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Owner: *Kris Kavasch: VP Finance/CFO*
Policy Area: *Accounting and Business*
References:

Travel Policy

Scope:

All UTHSCT staff and non employee travel paid by UTHSCT

Purpose:

To define expectations for business travel by UTHSCT employees and non employees.

Policy:

Policies governing UTHSCT Employees and Non-Employee:

As an agency of the State of Texas and as a component of The University of Texas System, The University of Texas Health Science Center at Tyler must abide by The State of Texas and UT System travel rules and regulations. UTHSCT travel (including Health Science Center employees, prospective employees, official visitors, and employees of other state agencies) is governed by State of Texas laws and rules, *Regents' Rules and Regulations*, UT System policies, and/or policies of the Health Science Center.

The University of Texas System Administration has established guidelines for travel programs at all UT component institutions. On this campus, these requirements apply to all travel reimbursed by the Health Science Center to an employee or non-employee **without** regard to source of funds.

In addition to the UT System guidelines, the University is subject to purchase and reimbursement limits of The Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts to ensure state agency and university compliance with the Texas Building and Procurement Commission's State Travel Management Program (STMP) for contracted travel services. These requirements pertain to all STMP travel vendor contracts including airlines, rental cars, and lodging.

General Guidelines

Funding

State-appropriated funds used for travel will adhere to guidelines set forth by The State of Texas Comptroller's Office, UT System and US General Service Administration.

Non state-appropriated funds can be used for travel but cannot exceed 25% of the GSA federal rates unless prior approval by a UTHSCT administrator.

Prior Approval

Request for Travel Authorization (RTA)

A Request for Travel Authorization Form for employee business travel must be submitted with the appropriate signatures in advance of incurring any travel expense (i.e. airline tickets, conference fees, registrations, etc) with documentation of the meeting, conference, etc to Accounting and a copy filed in the department. UTHSCT **will not** be liable for any penalty fees paid should a reservation be cancelled because an approval is not granted.

Standing Executive Request for Travel Authorization (RTA)

A Standing Request for Travel Authorization (RTA) for all IN STATE travel is allowed for the President, spouse of the President designated as a Special Assistant or Associate to the Chief Administrative Officer, Executive Vice President /Chief of Staff and Vice President-CFO/CBO. The Standing RTA must be completed and submitted to Accounting/Travel Services each fiscal year with the estimated travel expenses for the fiscal year not to exceed their travel budget. If during the fiscal year, the actual travel expenses exceed amount stated on the RTA then an additional Standing RTA is required. It is the responsibility of the employee to monitor their travel expenses to ensure the Standing RTA is valid.

Standing Local Mileage Request for Travel Authorization (RTA)

A Standing Local Mileage Request for Travel Authorization (RTA) is allowed for employees who have predetermined local (non over-night) travel as a part of their job. The RTA must be completed each fiscal year with the estimated mileage dollar amounts for non over-night travel. If actual expense exceeds the actual mileage expense stated on the RTA then an additional Standing RTA is required. It is the responsibility of the employee to monitor their travel expenses to ensure the Standing RTA is valid.

Spousal Travel

A spouse of a chief administrative officer designated as a "Special Assistant" or "Associate to the Chief Administrative Officer" is entitled to reimbursement or direct payment for the actual cost of travel, meals, and incidental expenses when functioning in that capacity in performing the duties described in the *UT System Spousal Travel Policy*. Travel, meals, and incidental expenses not related to the performance of those duties must be paid directly by the individual and not submitted for reimbursement or billed to the UTHSCT. If any billing, payment, or reimbursement is later determined to be inconsistent with this policy, the spouse or chief administrative officer must reimburse that amount to the UTHSCT.

Foreign Travel

For travel outside of the United States, UTHSCT is guided by principles published in IRS Publication 463, Chapter 1, *Travel*. In order to foster compliance with these IRS guidelines, all faculty, residents, students, and staff must complete a "Foreign Travel Authorization Business Purpose Certification" form prior to making travel arrangements. Authorization for all foreign travel, including Canada, Mexico and U.S. possessions must have advance written approval of the President or his designee.

Additionally, the UTHSCT International Oversight Committee (IOC) must consider and evaluate all requests for foreign travel as part of the authorization process. To facilitate IOC review, all faculty, residents, staff, and students must complete a "Request to Travel Outside the U.S." form at least 4 weeks in advance of proposed travel. UTHSCT faculty, residents, staff, and students **must** register all foreign trips through the International SOS Program prior to traveling. If the reservation is made by one of our travel agencies, the agent will register your trip.

State appropriated general revenue funds of any kind **may not** be used for travel to a foreign country with the

exception of Canada, Mexico and U.S. possessions which follow the same rules as out-of-state travel.

Foreign travel expenses must be converted to U.S. dollars. The reimbursement request must specify the exchange rate used (the exchange rate will be the rate applicable to the travel date, or, if applicable, the exchange rate used by the credit card company when it pays the charge.) Expenses incurred in the U.S. should not be converted on the foreign travel voucher.

