

University of Montana-Western

Travel Guidelines

Introduction

University departments and offices are authorized to approve travel and are responsible for the proper use and management of Travel resources. The managers of departments/offices are responsible to ensure that travel is directly related to an objective of the University, that adequate funds are available and that all travel is in accordance with University Travel Guidelines.

All travel requires concurrence by the traveler's supervisor and approval by the administrator/manager in charge of the departmental index code funding the travel. Although there is no formal authorization procedure, each Dean/Director should develop travel authorization/approval guidelines that will be used in their unit.

The travel policy allows cost reimbursement to employees and students engaged in "official" University travel. Before travel costs can be reimbursed, unique documentation requirements must be satisfied. In addition, there are limitations placed on the amount of reimbursement allowed for travel. These requirements and limitations are explained in detail in the Travel Guidelines. The Travel Guidelines also include a Travel Process chart, which provides an overview of the steps required for travel.

Questions concerning travel should be directed to the Travel Desk, (ext. 7101) located in Business Services.

UM-Western Travel Guidelines

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Business Services Web Site: www.umwestern.edu

GETTING READY TO GO

PREPAYMENT OF REGISTRATION FEES:

Conference fees can be prepaid directly to the vendor by using the Request and Authorization for Payment (RAP) form. Conference fees may also be paid for by using the UM-Western Pro Card. Payments under \$50.00 should be paid by the traveler and the expense claimed for reimbursement on the Travel Expense Voucher.

To initiate prepayment, submit the Request and Authorization for Payment (RAP) form to the Accounts Payable desk in the Business Office **seven (7)** working days prior to the required deadline. Out-of-country travel requiring a registration prepayment in foreign currency requires a **fifteen (15)** working days advance notice. A conference announcement must be attached to the (RAP) form.

Special conference events of a personal nature, such as entertainment, are non-reimbursable and must be paid by the traveler personally. A personal check may be attached to the (RAP) form to be included with the prepayment.

When trips are canceled that included a prepaid fee, it is the department's responsibility to apply for a timely refund. Refunds may be made directly to the UM-Western Pro Card account number or if by check, checks should be made payable to The University of Montana-Western.

STATE PROCEDURES – MONTANA OPERATIONS MANUAL ON TRAVEL ADVANCES:

1-0370-00 TRAVEL ADVANCES AND THE PURCHASING CARD

Agencies should eliminate travel advances, whenever possible, through the expanded use of the State's purchasing card for travel. For additional state purchasing card information, see MOM 1-700.00 at <http://www.discoveringmontana.com/doa/gsd/content/Downloads/MOMmanual2003.pdf>.

1-370.10 PURCHASING CARD PROGRAM

Agencies are required to use the State's purchasing card for individual **employee air travel** unless it can be documented that another payment method is in the state's best interest, and are also encouraged to utilize the card to made other individual and group travel and lodging arrangements. Agencies are responsible for establishing specific policies within the guidelines established for general purchasing card use. Use of the cards eliminates the need for state employees to utilize their own funds thereby eliminating the need for travel advances. For additional purchasing card information, see MOM 1770.00 at <http://www.discoveringmontana.com/doa/gsd/content/Downloads/MOMmanual2003.pdf>

1-370-50 TRAVEL ADVANCES

In most cases employees should be able to pay for substantially all of their travel costs using a purchasing card. If this is not possible then the use of a travel advance is allowed. Except in

hardship cases, your travel advance will not be approved unless your out-of-pocket expenses exceed \$50. In most cases, advances should be processed through the payroll system.

UM-Western's Travel Advance Policy

An employee advance is available to provide cash to a traveler for 100% of the estimated covered out-of-pocket expenditures that exceed \$100.00 for employees and \$50.00 for students. No advances will be allowed for amounts lower than the minimum.

All travel advances up to \$700.00 are to be picked up at Business Services from the cashier. Any travel advance **over** \$700.00 must be requested from the state in check form. Allow 7 to 10 working days for check advances. Business Services requires that travel advances be picked up before 3pm.

Business Services is responsible for the distribution of Travel Advance and RAP forms. Travel Advances are calculated (rounded to the nearest dollar) and issued to the traveler.

