

**Document Title:** TRAVEL POLICY  
**Category:** Accounting  
**Number:**  
**Effective Date:** January 1, 2002  
**Authority:** VP for Financial Administration  
**Document Status** [04/2002] [01/01/2014] [ ] [ ] Revision Dates [ ] Replacement [ ] Addition

---

## I. GENERAL

It is the policy of Oakwood University to reimburse employees who travel at the request of the University for reasonable and necessary expenses incurred while traveling on authorized University 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 University funds. These guidelines do not preclude more restrictive internal approval procedures which department heads may choose to implement in order to monitor their departmental accounts.

- A. **Necessary and Actual Expenses.** Only actual and necessary expenses of official travel are reimbursed. All travel must be by the most economical route practical and any person traveling by another route, without adequate written 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 University'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 University. Transportation arrangements should be made three or more weeks in advance to obtain the best possible rates.

Mileage reimbursement for travel to airports less than thirty miles from the official station may be reimbursed at the approved mileage rate for up to twelve miles (twenty-four round-trip). If it is documented that travel to an airport more than thirty miles from the official station is economically advantageous to the University and if approved by the division administrator mileage reimbursement for travel to that airport may be allowable at the approved mileage rate.

Most vehicles rented while on university business are covered by the University. Reimbursement will not be made for additional premiums paid on rental vehicles. In the interest of safety, rental of 15-passenger vans is prohibited; the University will not allow reservation for such nor are liable for such usage. Ensure all transportation modes are under the OU Insurance Coverage Policy. (If in question, ask HRM). If travel is internationally, outside of the USA and Canada and territories of the USA employee must purchase additional coverage in that local country.

- 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 University, and such contract expressly provides a measure of reimbursable travel expense, persons traveling in the service of the University will be reimbursed in accordance with the terms of the contract, but cannot be reimbursed in excess of the amount allowed by University guidelines.

## II. TRAVEL AUTHORIZATION

- A. **Travel Authorization.** A Travel Authorization form (Campus Leave) is required for all travel including institution and grant travel.
- B. **Per Diem.** The per diem includes all charges for meals, gratuities to restaurant employees, laundry, and other items where allowable. On the day of departure and the day of return employees may be reimbursed for up to three-fourths the approved per diem. Family per diem may be authorized once annually when pre-approved by division administrator. Family per diem if approved applies to employees traveling with spouse and/or child/children under the age of 24. The current per diem regulations can be accessed on-line at: <http://www.oakwood.edu/campus-services/accounting>.

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 allowed per diem.

- C. **Privately Owned Vehicles.** Mileage in lieu of actual transportation expenses may be reimbursed on a per mile basis. The current mileage rate can be accessed on-line at: <http://www.oakwood.edu/campus-services/accounting>.
- D. **Receipts.** Original 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.
- E. **Early Departure or Late Returns.** Travel request should include dates necessary to complete authorized University business. 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 and should be economically advantageous to the University.
- 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 University does not reimburse expenses for movie rentals. If two employees share a hotel room, each employee should record 1/2 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. Hotel maximum rate is \$150/night (excluding taxes and required fees) or the rate of the conference employee is attending. Exceptions must be pre-approved by the division administrator.
- G. **Air, Rail or Bus Fares.** Tickets purchased by the individual cannot be reimbursed until the trip is approved. A receipt from the airline (versus a credit card slip) is required. In most cases airport car rental is disallowed if the conference and hotel are at the same location. Taxi or shuttles can be used for transport to and from the airport.

H. **Other Allowable Expenses.** The following are allowed for reimbursement:

- The University will provide reimbursement for one checked item at the common carrier's official weight limit. Baggage charges for additional baggage or 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 \$30.00 per trip)*
- Portage. 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 \$30.00 per trip)*

