

**JACKSONVILLE STATE UNIVERSITY**

**Manual of Policies and Procedures**

**POLICY NUMBER: IV:06**

**DATE: May 1, 1987**

**REVISION/REVIEW DATES: Oct 1999, Jan 2000, Jan 2001, Jan 2002, Jan 2003, Apr 2003, Jan 2004, Mar 2004, Jan 2005, Sept 2005, Jan 2006, Oct 2010, Jan 2011, July 2012, Jan 2013, Jan 2014, June 2014, July 2015, June 2017, July 2018, Dec 2020, Jan 2023, Jul 2024**

**SUBJECT: Travel**

**APPROVED: Don C. Killingsworth, Jr., President**

**PURPOSE**

This policy delineates guidelines and procedures for reimbursement of travel expenses incurred during official business of Jacksonville State University.

**POLICY**

A. Jacksonville State University reimburses individuals for travel expenses (in-state, out-of-state, or international) incurred during official business as authorized by Code of Alabama, 1975, §36-7-20, § 36-7-21, § 36-7-22. When feasible and as a general rule, all employee travel should be pre-approved by the budget manager, and/or divisional vice president or President (depending on the type of travel) in JSU's travel system. Pre-approval will be submitted and approved through workflow provided by the system. An employee's failure to obtain pre-approval may jeopardize the employee's right to reimbursement particularly if there is a question regarding whether the travel and/or expenses were authorized. All international travel must be approved in advance by the President.

B. The institution follows IRS regulations to reimburse for the use of privately-owned vehicles. For current IRS reimbursement rates, see the IRS website. Travel reimbursement will be from the official travel base or the point of departure, whichever is closer to the travel destination. When multiple destinations are involved in the USA during the same trip, each destination must be identified and the mileage from point-to-point clearly documented. For audit purposes, the address of each destination is required.

C. For reimbursement, information must be submitted through JSU's travel system with documentation uploaded into the system.

The State of Alabama allows for travel within the state to be reimbursed using the uniform per diem rules or actual out-of-pocket(out-of-state) expenses when traveling on official business. This will be effective for travel dates beginning July 1, 2024.

### **General**

- A. The pre-approval process must be completed in JSU's travel system following its workflow.
- B. Upon completion of the travel, pre-approvals in JSU's travel system will be converted to expense reports in the system. Expense reports must be completed, e-signed/certified by the individual requesting reimbursement and approved by the Budget Manager and the immediate supervisor of the individual requesting reimbursement. In addition, if traveling using grant funding, approval must be obtained from the Grants Budget Office.
- C. Virtual Conferences do not qualify for reimbursement or per diem.
- D. Any per diem that does not require receipts is taxable and will be added to the traveler's W-2.

### **Uniform Per Diem Rules**

- A. Receipts are not required for the meal and per diem allowance provided for in §36-7-20. The dates and times of departures and arrivals are required for all trips. The breakdown for reimbursement is as follows:
  - For trips of less than six (6) hours duration: mileage only.
  - For travel which does not require an overnight stay where the trip is from six (6) to twelve (12) hours duration: \$12.75 meal allowance and mileage. If a meal is provided during this period, there will be no meal allowance.
  - Where the trip is in excess of twelve (12) hours but less than overnight: mileage plus \$12.75 meal allowance plus ¼ per diem (\$21.25) for a total of \$34.00. If a meal is provided during this period, the \$12.75 will be deducted from the \$34.00 making the allowance \$21.25.
  - Overnight: \$85.00 per diem per day for travel that requires one night stay and \$100.00 per day for travel that requires a stay of two or more nights, plus mileage.
- B. Except as expressly set forth below, Receipts are required for registration/conference fees. Receipts are also required for any expense item above \$25 (except the mileage, meal and per diem expenses set forth above). Employees should bear in mind that any expenses aside from statutorily provided expenses (mileage and per diem) will be subject to scrutiny and may not be approved. A conference itinerary is required to document the dates of the conference and the meals provided by the conference.

