




# Wichita State University Travel Handbook

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## **Introduction**

The following handbook is presented to promote efficiency in processing business travel. Wichita State University (WSU) detailed travel policies can be found at the website for Policies and Procedures at <https://wichita.edu> and State of Kansas (SOK) detailed information for travel policies can be found at the website for Employee Travel Expense Reimbursement Handbook at [www.admin.ks.gov](http://www.admin.ks.gov).

## **Travel Pre-Approval Report**

Any University employee proposing to travel out of state or internationally on behalf of the University must complete and submit a Pre-Approval (PA) Report per WSU Policy 3.28. A PA should be obtained 10 business days prior to the trip taking place, upon approval in the Travel & Expense Management software Chrome River, the employee may start making travel arrangements.

## **Travel Expense Report**

Travel reimbursements will occur after the trip has been completed and the traveler returns. Any approved Expense Report (ER) for employees should be completed through Chrome River within five business days of returning, and at least once each month per SOK travel policy and K.S.A. 75-3201. Reimbursements are made by direct deposit per SOK Circular 11-a-003.

## **Personal Time included with Business Travel**

Travelers should exercise special care not to seek reimbursement for expenses that could be construed as personal. Expenses paid that are directly related to the business will be reimbursable; additional expenses incurred during the personal days are non-reimbursable (i.e. parking, lodging, meal per diem, etc.)

## **Travel Agencies**

Travelers may use a travel agency to book business travel when department approvals have been obtained. The University's preferred travel agency is Sunflower Travel. Contact Laurie O'Leary 316-733-2753 or email [loleary@sunflowertravel.com](mailto:loleary@sunflowertravel.com). WSU Travel Services will not book any travel arrangements.

## **Border Cities**

The University has designated any city in a state located within 200 miles of the borders of Kansas as a border city per WSU Policy 13.02. Travel to a border city under this policy does not require a PA, with the exception of when a travel agency is utilized to book travel expenses a rental vehicle. The Travel Services Department verifies mileage figures reported for travel outside the borders of Kansas by Google maps, MapQuest or a similar tool.

## **Use of Personal Funds**

Employees shall provide themselves with sufficient personal funds for all anticipated expenses. WSU employees are not allowed to use **personal** funds to pay for the travel expenses of other employees. If a room is shared with another WSU employee, only one person may pay for the room. Lodging details must be cross-referenced on both employee's ER's.

## **Transportation Expense**

### **Reimbursable Transportation Expense**

Expenses may be paid or reimbursed for transportation incurred for travel by private or leased vehicles, public transportation via commercial air flights, trains, buses, etc., and in some cases, chartered or rental of special conveyances. Local transportation expenses such as city bus and taxicab fares are discussed in the Miscellaneous Expenses section.

### **Non-Reimbursable Transportation Expenses**

Traveling to or from restaurants is considered personal travel and will not be paid or reimbursed. Travel insurance for airfare will not be paid or reimbursed. Additional transportation expense incurred as a result of an employee residing in a city or town outside of the employee's official station or otherwise incurred because of an employee's choice of residence are not reimbursable. First class airfare is a non-reimbursable expense.

### **Most Economical or Advantageous Mode of Transportation**

The most economical mode of airline travel is generally tourist or economy class. The most economical mode of passenger train travel is generally first-class day coach. Specific justification must be furnished with the ER submitted for reimbursement of airfare or train fare when these classes are not used. If these classes are not available, a verifying statement from the travel agency, airline or passenger train company must be furnished with the ER. The State of Kansas audit group has reviewed the early boarding fee and deemed it to be discretionary and therefore is a personal and a non-reimbursable expense.

### **Cancellation of Flight**

If the traveler used personal funds to purchase the airline ticket and the flight was cancelled, the traveler will be reimbursed for the expense. The traveler will submit supporting documentation of the cancelled ticket within Chrome River. Any efforts to obtain a refund of the unused portion of the ticket should be part of the documentation in the ER.

## **Price Comparison Requirements**

A Price Quote Comparison should be obtained at the time the ticket is purchased or prior to travel and for the same dates as the actual business trip. Comparison must show the lowest available commercial economy airfare for one individual traveling to and from the business destination for the days of business only and at least two different airline carriers. The following additional expenses may be included with the airline quote; roundtrip mileage to/from airport from official station if it is lesser than home location, airport parking at a rate of \$11.00 per day and a shuttle expense to/from the airport to the business location. The amount that is reimbursed is the lesser of the comparison or actual expense amount. One-way tickets cannot be used as a comparison. A Price Quote Comparison is required when the traveler is electing to drive in lieu of flying.

## **Mileage Reimbursement for Private Vehicles**

When claiming expenses for use of private automobile for in-state driving, mileage must be documented from point-to-point, as well as, destination and purpose. No mileage will be allowed for personal business such as travel to restaurants, etc. In addition to mileage, expenses for parking and turnpike fees will be reimbursed.

