

Department Guidance for Travelers

October 2016

The current Washington University Travel Advances & Travel Expenses Policy Statement can be found at: [WU Travel Policy.pdf](#).

Travel Advances

- 1) Travel advances are intended to cover out-of-pocket costs for traveling for an extended period of time or to reimburse for up-front costs. Travel advances should be requested at least **two weeks** prior to the departure date and must be cleared with a travel report.
- 2) Some advance expenses can be paid directly to vendors by check request. The check request form can be printed from the EPS website and is also available from Beth Sparks. Check requests can be for airfare, conference registration, hotel deposits, etc. When possible, the vendor should invoice the University directly, or the traveler can pay for these expenses by applying for an “extra” travel advance to cover these early, prepaid expenses.

Travel Reimbursement

- 1) University policy requires travel expense statements to be completed in a timely manner after the completion of the trip. Statements submitted more than 60 days after trip completion require exception approval.
- 2) The Travel Expense Statement provided by Financial Services must be used. This form can be printed from the [EPS website](#) and completed manually or as a Microsoft Excel version. The statement can also be accessed at [aishelp.wustl.edu](#) or a paper copy can be obtained from Stacey Spruiel.
- 3) The travel expense statement must be completed and signed. Using a pencil to complete the paper form, to make changes easier, is acceptable. Stacey does not prepare the form, but will review and complete it, adding data such as travel advance and check request document numbers and budget/object codes. The traveler must supply the fund source(s) to be charged.
- 4) The amount of any prepaid expenses, including University ProCard purchases, must be listed on the bottom portion of the statement. If an advance exceeds actual expenses, the University is owed money, and a check made out to Washington University must be included with the travel report.

Supporting Documentation

- 1) Receipts should provide purchasing details including date, price and proof of payment. An electronic copy or legible picture of the original receipt which is printed is acceptable supporting documentation.
- 2) Supporting documentation is required for individual expenses of \$50 or more. Exception approval will be required if missing receipts are \$75 or greater per day.
- 3) *Special Rule for Sponsored Projects:* Some sponsors require actual receipts for all transactions to be submitted with a request for reimbursement to the University. In these cases, it is necessary for the traveler seeking reimbursement to obtain and attach all receipts regardless of dollar amount to the travel report.
- 4) Attention to the following is appreciated:
 - If per diem is claimed, the traveler should print out the location and per diem rate(s) from the government’s website as documentation, www.gsa.gov
 - If claiming mileage a printed map showing the actual miles should be printed and accompany the report, <https://www.mapquest.com/directions>, <https://maps.google.com>
 - For foreign travel, a currency conversion sheet should accompany the report, www.oanda.com
 - Any ProCard receipts must be marked “ProCard.”
 - We request that all supporting documentation be taped (not stapled) to an 8 ½” x 11” sheet of paper, single side only. Stacey will write the document number on the upper right hand corner of the travel expense statement, as well as on the individual sheets of supporting documentation.
- 5) The University pays a per diem for meals as an option chosen by the traveler (first and last day travel is 75% of total per diem amount) and no meal receipts are required. *Using the per diem option is preferred.* Otherwise, meal receipts must be submitted for any meal greater than \$50, and each meal must be itemized for any day whose expenses exceed \$75. The required receipts must be submitted, using actual costs for meals.
- 6) Alcoholic beverages, in any quantity, whether consumed with meals or between meals, are not allowable charges to any Federal grant or contract. University funds require the Chairman’s approval for this expense.
- 7) The University will not reimburse the cost of insurance on rental vehicles, unless the vehicle will be operated in unusually hazardous conditions (like driving into field terrain), or if travel is outside the United States. The University will pay for any repairs if the vehicle is damaged. A traveler involved in an accident should file a

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police report and get the proper information from any individual(s) involved. This would include name, address, telephone number of the individual, and the address, phone number, and policy number of their insurance carrier.

Upon return, Robert Gemignani will file the necessary paperwork with the Office of Insurance and Risk Management.

- 8) Reimbursements will be faster if expenses are not shared among travelers. If sharing expenses with others (e.g., lodging, meals, and car rental...), travelers should be advised that no report can be approved until ALL traveler expense statements have been turned in. Shared expenses must be cross-referenced, with the names of the individuals involved and, if sharing dinner expenses, all individuals will need to be named on the receipt.

Airfare

- 1) Airfare is to be purchased at the lowest available commercial coach/economy fare available that meets the business purpose of the trip (e.g., Southwest Airlines “Wanna Get Away” fare). Multiple commercial air carrier sites should be researched prior to booking a ticket to ensure the lowest available airfare is selected and not biased by frequent flier affiliation. Additional fees for standard coach/economy upgrade options that do not change the flight class, such as seat choice and early check-in are permitted. Such upgrades must be reasonable considering the facts and circumstances of the expense, and should be charged to the traveler’s discretionary funds, if available. *Guidance specific to Sponsored Projects* travel can be found on the [SPA website](#).
- 2) The University will not reimburse Business/Business Select Class without exception approval except for individual flight segments of 5 or more hours or when there is a medical need of an employee. Written documentation, no older than 12 months, from a doctor must be submitted with the travel expense statement. For flight segments greater than 5 hours a one class upgrade from coach/economy flight class will be reimbursed.
- 3) The University only permits first class airfare with written approval from the Chancellor or with exception approval by the CFO or Controller when it is not a one class upgrade.
- 4) Your itinerary should be attached to the travel expense statement. The document should include the agency used to make the reservation, date(s), *class designation* and price of flight(s).

International Travel & Business

- 1) The “Fly America Act” requires travelers funded by the U.S. government to use an American carrier service to/from the United States. Foreign carriers may be used between two points outside the U.S., if American carriers are not available, or if American carriers would cause long delays. Foreign air carriers can be used under certain circumstances according to “Open Skies Agreements” that can be found at: <http://www.gsa.gov/portal/content/103191>. Travel arrangements involving open skies agreements should be discussed with Robert or Stacey to get confirmation from Sponsored Projects beforehand.
- 2) When planning international travel involving students, travelers should consult the Global Engagement Resources website for information regarding the International SOS Emergency Travel Assistance Service plan, the International Travel Registry and the International Travel Policy. The website address is: <https://global.wustl.edu/resources/>.

If you have any questions concerning travel policies, please contact Robert Gemignani or Stacey Spruiel. The main things to keep in mind are: keep all receipts (especially airline tickets), ask questions before you leave or make any arrangements, and try to avoid sharing expenses.