



## **POLICY MANUAL**

### **OPERATING POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

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**Number 515**

**Subject: Travel Policy**

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#### **515.1 TRAVEL AUTHORIZATION**

All University travel must be supported by a properly completed "Travel Authorization" (TA) form except for travel utilizing departmental vehicles. These forms are available at Central Distribution. The first three sections of the TA should be completed before commencement of travel. Section 4 of the form should be completed upon termination of travel status.

##### **1.1 Travel Authorization - Initial Approval Process**

(1) Traveler must obtain approval from the account administrator for each account that will be charged.

(2) A traveler may not approve his or her own travel authorization, but must obtain the approval of his or her Department Head, Dean or Director, Vice President, Provost, or President, as appropriate. Approval level must be at least one supervisory level above the traveler.

(3) Travel authorizations should be routed as follows:

a. In-state travel TAs should be submitted to the Controller's Office, Travel Department, prior to travel only if commercial airline tickets or airport shuttling services are to be acquired by the University. Otherwise, TAs should be submitted after completion of the travel.

b. TAs for out-of-state travel charged to state funds should be submitted to the Dean or Director for approval at least seven (7) days in advance of the proposed start of travel.

c. International travel TAs require special approval before commencement of travel (See section 515.3).

(4) The travel authorization form should be completed for a single trip. Incidental mileage for a monthly period may be submitted on a single TA. Only travel costs as defined in this policy associated with the individual or group's trip should be reported on a TA.

## **1.2 Settlement of Travel Authorization**

(1) The traveler is responsible for completing the "Travel Cost Reimbursement" and the "Reimbursement Request Summary" (Section 4) of the TA within ten (10) days after the trip is completed. Specific instructions for completing the TA are found on the reverse side of the TA form. Preferably, when reimbursement of actual costs is approved, the "Summary of Travel Costs" form, or a similar summary report along with the appropriate itemized receipts, should accompany the completed travel authorization to support Section 4. This form is available at the Travel Department of the Controller's Office.

## **1.3 Same Day Trips and Costs for Departmental Vehicles**

(1) For trips that begin and end the same day, reimbursement for mileage and meals should be submitted on the TA. These costs are deemed to be operating costs, not travel, and therefore should be coded to account code 711500 and not to 750300. Costs for departmental vehicles are also deemed to be operating costs, not travel, and therefore should be coded to account code 711500 and not to 750300.

## **515.2 ALLOWABLE TRAVEL COSTS**

The determination and authorization of travel, as appropriate and necessary for University objectives, is the responsibility of the department head or other account administrator immediately involved. The authorization of the reimbursement to the traveler is the responsibility of the supervisor of the traveler. This supervisor must be at least one level above the traveler. The preparer of the travel reimbursement will assist the authorizer to comply with this policy. The traveler is certifying with signature that all expenses are correct and incurred in performance of University-related business. This entails, in addition to determining that the travel is appropriate and necessary, that the mode of travel and the cost thereof, as well as related costs of food and lodging, are appropriate and reasonable in terms of the stated purpose of the travel and are in compliance with this travel policy. Consideration should always be given to achieving the purpose of the travel in the most economical and efficient manner. Only costs incurred in appropriately authorized University (business) travel are allowable. The mode of transportation and the basis of reimbursement for food and lodging, i.e., per diem or actual costs, must be appropriately approved and documented by a TA. Other specific restrictions are as follows.

## 2.1 Transportation

### (1) Private Automobile

- a. Automobile Insurance - When using your private automobile, your personal automobile insurance will be the primary insurance coverage. The University's automobile insurance will only be effective after your personal insurance has been fully exhausted.
- b. Authorization - Motor pool vehicles are required when traveling for university business. There are a few exceptions to the motor pool vehicle requirement. When traveling under one of the exceptions; the trip authorizer should sign off and authorize the exception prior to the trip. The only exceptions are:
- No motor pool vehicle was available.
  - The trip was for the sole purpose of traveling to the airport, and a motor pool car would have been parked for an extended period of time.
  - The trip included non-university related business.
  - The total university business related trip mileage (mileage claimed for reimbursement) is less than 180 miles.

