1310 – University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
Policy on Transportation Expenses

Policy Sections

Policy Statement
Reason for Policy
Exclusions
Special Situations
Procedures
Additional Information
Frequently Asked Questions
Related Data
Contacts
History

Responsible University Officer
Director of Systems and Operations

Responsible Unit
Systems and Operations

Policy Statement

University faculty, staff and students may be reimbursed for transportation expenses incurred while traveling on University business. Official University business occurs when the employee or other person is traveling to attend approved job-related training, work on behalf of, officially represent, or provide a service upon the University's request.

Travel that would not directly benefit the University will not be reimbursed. Costs of personal travel before or after days of business travel, excess costs, indirect routes, and services unnecessary, unjustified, or for the convenience or personal preference of the employee in the performance of official University business are
Transportation by vehicle

University travelers are encouraged to use a state-owned vehicle or a vehicle that is leased through a state contract. Rental vehicles are not to be used at University expense solely for the convenience or personal preference of the employee. If a state-owned vehicle or vehicle that is leased through a state contract is not available, reimbursement is permitted. See Policy 1302: Statutory Provisions and Maximum Rates for Travel.

Mileage is measured from the closer of either the duty station or point of departure to destination (and return). When traveling to/from RDU - to/from Chapel Hill, the trip is 18 miles each way or 36 miles total for the round-trip. Reimbursement for travel between the employee's duty station and the nearest airline terminal and for appropriate parking may be made by using either the car service (one round-trip fare), a taxi (one round-trip fare), or by private car (two round trips each at the statutory rate with no parking charge, or one round trip with parking charges). Reimbursement for travel to and from the airline terminal at the employee's destination may be made for car service, bus, commuter train, subway or taxi with appropriate receipts.

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

Local Mileage Expenses

Personal mileage reimbursements to an employee from university funds for business mileage within or between campus departments or between state/federal local agencies in the same locality as the employee's work station are only available as follows:
1. For EHRA and SHRA employees, when the round trip exceeds 20 miles or
2. For SHRA employees, when the employee is asked to drive their personal vehicle in an activity that is routine and reoccurring part of the employee's work assignment.

Rental Vehicles

Travelers should choose the most economical means of refueling the rental vehicle, including self-refueling the rental vehicle before returning it to the rental agency. Prepaying for fuel as part of the rental contract when a substantial number of miles will be driven (well more than 100 miles) is acceptable when self-refueling the vehicle is not a viable solution, due to the time or safety constraints. Gas receipts for refueling the rental vehicle from a commercial gas station or rental agency are required for reimbursement.

Rental Vehicle Insurance within the United States

When proof of insurance is needed, travelers should obtain a rental car insurance card from their department or by contacting the University's Insurance and Risk Management Office.

The following travel expenses related to car rentals are not reimbursable to the traveler by the University:
1. Collision Damage Waiver/Loss Damage Waiver - Since the State of North Carolina Motor Vehicle Insurance Policy provides rental physical damage coverage as noted above, this insurance coverage is not required for state employees. The University will not reimburse a traveler choosing to pay for this type of coverage.
2. Personal Accident Insurance - Acceptance of this insurance by the traveler will result in an additional fee or surcharge and is considered personal insurance. The University will not reimburse choosing to pay for this coverage.

Rental Vehicle Insurance Outside of the United States
When traveling outside the State of North Carolina Motor Vehicle Insurance Policy Coverage Territory (United States, Canada, Puerto Rico, the United States Virgin Islands, and other territories/possessions of the United States of America) the employee may purchase Collision Damage Waiver/Loss Damage Waiver coverage and departments may reimburse the traveler for the cost of this insurance coverage.

Transportation by air
Travelers on University business are encouraged to use commercial air transportation if possible. Transportation by commercial airlines is limited to actual coach fare, substantiated by receipt.

Business class airfare is allowed in the following circumstances:

1. Domestic travel by business or first class is permitted if the traveler is accompanying a major donor or dignitary who is traveling by business or first class and if the funding source of the travel is an allowable funding source.

2. International travel by business class is allowable if the length of a non-stop segment is at least 8 hours in duration.

