Travel 101: Understanding Travel Policies at The University of Alabama

Accounts Payable
3 Types of Governance

- Federal
- State
- UA
Who is a "Traveler"?

- Anyone who travels on behalf of the University is subject to the University’s Travel Policies
- Some examples:
  - Officials, speakers, volunteers
  - Prospective employees
- Students are an exception to this rule.
Travel Status

- Employees are in travel status when they leave their base.
- Base is defined as the employees’ primary residence or work location (whichever is closest to the travel destination).
Economical Travel

When traveling at the University of Alabama’s expense, travelers should, in all cases, seek to obtain the lowest possible fares and rates by scheduling their travel in the manner that will be the most economical for the university.
Personal Travel

Personal travel expenses for side trips are prohibited.
Traveler’s Responsibility

• It is the traveler’s responsibility to obtain documentation of the travel costs.
• It is the traveler’s responsibility to verify flight and hotel arrangements and ensure the schedule and booking is correct.
  – Charges associated with scheduling errors are not reimbursable.
Approvals

- All travel must be approved by the employee’s supervisor.
- By signing the Travel Voucher or P-Card Packet, the traveler & the supervisor are certifying that the expenses are true and accurate & have been used in accordance with the University of Alabama’s Travel Policies.
Travel Vouchers

- Eligible Out of Pocket expenses paid by the employee may be submitted for reimbursement on a Travel Voucher.
- There are 3 kinds of Travel Vouchers:
  - In-State
  - Out-of-State
  - International
- If the travel voucher is submitted more than 60 days after the traveler’s return, the reimbursement will be taxable income to the employee.
Transportation
Exit 2
Air Travel

- When traveling by commercial airline on official University business, travelers should plan well in advance and obtain the most economical fare available.
- Only coach/economy, non-refundable fares are allowable.
- Airfare should be purchased using the P-Card.
Air Travel – cont’d

• In circumstances where a P-Card could not be used, an original receipt, including method of payment, must be submitted with the travel voucher for reimbursement.
• Baggage fees for up to two pieces of luggage per traveler are also allowable.
• The costs of ticket life insurance, ticket cancellation insurance, seat selection fees, and early boarding fees are not allowable.
University Owned Automobiles

- The University maintains a fleet of sedans and vans that employees and students may use for official University travel. University-owned vehicles are available on a first-come, first-serve basis to properly licensed adults who are employed by or enrolled in the University.

- A valid driver's license and current MVR (Motor Vehicle Record) are required.
Privately Owned Automobiles

- Official travel will be reimbursed at the current federal mileage rate.
- The University makes reimbursement for the round-trip mileage between travelers’ base and destination, or for the actual miles traveled from origin to destination and back, whichever is less.
- Reimbursement for round trip mileage cannot exceed the cost of a roundtrip flight. Reimbursement will be made at whichever is lowest, the current mileage rate or the lowest discounted airfare. This is called airfare-in-lieu of mileage.
Public Transportation vs. Rental Vehicles

• During official University travel, taxis may be hired when no other, more economical public transportation is readily available.

• The University does not pay for taxi fare to and from meals.
Rental Vehicles

- The University does not accept transportation to and from the airport, to and from meals, or sightseeing as justification for renting a vehicle.
- The University of Alabama should appear somewhere on the rental agreement so both the driver and vehicle are covered by the University’s liability insurance.
- Do **NOT** purchase additional insurance from rental car agencies.
In-State Per Diem

- When a University employee travels within the state of Alabama on official University business, that employee is reimbursed on a per diem basis for expenses other than transportation.

- The P-Card cannot be used for In-State travel.
Per Diem Rates

- Per Diem is calculated based on the hour of departure and hour of return.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Duration of Travel</th>
<th>Per Diem Amount</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0 to 6 hours</td>
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<tr>
<td>6 to 12 hours</td>
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<tr>
<td>12 hours + (Not Overnight)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Overnight</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Note:
The state per diem rate is set by the governor. University Officials do NOT have the authority to change it.
Per Diem Waiver

- An employee who does not wish claim per diem should indicate on his or her travel voucher a signed statement waiving the allowance.

- Only an employee can decide to waive per diem. A University department cannot force an employee to waive per diem or refuse to pay per diem.
Out-of-State Travel

- *Actual* expenses *up to* UA maximum are paid for out of state travel.
- Departments may establish lower maximums.
- Departments may require receipts even if AP does not.
Out-of-State Lodging

- Any lodging over $250 a night before tax requires written explanation from the traveler and approval from the Dean, Department Head, or Budget Manager.
- Itemized folio receipts are required.
Out-of-State Meals

- Meals for travel out-of-state are reimbursed at the actual cost of the meals, up to $75.00 a day with receipts for entire day, or up to $45 without receipts.

- The amounts per day are not a per diem or a given reimbursed amount.
  - Actual cost must be submitted on the travel voucher even if the cost went over the per day maximum.

- Travelers cannot list a flat amount or an amount that appears to be a per diem.

- Gratuities in excess of 20% will not be reimbursed.

Caution:
The 20% maximum applies to all gratuities or tips!
International Travel

• Travel outside the U.S. or Canada is considered International

• U.S. Dept. of State Foreign Per Diem rates are used as maximum--
  http://aoprals.state.gov/web920/per_diem.asp

• Vouchers for reimbursement should be prepared in U.S. currency.
  – Each receipt should be converted to U.S. dollars.
  – Please make a note of the exchange rate for the travel period.
International Travel

- When traveling internationally, please contact Bank of America (for pcards) or your bank (for personal cards) at least two business days prior to leaving so your transactions do not get flagged as potential fraud.

- Bank of America charges an international transaction fee for all charges that are processed outside of the U.S.
Summary
## Travel Expense Summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expense</th>
<th>In-State</th>
<th>Out-of-State</th>
<th>International</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Lodging</strong> (UA Employees)</td>
<td>In-State Travel Voucher (Subject to Per Diem)</td>
<td>P-Card (Subject to limit)</td>
<td>P-Card (Subject to limit)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Meals</strong></td>
<td>In-State Travel Voucher (Subject to Per Diem)</td>
<td>Out-of-State Travel Voucher (subject to daily limit)</td>
<td>International Voucher (subject to daily limit)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Conference Registration Fees</strong></td>
<td>P-Card</td>
<td>P-Card</td>
<td>P-Card</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Airfare</strong></td>
<td>P-Card (if most economical)</td>
<td>P-Card</td>
<td>P-Card</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ground Travel</strong> (Ex.: taxi, shuttle, rental car, parking fees, etc.)</td>
<td>P-Card</td>
<td>P-Card</td>
<td>P-Card</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mileage</strong></td>
<td>In-State Travel Voucher</td>
<td>Out-of-State Travel Voucher</td>
<td>International Travel Voucher</td>
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Help is Available

- The University Travel Policy is available on the Accounts Payable Website
  - http://accountspayable.ua.edu/
- Staff members in P-Card Services and Accounts Payable are always happy to answer any questions you have that are related to P-Card or Travel. Feel free to call or email us for help!