Whenever possible, staff members are encouraged to travel together and submit one claim for reimbursement.

c. Mileage Guide - Reimbursement for use of a privately owned automobile will be based on mileage computed from the latest Standard Highway Mileage Guide, and will be limited to the most economical usually traveled routes.

d. Reimbursement Rate - The University's posted mileage rate will be updated upon a change in the Internal Revenue Service rate and is calculated based on their rate. Travelers who meet one of the approved exceptions will be reimbursed at the currently posted mileage reimbursement rate for each mile actually traveled on official business unless the traveler and the department head agree to other arrangements. The current mileage reimbursement rate can found by visiting <http://controller.usu.edu/travel/notifications/milerate.htm>. This is all-inclusive, and expenses such as parking, storage, traffic violations, etc., will not be reimbursed. However, reimbursement is available for parking expenditures incurred when traveling by air (see section 2.4(1)).

Should a university employee use a personal vehicle in the conduct of university business without meeting one of the allowed exceptions, that employee shall forfeit the reimbursement for use of the personal vehicle.

If the traveler is receiving a transportation allowance benefit as a basis for employment, this benefit will cover all the costs of operating the private automobile for business purposes. There will be no additional reimbursement for mileage incurred.

If the traveler has been provided a vehicle upon employment at the University and is required to personally pay all of the operating costs of the vehicle, reimbursement will be at the rate currently approved by the Administration and IRS guidelines for out-of-pocket expenses. The University will also include as personal income reported to the IRS the total of all personal miles driven computed as the difference of the University rate and the out-of-pocket rate. The current out-of-pocket rate can be found by visiting <http://controller.usu.edu/travel/notifications/milerate.htm>.

e. Vicinity Travel - It is necessary to identify vicinity travel separately from mileage between points of travel when reimbursement is being claimed for vicinity travel. Vicinity travel in metropolitan areas which exceeds 50 miles per day should be detailed. When the TA covers vicinity travel of more than one day, each day of travel should be detailed in the "Travel Cost Reimbursement" section of the TA, or summarized there with detail attached. Supplemental travel forms are available at the Travel Department for this purpose.

f. Automobile at Airfare Rate - When the travel is out-of-state, and the traveler elects to drive his or her own car the entire trip in lieu of using commercial carrier, reimbursement will be at the approved allowable mileage rate or the applicable coach rate, whichever is lower, plus the standard reimbursement for travel to the Salt Lake City International Airport.

g. Standard Reimbursement to Airport - A traveler is reimbursed for mileage to and from Salt Lake City International Airport on the basis of one round trip per authorization (166 miles).

## (2) Motor Pool and Department Vehicles

a. Reservations - Motor Pool vehicles should be requested on a per-trip basis. Vehicles may be obtained by submitting the Motor Pool copy of the TA and making arrangements with the Motor Pool as early as possible.

b. Speed Restrictions - A State Executive Order directs each State employee using a state-owned road vehicle not to exceed the posted speed limit. Reported violations are thoroughly reviewed, and appropriate action is taken by the University administration.

c. Personal Use - University vehicles are not to be driven for personal use unless such use is approved by an employee's department head, dean, or vice president, as applicable. (See Executive Memorandum No. 86-4 regarding personal use of University vehicles.)

d. Costs for departmental vehicles are deemed to be operating costs, not travel, and therefore should be coded to account code 711500 and not to 750300.

