

System-wide Policy: FI0531 - Travel Cards	
Version: 1	Effective Date: 09/01/2020

FI0531 – Travel Cards

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Objective:

To provide policies and procedures to departmental personnel on the use of university travel cards. Obtaining a travel card is optional and is intended to reduce the out of pocket burden for employees, guests and students who travel on behalf of the university.

Policy:

Eligibility

1. Faculty, staff and student employees are eligible for a Travel Card provided they meet the following criteria:
 - a. Have active employment status, in good standing
 - b. Have their application approved by their department head and their campus/institute travel card coordinator
 - c. Review training materials and successfully complete the travel card questionnaire which includes the travel cardholder agreement.
2. Non-employees are not eligible for a card, including students and guests.

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Obtaining the Card, Increasing Limits

3. There are two types of travel cards:
 - a. Cards issued for individual travel.
 - b. Cards issued to an individual responsible for paying the travel expenses of more than one individual. These would typically be used for team travel or study abroad trips.
4. All applications are processed through the Concur travel system. They are routed electronically to the employee's department head and to their campus coordinator for approval. In addition to completing the application, prospective cardholders must also successfully complete the training and questionnaire housed in the [K@TE](#), the University's learning management system. The campus/institute has final authorization for the approval of a travel card request.
5. Increases or decreases for the card are also processed in the Concur travel system. These are routed to their department head and the Campus/institute's Chief Business Officer for approval.

Occasional Travelers, Students and Guest Travel

6. It is acceptable for a travel cardholder to place business related travel expenses for occasional travelers, guests or students on their card. Examples would include airfare for guests coming to job interviews or airfare for students to present papers at academic events. If there is a recurring need in a department to pay for these types of expenses, the department may request an individual travel card for this purpose. The cardholder, however, is responsible for all charges placed on the card, obtaining acceptable receipts, ensuring that the purchases comply with policy, and processing the transactions in the travel expense system. Cardholders should **NEVER** give their travel card to occasional travelers, guests or students. If these guests or students incur additional out of pocket expenses, their Concur delegate must complete their expense report in Concur to reimburse them for their expenses. The expense report should note any expenses paid by someone else on their behalf.

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Suspension and Cancellation

7. The university may suspend or cancel a Travel Card at any time. The most common reasons for doing this are:
 - a. The card has not been used for 18 consecutive months
 - b. It is suspected that fraudulent transactions have been made with the card
 - c. The travel card transactions have not been processed within 30 days from the trip end date
 - d. The cardholder is under investigation for misuse
 - e. The cardholder is transferring to a different department or role or is leaving the university
 - f. The cardholder has failed to follow this policy or has violated the university's travel policy
 - g. Excessive personal/non-reimbursable items are being charged to the card, even if these items have been repaid
 - h. The cardholder fails to use the university's preferred travel agency for airfare purchases
 - i. First or business class airfare is purchased with the card
 - j. Failing to provide receipts for travel card transactions
8. Once a card is suspended or cancelled because of negligent behavior or misuse by the cardholder, they are not eligible for another card or cash advances and they will be responsible for procuring any business-related travel expenses and requesting reimbursement.
9. Any employee who makes fraudulent charges on the card is prohibited from obtaining a card or cash advances in the future and they will be subject to disciplinary action, including termination of their employment. All fraudulent charges will be deducted from the employee's pay.

Acceptable Uses for Travel Card

10. The Travel Card may be used for the purchase of business travel expenses on behalf of the university that are reasonable and comply with policy. Policy violations may result in the card being suspended and/or unallowable charges being deducted from the cardholder's pay. The following is a list of categories for which the Travel Card is recommended:
 - a. Air, rail, bus, ground transportation, and shuttle transportation – **NOTE: First Class or Business Class Airfares are prohibited and will result in the card being cancelled;**

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- b. Car and van rentals. **Note: Campus motor pools must be utilized for local rentals;**
- c. Gasoline for rental vehicles; **Note: UT's gas card must be used for UT cars.**
- d. Hotel deposits and reservations including those for student and employee groups and official university guests. The card may be used even if a contract exists.
- e. Miscellaneous business expenses such as parking, internet, and office supplies that are needed for conducting university business while in travel status;
- f. Business meals while in a travel status – See the meal per diem section below for additional information;
- g. Conference registration fees;
- h. 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.

Prohibited Purchases

11. The following purchases may not be made with the card and will result in the card being suspended:
- a. Item prohibited by the [University's Travel Policy FI0705](#), including but not limited to:
 - i. First or business class airfare,
 - ii. Local car rentals (unless documentation exists that the motor pool wasn't able to provide a vehicle),
 - iii. Luxury vehicles,
 - b. Gas for personal vehicles, if mileage is also being claimed;
 - c. Gas for UT vehicles;
 - d. Personal expenses;
 - e. Travel expenses for spouses, family members or guests, who are not traveling on official university business;
 - f. Souvenirs;
 - g. Gift cards;
 - h. Cash;
 - i. Equipment needed while traveling that exceeds \$1,500;
 - j. Goods or services that are not needed while traveling;

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Card Holder Responsibilities

12. The travel card holder has the following responsibilities:

- a. Use the card for prudent and reasonable business travel expenses;
- b. Ensure that all charges comply with university procurement and travel policies;
- c. Process all transactions in the Concur Expense system within 30 days after the trip has ended;
- d. Obtain receipts for all purchases exceeding \$10;
- e. Never let anyone borrow your travel card;
- f. Immediately report any fraudulent or suspicious transaction to the System Procurement Card Administrator and the Campus Card Administrator;
- g. Request the cancelation of the card, if you are leaving the university or transferring to another department;
- h. Immediately start the transaction dispute process if an amount or charge doesn't appear correct;
- i. Ensuring that expenses to sponsored projects comply with the sponsoring agency's policies.
- j. Once awarded, cardholders are expected to complete a refresh training if and when the card is renewed.

