

System-wide Policy: FI0705-UTSA General Travel Procedures	
Version: 2	Effective Date: 12/09/2025

Objective

This document contains procedures related to the most common travel expenses that employees will encounter.

Scope

This document applies to all employees 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 the majority of its travelers are employees.

Procedures

Air Transportation

- I. Airfare Purchases/Reimbursement Limited to Coach Fares
 - A. State law (Tenn. Code Ann. § 49-7-13) limits airfare reimbursement to **standard coach fares (the lowest class airfare)**. This limitation applies regardless of the funding source used to purchase the airfare.
 1. Employees may purchase fares other than coach, but the University will only reimburse for coach fares (the lowest-class airfare).
 2. In such cases, the employee must provide supporting documentation for the cost of the standard economy fare by obtaining a comparison quote of the price difference from the same source, using the same carrier, and on the same day the employee purchased the original ticket.
 - B. If coach airfare is not available, employees must purchase the ticket through the University’s Travel Agency. The University’s Travel Agency will document the lowest coach fare available, and the University will reimburse the employee for the fare that the University’s Travel Agency booked.
 - C. If an employee is uncertain whether a particular airfare is coach-class airfare, employees must consult with the University’s Travel Agency. Some airlines do not utilize the term

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“first-class airfare,” and, instead, classify business-class or first-class airfare with names such as, “premium economy,” “coach plus,” “economy plus,” “business select,” or “premium select” fares.

II. Comparison Quotes (circumstances when University requires)

A. Employees must obtain a comparison quote for airfare in any of the following circumstances:

1. Personal travel is combined with business travel and includes additional destinations. Employees are not required to obtain comparison quotes if there are not additional destinations.
2. The departure airport is an airport other than the departure airports listed below:

Duty station

Departure Airports Where Comparison Quote Not Required

Chattanooga

Chattanooga, TN; Nashville, TN; Atlanta, GA

Knoxville

Knoxville, TN; Nashville, TN; Atlanta, GA

Martin

Memphis, TN; Nashville, TN; Jackson, TN; Paducah, KY

Memphis

Memphis, TN

Nashville

Nashville, TN

UT Southern

Nashville, TN; Huntsville, AL; Birmingham, AL

Other locations

Employees may choose between the two international airports closest to the employee’s designated duty station, or a closer airport.

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3. When the employee is flying into a city other than the business destination.
4. The employee purchases an airfare other than coach (the University will only reimburse for coach-class airfare).

- B. An employee must obtain a comparison quote for standard coach airfare from the same booking source using the same airline, and the employee must obtain the quote on the same day that the employee purchases the original ticket.
 1. The University will use the quote to determine the amount of reimbursement.
 2. The University will reimburse the employee at the lesser of the two amounts (original ticket vs. quote).
 3. If an employee fails to get a quote on the same day that the employee purchases the original ticket, the employee will need to obtain a quote for standard coach airfare from the same carrier showing the same day(s) of the week, at least 21 days in advance from the date that the employee obtains the quote.
 4. Employees must provide additional expenses, such as car rentals, lodging, mileage, and meals so that the University may determine the least expensive route.

III. Receipts

- A. Employees must provide receipts to document airfare charges.
- B. The receipt must contain:
 1. Airline's name
 2. Amount
 3. Class of airfare (coach or other designation)
 4. Complete trip itinerary (including departure and arrival times)
 5. Dates of travel
 6. Method of payment
 7. Passenger's name

IV. Non-Refundable Airfare

- A. The University will reimburse employees for non-refundable airfare in advance of the trip only when the employee books the flight through the University's Travel Agency or through the ERP system's travel booking tool.
- B. If an employee purchases a non-refundable airfare in any other manner, the University will reimburse the employee only after the employee completes the trip.

V. Unused Tickets

- A. Employees who have unused tickets must attempt to obtain a refund from the vendor, if possible.
- B. The University will reimburse employees for costs associated with using the unused ticket, including any fees for applying the credit or changing the name of the traveler.
- C. If the vendor will not provide a refund, the employee is responsible for ensuring that

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the value of the ticket is applied as a credit to the employee's future travel or to the employee's department for future use. The department is responsible for managing this process.

- D. If the University has paid for the airfare (either via the University's travel card or via reimbursing the employee), the employee must not use the unused ticket credit for personal travel. The University prohibits individuals from using credits for personal travel.
- E. If the University has reimbursed the employee for the unused ticket, and the employee has not used the ticket in 6 months, the University will attempt to apply the credit to another employee's business trip.

VI. Airline Fees

- A. The University will reimburse employees for fees that an airline imposes, such as seat assignments, boarding pass fees, checked baggage fees, etc.
- B. For clarity, the University will not reimburse employees for any fees associated with upgrading flights from coach-class airfare to a different class of airfare.