## (3) Rental Cars

a. Authorization - The need for the use of rental cars should be determined by the nature of the circumstances. Rental vehicles should be utilized on official University business when such use expedites travel schedules and facilitates the accomplishment of the individual's work assignments.

b. Discounts - Particular attention should be given to economize on the rental rates. The traveler should ask for an institutional or corporate discount. The State of Utah has entered into an auto rental agreement with specific car rental agencies. Agency names and contract numbers can be obtained from the Controller's Office, Travel Department. These discounts are available for all University travel. Rental car agencies may change from time to time and notification will be provided as to the current carriers.

c. Insurance Coverage - Pre-contracted liability and physical damage insurance is available for vehicles rented from certain car rental agencies, if the traveler uses the appropriate Corporate Contract Number and pays the pre-negotiated rates. As these rental contracts are negotiated periodically, travelers should make sure they have the relevant information for the current year. For detailed information about contracts and insurance coverages, contact Risk Management Services. For detailed information about rental car rates and available services, please contact the Travel Office.

#### (4) Commercial Aircraft

a. Class Restriction - Reimbursable air transportation costs are limited to those fares less than first class. If special and reduced fares are available, they should be secured. Employees making reservations for out-of-state travel should request the least expensive airfare available at the time reservations are made. State contracted airfares may be available at the travel agencies. You should request these airfare rates when contacting the agency. Stays over a Saturday night can reduce the cost of airfare significantly. When determining the least expensive airfare, you should also consider the additional lodging, meals, and incidentals for the extra days required by the Saturday night stay.

b. Travel Agencies - Travelers are encouraged to purchase tickets from any local travel agency. However, they should not pay cash for their tickets. Travel agencies will bill the USU Travel Department for the ticket charges. If, under unusual circumstances, there is a need for travelers to purchase their own airline tickets, they may request an advance of funds to do so via a TA. The traveler's copy of the travel ticket will be required for reimbursement.

***A travel authorization number is required to be delivered to the travel agency before the travel agency can issue airline tickets.*** The agency will indicate when the tickets can be picked up, or in most cases, when they will deliver the tickets to the traveler. A properly executed travel authorization should be forwarded to the Controller's Office within **14 days** of the date of purchase of the ticket. If a travel authorization is not received as prescribed, the Controller's Office will charge airfare to a departmental Education & General account or other available account.

c. Special Coupons or Discount Tickets - If they may be utilized for University travel, special coupons or discount promotion tickets received by a traveler should be submitted to the applicable department head as soon as possible so that they might be utilized for departmental travel. Similarly, any cash refund or credit received by a traveler for ticket purchases should be submitted to the department to offset the expense reported on the TA.

#### (5) Private Aircraft

a. Authorization - The use of a private aircraft on official University business may be authorized if the traveler elects, and it is determined by the applicable supervising administrator not to be disadvantageous to the University or purpose of the trip.

b. Insurance Coverage - Private aircraft owners opting to fly their aircraft on University business must have their own liability insurance. This insurance coverage should be at least \$1,000,000 per occurrence and name the University as an Additional Insured for such flights.

The employee's life insurance accidental death benefit (two times regular rate) is not applicable for accidents in private aircraft; however, the regular life insurance is in effect for all employees (pilots and passengers).

c. Reimbursement Rate - Reimbursement for private airplane travel will be at the rate of :  
Ten cents (\$0.10) higher than the private auto rate per mile for one person  
Fifteen cents (\$0.15) higher than the private auto rate per mile for two or more persons

Mileage will be computed from the latest Standard Nautical Mileage Guide, or highway mileage if the nautical mileage is not listed.

## **2.2 Lodging**

Lodging will be reimbursed for the actual cost of lodging incurred.

## **2.3 Food**

### (1) Reimbursement for Actual Costs

When reimbursement for actual costs is requested by the traveler and approved by his or her supervising administrator, meals will be reimbursed based on actual costs as supported by itemized receipts. When claiming reimbursement for actual meal costs, please complete the "Summary of Travel Costs" form. When claiming per diem for meals, the Summary of Travel Costs form may be required by the department. A "Summary of Travel Costs" form is available in the Travel Department for this purpose. When claiming reimbursement for the actual cost for meals, an itemized receipt must be presented for the particular meal being claimed as actual. The other meals that day may be claimed as per diem amounts.

