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Contact Dept: Finance Dept.
Phone: 251-6472

Policies and Procedures

Subject: Travel, Transportation, Per Diem - Regulations and Rates

I. PURPOSE OF POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

- A. Budget Manual – **5.0-5.11** (www.osbm.stat.nc.us) sets forth travel policies and regulations relative to securing authorization and reimbursement of expenditures for official State travel. The administration and control of travel is in accordance with the provisions of G. S. 138.5, 138.6 and 138.7. (www.ncga.State.nc.us)
- B. State officers, State employees, members of State boards, commissions and committees may have their actual travel expenses reimbursed by the State, subject to the limitations contained in these policies. An employee traveling on official state business is expected to exercise the same care in incurring expenses that a prudent person would exercise if traveling on personal business and expending personal funds. Excess costs, circuitous routes, delays, or luxury accommodation and services unnecessary, unjustified, or for the convenience or personal preference of the employee in the performance of official state business are prohibited. Requests for reimbursement shall be filed within 30 days after the travel period ends for which the reimbursement is being requested. (State policy 5.0.2) Under no circumstances may duplicate reimbursement be made for that portion of an employee's expenses paid or reimbursed by a Non-State source.
- C. All travel reimbursements are contingent upon the proper approvals and authorizations and the availability of funds in the proper budget code.
- D. These regulations are to be followed in the disbursement of funds from the Financial Affairs Office for both State funds and Non-State funds.

II. DEFINITION OF TERMS

- A. For purposes of these policies, the following definitions apply:
 - 1. Travel: All activities involving expenses for transportation, subsistence or registration which are authorized to be paid from State or Non-State funds or which involve State vehicles for transportation. Official State business occurs when the State employee is traveling to attend approved job related training and/or work on behalf of, officially represent, or provide a State service upon the State's request. Travel that would not directly benefit the State will not be reimbursable.
 - 2. Agency: Any State agency, department, institution, commission or other organization operating from funds deposited with the State Treasurer.

3. State Funds: Any funds derived from State appropriations. (Any fund beginning with number 2).
4. State Employee: Any employee, whether temporary, permanent, trust or State funded, who is paid on a State agency payroll with either State funds or Non-State funds.
5. Non-State Employee:
 - (a) A consultant whose compensation will be paid from a general expense subhead rather than from a payroll.
 - (b) An employee of another governmental jurisdiction - local or federal - in whose travel the State may have a business interest.
 - (c) A prospective teacher or other prospective State employee.
 - (d) A student in a State, public college, or university.
6. Duty Station: The job location to which assigned.
7. Subsistence: Lodging and meals.
8. Conference/Convention: A formal gathering for the purpose of conducting business and exchanging information.
9. Institute: A formal gathering for the purpose of training and instruction.
10. Common Carrier: Commercial scheduled airplane, rail and bus.
11. In-State: Within the borders of North Carolina.
12. Out-of-State: All of the continental United States except North Carolina. Out-of-State travel status begins when the employee leaves the State and remains in effect until the employee returns to the State.
13. Out-of-Country: Anywhere not included in the two definitions above.
14. Travel Officer: Employee within the Financial Affairs Office who is designated to audit and approve travel reimbursements.
15. Curriculum-Related Travel: Travel for which an authorized faculty member has an accredited course of study and is participating in a pre-approved activity requiring off-campus related travel expenses.

III. STATUTORY PROVISIONS GOVERNING TRAVEL AND EXPENSE ALLOWANCES

A. Transportation Allowances for State Officers and Employees

Expenses for travel on official business by employees of State departments, institutions and agencies, which operate from State, or Non-State funds deposited with the State Treasurer, shall be reimbursed at the following rates as set forth by legislation enacted by the General Assembly.

1. **Transportation by Personal Vehicle**

Actual mileage is reimbursable. Mileage is measured from the closer of duty station or point of departure to destination (and return).

(a) The State Employee should contact the Campus Operations Department at 251-6564 to see if a university vehicle is available. Based on the approximate round-trip mileage, the Campus Operations Department will be able to tell you whether a State vehicle or a rental car would be more cost efficient.

