Expense Claim Reimbursement Procedure
Reimbursable and Non-reimbursable Expenditures

Overview

This procedure is intended to be used for the reimbursement of business travel and hosting expenditures.

In certain instances individuals use personal resources to cover business travel and hosting related expenditures. To be reimbursable these transactions must comply with University policy, procedure, legislation and donor/granting agency terms and conditions. All claims must be reasonable and reflect prudence, good judgment, due diligence to reasonable economy, and be defensible to a reasonable and impartial observer.

Reimbursement can potentially come from any funding source. Travel and hosting activities are highly regulated by the University, and in the case of research funding, by donor/granting agency terms and conditions. Therefore, when contemplating travel it is important to understand the relevant terms and conditions to be followed. Departments may impose more stringent procedures dependent upon granting agency rules. In those cases where donor/granting agency regulations do not address a particular situation, University policy and procedures will apply.

Reimbursement of expenses can only occur once the travel has occurred; there is no reimbursement of expenses in advance of the date of travel. Claims for reimbursement of travel and hosting expenses must be submitted within the same fiscal year that the expense was incurred, regardless of the funding source.

A separate travel claim must be submitted for each trip.

Purpose

The purpose of this procedure is to facilitate reimbursement of travel and hosting expenses incurred on behalf of the University of Alberta.

Procedure Detail:

1. REIMBURSEMENT CLAIMS

The recovery of out-of-pocket travel and hosting related expenditures is achieved through the submission of a properly completed, approved and supported Travel and Hosting Expense Reimbursement Form.

2. SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Original receipts must be attached to support expense claim items. If original receipts are lost, the claimant must complete the Lost Receipt Declaration Form and submit with the Travel and Hosting Expense Reimbursement Claim Form.

As all travel and hosting transactions are subject to audit review, the required supporting documentation, e.g. conference agendas or approvals for procedure exceptions, must also be attached.
3. APPROVALS AND ACCOUNTABILITIES

Both the Claimant and the Approver are accountable for ensuring that claims for travel and hosting related expenses are in accordance with appropriate policies and procedures, and that the expenses were incurred for University business purposes only.

Internal Control must review and sign the completed form to confirm that supporting documentation is complete, chart-field string (COA) and GST coding are accurate and that all the expenses being claimed adhere to the University’s policies and procedures and any donor/sponsor terms and conditions.

Approval for travel and hosting expenses must be obtained from the next reporting level of authority (One-over-One approval) before payment will be made. Detailed information can be found in the Signing Authority and Approval Procedure.

INELIGIBLE EXPENSES

While traveling or preparing to travel, the following are non-reimbursable expenses

- Travel expenses of a traveling companion, unless otherwise authorized by the Chair of the Board of Governors, President or Vice-President (e.g. spouse or personal assistant due to a disability).

- Business, executive or first class air travel under four hours in duration.

- Business, executive or first class air travel over four hours in duration, unless pre-approved, in writing by the claimant’s respective Vice-President.

- Personal telephone calls unless pre-approved by the next reporting level of authority (One-over-One Approval). - In-room mini bar (snacks & alcoholic beverages) and movies.

- Laundry unless the travel exceeds seven days.

- Interest charges on either corporate or personal credit card balances.

- Cancellation fees arising from failure to appropriately cancel transportation or hotel reservations.

- Personal travel insurance.

- Additional private automobile insurance.

- Conference activities that are considered optional, e.g. golf tournaments.

- Passport fees.

- Child/dependent care.

- Any personal related expenses from family members accompanying on business trips. (e.g., Meals, transportation, and accommodations).

