

Radford University Travel Policy

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Overview

The Commonwealth of Virginia limits travel costs to expenses necessary for providing essential services to the Commonwealth's citizens. Individuals who travel on official university business must exercise **economical judgment** in making travel arrangements and travelers/travel planners must seek ways to reduce the costs of essential travel. Use of university funds to accommodate personal comfort, convenience, or taste is not permitted. Travel routing, regardless of method, shall be the most direct practicable route. Travel expenses are open to the public and must be able to sustain the test of public review. Any falsification of payments is fraud and the University must treat it as such.

Radford University will reimburse individuals traveling on official University business for reasonable and necessary expenses incurred. To request reimbursement, individuals must complete and submit travel documents as described by this policy. Entertainment expenses are not reimbursable.

All travel expenses, regardless of amount, must be encumbered (via Self Service Banner or eVA) whether or not a Request for Travel (RFT) Form is required. Departments are responsible for developing internal procedures for budgetary control of all travel costs. When reimbursement will be requested, all reimbursable travel expenses require entry into Self-Service Banner (SSB) to encumber funds once approval is obtained (verbally or through RFT as required). ***Each day's expenses must be listed separately when the purchase order is entered into SSB.*** For travel that exceeds 4 days, expenses should be summarized by type and the corresponding dates provided in the text field.

Upon completion of the trip, a printed Cognos Travel Expense Reimbursement Voucher (TERV) with actual amounts, original receipts, and supporting documents must be prepared for signature. The original Request for Travel Form (if required as defined in this policy), the original approved Travel Expense Reimbursement Voucher and all original receipts must be sent to Accounts Payable (Box 6906) for processing.

Definitions

Base Point: The primary place, office, or building where the traveler performs his/her duties on a routine basis. Multiple base points are not allowed.

Commuting Mileage: Round-trip mileage traveled routinely by the employee between his/her residence and base point. Mileage and other commuting costs incurred during commuting status are considered a personal expense and are not reimbursable.

Exception Based Travel: Must be approved in advance:

- travel involving four or more employees to a single destination
- all international travel (travel outside of the 48 contiguous United States)
- international travel involving four or more employees
- lodging expense up to 50% over the state lodging rate
- alternative lodging
- use of private or chartered airlines or State-owned aircraft

Travel Status: Travel outside of an employee's official station.

Trip: Any period of continuous travel between when the traveler leaves his/her residence or base point and returns to his/her residence or base point.

Official Station: The area within a 25-mile radius of an employee's designated base point.

Request for Travel (RFT)

The University requires an approved Request for Travel Form to be prepared in advance of travel for:

- overnight travel where estimated total cost is expected to exceed \$500
- travel funded by sponsored programs (i.e. grant funds)
- all exception based travel

The RFT must include all associated costs such as direct-billed car rental, airfare, registration fees, lodging, meals, incidentals, etc., regardless of funding source (state, foundation, personal funds etc.) and be approved in writing before making any travel commitments. All other travel may be approved verbally by the employee's supervisor.

Travel Involving Multiple Employees

To ensure all travel meets the test of necessity, travel involving three or more employees to a single travel destination (domestic or international) must be approved in advance by the appropriate travel designee (as appointed by the University President) regardless of the total cost of the trip. This includes travel of presenters as well as attendees. One coordinator should be designated to collect all travel documentation to submit to the President's Office with a memo stating the justification of four or more traveling.

International Travel

International travel consists of all travel outside of the 48 contiguous United States and requires the prior written approval of the University President regardless of the total cost of the trip.

When taken outside of the United States, university property such as commodities, software, and technology may be subject to export licensing under the Export Administration Regulations (EAR) or regulations by other government agencies. Therefore, when traveling to a foreign destination with Radford University equipment (e.g. laptops, tablets, software, etc.), you are **required** to complete the Radford University [Temporary Export Certification Form](#) once approval for travel has been obtained from the University President. After completion of the Temporary Export Certification Form, you will receive notice of important equipment restrictions, travel advisories and restricted party screening information specific to your travel destination(s). Please note this applies to all foreign travel regardless of nature (e.g., personal, business, etc.) when university property will be taken.