VII. Airport Parking

- A. The University will reimburse employees for airport parking charges (the University does not limit employees to economy parking lots), except that the University will not reimburse employees for: valet parking at airports or for short-term parking at airports when the employee is flying to another destination.
- B. If an employee utilizes valet parking at an airport or short-term parking at an airport (when the employee is flying to another destination), the University will reimburse the employee for the difference between the valet parking cost and what parking would have cost had the employee parked in a garage or lot. If an airport has garages or lots priced according to proximity, the University will utilize the garage or lot nearest the airport's entrance.

VIII. Miscellaneous Air Transportation Fees

- A. The University will not reimburse for any Transportation Security Administration (TSA) or similar government-agency fees related to air travelers lacking a REAL ID or any other fees imposed by the TSA or a similar government agency (in the U.S. or any other country).
- B. The University will not reimburse employees for costs related to obtaining a REAL ID or any other government-issued identification, which might be required to access certain transportation.

Automobile Transportation

I. Automobile

A. University-Owned Automobiles

- 1. The University encourages employees to use University-owned automobiles,

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- when available.
2. When possible, the University encourages employees to purchase gasoline for University-owned automobiles from University motor pool facilities. The applicable University fleet management department will provide a gasoline credit card for use with the automobile when such resources are not available.
 3. If an employee purchases gasoline for a University-owned automobile by a method other than utilizing the gasoline credit card that fleet management provides, the employee who purchased the gasoline must provide a copy of the receipt with their expense report.
 4. The use of University vehicles is restricted to the continental United States. See FI0725 – Use of University Vehicles.

B. Personally Owned Automobiles

1. Employees may use personally owned automobiles for business travel. Employees driving a personally owned automobile may claim either mileage or gas purchases, but not both.
2. When claiming mileage: the Travel Expense Report must indicate the employee's itinerary and show the business mileage.

C. Vehicle Allowance / Courtesy Car

1. The University will reimburse employees who have a vehicle allowance or courtesy car at the rate defined by the GSA's Privately Owned Vehicle (POV) Mileage Reimbursement Rates, regardless of which car the employee drives.
2. The University will not reimburse mileage for employees who are assigned a University-owned automobile.

D. Local Mileage

1. Employees may not request reimbursement for commuting from the employee's home to their primary work location, regardless of the frequency of such trips per day or if it occurs after business hours (including on weekends, holidays, or administrative closings).

E. Automobile Rentals

1. Employees may rent automobiles when they are flying to a business destination. Employees must rent the most economical automobile that serves their needs.
2. The University encourages employees to book rental automobiles through the Travel System, or through the University's Travel Agency. If an employee rents a vehicle from the University's Contracted Car Rental Agency through the Travel System or the University's Travel Agency, a loss-damage waiver will be applied to the rental automatically.
3. The University allows employees to rent economy-class, midsize-class, or standard-class vehicles. The University does not allow employees to rent luxury

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automobiles.

4. Restrictions related to rental cars:

a) Rentals at primary work location:

- i. Employees may rent an automobile to travel from their primary work location to a business destination only when they first attempt to reserve an automobile through the University's motor pool operation that serves the employee's primary work location (if applicable). Employees must provide documentation that the University's motor pool operation cannot accommodate the employee's need.
- ii. If an employee does not provide documentation from the University's motor pool, the University will reimburse the employee at the lesser of the total rental expense (including gasoline with receipts) or the amount determined by using the standard mileage rate and the number of miles driven for

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business. Employees may not claim the standard mileage rate, when the rental expenses are lower.

b) Refueling Rental Automobiles

- i. Employees may not purchase the pre-paid fuel option when renting automobiles.
- ii. The University strongly encourages employees to refuel rental automobiles at a gas station close to the rental-car return location. If a rental car agency imposes a refueling charge, the University will reimburse the employee for the charge. Reimbursement for the refueling charge does not require an exception.

c) Insurance/Loss-Damage Waiver

- i. The University will not reimburse employees for insurance or loss-damage waiver coverage, except for collision damage waiver coverage for international automobile rentals. The University encourages employees to purchase loss-damage waiver coverage for all international automobile rentals (see FI0705 – Travel definitions section).
- ii. For domestic rentals through the University’s Contracted Car Rental Agency, loss-damage waivers are included in the agreement, if the vehicle is rented for business use. Employees must rent automobiles from the University’s Contracted Car Rental Agency through the Travel System to obtain the loss-damage waiver.

5. Damage to Rented Automobiles

- a) Employees must report all damage to rented automobiles being used for business to the System Office of Risk management within 24 hours of the damage occurring or 24 hours from the point that the employee notices the damage, whichever is first.
- b) When physical damage occurs, if the employee is at fault, the applicable University fleet management office will coordinate with the employee’s department regarding the costs that the employee’s department will have to pay to repair or replace the vehicle.

