

WESTERN CAROLINA UNIVERSITY TRAVEL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Section 1 – Overview and General Guidelines

Last Modified Date: 07/01/03

A. State Policies Regarding Travel

The University's Travel Policies and Procedures Manual is based on Section 5 of The State Budget Manual, which sets forth travel policies and regulations relative to securing authorization and reimbursement of expenditures for official state travel. The administration and control of travel is designed to comply with the provisions of G.S. 138-5, 138-6, and 138-7.

B. Responsibility of Traveler

An employee traveling on official business is expected to exercise the same care in incurring expenses that a prudent person would exercise if traveling on personal business and expending personal funds. Excess costs, circuitous routes, delays or luxury accommodations, and services that are unnecessary or unjustified are not acceptable under this standard. Employees will be responsible for unauthorized costs and any additional expenses incurred for personal preference or convenience. Each traveler is responsible for his/her own expenses (both employees and non-employees). The University should not be billed for an individual's travel-related expenses.

C. Ride Sharing

It is the policy of the University to limit the number of vehicles for which mileage expense is to be incurred by the University to the minimum necessary to transport multiple business travelers to a common destination with reasonable regard for safety, comfort, and efficiency.

The precise number of vehicles that can be justified will vary according to type of vehicle available (e.g. van, sedan, station wagon); number of travelers; distance to be traveled; vicinity travel required at the destination; compatibility of travelers' departure and return schedules; and other pertinent variables. However, both the traveler and those who authorize the travel bear responsibility for assuring that the number of vehicles used and the consequent expenses incurred reflect observance of the University policy stated above.

When multiple passengers undertake approved business travel in a private vehicle, only one may claim reimbursement for mileage.

D. Penalties and Charges Resulting from Cancellations

Penalties and charges resulting from the cancellation of travel reservations (including airline or hotel reservations and conference registration) shall be the University's obligation if the employee's travel has been approved in advance and the cancellation or change is made at the direction of and/or for the convenience of the University. If the cancellation or change is made for the personal benefit of the employee, it will be the employee's obligation to pay the penalties and charges. However, in the event of accidents, serious illness, or death within the employee's immediate family or other critical circumstances beyond the control of the employee, the University may pay the penalties and charges.

E. Travel by State Officials which Involves Political Functions or Meetings

State funds may not be used to pay travel and/or subsistence costs which are entirely related to an individual's attendance at a political function or meeting. If the travel and/or subsistence costs are related to official State business and partly related to the individual's attendance at a political function or meeting, then State funds may be used to pay up to one-half of the travel and/or subsistence cost of the trip. If a state-owned vehicle is used, the reimbursement rate to the state will be the motor pool rate.

F. Controller's Office – Travel Audit Section

The Controller's Office is responsible for administering the University's Travel Policies and Procedures. The Travel Auditor reviews travel authorizations and reimbursement requests for completeness and conformance to the University travel regulations; prepares input documents for travel advances and reimbursements; maintains subsidiary records of travel advances; and prepares travel deposits for the Cashiers' Office.

The Travel Auditor is located in Room 332, H. F. Robinson Administration Building.

G. Forms

All forms for travel are available from the Print Shop and are on the Controller's website at <http://admfin.wcu.edu/control/template.htm>.

H. Assistance

Before travel expenditures are incurred, all travelers and administrative personnel should be aware of the travel policies and procedures stated in this manual. Please refer questions to Sue Dills, Travel Auditor, **Ext. 3104**.

WESTERN CAROLINA UNIVERSITY TRAVEL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Section 2 – Authorizations Required for Travel

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A. Trip Authorizations

Before travel may begin, travel on University business must be approved by the traveler's immediate supervisor, the accountable officer for the budget to be charged, and others as indicated in the following table.

	Traveler	Accountable Officer and Immediate Supervisor	Admin. Next in Line/Dean	Vice Chancellor/ Chief of Staff	Chancellor
Vicinity, no excess	X	X			
In-state/Out-of-state, no excess	X	X			
* In-state/Out-of-state, excess ≤ 200% of standard lodging rate	X	X	X		
In-state/Out-of-state, excess > 200% of standard lodging rate	X	X	X	X	
Expenses for attendants of handicapped employees	X	X	X	X	
Travel Agent Fees > \$100	X	X	X	X	
Use of privately owned or chartered aircraft	X	X	X	X	X
Out-of-country	X	X	X	X	X

* In-state and out-of-state travel with excess ≤ 200% of standard lodging rate must be approved two steps above traveler or the appropriate Vice Chancellor, whichever is less.

B. Request for Travel Allowances in Excess of the Standard

Approvals Required

Excess requests may be approved by the administrators subject to the limits indicated in the preceding table. All departments reporting directly to the Office of the Chancellor must submit excess requests to that office for approval. Excess reimbursement requests must be approved at the same time the travel is authorized.