Lodging

Overnight lodging for approved, official business away from the traveler's official station is reimbursable. Expenses must be necessary and reasonable and an original itemized hotel receipt

showing a zero balance must be provided with the travel reimbursement voucher. Government rates must be requested and confirmed at reservation and at check-in. The University President or designee may authorize prior approval for lodging up to 50% over the guidelines when circumstances warrant. An explanation of the circumstances justifying the lodging exception must be attached to the voucher.

The Request for Travel Form section: "Lodging Exception Request" is considered adequate written documentation and must be approved in advance and submitted with the Travel Expense Reimbursement Voucher. For non-luxury, conference hotels the University Controller may approve lodging rates that are less than the lodging guideline applicable to the travel destination multiplied by the number of official business travelers in the room.

Lodging/Meals & Incidental Expense (M&IE) Per Diem Guideline Tables provide in-state and out-of-state rates for lodging and M&IE. The lodging guidelines exclude reimbursable taxes/surcharges. Taxes and surcharges must be prorated in cases where actual rates exceed allowable rates.

Direct university billing of lodging expenses (room and tax only) is permitted for non-employees. A university purchase requisition must be entered into eVA and the hotel should be provided the purchase requisition number. The purchase requisition number should be included on the bill from the hotel. If additional paperwork is required/requested by the hotel to be completed prior to reserving the rooms, please contact Procurement and Contracts for assistance. Contracts must be approved and signed by either the Director or Assistant Director of Procurement and Contracts.

Charges for cancelled reservations may not be reimbursed.

Alternative Lodging

When lodging other than hotels and motels is used (e.g. apartments), a comparison statement along with University President or designee approval is required. The traveler should document the total cost of both alternative and usual accommodations and savings.

Meals and Incidental Expenses (M&IE)

M&IE, including all taxes and tips, is based on a fixed allowance and is paid only for overnight travel outside the official station. On a travel departure or return day, 75% of the meals per diem is reimbursed. The allowable per diem is based on where you spend the first night for departure day and where you spend the previous night for return day. Direct university billing of meal expenses during overnight travel is not permitted. If meals are included with registration or lodging, the M&IE claimed shall be reduced by the amount shown for the applicable meal. The M&IE per diem shall be paid directly to the traveler even where it can be shown that one traveler incurred the expenses on behalf of another.

If a breakfast is offered at no charge by the hotel and the traveler does not partake of the breakfast due to any reasonable circumstance (e.g. early work hours do not allow for participation in the provided breakfast; the food provided was not adequate; the traveler's dietary needs were not met), then the traveler must notate this on the travel expense reimbursement voucher in order to claim M & IE for breakfast.

Incidental travel expenses are reimbursed as the incidental portion of M&IE (\$5 per day) and are prorated for departure and return days. The \$5 incidental allowance is paid only for overnight official business travel. This includes all service fees and tips (including but not limited to bellhops, skycaps, maids, waiters/waitresses, taxi and limousine drivers), laundry expenses, personal telephone calls and transportation between places of lodging or business and places where meals are taken.

Business Meals

Official business meals must involve substantive and bona fide business discussion. The following must be submitted to obtain reimbursement:

- Written approval of the University President or designee
 - When a Request for Travel Form is required to be completed, approval can be obtained in the applicable section of the form.
 - When a Request for Travel Form is not required, the Business Meals Certification Form (BMCF) should be completed and signed by the University President or designee.
 - In limited circumstances, when the supervisor is a travel designee, and an RFT is not required, the Travel Expense Reimbursement Voucher can be used for documentation of University President or designee approval. All required elements, as identified below, must be included on the TERV as supporting documentation.
- List by name all persons involved in the meal
- Stated reason for the meal
- Location of meal
- The original itemized restaurant receipt

The Business Meal Certification Form should be used to obtain University President or designee approval for all requests not approved on a Request for Travel Form and submitted with the Travel Expense Reimbursement Voucher except in the one circumstance noted above when the supervisor is also a travel designee.

