

UT Health Science Center: FI0705-H Travel	
Version 2	Publication Date: 08/03/2023

Objective

University Fiscal Policy FI0705 Travel outlines in detail the guidelines and reimbursement rates for expenses incurred by employees while in travel status on official University business and should be utilized as the official reference in all official travel matters. The items noted below outline procedures specific to the University of Tennessee Health Science Center (UTHSC).

Scope

This document applies to all UTHSC employees and others traveling while conducting UTHSC business who incur travel-related expenses when in travel status. For purposes of FI0705—Travel and the associated procedures, the University utilizes the word “employee” or “employees” to refer to travelers since most travelers are employees.

Definitions

Contracted Car Rental Agency: Enterprise Rent-A-Car and National Car Rental.

International Travel: Travel to a location outside of the United States’ 50 states and Washington, D.C. For clarity, even though the following locations are considered part of the United States, the following locations are considered “international” locations for purposes of this policy:

- American Samoa
- Baker Island
- Guam
- Howland Island
- Jarvis Island
- Johnston Atoll
- Kingman Reef
- Midway Islands
- Navassa Island
- Northern Marianas Islands
- Palmyra Atoll
- Puerto Rico
- U.S. Virgin Islands
- Wake Island

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Please note that CONUS rates only apply to the continental United States (sometimes referred to as “the lower 48” states). Travel to a U.S. destination outside of the lower 48 states falls under OCONUS rates. Also, please note that the University’s rental-car insurance only applies to travel within 1 of the 50 states (and it does not apply to U.S. territories outside of the 50 states).

International Travel Authorized Person: The person or office that the applicable campus or institute names as their official person or office who will advise employees on International Travel.

Travel Agency: World Travel Service, Inc., commonly referred to as “World Travel.”

Travel System: The software program that the University utilizes as its travel management system.

Procedure

Use this Outline Format when possible:

I. General:

The campus/institute business officer (or designee) must review any exceptions to this policy and will serve as the final review step for exceptions to this policy, except that Chief Business Officers may not approve exceptions for their campus chancellor or institute head official. Exceptions for airfare other than coach-class airfare require Chief Business Officer and Chief Financial Officer (or designee) approval. At UTHSC, exceptions to the policy should rarely be submitted and only in extraordinary circumstances.

II. Cash Advances

Cash/Travel advances may be obtained when university travel would impose a financial burden for the employee or student traveling on university business. Advances from university funds constitute a loan to an individual. Cash advances are requested using the University’s Travel System. Travelers should allow enough time for the advance to be approved by the department head and advances \$3,000 or more require additional approval by the campus/Institute business office.

Normally, a cash advance will not be made more than ten days before the travel departure date and will be direct deposited into the employee’s bank account. The amount of the advance will automatically be deducted from the total expenses incurred. If a travel expense report is not submitted within 30 days from the end of the trip, the entire amount of the outstanding balance will be withheld from the employee’s next payroll check or future business reimbursements to the employee. By requesting a travel advance, the employee is authorizing this deduction. Requests for cash advances will only be considered on an exception basis and in cases of extreme hardship.

III. Travel Cards:

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Departments may use travel cards to purchase airline tickets and car rentals for employees and other travelers authorized to travel at the university's expense. These expenses must not be paid more than 6 months in advance of the travel. The cardholder is responsible for obtaining acceptable receipts, ensuring that the purchases comply with policy, and processing the transactions in the travel expense systems. Cardholders should never give their travel card to others. If non card holding travelers will incur additional out of pocket expenses on a trip, a travel expense report should be completed by them or on their behalf so that the funds will be paid directly to them. The expense report should note any expenses paid by someone else on their behalf.

IV. Automobile Rental:

The rental of luxury class, private sedans, or car services, and stretch limousines are prohibited for employees. The rental of economy class, mid-size class, and standard class vehicles are permissible on the HSC Campus. The rental of SUVs, minivans, vans, or any class vehicle higher than a standard class vehicle must be preapproved by the CBO or his/her delegate through the HSC Accounts Payable Office.

V. Automobile Rental at Official Station:

To rent a car locally for travel purposes, the motor pool department must first be contacted to see if a UTHSC vehicle is available. If not, a notice from the motor pool must be obtained and submitted with the travel expense report.