- Combining University Business with Personal Travel; when combining business with personal travel, the University’s responsibility is limited to the related reimbursable expenses (air fare, accommodation, food, etc.) that would be applicable if the interruption had not occurred.
**ELIGIBLE EXPENSES**

While traveling or preparing to travel, the following are **reimbursable expenses**:

- Flight cancellation insurance
- If traveling outside of Canada or the USA, travelers’ medical insurance and required vaccinations.
- Required special visas to enter a particular country and conduct University business.
- Excess baggage charges as warranted by need.
- Telephone calls and data communication charges related to University business.
- Laundry if the length of travel exceeds 7 days.
- Gratuities for service (i.e. bellhops, redcaps etc.). Expenses must be fully itemized and included in the claim (date, location, brief description). - Expenditures for off-campus parking.
- Conference/Seminar registration fees, including pre-conference workshops that may be optional but meets the needs of the University.- Foreign exchange fees or charges to convert funds into traveler’s cheques, cash cheques, etc.
- Valet Parking, Airport valet parking is **not** reimbursable. Hotel valet parking during overnight stays is reimbursable. (Parking will be reimbursed to a Maximum of $20/day at the EIA.)

**Regarding airfares:**

- Only the lowest available fares appropriate to particular itineraries, to a maximum of Tango Plus or equivalent “H” Class fare will be reimbursed. This will allow the traveler the flexibility to change tickets to accommodate schedule changes. Ticket acquisitions should be based on business requirements rather than a reduced fee to upgrade to a higher fare class, e.g. business, executive or first class.
- Travelers wishing to personally fund a higher category of travel should submit a fee quote for Tango Plus / H Class or equivalent for the dates of travel with actual ticket and cost of purchase. The lower cost fee quote will be reimbursable.
- The choice of airline or routing for business travel should be based on the lowest fare and agreements with contracted vendors, rather than on personal frequent flyer program incentives.
- Business, executive or first class fares for flights less than four hours in duration are not eligible for reimbursement. Business, executive or first class fares for flights that are greater than four hours in duration are eligible for reimbursement only upon pre-approval, in writing by the claimant’s respective Vice-President, upon recommendation of the claimant’s direct Supervisor. Written, dated approval must be provided as supporting documentation with the travel claim.
- Reimbursement is for actual fares paid. Regardless of funding source, claimants must submit their ticket (paper or e-ticket), proof of purchase (invoice), and paper boarding pass. As per donor/granting agencies terms and conditions, air fare expensed to a research account must be supported by a paper boarding pass. Discrepancies will be reimbursed based on the lower of the two amounts.
- To encourage the lowest possible airfare, extra costs to obtain excursion fares will be reimbursed provided a substantial saving to the University can be evidenced (attach explanation to expense claim where applicable). Extra costs will usually be for accommodation and meals required to meet the minimum stay conditions, fees for changing dates of travel, and cancellation insurance.

- Flights purchased using frequent flyer points are not reimbursable for a cash equivalent as there is no cash surrender value.

- Flight cancellation insurance enables the traveler to be reimbursed for the cost of the flight when cancellation was due to events that are not under their control, e.g. medical reasons. The cost of this insurance is reimbursable.

Regarding vehicle rentals and other ground transportation:

- Vehicle rentals are to be limited to a compact, mid-sized or full-size vehicle, depending on justifiable need. This being said, there is a need to demonstrate prudence, good judgment and reasonable economy when choosing the type of vehicle. For example, one should opt for several cab rides as opposed to a car rental and parking if the associated costs warrant. The choice must be able to demonstrate cost savings. Reimbursable expenses include the rental fee, the kilometer/mileage charge by the rental agency, fuel charges and insurance coverage when applicable.

- Rental of luxury vehicles is prohibited unless authorized by the appropriate one-over-one approving authority. The rationale for such an approval is to be attached to the respective expense claim.

- Reasonable expenditures for taxis and public transportation to and from airports, railway stations, between appointments, hotel locations and meeting places are reimbursable, including reasonable gratuities for service. Receipts are required for transportation.

- It is the responsibility of the traveler to ensure that they have the appropriate license to drive a vehicle while on University business.

- It is the responsibility of the traveler to ensure that adequate insurance is in place for all drivers of the vehicle. Detailed information regarding insurance coverage can be found on the Risk Management Services website.

- Rental car kilometers driven by family members for non business related purposes will not be reimbursed.

