



## 6.2.14 Travel Reimbursement

Chapter 6 - Fiscal	Original Effective Date: May 2000
Section: 6.2 Travel Policies and Procedures	Date Last Reviewed: December 2022
Responsible Entity: Vice President and Chief Financial Officer	Date Last Revised: December 2022

### I. Purpose

To establish cost-effective business travel reimbursement practices and ensure appropriate use of funds.

### II. Scope

This policy applies to all UT Health San Antonio staff members, faculty members, learners, and official visitors (e.g., consultants, job candidates) seeking reimbursement for expenses incurred while traveling on official business.

### III. Policy

#### A. General Requirements

##### 1. Reimbursements

- a. Reimbursement for business travel expenses is obtained by submitting a request to the Office of Accounting within thirty (30) days of the last day of a trip. Payments are generally issued within seven to ten working days of the time the completed and approved reimbursement request is received in the Office of Accounting.
- b. An individual may not accept a reimbursement or advance for the same travel expense from more than one source. If an individual receives an advance or reimbursement for travel expenses from a person/entity other than UT Health San Antonio that is less than the total amount of expense incurred, they may seek reimbursement from UT Health San Antonio for the remainder of the expenses.
- c. Reimbursement of travel or entertainment expenses must be reasonable and approved by the supervisor or department head (or designee) of the individual being reimbursed. A subordinate of the traveler being reimbursed is not an appropriate approver.

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- d. Persons approving travel requests have the discretion to limit travel expenses provided the individual is notified in advance of the planned travel.
  - e. Discretion must be used to ensure gratuities and tips are provided only in appropriate circumstances and for appropriate amounts not to exceed 20% of the allowable amount charged excluding taxes, service charges and the like.
  - f. No travel expenses may be reimbursed from petty cash.
2. State and Non-State Rates for Travel Expenses
    - a. For state appropriations (in fund 14001), travel expenses are not allowable.
    - b. For state appropriations grants and tobacco funds (14107, 14215, 15xxx, 2305x, 2306x, 420xx), business travel lodging and meals may be charged at Government Services Administration (GSA) per diem rates. See the [GSA website](#) to determine rates.
    - c. Generally, for non-state funds, the total expenses for meals and lodging may not exceed the maximum of \$450 per day per diem rate. Travel expenses for meals and lodging in excess of \$450 may be charged to practice plan funds (22xxx) and general designated funds (23xxx, except for tobacco funds in 23055-23066).
    - d. Travel expenses for meals and lodging in excess of state grant and tobacco fund rates may be charged to non-state funds (Federal and Local government, Auxiliary Enterprise, Practice Plan, Designated, or Current Restricted funds).
    - e. If an employee's travel expenses are less than the GSA per diem rates, then reimbursement for actual expenses should be requested.
  3. Claiming Extra Per Diem

An employee may be permitted to claim per diem for extra travel time if both the following conditions are met:

- a. The amount of the additional travel expenses (including meals and lodging at the duty point city) plus airfare is less than or equal to:
    - i. The UT contract airfare if one exists between the employee's designated headquarters and the duty point city, or
    - ii. The full coach airfare between the employer's designated headquarters and the duty point city if no UT contract airfare exists in that market.
  - b. It is in the best interest of the state to allow the employee to be absent from duties for the extra travel time. The department must determine that it is an efficient use of state resources to have an employee away from headquarters for the extra time.
4. Documenting Use of Travel Contractors
    - a. Any reimbursement request covering travel for which airfare, car rental or lodging was used must be accompanied by a [State of Texas Travel Contractor](#)

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[Usage Statement form](#) to ensure that state and The University of Texas System documentation requirements are met.

