

Travel and Business Expense Policy Overview

The purpose of this slideshow is to offer an overview of the Travel and Expense Policy in addition to the Travel Card Policy. You are *strongly urged* to read both policies in their entirety. As an employee traveling on University business, you are required to know, understand, and abide by these policies.

If you have any questions or concerns, please ask a Physics Office Administrator.

What is Concur & do I have to use it?

- Concur is the University's electronic system for booking travel and completing travel and expense reimbursements. The system is only accessible to full-time University employees – this excludes all students.
- Yes, you will need to use this tool in order to be reimbursed for your travel and expense reimbursements.
- You do NOT need to use the tool to book your reservations.

What is the Travel Card & do I have to use it?

- The University Travel Card is a *corporate-liability* credit card, meaning that it is directly billed to and paid for by the University.
- All employees are REQUIRED to use the Travel Card when booking travel and incurring travel-related expenses using University funds. When not using University funds, employees are ENCOURAGED to use the Travel Card.
- University funds = all non-grants
- For the purposes of this requirement remember the following: “If my grant is paying for this, I don’t HAVE to use the travel card. However, if there is any chance that these charges might go to my IDC account or to the department, I HAVE to use the travel card.”
- The Travel Card ***should not*** be used to replace ordering or purchasing requests that are currently processed through the Department. Such usage can be viewed as misuse of the card.

Activating your Travel Card

- Travel cards will be distributed to full-time employees. Travel cards will not be given to any students.
- The Travel Card has chip technology for international transactions. The Card will be distributed with a PIN number. Do not lose this number.
- When activating your card, you will be asked for your billing address, zip code, and social security number. You will also need to provide your office phone number.
 - Billing information: 25 Buick Street, Boston, MA 02215
 - SSN is always your BUID without the “U.”

Booking Travel

- As a general rule, all transportation and lodging expenses for business travel by employees should be charged to the Travel Card.
- Air travel is reimbursable for economy airfare only. The traveler is personally responsible for airline upgrade fees. If it is difficult to pay for upgrades separately, you are allowed to charge the upgrade to your Travel Card and mark it as a “personal expense” at the time of your travel report completion.
- You are urged to book travel at least 14 days prior to your departure.

Booking Travel with Grant Funds

- When traveling under a federally sponsored project, airfare costs are subject to strict guidelines in accordance with the OMB Circular A-21.
- You are not allowed to charge Business Class or First Class accommodations to federally sponsored projects unless pre-approved by the sponsor.
- Travelers must comply with the Fly America Act and the Open Skies Agreement (next slide).
- Any unused airline tickets and cancelled trips cannot be charged to a grant; if this occurs the transaction must be charged to the department for future departmental benefit. Please contact the department if you have questions regarding cancelled trips.

Fly America Act & Open Skies Agreement

- If you are traveling internationally you must purchase your airfare on a US flag carrier. When purchasing the ticket, be sure that the code is that of a US airline.
- The Open Skies Agreement allows for exceptions when traveling internationally to EU countries, Australia, Switzerland, and Japan. The exception is that you do not need to be on a US flag carrier when flying DIRECTLY TO the listed EU countries, Australia, Switzerland, and Japan.
- If you are traveling internationally on DoD funds, you MUST fly a US flag carrier and you CANNOT take advantage of the Open Skies Agreement.
- **When in doubt, ask a Physics Office Administrator before booking!**

Extending Business Travel with Personal Travel

- You are allowed to extend your Business Travel with Personal Travel. *Please remember that extending your trip is at the discretion of your direct supervisor and must be approved prior to booking.*
- If you plan to extend your business trip with personal travel, *you MUST provide a price quote that is from the same day that you book your flight.* The quote must show the cost of airfare of a comparable flight returning at the end of the business trip. The same notion is true if you are conducting personal travel prior to your business travel.
- You will be responsible to pay for the difference in cost if adding a personal trip makes your airfare more expensive. If you do not provide a quote you might not be able to be reimbursed.

Rental Vehicles

- When renting a vehicle, domestically or internationally, the University will only cover the cost of renting the vehicle and associated rental expenses based on submitted receipts.
- The Travel Card should be used for all rental vehicle fees.
- When renting *domestically*, BU's insurance covers employees as well as the vehicle. DO NOT sign or initial additional insurance coverage as this will not be reimbursed.
- When renting *internationally*, if the Travel Card is not used to rent, both liability and collision coverage should be purchased for the vehicle.

Personal Vehicle Usage

- The use of a privately owned vehicle for University business purposes is authorized when it is cost effective. If the length and duration of travel is such that traveling by vehicle is more expensive than using economy-airfare, this option should not be used.
- Employees will be reimbursed at the current IRS rate per mile, plus properly documented parking fees and tolls.
- The traveler must hold a valid driver's license and registration on the vehicle being used. The traveler must also procure and maintain MA minimum statutory insurance limits of \$20K per person and \$40K per accident for bodily injury to others.

Lodging and Meals

- Travelers should use standard accommodations in reasonably priced hotels. You are required to cancel reservations in a timely manner to prevent “no show” charges. Unless there is a legitimate reason for a “no show” charge, this will not be a reimbursable expense.
- You must provide the original hotel for lodging expenses.
- All meal-related expenses, including those for business purposes should be based on actual cost and be supported by an itemized receipt.
- If the meal expenses include other people, you must declare who was present, the purpose of the meal, and the date.
- Reimbursement for the cost of alcohol is not allowed on Federal awards.