Department Head Responsibilities

13. Department heads have the following responsibilities:

- a. Only approve travel card requests for employees who are responsible, in good standing and capable of properly performing the responsibilities that come with the card;
- b. Establish procedures that ensure travel card transactions are processed in a timely manner, comply with policy and applicable receipts are attached with each transaction;
- c. Review all travel card transactions for compliance with travel policies, departmental procedures and any spending limit constraints;
- d. For any cardholders that are leaving the university or transferring to another department, ensure that the card is obtained from the cardholder and steps are

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taken to cancel the card. They should work with their campus card coordinator when cancelling cards.

- e. Reporting any suspicious or fraudulent transactions to the System Program Administer;
- f. Fully cooperate with any audits, investigation or reviews of the travel card program;
- g. Assist with the collection of any funds owed back by employees in their department;
- h. Initiate any request for spending limit increases/decreases based on anticipated usage by employees in the department;


Processing Travel Card Transactions

- 14. All travel card transactions will be uploaded into Concur, the university’s travel expense system. If the cardholder fails to see their transactions within a week, they should contact the System Accounts Payable Office for assistance. The employee should process these transactions as soon as their trip has ended. Failure to process these transactions in a timely manner will result in cancellation of the card and the charges may be reported as taxable income to the employee.
- 15. Receipts must be attached to all transactions exceeding \$10 before they can be processed. Credit card receipts do not qualify as a receipt except for ground transportation, parking, baggage fees, or tolls.
- 16. The cardholder’s department head and their campus/institute travel auditors will review all transactions. If the transactions are not processed in a timely manner, the cardholder’s immediate supervisor will also be required to review the transactions.

Processing Meal Purchases

- 17. Employees are provided a meal per diem in accordance with the [federal CONUS and OCONUS rates](#). However, the per diem is not received by the employee until their expense report is processed, which is after their trip. Therefore, it is acceptable to purchase meals with the travel card while traveling. To net these meal transactions against the allowable per diem, the employee must assign the credit card transaction to the expense type “Meals – Actual” and check the box “Deduct from Per Diem”. See the reference image below.

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Expense Type * 

Meals - Actual
▼


Exception? *

No
▼


Report/Trip Purpose *

Instruction/Teaching
▼

Transaction Date *


MM/DD/YYYY

City of Purchase *


▼

Payment Type *

Out-of-Pocket
▼

Amount *

Currency *

US, Dollar
▼

Deduct from Per Diem

18. The “Meals - Actual” amounts will be netted against the allowable meal per diems. If the “Meals – Actual” exceed the per diems, the employee may owe the difference to the University, if they have no other out of pocket expenses. Any amounts owed to the University will be deducted from their next payroll check.

19. Meals for two or more people should be expensed using the expense type “Group arranged meals/events” or “Entertainment” depending on the purpose. The corresponding meal per diem should be deducted from the expense report for all individuals attending the event and claiming a meal per diem.

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Processing Personal Purchases

20. The travel card may not be used for personal purchases, except for instances when they cannot be easily separated from a business charge. An example would include rental car charges for personal days before or after a business trip. When personal charges are incurred in these exceptional cases, the cardholder should identify them under the expense type “Non-Reimbursable or Personal” in the travel expense system. The system will then deduct these charges from any out of pocket expenses. If the personal charges exceed the out of pocket expenses, the amount will be deducted from the cardholders next payroll check. Excessive personal charges will result in the card being cancelled.

Lost/Stolen Cards, Fraudulent/Disputed Transactions

21. The cardholder’s transactions will be uploaded daily into the Concur expense module and it is important that these be reviewed in a timely manner. If fraudulent transactions or inaccurate transactions are identified, the cardholder should immediately call the bank at 1-888-449-2273 or collect at 602-379-8753. The System Program Administrator should also be notified at ap_cardadmin@tennessee.edu or 865-974-2302 having completed the [Statement of Disputed Item form](#). If the card is lost or stolen call the contact information above to report it to the bank and System Program Administrator.

Any fraudulent or disputed charges and their corresponding credits must be assigned to an expense report with a business purpose of “Fraudulent/Disputed Charge” and they should be processed in Concur. This will clear these charges from the traveler’s inbox and allow for a proper reconciliation with the charges from the bank. The System Accounts Payable Office can assist with this process at ap_cardadmin@tennessee.edu or 865-974-2302.

Declined Transactions

22. If a travel card transaction is declined for a reason unclear to the cardholder, they should contact the bank’s customer service number on the back of the card. Common reasons for declines include exceeding established spending limits, card expirations and the merchant category code is blocked.

PROCEDURES:

To view links to campus policies and procedures, visit:
<https://policy.tennessee.edu/campus-policies-procedures>

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FOR MORE INFORMATION:

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Related Policies: [FI0705 - Travel](#)