### **Mileage Reimbursement Rate**

Personal automobiles will be reimbursed at a rate of \$0.655 per mile for fiscal year 2024. These reimbursement rates are considered to cover all costs associated with the use of the privately-owned conveyance. This includes, but is not limited to gasoline, oil, tires, repairs, insurance (including uninsured losses, and insurance deductibles resulting from damage to the privately owned conveyance), license fees, depreciation costs and expenses of any type.

## **Mileage Reimbursement Rate Exception**

For an employee who elects to drive (mileage is greater than 800 miles round trip) in lieu of flying, only the amount up to the equivalent of the airline economy class fare will be reimbursed. This comparison should be made based on airfare rates available on the date the out-of-state travel request is approved. For further details about the comparison refer to the Price Comparison Requirements section within this manual. Documentation should be submitted with the ER in Chrome River.

## **Vicinity Mileage**

Vicinity Mileage is defined as reimbursement to the employee for vicinity miles traveled by privately owned or operated conveyance during official state business within or in the area of the employee's official station or the city, town or location traveled to.

The total vicinity mileage traveled each day for each city should be reported separately on the employee's ER along with the purpose for traveling the vicinity miles and the name of the business' or individuals contacted. The reimbursement request should be submitted monthly.

## **Rental Vehicle**

Enterprise (primary) and Hertz (secondary) are contracted with the State of Kansas and are the preferred rental companies within the State of Kansas. Employees must select the most economical class of vehicle. Any other class will require additional documentation for approval. When using the Business Procurement Card (BPC) to rent a vehicle, insurance coverage for Loss Damage Waiver and Collision Damage Waiver (LDW/CDW) is included and should not be accepted at the counter. However, if using a personal credit card, you may select to accept LDW/CDW coverage with the rental agency and be reimbursed. Personal accident insurance (PAI), personal effects insurance (PEI), Roadside Assistance and other supplemental liability insurance (LIS) are considered personal expenses and not reimbursable. Passenger Van (12 or 15), truck and cargo van requires the traveler to not accept LDW/CDW coverage, it is built into the rental rate. Hertz will charge extra for drivers between the ages of 18-21. Enterprise drivers must be 18 years old to rent a vehicle and be 25 years old to drive a van. If choosing to book your own rental vehicle, you must reference the following numbers to receive a contracted rate and benefits. Enterprise account numbers can be found at myWSU faculty/staff tab within the Chrome River section. If an accident occurs see the Accident Reporting Requirements section in this handbook.

## **Accident Reporting Requirements**

If an accident occurs involving a rental vehicle being used for official state business; follow the accident procedures on the travel website regarding the actions required by the vehicle operator.

## **Meal Requirements**

Employees may be reimbursed for Meals & Incidental Expense (M&IE) while in travel status. Incidental expenses are included in this rate such as charges for taxes, fees and tips to waiters, bellhops, etc. M&IE reimbursement is based on quarter days with the daily M&IE rate divided equally between quarters. M&IE is provided for the time in which the employee is in travel status, including the quarters the employee departs and returns. A meal cannot be reimbursed if the place at which the official business is conducted is within 30 miles of the employee's official station or if a meal is provided at no cost to the employee. Additionally, a department may reduce the meals with prior approval see 'Reimbursement at a Reduced Subsistence Allowance' section below for further clarification and procedure.

## **Single Day Trips**

In limited circumstances and at the discretion of the department, employees may be reimbursed for one meal per day for official state business travel in which overnight travel does not occur. The meal can be reimbursed if the traveler's

workday is extended three hours or more beyond the regularly scheduled workday. The standard workday for a WSU employee is 8 hours, making them have to work 11 hours before qualifying for a meal. M&IE cannot be reimbursed if the place at which the official business is conducted is within 30 miles of the employee's official station or if a meal is provided at no cost to the employee. One breakfast, lunch or dinner may be paid, as determined by the department, at the following percentage of the daily M&IE rate: Breakfast 15%, Lunch 35% or Dinner 50%.

### **Reduced Meal Allowance for Meals Provided at No Cost to the Employee**

A department shall reduce the meal allowance by the amount shown below for each meal provided to an employee if the cost of meals is included in the cost of a registration fee or other fees or charges paid by WSU or supplied without cost by another party. This includes complimentary breakfasts offered to employees at lodging establishments, excluding light continental breakfasts. Reduced percentage of Daily M&IE rate: Breakfast 15%, Lunch 35% or Dinner 50%.

### **Lodging Reimbursement**

Daily lodging rates will be determined SOLELY by the use of the CONUS – U.S. General Services Administration defined rates found at: <https://gsa.gov/portal/content/104877> rates are adjusted bi-annually. Rates for Outside the Contiguous United States (OCONUS) are found at: <https://www.defensetravel.dod.mil/site/perdiemCalc.cfm>. Taxes associated with lodging are not considered when applying the maximum lodging limit to the traveler's lodging rate. Lodging for only one night may be prepaid with a BPC if a deposit is required.