## **Travel Qualifying for actual and necessary expense Reimbursement – In-State and Out-of-state**

- A. Out-of-State & International Travel Authorization requests are submitted in JSU's travel system and must be approved by the Budget Manager and the immediate supervisor. In addition, if traveling using grant funding, approval must be obtained from the Grants Budget Office. Approval must be obtained by the President or any direct report to the President prior to travel.
- B. Alabama statute dictates that actual and necessary travel expense is to be reimbursed. "Necessary" is to be determined by the traveler and budget manager/ vice president.
- C. After travel is complete, pre-approval must be converted to an expense report in JSU's travel system and be completed/certified by the individual requesting reimbursement and approved by the Budget Manager and the immediate supervisor of the individual requesting reimbursement. In addition, if traveling using grant funding, approval must be obtained from the Grants Budget Office.
- D. Receipts are required for the following: hotel (itemized receipt), air fare, car rental (agency receipt), and registration/conference fees. Receipts are also required for other items \$25.00 or greater. If the registration fee has not been pre-paid through the JSU system, a receipt for payment of conference fees is required for reimbursement.
- E. A conference itinerary copy is required to document the dates of the conference and information regarding meals provided by the conference. Reimbursement for meal expenses will be limited to a maximum of \$45.00 per day without receipts, or \$75.00 a day with itemized receipts. Baggage handling is calculated on the basis of what is considered a reasonable charge. Receipts are not required unless an individual baggage expenditure exceeds \$25.00. Commercial carrier (airline, train, bus, etc.) baggage charges require documentation if the charge exceeds \$25.00 and will be reimbursed.
- F. Taxi/limousine service allowance is for actual expenditure. Receipts are required when an individual taxi/limousine expenditure exceeds \$25.00.
- G. Hotel internet access and telephone calls for official business are reimbursable. Calling home is not considered official business.

## **INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL**

- A. All University-related international travel is assessed for any potential health and safety risks. University-related international travel includes but is not limited to study abroad programs, internships, field studies, service-learning, research, paper presentations at conferences, fellowships, or professional development activities.
- B. JSU supports the University related international travel of students, faculty, and staff to countries that are under the US Department of State's Travel Advisory Level 1: Exercise Normal Precautions or Level 2: Exercise Increased Caution designations.

C. JSU may not support University-related international travel to certain areas within the countries that are designated as Level 3 or Level 4, even though the overall US Department of State's Advisories are Level 1 or Level 2 for those countries, unless such travel is approved by the International Travel Risk Committee, the Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs or divisional Vice President, and the President.

D. JSU may not support the travel of faculty, staff, or students to a country that is under either a Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Travel Health Warning Level 3 or for which the US Department of State has issued a Travel Advisory Level 3 - Reconsider Travel or Level 4 - Do Not Travel, unless such travel is approved by the International Travel Risk Committee, the Provost and Senior Vice President of Academic Affairs, or divisional Vice President, and the President.

E. JSU reserves the right to disapprove, rescind, or cancel any approved travel program in the event the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) or the US Department of State issues a new travel advisory for the country or region in which the program is going to be held.

F. JSU requires travelers on university-related international travel to complete all required international travel forms provided by the International House and Programs.

G. JSU requires travelers planning University-related international travel to purchase comprehensive international travel or health insurance. The insurance must at the minimum provide coverage for an accident and sickness, coverage for COVID-19, coverage for medical evacuation, and repatriation of remains, along with political, security, and natural disaster evacuation.

H. Travel outside the United States is considered international travel. Approval of foreign travel must be obtained by the President through Chrome River prior to requesting an commitments or payments applicable to the trip, including the booking of air fare.

I. Meals and incidental actual expenses will be reimbursed up to the current Federal "Meals & Incidental Expenditures" (M&IE) using a per-diem rate for specific international destinations. M&IE expenses include in-country meals, tipping, intra-city taxi, subway, local bus service, and other incidental expenses. (Note: Federal Rate Tables are available from the U.S. State Department website. If the city is not listed on the State Department's table, the rate for "other" in the federal rate table should be used. A printed table must be submitted with the travel documentation for audit purposes.) Receipts are not required.