Charges for alcohol may not be paid from state appropriated funds or federal funds.

(2) Reimbursement on Per Diem Basis

a. In-State Travel

(i) Reimbursement Rates - The per diem amount will be \$28.

(ii) Partial Days - Partial days per diem for in-state travel is computed as follows:

Allowance up to 24 continuous hours:

<b>HOURS</b>	<b>MEALS</b>
11 to 14	One Meal
Over 14 to 18	Two Meals
Over 18 to 24	Three Meals

Allowance in excess of 24 continuous hours:

<b>HOURS</b>	<b>MEALS</b>
6 to 11	One Meal
Over 11 to 14	Two Meals
Over 14 to 24	Three Meals

The meal per diem is as shown below. The dinner meal allowance is authorized only when the return time is later than 8:00 p.m.

Breakfast	\$ 7
Lunch	\$ 8
Dinner	\$13
Total	\$28

b. Out-of-State Travel

(i) Reimbursement Rates - The standard maximum per diem is \$28 per day except in high rate metropolitan areas (See appendix A) where the per diem is \$36 per day.

(ii)

	Low Rate	High Rate
Breakfast	\$ 7	\$ 9
Lunch	\$ 8	\$10
Dinner	\$13	\$17
Total	\$28	\$36

(iii) Partial Days - Out-of-State per diem computation for partial days is as follows:

Allowance up to 24 continuous hours:

<b>HOURS</b>	<b>MEALS</b>
11 to 14	One Meal
Over 14 to 18	Two Meals
Over 18 to 24	Three Meals

Allowance in excess of 24 continuous hours:

<b>HOURS</b>	<b>MEALS</b>
6 to 11	One Meal
Over 11 to 14	Two Meals
Over 14 to 24	Three Meals

If the election is made to be reimbursed for actual costs, the above partial per diems are not applicable.

### c. Time Period

#### (i) Normal

Per diem begins at the time of departure from home station and ends at the time of return to that station.

#### (ii) Travel by Automobile Required

If an automobile is the only mode of travel possible to fulfill authorized objectives of the trip and/or serve the best interest of the University, per diem will be paid from the time of departure from and return to home station. The reason for the necessity of automobile travel must be indicated on the TA or attached documentation.

#### (iii) Travel by Automobile Requested

If the travel is out-of-state, and the mode of travel elected by the traveler is by private or Motor Pool automobile rather than commercial aircraft, and less than three authorized University travelers share the vehicle, per diem will normally be computed on the time it would have taken if the travel had been by commercial airline. In addition, when a request for out-of-state travel by private automobile is authorized for less than three University employees, the employee(s) will be charged annual leave for the normal working hours required to travel to and from destination in excess of normal flight time.

Although this is the policy for most situations, the unique circumstances of each trip must be considered by the authorizing account administrator to ensure that the interests of the University are best served by its application. Any exception requested should be so noted on the TA and must be approved by the President, Provost, appropriate Vice President, or Dean.

### d. Registration Fees and Banquets

Payments for registration fees, banquet fees, or other conference fees normally paid in advance should be submitted on a requisition to Purchasing Services for advance payment. However, these fees will be reimbursed on a TA if they are not previously paid on a requisition.

The value of any meals included in the registration fee will be deducted from the applicable per diem allowance. The deduction for meals will be \$7, \$8, and \$13 for breakfast, lunch, and dinner, respectively, regardless of the value indicated on the registration brochure.

### e. Camping Out

Individuals who must camp out as part of their job assignment will receive a per diem allowance of \$35 per day, based on the following for partial day considerations:

Breakfast	\$ 5
Lunch	\$ 6
Dinner	\$ 8
Sleeping Accommodations	\$16

## 2.4 Other Allowable Costs

(1) Airport Parking - When using on- or off-airport parking facilities for official University business, the basis for reimbursement is at the prevailing rate at the airport parking lot. Long-term parking facilities should be used when appropriate. A receipt is required to obtain reimbursement.