Travel to Washington, DC

All travel to Washington, DC that is paid for from state appropriated funds requires prior notification to the Office of State-Federal Relations (OSFR) if the purpose of the trip is to: 1) obtain or spend federal funds or 2) to impact federal policies. Prior notification is accomplished by completing the OSFR form.

UTHSCT is required to complete quarterly reports on travel to Washington, DC through the office of the Director of University and Community Affairs.

Registration

The required method of payment of registration fees is directly to the vendor through the purchasing process, a purchase order. An employee who elects to prepay a registration fee from personal funds may be reimbursed **only** after the trip is complete through a payment request form with required documentation, departmental approval and an administrator's signature.

Travel Cards

Only UTHSCT employees are eligible to receive a Citbank Travel Card for business related expenses incurred during an overnight stay. The travel card acceptable charges are meals, lodging expenses, gasoline for rental cars, parking and other approved business related incidentals.

Transportation Guidelines

Airfare

Texas Procurement and Support Services (TPASS) have established contract rates with airlines for the State of Texas. These contracted rates are for coach class and can be obtained by using UTHSCT Central Billing Account. UTHSCT will not pay or reimburse an amount greater than these contracted rates unless the amount meets the exemption set forth by TPASS. Travelers are encouraged to acquire the lowest possible rate; however, these rates must be offered to the general public and cannot be offered only to UTHSCT employees. First or business class airfares will not be paid or reimbursed unless deemed a medical necessity (as documented by a physician) or are the only flight available (a statement from a UTHSCT contracted travel agency is required documentation).

Rental Cars

TPASS has established contracted rates with Enterprise and Avis Rental Car Agencies and upon request in most instances will direct bill to UTHSCT. UTHSCT has access to contract rates through TPASS and only those amounts will be directly billed to UTHSCT. UTHSCT will only reimburse up to the stated contract rates unless an approved TPASS exception exists and is documented.

Personal Vehicles

Mileage will be reimbursed at a specific rate per mile according to Texas state guidelines and can be reimbursed with one of two supporting documents: 1) actual vehicle odometer readings from point to point or 2) printed documentation from UTHSCT's officially adopted online mapping system (MapQuest).

Gasoline charges are not reimbursable for a personal vehicle. In no instance will the mileage reimbursement exceed the average coach airfare and other necessary expense to complete a flight. Written documentation of coach airfare from one of UTHSCT contracted travel agencies compared to mileage must be submitted with the Travel Authorization prior to the trip. UTHSCT **will not** reimburse if the comparison is not made and approved prior to the trip.

Meals and Lodging Guidelines

Meal expenses are reimbursable with receipts only when an overnight stay is involved. An employee is reimbursed for **actual** expenses of meals with receipts not to exceed the Federal Government's Domestic Per Diem Rates guidelines incurred the day official business is conducted, the day prior to official business and or the day after official business as long as the travel time to the duty point reasonably requires more than one day.

UTHSCT employees cannot be reimbursed for meals on an overnight stay within 50 miles of the employee's designated headquarters.

UTHSCT will reimburse, with administrative approval, up to a maximum of \$100 per day In-State/Out-of-State.

Meal 'Per Diem' amount is not an entitlement but rather than the maximum allowed daily expense.

TPASS has established contracted rates with hotels for state employees on travel while doing business for the State of Texas. Lodging rates may be determined by utilizing the locality-based rates as provided in the Federal Government's Domestic Per Diem Rates guidelines.

UTHSCT will reimburse, **with prior administrative approval**, a maximum of In-State/Out-of-State at \$250 per day.

Incidentals

Incidental business expenses such as telephone, faxes, internet access, etc., are reimbursable.

Reimbursement Guidelines

Reimbursement of travel expenses is obtained by submitting a Travel Reimbursement Voucher with the appropriate signatures and documents to Accounting/Travel Services within fourteen (14) days of the last day of the trip.

Travel Reimbursement Vouchers for Standing Executive RTA reimbursements must have conference or meeting agenda, itinerary or conference registration materials to adequately document the business purpose of the trip attached to form when seeking reimbursement for travel expenses.

Travel Reimbursement Vouchers for Standing Local Mileage RTA Reimbursements must include travel dates, location and reason for travel for each destination. The voucher is due to Accounting/Travel Services within ten (10) days after the end of the month in which the travel occurred. If deadline is not met, reimbursement may not be paid.

A traveler cannot be reimbursed for any expense incurred by another UTHSCT employee or guest. Each UTHSCT traveler must pay for his/her own travel expenses and submit appropriate form for reimbursement.

Employees should be diligent in monitoring their reimbursement requests to ensure duplicate reimbursement voucher are not submitted to Accounting/Travel Services. If duplicate payment is made, employee is required to repay the duplicate payment immediately when error is discovered.

References:

<http://fmx.cpa.state.tx.us/fmx/travel/texttravel/index.php>

<http://www.utsystem.edu/travel>

<http://www.window.state.tx.us/procurement/prog/stmp/>

Relevant Forms and detail policy information

<http://sharepoint/sites/Accounting/Shared%20Documents/Travel.aspx>

Attachments:

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