Items that may be included in the advance calculation:

- Meals
- Lodging
- Registration Fees
- Personal Car Mileage or Rental Vehicles
- Miscellaneous Expenses

Items that may not be included in the advance calculation:

- Prepayments made on the RAP form
- Items paid for with the UM-Western Pro Card
- Personal Payments to Commercial Carriers
- Meals included in conference registrations
- Entertainment
- Spouse Expenses

The Travel Advance form is converted to cash at the Business Services window no more than 7 days prior to the departure date of the trip. Picture identification may be required when obtaining a travel advance.

When Travel includes an advance, the Travel Expense Voucher must be submitted to Business Services within **thirty (30)** working days after the conclusion of the trip, unless otherwise authorized by the Vice Chancellor for Administration and Finance. The Travel Advance form stays on file in Business Services until the Travel Expense Voucher is submitted to Business Services.

Employees with an outstanding travel advance **thirty-one (31) calendar days** after the end of the trip will have the amount of the advance automatically deducted from their paycheck.

Students, not on payroll, with an outstanding travel advance thirty (30) calendar days after the end of the trip will have a hold placed on their student account preventing them from completing any future registration and placing a hold on their official transcript and diploma.

REIMBURSABLE TRAVEL EXPENSES

TYPES OF TRANSPORTATION:

Transportation should be the most economical in the terms of direct cost to the University and the employee's/student's time away from the office/school. Listed below are the different transportation options available to travelers.

When transportation costs are expected to exceed \$5,000, departments must consult with Purchasing in Business Services before booking transportation services.

- **Private Vehicle**

Reimbursement rates for private vehicle mileage are defined by state statute. Reimbursement decreases after the first 1000 miles driven in a given month. Travelers must maintain the required minimal vehicle insurance coverage consistent with the laws of the state. Current reimbursement rates and the minimum insurance coverage required are listed on the Estimated Travel Cost Schedule.

- **Motor Pool Vehicles**

University vehicles can be obtained at the Motor Pool for employees traveling on official University business. The daily rate and mileage charges are assessed to the department for these vehicles. Current rates and regulations are listed on the Estimated Travel Cost Schedule.

- **Rental Vehicles**

The state maintains several agreements with rental car agencies to provide special rates for travelers. Travelers should use the rental car agency that can provide the best price for their travel. Additional insurance is **not required** when using a rental car. The UM-Western Pro Card may be used to pay for rental car use.

- **Commercial Carriers (Excluding Air Travel)**

Travelers securing public transportation (bus, railway) from commercial carriers may use one of two payment methods:

1. University personnel may purchase commercial transportation with The UM-Western Procard. The receipt must be retained and attached to the traveler's UMW Procard statement.
2. University personnel may purchase commercial transportation with personal funds. The receipt must be retained and attached to the travel expense report. The traveler is reimbursed AFTER the trip when the travel expense report is submitted.

1-0300.60 TRANSPORTATION PURCHASE ORDER

The transportation purchase order form and process have been eliminated. The Department of Administration requires agencies to use the State's purchasing card to purchase all airline tickets for individual employee travel.

10300.65 AIRLINE TICKET PURCHASES

Agencies are required to use the State's purchasing card to purchase all airline tickets for individual **employee** travel unless it can be documented that another payment method is in the state's best interest. This applies to ticket purchases made through a travel agent, purchased directly from an airline, or purchased from an online travel source. Additional information is available at the department's air travel web site:

<http://www.discoveringmontana.com/doa/doatravel/airtravel/index.asp>

IN-STATE LODGING REIMBURSEMENT GENERAL:

Lodging is reimbursed according to rates established by the state as addressed on the Estimated Travel Cost Schedule (Exhibit B).

In-State – lodging reimbursement rates at Actual Cost are subject to Federal Per Diem Cap:

Except as provided for in the following section (In-State Travel – Lodging Reimbursement at Actual Cost (NO CAP), the traveler is eligible to be reimbursed the actual out-of-pocket lodging expenses, not to exceed the federal per diem room rate for the location involved, plus taxes on the allowable cost for any location in Montana:

1. The traveler is attending a conference sponsored in whole or in part by a state agency and has obtained lodging at the conference facility.

