

WESTFIELD STATE UNIVERSITY

TRAVEL PROCEDURES

REQUEST TO TRAVEL

1. A Request to Travel Form (“RTF”) must be fully completed and approved documenting proposed travel, **prior** to the initiation of travel, to encumber the funds needed to pay for the travel. It must be **received** in the Procurement Department at least three business days in advance of the departure date.

“Zero” dollar RTFs are to be filed and retained in the using department’s office and not sent to the Procurement Department.

2. The fully completed RTF must include:
 - a. All anticipated University related travel expenses. Such expenses include registration fees, hotels, airfare, meals, vehicle rental, taxis, parking, tolls and/or mileage, and any other expenses to be paid by the University. All costs should be listed identifying any expenses to be paid on the University procurement card.
 - b. Supporting documentation (i.e. a copy of the official conference/workshop agenda, registration form, or program) if applicable.
 - c. Signature of traveler.
 - d. Approval (signature) by the appropriate Department Chair or Supervisor, after assuring appropriate benefit to the University. A subordinate or equal nonsupervisory individual is not to approve an RTF for a superior except as indicated below.
 - e. Final approval (signature) by the area Vice President or employee with Department Head Signature Authority (DHSA) for the assignment of a funding source, verification that the dollar amount approved is available and that expenses are appropriate and reasonable.
 - i. In the instance of Vice Presidents or direct reports to the President, the President must approve the RTF. In the case of the President, by the Board of Trustee Chair and the Vice President for Administration & Finance.
3. Procurement shall review the RTF for compliance with University policy, encumber the approved funds in the Banner database and assign a travel number (called an E#).
4. A copy of the RTF listing the assigned travel number (E#) will be returned to the traveler’s department. This number must be referenced when submitting the request for travel reimbursement upon the traveler’s return.

5. Employees traveling without prior approval of the RTF and the issuance of an E# will not be reimbursed and will not be covered by any University/Commonwealth insurance.
6. A copy of the fully executed RTF will be provided to the appropriate Vice President or employee with DHSA. In the case of the President, the copy will be provided to the Chair of the Board of Trustees and the VP of Administration and Finance.

REIMBURSEMENT

1. To receive reimbursement for travel expenses, the traveler must complete and submit a Travel Reimbursement Form (“TRF”) and the Financial Accounting Office must **receive** it within 45 calendar days from the final day of business travel. The TRF requires the signature of the Department Chair or Supervisor along with the traveler’s signature to ensure reimbursement is consistent with the RTF.
2. The TRF must include the E# assigned to the traveler on his/her approved RTF as well as the exact times of day for the departure and arrival to and from home for meal allowance purposes.
3. All reimbursable expense receipts (transportation, lodging, etc.), except for meals, for specific travel must be attached to the TRF. If no receipt is submitted, no reimbursement will be made. A receipt is defined as **original** proof of payment showing what was obtained, for whom, when, where and at what cost. For receipts missing that are less than twenty-five dollars, a no receipts form must be completed and accompany the TRF. The form can be found on myWestfield>Documents>Administration and Finance>Travel Information.
4. For any conference or workshop travel, proof of attendance or documentation of paid registration is required for any travel reimbursement.
 - a. Photocopied receipts cannot be accepted.
 - b. A credit card receipt listing only the total cost cannot be accepted. A corresponding itemized receipt detailing the individual expenditures must accompany the credit card receipt.

Meals Allowance:

Standard Meal Allowance Guidelines are used for meal reimbursement when travel extends beyond working hours. The exception to this is when meals are included as part of a conference or meeting registration fee regardless if the meal is consumed or not.

Standard Meal Allowance Guidelines:

Full Travel Status: Absent from home more than 24 hours:

Persons shall be reimbursed for meals when on full travel status; (when absent from his/her home on assignment for more than 24 hours as follows:)

Travel Begins:

Before 6:00 a.m.
 Between 6:00 a.m. & 11:59 a.m.
 Between noon & 6:00 p.m.

Entitled To:

Breakfast, lunch, dinner
 Lunch, dinner
 Dinner

Travel Ends:

Between 6:00 a.m. & 11:59 a.m.
Between noon & 6:00 p.m.
After 6:00 p.m.

Entitled To:

Breakfast
Breakfast, lunch
Breakfast, lunch, dinner

Partial Travel Status: Absent from home less than 24 hours:

Travel Begins:

Two hours before working hours

Entitled To:

Breakfast

Travel Ends:

Two hours after working hours

Entitled To:

Dinner

Meal Allowance Rates:

Meal allowances for eligible meals are paid based on Fiscal Year 2024 US GSA federal standard rates. The rates are \$13 for Breakfast, \$15 for Lunch, and \$26 for Dinner. These rates apply to all employees, benefitted or contracted, and regardless of bargaining unit. The rates are not tied to inflation or adjustments to the federal rates.

