

# UNIVERSITY OF Nebraska

Travel Policy

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## Purpose

The purpose of the University of Nebraska's Travel Policy is to provide for the payment of authorized, necessary and reasonable travel expenses incurred by University employees traveling on University business. The intent of the policy is that such payments be fair and equitable both to the employee and to the University as well as consistent with all applicable State of Nebraska statutes and regulations to support the productivity and safety of those traveling on University business.

## Travel Status Definition

The following policies apply to employees of the University of Nebraska while they are in Travel Status. An employee is in Travel Status when he/she is outside of his/her normal city of work or residency or his/her respective regular commuting route while conducting or engaging in official University business. Pre-Trip Requests and expense reports within the University expense and booking system will be required for all travel which falls under this definition. The failure to comply with these requirements may result in travel expenses not being reimbursed and/or paid for by the University or disciplinary actions as appropriate.

## Pre-Travel Requirements

### ***Approval Authority***

Each employee trip will require the submittal of a Pre-Trip Request. A Pre-Trip Request is an approval, processed through the University expense and booking system, for an employee to travel for University business and to use University funding sources for expenses related to the business travel. A Pre-Trip Request must be approved by the individual's supervisor and the individuals who have funding authorization for all respective funding centers being utilized for the trip. This same approval process will be required upon the submittal of actual expenses of the trip via the University expense system.

Foreign and non-continental United States travel will require review by the University Travel Office for compliance with all associated University policies and procedures.

Privately owned or piloted planes, chartered planes and the State of Nebraska plane will require additional approval from the employee's respective Vice Chancellor of Business and Finance.

### ***Most Economical Rates***

Consistent with the purpose of this Travel Policy, employees and the University must make their best efforts to consider and utilize the most economical means possible for all travel. Time management, staff productivity, cost efficiency and other related aspects will be taken into account when considering the most economical means. Ultimately, the University and all travelers must work to be good stewards of all funds and resources which have been made available.

## ***Compliance and Exemptions***

Failure to comply with the requirements stated within this policy may result in the employee not being reimbursed, the University not paying for unapproved travel expenses, the employee having travel restrictions enforced due to recurring policy violations, withholding all or portions of reimbursements for the respective or future trips and/or disciplinary actions as appropriate. Compliance by all employees will be monitored and addressed by the University Travel Office and other University administration and supervisors when deemed necessary.

No exemptions to this Travel Policy will be authorized unless proper documentation, such as an ADA accommodation plan, is on file with the University and the University Travel Office is made aware in writing of such documentation prior to the request for an exemption. Proper documentation may include necessary medical documents which will be kept on file with the employee's respective campus compliance office. A description of how these exemptions affect an employee's travel requirements and capabilities will be kept within the employee's personal travel profile by the University Travel Office management and staff. The respective employee's trips and related expenses will be processed in accordance with these approved, documented exemptions. All accommodations or exceptions to this Travel Policy must be requested in writing during the pre-trip authorization. No exceptions will be granted during the reimbursement phase.

## ***Personal Travel***

All University business travel that includes any personal travel must be self-reported to the University Travel Office prior to the trip within the respective Pre-Trip Request. The request should only include the estimated expenses for the related University business travel. Travel expenses involving personal travel will not be paid for by the University. Following the trip, the University will pay for or reimburse the employee for the portion of the expenses which relate to the business portion of the respective trip. All personal expenses and related taxes and fees will be deducted from the submitted, detailed receipts.

## ***Departure and Return Times***

For all trips reimbursements, departure time is defined as the time the employee leaves his/her home or work location and is in Travel Status, and return time is defined as the time the employee returns to his/her home or work location after ending Travel Status. Personal travel time to or from the home or work location prior to or following to University business travel cannot be claimed.

## ***Department Policies***

Individual departments may create more restrictive travel policies; however, the department will have the sole responsibility of monitoring compliance of these internal policies. Once Pre-Trip Requests and expenses are approved, the travel and its related expenses will be processed and audited in accordance with this Travel Policy.

## ***Travel Expense Deadline***

All trip expenses must be submitted to the University Travel Office, through the University expense and booking system, no later than sixty (60) days after the final day on which expenses

were incurred for which reimbursement is sought. Expenses submitted past this deadline will not be paid or reimbursed.

## Available Payment Methods

### ***University Direct Payments***

Direct payments are payments made by the University on behalf of the employee for business-related travel expenses. The University will pay for pre-approved air, Amtrak, Rail Europe, lodging, and car rental expenses for University business travel when the bookings are completed through the University travel management company system unless personal travel is involved. When applicable, other pre-paid expenses may also be paid directly by the University.