Federal per diem room rates for Montana are available through the Internet at the following location:

<http://www.policyworks.gov/org/main/mt/homepage/mtt/perdiem/perd04d - Perd04d>

Department of Administration: State Travel Guide: Hotel Listings:

<http://www.state.mt.us/doa/doatravel/Hotel1List.asp>

In-State Lodging Reimbursement Rates At Actual Cost (No Cap)

The Vice Chancellor for Administration & Finance may approve reimbursement of lodging at actual cost, without applying the cap provided for in the section above under the following circumstances:

1. lodging costs below the caps provided for in the previous section are temporarily unavailable due to special functions such as fairs, sporting events, or conventions or seasonal demand;
or

2. emergency travel arrangements preclude being able to find accommodations below the caps;
or
3. remote locations with limited accommodations within a 15-mile radius preclude obtaining accommodations below the caps; or
4. you are employed in a regulatory or undercover function and have reasonable cause to believe there is risk to your personal safety.

You must provide adequate justification, along with the original lodging receipt, to the Vice Chancellor for Administration and Finance.

Out-of-State Travel Lodging

Out-of-State lodging is reimbursed according to rates established by the state as addressed on the Estimated Travel Cost Schedule. In certain circumstances a traveler may be reimbursed for the actual cost of out-of-state lodging if one of the following criteria has been met:

1. The purpose of the travel is to attend a conference, which is being held at the lodging site.
2. Government rates were requested and were not available at the hotel where the employee is staying and the employee received **prior** approval to be reimbursed at the higher rate.

Travelers staying in a non-receiptable facility (i.e., friends, relatives, camper, or trailer) or failing to obtain a receipt will be reimbursed based on the unreceipted lodging rate on the Estimated Travel Cost Schedule.

When lodging is provided to the traveler as part of the conference or by the host institution and no charge is assessed directly, lodging cost cannot be claimed by the traveler. Examples are:

- A cabin that is provided for backwoods work.
- Seminars/conferences where lodging is provided as part of the registration fee.

An appropriate, itemized lodging receipt from a commercial facility must be attached to the Travel Expense Voucher before reimbursement can be made. Credit card receipts, credit card statements, canceled checks, etc., are **not** acceptable.

MEAL REIMBURSEMENT:

Meals are reimbursed according to rates established by the state. Receipts are not required for in-state, out-of-state, or out-of-country foreign meal per diem reimbursement. Current rates are listed on the Estimated Travel Cost Schedule.

Meals included in conference registration fees may not be claimed in the per diem allowance.

Travel by air is considered to be out-of-state from the time of boarding a flight with a destination outside Montana or returning from outside Montana. When using other modes of transportation, the geographical location will determine meal reimbursement allowances.

Departure and return times are used to compute meal reimbursements. In order to claim reimbursement for a meal, an employee must have been in travel status for at least three (3) continuous hours within one of the following time ranges:

Time Range	Meal Allowed
12:01 am to 10 am	Morning meal
10:01 am to 3 pm	Midday meal
3:01 pm to midnight	Evening meal

Reimbursement for day trips is determined by the travel shift. **A travel shift is defined as the period of time beginning one (1) hour before an employee's regularly assigned work shift commences and ending one (1) hour after the work shift terminates.**

Only **one (1)** meal may be claimed by an employee per day when all travel is performed solely within the confines of an assigned travel shift.

Employees are entitled to **two (2)** meals during a 24-hour calendar day if they depart within their travel shift but return outside the shift or depart before the assigned travel shift and return during the shift.

When travel is totally outside the confines of the travel shift, the time ranges for each meal govern eligibility for meal reimbursement.

The UM-Western Pro Card can **NOT** be used for paying meal charges.

For help in determining which meals a traveler is eligible to claim, please call the Travel Desk (ext. 7101).

REGISTRATION REIMBURSEMENT:

The UM-Western Pro Card may be used for registration payment. An itemized receipt and/or conference announcement must be maintained with the Accounts Payable department in Business Services and kept with the UM-Western Pro Card records for later review.

Conference registration fees paid by the traveler will be reimbursed, provided an itemized receipt and/or conference announcement is attached to the Travel Expense Voucher. Special conference events, such as entertainment or tours of a personal nature, are non-reimbursable and must be paid with personal funds.

Conference announcements must contain an explanation of the services included in the registration fee. When conference announcements do not contain this information, the traveler must obtain a signed statement from the conference organizers, explaining services included in the registration fee. This statement must be attached to the Travel Expense Voucher.

MISCELLANEOUS EXPENSES:

Miscellaneous business expenses associated with travel are reimbursable. Items of \$5.00 or more must be supported by an appropriate, itemized receipt. Items must be listed on the Travel Expense Voucher in the Miscellaneous Expenses Explanation section.

