added to the invoice solely because a credit card is being used;
13. Airfare, unless the cardholder purchases the airfare through the University's travel agency.

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SECTION 2. Reason for the Policy

This policy addresses the University’s travel card program.

SECTION 3. Scope and Application

This policy applies to all individuals who utilize the University’s travel card. Further, this policy applies to department heads who authorize their departments to have a travel card.

SECTION 4. Procedures

[link to be added]

SECTION 5. Definitions

N/A

SECTION 6. Penalties/Disciplinary Action for Non-Compliance

Intentional personal use of a travel card is theft, which will result in adverse human resources actions (up to, and including, termination of employment). Intentional personal use of a travel card might also result in criminal charges to the employee(s) involved in personal use.

Failure to comply with this policy and its procedures, and failure to comply with related policies, might result in revocation of travel card privileges.

SECTION 7. Responsible Official & Additional Contacts

Subject Matter	Office Name	Telephone Number	Email/Web Address
Policy Clarification and Interpretation	Accounts Payable	865-974-2302	tishamarshall@tennessee.edu

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SECTION 8. Policy History

Version 3 November 8, 2023

Version 2 September 29, 2021

SECTION 9. Related Policies/Guidance Documents

- [FI0405 - Procurement](#)
- [FI0525 - Petty Cash](#)
- [FI0531 - Travel Cards](#)
- [FI0705 - Travel](#)
- [FI0715 - Entertainment, Group Arranged Events, Food and Housing Purchases for UT Sponsored Conferences and Seminars](#)
- [FI0600 - Equipment - Sensitive Minor](#)
- [FI0605 - Equipment](#)
- [FI0120 - Records Management](#)