### ***Expenses Paid by Employee***

Personal funding sources (out-of-pocket expenses of the employee) may not be utilized by the employee for University business travel expenses, unless such expenses are not required to be paid for by the University as stated within this Travel Policy. Reimbursements for expenses paid with personal funding sources must include itemized receipts and will be submitted through the University travel expense system, evaluated for allowable expenses according to this Travel Policy, and reimbursed to the employee after approval by the University Travel Office.

### ***Procurement Card***

The University-issued procurement card (known as a “P-card”) is available only for pre-paid conference registrations. Other travel expenses must be pre-approved by the employee’s campus procurement department before an employee may use a P-card for travel purchases and must comply with the University Procurement Card Policy with its respective campus amendments.

## Transportation

### ***Commercial Air***

For all travel beyond a 550-mile radius of the employee’s campus, air travel is the required form of travel. The University Travel Office will evaluate all requests for exemptions to this rule. If air travel is more economical, the employee will not be reimbursed for meals or lodging while enroute to the trip’s final destination. Other business purposes and/or reasons for car travel over air travel will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis by the University Travel Office.

### ***Booking***

All flights are to be booked through the University-contracted travel management company(s). At the time of purchase, the employee may book a ticket not to exceed the price of the coach rate. If the employee selects a flight that is not the cheapest, listed price, the employee must provide an explanation for this choice to the University Travel Office. This purchase will then be evaluated by the University Travel Office for final approval of purchase, or, if denied, a possible cancellation and rebooking of the cheaper fare. Booking outside of the University-contracted travel management company will be allowed only when the services of the University-contracted travel management company are not available.

## Upgrades

The University will pay for the coach rate ticket as determined by listed price at the time of booking. All upgrades will be the personal responsibility of the employee. The employee must contact the travel management company, arrange the ticket exchange and pay for all fees associated with the upgrade, including change and transaction fees.

In the case of a cancellation, the upgraded ticket becomes the property of the University for future business trips of employees. The University will reimburse the employee the upgrade cost only. The change, transaction and other fees associated with the upgrade will not be refunded to the employee.

## **Rental Cars**

### Booking

All rental cars will be booked with contracted University providers through the University booking system. University-negotiated car rental rates will be utilized for all University business travel. When a contracted provider is not available, booking may take place outside of the University booking system and submitted as a business trip expense.

All rentals larger than “Full Size” will require approval from the University Travel Office. In addition, rentals of 12-passenger vans will require a driver who has had the proper training and has the proper documentation on file with the University Travel Office prior to booking or rental.

### Insurance

If any personal travel is involved in a business trip, the employee may need to obtain additional insurance for the rental car. This additional insurance will not be reimbursed or paid by the University.

For foreign rental cars, extra insurance is to be obtained and will be reimbursed or paid by the University. This applies to all foreign rentals outside of the continental United States, Alaska and Hawaii.

### Other

Fuel receipts for rental cars may be submitted by the employee for reimbursement.

## **Personal Vehicles**

### Mileage

A University employee will be reimbursed for use of a personal vehicle (including vans, pickups, panel trucks and motorcycles) while on University business (excluding commuting miles) at the standard mileage rate established by the University of Nebraska.

No fuel receipts will be accepted for personal vehicle travel reimbursement. All additional mileage that is in excess of the direct route of travel (from/to departure address to/from final destination address) must be submitted as a separate expense with a detailed mileage log.

### Home to Temporary Work Location

Mileage for the direct route from an employee's home to a temporary work location, including travel from employee's home to airport, is reimbursable.

### Commuting

Commuting miles, calculated as the normal, direct route between an employee's home and permanent work location, are not reimbursable.

### Additional Mileage from Commute

Additional mileage incurred outside of the direct commuting route for an employee is reimbursable if the extra miles are for University business travel and the employee is in Travel Status.

### Blanket Travel Authorization

Based on the capabilities of the University expense and booking system, Blanket Travel Authorizations (BTA) will be allowed for business travel with the same business purpose. BTAs will be requested through the University Travel Office and approved by the employee's respective supervisor and all individuals who have funding authorization for all respective funding centers being utilized for the BTA. A BTA has a maximum term of one academic or fiscal year depending on the specific request and may be renewed by submitting a new request at the end of each term. Only travel within city limits, state limits, and/or a 100-mile radius of the employee's respective campus is permitted under a BTA. Travel not meeting this criterion must be requested through the standard, individual trip process.

### Personal Insurance

The employee's personal vehicle insurance will be the primary coverage for all personal vehicle business travel. The University insurance policy will be utilized as secondary coverage if necessary.