VI. Designated Travel Agency:

UTHSC travelers are encouraged to use the University's designated travel agency, World Travel Services, Inc. Airline reservations may be made through World Travel and the service fees for both telephone and online reservations are reimbursable. World Travel can also assist travelers in securing CONUS rates for lodging. If the CONUS rate is not available at the destination, a World Travel consultant will document via email that the CONUS rate was not available and that the rate booked was the lowest rate available at the time of the booking. Attach the email and hotel receipt to the reimbursement request in the University's Travel System.

VII. Flight Class Required:

In accordance with Tenn Code Ann. § 49-7-130, reimbursement for airfare will be limited to economy fare. Economy refers to any class that is not business or first class. No business or first-class fares will be reimbursed. Since this information must be obtained, travelers are discouraged from using either Travelocity or Expedia since they no longer specify Flight Class or Itineraries.

VIII. Guest Travel:

Local hotels may be paid on behalf of guest travelers by the University via direct bill. Guest travelers are entered into the accounting HR system through E- Form, ZPHRRECORD000. The guest traveler is approved by the Payroll office and assigned a personnel number. An

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approved travel request must be processed for the trip. Local hotel reservations will be made by the HSC AP staff and the department will be provided with the confirmation number. Except for spouses of job candidates, travel expenses for individuals accompanying a guest require approval by the Department Chair and HSC Chief Business Officer.

Former employees or anyone who has a personnel number in the accounting system but is in a withdrawn status at the time of the travel should be rehired as a guest traveler.

IX. Meals Allowance

At UTHSC meals are reimbursed at the per diem rate for the location(s) of travel. Departure and return travel days are prorated at 75% of per diem. Meals that the University provides through a University hosted event must be deducted from the allowance. Receipts are therefore not required.

X. Registration Fees

Registration fees may be prepaid by the University and are processed through the University's travel system. Expense type "Conference/Training Registration Fees" must be selected. The traveler should then select the "Yes, Centrally Paid" under the field "UT to Prepay Registration fees." This request must be submitted at least two weeks before the payment deadline to ensure proper approval and processing. If a traveler pays registration out of personal funds, the fee can only be reimbursed after the completion of the trip by attaching the paid receipt to the expense report.

XI. Reimbursement Procedures

An original, itemized receipt must be submitted for lodging, registration fees, airline tickets, airline baggage charges rental cars, and any other allowable expense of \$50 or more. The documentation of airfare must include the name of the passenger, dates of travel, complete trip itinerary, name of the airline, class of service, and a breakdown of taxes and fees. Airfare will be reimbursed at a standard economy/coach fare regardless of the funding source. The documentation must include evidence of payment by the traveler. Lodging receipts must include the name of the individual occupying the room, the daily room charges, applicable taxes, total charges, and indication of total payment received (zero balance). Rental car receipts must itemize all charges paid for the determination of reimbursable expense. Employees must submit reimbursement claims no later than 120 days after completing a trip, except for cash advances and travel-card transactions, which must be settled within 30 days after completing a trip. All travel claims submitted for the reimbursement 120 days or more after completion of the trip require an explanation. All travel claims submitted for reimbursement 180 days or more after completion of the trip will also require approval from the Chief Business Office or their designee. If an employee pays expenses associated with another employee, guests or student, the expenses must be submitted at the same time as their expenses and each expense report should reference the other.

XII. International Travel

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At UTHSC requests for international travel must be approved by the Chief Business Officer or their designee. Furthermore, the cost of international travel is to be paid on restricted funds whenever possible. Travel may be allowed on limited unrestricted accounts where the source is non-appropriated state funds. For example, unrestricted accounts funded by F&A return would be considered for international travel. Please contact the Office of Finance should you have further questions or need guidance regarding the use on unrestricted accounts for international travel.

Links to University of Tennessee Fiscal Policy FI0705 and other forms referenced in the above procedure may be found at the UTHSC Accounts Payable Website:

[Accounts Payable](#) | [Procurement Services](#) | [Office of Finance](#) | [UTHSC](#)

Penalties/Disciplinary Action for Non-Compliance

Employees who fail to comply with this policy might be personally liable for some, or all, travel expenses incurred for a given trip. Employees who intentionally violate this policy might face adverse human resource actions, up to and including termination. Employees who intentionally request reimbursement for false travel expenses may face criminal charges.

Related Policies/Guidance Documents

FI0130—Fraud, Waste, and Abuse

FI0405—Procurement

FI0420—Contracts

FI0530—Procurement Cards

FI0531—Travel Cards

FI0725—Use of University Vehicles

BT0030—Policy Statement on Travel