Documentation Required

Excess reimbursement requests must be accompanied by documentation that substantiates the following:

- The travel is entirely related to University business.
- The travel is the most practical way to conduct the University business.
- Reasonable efforts have been made to keep the cost within statutory limits and to keep the number of travelers to a minimum.
- Travel expenses can be covered within budgeted travel line-items.

WESTERN CAROLINA UNIVERSITY TRAVEL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Section 3 - Subsistence

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A. Definitions

Subsistence is an allowance related to lodging and meal costs, and gratuities thereon.

Out-of-State Travel Status begins when the employee leaves the state and remains in effect until the employee returns to the state. However, in-state allowances and reimbursement rates apply when employees and other qualified official travelers use hotel and meal facilities located in North Carolina immediately prior to and upon returning from out-of-state travel during the same travel period.

Out-of-Country Travel Status begins when the employee leaves the United States and remains in effect until the employee returns to the United States. If the employee and other qualified official travelers use hotel and meal facilities located outside North Carolina, but within the United States, immediately prior to and upon returning from out-of-country travel during the same travel period, out-of-state subsistence rates shall apply.

B. Subsistence Rates – Meals and Lodging

1. In-State and Out-of-State Travel

The maximum allowable statutory rate (G.S. 138-6) for meals and lodging is **\$97.75** for in-state travel and **\$111.75** for out-of-state travel. The payment of sales tax, lodging tax, local tax, or service fees applied to the cost of lodging is allowed in addition to the lodging rate and is to be paid as a lodging expense.

The following schedule of allowances shall be used for reporting allowable subsistence expenses incurred while traveling on official state business:

	In State	Out-of-State
Breakfast	\$ 7.50	\$ 7.50
Lunch	9.75	9.75
Dinner	16.75	19.00
Lodging (actual up to)	<u>63.75</u>	<u>75.50</u>
Total	\$97.75	\$111.75

2. Out-of-Country Travel

All out-of-country travel must be approved by the appropriate Vice Chancellor or Chief of Staff in advance of the trip. Employees may elect to claim either out-of-state rates for subsistence or the lesser of the actual cost of meals and lodging or 90% of the subsistence rate published by the U.S. Department of State for the applicable foreign site (available on-line at <http://www.state.gov/m/a/als/prdm/>). Excess subsistence for both meals and lodging requires approval by the Vice-Chancellor in advance of the trip. A receipt for lodging expenses from a commercial lodging establishment must be presented for reimbursement. Requests for excess meals must be documented by a receipt if paid from state-appropriated funds.

C. Lodging

1. General Guidelines for Reimbursement

The traveler must document that overnight lodging was necessary and accomplished. The travel must involve a travel destination located at least 35 miles from the employee's regularly assigned duty station (vicinity) or home, whichever is less.

Requests for reimbursement should be filed within 30 days after the travel period for which the reimbursement is being requested ends. Specific dates of lodging must be listed on the reimbursement request, and substantiated by a receipt from a commercial lodging establishment. Reimbursement for lodging is limited to the single occupancy rate up to a maximum of **\$63.75 per night** for in-state lodging or **\$75.50 per night** for out-of-state lodging.

3. Room Sharing

If one state traveler pays the full lodging expense for him/herself and one or more other individuals traveling on official state business with whom he/she shares a room in a commercial lodging establishment, the traveler bearing the expense should include the full lodging expense on his/her reimbursement request. A note of explanation should be included on each traveler's reimbursement request with a list of those sharing the room. The total per night lodging charge will be divided by the number of state travelers sharing the room for purposes of applying the statutory limitation. As long as each traveler's share of the room charge is less than the allowable rate, no additional approvals are needed for excess lodging.

3. Excess Lodging

Authorization for excess lodging must be obtained in advance as specified in *Policy 2 – Section A*. Excess lodging is allowed when the employee is in a high cost area and unable to secure lodging within the current allowance, or when the employee submits in writing an opinion that his/her personal safety or security is unattainable within the current allowance. Excess lodging authorization is not allowed for reasons of convenience or personal preference. The employee may exceed the part of the ceiling allocated for lodging without approval for excess if the total lodging and food reimbursement does not exceed the maximum allowed daily subsistence.

D. Meals

1. General Guidelines for Reimbursement

The employee must document that the payment for meals was necessary and accomplished. Reimbursement rates listed in Section B are inclusive of gratuities. Each reimbursement form must show the time of departure and time of return for purposes of ensuring compliance with travel regulations. The costs of meals included in other related activities (registration fees, conference costs, hotel registration, etc.) may not be duplicated in reimbursement requests.

2. Meals During Overnight Travel

A state employee in overnight travel status on official state business may be reimbursed for meals including lunch. The travel must involve a travel destination located at least 35 miles from the employee's regularly assigned duty station (vicinity) or home, whichever is less.

