Travel Manual
A Guide to Mason Travel Policies and Procedures

Prepared by the Fiscal Services Training Department

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Introduction

This guide has been prepared as a resource for individuals traveling on official business at George Mason University. Travelers should refer to the Travel Office webpage on the Fiscal Services web site at http://fiscal.gmu.edu/travel/ before making any travel plans. The web site contains the most up to date information. The Commonwealth Accounting Policies and Procedures (CAPP) manual provides definitive guidance related to Commonwealth of Virginia regulations. Business travel expenses must be reasonable and necessary. The use of State funds to accommodate personal comfort, convenience or taste is not permitted. Travelers may contact the Travel Administrator at (703) 993-2623 or email travel@gmu.edu with questions.

Note: Policies, procedures and reimbursable amounts reflect Commonwealth of Virginia and George Mason University policies. Each unit, at the discretion of management, may require additional approvals and/or limit reimbursable amounts. These additional provisions must be applied uniformly to a class of employee (e.g., all employees or all faculty). For example, a unit may limit mileage reimbursement to overnight travel, limit meal reimbursement to actual expenses (up to the guideline amounts) or not reimburse passport issuance and renewal fees.

Travel Policy

University Policy Number 2101, Travel Authorization and Reimbursement Policies, provides for reimbursement of reasonable and necessary expenses incurred while traveling on university business. The full text of the policy is included as Appendix A of this manual, and is also available at the Fiscal Services web site: http://fiscal.gmu.edu. The following procedures have been developed to provide guidance to travelers when applying the policy to particular travel events.

Travel Request System (TRS)

All Travel Authorizations and Reimbursements (except for team/group travel) must be processed through Mason’s electronic travel resource, the Travel Request System (TRS) https://travel.gmu.edu/. The TRS must be accessed on the VPN network. Mileage, per diem rates and lodging maximums are embedded in the system, and calculations are performed based on travel dates and location(s) entered. The TRS design includes a delegate feature in which a traveler, department chair or supervisor may designate a Mason staff member to complete electronic Travel Authorizations and Reimbursements on behalf of others. Additional delegate information is available in Appendix F and at Getting Started.

The TRS is independent of Banner Finance. Travel Authorization and Reimbursement requests require electronic approvals completed in Banner Workflow. All approvers must have a valid Mason Net ID to approve documents. Documentation and receipts will be uploaded and attached to Travel Authorizations and Reimbursements. Required receipts must be uploaded and attached to the Travel Reimbursement in order for a traveler to be reimbursed for business related travel expenses. An Approver Quick Guide, TRS Quick Guide and additional
Information on electronic travel approvals and document upload procedures may be found on the TRS Resources web page.

Pre-trip Planning and Cost Estimates
The traveler and/or delegate must research the available transportation and lodging options prior to submitting a Travel Authorization. The most economical means of travel should be evaluated and the following items should be considered when planning a trip:

- Reason (business purpose) for Travel
- Dates of travel
- Destination(s)
- Transportation method(s)
- Lodging requirements
- Registration fees
- Meals
- Other anticipated requirements and expenses

All travel costs must be estimated and approved before the proposed trip is made. These estimates should include expenses to be billed directly to the university as well as expenses to be reimbursed to the traveler.

Special Accommodations
Mason complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The Office of Compliance, Diversity and Ethics must certify travelers requiring special accommodations due to physical or other disabilities prior to making trip arrangements.

Group Travel
Occasionally, faculty or staff members may supervise a group of students on a university-sponsored activity that requires travel outside of the local area. In these situations, the faculty or staff member should contact the Travel Office for guidance. Travel involving Mason employees only, does not qualify as group travel and individual travelers will be responsible for their own business travel expenses.

Travel Approval Process
Faculty and staff may not authorize and/or approve their own travel vouchers. If a previously approved trip is cancelled, due to extenuating circumstances beyond the traveler’s control, documentation will be required and must including a Travel Reimbursement approved by the Authorized Approver/Supervisor and Fund/Org Approver. Reimbursement will only be considered on a case-by-case basis as per Commonwealth Accounting Policies and Procedures (CAPP).

Domestic Travel
A domestic trip where (a) a complete estimate of all travel costs is not expected to exceed $1,000 and (b) lodging costs are not expected to exceed basic rates must be approved verbally in advance by the traveler’s Authorized Approver/Supervisor.
A domestic trip where (a) a complete estimate of all travel costs is expected to exceed $1,000 and/or (b) lodging costs are expected to exceed basic rates must be approved electronically in advance by the traveler’s Authorized Approver/Supervisor and the associated Fund/Org Approver. The traveler or delegate must complete a Travel Authorization in the Travel Request System and receive approval prior to travel.

International Travel

All international travel must be approved electronically in advance by the traveler’s Authorized Approver/Supervisor and the associated Fund/Org Approver. The traveler or delegate must complete a Travel Authorization and receive approval prior to travel.

Specific international destinations require advanced approval. When submitting a Travel Authorization to a location listed below, the document will automatically be routed to Research Development, Integrity and Assurance (RDIA) and/or The University Travel Advisory Committee (UTAC) for review and approval. Travelers/delegates should not make any travel preparations until RDIA approval has been received.

RDIA must approve, in advance, when international travel is:
- To a comprehensively embargoed country (e.g., Cuba, Iran, North Korea, Sudan and Syria).
  OR
- To a militarily embargoed country such as China or Afghanistan (complete list of these countries available at: http://pmddtc.state.gov/embargoed_countries/index.html) for a traveler who works with International Traffic in Arms Regulations (ITAR) data.

UTAC must approve, in advance, when international travel is:
- To countries or areas under U.S. Department of State Travel Advisories Level 3 and 4, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Level 3 warnings or countries under comprehensive economic sanctions.

Mason provides International Emergency Insurance for employees travelling on university business overseas. To obtain insurance coverage documents please complete the International Emergency Insurance Registration Form and submit to the Office of Risk Management at least two weeks prior to your trip.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Determining Factors</th>
<th>Form of Approval</th>
<th>Level of Approval</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total cost less than $1,000 AND Lodging at basic rate</td>
<td>Oral</td>
<td>Authorized Approver/Supervisor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total cost $1,000 or more OR Lodging above basic rate*</td>
<td>Electronic</td>
<td>Authorized Approver/Supervisor AND Fund/Org Approver</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Travel Policies and Procedures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>To a comprehensively embargoed country (e.g., Cuba, Iran, North Korea, Sudan and Syria) OR To a militarily embargoed country such as China or Afghanistan* for a traveler who works with data controlled by the International Traffic in Arms Regulations (ITAR)</th>
<th>Electronic</th>
<th>Traveler’s Authorized Approver/Supervisor AND Fund/Org Approver AND Office of Research Integrity and Assurance (RDIA) AND/OR University Travel Advisory Committee (UTAC)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Traveler is a nonimmigrant VISA holder</td>
<td>Electronic</td>
<td>Traveler’s Authorized Approver/Supervisor AND Fund/Org Approver AND International Tax office</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Overnight travel at any dollar amount (more than, less than or equal to $1,000) that includes lodging costs over the basic rates requires written approval in advance of the travel.

Other Advance Approvals

Some travel may require additional advance approval. A traveler requesting lodging exceptions up to 200% of the basic or standard rate must submit a Travel Authorization and receive approval by the Authorized Approver/Supervisor and Fund/Org Approver for the fund/org being charged. An explanation to justify the higher rate must be included on the Travel Authorization.

When lodging costs are expected to exceed the basic or standard rate by 200%, the traveler must submit the approved Travel Authorization to the Travel Office for consideration at least 14 days prior to the trip. The Travel Office will coordinate the additional approval required for lodging that exceeds 200% of the basic or standard rate. Approval is not guaranteed and travelers should not reserve lodging until approval has been received.

Departments intending to invite residents of foreign countries to travel at the university’s expense must arrange with the International Tax Office (inttax@gmu.edu) before inviting the individual to travel or making any travel preparations on the visitor’s behalf.

Dollar Limitations on Certain Travel Costs

The Commonwealth of Virginia has established dollar limitations on certain categories of travel expenses, as indicated in this section. Travelers will not be reimbursed for amounts in excess of these limitations.

Lodging: Basic Rates

Lodging may be reimbursed when an individual is traveling overnight on official business. Lodging expense reimbursement varies with the travel destination, but all expenditures must be necessary and reasonable. Lodging rates are governed by the U.S.
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General Services Administration (GSA). The listed rates assume single occupancy and exclude applicable taxes. Lodging taxes are reimbursable but are not included in the basic or standard rate restrictions.

The lodging, meals and incidental expenses that are allowable for travel reimbursement in the 48 contiguous states are available at http://fiscal.gmu.edu/travel/learn-about-meals-per-diem-rates/per-diem-rates/.

Additional information about the GSA rates is available at http://www.gsa.gov/portal/content/142071

Lodging: Above Basic Rates

Lodging costs up to 200% of the established basic rate may be approved by the traveler's Authorized Approver/Supervisor and Fund/Org Approver when circumstances and budget warrant. Justification for the higher cost lodging must be entered on the Travel Authorization and approved electronica prior to travel in all cases, including those when the traveler is staying at the site of the conference he or she is attending.

Example: The basic rate per night in Columbia, South Carolina is $101.00. Any per night hotel cost between $101.01 and $202.00 ($101 x 2) is considered above the basic rate. An explanation of the circumstances justifying the lodging exception must be provided on the Travel Authorization and submitted for approval. The Travel Authorization must be approved by the Authorized Approver/Supervisor and Fund/Org Approver prior to travel.

When traveling to areas where higher than standard rates are applicable, travelers are reminded to carefully check the actual location/address of the selected lodging before confirming the reservation. The Mason Travel Office is authorized to reimburse travelers for lodging costs based on the actual location of the lodging and not a nearby city. For example, travelers to the Boston area will be reimbursed at Boston rates only when the lodging is physically located in Boston, the city of Cambridge or Suffolk County. Reimbursement for lodging in nearby Brookline, located in Norfolk County, is at the standard lodging rate. In the San Francisco area, the higher lodging rate is in effect for San Francisco and San Francisco County only. Many hotels near the airport, such as the San Francisco Airport Marriott, are actually located in San Mateo County where lodging is reimbursed at a lower rate.

The following link may be useful to travelers to determine if a zip code is located in a county with higher lodging rates: http://explorer.naco.org/index.html?zipSearch. Travelers should check, request and confirm government rates both at the time reservations are made and during check-in.

Alternative Lodging

The Commonwealth of Virginia (CAPP Manual 20335, pg. 17) states, “When lodging other than hotels and motels is used, apartments for example, a comparison statement including authorization by the Agency Head or designee must be submitted with the travel reimbursement. The comparison statement should show the total cost for using the alternate accommodations and length of contract, the cost of the alternative accommodations, and net
savings.” The Alternative Lodging Guide is available to assist and inform individuals who choose to use alternative lodging.

Submit a Request for Alternative Lodging

Requests for alternative lodging, described above, must be submitted for approval prior to making the purchase. Submit a Travel Authorization, approved by the traveler’s Authorized Approver/Supervisor and Fund/Org Approver, and a comparison statement to the Travel Office at least 14 days before the trip start date. The approval must be included with the Travel Reimbursement.

- Review all cancellation and prepayment policies that exist in order to determine the proper payment method for the alternate accommodation. (See Cancellation and Prepayment Policies below.)
- Send an email request to travel@gmu.edu explaining the circumstances, proposed payment method and alternate accommodations. Requests must include length of contract, the cost of the alternative accommodations, and net savings.

Cancellation and Prepayment Policies: Compared to traditional hotel and motel providers, who typically allow cancellations and refunds within 24 hours of arrival, alternative lodging providers may have stricter rules. In addition, alternative lodging providers typically require the traveler to pay for the entire stay well in advance of the travel date. For example, Airbnb, a popular apartment booking company, allows apartments to be listed with cancellation and refund policies that range from “Flexible” (most similar to a hotel/motel) to “Super Strict” (no refunds). Read more about the differences here:

- [https://www.airbnb.com/home/cancellation_policies#flexible](https://www.airbnb.com/home/cancellation_policies#flexible)
- [https://www.airbnb.com/home/cancellation_policies#moderate](https://www.airbnb.com/home/cancellation_policies#moderate)
- [https://www.airbnb.com/home/cancellation_policies#strict](https://www.airbnb.com/home/cancellation_policies#strict)
- [https://www.airbnb.com/home/cancellation_policies#super-strict-30](https://www.airbnb.com/home/cancellation_policies#super-strict-30)
- [https://www.airbnb.com/home/cancellation_policies#super-strict-60](https://www.airbnb.com/home/cancellation_policies#super-strict-60)

Travelers assume all risk when placing travel charges on their personal card or debit card. The university will not reimburse travelers for charges related to cancellations, no shows or travel insurance. Travelers may only seek reimbursed for lodging costs after the trip is completed.

Travelers are discouraged from agreeing to any cancellation policy that does not provide a full refund if cancelled with one days’ notice. If travelers choose accommodations that do not provide this flexibility, they must use a personal form of payment and wait to be reimbursed once the trip is completed.
Alternative accommodations that **do provide for a full refund when cancelled with one days’ notice** may be purchased using one of the following payment methods:

1. Mason Travel Card (individual liability card)
2. Mason P-Card, temporary lift provided *for group travel only*
3. eVA purchase order, if accepted by the vendor *for group travel only*

*Group Travel: Faculty and staff members who are supervising groups of students on university-sponsored activities; such as forensics, athletics, music, etc.*

**International Rates**

The lodging and per diem rates for international destinations are not embedded within the TRS. The university uses federal government rates for international lodging and per diem rates for locations outside the 48 contiguous United States. The traveler/delegate must find the appropriate location rate and enter the information onto the Travel Authorization. The meal and incidental per diem must correspond to the location specified for the overnight lodging.

Reimbursement requests for international lodging, meals and incidental expenses must be accompanied by documentation of the maximum allowable rates during the period of travel for the applicable international location(s). A printed copy or screen shot of the applicable rate must be included with the Travel Reimbursement. Documentation should be uploaded and attached to the reimbursement voucher in the TRS.


Rates for international destinations are available at [https://aoprals.state.gov/web920/per_diem.asp](https://aoprals.state.gov/web920/per_diem.asp)

**Exceptions to Maximum Rates**

In very rare circumstances, prevailing hotel rates exceed the maximum allowable reimbursement rates, despite reasonable efforts by the traveler to locate alternatively priced accommodations. In these situations, the traveler may request an exception. The Controller will only consider requests submitted by the Travel Office, well in advance of travel.

Exception requests should document the circumstances of the travel and must be accompanied by a Travel Authorization electronically signed by the traveler’s Authorized Approver/Supervisor and the Fund/org Approver for the fund/organization being charged.