(b) If a State Employee chooses to use their personal vehicle even though a university vehicle is available, they will be reimbursed at the motor fleet rate for mileage. To see the current mileage rate, go to:

http://www.unca.edu/controller/travel_information.html

(c) If a university vehicle was not available, the employee will be reimbursed at the business standard mileage rate set by the Internal Revenue Service. To see the current mileage rate, go to:

http://www.unca.edu/controller/travel_information.html

2. **Transportation by Common Carrier**

For transportation by airline, bus, railroad, Pullman or other conveyance, actual tourist class fare, substantiated by a receipt will be reimbursed. UNC Asheville requires boarding passes on all air travel.

B. Meals during Daily Travel

Subsistence:

Travel allowances for State officers and employees - Travel on official State business by the officers and employees of State departments, institutions and agencies, which operate from funds deposited with the State Treasurer shall be reimbursed at the State per diem rate. The current per diem rates can be found at:

http://www.unca.edu/controller/travel_information.html

Note: Reimbursement for individual meals can be below per diem but cannot exceed the per diem rate. No receipts for individual meals are necessary. An employee may request reimbursement for actual expenses if they are less than the allowable rates. If expenses are greater than the allowable per diem, the reimbursement to the employee is limited to the per diem amount.

- Breakfast: to claim breakfast, the employee must depart their duty station prior to 6:00 am.
- Lunch: to claim lunch, the employee must depart their duty station prior to Noon (day of departure), and it has to be an over-night trip. When returning from a trip, employee must return to duty station after 2:00 pm in order to claim lunch.
- Dinner: to claim dinner, the employee must depart duty station prior to 5:00 pm (day of departure) or return to duty station after 8:00 pm (day of return).

Employees may be reimbursed per diem for meals for partial days of travel when in overnight travel status and the partial day is the day of departure or the day of return.

Travel must involve a travel destination located at least 35 miles from the employee's regularly assigned duty station or home, whichever is less.

One-day trips do not allow for lunch reimbursements. However, employees can be eligible for allowances for breakfast if they leave before 6:00 am and dinner if they return after 8:00 pm.

A State employee may be reimbursed for meals, including lunches, when the employee's job requires his attendance at the meeting of a board, commission, committee, or council in his official capacity and the meal is preplanned as part of the meeting for the entire group. Such meetings must include persons other than the employees of a single State department, institution, or agency.

C. Lodging During Travel

Lodging is reimbursed at the State per diem rate. The current per diem rates can be found at:

http://www.unca.edu/controller/travel_information.html

The payment of sales tax, local tax, or lodging tax applied to the cost of lodging is allowed in addition to the lodging per diem rate and is to be paid as a lodging expense. (G.S. 138-6(a)(32)). www.ncga.State.nc.us

Supervisory individuals certifying the reimbursement requests as necessary must require documentation from the employee to substantiate that overnight lodging was necessary and accomplished. For this purpose, UNC at Asheville's policy requires that specific dates of lodging be listed on the reimbursement request and substantiated by a zero-balance receipt from the commercial lodging establishment.

Excess lodging authorization for in-State, out-of-State, and out-of-country travel must be obtained in advance from the department head or their designee. Excess lodging is allowed for one of the following reasons. (State Policy 5.1.7)

- The employee will be in a high-cost area and unable to secure lodging within the current allowance. To achieve a better level of control, the Travel Officer will review reimbursements for hotel expenditures exceeding the State per diem rates and for State compliance.
- The employee feels that their personal safety or security is unattainable within the current allowance. If claiming for this reason, the employee must submit in writing a statement expressing this concern.

Excess lodging authorization is not allowed for reason of convenience or personal preference for the employee.

The employee may exceed the part of the ceiling allocated for lodging without approval for over-expenditure provided that the total lodging and food reimbursement that the employee is entitled to for that day does not exceed the maximum allowed daily subsistence (G.S. 138-6(a)(3)). www.ncga.State.nc.us