Regarding private automobiles:

- Private automobiles used for University business within Alberta will be reimbursed at a rate of 46 cents per kilometer. This rate includes the cost of fuel and vehicle "wear and tear". You may choose to claim either the per kilometer rate for the actual number of kilometers driven or the actual cost of fuel if supported by original receipts. Once the maximum of 11,625 km, per calendar year, has been claimed by an individual the reimbursement rate changes to 31 cents per kilometer.

- Where travel is on roads where seriously adverse road conditions prevail (i.e. off main or secondary highways), a supplement of 4 cents per kilometer will be paid. Such claims must show the complete travel itinerary and designate the portion traveled under adverse conditions.

- Where travel by private automobile is outside Alberta, the lesser of a reasonable estimate of the respective lowest available airfare by the most direct route OR mileage at 46 cents per kilometer should be claimed.
- Staff members traveling as passengers in a private automobile cannot claim mileage or the cost of any equivalent transportation.

- Private automobiles used for University business are not covered by the University’s insurance policy. Claimants are advised to check with their own insurance provider to secure any necessary additional insurance coverage. The University does not reimburse for personal insurance or registration costs.

- **National Parks of Canada Passes** such as Banff or Jasper are reimbursable based on the Adult daily pass rate of $8.80 per day per person, if University business requires you to stay longer then 7 days you will be reimbursed up to the Adult Annual pass amount of $61.80. If you purchase a National Parks Annual pass for personal use you will be reimbursed for any days used for University Business for the Adult Daily pass rate of $8.80 per day to a maximum of $61.80, with the exception of rate changes.

- If University Business requires multiple visits within a 12 month period to the National Parks where passes are required an Annual Adult pass may be purchased and you’ll be reimbursed on a daily rate for each visit up to the maximum of $62.40. **Receipts are required.**

**Other Ground Transportation**

Reasonable expenditures for taxis and public transportation to and from airports, railway stations, between appointments, hotel locations and meeting places are reimbursable, including reasonable gratuities for service. Original receipts are required for transportation in excess of $25 per trip.

**Regarding accommodations:**

- Reimbursement is limited to the single occupancy rate for standard accommodation, or whatever class of accommodation is the least expensive. Original itemized receipts must be submitted for reimbursement. Exceptions are to be pre-approved by the next reporting level of authority (One-over-One Approval). Written, dated approval must be provided as supporting documentation with the travel claim.

- The choice of accommodation should be based on business travel requirements rather than personal membership program incentives.

- If there is an upgrade in accommodations because of family members accompanying you, you will only be reimbursed at the single room rate.

- Accommodation for one night before and after an event is acceptable if the start and end times warrant such travel logistics. Longer periods are also acceptable if airfare savings can be demonstrated. Where applicable, dates should coincide with those on the air ticket.

- If the traveler stays with friends or family instead of at a hotel, they may be reimbursed for a gift of appreciation up to a maximum of $150 for stays of seven days or less and no more than $20 per day to a maximum of $300 for the entire trip.

**Regarding meals:**

- The cost of meals may be reimbursed either by submitting receipts for the actual cost of meals and gratuities, or by claiming meal per diems.
- In the event the actual cost of meals and gratuities is claimed, original receipts must be provided. We recognize that certain destinations are more expensive; however as with any expense reasonable economy applies.

- The per diem allowance is $45 CAD per day (or USD equivalent if traveling outside of Canada) or $10 for breakfast, $10 for lunch, and $25 for dinner for partial days. Outside of Canada and the US, the per diem allowance is $66 CAD per day ($15 for breakfast, $15 for lunch, and $36 for dinner). Alternatively, the actual cost of meals and gratuities may be claimed if supported by original DETAILED receipt and proof of payment. As with any expense, reasonable economy applies. Destination considerations may also apply.

- Meals included in the cost of registration/conference fees are not to be otherwise claimed.

- Purchase of alcoholic beverages is not reimbursable (unless hosting – see below).