**Required Process:**

- Prepare documentation in the form of a single page memo that explains the circumstances and lists the rates and complete name and address (including zip code) for three hotels in the vicinity of the requested lodging.
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- Attached the hotel data printed from the internet to the exception request documentation memo.
- Summarize the three hotels’ rate and location information in the body of the exception request documentation memo.
- Submit the approved Travel Authorization and exception requests memo to the Travel Office at least 14 days prior to the trip. Request may be sent by email to travel@gmu.edu

Room Sharing
The Travel Authorization/Reimbursement must be annotated to explain more than one person in a room. When two or more people are traveling on official state business and staying in the same hotel room, the allowable lodging rate will be the lodging rate allowed in the area they are staying, plus the cost charged by the hotel for any additional persons in the room. Documentation from the hotel listing additional hotel charges for each additional person, per room must be provided. If the additional traveler is not a business traveler, only the single room rate may be claimed.

For non-luxury, conference hotels, the total daily lodging amount for Mason travelers sharing a room cannot exceed the maximum daily lodging rate for a single traveler plus any applicable extra person(s) charge. For example, two Mason staff members plan to share a room while attending a conference. The maximum lodging rate at the conference location is $80 per night standard rate/$120 per night conference rate. The maximum reimbursable amount is $80/$120 per night for the room, not $80/$120 per Mason traveler.

Requests for multiple travelers in the same room that exceed the conference room rate, plus any applicable extra person(s) charges, must be submitted to the Travel Office seven days prior to the commencement of the trip. Approval by the University Controller must be received in advance of the travel.

Internet Charges
Travelers may be reimbursed for internet charges at hotels when internet access is necessary for business activity. To be reimbursed for internet charges, travelers must provide an explanation of the internet usage, such as checking and responding to email. The explanation may be written on the itemized hotel bill.

Internet charges to sponsored funds are allowable only when directly related to the specific grant or contract. As such, checking email could only be charged to a grant if email activity was limited to, and directly related to, a specific project. Internet-based researches directly related to a sponsored project is allowable.

Hotel Bills
An original itemized hotel bill must support lodging reimbursement requests. For hotel rooms obtained through internet providers, the traveler must attach the entire hardcopy receipt from the internet site showing total cost and confirmed services to the Travel Reimbursement. No lodging reimbursement is authorized for informal lodging arrangements such as staying with friends, colleagues or relatives.
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Per Diem Rates

As with lodging, the Commonwealth of Virginia utilizes per diem rates for meals and incidental expenses that are governed by the U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) and listed in the last column of the rate table at http://fiscal.gmu.edu/travel/learn-about-meals-per-diem-rates/per-diem-rates/. The meals and incidental expenses (IE) breakdown for the 48 contiguous United States is available at www.gsa.gov/mie. The meals and incidental per diem must correspond to the location specified for the overnight lodging.

Per Diem rates include:
- meals, including taxes and tips
- transportation to where meals are taken
- personal telephone calls
- laundry expenses
- tips to baggage handlers

Travelers will not be reimbursed separately for these items and are advised to budget their travel expenses accordingly.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total M&amp;IE</th>
<th>Continental Breakfast/Breakfast</th>
<th>Lunch</th>
<th>Dinner</th>
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<td>$51</td>
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<tr>
<td>$74</td>
<td>$17</td>
<td>$18</td>
<td>$34</td>
<td>$5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

International Per Diem Rates

The lodging and per diem rates for international destinations are not embedded within the TRS. The university uses federal government rates for international lodging and per diem rates for locations outside the 48 contiguous United States. The traveler/delegate must find the appropriate location rate and enter the information onto the Travel Authorization.

Reimbursement requests for international lodging, meals and incidental expenses must be accompanied by documentation of the maximum allowable rates during the period of travel for the applicable international location(s). A printed copy or screen shot of the applicable rate must be included with the Travel Reimbursement. Documentation should be uploaded and attached to the reimbursement voucher in the TRS.

Rates for international destinations are available at [https://aoprals.state.gov/web920/per_diem.asp](https://aoprals.state.gov/web920/per_diem.asp)

**Travel Departure and Return Days**

On travel departure and return days, travelers receive 75% of the per diem allowance, regardless of the time of departure or return. The return day allowance is based on the rate at the location where the traveler spent the night prior to returning. The rates for the 48 contiguous United States are available at [www.gsa.gov/mie](http://www.gsa.gov/mie) and summarized below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total M&amp;IE</th>
<th>Travel Departure and Return Days</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$51</td>
<td>$38.25</td>
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<tr>
<td>$54</td>
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<td>$69</td>
<td>$51.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$74</td>
<td>$55.50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

“No-cost” Meals

The daily per diem rate must be reduced for all "no-cost" meals the traveler receives. “No-cost” meals are those included in event registration fees. If a continental breakfast or reception is offered as part of the travel event and the food/timing is sufficient to serve as a meal, the traveler must deduct the per diem by the appropriate allowance amount. If a meal is offered as part of a conference and the traveler has medical restrictions, the traveler should make every effort to have the conference facilitate his/her need by the deadline specified by the conference. If the conference does not honor the request, the traveler is not required to deduct the applicable meal allowance for the per diem. However, the traveler must include a note or other documentation with the Travel Reimbursement Voucher documenting this information. This note may be entered in the comments section in the TRS or attached to the Travel Reimbursement. Individual meal components are provided in the per diem rate tables and embedded in the TRS to assist travelers in calculating the deduction for these “no-cost” meals.
Transportation

The TRS designated two types of transportation – primary and secondary. Primary transportation is how the traveler will reach the intended destination and return. Secondary transportation is how the traveler will get from place to place once they arrive at the intended destination. For example, the primary transportation may be airline from Mason to the destination and the secondary transportation may be taxi to and from the hotel and airport upon arrival at the destination. The following information should be used when planning both primary and secondary transportation.

Commercial air and rail carriers

Payment of commercial airfare or rail travel is appropriate when traveling on university business. Generally, airline and rail travel cannot exceed the rates charged for tourist or coach class accommodations. Reimbursement for Acela service on Amtrak is prohibited. Some airlines have created a higher level of coach class services that charges a premium for preferable seats, priority boarding, advance seat selection and/or other amenities. Examples of non-reimbursable seats are: United Economy Plus, Delta Comfort, Southwest Business Select and American Premium Economy. Such upgrades in the coach seating area are considered enhancements to the coach fare and are not reimbursable including situations when the upgraded seats are the only ones available on a desired flight.

The traveler’s Authorized Approver/Supervisor and Fund/Org Approver may grant permission for business class air or rail travel under the following circumstances:

**Air**

1. The business class fare does not cost more than the lowest available tourist/coach fare (comparison must be attached to the Travel Reimbursement)
2. The travel is to western Europe and the business meeting is conducted within three hours of landing
3. The travel is for transoceanic, intercontinental trips of more than eight hours
4. The traveler pays the difference.

**Rail**

1. The business class fare does not cost more than the lowest available tourist/coach fare (comparison must be attached to travel voucher)
2. Reserved coach seats are not offered on the route
3. The traveler pays the difference

Travelers should consider the following options when making air travel arrangements. All tickets and/or receipts must indicate coach class fares unless appropriate documentation is obtained. **Reimbursement for first class travel is prohibited.**

Airline Fees
Some airlines charge additional fees for services, such as checked baggage. When planning a trip, travelers should be aware of these fees and associated limitations, and consider the total cost when selecting the most appropriate carrier. These fees are reimbursable with a receipt when limits must be exceeded for legitimate business purposes. For example, checked baggage with the hockey team’s equipment will generally exceed limitations. Written justification must be provided when requesting reimbursement for two or more checked bags.

**Fly America Act**

When federal funds are used, provisions of the Fly America Act (FAA) are applicable and international travel is restricted to a U.S. air carrier unless circumstances meet the qualifications for a waiver. All waivers must be documented on the Certificate of Exception to Fly America Act form. This form must be submitted with the travel voucher, attached to an invoice approval if traveler was billed or submitted to the Office of Sponsored Programs if airfare was purchased on a P-Card. Please use the Fly America Act Decision Tree prior to booking international travel. For more information on DOD funded travel, the Fly America Act and Open Skies agreement with EU, Japan, Switzerland and Australia please visit [http://osp.gmu.edu](http://osp.gmu.edu).

**Covington Travel**

Travelers may contact Covington Travel in Richmond at 804-747-7077 or 888-747-7077 between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m. for airline reservations. Covington Travel provides the option to conduct bookings through an online travel portal. The traveler will provide payment to Covington Travel. Options include the Purchasing Charge Card (P-Card), the Travel Charge Card or a personal credit card. Covington Travel can direct bill airfare in excess of $2,000 to a centralized Mason Travel Card. A fee will be added to the cost of each airline ticket purchased. Covington Travel may also be contacted for domestic and international lodging and rental car reservations. NOTE: If you are traveling internationally on a federal award please ensure your flight meets the FAA requirements.

**Uniglobe Ulti-Max Travel**

Travelers may contact Uniglobe Ulti-Max Travel in Herndon at 703-707-0200 or 866-629-8728 between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. for airline reservations. The traveler will provide payment to Uniglobe Ulti-Max Travel. Options include the Purchasing Charge Card (P-Card), the Travel Charge Card or a personal credit card. A fee will be added to the cost of each airline ticket purchased. Uniglobe Ulti-Max Travel may also be contacted for lodging and rental car reservations. NOTE: If you are traveling internationally on a federal award please ensure your flight meets the FAA requirements.

**Other Travel Providers**

Travelers are permitted to make travel arrangements using any travel agency, ticket provider or online service. When procuring services via the Internet, the traveler must submit documentation that validates cost as well as the mode and class of travel. The confirmation document (all pages) generated at the end of the reservation process showing total cost and class of service must be uploaded and attached to the Travel Reimbursement Voucher. When a
paper ticket is issued, the passenger receipt (ticket stub) should also be uploaded and attached to the Travel Reimbursement. NOTE: If you are traveling internationally on a federal award please ensure your flight meets the FAA requirements. Screen shots supporting FAA exceptions should be printed/scanned at the time of airfare purchase and submitted with the Certification of Exception to Fly America Act form.

**Transportation Payment Methods**

The following payment methods are available for purchasing airline and rail ticket.

**Purchasing Charge Card (P-Card)**

An authorized P-Card holder may purchase common carrier (air and rail) tickets for the cardholder or other individuals within his/her department who are authorized to travel. The cardholder must retain the original purchase receipt and a copy of the Travel Authorization approved by the traveler’s Authorized Approver/Supervisor and Fund/Org Approver (if required). Mason will be billed directly for all P-Card charges. Contact Purchasing at extension 3-2580 for information about obtaining and using this card.

**NOTE:** The state’s “Electronic Commerce Policy” imposes certain security requirements that must be met before using the P-Card over the Internet. The “Security Requirements” are included in Appendix B of this manual.

**Travel Charge Card**

The traveler must submit an original ticket receipt and evidence of payment with the travel voucher when the Travel Charge Card is used. This is an individual liability card and each cardholder is responsible for payment of charges made on this card. Please use this option carefully; traveler will only be reimbursed after the trip, regardless of how far in advance the airline tickets are purchased. Contact the Travel Office at extension 3-2623 for information about the Travel Charge Card.

**Personal Credit Card**

The traveler must submit an original ticket receipt and evidence of payment with the Travel Reimbursement when a personal credit card is used. Please use this option carefully; traveler will only be reimbursed after his/her trip, regardless of how far in advance the airline tickets are purchased.

**NOTE:** If the trip is canceled after airline tickets have been purchased, the traveler may be reimbursed with his/her Authorized Approver/Supervisor's approval. The approval must include a statement by the Authorized Approver/Supervisor that he/she agrees to monitor future use of the ticket.

**Motor Pool vehicles**

A traveler may also utilize a Facility Services Motor Pool vehicle for approved university activities. A Motor Vehicle Request form and driver awareness training must be completed before an employee can utilize the Motor Pool. Additional information on driver awareness
training may be found at [http://risk.gmu.edu/training/driver-training/](http://risk.gmu.edu/training/driver-training/). A Motor Pool Vehicle Request form must be submitted at least three days in advance of the proposed travel date and is available at [Motor Pool Request Form](http://risk.gmu.edu/training/driver-training/). These vehicles come with a fuel card. Costs for the vehicle and fuel will be charged directly to the user’s fund or organization. Mileage greater than 300 miles round trip, must be approved in advance by the Office of Risk Management. The cost of using a motor pool vehicle and fuel will be charged directly to the department. Additional information may be found online at [http://facilities.gmu.edu/PhysicalPlant/Motorpool/](http://facilities.gmu.edu/PhysicalPlant/Motorpool/).

**Enterprise Rental vehicles**

The Virginia Office of Fleet Management Services has partnered with Enterprise Rent-a-Car to provide short term rental cars for state agencies. All vehicle reservations must be made at least 24 hours in advance of the anticipated pick-up of the vehicle. Travelers are required to access the Enterprise Trip Calculator at [Trip Calculator](http://risk.gmu.edu/training/driver-training/) when planning a trip that involves traveling more than 280 miles per day. In most cases a traveler will be reimbursed for the cost of an Enterprise rental vehicle and gas OR mileage at the fleet rate. An Enterprise Guide provides details and is available in Appendix D and at [Enterprise Guide](http://risk.gmu.edu/training/driver-training/). Mason travelers paying for rental vehicles with a personal credit card will be required to pay all taxes at Enterprise Rent-A-Car. The taxes paid by the renter will be fully reimbursable with appropriate receipt documentation.

### Reimbursement When Mileage Exceeds 280 Miles Per Day

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vehicle Driven</th>
<th>Trip Calculator: Enterprise Lower Cost*</th>
<th>Enterprise Vehicle Available</th>
<th>Reimbursement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Enterprise</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Rental and gas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Mileage @ fleet rate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No**</td>
<td>Mileage @ personal rate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Mileage @ personal rate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal</td>
<td>Calculator not attached</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Mileage @ fleet rate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motor Pool</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>$0 (recharge to Dept.)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*At least 24 hours before a trip, the Enterprise Trip Calculator should be accessed at [Trip Calculator](http://risk.gmu.edu/training/driver-training/). Cost Comparison page must be printed and attached to the Travel Reimbursement Voucher.
**Page indicating vehicle not available on specific date(s) must be printed and attached to the Travel Reimbursement Voucher.

The number of days to be entered in the calculator will be the number of 24-hour car rental days necessary for the trip. For example, if the Enterprise location is open Monday-Friday from 7:30 a.m. to 6 p.m., it may be necessary to pick up or return a car a day before and/or after the trip.

The Enterprise agreement also offers a 10% discount on airport rentals and a 5% discount on non-airport rentals outside of Virginia when traveling on university business. Reservations should be completed at Enterprise’s George Mason link Enterprise Reservations by selecting “Business Use – All Locations.”