F. Tolls

1. The University will reimburse for tolls when driving on a toll road is necessary.
2. The University will reimburse for costs associated with utilizing toll roads, when applicable.

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G. Ground Transportation

1. If an employee travels by air, the employee may seek reimbursement for taxi, ride-share, bus, or shuttle charges to and from airports, and to and from lodging and meeting sites or restaurants.
2. Employees may not utilize limousine services.
3. Employees must list the destination and reason for each fare reimbursement that the employee claims on the travel expense report, regardless of the amount.

H. Parking

1. The University will reimburse employees for parking charges that the employee incurs while on travel status.

I. Traffic Offenses; Other Fines

1. Employees are personally responsible for their traffic offenses, including payment of fines related to traffic offenses.
2. Employees are personally responsible for any fines associated with non-moving violations, unpaid toll-road charges, etc.

Conference Registration

I. Conference Registration, Generally

- A. The University will pay for conference registration fees, as outlined below.
- B. Sometimes, conferences provide an opportunity for attendees to participate in a personal event, such as a golf outing. Employees may use personal funds to participate in such personal events, but the University will not pay for personal events associated with a conference, unless the employee obtains advanced approval from the applicable Chief Business Officer. Examples of personal events include golf outings, cruises, historical tours, sporting events, concerts, etc.
- C. The University will not pay for a spouse or companion to attend a conference, unless the employee obtains advanced approval from the applicable Chief Business Officer.
- D. Employees may not register for a conference more than six months in advance, unless the employee obtains an early registration discount and documents the discount.
- E. Conferences sometimes include lodging with the conference registration fee. In these instances, employees must ensure that the conference registration meets the following criteria:
 1. The lodging must be part of a package that the conference offers, and must be listed in the conference's registration materials.
 2. The University's payment of the conference registration fee must go directly to the vendor who is collecting the registration fee.
- F. Employees must submit conference information with their travel reimbursement

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submission showing the dates of the conference and the location of the conference.
Conference organizers typically include this type of information on their website.

II. Conference Registration Payment Options

A. The University allows its employees one of four options when the employee needs to register for a conference. The options are stated below.

1. Invoice (Direct Bill to the University)

- Employees may obtain an invoice from the conference organization and submit in the ERP System.
- When an employee submits an invoice for conference registration fees, the employee must ensure that the invoice contains:
 - The name of the employee attending the conference;
 - The date and location of the conference;
 - An itemization of all charges included in the conference registration fee.
- If the above information is not included on the invoice, the employee will need to send appropriate backup documentation with the T-30.

2. Employee Pays and Seeks Reimbursement

- Employees may pay conference registration fees using personal funds, either in advance or at the conference site.
- If an employee pays a conference registration fee using personal funds, the employee may not seek reimbursement until after the conference.
- To seek reimbursement, the employee must submit a Travel Expense Report after the conference, and must include an itemized conference registration receipt along with all appropriate conference documentation.

3. Department (or Employee) Pays via Travel Card

- Departments may pay for an employee's conference registration fees with a travel card.
- When a department pays for a conference registration fee using a travel card, departments must submit a receipt detailing all charges with each transaction.
- If an employee pays for a conference registration utilizing a University travel card, the cardholder must submit an expense report. To reconcile the cardholder's travel-card statement, the cardholder must submit a travel expense report after the conference, and must include an itemized conference registration receipt.

4. Department (or Employee) Pays via Procurement Card

- Departments may pay for an employee's conference registration fees with a procurement card only when (i) the conference is fully virtual; or

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- (ii) when the conference is within a geographic range that will not require the employee to incur travel costs (other than mileage or parking).
 - 2. When a department pays for a conference registration fee using a procurement card, departments must submit a receipt detailing all charges with each transaction.
- B. Regardless of how the University department or employees pays for conference registration fees, the employee is responsible for attaching appropriate conference documentation to the Travel Expense Report.

Damages

- I. Employees are personally responsible for damages to lodging and any other similar facility.
- II. If employees purchase insurance to cover their stay at a lodging facility, the University will not reimburse employees for the cost of the insurance.

General Expenses

I. Non-Reimbursable Expenses

A. Personal Expenses

- 1. The University will not reimburse personal expenses.
 - 1. Personal expenses are expenses that involve no University business purpose and include, but are not limited to: laundry, dry cleaning, expedited security services (including Clear, Global Entry, and TSA Precheck), early boarding fees, hotel room bars, house-sitter fees, pet boarding fees, pet sitting fees, trip cancellation insurance, child or other dependent care, cellphone chargers, cellphone power banks, cellphone repair costs, charging cords, dash mounts, car charger devices for cell phones, etc.
 - 2. If there is a University business purpose for laundry (such as athletic teams' uniforms) or other charges, the University will reimburse such charges.
- 2. If an employee charges personal expenses to a University travel card, the employee must process all personal expenses in a manner that indicates which charges are non-reimbursable. The University will deduct personal expenses from reimbursable expenses that the employee paid out of pocket.
- 3. If an employee's personal expenses exceed their reimbursable expenses, the University will deduct the amount from the employee's next paycheck.

