

Travel Policies

I. General

It is the policy of the Oakwood College to reimburse employees who travel at the request of the College for reasonable and necessary expenses incurred while traveling on authorized College business. The implementation of this policy is reflected in the spirit of the guidelines set forth below. In this regard, these guidelines are not intended to replace the good judgment of those responsible for their execution. Circumstances and differences in responsibilities may dictate exceptions. In such cases, appropriate action should be characterized by prudence and a responsibility to safeguard College funds. These guidelines do not preclude more restrictive internal approval procedures which Department Heads may choose to implement internally in order to monitor their departmental accounts.

- A. **Necessary and Actual Expenses.** Only actual and necessary expenses of official travel is reimbursed. All travel must be by the most economical route practical and any person traveling by another route, without adequate justification, must assume any additional expense incurred. When there is an interruption of travel or deviation from the direct route for the traveler=s personal convenience, the travel allowance may not exceed that which would have been incurred on uninterrupted travel.
- B. **Official Station.** The official station of an employee is the office and/or campus to which an employee is normally assigned. Transportation costs between an individual's domicile and official station are not allowed.
- C. **Timelines.** To ensure that the College's travel reimbursement policies continue to qualify as an "Accountable Plan" (as defined by Internal Revenue Service guidelines), all travel expense claims must normally be filed within seven (7) days of the date that the expenses were incurred.
- D. **Transportation.** Responsible personnel must ensure that all transportation modes and practices are the most economically obtainable. Travel must be consistent with departmental programs, practical and in the best interest of the College.
- E. **Reimbursement from Funds Available Through Outside Contract.** If reimbursement is to be made from funds available through a contract between an outside sponsor and the College and such contract expressly provides a measure of reimbursable travel expense; persons traveling in the service of the College will be reimbursed in accordance with the terms of the contract, but cannot be reimbursed in excess of the amount allowed by College guidelines.

II. Travel Authorization

- A. **Travel Authorization.** A Travel Authorization form (Campus Leave) is required for all reimbursable travel including institution and grant travel. (See instructions for creating a Campus Leave in CARS)
- B. **Per Diem.** The per diem includes all charges for meals, gratuities to restaurant employees, and

laundry where allowable. The current per diem regulations are:

- *Per diem is \$41
- * No per diem allowance will be paid for a trip of less than six hours.
- * For a trip greater than six hours but less than twenty three hours, a meal allowance of \$20.50 (receipts are required) will be paid.
- * For an overnight trip, \$41 per day will be paid.
- * When all meals are provided by others (persons or organizations) per diem is \$13.00 (fully entertained)
- * Pre-authorized family per diem is \$57.00

If an employee does not wish to receive the per diem (in full or partial) he/she must state in writing that they voluntarily forfeit the per diem due them.

- C. **Privately Owned Vehicles.** Mileage in lieu of actual transportation expenses may be reimbursed per mile at the rate of \$.39 per mile.
- D. **Receipts.** Receipts should be obtained whenever possible for any travel expenses, but are required for all registration fees, air fare, rail and bus fare, gasoline and oil purchases for rental vehicles, and for any other expense greater than \$10. *If car rental and gas receipts are lost for trips where the rented car was driven for more than 60 miles, then the mileage rate may (with Unit VP=s and Financial VP=s approval) be claimed in lieu of rental reimbursement.*
- E. **Early Departure or Late Returns.** A memo is required to justify an employee leaving on an early travel date or returning late. The justification should document the reduction in the total travel costs.
- F. **Hotel Expenses.** Hotel expenses should be broken down on a per-day basis. The amount should include the room charge plus any applicable room taxes and should not include any telephone, meal, or parking expenses. The College does not reimburse expenses for movie rentals. If two employees share a hotel room, each employee should record 2 of the cost on his/her travel report. The employee who paid for the room should attach the original receipt to his/her travel report. The other employee should attach a copy of the hotel receipt with an explanation that a room was shared and that the original receipt is with the other employee's travel report. If a non-employee shares a room, the employee will be reimbursed for the single room rate only.
- G. **Air, Rail or Bus Fares.** Tickets purchased by the individual cannot be reimbursed until the trip is completed. A receipt from the airline (versus a credit card slip) is required.
- H. **Other Allowable Expenses.** The following are allowed for reimbursement:
- * Baggage charges for baggage in excess of the weight carried free by common carriers are allowable if such excess is used exclusively for official business. Storage and handling charges may also be allowed under the same conditions.
 - * Gratuities. Tips to taxi drivers, and/or housekeepers are allowable