The per diem allowance applicable to the business meal must be excluded from the daily M&IE allowance. The individual requesting reimbursement will be paid for actual expenses up to the per diem allowance. The University President or designee may authorize justified business meal reimbursements up to 150% of the per diem allowance. Alcoholic beverages and associated taxes are not reimbursable. Business meals held outside of travel status shall adhere to the Food and Beverage Policy.

Personal Owned Vehicle (POV) Usage

Currently, the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) has established the standard mileage

reimbursement rate of 58 cents per mile, effective January 1, 2019. Accordingly, the mileage reimbursement rates for privately owned vehicles used on official university business will be as follows:

- Travel distances up to 200 miles per day will be reimbursed at 58 cents per mile.
- Travel distances more than 200 miles per day will continue to be reimbursed at 24.6 cents per mile.
- The reimbursement rate is reduced to 13 cents per mile for travel in excess of 15,000 miles per year in a privately owned vehicle, unless an Enterprise Rental car is not available. In such cases, the rate shall be the IRS rate.

If the IRS mileage rate is used for reimbursement outside of scope above, appropriate justification must be documented (cost/benefit analysis, Enterprise vehicle not available) and approved by the University President or designee. When conducting a cost benefit analysis, for overnight travel consider the average daily mileage over the period the rental would otherwise be needed. This documentation and approval must be attached to the Travel Expense Reimbursement Voucher.

Rental Vehicles

Radford University has a contract with Enterprise Rent-A-Car. Enterprise delivers vehicles to campus. For local rentals beginning on the weekend or before 7:30 a.m., an Early Bird Fee may apply. For example, a trip beginning on a Sunday would require the vehicle to be delivered to Facilities Management on Friday; an Early Bird Fee (\$15 flat fee) would be charged. If early delivery is needed, the online system can still be used; however this adjustment cannot be reflected. A copy of the reservation, along with a notation of the early start should be faxed to the Enterprise location. The adjusted amount should be reflected on the RFT (when required) and Self-Service Purchase Order.

Drivers returning vehicles to campus should not return vehicles with a full tank of gas; Enterprise utilizes the gas pumps at Facilities Management to refuel.

Other commercial rental agencies may be used, when warranted, after reaching the destination. Request the government or commercial rate. Premium cars are discouraged. Before returning other commercial rental agency vehicles, refuel the vehicle or attach a justification to the travel voucher regarding why it was not refueled. Optional insurance must be declined by state employees if within the USA, as a State policy provides coverage. Outside the USA, accept Liability Damage Waiver (LDW) & Collision Damage Waiver (CDW) only. Non-state employees may be reimbursed for LDW & CDW only. DO NOT ACCEPT PREPAID FUEL OPTIONS.

To obtain Enterprise Rental car rates and access the on-line reservation system, please go to the Facilities Management webpage:
<http://www.radford.edu/content/facilities-maintenance/home/administrative-services/enterprise-rentals.html>

Motor Pool

RU maintains large passenger vans. Contact the Motor Pool to make advance reservations and enter a purchase order in Self-Service Banner to encumber the expense.

Air Travel

Tickets can be purchased by RU through the university's travel agency, Christian Travel, Radford, VA. Generally, air travel is limited to tourist/coach fare. **First class travel is prohibited.** Direct payment to non-contract travel agencies and airlines by the university is not permitted. The traveler is responsible for payment of tickets purchased through other vendors and reimbursement will be included on the Travel Expense Reimbursement Voucher form. Private/chartered air travel requires prior approval by the Secretary of Education.