The University will not reimburse or be held responsible for any personal insurance coverage, deductibles, or uninsured losses.

### **Motorpool/University Owned Vehicles**

Motorpool and University-owned vehicles will be billed by the University directly to the department(s) utilizing the vehicles. Employees are to utilize the Voyager cards, placed in each vehicle, to cover fuel and oil costs. Personal fuel and oil receipts will only be reimbursed if the Voyager card does not function correctly or is unavailable at the time of purchase.

### **Other Forms of Travel**

Any employee wanting to use alternative means of travel, including those listed in this section, must submit a Pre-Trip Request outlining why the alternative form of travel is being requested and that no other less-expensive means are available before these forms of travel may be utilized.

### Privately-Owned or Piloted Airplanes

Privately-owned or piloted airplanes will be reimbursed at the current IRS mileage rate.

## Personally-Rented Airplanes

Personally-rented airplanes will be processed through the University Travel Office and reimbursed at actual expense.

## Chartered Flights

All contracts for chartered flights for employee travel will be approved and processed through the University Travel Office.

## State Plane

All requests for the State of Nebraska plane will be approved and processed through the University Travel Office and the Nebraska Department of Transportation.

## Amtrak and Rail Europe

All Amtrak and Rail Europe trips will be booked through the University travel management company.

## Charter Buses

All contracts for chartered buses for employee travel will be processed and approved by the respective employee's procurement office and provided to the University Travel Office for monitoring and compliance.

## Other

All other forms of transportation will be reviewed by the University Travel Office and approved as appropriate.

## Lodging

All lodging is to be booked through the University booking system. Lodging expenses will be reimbursed at the conference rate, when applicable, or up to the GSA per diem rate plus an additional 50% based on the location of the lodging. Conference rates will require extra documentation including the conference agenda and proof of the respective rate at the time of booking. When the University booking system is unavailable, the submitted lodging receipt must be itemized and show that payment was made in full to be considered for reimbursement.

If employees choose to share lodging, related expenses must be cross referenced. When sharing a room with a non-University companion(s), only a single room rate will be covered by the University.

## Meals

### ***Reimbursements***

Up to three meals will be allowed per day for travel with the total cost of these meals not exceeding the GSA meals per diem rate of the respective trip's destination city. The employee may submit up to three receipts for reimbursement per day. If receipts are submitted beyond the three-receipt limit or total meal expenses are in excess of the GSA per diem rate, these excess

expenses will not be eligible for payment or reimbursement. The number of meals allowed and their associated costs (breakfast and lunch at 25% and dinner at 50% of the GSA daily meal per diem rate) will be deducted from the daily allowance if meals are included in conference rates, lodging offerings or other registrations. Deductions will also be made in accordance with trip departure and return times as listed within the “Meal Allowances” section.

For all submitted meal expenses, and required receipts, the employee may only submit receipts with his/her individual meals. No other individual’s meals or expenses should be included on the submitted receipt with the exception of Official Functions as defined within this Travel Policy. An incorrectly submitted receipt may not be reimbursed.

**Alcohol**

Alcohol, and its associated tips and taxes, will not be reimbursed. These expenses must be deducted from all submitted expenses and receipts.

**Meal Allowances**

For the following meal allowances, refer to the departure and return times as defined in the “Departure and Return Times” section and stated within the employee’s trip details:

One-Day Travel Meal Allowances	
Breakfast	Departure time is prior to 6:30 a.m.
Lunch	No
Dinner	Return time after 7 p.m.

\*Reimbursements for one-day travel food expenses are reportable on the employee’s W-2 if the total expenses are greater than \$200 from December 1 to November 30.

First and Last Day of Extended Travel Meal Allowances	
Breakfast	Departure time is prior to 6:30 a.m. or return time is after 10 a.m.
Lunch	Departure time is prior to 11 a.m. or return time is after 2 p.m.
Dinner	Departure time is prior to 5 p.m. or return time is after 7 p.m.

**Groceries**

Groceries may be reimbursed, in lieu of meals, up to 50% of the GSA rate of the trip’s final destination. The total reimbursement will be based on the number of people and the total meals the purchase covers. For each meal covered, the corresponding GSA rate (breakfast and lunch at 25% and dinner at 50% of the GSA rate for the trip’s final destination) will be deducted from each individual employee’s total meal allowance for their respective trip.

**Official Functions**

Expenses for official functions, conferences, hearings or group meetings while in Travel Status are allowed for various purposes. Reference the University Procurement Food Policy for specific details on these allowances. In addition to the required receipts for approved, official



function expenses, the business purpose/agenda and a list of attendees must be provided including the place of employment/headquarter city if attendees are University employees.