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B. Hotel Gratuity (Tips)

1. The University will not reimburse an employee for providing a gratuity (tip) to hotel staff.

II. Reimbursable Expenses

A. Generally

1. When an employee incurs a reimbursable expense, the employee must provide an itemized receipt and supporting documentation (when applicable) when seeking reimbursement.

B. Miscellaneous Business Expenses

1. Employees may seek reimbursement for printing, copying, and related expenses when the employee incurs these costs for a business purpose.

III. Internet

- A. The University will reimburse employees for charges associated with accessing the internet, provided that the employee's access was for a business purpose.

IV. Gratuity (Tips)

- A. Excluding tips to hotel staff (which are not reimbursable), the University will reimburse employees for providing gratuities (tips).
- B. The University will reimburse gratuities up to 20% of the total costs.
- C. If an employee documents a tip on a receipt, the employee's manual documentation of the tip is acceptable and does not constitute altering a receipt.

Group Travel

I. Transportation

- A. Employees may utilize contracted transportation services, University motor pool vehicles, or personal vehicles for group travel.
 1. If the employee will use a contracted service, and if the amount is more than the bid threshold in FI0405~[Procurement policy](#), employees must obtain the transportation by going through the Procurement process (for example, competitive bid, etc.).
 2. Employees may rent an automobile to travel from their primary work location to a business destination only when they first attempt to reserve an automobile through the University's motor pool operation that serves the employee's primary work location. Employees must provide documentation that the University's motor pool operation cannot accommodate the employee's need.

II. Lodging

- A. Employees may choose to bill lodging expenses directly to the University, if the

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lodging provider will allow the University to set up direct billing. If the hotel will not allow the University to set up direct billing, the person responsible for the trip may obtain a travel card or a cash advance to pay for the lodging.

1. If the lodging provider requires a purchase order, the employee's department will submit a requisition in the University's requisition system. If the lodging provider requires a contract, the employee's department will follow the University's contract process. Almost all lodging providers require a contract, even when the transaction is under \$10,000.
2. If the University's payable amount is \$10,000 or more, the University requires the department to process a contract for the lodging, even in cases where the lodging provider would not require a contract. See FI0405 ~ Procurement and FI0420 ~ Contracts.

B. Employees may purchase meals for a group in one of the methods described below. The amount distributed may not exceed the amounts shown for meal allowances.

1. Employees may arrange to have group meals direct-billed to the University. The invoice or receipt for such expenses must identify the group for which the charges are made, number of meals served, cost per meal, and total amount.
2. The employee responsible for the trip may pay the group meal expenses personally and request reimbursement by filing a travel expense report. An invoice or receipt must be attached which identifies the group for which the charges are made, number of meals served, cost per meal, and total amount.
3. The person responsible for the trip may obtain a cash advance or a group travel card to pay for such expenses. See FI0531 - Travel Cards for more information regarding group travel cards.
4. The person responsible for the trip may obtain a cash advance and distribute cash to members of the group, including the accompanying staff. The distribution of cash must be documented by completing a roster. The roster must contain participants' names, student IDs or employee numbers, and the amount distributed for each meal. Each individual receiving cash must sign the roster. The person responsible for the trip must submit the signed roster with their travel expense report in order to be reimbursed by the University.
5. For team travel, funds may be distributed using the University's pre-paid card solution. Rosters are not required if the University's pre-paid debit card program is used to distribute meal per diems to the group, since the distribution of the funds is recorded in the pre-paid card system.

C. If the group will provide alcohol to group travelers aged 21 and over, the group

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must utilize an appropriate restricted account.

Honorariums

- I. For purposes of this procedure, an “honorarium” is a payment that another party provides to a University employee as a sign of appreciation for participating in an activity or event. Importantly, an honorarium is not a contractually obligated payment for services rendered. Further, an honorarium is distinguished from a gift because an honorarium is an honorary payment made to someone in recognition of their professional service (when there is no obligation to provide the payment). A gift is something given to someone else without obligation and for no particular purpose or reason.
- II. The University allows its employees to accept an honorarium for speaking at a conference, seminar, or similar event.
- III. University employees who receive an honorarium are responsible for determining the tax consequences of receiving the honorarium.
- IV. University employees must comply with all applicable laws, regulations, and policies or procedures, including without limitation: [GE0002—Conflicts of Interest & Commitment](#); [HR0580—Code of Conduct](#).
- V. University employees cannot accept double payment (often referred to as, “double dipping”) for the same travel costs, so if a third party provides a University employee with travel funds, in addition to an honorarium, the University employee cannot keep the travel funds and file for reimbursement by the University. If the third party providing the honorarium specifies that some or all of the funds are intended to cover the employee’s travel costs, the employee must deduct the honorarium from their travel reimbursement.

