

#### **04.901 Travel**

Travel reimbursements are processed in the Purchasing and Payment Services Department, Customer Service Division, under the daily supervision of the Customer Service Manager, in compliance with the State of Texas Travel Regulations when state funds are used; and in compliance with System 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 System Travel Guide. Copies may be obtained from the Travel Section in the Customer Service Division.

#### **Request for Approval to Travel**

The Request for Approval of Travel will be required in the following situations

- 1) state funds are used for travel outside the state of Texas (not required for Board of Regents)
- 2) If a travel advance is requested
- 3) If the department wants available funds encumbered
- 4) If the department wishes to use the Request for Approval to Travel number for tracking the payment.
- 5) If State Corporate Travel Card Business Travel Account service is used.

Requires signature of the accountholder, and grant accounts 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 Regulations**

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

The System 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 System travel guide for trips funded from local funds, but the Controller or his/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 yellow copy of this form is to be retained by the department. 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 form must be presented to the Customer Services Division 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 System Policy 2.1.2 "Forms"

### **Travel Reimbursements**

Maximum Reimbursement Rates for State Accounts:

<b><u>Type</u></b>	<b><u>Rate</u></b>
<b>MILEAGE</b>	
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, CUSTOMER SERVICES DIVISION, FOR CURRENT MEAL AND LODGING INFORMATION**

#### **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 System full-time employee take a System 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 System 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 System. 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 - General Services Commission**

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

### **Travel Outside the Continental United States**

The System 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 System 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 System 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 System 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 Travel Section of Customer Service for review.

Although the corporate travel card is used in lieu of travel advances by University of North Texas System employees, all travel regulations of the State and System 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 Travel Section in the Customer Service Division 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 System employees that fall into the following categories:

- 1) New employee who has applied for a state corporate travel card, but has not received the card
- 2) An employee who travels less than 3 times per year or spends less than \$500.00 per year on travel expenses.

- 3) Employees denied a state corporate travel card by the card provider
- 4) Employees who have had their state corporate travel card canceled
- 5) Individual situations when substantiated with written documentation

Contact the Travel Section in the Customer Service Division for information and procedures for using the Business Travel Account.

### **General Information**

System 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.

### **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 System or personal safety considerations.