3. Other international travel by business class is allowable if the facts and circumstances of the travel warrant it.

4. The first class or business class airfare for senior University administrators must be approved in advance by the appropriate individual as described in University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill Policy 1303 and by the department head for other University employees and substantiated by written documentation.

Employees traveling by common carrier to conduct official University business, who travel to their destination earlier than necessary and/or delay their return to avail the University of reduced transportation rates, may be reimbursed subsistence if, in the opinion of the department head, the amount saved in transportation costs due to the early and/or delayed travel is greater than the amount expended in salary and additional subsistence.

Documentation of cost savings and prior written approval of the department head is required.

If personal time is attached to the trip, you will need to provide a comparison quote from the same airfare provider for a direct flight on the business dates.

Fly America Act
All out-of-state and foreign travel funded by contracts or grants requires prior agency approval. According to the Fly America Act, federal contracts and grants require the use of U.S.-flagged airline carriers when leaving and returning to the United States unless otherwise approved by the sponsoring agency. You must travel on a U.S. carrier as far as possible. Additional cost for U.S. carrier flights is not sufficient justification to fly on foreign carriers. Please note that the same rules apply to a foreign visitor's flights when supported by federal funds.

Exceptions to the Fly America Act
There are strictly limited circumstances in which an exception to the Fly America Act may apply and the use of a foreign carrier is allowable. For example:
• Airfare is not funded by U.S. Federal funds
• Open skies agreement
• Other exceptions, as listed in the FAA Waiver Checklist

For more information, see the GSA Fly America Act webpage.

**Travel by Non-Commercial Aircraft**

Requests for travel on non-commercial aircraft may be proposed for approval based on the circumstances of the trip. Non-commercial aircraft includes the following forms of travel:

1. Travel by a senior University administrator or other University employee on a Medical Air Operations plane is permitted, but is subject to the Medical Air Operations Use Policy, related NC AHEC policies and this policy. In addition, travel on a Medical Air Operations plane should not be used in any instance that would involve "deadhead" miles. Approval is required in the same manner as transportation by other means.

2. Travel by a senior University administrator or other University employee on a donor-owned plane does not require pre-approval under these policies; however, such travel shall be reported for information only to the individual responsible for approving the senior University administrator's or other University employee's travel.

3. Travel by a senior university administrator or other University employee by private charter is strongly discouraged but may be proposed for prior approval in unusual circumstances. At a minimum, documentation shall include confirmation that a commercial flight 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, and the use of a charter flight is necessary because of unusual travel circumstances. Approval by the Chancellor or the person designated to do so by the Chancellor is required.

**Transportation by other means**

University business travelers may be reimbursed for traveling by train at the "coach" fare. The actual cost of Pullman fare is reimbursable when overnight travel is required. The individual must provide justification showing the travel by train was the least expensive method of transportation.

The actual cost of taxi and car service fares is reimbursable when required for travel on University business. Receipts are required when one-way trips exceed $20.00.

Requests for reimbursement of taxi fares should identify each trip by point of origin, destination, and purpose. *Taxi fares are not reimbursable for intra-city transportation*, except in emergencies when no less expensive mode of transportation is available within a reasonable period.

No common carrier or public transportation fares are reimbursable on a trip on which an employee uses a state-owned vehicle, unless it is shown that such transportation was more economical in a particular situation.

**Reason for Policy**

This policy is to ensure compliance with State travel regulations.

**Exclusions**

None
**Special Situations**

**Daily Commute.** Reimbursement may not be made for commuting between an employee's point of departure and his duty station.

**Cancellations.** Penalties and charges resulting from the cancellation of airline reservations (or other travel reservations) shall be the department's obligation if the employee's travel has been approved in advance and the cancellation or change is made at the direction of and for the convenience of the department. If the cancellation or change is made for the personal benefit of the employee, it shall 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 circumstance beyond the control of the employee, the department will be obligated to pay the penalties and charges.