**Adjustments to Enterprise Calculator**

Since the Enterprise calculator is “protected” at the state level, Mason users are not permitted to make electronic changes to rates or calculations. Thus in some circumstances, it may be necessary to make written changes to the amounts generated by the calculator for purposes of determining the lowest cost transportation. If adjustments are made, the printed page should be scanned, uploaded and attached to the Travel Reimbursement.
In the following situations, the Enterprise calculator should be printed and an adjustment should be written on the Lowest Cost Transportation line of the calculator page. The calculator should then be scanned, uploaded and attached to the Travel Reimbursement.

- A minivan is required. In some situations the number of travelers or equipment being transported dictates the use of a minivan. In those cases, after printing the Enterprise calculator, the amount displayed in the Enterprise Vehicle box should be doubled and that doubled amount written on the Lowest Cost Transportation line with the notation “minivan required” and the reason for using the minivan.

- The proposed driver is younger than age 21. The Enterprise contract requires that the driver be 21 years of age or older. If the traveler is under 21, write “driver is younger than age 21” on the Lowest Cost Transportation line. Reimbursement will be at the personal mileage rate.

- A trip originates where state contract rates are not available. If a traveler will begin a trip in a location other than Virginia, Maryland or the District of Columbia where state contract rates are available, the amount displayed in the Enterprise Vehicle box should be crossed out and replaced with the Total Estimated Charges for a compact or intermediate car at the rental location. The Enterprise page displaying that rental information (please see example below) should be printed and attached to the calculator.

Personal Vehicle

Travelers may be reimbursed for use of a personal vehicle while traveling on university business. The state requires that travel be conducted in the most economical manner; meaning the total reimbursement for vehicle use, lodging, and meals and incidental expenses may not exceed the alternative cost of travel by the most economical air routing.

Mileage Rates
An employee will normally be reimbursed at the fleet rate, currently $0.246 per mile, when he/she drives a personal vehicle more than 280 miles per day for business related travel.

Travelers may be reimbursed at the personal mileage rate, currently $0.535 per mile, in the following situations:

- The mileage does not exceed 280 miles per day.
- The mileage per day is more than 280 miles, but the cost of a personal vehicle is less than the cost of an Enterprise vehicle. The traveler must attach the Enterprise Trip Calculator Form to the Travel Reimbursement Voucher.
- An Enterprise rental vehicle is not available. The traveler must print a copy of the Enterprise page indicating vehicle is sold out for the day(s) requested and attach it to the Travel Reimbursement Voucher.
- The proposed driver is younger than 21 years of age.

**Commuting mileage**

Round-trip mileage traveled routinely and directly by an employee between his residence and work place incurred on a workday is considered commuting mileage. Commuting mileage and other commuting costs incurred on workdays are considered personal expenses and are not reimbursable. When traveling for business, the commuting mileage must be used to reduce the reimbursable mileage expense when a traveler leaves or returns to their home on a week day.

**Other Rental Vehicles**

Reimbursement may be received for rental of an economy or mid-size class vehicle when circumstances warrant. **Luxury vehicle rentals will not be reimbursed.** No reimbursement is authorized for vehicle rentals from non-traditional sources or for informal vehicle rentals from friends, colleagues or relatives.

**Insurance on rental vehicles**

*Employees:* The Commonwealth provides a statewide self-insured plan for employees. Therefore, employees will not be reimbursed for rental car insurance for locations within the United States, and employees should **decline** liability damage waiver (LDW) and collision damage waiver (CDW) insurance for travel within the United States. Other forms of insurance such as personal accident insurance (PAI) are also not reimbursable.

*Non-employees:* A traveler who is not a state employee should determine whether his/her personal automobile insurance provides coverage on rental vehicles. Reimbursement for insurance charges will only be made for those individuals without such coverage.

*International Travel:* All travelers in international countries must purchase appropriate insurance and will be reimbursed for all reasonable, necessary and actual insurance premiums.
**Travel Policies and Procedures**

*Gasoline charges*
Reimbursement for fuel is limited to prices at customary, competitive outlets. In no instance should the traveler enter into a “Fuel Agreement” or pay for fuel in advance when renting a vehicle. No instance includes situations where the fuel agreement per gallon fuel cost is less than prevailing per gallon rates.

**Parking Fees and Toll Charges**
Reimbursement is provided for parking fees and toll charges incurred. Parking at airports is limited to the most economical rate. **Parking at any Mason campus will not be reimbursed to current employees.** Travelers should work with Parking Services to acquire a departmental parking pass when traveling between campuses for university business.

**Taxi and shuttle van fare**
Reimbursement is provided for taxi and shuttle van fares between airports or other transportation terminals and hotels or other lodging facilities. Receipts are required when the reimbursement claim exceeds $75 per instance. A maximum tip of 15% of the taxi cab or shuttle service fare is reimbursable as a transportation cost separate from Meals and Incidental Expenses. The amount of the tip should be separated from the fare on the Travel Reimbursement Voucher.

**Sponsored Projects**
The dollar limitations described above also apply to travel conducted in support of grants and contracts sponsored by outside agencies unless the underlying grant or contract specifically provides different reimbursement policies or rates. Authorizations and vouchers applying this exception must contain a statement to this effect signed by the Principal Investigator and the Associate Vice President of Research Operations. Principal Investigators (PIs) and unit administrators should review award budgets and travel restrictions to ensure travel costs charged to sponsored funding are allowable.

Additionally, when federal funds are used, provisions of the Fly America Act (FAA) are applicable and travelers must use a U.S. flag air carrier unless circumstances meet the qualifications for a waiver. Including instances in which use of a U.S. air carrier 1) increases the number of aircraft changes outside the U.S. by two or more, (2) extends the travel time by six hours or more, or 3) requires a connecting time of four hours or more at an oversees interchange point. Screen shots supporting the exception should be printed/scanned at the time of airfare purchase to serve as backup to the **Certification of Exception to Fly America Act** form. Cost is not considered a reason for exception under this federal regulation, and travelers will not be reimbursed for any transportation cost when there is improper use of a foreign air carrier. Travelers are required to indicate the name of the air carrier for international travel when federal funds are charged.
For additional guidance, please review the FAA Decision Tree. Questions regarding travel to be charged to sponsored projects should be directed to the Office of Sponsored Programs at ext. 3-4806.

Other Reimbursable Expenses

Other expenses that may be reimbursed include:

1. Business telephone calls
2. Facsimiles
3. Data transmission charges
4. Passport and visa expenses, vaccination fees, airport fees
5. Registration fees
6. Internet charges

Business phone calls, facsimiles and data transmission charges must be supported by documentation that includes the date, points and parties involved, the business purpose of the call, and the charges incurred. Travelers are permitted to incur charges for use of the internet at hotels, airports or other locations provided that internet access is necessary for business activity. To be reimbursed for internet charges, travelers must provide an explanation of the internet usage, such as reading and responding to email. The explanation may be written on the itemized hotel bill or internet provider receipt. Internet charges to sponsored funds are allowable only when directly related to the specific grant or contract. As such, checking email could only be charged to a grant if email activity was limited to, and directly related to, a specific project. Internet-based research directly related to a sponsored project is allowable.

Unallowable Expenses

The following is a list of common expenses that are not reimbursable. *The list is not all-inclusive.*

1. Lost or stolen articles
2. Alcoholic beverages
3. Excessive meal and lodging charges
4. Personal telephone calls *
5. Personal laundry expenses *
6. Damage to personal vehicles, clothing or other items
7. Expenses related to personal negligence of the traveler, such as fines
8. Services to gain entry to locked vehicles
9. Towing charges
10. Insurance associated with rental cars in the United States
11. Luxury vehicle rentals
12. Excessive parking and gasoline charges
13. Mason parking fees
14. Movies charged to hotel/motel bills
15. Expenses for children, spouses and other non-business companions
16. Local commuting expenses
17. Service fees and tips (e.g., to baggage handlers) * These expenses are covered by the incidental portion of the per diem payment.
18. Travel between lodging and places where meals may be taken
19. Travel insurance (personal injury or loss, trip interruption/cancellation, etc.)
   a. Travel accident and emergency insurance coverages is available for employees (covered cost). Additional information is available at https://risk.gmu.edu/insurance/.

Travel Advances
Mason employees traveling on university business for group travel or to international destinations, as described below, may request a travel advance. The advance may be used to pay out-of-pocket travel expenses that are un-allowable on a Mason P-card or are unable to be directly billed to Accounts Payable. The incurred expense(s) must be considered reimbursable under the Travel Policy. Instruction for completing a travel advance may be found online at Travel Advance Instructions and Travel Advance Request Form.
   • Group Travel: Faculty and staff members who are supervising groups of students on university-sponsored activities; such as forensics, athletics, music, etc.
   • Faculty and staff members traveling to an international destination(s) where credit cards may not be accepted.

   **Mason does not issue travel advances for individual travel.** Instead, individuals traveling two or more times per year may apply for a Travel Charge Card. This is a personal liability card and cardholders are responsible for payment of monthly statements. Travel expenses charged to the Travel Charge Card will not be reimbursed until after the trip has taken place. Contact the Travel Office for additional information about the Travel Charge Card.

Conference Registration Fees
Many organizations accept the P-Card to pay conference registration fees. Travelers may also request prepayment of registration fees directly to the sponsoring organization by submitting a Payment Request form to Accounts Payable. Travelers may also be reimbursed for registration fees they pay using personal funds. State rules prohibit payments made more than 180 days prior to the event.

Candidates
A department hosting a candidate to be interviewed for a Mason position is encouraged to arrange for the candidate’s transportation and lodging to be billed directly to the university. Direct billing for transportation is available by using the P-Card or by using Covington Travel or Uniglobe Ulti-Max Travel's reservation and ticketing service by phone.

Direct billing for the candidate’s lodging is also available. The Purchasing Department has negotiated contracts with several hotels in the local area. Sponsoring departments are
Travel Policies and Procedures

encouraged to make guest lodging arrangements with one of these hotels to obtain favorable rates and direct billing to the university. An updated list of hotel accommodations is available on the Fiscal Services web site at Lodging in the Local Area. Additional information may be obtained from the Purchasing Office at 3-2580.

Candidates may also make their own transportation and lodging arrangements. Instructions and information for candidates and their hosting departments is available on Travel Office web page at Candidate Information. Reimbursement will be made after the trip has occurred. Candidates should be informed that receipts for transportation expenses over $75 are required for reimbursement. When a candidate purchases airline tickets via the internet, he/she must submit the confirmation document generated at the end of the on-line reservation process that confirms the cost of the flight as well as the class of service.

Contractors

Guest lecturers, consultants, vendors and other contractors are not normally reimbursed for their travel expenses. Instead, their travel costs should be included in their contracts or honoraria. In situations that require separate payment of a contractor’s travel expenses, all requirements and limitations of the travel policy apply. Departments should be aware that direct reimbursement of travel expenses is one of the factors leading to classification of an individual as an employee rather than a contractor. All payments to contractors must be supported by an “Employee/Independent Contractor Evaluation Form” and a substitute W-9 form. Both forms are available from the Accounts Payable Department and from the Fiscal Services web site at http://fiscal.gmu.edu.

Business Meals

Business meals occurring in the local area or during overnight travel may be reimbursed if the conditions for business meals established in University Policy Number 2102, “Food and Beverages Expenditures” are satisfied. Non-Mason guests must be present at the meal and bona fide business discussions must take place. Reimbursement for business meals occurring during overnight travel will be limited to the cost of the guest’s meal only; the traveler/host will receive the normal per diem payment for the trip location.

Reimbursement for food and beverages purchased during business meals requires a “Food and Beverages Authorization” form. For the full text of the Policy on Food and Beverages Expenditures, and the Food and Beverages Authorization forms, go to the Fiscal Services web site at http://fiscal.gmu.edu.

Reimbursement requests must be accompanied by an original itemized receipt. If an itemized receipt is not available, the request must include a certification that no alcoholic beverages were consumed at the meal. State rules prohibit use of state funds for alcoholic beverages.

State and local governmental entities may now use their respective exemption certificate (Form ST-12) to purchase prepared foods, catering and related services provided in connection with the sale of food exempt of the sales and use tax if the university meets the following criteria. For more information regarding sales tax on business meals please visit http://fiscal.gmu.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/SalesTaxPreparedFood.pdf.
Local Area Travel Expenses

Non-commuting travel expenses may be reimbursed when individuals must travel in the local area on official business. This includes trips between Mason campuses or to other locations in the vicinity to attend meetings or training classes, to deliver paperwork, etc. Travel may be by personal vehicle or local common carrier (e.g., metro, bus, etc.) For travel between Mason campuses by personal vehicle, a table of mileage distances and reimbursement amounts to be claimed is available below. Commercial parking fees and toll charges may also be reimbursed. Charges to park on Mason property (i.e., Mason decals, passes and parking meters) are not reimbursable. Normal commuting mileage is not reimbursable; only the net additional mileage may be claimed.

Example: An employee, whose normal work location is the Fairfax campus, has a normal round trip commute of 20 miles. On a scheduled workday she travels 30 miles from her residence to the Science and Technology campus to conduct training. The training concludes at 10:00 a.m., when the employee travels 20 miles from the Science and Technology campus to her office in Fairfax. The employee travels six miles round trip for lunch and returns to work. In the afternoon she travels 15 miles to the Arlington campus for a meeting, after which she travels 12 miles to her residence. The total distance traveled is 83 miles (30+20+6+15+12). The total reimbursable mileage is 57 miles (83-26) to exclude normal commuting (20 miles) and personal (6 miles) mileage.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Depart From</th>
<th>Arlington</th>
<th>Fairfax</th>
<th>Herndon</th>
<th>Loudoun</th>
<th>Prince William</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arlington</td>
<td></td>
<td>15 miles, $8.02</td>
<td>20 miles, $10.70</td>
<td>22 miles, $11.77</td>
<td>32 miles, $17.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fairfax</td>
<td>15 miles, $8.02</td>
<td></td>
<td>16 miles, $8.56</td>
<td>20 miles, $10.70</td>
<td>20 miles, $10.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Herndon</td>
<td>20 miles, $10.70</td>
<td>16 miles, $8.56</td>
<td></td>
<td>7 miles, $3.74</td>
<td>18 miles, 9.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loudoun</td>
<td>22 miles, $11.77</td>
<td>20 miles, $10.70</td>
<td>7 miles, $3.74</td>
<td></td>
<td>26 miles, $13.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prince William</td>
<td>32 miles, $17.12</td>
<td>20 miles, $10.70</td>
<td>18 miles, $9.63</td>
<td>26 miles, $13.91</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Lodging in the Local Area

An employee is generally not reimbursed for lodging within 25 miles of his/her work place, office or home. If extenuating circumstances and budget permit, an employee may seek **advanced approval** for lodging in the local area. To request an exception please contact the Travel Office at least 30 days prior to reserving local area lodging for an employee. The university Controller approves all exceptions. No approval will be given after the trip has taken place. Local area lodging may be paid for guests of the university such as candidates or speakers. The Purchasing Office has negotiated contracts with several hotels in the local area. Sponsoring departments are encouraged to make guest lodging arrangements with one of...
these hotels to obtain favorable rates and direct billing to the university. The list of hotels in the local area is available online on the Fiscal Services web site at Local Area Lodging. Additional information may be obtained from the Purchasing Office at 3-2580.