D. General Statements

1. Tips and Gratuities—Reasonable tips are reimbursable. Reimbursement for gratuity or tips must be considered reasonable for items that are not already covered under subsistence. Excessive tips will not be reimbursed. A reasonable tip would be one that a prudent person would give if traveling or conducting personal business and expending personal funds. (State Policy 5.1.3)
For example:
 - \$1-\$2 per bag for luggage service at hotel or airport
 - \$1-\$2 per night for hotel housekeeping
 - \$1-\$2 for valet parking, when valet parking is the only option
 - \$1-\$2 per bag for shuttle drivers
 - \$1-\$2 plus 15% of fare for taxi drivers
 - There will be no reimbursing of tips for room service.Gratuities are to be charged to the “miscellaneous” account code-see listing below.
2. Telephone calls An employee who is in travel status for two or more consecutive nights in a week is allowed one personal long-distance telephone call for each two nights of travel. The reimbursement may not exceed \$3.00 for each in-State call or \$5.00 for each out-of-State call. Official phone calls are reimbursable. Individual calls over \$5.00 must be identified as to point of origin and destination. Telephone calls are to be charged to the “miscellaneous” account code- see listing below.
3. Tolls, Taxi, Shuttle The actual cost of taxi, tolls and shuttle fares is reimbursable with a receipt when required for travel on State business. Use of Public Transportation can be reimbursed without receipt if under \$5 for each one-way trip, or the cost of a weekly subway or bus pass when turning in the pass. These expenses are to be charged to the “Transportation/Ground” account code- see listing below.
4. Passport reimbursement for the cost incurred in obtaining or renewing a passport may be made to an employee who in the regular course of his duties, is required to travel overseas in the furtherance of official State business. Passport expenses are chargeable to the same fund that supports the employee’s trip and to the “miscellaneous” account code- see listing below.
5. Parking expenses are reimbursable while in the course of conducting official State business as long as such expenses are determined reasonable and clearly show that there was care taken to keep the costs to the State as low as possible. Any parking rates considered excessive and only for the convenience of the employee will not be reimbursable. Parking expenses are to be charged to the “miscellaneous” account code-see listing below.
6. Internet Hook-up Fees Employees traveling on State business who need to transmit data electronically (including email) or use the Internet for State business purposes should use the most cost-efficient manner available. These expenses are to be charged to the “miscellaneous” account code- see listing below.
7. Convention, Conference, Institute Registration State law allows reimbursement for the actual amount of convention, conference, or institute registration fees as shown by a valid paid receipt or invoice. These expenses are to be charged to “registration fees” account code- see listing below.
8. Reimbursements Prior to Travel We pay reimbursements to the employee after their return from the trip—never before. If you need the conference event or hotel paid prior to travel, we suggest you request that the University pre-pay an organization before the event. Just obtain the invoicing information, attach to a Check Request,

and send to our Accounts Payable Department. The University will then pay directly to the conference event, hotel. See page 7 for Prepayment exceptions.

IV. STATE POLICIES REGARDING TRAVEL

A. Authorization Procedure

1. Written approval by the department head or their designee must be obtained prior to all travel. The "Authorization to Travel" form is to be used and can be found on the UNC Asheville web-site. If the employee is only claiming mileage, the "Authorization to Travel" form is not necessary.

In addition, further written authorization must be secured from the department head and their designee for the following:

- (a) Excess Lodging Expenses.
(See section III. Statutory Provisions, C. Lodging During Travel)
 - (b) When the Travel Authorization expense amount are insufficient to cover the actual expenses.
2. Blanket Travel Authorizations are normally given to designated individuals from Senior Staff, Athletics, Admissions, and Development offices. Any other Blanket Travel Authorizations will be approved on a case-to-case basis. Blanket Travel Authorization extends for a year and is renewed at the beginning of each fiscal year.

B. Action to Be Taken Before a Trip

When planning to travel by automobile, the employee should contact the Physical Plant Division Motor Pool secretary (Ext. 6284) to reserve a State car if a State car is desired.

Necessary approvals as shown in Section IV-A must be obtained prior to travel.

C. Travel Advances

State employees who have been issued state credit cards for travel purposes should not be issued travel advances unless there is substantiated justification. The only exception to this policy is for:

- Athletics Department Team Travel and Recruiting

A travel advance may not be issued more than five (5) working days prior to the date of departure. Travel advances are not to exceed one month duration and must be paid back within 30 days of the end of travel. At fiscal year end, advances must be paid back during the month of June if derived from STATE FUNDS. (See II. Definition of Terms, A. 3.) No advances will be given to a Non-State Employee. If the trip is canceled or the traveler's employment is terminated, the advance should be returned immediately.

