

 <p>Category: Financial</p> <p>Policy applicable for: Anyone traveling on university business</p>	<p><i>Policy Title:</i> Travel Expenses</p> <p>Effective Date: 06/03/2019</p> <p>Prior Effective Date: 10/06/2017; 07/01/2014; 03/11/11; 05/17/2010; 02/01/08</p> <p>Enabling Act(s): IRS Fly America Act Ohio Ethics Commission Rulings</p>	<p><i>Policy Number:</i> 2.1.6</p> <p>Policy Owner: Sr. VP for Administration and Finance</p> <p>Responsible Office(s): Accounts Payable Purchasing</p>
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BACKGROUND

The University of Cincinnati (“university”) understands that travel is essential to the teaching, research and public service missions of the university. The university must establish cost effective practices that are consistently applied and that comply with sponsor and regulatory requirements, while meeting the reasonable needs of travelers on university business. This policy addresses travel authorization and allowable expenditures for travel on university business. Student travel is addressed in the Student Travel Policy 1.10.2 (see *Related Links*). International travel outside the home country with a duration of greater than 3 months and up to 12 months consecutively in one host country is addressed in the Temporary Overseas Assignment Policy 2.1.34 (see *Related Links*).

DEFINITIONS

Concur is the university’s travel & expense management system. Concur must be used for all university travel requests and is the sole mechanism for travel expense reporting.

Duty of Care imposes a requirement that the university acts towards the public with the watchfulness, attention, caution and prudence that a reasonable person in the circumstances would use. In regards to this policy, it includes the set of processes intended to enhance the safety or well-being of travelers when away on university business.

Fly America Act refers to 49 U.S.C. 40118, which requires federal travelers to use U.S. flag air carrier services for all air travel and cargo transportation services funded by the U.S. government.

Host Country means the country in which the employee works; which, when applicable, will always differ from the home country.

Travel Expense Report is the report that tracks expenses incurred during the course of performing necessary job functions while traveling on behalf of the university.

Travel Request is the electronic request form in Concur that is completed in order to request approval for travel from your direct supervisor. This must be completed prior to the anticipated travel.

POLICY

The university will pay for or reimburse individuals for reasonable, authorized and appropriately documented travel expenditures as described below.

A traveler on university business should select a mode of transportation that is safe, cost-effective, and efficient. Travel arrangements should be made as early as possible to take advantage of lower rates. Ideally, arrangements should be made at least 30 days in advance of a trip.

The traveler is responsible for understanding this policy before planning and commencing travel for the university. Expense limits will be strictly enforced such as per diem and mileage reimbursement. The university will not pay for or reimburse for any travel club memberships.

Travelers on university business who elect to travel on weekends in order to obtain lower fares may be reimbursed for living expenses on the extra days if the end result reduces the total travel costs associated with the trip. In cases where vacation time is added to a business trip, any cost variance in expenses such as airfare, car rental and/or lodging must be clearly identified. The university will not prepay any personal expenses with the intention of being "repaid" at a later time, nor will any personal expenses be reimbursed. The cost of the extended trip cannot exceed what the trip would otherwise cost the university. Contact Human Resources for guidance on appropriate comp-time or vacation reporting.

Costs incurred by a traveler's failure to cancel reservations in a timely fashion are the responsibility of the traveler and will not be reimbursed by the university.

For special instructions or restrictions on sponsored projects, contact your grant administrator.

Travel Request (Pre-Trip Approval)

Approval for overnight and international travel, as well as same day air travel, must be submitted when traveling on university business, regardless of whether or not the university is paying for the trip, using a Travel Request via Concur and must be approved by the traveler's direct supervisor **prior** to the trip commencement. This enables Duty of Care features.

Approval for travel for candidates for employment, students, speakers, entertainers, or guests must be obtained from the head of the organizational unit paying for the travel.

Travel Requests are not necessary for same day car rentals or mileage reimbursement.

Travel Booking

Use of the university's contract travel agency is strongly encouraged but not required. Both the travel agency and Concur provide access to special travel rates. (See Travel Agency Contact in *Related Links*.)

Travel Expense Reports

All travelers should complete and submit their Travel Expense Report via Concur within 30 calendar days of the conclusion of the expense or trip. Failure to submit expense reports timely may result in personal income tax implications.

- Receipts are not required for purchases \$25 or less.
- Receipts for expenses greater than \$25 must be itemized and electronically attached to each expense transaction and show proof of payment.
 - If an itemized receipt is lost, it is the traveler's duty to contact the vendor and obtain a duplicate receipt.
 - In the rare event that an itemized receipt is not made available by the vendor, choose the missing receipt affidavit option within Concur.
- Travelers must convert expense receipts in foreign currency to U.S. Dollars if not done so via a bank credit card statement.
- Daily per diem rates will be used to reimburse travelers for meals and incidentals (see per diem meals below).
 - University purchasing cards are not to be used for routine meals or incidentals.

