

Policies of the University of North Texas	Chapter 10
2.1.15 Travel	Fiscal Management

Policy Statement. Travel reimbursements are processed in the Purchasing and Payment Services Department (PPS), HUB Reporting/Entity/Travel Division, under the daily supervision of the PPS Assistant Director, in compliance with the State of Texas Travel Regulations when state funds are used; and in compliance with University policy and applicable state law for travel expenditures if local funds are used.

Application of Policy.

Total University

Definitions.

None

Procedures and Responsibilities.

Travel reimbursements are processed in the Purchasing and Payment Services Department (PPS), HUB Reporting/Entity/Travel Division, under the daily supervision of the PPS Assistant Director, in compliance with the State of Texas Travel Regulations when state funds are used; and in compliance with University policy and applicable state law for travel expenditures if local funds are used. The state and local travel rules and regulations are combined in the University of North Texas Travel Guide. Copies may be obtained from the PPS HUB Reporting/Entity/Travel Division in PPS.

A. Request for Approval to Travel

The Request for Approval of Travel will be required to be completed and received in the Travel Section of the HUB Reporting/Entity/Travel Division of Purchasing and Payment Services before the proposed trip is made in the following situations:

- i. State funds to be used for travel outside the state of Texas (not required for Board of Regents);
- ii. Travel to Washington D.C. from any funding source - the form should be accompanied with a proposed itinerary, ten days prior to the trip date, for reporting to be sent to the State Office of State-Federal Relations;
- iii. If a travel advance is being requested; and

- iv. If State Corporate Travel Card Business Travel Account (BTA) service is used.

This form requires approval of the deptid or projid holder, and project ids will require the approval of Grant Accounting Department. May include multiple accounts and a trip may cross fiscal years, however, each segment of the trip must be funded from the appropriate fiscal year.

Travel advances are allowed in the following situations:

- i. For the purchase of a super saver air fare ticket. To obtain an advance for the super saver ticket, the information block on the Request for Approval to Travel must be completed giving the original cost of the ticket, the super saver fare, the savings to the University and the date on which the advance is required.
- ii. Employees who do not have the State Corporate Travel card are eligible for a 90% advance for travel expenses. Employees will be asked to apply for the card, unless they are ineligible under the credit card contract administered through the Texas Building & Procurement Commission.
- iii. The 90% advance is also given in situations where employees will be traveling in areas not accepting the State Corporate Travel card, such as a communist country. To obtain an advance under these circumstances, a memo explaining the circumstances must be submitted with the Request for Approval to Travel form.
- iv. Sponsors may receive a 100% advance for funds used in Team Travel. Team Travel is defined as travel involving one or more full-time faculty/staff members and one or more students.
- v. Individual situations when substantiated with written documentation where traveler cannot be reimbursed in time to meet State Corporate Travel Card payment requirement.

Additional controls on travel advance checks are as follows:

- i. An employee with a past-due or incomplete travel advance cannot receive an additional advance without the PPS Assistant Director's or the PPS Director's approval.
- ii. An employee not actually receiving a payroll check cannot receive an advance.
- iii. Requests for advances should be presented to PPS Travel Section five days prior to the date actually needed.
- iv. Picture identification (ID) is required to pick-up the check.

- v. Travel advance checks must be picked up on or before the travel dates. If an employee does not pick up an advance check prior to travel, the advance will be canceled.
- vi. An employee must liquidate the advance by returning the entire amount or by filing a travel voucher within seven (7) working days after the date of return indicated on the travel request.
- vii. The employee is completely responsible for the entire amount of the advance regardless of the amount of the travel voucher finally approved by the PPS Travel Section.
- viii. Advance checks are disbursed only to the employee to whom the check is issued. The employee must execute a power-of-attorney at the time the advance check is obtained. The power-of-attorney will be used in endorsing the employee's payroll check to cover the amount of the travel advance if the voucher is not filed within seven (7) working days after the date of return. A power-of-attorney is required for each travel advance received. The power-of-attorney is to be used only in case of default of the responsibilities outlined above. The PPS Travel Section will promptly notify the Payroll Department of the Controller's Office when a default occurs by an employee. The paycheck may be held by the Purchasing and Payment Services Department rather than having it cashed, until the employee provides the required travel voucher and/or advance repayment.

Travel Regulations.

If state funds are used, University of North Texas will follow state regulations. If local funds are used University of North Texas Policy will apply.

The University is responsible for ensuring that the travel expenses of its employees are the lowest possible considering all relevant circumstances. Employees normally will only be reimbursed for travel expenses outlined in the official University of North Texas travel guide for trips funded from local funds, but the Controller or her designee may allow non-traditional items to be reimbursed on the local travel voucher if it expedites the payment and is not in violation of other regulations or policies. If state funds are used, employees may only be reimbursed for travel expenses outlined in the State travel regulations. Each employee is responsible for understanding the travel regulations to prevent employees from incurring expenses that cannot be reimbursed.

Travel Forms.

The Request for Approval to Travel is a form available through the University Office Supply section. The use of the form is required only in specific situations.

The State Travel Voucher is a State form and cannot be modified without written permission from the State of Texas Comptroller's office. Request for changes to the University travel forms must be presented to the PPS Travel Section for consideration. Any changes to these forms without the proper consent may result in non-payment of the travel reimbursement. See also University of North Texas Policy [2.1.2](#) "Forms".

Travel Reimbursements.

Maximum Reimbursement Rates for State Accounts:

Type	Rate
MILEAGE	
Motor Vehicle - in-state	As set by the State Comptroller
Motor Vehicle - out-of-state	Average Coach Airfare

Travel reimbursements on grants for Federal or State agencies will be paid in accordance with the provisions of the grant.