## Foreign Travel

In addition to the following items, all policies stated throughout this Travel Policy apply to foreign travel, which includes travel beyond the continental United States, Alaska and Hawaii.

### **Executive Memorandum No. 25**

All travel to countries under a United States Department of State Travel Warning or Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Travel Health Notice must follow all guidelines, restrictions and approvals as stated within Executive Memorandum No. 25 including the following:

*“It is the policy of the University of Nebraska that any faculty or staff member seeking to travel under university auspices to a country for which the CDC has issued a Travel Health Notice at Warning Level 3 must first obtain prior approval for such travel by making a written request to the relevant University of Nebraska Chancellor. The Chancellor will make a recommendation on the request to the President, who will make a final determination.*

*Faculty or staff participating in non-university sponsored, independent travel to a CDC Warning Level 3 country must report such travel to the Chief Academic Officer on their campus prior to departure.*

*All faculty and staff undertaking such travel, whether under university auspices or not, will be subject to appropriate screening and health monitoring prior to returning to campus in order to ensure the health and safety of the University of Nebraska community.”*

### **Expenses**

All expenses must be submitted with applicable receipts and documentation in compliance with the “Receipt Requirements” section of this Travel Policy.

### **Export Control**

The export control regulations apply to foreign travel in relation to items that employees take with them on trips to sanctioned or embargoed countries and the conduct of business with, or providing services to, restricted individuals, countries or entities. Employees will comply with all rules within his/her campus export control policy.

### **Insurance**

All University employees are covered by the University International Travel Insurance Policy for University business travel. No pre-trip reporting or enrollment is required. For personal travel, the employee may need to purchase additional coverage at his/her own expense. Employees are encouraged to enroll in the Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP), which is a free service to allow U.S. citizens and nationals traveling and living abroad to enroll their trip with the nearest U.S. Embassy or Consulate.

## Travel with Students

This section is applicable to employees who travel with students when the students are:

- Members of the Board of Regents;
- Members of an official University committee, which is traveling on University business, approved by the Chancellor's or President's office;
- Participants of field trips conducted as part of an approved instructional program;
- Participants in Education Abroad trips and programs; or,
- Representatives of the University such as members of performing groups or teams.

### **Expenses**

The University will pay for approved costs associated with transportation, food, lodging and necessary insurance for the students traveling with the group and who are also members of the group. Some costs associated with study abroad programs will be paid with student fees, tuition and, in some instances, by the students themselves.

Employees may submit expenses associated with student travel for reimbursement. However, a list of students must be included with the request for proper reimbursement.

Approved, out-of-pocket travel expenses of a University student will be covered by the University. These reimbursements will be processed within the sponsoring department of the respective trip.

A group travel card is available for employees who travel with students. Please see the Group Travel Card Policy for more information.

### **Insurance**

Employees traveling with students must submit a student roster at least one week prior to the trip departure date.

Employees will be required to complete and submit the additional student insurance form to ensure that all students are covered while in Travel Status. The student's individual policy should serve as the primary insurance, and the University student insurance may serve as secondary coverage. Certain groups are already covered by a campus-wide policy and will not require this additional University student insurance. Please see the respective campus student group coverage below:

UNK – University recognized Athletic Teams, Band, Cheerleaders, Dance, Mascot

UNL – University recognized Athletic Teams, Cheerleaders, Dance

UNMC – Only students covered by UNMC student health insurance

UNO – University recognized Athletic Teams, Band, Cheerleaders, Dance, Mascot

### **Foreign Travel with Students**

For all foreign travel involving students, the employee must contact his/her respective Study Abroad/International Education Office.

## Receipt Requirements

The employee will provide required receipts that are detailed and itemized for all University business-related travel expenses. Receipts should only contain the reimbursable expenses of the individual employee. Any receipts with non-reimbursable or additional traveler expenses may not be considered for payment or reimbursement by the University. The employee should work to obtain and submit all travel expense receipts when available. Failure to submit required receipts may result in the University not paying for or reimbursing the employee for the related expenses.

If receipts are listed in a foreign language, all items on the receipt must be translated prior to submitting. The translation should include the business name, location, date, individual items and associated prices converted to the U.S dollar equivalency on the day of the transaction.