A state employee in overnight travel status may be reimbursed for meals for partial days of travel when the partial day is the day of departure or the day of return. To be eligible the following criteria must be met:

- Breakfast - Depart duty station prior to 6:00 A.M. and
The normal workday is extended by two (2) or more hours.
- Lunch - Depart duty station prior to Noon on day of departure or
Return to duty station after 2:00 P.M. on day of return.
- Dinner - Depart duty station prior to 5:00 P.M. on day of departure or
Return to duty station after 8:00 P.M. on day of return and
The normal workday is extended by three (3) or more hours.

3. Meals during Daily Travel

Allowances cannot be paid to an employee for lunches if travel does not involve an overnight stay. To be eligible for breakfast and evening meal allowances when overnight travel is not involved, the following criteria must be met:

- Breakfast (morning) – Depart duty station prior to 6:00 A.M. and
The normal workday is extended by two (2) or more hours
- Dinner (evening) – Return to duty station after 8:00 P.M. and
The normal workday is extended by three (3) or more hours
- The travel must involve a travel destination located at least 35 miles from the employee's regularly assigned duty station (vicinity) or home, whichever is less.

4. Meals and Day-to-Day Activities

University employees may not be reimbursed for meals eaten in conjunction with a congress, conference, assembly, convocation or meeting, by whatever name called, of the employees within the University, or between employees of the University and other state departments, institutions, or agencies to discuss issues relating to the employee's normal day-to-day business activities.

5. Meals for Required Employee Attendance

A University employee may be reimbursed for meals, including lunches, when the employee's job requires his attendance at the meeting of a board, commission, committee, or council in his/her official capacity and the meal is replanned as part of the meeting for the entire board, commission, committee or council. Such board, commission, committee, or council must include persons other than University employees.

6. Meals and Commercial Air Travel

Employees are allowed to claim reimbursement for meals even though they are shown and offered as a part of one's flight schedule on a commercial airline.

7. Excess Meals

No excess reimbursement will be allowed for meals unless such costs are included in registration fees and/or there are predetermined charges or the meals were for out-of-country travel.

WESTERN CAROLINA UNIVERSITY TRAVEL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Section 4 – Transportation by State Vehicles

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A. General Guidelines

When travel by vehicle is determined to be feasible, a State vehicle, when available, should be used instead of a private vehicle. State-owned vehicles shall be used for official state business only. State vehicles shall not be used while the employee is in vacation status.

B. Reserving a State Vehicle

Motor Pool vehicles may be used for University business travel at rates ranging from \$.24-\$.28 per mile for sedans and station wagons, and \$.22 per mile for vans. Policies and procedures applicable to reserving a State vehicle and purchasing gasoline for use in State vehicles are available from the University Motor Pool (telephone 7224).

C. Commuting

Permanently assigned state-owned vehicles may not be used for commuting between an employee's official workstation and his home. Every individual who uses a permanently assigned state-owned passenger motor vehicle, pickup truck, or van to drive between his official workstation and his home, shall reimburse the state for these trips at a rate computed by the Department of Administration.

D. Non-State Employee Riders

- **Non-state employees** may accompany state employees in state vehicles when they have a business interest in the purpose of the trip and their presence is related to state business.
- **Students** may be passengers in state vehicles to attend athletic events and other activities officially sanctioned by the institution.
- **Spouses and children of state employees** may accompany them in state-owned vehicles if ample space is available and all travel is strictly for official state business.
- **Hitchhikers** are not permitted to ride in state-owned vehicles.

E. State Vehicle Use at Destination

At the employee's destination, state vehicles may be used prudently for travel to obtain meals, but not for private purposes or for entertainment while off duty. No common carrier or public transportation fares are reimbursable on a trip in which an employee uses a state vehicle unless it is shown that such transportation was more economical in a particular situation.

F. Repairs

If a Motor Fleet Management vehicle (sedans and station wagons) requires repairs, authorization for repair must be obtained from Motor Fleet Management in Raleigh by calling toll-free 1-800-277-8181 twenty-four hours a day. There is no preset minimum or maximum allowance for costs of repair.

At any time that a University van requires repairs that exceed a cost of \$100.00, the driver must call the University Motor Pool (828-227-7224) to obtain permission for repairs.

WESTERN CAROLINA UNIVERSITY TRAVEL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Section 5 – Transportation by Private Vehicles

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A. Use for the Convenience of the State

When private vehicles are approved for use on official business for the convenience of the State, reimbursement will be paid at the mileage rate set by the IRS, which is currently **58.5 cents per mile**. “Convenience of the State” is defined as:

- Non-availability of a motor pool or State-owned vehicle

Or

- The round trip is 60 miles or less.

Non-availability of a motor pool vehicle must be documented by a certificate obtained from the WCU Motor Pool and submitted with the request for reimbursement.

B. Use for the Convenience of the Employee

When private vehicles are used on official business for the convenience of the employee, reimbursement is made at the lowest prevailing motor pool rate which is presently thirty-three cents (\$.33) per mile. “Convenience of the employee” is defined as covering all cases not qualifying as “convenience of the State.” When a private vehicle is used, the total reimbursement for mileage and subsistence may not exceed the total that would have been reimbursed for the lowest cost of airfare and subsistence for the period that would have been required for airline travel.