Meals in the Local Area
Generally, meal expenses must involve an overnight stay to qualify for reimbursement. An individual who is not in a travel status may be eligible for meal reimbursement if he/she participates in a business meal. Please see Business Meals above.

Receipts
Travelers are required to obtain original receipts for all expenses except for: meals, transportation expenses under $75 and incidental expenses reimbursed on a per diem basis. Lodging reimbursement requests must be supported by an itemized hotel bill. Hotel ledger receipts may be used to annotate business telephone calls, facsimiles, and data transmission charges. The annotation should include points and parties involved. Receipts must be uploaded and attached to the corresponding travel document in order to be reimbursed to the traveler. Original documentation/receipts should be retained by the traveler until after reimbursement has been received. The Travel Office may request original receipts if the uploaded document is illegible.

Other receipts that may be required include the following:
1. Airline ticket receipts and credit card statements
2. Airline checked baggage receipts
3. Public transportation receipts—taxi, limo, etc.
4. Rental car, including gasoline receipts
5. Parking and toll charges
6. Business meals with outside parties
7. Registration fees paid by traveler
8. Internet access receipts

Personal Travel with Business Travel
Occasionally an employee may take a trip that includes both personal and business travel, or the trip may originate/culminate at a location, other than the base location, due to personal reasons. When personal and business travel is combined, the traveler may only be reimbursed for expenses equal to or less than the cost incurred if originating/culminating at the traveler’s base location (excluding personal travel). In addition, when the cost of the additional personal travel exceeds the business travel expense, travelers may not use any form of Mason payment (Mason P-Card or Travel Agency billing). The traveler is required to add an annotation in the “comments” section that the trip includes both personal and business travel. Specific dates of personal travel must be noted.

Business Travel Reimbursement
In order to demonstrate that no additional expense was included for airfare for the personal portion of the trip, the traveler must provide a cost comparison, including two sets of documents generated at the time of booking the airfare (due to daily changing rates). Price comparisons must have the date printed on the face of the document and must match the purchase date of the airfare ticket. Reimbursement will be for the lower rate.

The first document must provide that a reasonably priced flight was selected which was relatively consistent with the time necessary for the business travel. An airline website search should be used to track back from the lowest price selecting the appropriate business time constraints following the route from the traveler’s base location to and from the business location for the days of business. The second document must denote the fare including the cost of personal travel. For domestic travel, travel days include the day before business begins and day after business ends. For international travel, travel days include two days before business begins and 2 days after. If two one way flights are used, the documentation must demonstrate this was more cost effective than roundtrip.

Cost comparison quotes generated after travel is complete will not be accepted.

Examples of Documentation Comparison:

1. A print out from American Airlines dated 4/1/2017 which shows the cost of the roundtrip flight from the traveler’s base location for the business travel dates only. Additional document from American Airlines dated 4/1/2017, which shows the cost of the flight from the traveler’s base location inclusive of the business and personal travel dates.

2. A print out from Travelocity dated 4/1/2017 which shows the cost of round trip connecting flights to/from the business destination and travelers base location. Additional document from Travelocity dated 4/1/2017, which shows the cost of a flight to the personal travel destination and a second flight from the personal travel destination to the business location on a different date.

Example of Travel Reimbursement:

A traveler is attending a conference in Chicago, IL and will be on business travel April 1 to April 5 (Saturday to Wednesday). The traveler decides to visit Denver, CO on personal leave after the conference concludes on Wednesday, April 5 and will return to Washington, D.C., the base location, on Sunday, April 9. The traveler departs from Washington D.C. on Saturday at 9:00 a.m. and returns a week later on Sunday at 9:00 p.m.

To determine the portion of airfare that is personal, the traveler must document the cost of roundtrip airfare for the business portion of the trip between Washington and Chicago. The roundtrip airfare between Washington and Chicago, April 1 – 5 is $350. (The traveler would return Wednesday at 9:00 p.m. for business travel.)
The total airfare to travel from Washington to Chicago, Chicago to Denver and Denver to Washington is $750 (April 1 – 9).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total Expenses incurred by traveler</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>$750</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>$400</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td><strong>$50</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>$2610</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Business Expenses eligible for reimbursement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>$350</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>$400</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>$220</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>$50</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>$100</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>$1120</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Personal expenses not eligible for reimbursement:

- Additional $400 for airfare from Chicago to Denver and return to Washington, D.C. is a personal expense. Further, the cost of the flight may not be purchased with a Mason P-Card because the total cost exceeds the business travel airfare expense. The traveler will be reimbursed $350 (business portion) upon completion of the trip.
- No lodging for Wednesday, Thursday, Friday or Saturday nights
- No meals for Thursday, Friday, Saturday or Sunday
- Ground transportation (car rental, shuttle, taxi and/or parking) in Denver - entirely personal
- No parking at Washington Reagan airport for Thursday, Friday, Saturday or Sunday
- No miscellaneous expenses (business calls, internet charges) for Thursday, Friday, Saturday or Sunday
Reimbursement Vouchers

Travelers are required to utilize the **George Mason University Travel Request System** at [https://travel.gmu.edu/](https://travel.gmu.edu/) to process all Travel Reimbursement Vouchers. For previously authorized trips, the traveler will enter actual amounts to replace cost estimates where appropriate. Travelers may also initiate reimbursement requests in the TRS for standard overnight trips costing less than $1,000 with basic rate accommodations or trips that include mileage or transportation only.

Travel Reimbursement requests should be submitted within 60 days of trip completion. Travelers are responsible for presenting legitimate and complete vouchers to the Travel Office. Required receipts must be attached to the voucher to support reimbursement claims. Any Travel Reimbursement requests submitted more than 60 days after trip completion may be reported as income and included on your W-2 as required by IRS guidelines. Under an accountable plan, the IRS defines a reasonable period of time for an employee to adequately account for expenses, as 60 days from the date the travel was paid or incurred, which is consistent with the expectation of the Commonwealth. Therefore, employees are required to submit Travel Reimbursements and supporting documentation within 60 days of trip completion. Travelers who make multiple local trips (mileage/transportation only) may consolidate them into one monthly travel voucher. Authorized Approvers/Supervisors should make every effort to review and electronically approve or return travel vouchers within three business days. Once approved, the travel vouchers are automatically routed to the Travel Office for processing.

Direct Deposit of Travel Reimbursements

Employees are encouraged to receive direct deposits of travel reimbursements. To establish a direct deposit bank account (Accounts Payable Deposit) in Banner Self-Serve (Patriot Web) for receipt of travel and other reimbursement payments:

1. Log into Patriot Web with Mason Net ID and password
2. Select Employee Services
3. Select Pay Information
4. Select Direct Deposit Allocation
5. Select Update Direct Deposit Allocation (bottom of page)
6. Please read the Accounts Payable Deposit instructions under the heading “Travel and Other Reimbursements...”
7. In the Add Allocation section, provide bank information including routing number and account number to be used for Accounts Payable reimbursements. This may be the same bank account as the Payroll Allocation account or a different bank account
8. Select Accounts Payable Deposit check box
9. Do NOT check the Payroll Deposit box
10. Email confirmation of direct deposit change will be sent to employee.

*Note: An employee may have only one Accounts Payable Deposit bank account. To change an existing Accounts Payable Deposit, you must first inactivate the existing account and then follow the steps above to enter the new bank information.*
An employee will be notified via email when a reimbursement is scheduled to post to his/her bank account. An employee may also access the Payment Inquiry Portal to check reimbursement status. Travelers not participating in direct deposit will receive reimbursement checks by mail at their home address on record.

**Internet Usage**

Procurement of travel services through the Internet is permitted. Travelers should use caution and prudent judgment when choosing an online travel service site. Hidden fees, significant prepayments or nonrefundable advances may apply that may not be reimbursable. When paying for services online the following methods may be used:

- Travel Credit Card - may be used for all types of purchases (i.e., hotel, transportation)
- Small Purchase Credit Card (P-Card) - may be used for common carrier transportation and conference registrations only
- Personal Credit Card

When travel services are procured online, the following supplemental documents must be submitted with the Travel Expense Reimbursement Voucher:

- All pages of the confirmation document generated when internet reservation is complete showing total cost and class of service (e.g. coach, business class) for electronic tickets
- Passenger receipt (ticket stub) when paper ticket is issued

**International Visitors**

Departments are encouraged to contact the International Tax Office in Fiscal Services when foreign nationals (non-US citizens) visit the university. The visitor’s nonimmigrant visa type will determine if the traveler is eligible for travel reimbursement. If possible, the visitor should schedule an in-person meeting with the International Tax Office so the Tax Coordinator can analyze the visitor’s tax status and prepare the appropriate tax documents. For more information, see [International Tax Office](#). The Fly America Act applies to federally funded awards which cover visitor and participant airfare. Please see the Sponsored Projects section of this manual for more information.
Travel Request System (TRS) User Guide

All travel authorizations and reimbursements are processed using the Travel Request System (TRS) (https://travel.gmu.edu). First time users will login to the TRS using their Mason NetID and password, complete a user profile and enter Authorized Approver/Supervisor information. Approval for travel authorizations and reimbursements is completed through Banner Workflow. Travelers/delegates do not need to obtain manual signatures on travel documents. Documentation and receipts must be uploaded and attached to travel documents for approver review. Original documentation/receipts should be retained until the traveler has received the reimbursement. If the Travel Office is unable to verify uploaded receipts, original documents may be requested. Business travel requirements are outlined in University Policy 2101, Travel Authorization and Reimbursement.

Delegate Instructions

To enter travel information for a Mason employee/Mason student, candidate or other non-Mason traveler it is necessary to complete the “Optional” information before logging into the Travel Request system. The individual must have a Mason “G” number in order to process travel documents. To receive a “G” number, the traveler must complete the Substitute W-9 (U.S. Citizen) or the W-8BEN (Certificate of Foreign Status) and fax the document to Accounts Payable at 703-993-2589. The most current version of these forms may be found on the Fiscal Services website.

1. Enter the Email address for the individual traveler
2. Select the traveler’s Mason affiliation from the drop-down then select “Login”
3. Login using your NetID and password
4. When asked if the traveler has a “G” number, select “Yes” to confirm. If traveler does not have a “G” number, cancel and logout of the system. See instruction above for “G” number request.

5. Complete the “Personal Information” for the traveler then select “Submit”

![Personal Information]

6. Verify information is correct and select “Enter Travel”

7. Select type of travel and enter Trip Information

8. For candidates or non-Mason travelers the delegate must provide an Authorized Approver/Supervisor’s NetID (for Mason employees, the Authorized Approver/Supervisor’s NetID will populate based on the travelers profile). The Authorized Approver/Supervisor may be the search committee chair or the fund/org approver for the department. Delegates should defer to department policy to determine the approver and then enter the individual NetID into the Authorized Approver/Supervisor’s NetID field.

9. Select the department who will incur the travel charges, provide the primary fund/org and select an approver from the drop down list. (Users may add more than more fund/org)

10. If there are additional approvers who must approve the travel document, enter the NetID in the Optional Approvers field and select to approve “Before” or “After” the Authorized Approver/Supervisor. This will prompt an approval request email to be sent to the optional approver. This is not a required field.

11. Continue to add travel information as needed

12. On the Information Verification screen select “Click here to add documentation/receipts...” to upload and attach documentation/receipt as needed. Required Receipts must be uploaded and attached to the travel document in order to receive reimbursement. Original receipts should be retained by the traveler until reimbursement of expenses is received.

13. Once all travel expenses have been entered users may select “email document” from the bottom menu. This will prompt an email to the traveler. Delegates should complete this step when processing a travel document for a non-Mason individual. Verify that all information is correct and then click “Send” to send the email.
14. You will receive a message that an email has been sent. **Do not click the “Main Menu” option.** Instead, click on the browser's “back” button twice, to return to the travel summary.

15. Select “submit for approval,” review the document and then select “Continue”

16. Add Preparer Comments is desired and then click “Yes.”

17. Mason affiliated travelers will receive a Banner Workflow request to approve the travel.

18. Non-Mason individuals will not receive an electronic approval request.

19. Please note that non-Mason travelers must sign or otherwise acknowledge receipt of the Travel Reimbursement voucher. Departments may accept an email approval from the non-Mason traveler or a physical signature on the Travel Reimbursement.

**Traveler Instructions**

1. Go to [https://travel.gmu.edu](https://travel.gmu.edu) and select “Login.” Access from off campus and other remote locations requires VPN. If working as a delegate, complete the “optional” information before logging into the system.

2. Verify that personal information and Authorized Approver/Supervisor information is current and correct. To update, select “Edit User Info.”

3. Select “Enter Travel” to continue. Choose an option from the Main Menu and select continue:
   
   a. Initiate Authorization – To begin an authorization when overnight travel costs exceed $1,000 or the trip includes lodging over the basic rate
   
   b. Initiate Reimbursement – To begin a reimbursement for transportation only, a one-day trip, standard overnight trip (under $1,000)
   
   c. View/Edit Trip – To view a submitted authorization or reimbursement and to initiate a reimbursement after a completed trip when an authorization was previously approved
   
   d. View Document Status – To view the approval status of a document and/or the document history
   
   e. Print authorization/reimbursement – To print an authorization or reimbursement
   
   f. Delegate Overview – Allows view only access to documents the user has prepared on behalf of others
   
   g. Approver Overview – Allows view only access to documents the user has approved/returned for corrections
   
   h. Edit user Information – To update personal or Authorized Approver/Supervisor information for traveler
Initiate Authorization

To begin a travel authorization select “Initiate Authorization” and then continue. Identify if the trip will be within the 48 contiguous United States or an International trip outside the 48 contiguous United States (including Alaska, Hawaii, Puerto Rico, or other U.S. territories) and then select continue.

*Note: International destinations require additional information to be entered into the TRS authorization. For International trips please see section entitled **International Destination Authorization** on page 9 of this guide. Users will follow the same steps for reimbursement with domestic and international travel.*

1. The Trip name is a combination of the traveler’s NetID (pre-populated), month of travel, year of travel and the travel destination, use destination city (country if international), not conference name (Example: hstrange-June-2016-Sarasota)
2. Complete remaining items for Trip Information and verify that the “Authorized Approver/Supervisor’s NetID” field is correct. If you plan to host a business meal place a checkmark in the corresponding box.
3. Next, complete the fund/org Information. Select a department from the dropdown menu and enter the primary fund/org for the travel expenses. Once you enter a fund/org, a list of approvers will be available in the Approver field. Choose the appropriate approver from the dropdown list. If 100% funding is not available, make the appropriate notation to the right of the Department field – either a % or a $ amount. Repeat entries for other funds/orgs that may be charged for the travel.