International Travel, Generally

I. International Travel, Generally

A. Campus or Institute International Travel Authorized Person

1. Employees must contact their campus or institute International Travel Authorized Person to verify that the employee is aware of all applicable laws and regulations (which might vary, based on the destination).

B. Rates

1. The University will reimburse for meals, mileage, and incidental expenses in accordance with the [U.S. Defense Travel Management Office’s](#) OCONUS rates.
2. The University will reimburse for international lodging up to 150% of the applicable OCONUS rate.

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3. Please note that OCONUS rates for lodging include all taxes; therefore, reimbursements are limited to the OCONUS rates for the applicable city and country.

C. Receipts

1. The University encourages employees to obtain an English-language version of receipts, when possible. Obtaining English-language receipts will help facilitate a faster reimbursement process.
2. Pertinent information on international receipts must be translated to English.

D. Conversion to U.S. Dollars

1. The University's Travel System will convert amounts to U.S. dollars based on the transaction date. Conversions shown on credit card statements are also acceptable, if they contain the amount claimed and are attached to each receipt. Credit card purchases do not need to be converted to dollars, because credit card providers convert charges to U.S. Dollars automatically.
2. International credit card transaction fees are reimbursable and employees must select the expense type "International Transaction Fees" when filing for reimbursement.

E. Passports and Visas

1. The University will reimburse employees for expenses incurred for the purchase of passports and visas for University business travel. Expenses, including a receipt for the passport or visas, must be fully documented and the employee must have active plans to travel internationally.
2. Expenses related to passports, birth certificates, and visas as a condition of employment are considered a personal expense. The University will not reimburse for such personal expenses.

F. Immunizations

1. The University will reimburse employees for expenses incurred for immunizations or medical tests, or both, when such items are required for University business travel.

G. Insurance

1. The University maintains a policy that covers international travelers, so the University will not reimburse employees if they purchase additional insurance coverage.

H. ATM (International Travel)

1. Employees may seek reimbursement for ATM fees only when on travel status in an international location and when utilizing an ATM is the optimal method to obtain physical currency.

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Lodging

I. Non-Conference Lodging

A. General Non-Conference Rates:

1. The University will pay for or reimburse employees for non-conference lodging as follows:
 - a) Continental United States: up to 150% above the [U.S. General Services Administration's per diem rates](#).
 - b) Alaska and Hawaii and U.S. Territories: up to 150% above the rate established by the [Department of Defense](#).
 - c) International locations: up to 150% above the rate established by the [Department of Defense](#).

B. Non-Conference Contracted Rates

1. Procurement Services' Contracted Hotels

- a) When an employee stays at a hotel that is under a contract negotiated by the University's procurement services offices, the University will reimburse up to the maximum contract rate. The University's purchasing agreements are available on [this website](#).
- b) If the contract allows the hotel to set blackout dates and an employee stays at the hotel during a black-out date, the University will reimburse the employee up to 150% of CONUS or OCONUS.

2. Other Contracts

- a) When the University contracts with a hotel for one-time use, the University will reimburse employees for the negotiated rate.

C. Travel Agency

1. The University's designated Travel Agency can assist employees in locating lodging rates that are within 150% of CONUS or OCONUS, as applicable. In the event that the Travel Agency cannot secure a rate within 150% of CONUS or OCONUS for a trip, the Travel Agency's staff will document that such a rate is not available and the rate booked is the lowest reasonable rate available at the time of the booking.
2. The documentation will be in the form of an e-mail and University employees must ensure that the email documentation is attached to the reimbursement request along with the hotel receipt. Employees who use this process will not be required to process the lodging as an exception.

D. Short-term Rentals

1. Employees may stay at short-term rental facilities from services such as Airbnb,

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Vacation Rental by Owner (VRBO), and others when traveling for business.

The University will reimburse the lesser of: the actual rate that the employee pays (including cleaning fees, service fees, and other charges), or up to 150% of the CONUS or OCONUS rate.

2. For clarity, this short-term rental section only applies to situations where the short-term rental agreement is between the individual employee and the owner (the University will not be a party to the short-term rental agreement).