Air Travel

Travel by air must be a coach or economy fare consistent with scheduling needs, including the need to conserve time by selecting direct flights when available and appropriate. The university will not pay for or reimburse for first class or business fare unless warranted by a medical condition, recommended by the traveler's physician, on file with University Health Services, and pre-approved by the traveler's supervisor. Frequent flyer miles may be used by the traveler to upgrade. For international flights with a leg of 5 or more consecutive hours, the university will pay for or reimburse for business class fare for the entire trip with supervisor approval.

In accordance with the Fly America Act, commercial air travel funded by a federal grant must use U.S. flag air carrier service except under certain conditions.

Vouchers or credits for unused air tickets are the property of the university and must be used for university business.

Travel by private charter flights must be pre-approved by the president or the appropriate senior vice president and must include a list of all travelers. UC's Purchasing department must be involved in all charter service planning and procurement. Using chartered flights

to transport non-essential individuals free of charge is prohibited. However, the university may offer extra seats to non-essential individuals for a fee.

Ground Transportation

The university will pay for or reimburse ground transportation and related expenses, such as a shuttle bus (between airport and hotel), taxi, bus, subway, tram, train and parking.

Reimbursement for car rental is limited up to intermediate size or lowest rate classifications for individual travelers. Travelers are to use university contracted car rental companies whenever possible. Full-size vehicles or vans are allowed for groups when traveling. In the case of rentals for group travel, all authorized drivers must be listed on the rental contract. Rental charges and actual fuel expenses are reimbursable in lieu of mileage.

For domestic travel, only the cost of renting an automobile will be reimbursed; no other insurances or additional coverages offered by the car rental agencies will be reimbursed. Insurance coverage is provided the university's insurance policy. Travelers should print a copy of the letter certifying insurance coverage (see *Related Links*) and submit to the rental agency.

When renting an automobile in a foreign country, it is required that all local, statutory and optional coverages, including collision damage waiver insurance, be purchased. The university's insurance policy will provide excess coverage over any applicable local insurance purchased. The university will pay for or reimburse for these rental coverages with appropriate documentation.

The university will reimburse mileage for a personally-owned vehicle (including motorcycles) as the primary mode of travel transportation providing that the cost does not exceed the least expensive airfare or rental car or if the destination is not otherwise accessible. Additional expenses, including but not limited to, lodging and meal expenses, should be considered when comparing costs. Mileage is calculated from the destination to be driven to and from the university. Commuting between home and primary work site will not be reimbursed by the university. (See Variant Expense Rate Table in *Related Links*.)

Mileage is not reimbursable when traveling by university vehicle or courtesy car.

Lodging

The university will pay for or reimburse reasonable, documented itemized expenses for lodging. Accommodations should be prudently planned so that the best interests of the university are served at the most reasonable cost.

Private Residence – standard university per person per day rate can be claimed (see Variant Expense Rate Table in *Related Links*) and an additional comment must be included within the expense report that acknowledges a stay in a private residence.

Per Diem Meals

The university reimburses ordinary per diem meal and incidentals rates to travelers. Per diem rates are based on the U.S. General Services Administration rates (see Federal Per Diem in *Related Links*). Travelers must pay for routine meals and incidentals with their personal funds. University funds or purchasing cards are not to be used to purchase meals or incidentals. No receipts are required to claim per diem reimbursement.

University funds may be used to pay for registration fees for conferences, seminars or other meetings that provide lunch and/or refreshments during the program. However, if a non-overnight program specifies that lunch is “on your own,” the university will not pay for or reimburse that meal.

Long-term Travel

Federal law dictates that travel expenses for employees may not be paid in a tax-free basis if the travel is reasonably expected to last longer than one year, or the travel does in fact last longer than one year. All expenses, including lodging or other expenses otherwise paid to a third party, for such long-term travel must be paid directly to the university’s employee on a fully taxable basis through the payroll system.

Ohio Ethics Law

Direct benefits from airline, hotel, and other similar reward programs earned by way of university expenditures cannot be used for personal benefit and may only be used for university business purposes. Incidental personal credit card benefits resulting from university business purchases are permitted and may be retained by the employee, provided: (1) the employee’s use of their personal business card does not result in a higher cost for the university; and (2) the employee does not seek reimbursement from the university for any amount greater than the debt actually owed to their personal credit card company.

Related links:

[Alcohol Purchases Policy](#)
[Currency Rate Converter](#)
[Entertainment Expenses Policy](#)
[Federal Per Diem \(per person per day rates\)](#)
[Meal Expenses Policy](#)
[Ohio Ethics Commission](#)
[Purchasing Card Manual](#)
[Relocation Expenses](#)
[Student Travel Policy](#)
[Temporary Overseas Assignment](#)
[Travel Advances Policy](#)
[Travel Agency Contact](#)
[UC Insurance Coverage Letter \(for domestic vehicle rentals\)](#)
[U.S. State Department Travel Warning](#)
[Variant Expense Table](#)

Phone Contacts:

Accounts Payable	556-6746
Export Control	556-1426
Grants Administration	556-4817
Purchasing	556-6742
UC International	556-4278
Travel & Expense Administrator	556-2337