D. Prepayments

Generally, when using state funds or trust funds that follow state rules and regulations, goods and service must be received prior to payment being made. However, prepayments will be allowed in certain cases where the price of the conference or lodging is non-refundable or where conference registration is required to be paid by credit card, or to obtain significant price reductions. Supporting documentation will be required.

Prepayments are also allowed for air-fare reimbursements and Curriculum-Related Travel.

Curriculum-Related Travel is defined as travel for which an authorized faculty member has an accredited course of study and is participating in a pre-approved activity requiring off-campus related travel expenses.

E. Action to Be Taken Upon Return from a Trip

Upon return from travel, the employee should complete a "Travel Reimbursement" form. This form should be signed by both the employee and the appropriate approving signature. The appropriate approving signature is to be one of the following: Department head or their designee, a Vice Chancellor, the Chief of Staff, or the Chancellor, depending upon which of these persons the employee falls under within the organization chart. This individual should then forward the "Travel Reimbursement" form with the "Authorization to Travel" form and all receipts to the Travel Officer in the Financial Affairs Office for final review. Original receipts for lodging bills, registration fees, and travel ticket stubs must be attached to the form; other receipts as may be conveniently obtained should also be attached. Requests for reimbursement shall be filed within 30 days after the travel period ends for which the reimbursement is being requested. (State Policy 5.0.2)

The above mentioned forms may be obtained on the UNC Asheville web site under "Faculty and Staff"; "Financial Affairs Office" "Travel."

The proper account codes must be used on the "Travel Reimbursement" form to break down the travel expense into the following:

Account Code	In-State	Account Code	Out-of-State
731110	Transportation/Air	731210	Transportation/Air
731120	Transportation/Ground	731220	Transportation/Ground
731130	Transportation/Other	731230	Transportation/Other
731140	Subsistence/Lodging	731240	Subsistence/Lodging
731150	Subsistence/Meals	731250	Subsistence/Meals
731160	Other Travel Expenses	731260	Other Travel Expenses
731190	Registration Fees	731290	Registration Fees

Account Code	Out-of-Country	Account Code	Non-Employee
731310	Transportation/Air	731410	All Transportation
731320	Transportation/Ground	731440	Meals & Lodging
731330	Transportation/Other	749260	Miscellaneous
731340	Subsistence/Lodging		
731350	Subsistence/Meals		
731360	Other Travel Expenses		
731390	Registration Fees		

Travel of board members is to be charged to the same account code as an employee.

V. TRANSPORTATION

A. General Policy

Authorization of the mode of travel is to be made by the department head or their designee and is subject to these regulations.

B. State Cars

When travel by car is determined to be feasible, a State car, if available, may be used instead of a private car.

1. State-owned cars shall be used for official State business only. "G. S. 14-247. Private use of publicly owned vehicle is unlawful for any officer, agent or employee of the State of North Carolina, or of any county or of any institution or agency of the State, to use for any private purpose whatsoever any motor vehicle of any type or description whatsoever belonging to the State, or to any county, or to any institution or agency of the State."
2. Drivers shall observe all local and State ordinances pertaining to the operation of motor vehicles. Any fines imposed for any violation which was under the control of the driver shall be the responsibility of the driver.
3. "G. S. 58-194.1. Liability insurance required for State-owned vehicles---Every department, agency or institution of the State shall acquire motor vehicle liability insurance on all State owned motor vehicles under its control." To achieve economy in providing insurance coverage for State-owned vehicles, blanket policies have been obtained, the premiums for which are paid by State agencies on a pro rata basis. Insurance policies on cars and trucks have liability limits of \$100,000 - \$500,000. The maximum liability of the State for each accident is \$100,000 per person for bodily injury and/or property damage with \$500,000 maximum liability for five or more persons. Any liability above the State limit is the responsibility of the employee under their personal automobile liability insurance policy.
4. Hitchhikers are not permitted to ride in State-owned vehicles. Wives or husbands of State Employees may accompany them in State cars if ample space is available and all travel is strictly for official State business. Children of State Employees may not be passengers in State cars driven by the employee.
5. Non-State Employees may accompany State Employees in State cars when they have a business interest in the travel. Students of State universities and colleges may be passengers in State cars for athletics and other activities officially sanctioned by the institution, provided the proper account is reimbursed at the standard mileage cost rate by the student activity fund involved.
6. When a State-owned car is used for official travel, parking and storage fees, tolls and required repairs are legitimate charges to the State, provided necessary receipts are obtained. Reimbursement of expense for airport parking for both private and State-owned cars is limited to 48 hours, with the receipt required for any charges exceeding one dollar (\$1.00).
7. At the employee's destination, State cars may be used prudently for travel to obtain meals, but not for private purposes or for entertainment while off duty. No common carrier or public transportation fares are reimbursable on a trip on which an employee uses a State car, unless it is shown that such transportation was more economical in a particular situation.