II. Conference Lodging

- A. When an employee attends a conference, seminar, or group meeting and the conference or group has negotiated lodging rates, the University will reimburse employees at the conference's or group's negotiated rate.
- B. In the event the employee lodged in a hotel of their choice, the amount of the reimbursement will be limited to the lesser of 150% of CONUS or OCONUS, or the rate of the conference hotel.
- C. Employees must provide documentation from the conference organizer when submitting their reimbursement request. The conference documentation must contain:
 1. The name of the designated conference;
 2. The start and end dates of the conference; and
 3. The applicable room rates.
- D. The absence of the room rate in the conference documentation will limit the reimbursement to 150% of the CONUS or OCONUS rate.

III. Long-Term Lodging

- A. Employees on a travel status for more than 14 consecutive days may elect to rent an apartment rather than stay in a hotel (for purposes of these procedures, the University deems a stay longer than 14 consecutive days as long-term lodging). If an employee elects to rent an apartment, the rental agreement must be between the individual employee and the landlord. The University will not be a party to such an agreement.
- B. Department head approval is required before the employee may rent an apartment. For clarity, this section only applies to the scenario where the individual rents the apartment (for clarity, this long-term lodging section only applies when the University is not a party to the lease).
- C. The total cost of the apartment, including, but not limited to, any rental of furniture and payment of utilities, must not exceed the standard University lodging rate 150% of the applicable CONUS or OCONUS. In the event that an employee leases an

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apartment that costs more than 150% of CONUS or OCONUS, the maximum that that University will reimburse the employee is 150% of the applicable CONUS or OCONUS rate for the area in which the apartment is located.

IV. Sharing a Room

- A. The University does not require employees to share a room.
- B. When two employees authorized to travel on University business decide to share a room, each employee must pay for their own lodging and request their own receipt. They are entitled to a combined applicable lodging rate **and this does not need to be treated as an exception.** The same is true if the University authorizes two or more students to share a room when traveling for a University business purpose.
- C. If it is not possible to get separate receipts, one employee may pay the entire amount and claim the expenses.

V. Hotel Fees

- A. The University will reimburse employees for early departure fees, late check-out fees, and other fees, provided that the employee provides an explanation and receipts.

VI. Deposits

- A. The University encourages employees to avoid non-refundable advanced hotel room rates.
- B. If the lodging accommodation provider requires the employee to pay lodging in advance, employees may use their travel card or the University will reimburse employees before a trip.

Non-Employee Travel

I. Non-Employee Travel

- A. Defined
 - 1. Non-employee (guest) travelers are individuals who are not University employees, and who will incur travel expenses for a University business purpose.
 - 2. A non-exclusive list of examples of non-employee travelers includes, but is not limited to, job candidates, researchers, students, and speakers.
- B. Generally
 - 1. Departments must ensure that non-employee travel complies with the University's Travel policy and applicable procedures.
 - 2. If the University and a non-employee has a contract (see FI0420 – Contracts) or a purchase order (see FI0405 – Procurement), the University may negotiate with the non-employee to pay the non-employee a lump sum (such as a daily rate) in lieu of requiring the non-employee to comply with the University's travel policy. This option will result in more efficiencies University-wide in the

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travel process.

3. Non-employees likely will not be eligible to book travel utilizing the University's negotiated rates (or rates that providers only offer to government employees). By negotiating a lump sum for travel expenses, the University department avoids dealing with exceptions for travel expenses above the rates allowed by this policy and applicable procedures.

4. Before the University will pay for a non-employee's travel costs, the applicable department must ensure that the non-employee is set up as a "guest" in the ERP System and is assigned an employee number. When applicable, departments must set up former employees as "guests" in the ERP System.

II. Nonresident Aliens

A. Travel payments to nonresident aliens might be subject to withholding tax. To be non-taxable, the trip must have a University-business purpose and must benefit the University.

B. Nonresident aliens must complete the UT Foreign National Independent Contractor/Guest Traveler Payment form and document the purpose of the trip and attach the required documents for their immigration status as listed on <https://payroll.tennessee.edu/nonresident-alien/>.

1. If the destination is outside of the U.S., the only documentation that the University requires is the form titled, *Statement of Services Performed*.

C. If the University determines that a nonresident alien's trip is taxable, the University will gross-up (increase the amount to cover the trip plus taxes), and the department will be responsible for the full amount.

III. Transportation

A. The University's automobile insurance policy covers non-employees when:

1. The non-employee is traveling for a business purpose and
2. When the non-employee rents a vehicle through the University's Contracted Car Rental Agency.

B. If a non-employee engaging in domestic travel purchases loss/damage waiver or similar products to cover their personal liability, the University will not reimburse for those expenses.

IV. Contractors

A. If the University needs to reimburse a contractor for travel expenses in accordance with a contract, purchase order, or other arrangement, University departments must process such invoices through the ERP System and follow the standard process for contract, purchase order, or miscellaneous invoices, as applicable.