C. Commuting

When private vehicles are used on official state business, mileage is measured from the closer of the duty station or point of departure to destination (and return). No reimbursement shall be made for the use of a personal vehicle in commuting from an employee's home to his duty station.

WESTERN CAROLINA UNIVERSITY TRAVEL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Section 6 – Transportation by Aircraft

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A. Commercial Airlines

Allowable Reimbursement

Tickets for commercial air travel may be purchased by the traveler and reimbursement claimed on the travel reimbursement form, substantiated by receipt. Reimbursement is limited to actual coach fare on domestic flights and actual business class fare on overseas international flights. Flight insurance is not reimbursable.

Super Saver Rates

When traveling by common carrier to conduct official state business, employees traveling to their destination earlier than necessary and/or delaying their return to avail the state of reduced transportation rates may be reimbursed subsistence for additional travel days if the amount saved in transportation costs due to the early and/or delayed travel is greater than the value of lost productivity and additional subsistence. When the reduced airfare rates require staying overnight one Saturday night to be eligible for reimbursement, the state employee must stay overnight on the Saturday closest to the first or last day of official state business to which the employee is attending.

B. Chartered Aircraft

The use of charter aircraft requires approval of the Chancellor with the following substantiated and in writing:

- A state aircraft is not available or not appropriate for the size of the party traveling or the destination airport.
- The use of a charter flight is more economical than a commercial flight.
- The use of a charter flight is necessary because of unusual travel circumstances.

C. Privately - Owned Aircraft

Reimbursement for official business use of an aircraft owned by a state employee requires approval of the Chancellor with the following substantiated and in writing:

- Use of an aircraft owned by a state employee is necessary because of unusual travel circumstances and is not for the sole convenience of the employee who owns the airplane.
- Use of the aircraft owned by a state employee, at the rates published below, is cheaper than any other method of air travel.
- The allowable reimbursement rate for aircraft owned by a state employee is \$.68 per mile per passenger.

WESTERN CAROLINA UNIVERSITY TRAVEL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Section 7 – Other Modes of Transportation

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A. Travel to/from Airport at Employee's Duty Station

Reimbursement for travel between the employee's duty station and the nearest airline terminal (or train/bus station, if applicable) is limited to one round trip with parking charges. Travel by private car is reimbursed in accordance with the guidelines in *Section 5 – Transportation by Private Vehicles*. Receipts are required for airport parking claims.

B. Travel to/from Airport at Employee's Destination

Reimbursement for travel to and from the airline terminal (or train/bus station, if applicable) at the employee's destination may be made where travel is via the most economical mode available as listed below:

- Taxi or airport shuttle service – actual cost with receipts.
- Rental vehicles – may be used; however, rental vehicles may not be used for the sole convenience of the employee. Receipts are required.
- Public Transportation – actual cost up to \$5.00 for each one-way trip either from the airport to the hotel/meeting or from the hotel/meeting to the airport. Receipts are *not* required.

C. Transportation Other than to/from Airport

Reimbursement may be made for costs of transportation other than to/from the airport when required for travel on official state business. Reimbursement is limited as follows:

- Taxi service – actual cost with receipts. Taxi fares for inter-city travel are not reimbursable, except in emergencies when no less expensive mode of transportation is available.
- Shuttle Service – actual cost with receipts
- Public transportation – actual cost up to \$5.00 per one way trip. Receipts are *not* required.

D. Bus and Train Service

The actual cost of coach fare for rail and bus service on state business is reimbursable. A receipt copy of the ticket must be attached to the travel reimbursement request.

E. Rental Cars

Rental cars may be used only when this is the most cost-efficient form of transportation. Rental cars are not to be used at state expense solely for the convenience or personal preference of the employee. A receipt copy of the paid rental contract must be submitted for reimbursement

The University will not reimburse for optional insurance coverage which includes Physical Damage Waiver (PDW), Collision Damage Waiver (CDW) and Personal Accident Insurance (PAI). Policies and information concerning rental cars are available from the Purchasing Department (telephone - 7203).

WESTERN CAROLINA UNIVERSITY TRAVEL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Section 8 – Other Travel Expenses

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A. Registration Fees

State law allows reimbursement of the actual amount of convention registration fees when substantiated by a valid receipt or invoice.

Registration fees are paid by using the Check Request form available at <http://admfin.wcu.edu/control/chkreq.htm>.

Tuition fees are distinguished from registration fees in that they are an educational expense and are charged to “Other Current Services” (3905). Tuition fees are those costs associated with employees enrolled in a course(s) or sessions described as educational in nature. The courses are usually accredited by a generally recognized accrediting agency. Upon satisfactory completion of work, the employee receives a certificate, degree or other similar acknowledgment of completion of work.

B. Parking and Tolls

Parking fees, storage fees and tolls are reimbursable when incurred while traveling on official state business. Receipts are required.