4. If there are additional approvers who must approve the travel document, enter the approver NetID and select to approve “Before” or “After” the Authorized Approver/Supervisor in the fields provided. This will prompt an approval request email to be sent to the optional approver. *This is not a required field.*
5. Enter information related to Primary Transportation charges and select continue. Primary transportation is the mode of transit taken to the destination. *(Transportation in the local destination area or to/from the airport/train station are considered Secondary Transportation and will be entered later)* Select Continue.

6. Enter Secondary Transportation, such as vans, taxis, etc. in the next section and estimate costs. Select Continue.

7. Select a location from the drop down list. If the location is not listed, choose the “Other location NOT listed above” field and enter the city and state. Enter arrival and departure dates, if not automatically populated, and select Continue.

8. Basic and conference lodging rates for the location will be displayed. These rates do NOT include tax. All lodging information must be entered. If lodging rate is more than the basic rate, but less than the conference rate, put a check next to the conference lodging rate and provide a justification. If sharing a room, complete the Room Sharing fields.
9. Enter a description for the event including any registration fee or meals that will be provided during the conference. A link to the conference agenda may be provided in the Comments Section (Step 13 below) for approver’s review. A conference agenda that shows meals provided must be submitted with the Travel Reimbursement Voucher.

10. Complete the Car Rental section if a car rental is planned and click Continue.
11. Enter any miscellaneous expenses (e.g. tolls, taxi, luggage) into the Estimated Misc. Expenses field. Ensure that a total amount is entered in the “Total estimated misc. expense” field. If no expenses are expected leave the fields blank and click continue.
12. Review the authorization summary and make any corrections necessary by clicking “Edit Info” in the appropriate field.
13. Select “Click here to upload receipts/documentation,” to upload and attach items to the travel document. For Reimbursements, required receipts must be attached.

14. Review the upload instructions and then select “Choose File” under the Add file section. Select the file from your computer.
15. Place a check in the box, noting that you have not attached any sensitive data. Then click “Upload File.”

16. The uploaded file will be displayed as shown below. Click “Delete this file” to delete the file otherwise continue to attach documentation as noted above.
17. When all files have been attached, select “Continue.”
18. The traveler may enter comments. Please use this field to provide details or explanations of unusual expenses. A link to the conference agenda may be provided for the approver’s review.
19. Once reviewed, click the “Submit for approval” button at the bottom of the summary. The traveler will again review the information and then select “Continue.” When prompted to enter comments, the traveler may choose to enter additional comments or leave the space blank.
20. If no additional edits are necessary, select “Yes” to submit the document and begin the Banner Workflow for approvals.
21. Traveler should see the following message:

![Image of TRAVEL REQUEST George Mason University Document has been submitted for approval.](image.png)

22. The authorization may not be edited/changed when it is in the approval process.
23. Click Main Menu to return to the TRS main menu. Users will receive an email stating that the document has been submitted for approval. Once all approvals have been recorded, users will receive an email stating that the document has completed the approval process.

**View Document Status**
A traveler may wish to view document status. This allows traveler to verify that Authorization and/or Reimbursement has been approved. Users may also View travel documents and approval history.

1. Select “View Document Status” from the Main Menu and click continue.
2. All trips that have been processed in TRS will display. The Approval Status column will display “Approved” or “Pending.”
3. To view a document or check on “Pending” status click on “View Document/History”

4. In the example above, the traveler “hstrange” has initiated and submitted a document. The document has been approved by the Authorized Approver/Supervisor “mstrauch” and the fund/org approver “lkemp.”

5. To view the document click “View Document”

6. To return to the Document Status page click the “back” button.

7. To return to the Main Menu, click the “Main Menu” button.
Initiate Reimbursement

1. Open a Firefox internet browser (VPN required for remote use). Go to https://travel.gmu.edu and select “Login.”
2. Verify that personal information and Authorized Approver/Supervisor information is current and correct. To update, select “Edit User Info.” Select “Enter Travel” to continue.
3. Choose “View/Edit Trip” and locate the trip name. Click “Initiate Reimbursement” to begin.

**View/Edit Trip**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Authorizations</th>
<th>Trip Type</th>
<th>Trip Name</th>
<th>Depart Date</th>
<th>Return Date</th>
<th>Reimbursements</th>
<th>Delete Trip</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>View/Edit Authorization</td>
<td>International</td>
<td>Strange-May-2016, Bermuda</td>
<td>05/01/2016</td>
<td>05/05/2016</td>
<td>Initiate Reimbursement</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. The following message will appear: *Note: Once a reimbursement has been initiated for this trip, the authorization cannot be edited. To start the reimbursement, select “continue”. Otherwise, select “back” to review the authorization or “main menu” to view/edit the authorization.*
5. Select Continue to begin the reimbursement.
6. Update all estimated expenses to reflect the actual amount to be reimbursed based on available receipts. Select “edit info” under the appropriate section heading to edit that section. Once edits are complete, select continue to return to the summary page.
7. Select “Click here to upload receipts/documentation,” to upload and attach items to the travel document. If documents were previously attached, select “Manage Uploads.” For Reimbursements, required receipts must be attached.

**Receipts / Documentation**

Click here to upload receipts / documentation

8. Review the upload instructions and then select “Choose File” under the Add file section. Select the file from your computer.
9. Place a check in the box, noting that you have not attached any sensitive data. Then click “Upload File.”
10. The uploaded file will be displayed as shown below. Click “Delete this file” to delete the file otherwise continue to attach documentation as noted above.

11. When all files have been attached, select “Continue.”
12. Once all edits are recorded, select “Submit for approval” located at the bottom of the summary page.

13. The traveler will again review the information and then select “Continue.” When prompted to enter comments, the traveler may choose to enter additional comments or leave the space blank.
14. If no additional edits are necessary, select “Yes” to submit the document to Banner Workflow for approvals. The following pop-up will appear for additional user reference.
Travel Policies and Procedures

15. Click OK in the pop-up window. Traveler should then see the following message:

16. Click Main Menu to return to the TRS main menu. Users will receive an email stating that the document has been submitted for approval. Once all approvals have been recorded, users will receive an email stating that the document has completed the approval process.

International Destination Authorization

1. Select “Initiate International Authorization” from the Main Menu. The Trip name is a combination of the traveler’s NetID (pre-populated), month of travel, year of travel and the country(ies) - not conference name (Example: hstrange-May-2016-Bermuda)

2. Complete remaining items for Trip Information and verify that the “Authorized Approver/Supervisor’s NetID” field is correct. If you plan to host a business meal, place a checkmark in the corresponding box. Note: The Office of Research Integrity and Assurance (ORIA) must approve travel authorization in advance for all travelers to a comprehensively embargoed country/region and for ITAR travelers to a militarily embargoed country/region.
3. Next, complete the Fund/Org Information. Select a department from the dropdown menu and enter the primary fund/org for the travel expenses. After a fund/org is entered, a list of approvers will be available in the Approver field. Choose the appropriate approver from the dropdown list. If 100% funding will not be available, make the appropriate notation to the right of the Department field – either a % or a $ amount. To charge more than one fund/org, complete another entry and adjust the percent (%) appropriated to each fund/org.

4. Complete the Emergency Contact Information and U.S. Department of State Registry section.

5. If there are additional approvers who must approve the travel document, enter the approver NetID in the fields provided and select to approve “Before” or “After” the Authorized Approver/Supervisor. This will prompt an approval request email to be sent to the optional approver. This is not a required field.
6. Enter information related to Primary Transportation charges and select continue. Primary transportation is the mode of transit taken to the destination. *(Transportation in the local destination area or to/from the airport is considered Secondary Transportation and will be entered later).* When federal funds will be charged, provisions of the Fly America Act are applicable. Enter the name of ALL the air carriers into the Airline field if federal funds are allocated for the travel. **Note:** For more information on DOD funded travel, the Fly America Act and Open Skies agreement with EU, Japan, Switzerland, and Australia; please access: http://osp.gmu.edu/financial-compliance/#FAA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Primary Transportation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Air</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ticket Price: $860.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paid by traveler: No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When federal funds are used, provisions of the Fly America Act are applicable and foreign travel is restricted to a U.S. air carrier unless extenuating circumstances apply and are approved in advance by OGS. See <a href="http://osp.gmu.edu/financial-compliance/#FAA">http://osp.gmu.edu/financial-compliance/#FAA</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Airlane: American Airlines (please enter when federal funds are charged)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ticket Price: $</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paid by traveler: No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enterprise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Round trip miles:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enterprise Rental Vehicle Cost: $</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gasoline Cost: $</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*(Note: When finalizing the bill, confirm sales tax is not charged. Sales tax is not reimbursable for rentals in Virginia.)*

7. Click Continue and enter Secondary Transportation information. Secondary Transportation is transportation to/from the airport and/or transportation in the destination location. Complete fields as necessary and select Continue.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Secondary Transportation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Transportation to/from airport or other terminal:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Origin city and state (e.g., Fairfax, VA): Fairfax, VA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Destination city (e.g., Dulles Airport): Dulles Airport</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vehicle type (Note: Minimum charge for the use of a motorpool vehicle is $20.00):</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☑ Personal vehicle - Round trip/Total miles:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ Motor pool sedan - Round trip/Total miles:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ Motor pool van - Round trip/Total miles:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ Other - Please describe (e.g., taxi, shuttle, bus, etc.):</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taxi between hotel and airport in Beavercreek</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

8. Enter location information by typing a city name and choosing a country from the drop down menu. Next, view the lodging maximums and meals and incidental expenses.
(M&IE) rates by selecting “click here” after the appropriate description. Once you select “click here” a new browser will open to the U.S. Department of State website. Select the country and city from the drop down menu and record the maximum lodging and M&IE rates on the TRS form. To view the M&IE rate allocation, select “click here” to open the rate breakdown. Find the M&IE rate for the travel location and record the breakfast, lunch, dinner and incidental amounts on the TRS form.

9. For Lodging, the basic rate and the conference rate will be listed. These rates are NOT inclusive of taxes and lodging surcharges. All lodging information must be entered before continuing to the next option. If the lodging rate is more than the basic rate listed but less than the conference rate, the traveler must put a check next to the conference lodging rate and provide a justification. If sharing a room, the traveler must complete the Room Sharing fields.
10. Enter a description for the event including any registration fee or meals that will be provided during the conference. A link to the conference agenda may be provided in the Comments Section (Step 14 below) for approver’s review. Traveler must attach a conference agenda to his/her reimbursement request to verify included meals.

11. Complete the Car Rental section if a car rental is planned and then click continue.
12. Enter any miscellaneous expenses (e.g. tolls, taxi, luggage) in the Estimated Misc. Expenses field. Ensure that a total amount is entered in the “Total estimated misc. expense” field. If no expenses are expected, leave the fields blank and click continue.
13. Review the authorization summary and make any corrections necessary by clicking “Edit Info” in the appropriate field.
14. Select “Click here to upload receipts/documentation,” to upload and attach items to the travel document. For Reimbursements, required receipts must be attached.

15. Review the upload instructions and then select “Choose File” under the Add file section. Select the file from your computer.
16. Place a check in the box, noting that you have not attached any sensitive data. Then click “Upload File.”
17. The uploaded file will be displayed as shown below. Click “Delete this file” to delete the file otherwise continue to attach documentation as noted above.

18. When all files have been attached, select “Continue.”
19. The traveler may enter comments as necessary. Please use this field to provide details or explanations of unusual expenses. A link to the conference agenda may be provided for the approver’s review.
20. Once reviewed, click the “Submit for approval” button at the bottom of the summary. The traveler will again review the information and then select “Continue.” When prompted to enter comments, the traveler may choose to enter additional comments or leave the space blank.
21. If no additional edits are necessary, select “Yes” to submit the document to Banner Workflow for approvals.
22. Traveler should see the following message:

23. The traveler may not edit the authorization document while it is in the approval process.
24. Click Main Menu to return to the TRS main menu.
Approver Instructions

Authorized Approvers/Supervisors, Fund/Org Approvers and Optional Approvers must review and monitor all travel authorization and reimbursement documents before electronically approving within the TRS. Approval certifies that the travel and expenses were necessary and incurred while on official Mason business.

1. Approvers will receive an email from travel@gmu.edu when a travel document is submitted.

   Please click here to login into Banner Workflow with your Net ID and password to review/approve a travel document for trip: Inrange-June-Maryland.

   After reviewing the travel document including any previous approvals you may:

   1. Approve the document as submitted by selecting Approve this document and Complete to save your approval and send the document to the next approver.

   OR

   2. Not approve the document as submitted by selecting Return to submitter with comments and Complete to return to this document to the submitter. You will use this option to completely disapprove the travel authorization/reimbursement or to request corrections/adjustments to the travel document. Whenever this option is selected, you must use the Reason box to explain why you are returning the travel document. Examples include, "travel not approved, inadequate budget" or "this authorization not approved, please charge org xxxxxx instead of org yyyy," or other appropriate comment.

2. Approvers may click on the Workflow link in the body of the email, which will open the Banner Workflow application and prompt the user to enter his/her username (NetID) and password.

3. Approvers will select the document and review the travel information and related expenses.

4. Attached documentation may be viewed by selecting the “Click here to view supporting...” link within the travel document. Note: Off-campus approvers must use the Mason Virtual Private Network (VPN) in order to view trip documentation files. VPN may be required when connected via wireless on-campus locations.
5. Once reviewed, the approver will select one of the two options located in the “Action” box:
   a. Approve to approve the document as submitted
   b. Return to submitter with comments – to return the document to the traveler for corrections. Comments must be entered in the “Reason” box to inform the traveler of requested changes. Approver will use this option to **deny** the traveler’s request in its entirety by entering “Trip request is denied” in the “Reason” box.

6. Next, approver must choose from the three options at the bottom of the page:
   a. Complete – to save your selection and move document to next approver
   b. Save & Close – to save your work and retain the document in your Workflow folder. The document will not move to the next approver or be processed further.
   c. Cancel – to exit the document without making changes, saving or approving the document and return to the worklist

7. Once completed or returned, the traveler receives an email notification of the document status.

8. If a trip is returned, the traveler will be able to review the comments, make requested changes and resubmit. If the traveler resubmits the document, the approval process will begin again.