**Frequent Flyer Miles.** Frequent flyer miles earned by a state employee while traveling on state business at state expense are the property of the state. Frequent flyer miles accumulated by an individual state employee during previous state business trips should, to the extent possible, be used by the state employee that accumulated the frequent flyer miles while traveling on future state business trips.

**Coupons or Certificates for Reduced Air Fare.** Coupons or certificates for reduced air fare, if acquired by a state employee while traveling on state business at state expense, are the property of the State and should be used, to the extent possible, by the state employee on future state business trips.

**Procedures**

None

**Additional Information**

**Frequently Asked Questions**

Q: Can you give me some examples on how to calculate different mileage rates for various types of trips?
A. See **Policy 1302 Statutory Provisions and Maximum Rates for Travel and Procedure 1302.1 Excess Lodging Justification, Mileage Reimbursement for Trips** for guidance on this.

Q: I have a medical condition that causes me extreme discomfort when I sit for long periods. May I be reimbursed for upgraded airfare?
A: Yes, if you provide a doctor's note to your EEO ADA office for workplace accommodation and the medical document is no more than two years old for upgraded travel requests.

Q: I prefer to get a rental car at the airport to drive to my hotel which is also the conference site. Having the rental car will allow me to get out at night and take meals away from the hotel. Will I be reimbursed for the rental car expense?
A: A reimbursement for rental car expenses will be not made to anyone whose lodging receipt indicates the person roomed at the same hotel in which the conference was being held. A reimbursement will not be made without written justification to explain the benefit the University derived from the rental of a car.

Q: I rented a car for my business trip, and the agency added insurance. Why is this not reimbursable?
A: As a University employee, you are covered by the State's master policy. Additional insurance costs are strictly prohibited by state regulation.

Q: What if I am leaving from or returning to an airport other than the one closest to my primary workstation?
This business trip is always attended by a member of our staff yearly and this year [INSERT EMPLOYEE/FACULTY NAME] represented our department. This trip is required for UNC-Chapel Hill to maintain certification or accreditation. The primary purpose of this trip is for [INSERT FACULTY NAME] to attend this conference, which contributes importantly to [INSERT FACULTY NAME]'s research agenda. I am mandating this trip by [INSERT EMPLOYEE/FACULTY NAME] for the purpose of business.

A: You will need to submit both the cost of the actual airfare and the airfare to/from your duty station. The University will pay the lesser.

Q: How are special charges with commercial airlines reimbursed?
A: Special charges by commercial airlines, including baggage fees, seating accommodations within the coach class section, or airport service charges are allowable charges and may be paid/reimbursed as a part of air transportation expenses. However, the number of bags should be reasonable in relation to the business purpose. For example, if the number of bags checked exceeds 2, the purpose of the trip should justify the additional bags.

Q: If a flight is canceled and the traveler used personal frequent flyer miles, can I get the amount reimbursed?
A: No. If personal frequent flyer miles are used to purchase a flight, the fare is not reimbursable if the flight is canceled. We recommend using our CABS system instead of personal frequent flyer miles.

Q: My flight was canceled, and the Airline company would only give me credit for a future flight. Can I have the University reimburse me?
A: No. The traveler has to take the credit and use it on their next business trip.

Q: How do I document my manager's confirmation that the trip is primarily for business?
A: The signed statement of confirmation or email from your manager (including the justification) should be uploaded into Web Travel or ConnectCarolina. If your department has an established travel form that shows managerial approval, that form may be used.

Q: What are examples of acceptable managerial primary proof of business?
A: Examples:

• This business trip is always attended by a member of our staff yearly and this year [INSERT EMPLOYEE/FACULTY NAME] represented our department
• This trip is required for UNC-Chapel Hill to maintain certification or accreditation.
• The primary purpose of this trip is for [INSERT FACULTY NAME] to attend this conference, which contributes importantly to [INSERT FACULTY NAME]'s research agenda.
• I am mandating this trip by [INSERT EMPLOYEE/FACULTY NAME] for the purpose of business.

Q: What constitutes management in the case of faculty?
A: Faculty should gain the approval of the department chair, or where there is no chair, the dean of the school.