Details on specific receipt requirements are as follows:

Receipt Type	Receipt Policy	Requirement of Receipt
<b>Abstract, proceedings</b>	Actual expense for copies of conference materials or related abstracts/papers	Yes
<b>Airfare</b>	Airline tickets are required to be purchased through the University travel management company; other sources require further review and approval as stated in policy	Yes
<b>Airline baggage fees</b>	Actual expense	Yes, if \$25.00 or more
<b>Airline fees</b>	The University will reimburse employees for airline fees that are necessary/required by the airline for the University business purpose of the trip; please itemize these expenses by date and explain any unusual or excessive charges; see policy for more details	Yes, if \$25.00 or more
<b>Airport shuttle</b>	Actual expense	Yes
<b>Airport tax/exit fee</b>	Actual expense may be claimed when not already included in the cost of the ticket (mainly foreign airports)	Yes, if available
<b>Alcoholic beverages</b>	Not reimbursable	N/A
<b>Animal boarding</b>	Not reimbursable	N/A
<b>Car rental</b>	Actual expense	Yes
<b>Car repairs, maintenance, accidents, washes, oil changes, or locksmith charges for personal vehicles</b>	Not reimbursable	N/A
<b>Child care</b>	Not reimbursable	N/A
<b>Conference registration/expenses</b>	Documentation of conference expense and agenda required for reimbursement	Yes
<b>Currency conversion fees</b>	Actual expense on amount required for University business travel	Yes
<b>Dry cleaning (hotel services)</b>	Not reimbursable	N/A
<b>Entertainment (including in-room movie rentals)</b>	Not reimbursable	N/A
<b>Exercise equipment/room fees</b>	Not reimbursable	N/A
<b>Faxes</b>	Actual expense necessary for University business	Yes, if \$25.00 or more

<b>Film developing</b>	Actual expense necessary for University business; purpose should be explained on reimbursement	Yes, if \$25.00 or more
<b>Flight insurance</b>	Included in travel management company booking; extra insurance not reimbursable	N/A
<b>Gasoline</b>	Actual expense for rental or University vehicles; may not be claimed on travel with personal vehicle	Yes
<b>Gifts</b>	Actual expense of gift when it is considered customary to present a gift to a host within foreign countries; no alcohol	Yes
<b>Gratuities (including tips for cabs, skycaps, bellmen, and meals)</b>	Limited to the IRS per diem total of \$5.00 per day for porters, baggage carriers, hotel staff and staff on ships (this limit does not apply to student group travel); gratuities for all other instances including meals and transportation must be included on their respective receipts with a cap of 20% of the total bill	Yes, with the exception of those included in the \$5.00 per day IRS limit
<b>Groceries</b>	Actual expense with an explanation of the number of meal equivalencies and individuals covered by the expenses	Yes
<b>Gym fees</b>	Not reimbursable	N/A
<b>Internet fees</b>	Actual expense for University business	Yes, if \$25.00 or more
<b>Laundry</b>	Reimbursable for international travel with a trip in excess of six days	Yes, if \$25.00 or more
<b>Lodging</b>	Itemized hotel receipt required; charges for staying with family or friends are not reimbursable; parking and University business related long distance fees must be listed as a separate expense item	Yes
<b>Meals</b>	Original, itemized receipts for meal expenses of \$5.00 or more; max of three meal receipts per day; see specifics on allowance within policy	Yes, if \$5.00 or more
<b>Mileage for personal vehicle</b>	Direct route will be entered into University booking and expense system; additional mileage will require an additional mileage log	Log required for additional miles; otherwise, N/A
<b>Newspapers</b>	Not reimbursable	N/A
<b>Official function</b>	Business purpose/agenda and a list of attendees must be submitted in addition to receipt; see policy for more details	Yes
<b>Parking</b>	Actual expense	Yes (when available)
<b>Passports</b>	Not reimbursable	N/A
<b>International, personal cell phone call or plans</b>	Reimbursed if required for University business during international travel	Yes
<b>Personal grooming items</b>	Not reimbursable	N/A
<b>Photocopying</b>	Actual expense if required for University business purposes	Yes, if \$25.00 or more
<b>Safe deposit box/secured storage fees</b>	Actual expense if required for University business purposes; storage of personal items is not reimbursable	Yes
<b>Snacks</b>	Not reimbursable unless submitted as a meal equivalent	Yes, if being submitted as a meal equivalent
<b>Spouse/companion expenses</b>	Not reimbursable	N/A
<b>Taxis, Ubers, Lyfts, buses, airport shuttles, subways, etc.</b>	Actual expense	Yes
<b>Telephone calls</b>	Actual expense of University business related calls	Yes, if \$25.00 or more

<b>Tolls</b>	Actual expense	No
<b>Tour/cruises</b>	Actual expense for University business related tours or mandatory conference events; optional or pleasure tours are not reimbursable	Yes
<b>Vaccinations</b>	Actual expense if required for University business travel; may only claim amount not covered by insurance	Yes
<b>Visas</b>	Actual expense if required for University business travel	Yes

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