V. Signatures

A. Non-employees do not have to sign or certify their travel reimbursement request, but departments may share a draft reimbursement request with the non-employee to ensure accuracy. The department is authorized to submit the non-employee's travel expenses for reimbursement, and the University will directly reimburse the non-

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employee.

Per Diem Allowances

I. Per Diem Allowance

- A. Except as stated below in section (I)(D), when an employee is in travel status, an employee is eligible to claim per diem. The University will provide to employees a daily meal and incidental allowances based on CONUS or OCONUS meal and incidental rates for the location where the employee spends the night. The purpose of the per diem allowance is to compensate, in whole or in part, an employee for the additional expense of travel and disruption to normal day-to-day activities.
- B. Employees may, but are not required to, deduct meals from their per diem allowance if a conference or third-party (non-University) entity or individual provides meals.
- C. Department heads have authority to require employees to deduct meals from their per diem if a conference or third-party (non-University) entity or individual provided a meal or meals.
- D. Employees must deduct meals that the University provides through a University-hosted event. For example, if the employee attends a University-hosted conference and the University provides lunch as part of the conference, the employee must deduct the lunch from their per diem reimbursement.

II. Travel Days

- A. The University will provide 75% of the normal reimbursement rate for the employee's day of departure and day of return, regardless of the employee's time of departure or return.

III. Meal Allowance for One-Day Trips

- A. The University will provide an employee 75% of the meal per diem for one-day travel from their primary work location, if the trip is completed in one calendar day and is at least 12 hours long and does not exceed 24 hours.
- B. The University will use the destination location for purposes of per diem.
- C. The University does not provide per diem for trips that are shorter than 12 hours.

Reimbursement Procedures

I. Generally

- A. Employees may obtain a University travel card in accordance with applicable University policies and procedures, or employees may pay their own expenses and seek reimbursement. Non-employees are ineligible for travel cards.

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II. Eligibility

- A. An employee is considered to be on travel status and eligible for allowed reimbursement beginning from the employee's departure from their primary work location.

III. Primary Work Location

- A. Generally, the primary work location of an employee is the employee's primary duty station reflected in the ERP System. If an employee is temporarily reassigned to a work location other than their usual location, the temporary location will be the employee's primary work location until the temporary assignment ends.
- B. If an employee seeks reimbursement when starting a trip from anywhere other than their primary work location, the employee must provide a statement (in the Travel System's "comment" section) explaining the reason. Failure to enter a statement in the comment section will result in the reimbursement request being delayed.
- C. The University will not reimburse an employee for travel to their temporary duty station, unless the employee documents that by commuting to the temporary duty station, the employee incurs additional expenses over what the cost of their commute would have been to their primary work location.

IV. Timing

- A. The University will not reimburse expenses more than 6 months in advance of the trip.
- B. 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.

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- C. In accordance with IRS guidelines, claims not submitted within 120 days after the trip ends might be considered taxable income. The University System Accounts Payable Office will report any reimbursement requests filed after 120 days to Payroll.

V. **Process**

- A. Employees will submit their travel expenses in the University's Travel System.
B. Employees must attach all relevant documentation, including receipts (cross reference).

VI. **Receipts**

- A. The University requires receipts in the following circumstances:
1. If an employee utilizes a University travel card for the expense, the University requires a receipt for expenses that are more than \$75.00.
 2. If the employee does not have a travel card, the University requires receipts for expenses that are more than \$50.00.
- B. Each receipt must:
1. Be issued by the vendor.
 2. Be legible.
 3. Show method of payment.
 4. Include the amount.
 5. Include the date of purchase.
 6. Include details of the charge(s).
 7. Include applicable taxes.
 8. Reflect line-item and total charges.
- C. Additionally, receipts for lodging must:
1. Include the vendor's name and address.
 2. Include the name of the individual occupying the room.
 3. Include the daily room rate.
 4. Be issued by the lodging provider.
- D. Except as specified below, credit card statements do not qualify as a receipt. Due to the nature of the following transactions, the University will consider a credit card statement as a receipt for the following transactions (if the employee paid for these expenses out-of-pocket using a personal payment method):
1. Ground transportation (excluding rental cars).
 2. Tolls.
 3. Baggage fees.
 4. Parking.
- E. For an out-of-pocket expense (that is, not on the University's travel card), if an employee fails to obtain a receipt or loses the receipt, the employee must either submit a missing-receipt declaration or a written explanation of the lack of a receipt, and will provide whatever documentation the employee has available, such as a credit card

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statement.