- b. Use of travel contractors is to be indicated with check marks on the form with brief explanations, as necessary.
5. Direct Payment for Non-Employee Lodging Expenses
    - a. In order to facilitate the payment process for incoming travelers, including consultants, prospective employees and other official visitors, the Office of Accounting will accept requests from departments seeking direct payment to hotels for related lodging expenses.
    - b. An in-coming traveler does not include UT Health San Antonio employees, faculty, residents, interns, fellows, and students. These individuals must use the travel reimbursement process.
    - c. Allowable charges on direct billings are lodging, local taxes (the University is exempt from state taxes as a State of Texas institution of higher education), meals, and business telephone calls as long as the charges are in conformity with prescribed University travel regulations. Any other incidental expenses billed will not be paid directly. Departments will be responsible for settling disputes with the hotel regarding any unpaid balances.
    - d. A Prior Approval form must be completed in advance. The prior approval number must be referenced on the reimbursement request and the Prior Approval form must indicate that lodging will be paid directly to the hotel.
    - e. All arrangements with area hotels are subject to and governed by UT Health San Antonio travel regulations.
  6. Paying for Others
    - a. In general, an individual on official business travel should only pay for their own travel expenses. However, in certain situations, there may be a legitimate reason for an individual to pay the travel expenses of another official business traveler. Reimbursement of these expenses paid for another official business traveler is permitted when there is a reasonable business purpose to do so (e.g., a student traveler does not have a credit card to charge lodging expenses on a university business trip, or to pay incidental prospective employee expenses).
    - b. The reimbursement to an official business traveler for expenses incurred for another traveler on university business is permitted when charged to non-state funds.
    - c. Reimbursements for paying the travel expenses for others may not be charged to state funds, tobacco funds or state grants (fund codes 14xxx, 15xxx, 23055-23066, 420xx).

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### 7. Cancellation Charges

UT Health San Antonio will pay or reimburse an individual for a cancellation charge related to a lodging or transportation expense that was paid in advance to obtain lower rates and is incurred because the individual was unable to use the lodging or transportation because of an illness or a personal or work emergency.

### B. Restrictions

The following travel related costs may not be reimbursed from state, grant or other institutional funds:

1. Gratuities or tips of any amount from state funds, which includes tobacco funds and state grants (fund codes 14xxx, 15xxx, 23055-23066. 420xx).
2. Gratuities or tips in excess of 20% on non-state funds.
3. Personal phone calls.
4. Personal cleaning and laundry services or clothing rental.
5. Baby-sitting services.
6. Personal entertainment fees of any kind including purchase/rental of alcoholic beverages, videotapes, movies and/or games; and
7. Excess baggage charges for personal belongings.

### C. Special Circumstances

In each of the following special circumstances, the Vice President and Chief Financial Officer must approve the reimbursement.

#### 1. Employees with Disabilities

UT Health San Antonio allows for reimbursement of a traveler with a disability for attendant care and other expenses incurred while traveling inside or outside UT Health San Antonio's designated headquarters if approved in advance on a case-by-case basis by the Office of the Vice President and Chief Financial Officer. An explanation of the circumstances must be included on the travel request.

#### 2. Illness or Personal Emergency

UT Health San Antonio will pay or reimburse an individual for travel expenses from a duty point to the individual's designated headquarters if they must return before official University business is completed because of illness, personal or work emergency.

#### 3. Attending Funerals

UT Health San Antonio will pay or reimburse an individual for travel expenses incurred while attending the funeral of an individual who was a state employee, a board member, or a legislator if:

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- a. It is determined that the individual's attendance at the funeral is appropriate under the circumstances, and
  - b. The expense is paid or reimbursed only to the extent it would have been paid or reimbursed had it been incurred while conducting official University business.
4. Inability to Perform Official Business due to Natural Disaster or Natural Occurrence

UT Health San Antonio will pay or reimburse an employee for travel expenses the employee incurs as a result of attempting to conduct official University business if:

- a. The employee is unable to conduct the business because of a natural disaster or other natural occurrence; and
  - b. The expense would be payable or reimbursable had the official University business been conducted.
5. Death of an Employee
- a. UT Health San Antonio will pay or reimburse the expense of preparing and transporting the remains and personal property of an employee who dies while conducting official University business outside the employee's designated headquarters, either to the employee's designated headquarters or to another location designated by the executor or administrator of the employee's estate.
  - b. If the remains and personal property are transported to a location other than the designated headquarters, then the amount of UT Health San Antonio's payment or reimbursement may not exceed the amount that would have been paid or reimbursed had they been transported to the headquarters.
6. Medical Care for Traveling Employees

UT Health San Antonio will pay or reimburse an employee for travel expenses the employee incurs while obtaining medical care for the employee if:

- a. The expense is incurred outside the employee's designated headquarters.
- b. The purpose of the employee traveling outside the employee's designated headquarters is to conduct official University business.
- c. Waiting to receive the care until the employee returns to the employee's designated headquarters would be unreasonable; and
- d. The expense is paid or reimbursed only to the extent it would have been paid or reimbursed had it been incurred while conducting official University business.