C. Telephone Calls

- Long Distance - Employees are not allowed to charge long distance telephone calls of a personal nature to the University, **except as stated below**. All long distance calls which are to be paid by the University must be made pursuant to the employee conducting official University business.
- Reimbursement - Business phone calls are reimbursable under "Other Expenses". Individual calls over **\$5.00** must be identified as to point of origin and destination.
- Allowable Personal Calls - An employee who is in travel status for two or more consecutive days in a week is allowed one personal long distance telephone call for each two days. Reimbursement to the employee may not exceed **\$3.00 for each in-state call** or **\$5.00 for each out-of-state call**.
- Employee Emergency Calls – Employees may use the state network system, state credit card, or may be reimbursed for a personal long distance call(s) if such call(s) is/are of an emergency nature. An example is a call made when an employee calls home to inform someone that the travel period has been extended beyond original plans due to unforeseen reasons.
- Mobile Telephones - Because mobile telephone charges (cellular and digital) are based on measured use, no personal calls should be made on mobile telephones except in case of emergency as determined by the University. Mobile telephone calls to conduct official state business should only be used when more economical means of telephoning are not reasonably available.

If an employee uses his/her personal mobile telephone in conducting state business, the employee can be eligible for reimbursement. In order to receive reimbursement, the employee must indicate on his/her telephone bill the

reimbursable calls, the individuals called, and the nature of calls and submit the telephone bill with the request for reimbursement.

- Use of Telephone with Computer Hook-ups - Employees traveling on official state business needing to transmit data via their computers should use the most efficient manner available, including services available through the State's Information Technology Services (ITS) access.

D. Tips

Tips for meals are included in the meal allowances (see Policy 3-B). Baggage handling "tips" for porters at terminals and hotels and other tips (except tips for meals or food service) may be claimed as "Other Expenses". Excessive tips must be documented with a receipt and explanation.

E. Passports

Reimbursement for cost incurred in obtaining or renewing a passport may be made to an employee who, in the regular course of his duties, is required to travel overseas in the furtherance of official state business. Passport expenses are chargeable to the same fund that supports the employee's trip.

F. Fees and Service Charges of Travel Agents

With sufficient justification and documentation, state employees can be reimbursed for usual, customary, and reasonable fees and services charges imposed by travel agents for assistance in making travel arrangements. Travel agent fees and service charges exceeding \$100 require approval of the appropriate Vice Chancellor.

WESTERN CAROLINA UNIVERSITY TRAVEL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Section 9 – Non-State Employees – Reimbursement of Travel Expenses

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A. Non-State Employees

Non-state employees traveling on official state business whose expenses are paid by the University are subject to these policies and procedures, including statutory subsistence allowances, to the same extent as are University employees. Travel expenses for members of a non-employee's family are not reimbursable by the University. No travel advances will be made to non-state employees.

B. Prospective Professional Employees

The appropriate vice chancellor may approve reimbursement of certain expenses of prospective professional employees visiting the University for interviews. These expenses are limited to transportation and subsistence expenses for 3 days (5 days if one is a Saturday) at the in-state rate. Prospective professional employees traveling to the university earlier than necessary and/or delaying their return to avail the State of reduced transportation rates may be reimbursed subsistence for additional travel days if the amount saved in transportation costs due to the early and/or delayed travel is greater than the additional subsistence. Excess lodging expenses may be approved in the same manner as for employees.

C. Students

1. General Guidelines

Students traveling on official University business, other than for athletic events or student organizations, whose expenses are paid or reimbursed from state appropriated funds are subject to these regulations, including statutory subsistence allowances, to the same extent as are University employees. Students traveling as representatives of student organizations or for the purpose of participating in athletic events must have expenses paid or reimbursed from funds supporting the particular organization or activity. The statutory limits may not be exceeded; however, actual expenses may be claimed if they are less than the allowable rates.

2. Group Travel - Advances

Eligibility -Funds may be advanced upon request for expenses to be incurred for University-sanctioned travel by student groups. Advances may only be issued to University employees; therefore, the advance must be requisitioned by the group sponsor or accountable officer on the form titled "Request for Advance for Travel and Other Expenses Incurred in the Discharge of Official Duty".

Deadlines -The request must be submitted to the Controller's Office at least two weeks prior to date of need to provide adequate time for check preparation. The advance may be issued no sooner than five (5) working days prior to travel.

Clearing Advances -All travel advances must be cleared no later than thirty (30) days after the travel period. The sponsor or accountable officer must clear the advance by submitting the "Group Student Travel Expense" form and repaying any unexpended balance. An outstanding travel advance must be cleared before a subsequent advance may be obtained. All travel advances must be repaid prior to June 30th of each fiscal year.

3. Group Travel – Reimbursement of Expenses

Request for Reimbursement -Immediately following the travel period a Travel Reimbursement form should be submitted to the Controller's Office. The standard subsistence allowances may not be exceeded; however, actual expenses may be claimed if they are less than allowable rates.