C. Private Cars

1. Use of Private Cars for Convenience of the Employee:

- (a) If a State car is available, but the State Employee wishes to use their private cars for personal convenience, the rate charged is the motor fleet rate. To see the current rates, go to: http://www.unca.edu/controller/travel_information.html
- (b) If two or more individuals are attending the same meeting and a State car is provided, it is expected that up to five persons will travel in a sedan and up to seven in a nine-passenger station wagon. If an individual elects to drive his own car in a situation where he could ride with others, no mileage is authorized. If two or more individuals are attending the same meeting and a State car is not available, it is expected that up to five persons will travel in one private car. In such a case, only the owner of the car will be paid mileage.
- (c) Reimbursement of costs incurred through use of a private car should be for direct mileage between points on the employee's itinerary.
- (d) Reimbursement may not be made for commuting between an employee's home and his duty station.
- (e) Reimbursement for mileage and parking charges resulting from use of an employee's private car for transportation to and from airline terminals and employee's duty station and/or home whichever is closer may be made on the basis of one round trip private car and parking charges. Travel is reimbursed in accordance with the IRS issued mileage rate. (www.osdbm.State.nc.us)
- (f) Parking requires a receipt. If the employee traveling chooses to use a taxi to get to and from the airline terminal, they will be required to turn in the receipts and will be reimbursed the amount of the receipt up to \$40.00 for round trip and \$20 for one-way trip. Reimbursement of expense for airport parking for both private and State-owned cars is limited to 48 hours, with the receipt required for any charges exceeding one dollar (\$1.00).

D. Commercial Airlines

Tickets for commercial air travel may be purchased by the employee and claimed on their expense account or charged to the agency. Air coach or tourist service shall be used when available. A receipt is required for reimbursement. Flight insurance is not reimbursable. For reimbursement, boarding passes are to be turned in along with the scheduling information which shows the cost of the ticket.

E. Baggage Fees

Travelers are encouraged to keep baggage fees to a minimum by traveling within the standard guidelines used by airlines. A receipt is required for reimbursement of all baggage fees.

F. Non-Commercial Air Travel

Requests for travel out-of-State as passengers on non-commercial aircraft are made and approved in the same manner as transportation by other means.

G. Scheduled Bus and Train Service

The actual cost of coach fare for rail and bus service on State business is reimbursable, as is the actual cost of Pullman fare when overnight trips are required. These expenses are to be charged to the "Transportation-Ground" account code.

H. Taxis and Shuttles --- Public Transportation

The actual cost of taxi and shuttle fares is reimbursable with a receipt when required for travel

on State business. Use of Public Transportation can be reimbursed without receipt if under \$5 for each one-way trip or the cost of a weekly subway or bus pass when turning in the pass. These expenses are to be charged to the "Transportation-Ground" account code.

If the employee traveling chooses to use a taxi to get to and from the airline terminal, they will be required to turn in the receipts and will be reimbursed the amount of the receipt up to \$40.00 for round trip and \$20 for one-way trip.