Examples of allowable reimbursements are:

Ground Transportation	Taxi fares, bus fares, gasoline for car rentals.
Supplies	When needed.
Telephone Charges	Phone calls MUST pertain to University business.
Laundry Service	Laundry service is available after the 5 th day of the trip. A receipt is required.
Baggage Handling	

Examples of non-allowable reimbursements are:

Personal Telephone Charges	
Alcohol Charges	
Tips	Already included in meal reimbursement allowance.
Exercise Facilities	Charges for hotel or club exercise facilities are personal.
Video Rentals	Charges are personal.
Traveler's Check Charges	Charges are personal.

UPON RETURN

TRAVEL EXPENSE VOUCHER

The Travel Expense Voucher is used to document and summarize reimbursable costs incurred by the traveler and to record the travel expense in the University's accounting records.

All travelers are required to submit a travel expense voucher signed by the funding department's Administrator/Manager explaining the nature of the trip and containing a schedule of expenditures and amount of reimbursement claimed.

At the conclusion of each trip, but no later than **30 days** after the conclusion of the trip, the traveler should review all related travel expense documentation, prepare a Travel Expense Voucher with required approval and documentation, and forward to Business Services travel desk. **Employees who do not file for reimbursement of travel costs within three (3) months after incurring the expense waive their right to reimbursement.**

One Travel Expense Voucher should be filed for group travel. Group travel involves two or more individuals who have agreed to allow one member (prime traveler) to be responsible for the financial affairs of the group.

Travelers can fill out one Travel Expense Voucher a month for trips that occur in the same month that are similar in nature.

Business Services will review the Travel Expense Voucher and process any reimbursement due the traveler or the University. Any reimbursement owed the University must be attached to the Travel Expense Voucher. When payments are in cash, deliver this in person to Business Services to obtain the required receipt.

Travel funds are often limited and, in certain situations, full reimbursement of travel costs allowed by state regulations cannot be made by the University. Under these conditions the traveler **must** be made aware by the department that full reimbursement will not be made. The University assumes no responsibility for maintaining records to support unreimbursed expenses deducted by employees when they file their personal income tax returns.

MISCELLANEOUS

OUT-OF-COUNTRY TRAVEL:

Out-of-country travel is defined as all travel occurring outside the boundary of the United States. Travel to Canada, Mexico, and U.S. possessions and territories are considered out-of-country travel.

The Worldwide Lodging Plus Per Diem System, published by the federal government, provides a combined lodging, meal and miscellaneous travel cost rate for all areas in the world. This daily rate establishes the maximum allowable for reimbursement. **Appropriate itemized receipts converted to U.S. funds are required for lodging costs to be reimbursed.** These rates are available at the following web site:

<http://www.policyworks.gov/org/main/mt/homepage/mtt/perdiem/travel.shtml>

The federal Worldwide Lodging Plus Per Diem rates specify the maximum lodging reimbursement amount in the first column of the schedules. The second column specifies the maximum per diem for **meals and incidental expenses (M&IE)**. The third column is the total maximum per diem (column 1 plus column 2). Since Montana does not reimburse for the amount allocated to miscellaneous expenses as a per diem, the traveler will need to calculate the federal allowance amount for meals. To calculate the reimbursement amount for meals, complete the following steps:

1. Divide the total per diem amount (third column) by 1.1; this calculates the total per diem amount for lodging and meals not including incidental expenses; round to the nearest whole number.
2. Deduct the lodging per diem (first column) from the amount calculated in item 1. This provides the per diem amount for meals.

Grants must also follow the travel guidelines of their contract and their granting agency.

EMPLOYEE TRAVEL TO BE REIMBURSED BY NON-UNIVERSITY ORGANIZATIONS/AGENCIES:

The University will provide travel advances at the request of department managers for employee travel that will be reimbursed by another entity (example: serving on a national organization steering committee that will pay travel expense for attending a meeting). All UM-Western Travel Guidelines apply in these cases. The top portion of the Travel Expense Voucher form should be marked **"Travel will be reimbursed by an outside agency."**

The Travel Advance will remain outstanding until the employee clears this account with the third party's reimbursement for the trip.

Travel advances or other costs paid by the University **MUST** be repaid to the University within **sixty (60)** days after the employee returns to campus. Departments should notify Business Services travel desk of any amount due the University within **thirty (30)** days after the end of the trip. This amount will be processed as a payroll deduction from the traveler's subsequent paycheck if not paid within 60 days. **Exceptions to this policy must be approved by the Vice Chancellor for Administration and Finance.**