(2) Telephone, Taxi, Etc. - All University business related phone calls on a trip and **one** safe arrival phone call may be reimbursed on the TA. Documentation of business purpose and person called is required. All non-trip related phone calls should be submitted on a check request form identifying the business purpose and person called. Miscellaneous expenses not included in the per diem allowance should be itemized in chronological order, and the business purpose explained on the TA or attached sheet. Individual transactions of fifteen dollars (\$15) or more must be supported by an original receipt. Credit card receipts are not acceptable.

(3) ATM Fees - All fees associated with the use of the University's corporate travel card or personal credit card to obtain a cash advance will be reimbursed to the traveler.

## 515.3 INTERNATIONAL (FOREIGN) TRAVEL

All travel outside of the United States is subject to the following policy insofar as it does not contradict the provisions of the specific contracts and grants. Circumstances and transactions resulting from international travel that are not covered by USU travel policy and/or updates will be reviewed by the Controller's Office, Travel Department, using the U.S. Department of State regulations as a guide. Any proposed deviations from this policy are to be specifically identified when the TA is submitted for approval. The deviation(s) should be explained in an attached letter submitted with the TA.

### 3.1 Travel Authorization (TA)

(1) Written approval by the sponsoring agency is required prior to initiation of the TA for all international travel using federal funds.

(2) All international TAs should be submitted for USU administrative approval, as indicated on the TA, seven (7) days in advance of the proposed start of travel. TAs involving international travel on contract and grant funds should be routed through the Sponsored Programs Office, and TAs on state funds should be submitted to the

appropriate Vice President, Provost, or President's Office. Foreign in-country travel need not be approved by the Sponsored Programs Office.

(3) The TA should include an attached itinerary showing name of traveler, purpose of the travel, origin/destination, and dates of travel.

### **3.2 Allowable Transportation Costs**

(1) All transportation costs shall be limited to those fares, which are less than first class on commercially scheduled air travel by the most direct and/or expeditious route. Other necessary transportation required by efficiency or work requirements will be reimbursed at actual cost (reason for such requirements must be thoroughly documented). U.S. flag carriers should be used when possible. Usage of non-U.S. flag carriers on foreign travel on contract and grant accounts should be approved by the Sponsored Programs Office before booking the flight. Private automobile travel to and from the Salt Lake International Airport will be computed as one round trip. Mileage will be paid only to one person when two or more authorized travelers travel in the same private automobile.

(2) Personal excess baggage is allowed up to the total size and number of pounds of baggage regularly allowed for first-class travel. Excess baggage expense must be supported by a receipt. Any unused excess baggage credit or reimbursement received by the traveler must be returned to USU.

### **3.3 Per Diem Allowances**

(1) Calendar Day Unit

For the purpose of calculating per diem while on foreign travel status, the calendar day (midnight to midnight) will be the unit. For fractional parts of a day, at the commencement or end continuous travel, one-fourth of the rate for a calendar day will be allowed for each period of six (6) hours or fraction thereof. When a change in per diem rate is made during the day, the rate of per diem in effect at the beginning of the quarter in which the change occurs shall continue to the end of such quarter.

(2) Per Diem En Route

As used below, the terms "exit" and "entry" points mean the last and first airports within the United States that are used during any particular trip.

a. Travel Within the Continental United States

Per diem for the portion of travel on an international trip that takes place within the continental United States will be paid according to the following:

(i) No Stopover - The maximum per diem rate per the Department of Defense Per Diem, Travel and Transportation Allowance Committee will be paid for all portions of

international travel between the point at which such travel begins in the continental United States, and the point of exit from the continental United States, or vice versa, when there is no stopover in the continental United States.

(ii) Stopover - Per diem may be paid in accordance with Section 515.2.3(2). (except the midnight to midnight calendar day unit will be used) for all portions of international travel between the point at which such travel begins in the continental United States and the point of exit from the continental United States, or vice versa, when a stopover in the continental United States is required to meet airline schedules or conduct University business.

