

# Travel Reimbursement Policy and Guide

## **\*\*Please refer to this guide when planning travel\*\***

If there is a question you may have that is not addressed here, please call Abby Evans @ Ext. 1400.

### **\*\*New\*\***

1. If you are claiming **vicinity miles** (mileage in and around cities) you must track actual business miles. These miles will be audited and compared to a recognized GPS system, e.g. Google Maps. Travelers must document actual mileage to each location traveled and attach documentation to the travel reimbursement form. Actual miles per the odometer reading will suffice as long as no personal miles are included, every point is documented (location and address listed), and the mileage can be compared to a GPS system (Google Maps) used in audits.
2. Travel claims for reimbursement must be turned in within 30 days of the actual travel dates. Claims turned in beyond the 30 day window may be approved on a case by case basis. Documentation must be presented with the reason the claim was not turned in within 30 days of actual travel.
3. An approved travel request is required to be on file prior to travel taking place.
4. If you take your own vehicle on a trip and are claiming mileage, you must provide your license plate number.
5. When filling out the reimbursement form, please document the time your official business began and when your official business ended, not the time you left campus and returned. If your agenda has a registration time/refreshments at the front end of the meeting/conference, the official business does not begin until the actual meeting starts.
6. **If you are traveling on school business by air, please note the following:**  
If you begin a trip, which includes airline travel, more than 24 hours before your official meeting starts, you **must** show a cost savings to the university. In this case, the 48 hour rule may be used. **If you do not include a cost comparison/documentation showing a cost savings, your travel times will be adjusted to only include travel within 24 hours of the time of official business**

The official rule follows as stated:

"Under limited circumstances involving airline travel, reimbursement **may** begin as many as 48 hours before and extend as many as 48 hours after the objective of the trip. This procedure allows state employees in travel status to take advantage of the **least expensive** air fares available for weekend departure or arrivals, particularly Saturdays."

"If the 48 hour rule is claimed, the voucher **must include a detailed cost comparison of the additional per diem, or meals and lodging versus the savings on the airfare. The airfare rate used in the comparison must come from the same travel agency where the ticket was purchased. The total reimbursement cannot exceed the amount of eligible reimbursement if the 24 hour rule were adhered to, including the airfare rate available at the time.**"

"Also, reimbursement **may** begin as many as 48 hours before and extend as many as 48 hours after the objective of the trip for travel **outside** the contiguous U.S."

7. The OPSU purchasing card may **only** be used for meals as part of team travel. If you are using an OPSU purchasing card, we must know if meals have been charged so they may be deducted from the per diem amount.
8. Regardless of mode of travel, reimbursement for out-of-state transportation cannot exceed that of **coach airfare plus mileage to and from the airport.** If you choose another mode of travel, other than by air, you must provide a cost comparison between the estimated cost of transportation and the cost of the airline ticket (had you flown to the destination). You must have an estimate from our state contracted agency **prior** to your trip.

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**\*\*If you still choose to travel by a different mode of transportation and it is more expensive, you will only be reimbursed up to the amount of the coach airfare plus mileage to and from the airport.**

9. If you are going to a conference/meeting, we **must** have a copy of your conference agenda or proof of the meeting so meeting dates and times can be verified. Any documentation you may have is beneficial.
10. If you are recruiting, you must fill out the Recruitment Log form to accompany your travel reimbursement form if no other documentation is available.
11. When reserving overnight accommodations, and using a P.O., the rate cannot be above the state rate for that particular city.

You can look up per diem and lodging rates at the following location:

<http://www.gsa.gov/portal/content/104877>

12. If you pay for your own motel room and are requesting reimbursement, you cannot be reimbursed above the state rate plus taxes for that city. The receipt must also show a zero balance due.
13. If the motel/hotel you stay at is a conference designated site, we must have documentation as such. If it is designated, the full amount above the state rate plus taxes is reimbursable.
14. If your travel requires an overnight stay and you prefer to stay w/ a friend, family, etc., it is seen as a cost savings to the university. There is a \$10 increase to the per-diem rate if this is case and is referred to as *per diem in lieu of subsistence*.
15. If any part of your travel (Registration Fee, Lodging, Rental Car, etc.) is paid on a purchase order, the P.O. # must be documented on the reimbursement form.
16. If any part of your travel (Registration Fee, Lodging, Rental Car, etc.) is paid on an OPSU purchasing card, it must be documented on the reimbursement form.
17. If you make your own airline reservations and are claiming reimbursement, you must first get a quote from McClure Travel (contracted travel agency) and provide that quote along with your reimbursement form so we can verify your reservation is a cost savings to the university. Remember, McClure ALWAYS accepts OPSU P.O.'s and purchasing cards.
18. All receipts must be originals - do not include meal receipts if you are requesting per-diem.
19. Per diem may only be claimed if travel requires an overnight stay or if travel is 18 hours or more in length.