Required Documentation -The following documentation must be attached to the Travel Reimbursement form:

- List of travelers
- Receipts for:
 - Lodging,
 - Commercial transportation (including air, bus, rail, taxi, shuttle service and rental car fare)
 - Parking and storage fees and tolls
- Statement signed by each student indicating the amount of any meal money received (if funds were advanced to students for meals)

Other documentation may be requested by the Travel Auditor as a result of her review of the request for reimbursement.

D. Attendants

Payment of travel and subsistence expenses (motel and meal costs) of attendants for handicapped employees while traveling on official state business may be reimbursed to the same extent as are state employees if advance approval is obtained from the appropriate vice chancellor.

WESTERN CAROLINA UNIVERSITY TRAVEL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Section 10 – Conferences, Seminars, and Other Meetings

Last Modified Date: 07/01/03

A. Internal Conferences

Definition - Internal conferences are those that involve the attendance of employees within the University only. A routine staff meeting is not an internal conference.

Requirements and Limitations

- No payment for meals is allowable unless overnight travel criteria are met
- The conference is planned in detail in advance, with a formal agenda or curriculum.
- There is a written invitation to participants, setting forth the calendar of events and the detailed schedule of costs.
- No excess travel subsistence may be granted for internal departmental meetings, conferences, seminars, etc. and such meetings must be held in state facilities when available. No registration fee may be charged.
- Refreshments for "coffee breaks" can be purchased provided there are twenty or more participants and costs do not exceed four dollars (\$4.00) per participant per day.
- A University department can not use state funds to support or underwrite a meeting, assembly, conference, seminar, rally, celebration, or similar function, by whatever name called, that promotes any cause or purpose other than the mission and objective of the University.

B. External Conferences

Definition - External conferences are those that involve the attendance of persons other than employees of the University. Payment for meals is allowable if included in the registration fee, but such fee must not consist exclusively of meal cost or it will not be allowable unless meeting overnight travel criteria. Conferences sponsored or co-sponsored by the University are authorized when they meet the limitations and requirements listed below.

Requirements and Limitations for External Conferences

- The conference is planned in detail in advance, with a formal agenda or curriculum.
- There is a written invitation to participants, setting forth the calendar of events, the social activities, if any, and the detailed schedule of costs.
- Assemblies should be held in state facilities where feasible; however, non-state facilities can be rented and the cost charged to a state agency without allocation to participants' daily subsistence allowances.

- Registration fees may be charged by the sponsoring department to participants for costs of external conferences.
- Registration fees may not include costs of entertainment, alcoholic beverages, setups, or flowers.
- Refreshments for "coffee breaks" can be purchased provided there are twenty or more participants and costs do not exceed four dollars (\$4.00) per participant per day.
- When assemblies are to be held under the sponsorship of the University in which the funding for all participants is budgeted, lump-sum payments to a conference center or an organization may be made upon written authorization from the Chancellor or his designee. The authorization must provide the following:
 - The purpose and duration of the conference.
 - The number of persons expected to attend.
 - The specific meals to be served at the conference (law prohibits lunches being provided to state employees unless registration fees are charged to all attendees).
 - The approximate daily subsistence cost per person.
 - The name of the conference center, hotel, caterer, or other organization providing the service.

C. Training Sessions

Definition - Employee training involves courses that develop an employee's knowledge, skill, and ability to perform the duties of his/her present job, such as courses on computer usage or management skills development. These courses generally have a set fee, are of relatively short duration, and are not part of a curriculum the employee is participating in leading to an educational degree.

Requirements and Limitations for Training Sessions

- Fees for training courses that provide training in specific areas are charged in the Accounting System to "Employee Education Expense" under "Other Current Services" (Object Code 3905)
- University-sponsored training sessions may provide refreshments for "coffee breaks" provided there are twenty or more participants and costs do not exceed four dollars (\$4) per participant per day.

D. Management Retreats

Definition - A management retreat is a meeting or series of meetings consisting of the Chancellor and his top assistants and coworkers. Retreats are sometimes held at a site other than the usual workplace and are held no more often than once a year.

Requirements and Limitations for Management Retreats

The Chancellor may authorize an annual management retreat. Expenditures are permissible in a manner as if it were an internal conference.

E. Informal Meetings with Guests of the Chancellor

Definition - An informal meeting is a meeting consisting of the Chancellor or his designee and non-state employees during which official state business is discussed for the majority of the meeting. Informal meetings are one-time occurrences and are not held on a recurring or routine basis.

Requirements and Limitations for informal meetings

The Chancellor, or his designee for a specific event, may be reimbursed from state funds for actual costs of meals for themselves and individuals who are not state employees who are their guests, when accompanying them in the course of conducting official state business. Cost of meals and other expenses for family members are not reimbursable from state funds.

WESTERN CAROLINA UNIVERSITY TRAVEL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Section 11 – Travel Advances and Reimbursements

Last Modified Date: 07/01/03

A. Travel Advances

1. Eligibility

Funds may be advanced to permanent employees for expenses to be incurred in approved travel on University business. Non-permanent employees may not receive travel advances. State Employees who have been issued state credit cards for travel purposes will not be issued travel advances, unless there is substantiated justification.