9. All electronic approvals/returns related to the original document will be date/time stamped at the end of document.

```
ELECTRONIC APPROVAL HISTORY:
Geraldene Nickle (gnickle), Supervisor - Approved, 02-MAY-2016, 12:34:06 PM
Cliff Shore (cshore), Fund/Org Appvr - Approved, 02-MAY-2016, 12:36:07 PM
Trvl Offc-Intl - Notified, 02-MAY-2016, 12:38:12 PM
```

The “Approver Overview” option from the main menu allows Approvers to view related documentation and approval status for trips they have taken action on.
Travel Contacts and Web Sites

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit</th>
<th>Email</th>
<th>Extension</th>
<th>Mail Stop</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Covington Travel</td>
<td>PH: 804-474-7077</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PH: 888-747-7077</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Tax Office</td>
<td><a href="mailto:inttax@gmu.edu">inttax@gmu.edu</a></td>
<td>3-2969</td>
<td>MS 4B2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3-5223</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office of Sponsored Programs</td>
<td><a href="mailto:osp@gmu.edu">osp@gmu.edu</a></td>
<td>3-4806</td>
<td>MS 4C6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purchasing Charge Card</td>
<td><a href="mailto:papadmin@gmu.edu">papadmin@gmu.edu</a></td>
<td>3-2580</td>
<td>MS 3C5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training Office</td>
<td><a href="mailto:jadams15@gmu.edu">jadams15@gmu.edu</a></td>
<td>3-5966</td>
<td>MS 4B2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travel Office</td>
<td><a href="mailto:travel@gmu.edu">travel@gmu.edu</a></td>
<td>3-2580</td>
<td>MS 3G6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uniglobe Ulti-max Travel</td>
<td>PH: 703-707-0200</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Travel-related Websites

- Fiscal Services Travel Office: [http://fiscal.gmu.edu/travel/](http://fiscal.gmu.edu/travel/)
- International Destinations: [https://aoprals.state.gov/web920/per_diem.asp](https://aoprals.state.gov/web920/per_diem.asp)
- Travel Request System: [https://travel.gmu.edu](https://travel.gmu.edu)
- U.S. State Department Travel Warnings: [https://travel.state.gov/content/passports/en/alertswarnings.html](https://travel.state.gov/content/passports/en/alertswarnings.html)
Responsible Office:

Fiscal Services

Procedures:

Detailed procedures for University Travel are available on the Fiscal Services website.

Related Law & Policy:

University Policy 2102: Food and Beverage Expenditures
University Policy 1134: University-Sponsored or University-Related International Travel

I. Scope

The policies and procedures provided herein apply to all George Mason University employees, students and all other organizations and individuals that intend to travel at university expense.

II. Policy Statement

As an Agency of the Commonwealth of Virginia, George Mason University (Mason) has a public obligation to ensure that all expenditures are essential, reasonable and support the mission of the university. All business travel expenditures must adhere to the travel regulations set forth by the Commonwealth of Virginia. The following requirements must be met in order for business travel to be reimbursable:

- Travel must be consistent with the university mission.
- Travel must be performed in the most economical manner (i.e., expenses must be necessary and reasonable).
- All expenses must be incurred while in travel status.
- Actual expenses must be reported (except for meal and incidental expense per diem).
- Expenses must not exceed the limitations imposed by the Commonwealth or Mason.
Travel expenditures are open records and subject to public review. Individuals are expected to exercise prudent judgment in performing business travel. Travelers are required to present receipts for all expenses except for meals and incidental expenses (reimbursed on a per diem basis) and transportation costs below $75 per instance.

III. Responsibilities

Travelers are responsible for performing their travel duties in conformity with the provisions of this policy and must submit legitimate and complete vouchers/imaging to support their travel reimbursement claims. Individual travelers are responsible for reviewing and approving vouchers/images if prepared by a delegate.

Principal Investigators (PIs) and Unit Administrators are responsible for reviewing award budgets and travel restrictions when sponsored research funds are charged to ensure that travel costs charged to sponsored funding are allowable. Review the Travel and Fly America Act section under Sponsored Expenditures located on the Office of Sponsored Programs (OSP) website at https://osp.gmu.edu/sponsored-expenditures/.

Authorized Approvers/Supervisors are responsible for reviewing and monitoring all travel expenses that they approve. Such approval will ensure compliance with this policy and certify that the expenses were necessary, appropriate and incurred while on official university business.

Fund/Org Approvers (fiscal officers with signature authority for a university fund or organization) are responsible for reviewing and monitoring all travel expenses that they approve. Such approval will ensure compliance with this policy and certify that the expenses were necessary, appropriate and incurred while on official university business.

Research Development, Integrity and Assurance (RDIA) is responsible for reviewing and approving international travel in advance of traveling to a comprehensively embargoed country (e.g., Cuba, Iran, North Korea, Sudan, Syria and the Crimea region of Ukraine) OR to a militarily embargoed country for a traveler who works with data controlled by the International Traffic in Arms Regulations (ITAR). A list of currently embargoed countries is available at https://www.pmddtc.state.gov/embargoed_countries/.

The University Travel Advisory Committee (UTAC) is responsible for reviewing and approving international travel in advance of traveling to countries or areas under U.S. Department of State Travel Advisories Level 3 and 4, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Level 3 warnings, or countries under comprehensive economic sanctions.

The International Tax Office is responsible for reviewing and approving travel in advance of traveling when the traveler is a non-immigrant visa holder.

The Purchasing and Accounts Payable Department is responsible for administering the provisions of this policy and providing guidance to travelers through the Travel Office.

The Controller is responsible for reviewing and providing approval/denial of any exception to the provisions of this policy. Exceptions will only be considered if submitted in advance of the travel.

IV. Travel Approval Process
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Faculty and staff may not authorize and/or approve their own travel vouchers. If a previously approved trip is cancelled, due to extenuating circumstances beyond the traveler’s control, documentation will be required and must including a Travel Reimbursement approved by the Authorized Approver/Supervisor and Fund/Org Approver. Reimbursement will only be considered on a case-by-case basis as per Commonwealth Accounting Policies and Procedures (CAPP).

**Domestic Travel**

A domestic trip where (a) a complete estimate of all travel costs is not expected to exceed $1,000 and (b) lodging costs are not expected to exceed basic rates (See section V. A-B) will be **approved verbally in advance** by the traveler’s Authorized Approver/Supervisor.

A domestic trip where (a) a complete estimate of all travel costs is expected to exceed $1,000 and/or (b) lodging costs are expected to exceed basic rates (See section V. A-D) will be **approved electronically in advance** by the traveler’s Authorized Approver/Supervisor and the associated Fund/Org Approver. The traveler or delegate must complete a Travel Authorization in the Travel Request System and receive approval prior to travel.

**International Travel**

All international travel must be **approved electronically in advance** by the traveler’s Authorized Approver/Supervisor and the associated Fund/Org Approver. The traveler or delegate must complete a Travel Authorization and receive approval prior to travel.

Research Development, Integrity and Assurance (RDIA) must approve, in advance, when international travel is:

- To a comprehensively embargoed country (e.g., Cuba, Iran, North Korea, Sudan, the Crimea region of Ukraine and Syria).
- To a militarily embargoed country (list of these countries available at: [http://pmdidt.state.gov/embargoed_countries/](http://pmdidt.state.gov/embargoed_countries/)) for a traveler who works with data controlled by the International Traffic in Arms Regulations (ITAR).

The University Travel Advisory Committee (UTAC) must approve, in advance, when international travel is:

- To countries or areas under U.S. Department of State Travel Advisories Level 3 and 4, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Level 3 warnings or countries under comprehensive economic sanctions.

Mason provides International Emergency Insurance for employees travelling on university business overseas. To obtain insurance coverage documents please complete the [International Emergency Insurance Registration Form](http://www.masonlive.com) and submit to the Office of Risk Management at least two weeks prior to your trip.

**Special Accommodations**
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Mason complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The Office of Compliance, Diversity and Ethics must certify travelers requiring special accommodations due to physical or other disabilities prior to making trip arrangements.

Group Travel

Occasionally, faculty or staff members may supervise a group of students on a university-sponsored activity that requires travel outside of the local area. In these situations, the faculty or staff member should contact the Travel Office for guidance. Travel involving Mason employees only, does not qualify as group travel and individual travelers will be responsible for their own business travel expenses.

V. Lodging

A. Basic Rates

Lodging rates are governed by the U. S. General Services Administration (GSA) and are available at https://www.gsa.gov/portal/category/104711. These rates are also embedded in Mason’s Travel Request System. The rates listed are single room rates excluding applicable taxes. Lodging taxes are fully reimbursable. Reimbursement for lodging in excess of the maximum rates will be limited to the maximum amount allowed and lodging taxes on these excessive rates will be reimbursed on a prorated basis.

B. Approval for Lodging Exceeding the Basic Rates

When circumstances and budget warrant, the Authorized Approver/Supervisor may provide advance approval for lodging up to 200% of the established basic rates (maximum rate).

Example: An employee is traveling to Richmond, VA for a conference. The GSA lodging basic rate is $139.00 per night for Richmond (City Limits), Virginia. Any per night hotel cost between $139.01 and $278.00 must be approved, electronically in advance, by the travelers Authorized Approver/Supervisor and associated Fund/Org Approver. An explanation of the circumstances justifying the lodging exception must be included with the Travel Authorization and Reimbursement.

C. More Than One Person in a Room

The Travel Authorization and Reimbursement must note with whom the room is being shared and their affiliation with Mason when two or more individuals are traveling for official business and staying in the same hotel room. The acceptable lodging rate when room sharing is the lodging rate allowable for the location, plus the cost charged by the hotel for any additional person(s) in the room not to exceed the maximum allowable rate for the location. Documentation from the hotel listing additional hotel charges for each additional person, per room, must be provided. If the additional traveler is not a business traveler, such as a partner or friend, only the single room rate may be claimed.

D. International Rates

International lodging and per diem rates are governed by the U.S. Department of State and are available at the U.S. Department of State website. Locations outside of the 48 contiguous United
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States including Alaska, Hawaii and U.S. Territories such as Puerto Rico are considered international and the rates for these locations may be found on the GSA web page. Reimbursement requests for international lodging, meals and incidental expenses (including locations outside of the 48 contiguous United States) must be accompanied by documentation of the maximum allowable rates for the dates of travel. Documentation should be uploaded and attached to the Travel Reimbursement before being submitted for approval.

E. Exceptions to Maximum Rates

In extremely rare circumstances, prevailing hotel rates exceed the maximum allowable reimbursement rate despite reasonable efforts by the traveler to locate alternatively priced accommodations. In these situations, the traveler may request an exception. A Travel Authorization, approved by the traveler’s Authorized Approver/Supervisor and Fund/Org Approver, may be submitted to the Controller for consideration. The Controller will only consider exceptions submitted to the Travel Office at least 14 days prior to the trip. An exception may be requested if individuals choose to share a non-luxury hotel room to save on lodging in high cost areas (e.g. standard room) and the nightly cost exceeds the maximum rate for the location. Exception requests should document the circumstances of the trip and must be accompanied by a fully approved Travel Authorization electronically signed by the traveler’s Authorized Approver/Supervisor and Fund/Org Approver. The request must also include a summary of at least three hotels in the vicinity including hotel name, address (including zip code) and nightly rates.

F. Alternative Lodging

Anytime lodging other than hotels and motels are used, apartments for example, additional approval is required. A Travel Authorization, approved by the traveler’s Authorized Approver/Supervisor and Fund/Org Approver, and comparison statement must be submitted to the Travel Office at least 14 days prior to the trip start date. The Travel Authorization must be approved by the Controller, in advance of the travel. The approval notice must be included with the Travel Reimbursement. Travelers are strongly advised to review all cancellation and prepayment policies prior to reserving alternative lodging. Compared to traditional hotel and motel providers, who typically allow cancellation and refunds within 24 hours of arrival, alternative lodging providers may have stricter refund rules and require prepayment of the entire stay well in advance of the travel date. Travelers assume all risk when placing travel charges on their Travel Card or personal debit/credit card (See section X.C). The university will not reimburse travelers for charges related to cancellations, no shows or travel insurance. Travelers may only seek reimbursement for lodging costs after the trip is completed. Because of concerns that these services are not regulated and do not protect users to the same extent as commercially regulated business, university employees choosing to use these services do so at their own risk. For additional information, please see the Alternative Lodging Guide.

G. Lodging Bills

A formal itemized bill must support lodging reimbursement requests. The bill must be uploaded and attached to the Travel Reimbursement. No lodging reimbursement is authorized for informal lodging arrangements such as staying with friends, colleagues or relatives.

VI. Meals and Incidental Expenses in Conjunction with an Overnight Trip
A. Per Diem Rates
Generally, travelers are paid on a per diem basis for meals and certain incidental travel expenses rather than being reimbursed for actual expenses. As with lodging, the U. S. General Services Administration (GSA) has established basic and city-specific maximum per diem rates for meals and incidental expenses. Current rates within the U.S. can be obtained from the Travel Office link at the Fiscal Services website. The incidental portion of the per diem is intended to cover such personal items as transportation to restaurants, telephone calls, laundry, and tips to baggage handlers.

B. International Per Diem Rates
Mason uses federal government travel ceilings for international lodging and per diem rates. See the U.S Department of State website for rates that apply to locations outside the United States. Reimbursement requests for international lodging, meals and incidental expenses must be accompanied by documentation of the maximum allowable rates during the period of travel for the applicable international location(s).

C. Travel Departure and Return Days
Per Commonwealth guidelines (CAPP 20335), on travel departure and return days, travelers receive 75% of the per diem meal and incidental allowance, regardless of the time of departure or return. The return day allowance is based on the rate at the location where the traveler spent the night prior to returning to the home base.

D. “No-cost” Meals
The per diem rate claimed must be reduced for all “no-cost” meals the traveler receives. This encompasses meals included in event registration fees. If a continental breakfast or reception is offered as part of the travel event and the food/timing is sufficient to serve as a meal, the traveler should reduce the per diem by the appropriate allowance. Individual meal components are provided in the per diem rate tables and built into the Travel Request System.

E. Personal Travel with Business Travel
Occasionally an employee may take a trip that includes both personal and business travel or the trip may originate/culminate at a location, other than the base location, due to personal reasons. When personal and business travel is combined, the traveler may only be reimbursed for expenses equal to or less than the cost incurred if originating/culminating at the traveler’s base location (excluding personal travel). In addition, when the cost of the additional personal travel exceeds the business travel expense, travelers may not use any form of Mason payment (Mason P-Card or Travel Agency billing). The traveler is required to add an annotation in the “comments” section of the Travel Authorization and Reimbursement that the trip includes both personal and business travel. Specific dates of personal travel must be noted. Specific instructions are available in the Personal Travel with Business Travel Guide.

VII. Transportation
A. Commercial Air Carrier
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Generally, airline travel cannot exceed the lowest rates charged for nonrefundable tourist/coach fare with a reasonable number of stops given the distance traveled. **Justification is required for purchase of refundable tickets.** Some airlines have created a higher level of coach class services that charge a premium for certain preferable seats, priority boarding, advance seat selection and/or other amenities. Such upgrades in the coach seating area are considered enhancements to the coach fare and are not reimbursable. When federal funds are used, provisions of the Fly America Act are applicable and foreign travel is restricted to a U.S. air carrier unless extenuating circumstances apply or there is an Open Skies agreement. For additional information on federally funded travel please see the Travel and Fly America Act section under Sponsored Expenditures at [https://osp.gmu.edu/sponsored-expenditures/](https://osp.gmu.edu/sponsored-expenditures/).