Lodging expense reimbursement is limited to the lodging establishment's lowest available rate for normal single occupancy on the day (or days) the lodging expense was incurred. The official receipt from the lodging establishment must be part of the documentation submitted with the employee's ER. Receipts provided to employees using express checkout are also acceptable provided that the dates of lodging, the daily room rate and the total lodging charges are in agreement. Non-itemized lodging receipts are sufficient for reimbursement unless rates are higher than the single rate and/or include charges in addition to room rate and taxes. Conference lodging is allowed at the actual rate based on the itemized receipt. Documentation from the conference website listing accommodation details must be submitted with the ER.

### **Direct Payment of Lodging**

Direct payment to lodging establishments can be made via check on behalf of employees in travel status on official state business. Advance payment for lodging is not authorized except one night of lodging may be prepaid with a BPC if a deposit is required. Departments are encouraged to contact the lodging establishment in advance and make arrangements for the employee's lodging. Travelers authorized to bill lodging directly to the agency should be specific at check-in as to the appropriate department to be billed for the charges. Prior to or at the time of checkout, travelers should pay all charges for meals, room service, personal phone calls, movies, laundry and any other miscellaneous personal charges. Each payment for lodging expense should include the name of traveler(s), date(s) of lodging, location of lodging, daily room rate, and purpose of travel. Attach itemized lodging receipt to the ER. Only lodging (lowest available rate for normal single occupancy) and appropriate taxes (no sales tax within the State of Kansas) should be paid directly to the lodging establishment.

### **Reimbursement at a Reduced Subsistence Allowance**

A department may pay an employee a reduced amount for M&IE or lodging expense with prior approval of the Budget Officer. To document approval to pay a reduced subsistence amount, agencies should complete form DA-37, Reduced Subsistence Allowance, and obtain agency head or designee approval signature and date in advance of the beginning of the date of the travel event. The employee must be notified of the reduced subsistence rate in advance of the beginning date of the travel event. A copy of the approved form must be maintained with the support documentation for each ER within Chrome River.

## **Travel Expense Reimbursement for Employees Who Become Incapacitated During Travel**

If an employee becomes incapacitated due to illness or injury while on official state business away from the official station or domicile, the department may authorize payment to the employee for appropriate expenses, not to exceed five days per SOK policy 3004.

## **International Travel**

Lodging is reimbursed at the actual rate based on the itemized receipt. Meal Per Diem will be reimbursed based on the U.S. Department of State website [https://aoprals.state.gov/web920/per\\_diem.asp](https://aoprals.state.gov/web920/per_diem.asp). Any foreign currency will have to be converted to USD using either the credit card statement or Chrome River.

## **Miscellaneous**

### **Expenses**

Any personal expenses incurred while in travel status will not be reimbursable. Receipts evidencing all miscellaneous expenditures should be submitted with the ER, except that no receipts are required for: telephone calls, telegrams, local transportation charges, unattended parking meters, unattended toll booths and turnpike tolls.

*Employees may be reimbursed for transportation charges incurred during travel to conduct official business such as: city bus, taxi fares, shuttle service and other forms of transportation. Receipts for these charges are not required. Local transportation charges for personal use, such as travel from a lodging establishment to a restaurant are not reimbursable.*

*Charges for baggage in excess of the weight or size carried free by transportation companies are reimbursable if such excess baggage is used for official business (excess personal baggage expense is not reimbursable). Charges for storage of the baggage are also reimbursable if related to official business. Specific written justification must be submitted with the TR for incurring the baggage weight and storage charges.*

### **Student Travel**

Student Travel is now processed utilizing Pre-Approval and Expense Reports within the Chrome River system. Review policy 8.13 / Student Travel for additional on the requirements surrounding completion of the University-Sanctioned Student Travel Registration Form. Contact Student Affairs for additional information.

Student employee travel using Student Government Association (SGA) funding will also be processed utilizing Pre-Approval and Expense Reports within the Chrome River system. A notation should be included on the report to document the amount of funding allowed.

### **Candidate Travel**

Travel reimbursements for candidate's interviewing for positions on campus will now be processed through Chrome River. The Pre-Approval Report has replaced the paper Travel Authorization form, and the Expense Report has replaced the paper Travel Reimbursement form. Contact Academic Affairs or Student Affairs with any questions relating to the candidate reimbursement process.

## **WSU Foundation Reimbursing Expenses**

If the travel expenses are being reimbursed through WSU Foundation, send an email to the Travel Services Department at [wsutravelfoffice@wichita.edu](mailto:wsutravelfoffice@wichita.edu) and request that the PA be closed because Foundation is reimbursing the expenses. Direct any questions regarding requirements for reimbursement to the Foundation.

## **Contact Us**

Travel Services: [wsutranseloffice@wichita.edu](mailto:wsutranseloffice@wichita.edu) or 316-978-5811

Travel Agency: [loleary@sunlfowertravel.com](mailto:loleary@sunlfowertravel.com) or 316-733-2753