Chrome River Frequently Asked Questions

How has Chrome River changed travel?
Chrome River automates the prior manual travel request, approval and reimbursement process. Chrome River consolidates many processes and resources into one consolidated system. Terminology has also changed a “request for travel” is now called a “preapproval” and a “reimbursement voucher” is now called an “expense report”. State and University travel policy and guidelines have not changed.

What are the benefits of using Chrome River?
There are many benefits to utilizing Chrome River, that include but are not limited to; the system is intuitive and user-friendly; automated approvals (that allow for tracking); built in edit checks that help verify compliance before submission; eliminates paper waste by managing receipts within the system and speeds up the reimbursement process.

Am I required to use Chrome River?
Once trained all departments must use Chrome River and discontinue using the paper RFT process. Any request for travel approved before the department training has been conducted does not need to be submitted through Chrome River. Paper forms submitted after training has occurred may be denied by Accounts Payable and be required to be sent through Chrome River.

Is there a user’s guide available?
Yes, a user’s guide is available that provides screen prints and step-by-step instructions on how to use Chrome River. This guide can be found by logging into the MyRU portal.

What if I need additional training, who do I contact?
Contact Accounts Payable (540) 831-7614 for open forums and training opportunities.

Is a preapproval required?
Yes. All travel and business meals require a preapproval in Chrome River. The only exception to this is a non-travel personal reimbursement, which must fit into one of the following categories: Educational Supplies, Office Supplies, Safety Apparel (Applicable to Facilities Only).

How is my preapproval and expense report routed for approval?
The automated approval routing flow is driven by the employee’s personnel reporting structure.

What if my department wants additional approvals not required by university policy?
If an approval is needed that is not required, the individual may email their approval or document via a memo. The email or memo approval can be attached and stored in Chrome River for documentation purposes.

What is encumbered in my budget?
All preapproval expense types marked as “Paid by Traveler” are encumbered once approved. Encumbrances are recorded at the account pool level (7120, 7121, 7123, 7130, 7150). Expense types marked “University paid directly” expenses (ex: Enterprise) as well as non-travel personal reimbursements are not encumbered.
Do I still need a Self Service Banner Purchase Order (SSB PO) for Enterprise and/or Christian Travel?
SSB PO’s are no longer needed for Christian Travel airfare nor Enterprise rentals. Additionally, eVA PO’s are not needed for registrations that will be paid via the SPCC. (An eVA PO will only be required if Accounts Payable needs to issue a check). Instead of providing the vendor (e.g. Enterprise, Christian Travel) with the SSB PO number, you will provide them with the Chrome River pre-approval number once approved.

What if actual expenses exceed my preapproval?
It is important to estimate all travel costs in the preapproval; however, unexpected expenses may arise (tolls, gas, etc.). If the expense report is within $50 of the preapproval, the expense will be processed. Additional approvals will be necessary if the overage is greater than $50. These approvals are obtained outside of Chrome River (through email) and attached to the expense report to aid in Accounts Payable processing.

How do I edit something that’s already been approved?
Users cannot edit preapprovals or expense reports that have already been approved. You have the ability to ‘recall’ and edit if the preapproval or expense report has not been finalized. Additionally, an approver cannot edit a preapproval or expense report. The approval must reject the preapproval/expense report and add a comment stating the reason. The preapproval/expense report will then be routed back to the employee for correction and resubmission.

What needs to be attached in Chrome River?
The per diem calculator, hotel quotes, Request for Travel form, or the Food & Beverage Authorization Form do not need to be completed or attached. Conference agenda’s and invitations to present may be attached to help aid in the approver’s review. Receipts are required to be attached to Chrome River expense reports. This includes lodging, rental vehicle fuel, and conference registration fees (if not paid by SPCC). The Chrome River landing page provides information on how to email receipts to your Chrome River account. For additional details, see the user’s guide for information on emailing receipts.

How do I use Chrome River for business meals?
Food and beverages may be provided at business functions that involve substantive and bona fide business discussions with an outside party or parties in attendance. Meals at which interview candidates are hosted are included in this category. Travel and Non-Travel Business meals should be processed in Chrome River. Refer to the user’s guide for detailed guidance. Where required by policy, a listing of attendees should be attached in Chrome River. All food and beverage purchases must comply with the University’s Food and Beverage Policy.

Who to contact with questions?
Questions regarding University and State Policy, please contact:
Accounts Payable (540) 831-7614

Questions regarding Chrome River Technical issues, please contact:
Technical Support: (540) 831-7204