VII. Scanned or Photographed Documents

- A. The University utilizes a fully electronic travel reimbursement process. Employees must either scan or photograph receipts and attach the receipts to their travel reimbursement request.
- B. Employees must attach all applicable records to their reimbursement request, including conference brochures, receipts, and other relevant documentation.
- C. If a department utilizes grant funds to pay a reimbursement request, the department is responsible for maintaining documentation consistent with the grant's requirements and following all procedures that the grant requires.

VIII. Personal Travel Combined with Business Travel

- A. If an employee adds personal time while at a business location, the following applies:
 - 1. Airfare: The University will reimburse the entire amount of airfare.
 - 2. All other costs: The University will not reimburse any expenses that the employee incurs during the personal portion of the trip (other than airfare to the business location).

Rewards and Other Customer Loyalty Programs

I. Generally

- A. When traveling for a business purpose, University employees may earn points and miles associated with airline, hotel, and rental car customer loyalty programs. The loyalty-program accounts must be in the individual's name.
- B. Only the University System Administration Office of Finance may create and maintain rewards program accounts under the University's name.
- C. Employees may not earn "meeting planner" points when booking meeting space or planning events for the University.

II. Rewards Points for Personal Use Only

- A. Employees may use rewards points for personal travel or to upgrade business travel.
- B. The University will not reimburse employees for any costs associated with redeeming rewards points, even if the redemption is for University business.

Train Transportation

- I. Employees may travel by train (including subway transit systems).
- II. Employees must purchase a coach-class fare. If an employee purchases a first-class or business-class fare, the employee must process this purchase as an exception and must explain the business purpose for the purchase.

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Travel Advances

- I. Generally
 - A. Employees may request a travel advance if their situation falls within one or more of the following circumstances:
 1. The employee does not have a travel card;
 2. The employee is traveling with a student or a group of students; or
 3. The employee will engage in International Travel.
 - B. Cash advances constitute a loan from the University to the employee. By requesting a travel advance, employees agree that the University may deduct all amounts that the employees owes the University from the employee's pay.
- II. Process
 - A. Employees may request a travel advance using the Travel System.
 - B. Excluding athletics travel, if an employee seeks \$10,000 or more, the Chief Business Officer must review the request. Each campus may set a threshold for Athletics at which the Chief Business Officer will review. Without a defined threshold for Athletics, the request will not route to the Chief Business Officer.
 - C. The University will not process a travel advance more than 10 days before the travel departure date.
 - D. When the University approves the travel advance, the University will provide the travel advance to the employee through the payment method on file with the University's Payroll Office.
 - E. Upon completion of the trip, employees must submit a travel expense report within 30 days of the end of the trip. The University will deduct the amount of the advance from the total out-of-pocket expenses that the employee incurred.
 1. If an employee does not submit the travel expense report within 30 days of the end of the trip, the University will deduct the entire amount of the outstanding advance from the employee's next payroll check or future business reimbursements.
 2. Employees who fail to submit a travel expense report within 30 days of the end of the trip will forfeit future cash advance privileges.

Travel Authorization Requests

- I. When Required
 - a. The University requires employees to submit a Travel Request only for International Travel.

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- b. If an employee is traveling with a group, the employees may submit a single travel request for International Travel. If known, all individuals traveling in the group must be listed on the travel request or as an attachment to the request.
- c. Employees must submit their International Travel request at least 10 business days in advance of their planned departure date.

II. Failure to Obtain an Approved International Travel Request

- a. The University will not reimburse employees for International Travel without these pre-authorizations:
 - 1. If the travel is to a country on the Federal Export Control list, the campus/institute's export control office must also approve the request.
 - 2. Campuses may also require additional registration in their international risk management systems.

III. Board Members and Officers of the University

- A. Members of the Board of Trustees and Officers of the University as defined by the Bylaws of the University of Tennessee Board of Trustees do not require authorization to travel internationally.

I. Travel Dates: Business Travel Start and End Dates

- A. Domestic: When an employee must travel within the United States for a University-business purpose, the employee may incur travel expenses starting one day each way before and after the event.
- B. International: When an employee must travel internationally for a University business purpose, the employee may incur travel expenses two days each way before and after the event.

Travel Packages

I. Generally

- a. The University will reimburse employees when a travel package (airfare, lodging and rental car) is purchased to obtain the best overall cost for a trip.
- b. The package, however, must not contain any expenses for which the University will not reimburse, including, without limitation, first-class airfare, or lodging that exceeds 150% of the applicable CONUS or OCONUS lodging rate for the location of travel.
- c. The receipt for the travel package must provide an itemization of each expense included and the **class of airfare must be documented.**
- d. **Booking and/or travel agency fees associated with travel packages are not reimbursable, unless the travel package is booked through the University's Travel Agency.**

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Penalties/Disciplinary Action for Non-Compliance

Failure to follow this procedure will result in the University not reimbursing all or part of the travel reimbursement claim.

Responsible Official & Additional Contacts

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