2. Procedures for Advance Requests

The request for funds must be submitted to the Controller's Office on a form titled "Request for Advance for Travel and Other Expenses Incurred in the Discharge of Official Duty" at least two weeks prior to the date of need to provide adequate time for check preparation. Advances must not exceed the estimated cost of the trip and may not be issued more than five (5) working days prior to the date of departure. Exceptions to the five (5) working day rule are as follows:

- Advances for payment of hotel room deposits will be issued earlier if required to insure conference lodging.
- Advances for airfare will be issued earlier in order to obtain "super saver" rates.

3. Clearing Advance

The traveler must clear the advance by submitting a completed "Travel Authorization and Reimbursement Form" within 30 days after the travel period. Advances must be deducted from the reimbursement request and a check for the net amount due (if any) will be issued to the traveler. In the rare event that the advance exceeds total expenses claimed, the traveler must attach to the reimbursement request a check for the excess, payable to the University. No subsequent advances can be made until the advance is cleared. All travel advances must be cleared prior to June 30th of each fiscal year.

4. Trip Delay or Cancellation

If a travel advance is obtained and the trip is not taken, the advance must be repaid immediately. If the trip is postponed, the advance must be repaid and a new advance obtained.

B. Travel Reimbursement

1. Procedures for Reimbursement Requests

Immediately following the travel period, a "Travel Authorization and Reimbursement" form should be submitted to the Controller's Office. Both the traveler and the accountable officer for the budget to be charged must sign the travel reimbursement request. If the individual to be reimbursed is the accountable officer for the budget to be charged, then a counter signature must be obtained from the administrator next in line. The state requires that all requests for reimbursement must be filed no later than 30 days after the period of travel ends. "Period of Travel" is defined as the month during which the travel occurred.

2. Documentation Required

All requested information should be provided on the reimbursement form and required receipts should be attached. Receipts are required for the following expenses:

- Airfare, bus or train tickets
- Rental cars
- Parking claims, tolls and storage fees
- Airport shuttles
- Taxi fares
- Lodging
- Excess meal allowances (when pre-approved for out-of-country travel)
- Phone calls in excess of \$5.00

Other documentation may be requested by the Travel Auditor as a result of her review of the request for reimbursement.

WESTERN CAROLINA UNIVERSITY TRAVEL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Appendix A – Rates-At-a-Glance

Last Modified Date: 07/01/08

TRANSPORTATION RATES			
<i>Mode of Transportation</i>	<i>Transportation Rate</i>	<i>Receipt Required?</i>	<i>Policy Reference</i>
AIRCRAFT			
Commercial Aircraft	Actual Coach Fare	Yes	6-A
(1) Chartered Aircraft	Actual Cost	Yes	6-B
(1) Privately-Owned Aircraft	68 cents/mile per passenger	No	6-C
BUS			
	Actual Coach Fare	Yes	7-D
PARKING AND/OR STORAGE FEES			
	Actual Cost	Yes	7-A, 8-B
PRIVATE VEHICLE			
(2) Used for “convenience of state”	58.5 cents per mile	No	5-A
(3) Used for “convenience of employee”	33 cents per mile	No	5-B
PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION			
	\$5.00 each one-way trip	No	7-B, 7-C
RENTAL CAR			
	Actual Cost	Yes	7-B, 7-E
TAXIS AND SHUTTLES			
	Actual Cost	Yes	7-B, 7-C
TOLLS			
	Actual Cost	Yes	8-B
TRAIN			
	Actual Coach Fare	Yes	7-D

(1) Requires advance approval of Chancellor.

(2) Applies when (a) a state-owned vehicle is not available **or** (b) the round trip is ≤ 60 miles.

(3) Total reimbursement must be ≤ lowest cost of airfare.

SUBSISTENCE RATES (Meals and Lodging)

(Policy 3)

	<i>In-State</i>	<i>Out-of-State</i>	<i>Receipt Required?</i>
BREAKFAST	\$ 7.50	\$ 7.50	No
(1) LUNCH	9.75	9.75	No
DINNER	16.75	19.00	No
(2) TOTAL MEAL EXPENSE	\$ 34.00	\$ 36.25	
(3) LODGING (ACTUAL UP TO)	63.75	75.50	Yes
TOTAL	\$ 97.75	\$ 111.75	

- (1) Lunch is only allowed for partial days of travel when: (a) traveler is in overnight travel status {see Policy 3-D (2)} **or** (b) employee is **required** to attend a meeting involving individuals from outside the University and lunch is served as part of that meeting {See Policy 3-D (5)}.
- (2) Meal allowances **include tips**.
- (3) Taxes (sales, lodging and local) and service fees are allowed **in addition** to these rates.