I. Fees and Service Charges

With sufficient justification and documentation and with approval of the department head or their designee, state employees can be reimbursed for usual, customary and reasonable fee and service charges imposed by travel agents for assistance in making travel arrangements. (State Policy 5.1.24)

J. Penalties and Charges Resulting from Cancellations

Penalties and charges resulting from the cancellation of travel reservations (including airline, hotel, or other travel reservations and conference registration) shall be the department's obligation if the employee's travel has been approved in advance and the cancellation or change is made at the direction of and/or for the convenience of the department. If the cancellation or change is made for the personal benefit of the employee, it shall be the employee's obligation to pay the penalties and charges. However, in the event of accidents, serious illness, or death within the employee's immediate family or other critical circumstances beyond the control of the employee, the department may pay the penalties and charges. (State Policy 5.1.9)

K. Rental Cars

1. If proven cost effective, with a comparison of the University's Motor Fleet rates and the Enterprise State contract rate, a rental car may be used. Contact Campus Operations Department Help Desk at 251-6564 and tell them the expected round-trip mileage amount. They will be able to tell you whether a State vehicle or a rental car would be more cost efficient. Rental vehicles are not to be used solely for the convenience or personal preference of the employee. A receipt is necessary for reimbursement. No reimbursement will be made for rental insurance purchased because State Employees are covered under the State's auto insurance program. However, reimbursement for automobile rental insurance will be permitted for individuals engaged in State business during travel to international destinations. Gas purchased when using a rental car is reimbursable with receipts.
2. Reimbursement shall not exceed the most inexpensive rate available for a standard automobile at the time the car was rented.
3. Gas receipts are not to be used in lieu of mileage. The only time gas receipts are an allowable expense, is when a rental vehicle is used, (indicate this on receipt.) In rare occasions, gas can be reimbursed with prior approval from the travel office. Note: facility vehicles have a State gas card for use.

L. Out-of-Country Travel

Anyone traveling outside of the boundaries of the continental United States is considered in Out-of-Country Travel Mode. Receipts for overseas travel must be converted to American Dollars using the current conversion rate. If receipts are in a foreign language, translate before turning in for reimbursement. A helpful on-line tool in figuring conversion rates can be found at www.oanda.com. Click under currency tools on FXConverter—please include a printed copy from FXConverter showing the conversion rate you are using.

VI. NON-STATE EMPLOYEES

A. Non-State Employees

Non-State Employees traveling on State business whose expenses are paid or reimbursed by the State of North Carolina are subject to these regulations, including statutory subsistence allowances, to the same extent as are State Employees. No travel expenses of members of a Non-State Employee's family are reimbursable.

B. Prospective Professional Employees

A department head or their designee is authorized to approve reimbursement of transportation expenses for prospective professional employees visiting State departments for employment interviews. These expenses are limited to transportation and subsistence for 3 days (5 days if one is a Saturday) at the in-State rate. The department head or their designee may approve excess lodging expenses.

C. College Students

Students at State institutions who travel on official State business and whose expenses or reimbursements are paid by the State of North Carolina are subject to these regulations, including statutory subsistence allowances, to the same extent as are State Employees. Travel by students for the purpose of participating in athletic contests and activities of student organizations must be paid from funds supporting the particular organization or activity, not State funds.

D. Attendants

Payment of travel and subsistence expenses (hotel and meal costs) for attendants for handicapped employees while traveling on official State business may be reimbursed to the same extent as are State Employees if advance approval is obtained from the department head or their designee.

VII. ASSEMBLIES SPONSORED BY STATE AGENCIES

A. Authorization of Expense Reimbursement

1. Reimbursement of expenses incurred by State Employees attending any formal conference, convention, school, workshop, institute, seminar or other organized gathering sponsored or co-sponsored by a State agency is subject to the limitations set out herein. Such expenses may be reimbursed when all of the following conditions are met:

- (a) There are a substantial number of participants with at least 25% of the participants being from outside the local area.
- (b) The assembly is planned in detail in advance with a formal agenda or curriculum.
- (c) Prior approval for the rates of reimbursement to participants and all related expenses is secured from the appropriate Vice Chancellor or their designee.
- (d) There is a written invitation to participants setting forth the calendar of events, the social activities, if any, and the detailed schedule of costs.
- (e) Registration fees charged may not include cost of entertainment, alcoholic beverages or set-ups, flowers, or other nonessential expenditures. Registration fees collected and not used to defray expenses of the particular conference may not be

used for other purposes and must be reverted to the General Fund.

2. No payment or reimbursement for alcoholic beverages or set-ups may be made from State funds at any time under any circumstances. They may not be included in registration fees or paid from State funds in any manner.
3. Reimbursement of expenses to participants shall be in accordance with all provisions of this travel policy and shall be on the basis of in-State rates.

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