Contact Purchasing & Payments Services Department, Travel Section, for Current Mal and Lodging Information

-or-

Check the PPS web-site for the information: www.unt.edu/pps

Distribution of Meal Per Diem.

Partial per diem will be reimbursed if overnight travel is involved. If state funds are used, reimbursement cannot exceed the distribution listed for breakfast, lunch and dinner regardless of the amount on the receipt. See the Meal and Lodging Guidelines

If a meal is paid by a registration fee, it should be deducted either from the registration fee or omitted in the meals section on the travel voucher. The meal cannot be claimed twice.

Incidental Expenses.

Depending on funding, certain incidentals might be reimbursable on the travel voucher. See state or local guidelines for details.

Team Travel.

Team Travel occurs when one or more students and one or more University full-time employee take a University sponsored trip together. Examples of team trips are athletic events, conferences, off-campus teaching, competitions or performances.

All Team Travel must be on a local account. A travel advance of 100% may be given for food allowances, taxi fares, and other anticipated incidental expenses. The hotel bill and airline tickets may be put on the sponsor's State Corporate Travel card; or, a purchase order may be issued if acceptable by the service provider or his designated agent.

Prospective Employees.

When the University requests a prospective state employee to travel to the campus for an employment interview, reimbursement may be made to the prospective employee for his travel expenses in the same manner as an employee of the University. Travel advances may not be issued to prospective employees. However, a purchase order may be issued to the service provider, or a contract airfare may be purchased using the State Corporate Travel Card Business Travel Account program. Expenses for spouses and/or other family members who travel with the prospective employee can only be paid if unrestricted gift funds are used. Spouse and family members cannot utilize the state contracted fares.

Travel Management Program - Texas Building & Procurement Commission.

Under the Travel Management Program administered by the Texas Building & Procurement Commission, various contracts have been issued resulting in lower travel rates for state employees on hotels, rental cars, and airline tickets. Although the University does not participate in the full Travel Management Program through the General Services Commission, University employees are expected to comply with contract restrictions of the Travel Management program administered through the Texas Building & Procurement Commission unless valid exception applies. Information is available in the PPS Travel Section.

Travel Outside the Continental United States.

The University may reimburse an employee for actual meals and lodging expenses when traveling to Alaska, Hawaii, Canada, Mexico and all U.S. possessions.

When state funds are used, the agency's chief administrator, or employee designated by the chief administrator, must give written approval before an employee may be reimbursed for any expenses incurred while traveling to a foreign country other than Canada and Mexico. The University may reimburse an employee for actual meals and lodging expenses when traveling to a foreign country.

State Corporate Card Program.

The University of North Texas is a participant in the State of Texas Travel Management Program. Part of this program provides a Corporate Travel Card for use by State employees. You are encouraged to apply for a card if you plan to make at least three trips on behalf of University of North Texas during a fiscal year or spend at least \$500.00 per fiscal year on State business. Travel advances for routine travel items were eliminated with the adoption of the corporate travel card program.

In most situations, travel advances will be given only for team travel, super saver airfare, and travel to foreign countries when required by individual situations. If an application has been made and the corporate travel card has not been received, the employee is eligible for a 90% travel advance on any expenses. An advance may also be given if the trip involves destinations where the corporate travel card is not accepted provided a written explanation of the situation is provided to the PPS Travel Section for review.

Although the corporate travel card is used in lieu of travel advances by University of North Texas employees, all travel regulations of the State and University will remain in effect, and employees should use the corporate travel card for business purposes only. Employees should submit the completed travel vouchers and necessary receipts to the PPS Travel Section immediately upon returning to campus.

Individuals will not be charged an annual fee for the corporate travel card under the Corporate Card agreement. The card provider sends monthly statements to cardholders, and employees are directly responsible for payment to the card company.

State Corporate Travel Card Business Travel Account.

The State Corporate Travel Card Business Travel Account is an account for purchasing State contracted airfares for prospective employees and University of North Texas employees that fall into the following categories:

- i. New employee who has applied for a state corporate travel card, but has not received the card;
- ii. An employee who travels less than 3 times per year or spends less than \$500.00 per year on travel expenses;
- iii. Employees denied a state corporate travel card by the card provider;
- iv. Employees who have had their state corporate travel card canceled; and
- v. Individual situations when substantiated with written documentation.

Contact the PPS Travel Section for information and procedures for using the Business Travel Account.

General Information.

University employees are expected to obtain the lowest available public fares when traveling. While state contracted fares exist for some airlines, motels and rental cars, employees should not assume these to be the lowest rates. Employees should always request the state hotel occupancy tax waiver at lodging establishments in Texas. If the waiver is denied, the employee must note this on the travel voucher in order to be reimbursed for payment of this state tax.

Reimbursements should be requested within 60 days from the date expenses were incurred. Purchases made in July and/or August should be submitted for reimbursement not later than 30 days after the University's fiscal year-end, August 31, so that the expenditures can be charged to the appropriate fiscal year. Under IRS regulations, expense reimbursements that are not made to an employee within a reasonable period of time should be reported as income on the W-2 and subject to withholding and all payroll taxes. UNT uses 60 days as a reasonable period of time in administering this section of the IRS regulations.

Traveling Time:

Travel time should be no more than leaving the day previous to the meeting and returning no later than day following the meeting unless extenuating circumstances exist, such as a cost savings to the University or personal safety considerations.

Responsible Party: Purchasing and Payment Services

References and Cross-references.

University of North Texas Travel Guide available from the HUB Reporting/Entity/Travel Division in PPS: www.unt.edu/pps
UNT Policy 2.1.2, Forms

Forms and Tools.

Request for Approval of Travel Form available from the Travel Section of the HUB Reporting/Entity/Travel Division of Purchasing and Payment Services

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Effective:

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*3/2011 format only