### D. Payment Mechanisms

1. A travel expense report is to be completed in the following situations:

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- a. Reimbursement of travel expenses to a UT Health San Antonio employee; or
  - b. Reimbursement of registration, workshop, and all other attendance fees to a UT Health San Antonio employee.
2. A cash advance should only be used to request cash advances for UT Health San Antonio employees. Refer to Institutional Handbook of Operating Policies (IHOP) Policy [6.2.11 Travel Advances](#) for additional guidance.
  3. A Payment Request is to be submitted for reimbursement of travel-related costs to these specific groups or in the following situations:
    - a. Official visitors, prospective employees, or other State of Texas employees.
    - b. UT Health San Antonio students, residents, fellows, or interns.
    - c. New UT Health San Antonio employees not yet on payroll that are traveling to San Antonio to attend meetings and/or to set up an office or lab.
    - d. Non-travel registration (virtual) for conferences and other meetings.
    - e. Prepayment of registration, workshop, other attendance, and abstract fees for UT Health San Antonio employees, and
    - f. Prepayment of room deposit for UT Health San Antonio employees.

### E. Required Documentation (Receipts)

- a. Receipts are required when the following business travel expenses are incurred:
  - i. Rented or public transportation
  - ii. Lodging
  - iii. Registration, workshop, and other attendance fees; or
  - iv. Miscellaneous purchases (e.g., gas for rental cars, books, videos, abstracts, passport, visa, and inoculation fees for foreign travel, etc.).
- b. Required receipts that will be accepted include the following:
  - i. Airline passenger invoices with payment shown.
  - ii. Itemized hotel bills with payment shown.
  - iii. Car rental agreement/receipts.
  - iv. Taxi, shuttle, rail, etc. receipts.
  - v. Parking receipts.
  - vi. Charge or cash receipts or copies of checks or charge bill for gas purchases for rental cars, books, videos, abstracts, etc.
- c. If original receipts are not available, the following documentation is required, along with an explanation as to why the original receipt cannot be provided.

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### i. Airfare

A copy of the ticket with proof of payment (e.g., credit card statement, copy of cancelled check) and a certified statement from the traveler that reimbursement for the tickets has not been requested of any other person or entity.

### ii. Lodging

A copy of the itemize hotel bill (showing payments) and a certified statement from the traveler that reimbursement for the lodging has not been requested of any other person or entity.

### iii. Other

A copy of the receipt from the originator and a certified statement from the traveler describing the expense, the amount, and that reimbursement has not been requested of any other person or entity.

## IV. Definitions

*When used in this document, the following words have the meaning set forth below unless a different meaning is required by context.*

Designated Headquarters – the area within the boundaries of the city in which a state employee's place of employment is located. If an employee's place of employment is located within an unincorporated area, then the area within a five-mile radius of the place of employment is the employee's designated headquarters [Texas Government Code Section 660.002(7)].

Duty Point – the destination, other than a place of employment, to which a state employee travels to conduct official state business [Texas Government Code Section 660.002(9)].

Per Diem – a daily allowance for expenses based on a fixed amount per day to cover the cost of lodging and/or meals and all related taxes and gratuities as incurred. For domestic travel, per diem rates are established by the [GSA](#) (General Services Administration). Foreign rates are established by the U.S. State Department.

## V. Related References

For questions regarding this policy, contact Office of Accounting at [acctg-admin@uthscsa.edu](mailto:acctg-admin@uthscsa.edu) or 210-562-6230.

Office of Accounting - [Travel Reimbursement SharePoint Site](#)

Travel Services - [SharePoint Site](#)

Texas Comptroller's Office - guidance on business travel reimbursement, [TexTravel website](#)

**VI. Review and Approval History**

- A. The approving authority of this policy is the University Executive Committee.
- B. The review frequency cycle is set for three years following the last review date, a time period that is not mandated by regulatory, accreditation, or other authority.

<b>Effective Date</b>	<b>Action Taken</b>	<b>Approved By</b>	<b>Date Approved</b>
<b>05/2000</b>	Policy Origination		05/2000
<b>04/2019</b>	Policy Revision		04/2019
<b>12/2022</b>	Policy Revision	Executive Committee	12/2022