Business Meal Guidelines:

Please refer to the University Business Expenses Policy (0300), which specifies business meal and gratuity guidelines.

Mileage:

1. Mileage will be reimbursed at the standard mileage rate established by the Internal Revenue Service.
2. Mileage calculations are based on the shortest distance from the University to the destination and back to the University. Exceptions that may be made for travel that begins and/or ends at home:

On a working day, mileage reimbursement will be calculated on the round trip miles required to reach the destination, less the employee's normal roundtrip commute.

Example 1: An employee's normal work commute is 30 miles round trip; the employee drives to a training that is 50 miles round trip. The employee is reimbursed for the 20 miles that exceed the normal work commute.

Example 2: An employee's normal work commute is 30 miles roundtrip; the employee drives from home to a training that is 30 miles, from the training to the University 40 miles, then 15 miles back home. The employee is reimbursed for the 55 miles that exceed the normal work commute.

On a non-working day, mileage will be calculated from home.

3. Mileage reimbursement submission must include destination, purpose, dates of travel and a direction page from MapQuest, Google, etc. indicating destination and distance. Failure to submit these materials will result in non- reimbursement. If mileage is submitted for numerous in-state travel dates, a separate sheet may be attached to the TRF.

Conference/Workshop Registration:

1. The conference or workshop registration fee is authorized for University employees only.
2. Additional fees for business related conference events are permitted only with prior approval and with clear documentation of business purpose and benefit to the University.

Hotel Accommodations:

1. Travelers shall contact the Campus Travel Manager to book hotel accommodations.
2. Travelers should stay at a reasonably priced hotels and or take advantage of special conference rates. Stays at luxury hotels are not permitted. Typical reasonably priced hotels would include the following: Hilton Hotels, Hampton Inn, Courtyard by Marriott, Four Points by Sheraton.
3. Travelers should request a single room rate and special rates, such as state government or university rates.
4. Travelers are encouraged to take advantage of reduced rates by making reservations early.
5. Traveler must provide the Financial Accounting Office with a vendor number or a completed W9 form for payments made directly to the hotel.
6. Internet access charges will only be reimbursed with approval and justification from the department head and area Vice President.

Airfare:

1. Travelers shall contact the Campus Travel Manager to book airfare accommodations.
2. Travelers are encouraged to take advantage of reduced rates by making reservations early.
3. Travelers may travel at an economy coach class (or equivalent) which allows pre-assigned seats. Not all classes of travel are equivalent but it is reasonable to allow travelers to ensure they have a pre-assigned seat before arriving at the airport. While this is not a requirement, it is allowable. Travelers may also choose an economy level of service without pre-assigned seats, if that is their preference.
4. Care must be taken to avoid changes or cancellation of airline travel. In the event of an unavoidable cancellation or the rescheduling of a trip, the unused airline ticket should be used to fund a future trip rather than purchase a new ticket.

Automobile Rental:

1. Travelers shall utilize the University recommended vendor only: Enterprise/National Car Rental. All vendor information is listed on myWestfield>Documents>Administration and Finance>Travel Information.
2. Rental cars will be reimbursed only if deemed absolutely necessary and it requires preapproval by the area Vice President or employee with DHSA.

Travel Advance Payment Form:

If necessary, payment may be made to the traveler or specified vendor prior to the date of departure for the following expenses:

1. Prepayment or deposit for workshop or conference registration.
2. Airfare.
3. A one night deposit for hotel accommodations.
4. 75% of the predetermined meal allowance for trips of five consecutive days or more.

In order to receive advance payment:

1. A Travel Advance Payment Form ("TAPF") must be submitted with acceptable receipts or documentation.
2. In order to calculate advance meal allowance, the traveler must provide, all conference information indicating whether meals are included with the registration costs plus dates and times of departure and return.
3. If payment is made directly to a sponsor/institution/facilitator, the requestor must provide the Financial Accounting Office with a vendor number or a completed W-9 form for payments.

In the event that advanced payment is made and the employee does not attend the meeting or conference, Financial Accounting must be notified as soon as practicable. The employee will be responsible for reimbursing the University for the advanced payment. If the cancellation is the result of an unforeseen emergency or a compelling University need, exceptions can be made with the approval from the Vice President of Administration and Finance.

Travel Changes and Cancelations:

When changes are made to travel arrangements that result in lost deposits, cancelation fees, or additional expenditures, a description of the change and an explanation for it must accompany the P-Card statement or travel reimbursement form. Travelers who cancel reservations or miss connections are personally liable for lost deposits and costs incurred unless the change is required by the University, business-related, or a result of uncontrollable circumstances.

Exceptions:

Exceptions to the Travel Procedures may be limited, but nevertheless may be necessary in unanticipated or very unusual circumstances. All exceptions must be reasonable, both as to arrangements and amounts, and must be approved by the DHSA and the Director, Procurement and Administrative Services. Once the decision has been rendered it is considered final.