Travelers should use the Purchasing Charge Card (P-Card) to purchase airline and rail tickets once the trip is authorized and approved. Appropriate documentation must be retained for three years by the cardholder (10 years for charges to a sponsored fund). Alternatively, a traveler may purchase airline tickets using his/her Travel Charge Card or a personal credit/debit card; however, reimbursement will not be made until after the travel has taken place (See section X.C). Documentation that validates the mode and class of travel is required for all air and rail reimbursements. When procuring airline tickets or other travel services using the Internet, specific documentation is required (See section XI). Rates for airline tickets typically may not exceed non-refundable coach class.

A traveler’s Authorized Approver/Supervisor may approve business class travel under the following circumstances:

- The business class fare does not cost more than the lowest available tourist/coach fare (a comparison must be provided showing the business and coach class fares),
- The travel is to western Europe and the business meeting is conducted within three hours of landing,
- The travel is for a transoceanic intercontinental trip of more than eight hours, or
- The traveler pays the difference.

Some airlines charge additional fees for services, such as checked baggage, previously included in the ticket price. These fees are reimbursable, with a receipt, when limits must be exceeded for legitimate business purposes. Written justification must be provided when requesting reimbursement for two or more checked bags.

**B. Personal Vehicle**

Travelers may be reimbursed for the use of a personal vehicle while on university business. Total reimbursement for vehicle use, lodging, and meals and incidental expenses, however, may not exceed the alternative cost of travel by the most economical air or rail routing.

**Rate**

The “personal” mileage rate may be used in any of the following situations (1) The travel distance is 280 miles or less per day, (2) The travel distance is over 280 miles and the use of the personal car is cost beneficial (a copy of the Enterprise Trip Calculator from the State’s Office of Fleet Management website must be uploaded and attached to Travel Reimbursement voucher), and (3) An
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Enterprise rental vehicle is not available (a copy of the page indicating vehicle is sold out must be uploaded and attached to Travel Reimbursement voucher).

Trips that do not qualify for the “personal” mileage rate are reimbursed at the lower “fleet” rate. Mileage rate information may be found on the IRS website at https://www.irs.gov/tax-professionals/standard-mileage-rates.

Commuter Mileage

Round-trip mileage traveled routinely and directly by an employee between their residence and assigned Mason work location on a scheduled workday is considered commuter mileage. Commuter mileage and other commuting costs (e.g. tolls, metro fees) incurred on a normal workday are considered a personal expense and are not reimbursable. Commuter mileage must be deducted from all mileage reimbursements in the Travel Request System when the employee chooses to return/depart from any location other than the assigned work location (e.g. home).

C. Rental Vehicle

Mason maintains a contract with Enterprise Leasing to provide vehicles for short-term travel by Mason employees. Reimbursement may be made for car rental expense and gasoline charges. The traveler must select the most economical type of vehicle available that meets their needs and acquire any commercial rate or government discount available when the vehicle is rented. Travelers must refuel rental vehicles before returning to the rental contractor. Reimbursement will be based on receipts provided for fuel used. In no instance should the traveler enter into a “Fuel Agreement” or pay for fuel in advance when renting a vehicle. Traveler will not be reimbursed for any charges related to a “Fuel Agreement” or advanced fuel purchase charged by the rental company.

Insurance on Rental Vehicles

The Commonwealth provides a statewide self-insurance plan for employees. Therefore, employees will not be reimbursed for rental car insurance for locations within the United States. Individuals traveling outside the territorial United States (including Canada, Puerto Rico) are required to purchase and will be reimbursed for liability damage waiver and collision damage waiver insurance.

D. Parking Fees and Toll Charges

Reimbursement is provided for parking fees and toll charges incurred. A receipt is required when an individual claim exceeds $75. Parking at Mason campuses will not be reimbursed to current employees or students.

E. Taxi and Shuttle Van Fares

Reimbursement is provided for taxi and shuttle van fares between airports and hotels. A receipt is required when an individual claim exceeds $75.

F. Local Area Public Transportation

Reimbursement is provided for metro, bus or other public transportation fares in the local area when expense is not incurred as part of the employee’s normal commute between their residence...
and assigned Mason work location.

VIII. Other Requirements and Limitations
Other reimbursable expenses may be reimbursed at the discretion of the travelers department or unit. The unallowable expense list is not all-inclusive. Travelers should use prudent judgment and remember that all travel expense accounts are open to the public and must be able to sustain the test of public review.

A. Other Reimbursable Expenses

1. Business telephone calls
2. Facsimiles
3. Data transmission charges
4. Internet charges necessary for business activity
5. Country specific expenses such as visas, vaccinations and airport fees
6. Registration fees (no more than 180 days in advance)

B. Unallowable Expenses.

1. Lost or stolen articles
2. Alcoholic beverages
3. Damage to personal vehicles, clothing, or other items
4. Services to gain entry to a locked vehicle
5. Movies charged to hotel bills
6. All expenses related to the personal negligence of the traveler, such as fines
7. Travel Insurance (Personal injury or loss, trip interruption/cancellation, etc.)
8. Entertainment expenses
9. Towing charges
10. Expenses for children, spouses, and companions while on travel status

C. Business Meals

Business meals occurring in the local area or during overnight travel may be reimbursed if the conditions for business meals established in University Policy Number 2102, “Food and Beverages Expenditures” are satisfied. A business meal may include food and beverages provided at business meetings that involve substantive and bona fide business discussions with an outside party, or parties, in attendance. The primary beneficiaries of such functions are the non-Mason attendees. As such, the ratio of Mason to non-Mason attendees must be appropriate to the circumstances of the event. Business meals are not an allowable charge on federally sponsored funds. An original itemized
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receipt must accompany reimbursement requests for business meals. See University Policy Number 2102 at the Fiscal Services website.

D. Grants and Contracts

The dollar limitations described above also apply to travel conducted in support of grants and contracts sponsored by outside agencies unless the underlying grant or contract specifically provides different reimbursement policies or rates. Authorizations and Reimbursements applying this exception must provide a statement to this effect signed by the Principal Investigator and the Associate VP for Research Operations.

E. Direct Deposit of Reimbursements

Reimbursement for travel will be made by direct deposit. To establish a direct deposit bank account (Accounts Payable Deposit) in Banner Self-Serve (Patriot Web) please see the Direct Deposit Guide.

F. Internet Charges Necessary for Business Activity

Travelers are permitted to incur charges to use the internet at hotels, airports or other locations provided that internet access is necessary for business activity. To be reimbursed for internet charges, travelers must provide an explanation of the internet usage, such as checking and responding to email or conducting internet-based research. The explanation may be written on the itemized hotel bill or internet provider receipt. Internet charges to sponsored funds are allowable only when directly related to the specific grant or contract.

IX. Local Area Travel Expenses

A. Transportation in the Local Area

Non-commuting travel expenses may be reimbursed when individuals must travel in the local area on official business. This includes trips between university campuses or to other locations in the vicinity to attend meetings, training classes, to deliver paperwork, etc. Travel may be by personal vehicle or local common carrier (e.g., metro, bus, etc.). Commercial parking fees and toll charges may also be reimbursed. Charges to park on Mason property (i.e., university decals, passes and parking meters) are not reimbursable. Normal commuter mileage must be noted in the Travel Request System when travel begins or ends at a location other than the employee’s assigned Mason work location. Normal commuting mileage and expenses are not reimbursable; only the net additional mileage or expenses may be claimed.

B. Lodging in the Local Area

An employee is generally not reimbursed for lodging within 25 miles of his/her work place, office or official station. If extenuating circumstances and budget permit, an employee may request an exception and obtain advanced approval for lodging in the local area. A Travel Authorization, approved by the traveler’s Authorized Approver/Supervisor and Fund/Org Approver, may be submitted to the Controller for consideration. To request an exception please contact the Travel Office at least 14 days prior to reserving local area lodging for an employee. No approval will be given after the trip has taken place. Local area lodging paid for guests of the university (e.g.,
employment candidates) are considered travel expenses and should be included with the estimated cost of the trip if the trip is expected to exceed $1,000. Sponsoring departments should work with the Purchasing Office to arrange for guest lodging and for the university to be billed directly by the vendor. Contracts with local area hotels are listed on the Travel Office webpage at the Fiscal Services website. Visitors are limited to the appropriate local contracted hotel/motel rate when, in special situations, they obtain their own lodging.

X. Methods of Payment

A. Purchasing Charge Card (P-Card)

Travelers may utilize the Mason small Purchase Charge Card (P-Card) to purchase common carrier transportation (air or rail tickets) and conference registration fees for themselves or others within their unit once the trip is authorized and approved. No other individual business travel expenses may be purchased with the P-Card. Contact the Travel Office for information on group travel purchases as defined in this policy.

B. Travel Card

Full-time employees who travel more than once per fiscal year are authorized to obtain a Mason Travel Card. The Travel Card is an individual liability credit card and it is the traveler’s responsibility to pay the full card balance on a monthly basis regardless of whether or not a reimbursement has been received. All authorized business travel expenses may be purchased using the Travel Card (e.g. hotel, meals, transportation, etc.). Mason will not reimburse individuals for expenditures paid in advance, where the travel does not occur. Applications may be obtained from the Travel Office.

C. Personal Credit/Debit Card or Currency

Travelers may utilize their own, individual liability personal credit/debit card or currency to secure business travel. Mason does not issue travel advances for domestic travel. Mason does not reimburse for incurred business travel expenses until the trip has been completed and an approved Travel Reimbursement has been submitted electronically. Mason will not reimburse individuals for personal credit/debit card fees associated with securing business travel (e.g. interest charges, overdraft fees) or for expenditures paid in advance, where the travel did not occur.

D. Travel Advances

Mason employees traveling on official university business for group travel or to international destinations where credit cards may not be accepted may request a travel advance. Travel Advance instructions are available on the Fiscal Services webpage under Forms and Instructions.

XI. Using the Internet to Purchase Travel Services

When travel services are purchased using the Internet, the following supplemental documents must be submitted with the Travel Reimbursement voucher: 1) All pages of the confirmation document generated when the reservation is complete showing total cost and class of service (e.g. coach, business class) for electronic tickets. 2) Passenger receipt (ticket stub) when a paper ticket is issued.
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XII. Dates

A. Effective Date:
This policy will become effective upon the date of approval by the Senior Vice President for Administration and Finance and the Provost and Executive Vice President.

B. Date of Most Recent Review:
February 15, 2018

XIII. Timetable for Review
This policy shall be reviewed and revised, if necessary, annually to become effective at the beginning of the University’s fiscal year, unless otherwise noted.

XIV. Signatures

Approved:

_________________________  __________________
Senior Vice President for Administration and Finance  Date

Approved:

_________________________  __________________
Provost and Executive Vice President  Date
Electronic Commerce Policy

Security Requirements - In order to procure goods or services through the Internet, the vendor must have a Secure Socket Layer (SSL) Version 2.0 or greater. It is the agency’s responsibility to ensure the vendor meets the SSL 2.0 requirement before placing an order and using the SPCC as a method of payment. To ensure the vendor has a SSL, the Address Window must start with https://. This may not occur until the payment information is requested. For information about the vendor’s security certification, check under Help on your browser’s tool bar. Buying through the Internet might subject an agency or institution to the vendor’s terms and conditions if no MOU exists. Agencies are encouraged to establish a MOU with vendors whom they conduct business with on a regular basis. See DGS/DPS website for sample MOUs. (at a future date)
The Enterprise Trip Calculator must be uploaded and attached to the Travel Reimbursement when the per day mileage is expected to exceed 280 miles per day. If Personal Vehicle is the lowest cost, attach a copy of the Trip Calculator to the Travel Reimbursement in order to receive the higher personal rate mileage reimbursement. If a Trip Calculator is not attached and mileage exceeds 280, then reimbursement will be made at the lower fleet rate.

Enterprise Trip Calculator instructions:

- At least one day before the trip, open the Enterprise Trip Calculator at https://dgs.virginia.gov/fleet/travel-planning/trip-calculator/.
- Enter the five items of information requested for the trip
  - Traveler's name
  - Mason _________ (department)
  - Destination
  - Number of miles for the trip
  - Number of days for the trip*
    - *days are 24 hour days, for example 10 a.m. Monday-10 a.m. Tuesday is 1 day.

If the cost of an Enterprise vehicle displayed is less than the cost of a personal vehicle
• select “Go to Enterprise Reservation Site”
• select “G”
• select George Mason University (NOT George Mason University-Motorpool)
• select campus location to reserve at that location; OR
• select Business Use –All Locations to reserve at another location, perhaps a location near the traveler’s home
• enter trip dates and times
• select a vehicle included in the agreement at the state contract rate
• $32 compact $33 intermediate $61 minivan
• provide the requested information
  o renter’s name, phone number, email
  o Department name (fund/org not required)
• select continue
• select book now to complete the reservation

Note: The cost of an Enterprise vehicle at the contract rate as well as gas expense related to the trip is fully reimbursable. Sales tax will display during the reservation process and is reimbursable when paid with a personal credit/debit card.

Travelers may call the telephone number above “we’ll pick you up” to arrange for a pick up. Cars are provided with partial or full tanks of gas and must be returned with at least the same amount. Do not enter into a “Fuel Agreement” with any car rental company. If you prefer a full tank, specify this when you call. If charges for refueling are assessed by Enterprise, these will not be reimbursed to the traveler. The traveler must refuel the vehicle before returning to Enterprise.
Getting Started with the Travel Request System (TRS)

The Travel Request System (TRS) is an online system available to faculty, staff, students, candidates, guest speakers and others who travel at Mason’s expense. Since it is a stand-alone application that is independent of Banner, each user will enter and then update as necessary his/her department information, Authorized Approver/Supervisor information, home address, etc. The TRS design includes a delegate feature in which a traveler may designate another Mason staff member, who is registered in the TRS, to prepare electronic travel authorizations and reimbursements on his/her behalf.

First time users: Register and establish a delegate

1. Open a Firefox browser and enter travel.gmu.edu. Note: Off-campus users must use the Mason Virtual Private Network (VPN) in order to access the TRS.
2. Select the gray Login box
3. Enter your Mason NETID and password, the same used to log-in to Mason email and Patriot Web
4. Select first time user
5. Complete personal, department and Authorized Approver/Supervisor information and select Submit
6. To establish a delegate, select Delegate Info at the bottom of the screen
7. Follow the prompts in the Add Delegate section to select and add one or more delegates
8. If you would like to add a delegate whose name does not appear in the dropdown, select other and enter his/her G#
9. Select Save changes at the bottom of the page

The selected delegate(s) will be able to log in to the TRS, and complete travel authorizations and reimbursements by entering your email address in the “I am acting as a delegate for” section of the TRS home page.