J. Payment of travel insurance for international travel will be reimbursed.

K. All other regulations governing out-of-state travel expenditures also govern international travel.

#### **PRE-PAYMENT OF CERTAIN TRAVEL EXPENSES**

A. The Code of Alabama permits institutions of higher education to prepay registration and airfare for persons traveling in the service of the University.

B. In addition to the prepayment of registration and airfare, the University permits the prepayment of hotel/motel accommodations and meals for employees in connection with student/athletic group travel.

C. Ensure all pre-approvals are obtained prior to making any pre-payments for travel.

## **PETTY CASH FOR STUDENT TRAVEL**

A. Petty Cash may be advanced for student travel expenses. To receive petty cash for student (individual or group) travel, an encumbrance (PCSH) is submitted. Checks are issued for petty cash requests in excess of \$1,000. Normally, the approved encumbrance must be received by the Accounts Payable Clerk a minimum of five (5) working days prior to the date the funds are needed. Petty cash amounts for \$1,000 or less will be distributed in cash. The funds (either check or cash) may be obtained by a full-time University employee at the Head Cashier's window in Angle Hall between the hours of 8:00 and 11:00 A.M. or 1:30 and 3:00 P.M.

B. Upon completion of the trip/event, any funds not used, along with full documentation of funds expended ([Form 48](#)), "Petty Cash Voucher," signed by the University employee; a list of the names of all students involved; a copy of the document authorizing participation in said trip/event; and all receipts) must be turned in to the Head Cashier by a full-time employee within two (2) working days after the completion of the trip/event during the specified hours outlined.

## **NON-MANDATORY PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES**

An employee may request University funding for non-mandatory travel for professional development. If the employee's supervisor deems such travel beneficial to JSU, the institution may agree to fund all or part of allowable expenses, in accordance with state regulations. When funding is approved at less than 100%, the traveler must acknowledge prior to the trip that he/she will be personally responsible for the portion of the trip's cost not covered by the institution. The institution's participation and the traveler's acknowledgment will be documented through the pre-approval and expense report process in JSU's travel system.

## **GENERAL TRAVEL REGULATIONS**

- A. Personal Deviations or Interruptions.** Travel interruptions or deviations for personal reasons will not be reimbursed. However, if the interruption or deviation of the travel is for a business purpose, or a natural phenomenon (such as a snowstorm), the travel modification may be approved for reimbursement with appropriate supporting documentation.
- B. Gratuity Limits.** Gratuities for meals are limited to a maximum of 20%.
- C. Alcoholic Beverages.** Purchase of alcohol will not be reimbursed.
- D. Air-Fare-in-Lieu of Mileage.** Reimbursement for round trip mileage cannot exceed the cost of a round-trip flight. Reimbursement will be determined by which is lower, the current mileage rate for use of a private automobile or the lowest economy airfare. Complete [Form 21](#) to document amount claimed.

- E. Filing of Travel Reimbursement Claims.** A claim for travel reimbursement must be filed within sixty (60) days of the conclusion of the travel. If the claim is received after sixty (60) days, the travel reimbursement is subject to tax withholding.
- F. Missing, Lost, or Misplaced Receipts.** In the event that a required receipt is missing, lost, or misplaced, an employee may complete [Form 25](#) and include it with the travel reimbursement claim in lieu of the receipt.
- G. Meals Provided for Others.** Meals for persons other than the individual on travel status should be submitted in accordance with [Policy IV:03:05](#)Meals/Refreshments.
- H.** University Motor Pool Vehicles should be used when it results in lower travel costs to the University.
- I.** Employee Discipline: Any employee who submits false or misleading expense reports will be subject to discipline up to and including termination.

## **RESPONSIBILITY**

The Senior Vice President for Finance & Administration and CFO is responsible for this policy.

## **EVALUATION OF THE POLICY**

This policy will be reviewed at least every five (5) years.