OTHER TRAVEL EXPENSES

	<i>Rate of Reimbursement</i>	<i>Receipt Required?</i>	<i>Policy Reference</i>
PASSPORT	Actual Cost	Yes	8-E
REGISTRATION FEES	Actual Cost	Yes	8-A
TELEPHONE CALLS WHEN IN TRAVEL STATUS			
Business calls (individual call ≤ \$5.00)	Actual Cost	No	8-C
(1) Business calls (individual call > \$5.00)	Actual Cost	Yes	8-C
(2) Personal calls (in-state call)	Actual cost up to \$3.00	No	8-C
(2) Personal calls (out-of-state call)	Actual cost up to \$5.00	No	8-C
Employee Emergency Calls	Actual Cost	No	8-C
(3) Business calls on personal mobile phone	Actual Cost	Yes	8-C
TIPS			
For meals and/or food service	Included in Meal Allowance	No	8-D
(4) For other services (baggage handling, etc.)	Actual Cost	No	8-D
(5) TRAVEL AGENT FEES AND SERVICE CHARGES	Actual Cost	Yes	8-F

- (1) *Must be identified as to point of origin and destination.*
- (2) *Only allowed during trips of 2 or more consecutive days and limited to 1 call for each 2 days of travel.*
- (3) *Telephone bill must be submitted with names of individuals called and nature of calls.*
- (4) *Excessive tips must be documented with a receipt and explanation.*
- (5) *Travel agent fees and service charges > \$100 require approval of Vice-Chancellor*

WESTERN CAROLINA UNIVERSITY TRAVEL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Appendix B – Definition of Terms

Last Modified Date: 07/01/03

For the purpose of these travel regulations, the following definitions apply:

Employee's Duty Station: The headquarters or job location at which the employee spends the majority of his or her working hours. For an employee in travel status, the duty station should be the point where traveling begins the majority of the time (home or office). The designation of an employee's home as the duty station requires approval by the Chancellor and the Office of State Budget and Management (OSBM) on an annual basis.

External Conference: Conferences that involve the attendance of persons other than the employees of the University. Payment for meals is allowable if included in the registration fee, but the fee must not consist exclusively of meal cost or it will not be allowable unless meeting overnight travel criteria.

Informal Meeting: A meeting consisting of a department head and his designee and non-state employees during which official state business is discussed for the majority of the meeting. Informal meetings are one-time occurrences and are not held on a recurring or routine basis.

Internal Conference: A conference that involved the attendance of employees within the University only. No payment of meals is allowable unless overnight travel criteria are met. A routine staff meeting is not an internal conference.

Management Retreat: A meeting or series of meetings consisting of the Chancellor and his top assistants and coworkers. Retreats are sometimes held at a site other than the usual workplace and are held no greater than once a year.

Out-of-Country Travel: Out-of-country travel status begins when the employee leaves the country and remains in effect until the employee returns to the country. If the employee and other qualified official travelers use hotel and meal facilities located outside North Carolina, but within the continental United States, immediately prior to and upon returning from out-of-country travel during the same travel period, out-of-state subsistence rates shall apply.

Out-of-State Travel: Out-of-state travel status begins when the employee leaves North Carolina and remains in effect until the employee returns to North Carolina. However, in-state allowances and reimbursement rates apply when employees and other qualified official travelers use hotel and meal facilities located in North Carolina immediately prior to and upon returning from out-of-state travel during the same travel period.

Registration Fees: Fees that are generally charged for defraying the costs of speakers, building (room) use, handout materials, breaks and lunches at conferences and conventions. Registration fees are charged to Object Code 3954.

State Employee: Any employee, whether temporary or permanent, who is paid on a State payroll.

Subsistence: An allowance related to lodging and meal costs, and gratuities thereon. General Statute 138-6 provides for allowances to be paid in amounts or rates specified. For purposes of determining eligibility for allowances, travel status means being away from the employee's normal duty station. The duty station is defined as the location or near vicinity of the employee's work place. To be eligible for allowances in connection with travel, the employee must be acting in official capacity as required by his/her work activities.

Training Session: Employee training involves courses that develop an employee's knowledge, skill, and ability to perform the duties of his/her present job; such as, courses on computer usage or management skills development. These courses generally have a set fee, are of relatively short duration, and are not part of a curriculum the employee is participating in leading to some educational degrees.

Transportation: Includes personal automobile, taxi, bus, train, airplane, motor pool charges, auto rental, tolls, and parking fees. All travel expenses must be incurred by and for state employees or other eligible travelers in conducting official state business in order to be eligible for reimbursement.

Travel Period: The calendar month during which the travel ended.

Tuition Fees: Fees charged as payment for instruction given at an institute or workshop. The fee is actually those costs associated with employees enrolled in a course(s) or session(s) described as educational in nature. The courses are usually accredited by a generally recognized accrediting agency. Upon satisfactory completion of course work, the employee student receives a certificate, degree or other similar acknowledgment of completion of work. These fees are educational expenses and are charged to Object Code 3905 – Employee Education Expense.