Previous users: Update information and establish/change a delegate

1. Open a Firefox browser and enter travel.gmu.edu. Note: Off-campus users must use the Mason Virtual Private Network (VPN) in order to access the TRS.
2. Select the gray Login box (unless acting as a delegate)
3. Enter your Mason Net ID and password, the same used to log-in to Mason email and Patriot Web.
4. Select login
5. Select Edit User Info to review and update personal information. If department information is no longer current, use the drop down to select the appropriate department. Select Save changes at the bottom of the page
6. Select Delegate Info at the bottom of the screen to review delegates. Follow the prompts to remove or add delegates.

7. If you would like to add a delegate whose name does not appear in the dropdown, select other and enter his/her G#

8. Select Save changes at the bottom of the page

The selected delegate(s) will be able to log in to the TRS, and complete travel authorizations and reimbursements by entering your email address in the “I am acting as a delegate for” section of the TRS home page.
TRS Document Upload Guide

Travelers and delegates may upload documentation to Authorizations and Reimbursements within the Travel Request System (TRS). Travel Approvers must review receipts/documentation to ensure accuracy and Policy compliance before taking action on a document. Receipts must be uploaded and attached to the Reimbursement Voucher in order to receive a reimbursement from the Travel Office.

Instructions

Documentation may be uploaded individually by category (multiple files) or collectively in a single upload (one file). Note: Original documentation should be retained by traveler/delegate until reimbursement is received.

Please order documentation as follows:

- Primary transportation (airfare, train, Enterprise receipt, etc.)
- Secondary transportation (taxi, shuttle bus, etc.)
- Itemized lodging bills (in date order when multiple locations are visited)
- Conference registration fees
- Miscellaneous

Please follow the guidance below to prepare documents before attempting to upload.

- File may not exceed 5MB in size and the following formats are acceptable:
  - .gif, .jpg, .bmp, .pdf, .docx, .xlsx.
  - Maximum file name length is 100 characters.
  - File names may not contain any special characters (!, ?, -, /).
  - The underscore character (_) must be used between each word in the file name.
  - File names should identify the attachment. For example, a hotel receipt for a single location trip could be Hotel.pdf. A trip that includes multiple locations should list the lodging name, location and date(s) Marriot_NYC_1152016.pdf.

Please do not upload any document that contains sensitive data. Social Security Numbers (SSN) and/or complete credit/debit card numbers must be removed prior to upload. The last four digits of the credit card number may continue to be present. Please double check that documents prepared for upload do not contain sensitive data. Do not upload a W-9 form as it may include a SSN.

Steps for Traveler/Delegate

1. Prepare documents as described above.
2. On the Trip Summary screen select “Click here to upload receipts/documentation.”
   *Note: If documents were previously added select “Manage Uploads” to add additional documents or delete existing documents.*

   **Receipts / Documentation**
   
   Click here to upload receipts / documentation

3. Review the upload instructions and then select “Choose File” under the Add file section. Select the file from your computer.

4. Place a check in the box, noting that you have not attached any sensitive data. Then click “Upload File.”

5. The uploaded file will be displayed as shown below. Click “Delete this file” to delete the file otherwise continue to attach documentation as noted above.

6. When all files have been attached, select “Continue.”

7. Click “Submit for Approval,” review the travel document then select “Continue”. Add Preparer Comments as necessary and then click “Yes” to begin the approval process.

8. User may check on document approval status and view document attachments by accessing the “View Document Status” option from the TRS Main Menu.

Steps for Approvers

1. Login to Workflow to access the travel document.
2. In Workflow select “Click here to view supporting documentation...,” a new window will open with the attachments. Click each attachment to open and view the item. When finished viewing attachments, close the new window and return to Workflow.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Authorized Approver: Geraldine Kirchner-Nickle</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TRS Trip Name: wftest01-April-2017-Sudan</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*[Click here to view supporting trip documentation/receipts in a new browser tab.]*

3. Take action on the document (approve or return for corrections w/comments) and then click “Complete” on the bottom menu.
**TRS Quick Guide**

All Travel Authorizations and Reimbursements (except for team/group travel) must be processed through Mason’s electronic travel resource, the Travel Request System (TRS) [https://travel.gmu.edu/](https://travel.gmu.edu/). The TRS must be accessed on the [VPN network](https://travel.gmu.edu/). Mileage, per diem rates and lodging maximums are embedded in the system, and calculations are performed based on travel dates and location(s) entered. The TRS design includes a delegate feature in which a traveler, department chair or supervisor may designate a Mason staff member to complete electronic Travel Authorizations and Reimbursements on behalf of others. Additional delegate information is available in [Getting Started Guide](https://travel.gmu.edu/).

**Trip Type, Approvals and Documentation**

All Mason funded travel requires approval prior to the start of the trip. The traveler or delegate must upload documentation, such as receipts, to the Reimbursement request. Approvers must view the attached documents/receipts before approving/returning a document to the traveler or delegate. **All required receipts must be uploaded and attached to the Travel Reimbursements in order to be processed by the Travel Office.** Travelers should retain original receipts until reimbursement has been received. Additional guidance on uploading documents may be found on the [TRS Document Upload Guide](https://travel.gmu.edu/).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trip Type - Determining Factors</th>
<th>Required Approvals</th>
<th>Examples of Documentation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Standard Overnight:</strong> Where overnight accommodation cost is less than $1,000 AND Lodging is at the basic rate</td>
<td>Authorized Approver/Supervisor <strong>AND</strong> Fund/Org Approver</td>
<td>~Airline, Baggage Fee, Lodging and Registration receipt(s) ~Shuttle, Taxi, Cab receipt (if over $75) ~Conference or meeting Agenda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>One Day Trip:</strong> Where no overnight accommodation or per diem is used AND cost is less than $1,000</td>
<td>Authorized Approver/Supervisor <strong>AND</strong> Fund/Org Approver</td>
<td>~Rental car and gas receipt ~Registration receipt ~Conference or meeting Agenda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Transportation Only:</strong> Where only transportation cost(s) are being requested</td>
<td>Authorized Approver/Supervisor <strong>AND</strong> Fund/Org Approver</td>
<td>~Mileage calculation/print out ~Metro, Shuttle or Rental car receipt</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The following Domestic* trip types require **Oral approval prior to trip start date. A Travel Authorization in TRS is not required.** After the trip completion, a Reimbursement request may be submitted in TRS for actual expenses.

- **Extended Trip:** Domestic* trip where cost is $1,000 or more AND/OR Lodging is above basic rate**
  - Authorized Approver/Supervisor **AND** Fund/Org Approver
  - ~Airline, Baggage Fee, Lodging and Registration receipt(s) ~Shuttle, Taxi, Cab receipt (if over $75) ~Conference or meeting Agenda

- **International Trip:** Travel to Hawaii, Alaska or other location outside of the contiguous U.S.
  - Authorized Approver/Supervisor **AND** Fund/Org Approver
  - ~Airline, Baggage Fee, Lodging and Registration receipt(s) ~Shuttle, Taxi, Cab receipt (if over $75) ~Conference or meeting Agenda ~Currency conversions
International Trip: Travel to comprehensively embargoed country, a militarily embargoed country when working with ITAR data, countries or areas under US State Dept. Travel Advisories or CDC Level 3 & 4, or countries under comprehensive economic sanctions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Traveler is a nonimmigrant VISA holder</th>
<th>Authorized Approver/Supervisor AND Fund/Org Approver AND Office of Research Integrity and Assurance (RDIA) AND/OR University Travel Advisory Committee (UTAC)</th>
<th>~Airline, Baggage Fee, Lodging and Registration receipt(s) ~Shuttle, Taxi, Cab receipt (if over $75) ~Conference or meeting Agenda ~Currency conversions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

*Domestic includes the contiguous United States only and does not include Alaska or Hawaii. Travel to Alaska, Hawaii, Puerto Rico or other U.S. territories is considered International Travel.

**Overnight travel at any dollar amount (more than, less than or equal to $1,000) that includes lodging costs over the basic rates requires written approval in advance of the travel.

Complete a Travel Authorization

1. Open a Firefox internet browser (VPN required for remote use), Go to https://travel.gmu.edu and login. Note: Delegates will enter the Traveler’s email, select the Traveler’s status and submit. Delegate will then be asked to Login.
2. Select Enter Travel, then Initiate Authorization and click the Continue button.
3. Select Trip Type (Extended or International) and click the Continue button.
4. Enter Trip Information. Authorized Approver/Supervisor’s Net ID - will automatically populate, but may be changed if needed.
5. Enter Fund/Org Information and choose Approver - select department from the drop-down list; enter the fund or org to be charged and select Approver. If charging multiple funds/orgs, indicate either the dollar amount or percentage to be charged to each fund/org.
6. If needed, enter Optional Approver’s Net ID and choose “Before” or “After” Authorized Approver/Supervisor.
7. Enter Primary Transportation. Enter the air carrier when traveling internationally charging Federal funds.
8. Enter Secondary Transportation for Origin City and Destination facility. Enter a description when choosing Other.
9. Enter Location by selecting from drop-down list; if not included in the drop-down select other location NOT listed above, type in city and select state.
10. Enter Lodging – rates display based on the location. If you are choosing the conference lodging rate, provide an explanation, e.g. conference hotel. For international locations/rates, follow links.
11. If room sharing, enter additional traveler name and identify if individual is a Mason employee.
12. Enter Event name or description. Enter meals provided, except for travel days
13. Enter Car Rental if applicable
14. Enter Estimated Miscellaneous Expenses.
15. Review information, select Edit Info to edit any section. Edits may be made to the authorization any time prior to submitting for approval; you may exit the system and then log back in to make edits.
16. Select Upload receipts/documentation to attached documents to travel authorization when required.
17. Use Comments section to provide clarification or additional information.
18. Select the Submit for Approval button to begin the Workflow approval process.
19. Select Continue and then Yes. Additional comments may be entered under Preparer Comments.
20. Travel is not authorized until all required approvals have been received.

Completing a Travel Reimbursement

1. Open a Firefox internet browser (VPN required for remote use), Go to https://travel.gmu.edu and login (note delegate login above)
2. Select Enter Travel. For Reimbursement only trips select “Initiate Reimbursement”, enter trip details then proceed to Step 5.
3. For trips where a TRS Authorization was required and submitted, select View/Edit Trip.
   - All trips will be displayed
   - Select Initiate Reimbursement next to Trip Name to begin or View/Edit Reimbursement to update an existing reimbursement.
4. Edit section(s) based on actual travel costs by selecting blue Edit Info links. Enter new and/or revised information and select Continue.
5. Select Upload receipts/documentation to add ALL required receipts and additional documentation. Note file upload requirements before attempting to attach documentation. Document Upload Guide.
6. After edits are completed, scroll down and select Submit for Approval to begin the Workflow process.
7. Select Yes and then Continue. Additional comments may be entered under “Preparer Comments.”
   Note: Traveler/delegate will receive an email stating that the approval process has begun. Another email will be sent once the document has received all required approvals.

Submitting Travel Expense Reimbursement Voucher
1. The Authorized Approver/Supervisor and/or Fund/Org Approver must verify that all required receipts have been attached to the reimbursement request before approving the document in Workflow.
2. Once all approvals are received the Travel Office will receive the reimbursement request and view the attached receipts for accuracy and Policy compliance.
3. Original receipts/documentation should be retained by the traveler until AFTER reimbursement has been received.
   If the Travel Office is not able to read/view a receipt or if documentation is missing the traveler/delegate may be asked to submit the original receipt before a reimbursement is generated to the traveler.
APPENDIX G

To access the electronic version of the form please visit http://osp.gmu.edu/wp-content/uploads/FAA-DecisionTree-072117.pdf.

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George Mason University “FLY AMERICA AND OPEN SKIES AGREEMENTS” DECISION TREE

Travel within the U.S. You must fly on a U.S. flag airline unless your travel circumstances qualify for an exemption^{1} as noted in the Fly America Act.

---

Are you flying between the U.S. and a foreign country on federal funds?

**No**

The Fly America Act and Open Skies Agreements only applies to Federally funded awards. Review your non-federally funded award for travel restrictions.

---

**Yes**

Are you traveling to a foreign country funded by the Secretary of Defense (DOD) or Secretary of a military dept. such as the Air Force, Army, Navy, or DARPA?

---

**Yes**

You are NOT permitted to take advantage of the Open Skies Agreements. You MUST fly on a U.S. flag airline^{2} unless you qualify for an exemption^{1} as noted in the Fly America Act.

---

**No**

Are you traveling to or through a European Union (EU) country, Iceland, or Norway? This includes flights that originate, arrive, or have a stop-over in the EU.

---

**Yes**

You MAY fly on a U.S. flag airline^{2} if traveling on a EU, Norwegian, or Icelandic airline complete an exception form^{3}.

---

**No**

Are you traveling between the:

A) U.S. and Australia?

B) U.S. and Japan

C) U.S. and Switzerland?

---

**Yes**

Does the government have a published City-Pair airfare rate for your travel route?

**Check here: City Pair Program**

Enter airport code "WAS" if traveling to or from the DC area. (GMU travelers cannot use City-Pair)

---

**No**

Are you traveling between the U.S. and other foreign countries?

---

**Yes**

You MUST fly on a U.S. flag airline^{2} unless you qualify for an exemption^{1} as noted in the Fly America Act.

---

**No**

Are you traveling between the U.S. and foreign countries?

---

**Yes**

You MUST fly on a U.S. flag airline^{2} unless you qualify for an exemption^{1} as noted in the Fly America Act.

---

^{1} Click here to complete the "Certification of Exception to Fly America Act" form.

^{2} Service performed by U.S. flag airline, as indicated on ticket, or under code-sharing arrangement which identifies the U.S. flag airline's designator code and flight number on ticket document. For example United Airlines UA708 operated by "Thai Airline".

See page 2 for travel outside the U.S.  Revised 7/21/17
George Mason University “FLY AMERICA AND OPEN SKIES AGREEMENTS” DECISION TREE

Are you traveling between any two points outside the U.S. funded by the Secretary of Defense (DOD) or Secretary of a military dept. such as the Air Force, Army, Navy, or DARPA?

Yes ➔ You MUST fly on a U.S. flag airline¹ unless you qualify for an exemption¹ as noted in the Fly America Act.

No ➔

Do you reside in the U.S.?

Yes ➔ You MUST fly on a U.S. flag airline¹ unless you qualify for an exemption¹ as noted in the Fly America Act.

No ➔ You MAY fly a U.S. flag airline², EU¹, Norwegian¹, Icelandic¹, Australian¹, Japanese¹ or Swiss¹ airline. The City Pair Program does not apply.

¹ Click here to complete the “Certification of Exception to Fly America Act” form.
² Service performed by U.S. flag airline, as indicated on ticket, or under code-sharing arrangement which identifies the U.S. flag airline’s designator code and flight number on ticket document. For example United Airlines UA708 operated by “Thai Airline”.