when deemed by administration to be reasonable and necessary. Gratuities claimed as travel expenses should be consistent with levels generally accepted, taking into account geographical location, types of services provided, and any special circumstances. (*limit \$20.00 per trip*)

- * Porter age. Reasonable expenses for baggage handling services are allowable for delivery to or from a common carrier and delivery to or from a lodging accommodation. (*limit \$20.00 per trip*)
- * Registration Fees. The payment of registration fees, which are required as admittance fees for participation in meetings are allowable. Meals included as part of the registration fee may not be claimed separately. Organizational membership dues, as distinguished from registration fees, shall not be processed for payment as travel.
- * Telephone and Facsimile. Expenses for necessary official telephone and facsimile services are allowable. Whenever possible, telephone calls to an activity's central office shall be made by direct dial. (*limit \$20.00 per trip*)
- * Airport parking for Huntsville Airport is reimbursed up to the rate of \$8.00 per day for a maximum of **\$50.00 per trip**.
- * Hotel parking is reimbursed up to the rate of \$30.00 per day for a maximum of **\$210.00** per trip.

J. **Non-Allowable Expenses for Travel.** The following (not all inclusive) are not allowed for reimbursement:

- * Miscellaneous supplies
- * Alcoholic beverages
- * Personal phone calls
- * Unauthorized entertainment and hospitality expenses
- * Items without receipts
- * Unauthorized spending (books, gifts, etc.)
- * Payment of mileage rate when renting a car (If you drive a car, you can receive either the mileage rate or reimbursement for gas, not both. If you rent a car, the original receipt for gas and car rental should be turned in for reimbursement only.)
- * Items that are not included on the Campus Leave form.
- * Unauthorized trips

K. **Signature Requirements.** All travel to be reimbursed by Oakwood College must be approved on a Travel Authorization form in advance by the appropriate department supervisor, Vice President, VP for Financial Affairs and the President. Employees may not approve their own reimbursement.

L. **Interrupted Travel.** If there is an interruption of travel or deviation from the direct route for personal reasons, the reimbursement will not exceed that which would have been allowed if the travel was not interrupted. Any deviation must be explained in writing and attached to the travel voucher so that the correct amount of reimbursement can be determined.

M. **Expenses Paid on Behalf of Others.** It is not permissible to include expenses paid on behalf of others on an employee's travel reimbursement voucher. Each traveler must report his/her own expenses.

N. **Foreign Travel.** Procedures for foreign travel are the same as for travel within the United States. An employee may exchange currency several times during a trip at different rates; however, one exchange rate can be used for all travel conversions. The conversion rate must be shown on the travel voucher. Persons traveling under federally funded accounts should be aware of and adhere to U.S. Flag Carrier regulations (FAR 47.4).

Travel Reports Procedures

General steps for turning in travel reports:

1. Travel reports are due in the Accounting Office within seven working days following an employee's trip. Retrieve report from the Accounting Report Form Menu on Webpage.
2. Travel reports should be filled out completely and all original receipts should be attached. Attach on-line to requisition when applicable for reimbursement.
3. Travel reports should not be turned in without the following signatures or it will result in a delay on reimbursements: employee, department head, and division head. To expedite the reimbursement, create a requisition for a check (CK) for the amount of the reimbursement from the travel report.
4. Employees should allow a week to ten days for any reimbursements (due to the volume of reports being submitted).
5. Any reimbursement to the school must be paid and receipted with the cashier, and the original receipt should be attached to the travel report before submitting to the Accounting Office. No money should be turned into Distribution Center at any time.