#### b. Travel Outside the Continental United States

Per diem for travel between exit or entry point in the continental United States and the assignment post, or between assignment posts, fits into one of the three following cases:

(i) Same Day Travel (round trip) - The per diem rate is that of the place where the foreign travel begins (either the exit point in the continental United States or the assignment post);

(ii) En route Less than Six (6) Hours (not same day return) - The per diem rate is that of the destination (either the assignment post or the point of entry into the continental United States); and

(iii) En route Six (6) Hours or More (not same day return) - The per diem rate is \$6 per day from the exit point of the continental United States to the assignment post or vice versa. (Once the assignment post is reached, the per diem rate for that post is in effect.)

### **3.4 Per Diem Rates**

Foreign per diem rates, regardless of fund sources, will be paid according to the amounts stated by the Department of Defense Per Diem, Travel and Transportation Allowance Committee, except as may otherwise be restricted in the specific terms and conditions of a contract or grant. However, the same provision for reimbursement of actual costs applies as indicated in Section II.

### **3.5 Rest Stops**

A rest period of up to twenty-four (24) hours may be authorized when air travel is less than first-class accommodations and the scheduled flight time (including stopovers to meet airline schedules) exceeds fourteen (14) hours by the most direct or usually traveled route. Per diem will be paid at the applicable rest site's rate. However, a rest stop shall not be authorized, nor per diem paid, when an employee elects for personal convenience to make a stopover or travel by an indirect route resulting in travel time in excess of fourteen (14) hours.

When personal leave of any kind is taken while an employee is traveling for University business, the exact hour of departure and return-to-duty status must be indicated on the TA. Per diem and other personal costs will not be allowed during leave of absence from official duty.

**3.6 Settlement of Travel Authorization**

(1) Travel costs shall be identified to the appropriate project(s) or account number(s) by the traveler.

(2) In order to be reimbursed for travel expenses, it is necessary to provide complete and accurate details of all travel expenses as follows:

a. A complete and actual itinerary indicating the hour of departure and arrival at each location in order to support the per diem claimed.

b. When reimbursement for actual costs is requested by the traveler and approved by his or her supervising administrator, meals will be reimbursed based on actual costs as supported by itemized receipts.

c. Daily miscellaneous expenses not included in the per diem allowance should be itemized in chronological order on the TA or attached sheet, if necessary. Individual transactions of fifteen dollars (\$15) or more must be supported by an original receipt.

d. Miscellaneous expense items should be reported in U.S. dollars with the applicable foreign exchange rate effective as of the date of purchase.

**APPENDIX A — HIGH RATE PER DIEM METROPOLITAN AREAS**

<b>KEY CITY</b>	<b>COUNTY AND OTHER DEFINED LOCATION</b>
California:	
Los Angeles	Los Angeles, Kern, Orange, and Ventura Counties; Edwards Air Force Base; Naval Weapons Center and Ordnance Test Station, China Lake
San Francisco	San Francisco
District of Columbia:	
Washington D.C.	Washington D.C.; the cities of Alexandria, Falls Church, and Fairfax, and the counties of Arlington, Loudoun, and Fairfax in Virginia; and the counties of Montgomery and Prince Georges in Maryland
Florida:	
Key West	Monroe

Illinois:	
Chicago	Du Page, Cook, and Lake
Maryland:	
Columbia	Howard
Massachusetts:	
Boston	Suffolk
Cambridge/Lowell	Middlesex
New Jersey:	
Newark	Bergen, Essex, Hudson, Passic, and Union
New York:	
New York City	The boroughs of Bronx, Brooklyn, Manhattan, Queens, and Staten Island; Nassau and Suffolk Counties
White Plains	Westchester
Pennsylvania:	
Chestor/Radnor	Delaware
Philadelphia	Philadelphia; city of Bala Cynwyd in Montgomery County