- Registration Fees. 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.
  - Wi-Fi, Telephone and Facsimile. Expenses for necessary official Wi-Fi, telephone and facsimile services are allowable. Whenever possible, telephone calls to an activity's central office shall be made via the telephone service that is economically advantageous to the University. (*limit \$30.00 per trip*)
  - Airport parking for Huntsville Airport is reimbursed up to the rate of \$8.00 per day for maximum of \$80.00 per trip.
  - Hotel parking is reimbursed up to the rate of \$30.00 per day for a maximum of \$210.00 per trip.
- I. **Non-Allowable Expenses for Travel.** The University does not provide reimbursement for the following list of items (the list is not all inclusive):
- Alcoholic beverages
  - Personal phone calls
  - 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 entertainment and hospitality expenses
  - Unauthorized trips
- J. **Signature Requirements.** All travel to be reimbursed by Oakwood University must be approved on a Travel Authorization form (Campus Leave) in advance by the appropriate department supervisor, and division administrator. Employees may not approve their own reimbursement.
- K. **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.
- L. **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.
- M. **Foreign Travel.** Procedures for foreign travel are the same as for travel within the United States.  
. The conversion rate should be documented via receipts and 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).
- N. **Multiple Location Travel (back-to-back travel).** Employees should complete a separate Campus Leave and Travel Expense Report for each location when combining multiple trips.
- O. **Class or Student Travel.** Student may travel, only, under the supervision of a university employee. OU employee will add student travel expenses to his or her travel request for approval and reimbursement. Employee may request the following for student travel:
- **Per Diem:** (See section on per diem) (Student signature is required and should be attached to Travel expense report to verify receiving per diem.)
  - **Meals:** A department may choose to buy student meals and not verify and distribute per diem to the student. However, receipts are required for reimbursement.

- **Other:** all other arrangements for students that require funding should be included on the travel request for approval and reimbursement of an OU employee.

**P. Lodging with Relatives or Friends.** Oakwood University encourages employees to stay with friends, relatives or colleagues when traveling on university business, when appropriate. In consideration, Oakwood would like to thank the host/hostess with either a gift or check. The distribution is as follows:

OU will allow a gift (ex. meal, gift basket, flowers, etc), or gift card same as cash, for up to 5 nights at \$10 per night stay (or \$50). Receipts are required for reimbursement.

Or request a check from Accounts Payable at \$10 dollars per night; attach a Travel Report, and a completed W9 to process payment host/hostess after trip.

**Document Title:** TRAVEL REPORTS  
**Category:** Accounting  
**Number:**  
**Effective Date:** April 5, 1999  
**Authority:** VP for Financial Affairs  
**Document Status:** [ ] [ ] [10/2013] [ ] **Revision Dates** [ ] **Replacement** [ ] **Addition**

---

## **PROCEDURES AND POLICIES FOR COMPLETING A CAMPUS LEAVE**

1. Begin process for trip **SIX WEEKS IN ADVANCE**.
2. Create Campus Leave On-line (OU Travel tab) for entire trip (Airplane, car rental, per diem, etc.)
3. Create Requisition On-line with the entire trip amount (Total from Campus Leave), and attach Campus Leave to requisition.
4. Submit request for approval.
5. Purchase Order created (One will be sent to OU Agency w/Campus Leave)
6. Login on OU Travel on-line reservation (Need authorized PO to make reservation) or other website.
7. Create on-line reservation for airfare, car rental and/or hotel. If conference/convention hotel is not listed, contact OU travel agent for direct booking or find competitive rates on-line or via an alternate source.
8. OU travel agent will process trip arrangements based on receipt of an authorized University PO verification.
9. Requisitioner should email purchase order with attachment to [acctravel@oakwood.edu](mailto:acctravel@oakwood.edu) and check writer will create e-pay within three (3) business days for Other Expenses: per diem, baggage, mileage, etc. All payments to OU employee will be done via electronic payment to the primary account designated in Payroll until another account information is given to update the employee e-pay file. (See check-writer for updating).
10. If a separate payment is needed for registration, please attach memo with Vendor Name and Number with amount to the Purchase Order documentation sent to [acctravel@oakwood.edu](mailto:acctravel@oakwood.edu) for vendor payment.
11. OU is responsible for reimbursing only the items listed on the approved Campus Leave and/or Purchase Order.

## **PROCEDURES AND POLICIES FOR SUBMITTING TRAVEL REPORTS**

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.
2. Travel Reports should be filled out completely and all original receipts should be attached. 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. Or drop-off travel report at Accounting Distribution.
3. Employees should allow a week to ten days for any reimbursements (due to the volume of reports being submitted).
4. 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.

## **GENERAL INFORMATION IN REFERENCE TO TRAVEL REPORTS**

Any reimbursement to the school must be paid and receipted with the cashier, and the original receipt should be attached to the travel report form before submitting it to the Accounting Office. No money should be turned into the Accounting Office at any time.

Reimbursement is not given for the following:

1. Items without receipts
2. Unauthorized items (books, gifts, etc.)
3. Travel to the airport for out-of-town trips
4. Mileage is not paid when renting a car. Original receipts for gas and car rental should be turned in for reimbursement only. When driving their own car, employees may receive either mileage or have gas receipts paid, but not both.  
Payments for gratuities will not exceed \$5.00 a day, with the exception of authorized luncheons and dinner meetings.

Travel Report forms are supplied by the Accounting Office.