- Reimbursement of meals where the participants are solely University staff members and involve work-related business, can occur with the prior approval of the one-over-one, and can only be charged to the unit’s Operating Account - Administrative Allowance (account 503301).

- **Business Entertaining/Hosting** expenses involve hosted events where the individuals in attendance are both internal and external to the University and where the event relates to conducting the business of the University, e.g. a business dinner. Dependent upon the funding source, reimbursement for hosting expenses may include food, alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages, and social activity. In cases where External Research Funds are utilized, i.e. NSERC, SSHRC, CIHR, reimbursement for alcoholic beverages is strictly prohibited.

- Hosted events where the majority of people in attendance are internal to the University and where the event is funded by an Operating Fund account or a General Research Fund account may include alcoholic beverages and will be reimbursed up to a maximum of $10 per person per event. This maximum of $10 per person will be increased to $25 person for exceptional circumstances with prior documented approval from the Dean. The relevant documentation to accompany the expense reimbursement submission.

- Regardless of the funding source, expenses should be kept to a reasonable cost and involve only those expenses appropriate to the objectives and/or significance of the event. All hosting expenses should be coded to account 503261.

- Supporting documentation for all hosting transactions must include the purpose of the event and the names of the people in attendance.

In keeping with the principle of one-over-one approval of hosting expenditures, the most senior person in attendance from the hosting unit is to pay and expense the related costs. It is important to distinguish between the most senior attending member of the University and that of the hosting unit. This is to say that if the President of the University attends a function as an invited guest of the hosting unit, it is appropriate that the most senior attendee from the hosting unit cover and expense the hosting costs, not the President. However if the Office of the President is the host and the President is in attendance, the President should pay and expense the costs.

- Where the University benefits from the attendance of a spouse/partner of a senior administrator, the cost of the spouse/partner’s attendance will be reimbursed with the pre-approval of the one-over-one. For the spouse/partner of the Board Chair and President, the approval will be sought from General Counsel.
**Regarding Staff / Internal Expenses**

- Activities such as a retirement or employee appreciation function that primarily involve employees of the University of Alberta and immediate family (i.e. spouses) can only be charged to the unit’s Administrative Allowance (account 503301). This requires a respective budget allocation of funding.

- Alcohol may be reimbursed up to $10.00 per person, per event. Alcohol totaling more than $10.00 per person per event requires the prior approval of the one-over-one for non-hosting situations and be charged to the unit’s Administrative Allowance (account 503301).

For full text of the University of Alberta Policy
https://www.conman.ualberta.ca/stellent/groups/public/@finance/documents/procedure/pp_cmp_060230.hcsp

**DEFINITIONS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Travel</td>
<td>To go from place to place to conduct business on behalf of the University, by various modes of transportation (i.e. car, bus, train, plane).</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hosting</td>
<td>Occurs when a University employee, during the regular course of business, hosts an event, e.g. breakfast, lunch, dinner, or celebration, for which the expenses will be claimed for reimbursement by the University. People in attendance of the event can be either internal or external to the University.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reasonable</td>
<td>Expenses that are moderate, reflect prudence, good judgment, due diligence to reasonable economy and are defensible to a reasonable and impartial observer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Original Receipts</td>
<td>The detailed receipt provided by the merchant/supplier. An online receipt or internet “invoice” is considered an original receipt in the case of an internet purchase. An original Visa / MasterCard chit is not considered an original receipt.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supporting Documentation</td>
<td>Any other information that relates to the transaction that adds to a review/audit understanding of the entry, e.g. conference agendas or approvals for procedure exceptions</td>
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<tr>
<td>Restricted or Controlled goods</td>
<td>Goods, upon import into Canada, requiring an Import Permit, License or Certificate under any act of parliament. i.e. Radioisotopes, Commercial Alcohols, Live Animals, Drugs, Precursor Chemicals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consumable</td>
<td>Able to be used completely, as of services, resources or materials</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tangible</td>
<td>Material assets having physical substance and intrinsic monetary value</td>
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