Travel Advances

- All requests for advances must be completed at least seven days prior to the scheduled trip departure.
- Employee advances will be processed through use of the Travel Card.
- Travel advances will be allowed on a limited exception basis.
- Student advances will be processed through the Travel Advance (paper) form. Please be sure to visit the Physics Office well in advance of your trip to request a Travel Advance.

Per Diem

- Use of per diem allowance for meals can be used when traveling on a grant. Only one method can be used for the entire duration of the trip.
- **Per diem allowances for lodging are no longer permitted.** The University Travel Card should be used to purchase all hotel stays. If you are a student and would like to have your lodging expenses prepaid, please be in touch with the front office staff.
- If you use a meal per diem on your reports, receipts are not required. However, if you use your travel card for meal purchases you cannot claim per diem.
- Domestic Per diem rates can be found on the GSA website.
- Foreign Per diem rates can be found on the US Department of State website (please remember to check that you are viewing the proper month).

International Travel Considerations

- In accordance with the University's International Travel Risk Policy, non-faculty researchers, research staff, administrative staff, and students are **REQUIRED** to register University-sponsored international travel with Global Programs. Faculty are encouraged to register travel prior to departure. Individuals must have adequate health insurance and emergency travel assistance services coverage.
 - Registration for faculty and staff is done through the Concur using the Travel Request functionality.
 - Students must register under the Global Programs website at <http://www.bu.edu/globalprograms/manage/international-travel/registry/>.
- The University provides emergency travel and evacuation assistance insurance to all faculty and staff traveling internationally on University business.
- Students are required to have both health insurance and emergency travel assistance coverage while abroad. If you are a student traveling internationally, please be in touch with the Business Manager as soon as possible.

Expense Reporting Process

- All expense reports must be submitted electronically using the University's expense management system. **All expenses must be reported within 30 days of returning from a trip or incurring a business expense.**
- Reimbursements for small amounts should be consolidated whenever possible. Multiple trips should be reported on one expense report.
- Generally, travel and business expense reimbursement requests should be held and not processed until the total reimbursement request per report is \$25 or more. If you are able to refrain from making an out-of-pocket expense for less than \$25, please see a Physics administrator.
- Expense reports should only be submitted after expenses have been incurred or when a traveler returns from a trip.
- Employee reimbursements can be processed as direct deposits or live checks. Student and guest reimbursements will be processed as live checks.

Submitting an Expense Report

- Reports must be submitted within 30 days of returning from a trip or incurring a business expense.
- If you are utilizing the Travel Card, you must allocate your expense to a report within 30 days of purchase even if it is for a future trip. To do so, you will likely need to create an expense report for a future trip.
- Unassigned charges can lead to a “hold” on your Travel Card. If you do not complete a report within 120 days, the expense will be considered taxable compensation to you and will be subject to the appropriate tax withholding.
 - Within 30 days of transaction date, cardholder will be notified via email to assign the transaction.
 - Within 45 days of transaction date, cardholder and financial approver will be notified via email.
 - Within 60 days of transaction date, notification will be sent to the appropriate Dean of Vice President.

Physics Expense Reporting Structure

- Expense report processing will be grouped by category:
 - Shaun and Nancy will be working together to process all reports. Please email either with questions.
- Employees will process expense reports using Concur (more information on next slide).
- Students and guests will be required to complete online reimbursement form, which can be found here: <http://sites.bu.edu/physics-resources/forms/reimbursement/>.

Physics Expense Reporting: Faculty & Staff

- Employees must add Shaun and Nancy as expense delegates (this process should have been completed by Travel on your behalf).
- Employees are responsible for completing their own travel and expense reports using Concur.
- Once your report is ready for review, **DO NOT SUBMIT THE REPORT**. Email Shaun or Nancy indicating that the report needs to be reviewed for processing. Once the report is reviewed, they will submit the report on your behalf.
- If you submit your report without it being reviewed by Shaun or Nancy, it will be returned to you.

Reporting Non-Travel Expenses

- If you are seeking a reimbursement for a non-travel expense, please choose the travel dates as the date of the transaction (you can use a single report for multiple transactions).
- Use the following classifications for such expenses:
 - Office supplies (will be prompted for additional justification)
 - Printing, photocopying, stationery
 - Books and periodicals
 - Conference registrations
 - Professional subscriptions and dues; memberships
 - Materials
 - Meetings
 - Alcohol

Receipt Documentation

- Itemized receipts must be electronically submitted for expenses totaling \$25 or more. You do not need to submit receipts for expenses less than \$25.
- If itemized receipts are not available, or lost, the traveler must complete a Missing Receipt Affidavit form documenting the date(s), location(s), person(s), purpose(s), and cost(s) of the expense item(s).
- **A credit card statement or cancelled check is not a valid form of documentation and will not be accepted to substantiate an expense.**

Approval Process

- Travelers may not approve reimbursement or processing of their own travel/business expenses.
- All completed and submitted expense reports will be automatically forwarded to the traveler's supervisor and all applicable financial approvers for review and approval.
- If a traveler is charging a federal grant and the PI of the grant is not the traveler's supervisor, administrators will manually route the expense report to the relevant PI for approval.