Mileage versus Air Cost

When travel is by personally-owned automobile, the total of the expenses reimbursed, including meals and lodging, should not exceed the total cost of the trip using the most economical public air transportation fare available, also including meals and lodging. University President or designees are authorized to grant exceptions to this policy when justified. Comparative statements (e.g. cost/benefit analysis) should be attached to the Travel Expense Reimbursement Voucher.

Internet Usage Requirements

Usage of the Internet to procure travel services is allowed. Use caution and prudent judgment when choosing an Internet travel service site. Hidden fees, significant pre-payments, or unrefundable advances can apply that may not be reimbursable. Travelers must comply with procurement guidelines.

Hardcopy final page from Internet site showing total cost and confirmed service must be provided. Airline confirmation (i.e. ticket stub, copy of the electronic ticket, etc.) of the type of ticket purchased (e.g., coach, business) must also be provided.

Once appropriate (verbal or written) approval is obtained, payment methods may include either a university travel charge card (BA/MasterCard) or a personal credit card. Hardcopy documentation that confirms services, costs and travel class must be printed and submitted with the Travel Expense Reimbursement Voucher. **Caution: Reimbursement of travel expenses, including airline ticket charged to the Bank of America travel charge card, cannot be processed until after the travel is completed.** Refunds for unused tickets purchased by other than the Air Travel Charge Card (through Christian Travel) are the responsibility of the traveler and may result in a personal expense.

For Hire Transportation

Receipts are required for taxis, shuttle vans, and other "for hire transportation" if the reimbursement claim exceeds \$75. The business related necessity of reserved "for hire transportation" (i.e. chartered transportation) must be identified on the Travel Expense Reimbursement Voucher. Public transportation to restaurants is allowed only for official business needs. Reimbursement for luxury transportation (i.e. limousines) is not allowed.

Other travel expenses that may be reimbursable with a furnished receipt include:

- Conference registration
- Taxes, fees, and surcharges paid by the traveler for lodging.
- Business Telephone Calls, Telegrams, Internet Access, Hotel Business Center Charges, and Facsimiles for official business purposes and paid for by the traveler may be claimed on the Travel Expense Reimbursement Voucher. A full explanation must be stated on the Travel Expense Reimbursement Voucher accompanied by supporting documentation.
- Tolls and parking fees are reimbursable when paid for by the traveler in the course of conducting official University business. A receipt is required for reimbursement claims where each individual claim is greater than \$75. Reimbursement must be claimed as an “other expense” on the Travel Expense Reimbursement Voucher.
- Funeral attendance expenses for travel outside of the official station are reimbursable for one employee selected by the University President or designee to represent the university. Lodging and M&IE are allowed if the representative is considered to be in travel status and overnight stay is required.

Disallowed Expenses

Non-reimbursable expenses include but are not limited to the following:

- Day meals not involving bona fide business discussions
- Lost or stolen articles
- Alcoholic beverages
- Excessive meals, lodging, tips, etc.
- Damage to personal vehicles
- Services for entry to locked vehicle
- Movies charged to hotel bills
- Entertainment expenses
- Towing charges
- Expenses for children, spouses and companions
- All expenses related to traveler’s personal negligence, such as fines

Travel Credits

Travel credits, reduced rates, or free services received from public facilities (e.g., airline, car rental agencies, motels, etc.) by individuals for whatever reason accrue to the Commonwealth. Any credit, reduced rate, or free service must be reported to the Accounting Services office and must be deducted from the amount of travel expenses claimed.

Some expenses not previously addressed may be reimbursable if reasonable and necessary. A full explanation of the charges must be stated on the travel voucher, accompanied by supporting documentation and any required approvals.

Contact Information

For Questions or concerns please contact: Accounts Payable at 831-7616
Please see additional guidance and the complete state travel policy at:
<http://www.radford.edu/content/accounting-services/home/travel.html>