Q: In the case of travel for Senior University Administrators that includes both business and personal elements, who confirms the nature of the travel as business?
A: Confirmation of travel as being business in nature is handled by the administrator's supervisor or the person designated to do so, as is the case for the authorization of travel by Senior University Administrators under Procedure 1303.1.

## Related Data

- **Travel Services Airfare Request**
- **State of North Carolina Budget Manual, Section 5**
- **1402 - University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill Policy on Insurance for Rental Vehicles**
- **NC Department of Administration Term Contracts for Rental Car**
History

Revised:

Mar. 19, 2018: Changed "obligated" to "encouraged" on paragraph 1 under "Transportation by Vehicle." Deleted all references to mileage calculations and rate schedules and referred to Policy 1302, where these items are housed. Deleted questions relating to mileage rate calculations and non-employee mileage filing.

Feb. 7, 2018: New mileage rates for 2018 were updated to the IRS standards of 54.5 cents per mile for the trip up to 100 miles, and then 33 cents per mile for trips more than 100 miles. EHRA/SHRA employees can claim local mileage expenses under certain restrictions, as now specified in the policy. Rental car insurance cards need to be used as issued by the University's Insurance and Risk Management Office: additional insurance coverage other than what the university has stipulated for domestic travel will not be reimbursed. International travelers may purchase collision damage waiver/loss damage insurance and may be reimbursed. Commercial airline travel is limited to coach fare and substantiated by a receipt to receive reimbursement. If personal time is attached to a trip, the traveler must provide a comparison quote from the same airfare provider for a direct flight on business dates. Frequent flyer miles earned while doing state business must be used for future state business matters, to the extent possible. Any coupons or certificates earned while on state business is the State's and should be used by the employee for future state trips. Special charges are allowable as stated in Policy 1310, however, excess costs that are not reasonable in relation to the business purpose require written justification and approval to be reimbursed. Cancelled flights that the airline company gives credit for will not be reimbursed. Three FAQs concerning these updates were added. Contact information updated.

October 10, 2017: Clarified FAQ on travel days and mileage rates to indicate that a one-day trip would only be granted 53.5 cents for the first 100 miles.

June 22, 2017: Added a FAQ concerning business meetings which require participant to stay over weekend and the need for, or exception to, advanced management approval.

May 17, 2017: Removed personal vehicle mileage question. Added definition of travel days to first FAQ.

May 17, 2017: Updated Personal Vehicle mileage question, lowering the previous 34 cent mileage reimbursement of 2016 (if choosing to use a personal vehicle over state car) to 17 cents per mile at the appropriate 2017 medical/moving mileage rate.

April 26, 2017: Updated exclusions to include expenses paid by third party. Updated FAQs to reflect new example of such.

February 17, 2017: Updated miles per day of travel stipulation to the mileage reimbursement sections and added a FAQ to illustrate how mileage rates should be applied.

February 2, 2017: Changed terminology from "State owned or Enterprise" to "state owned vehicle or vehicle leased through a state contract"
January 6, 2017: Updated mileage reimbursement rates, dropping the mileage reimbursement from 54 cents a mile to 53.5 cents per mile, and from 19 cents per mile for every mile exceeding 100 to 17 cents per mile for every mile exceeding 100.

December 6, 2016: Updated mileage reimbursement rates by reducing round trip reimbursement for more than 100 miles without state vehicle to be 19 cents per mile from the previous rate of 34 cents a mile.

May 27, 2016: Added Airfare Request link.

January 11, 2016: Updated mileage reimbursement rates and round trip mileage.

April 2, 2015: Clarified point of departure in Travel by Personal Vehicle and Special Situations section.

January 8, 2014: Updated mileage reimbursement rate.

January 9, 2014: Updated mileage reimbursement rate.

May 1, 2013: Added information to Transportation by Air section and Special Situations for senior University officials.

January 4, 2013: Updated allowed mileage rate.

July 1, 2011: Rate change.

June 6, 2011

All revision dates:


Attachments: No Attachments

Approval Signatures

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<th>Step Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>Publication by Office of Ethics and Policy</td>
<td>Matthew Teal: University Program Specialist</td>
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