

## NJIT Travel Policy

Policy Amended as of August 30, 2018

### I. Policy Statement

This policy pertains to faculty, staff and students who incur travel expenses while on university approved business. The university will reimburse travelers for reasonable, necessary, appropriate and approved travel expenses, as defined, while performing university business consistent with full compliance of applicable Federal and State regulations, grant and contractual obligations, and other university policies.

#### 1. Guiding Principle:

All approved travel expenses are the responsibility of, and granted at the discretion of, department heads and area Vice Presidents as defined in this Travel Policy. Travelers and approvers have respective roles and responsibilities relative to submitting and approving travel related expenses. Travelers should neither gain nor lose personal funds as a result of university business travel, and are expected to be prudent when incurring travel expenses.

#### 2. General Considerations:

*Sponsored Projects and Programs:* University regulations apply to all grant or contract funded travel unless there are special restrictions or guidelines from the sponsor. Refer to the sponsor guidelines for specific compliance requirements. Questions on sponsored travel should be directed to the university's [Office of Research](#).

Federal policy, [Uniform Guidance 2 CFR 200.474](#), addresses travel expenses specifically and this policy is designed to comply with the required standards. An individual's travel can only be paid on a federally-sponsored award if the participation of the individual is necessary for the award and the costs are a direct result of the individual's travel for the federally sponsored award.

- Documentation should be maintained clarifying why the particular person is traveling, why the travel is necessary and how it benefited the project.
- Travelers should confirm the eligibility of grant-funded travel with the appropriate grant accountant prior to incurring costs.

Where applicable, consider video conferencing or web conferencing as an alternative to travel.

*Accidents, thefts, and other crimes* while traveling on university business must be reported immediately to the proper authorities, consistent with local/state laws. In addition, these issues must be reported to the university's [Department of Public Safety](#) at (973) 596-3120, the [Department of Risk Management](#), and to the traveler's home department as soon as possible.

## II. Policy Eligibility

### University Faculty, Staff and Students

Prior to making travel reservations, **all employees** must comply with the State Ethics Commission requirement and complete a Travel Pre-Approval Request Report through Chrome River, the university's online travel expense management system, in order to receive travel reimbursement upon return to campus.

University faculty, staff and students are eligible to receive expense reimbursements for travel provided they occur while conducting university approved business away from their normal work site. Approved dates of travel are any day of the week as deemed necessary for business purposes. Eligible travel destinations are those which are not the employee's typical worksite location, even if that location is not at the university.

Expenses incurred while traveling will be considered for reimbursement when they are necessary to achieve the objectives of the program, project or task. The traveler and respective supervisor, PI, responsible person for the index/fund must ensure travel is appropriate, reasonable, and necessary. The traveler's approver (1-up supervisor), in accordance with this policy and the procedures established within his or her college, division, or department, must authorize all university business travel. Under no circumstances may an individual approve his or her own travel or travel expenses.

All expense reimbursements submitted must be approved by the traveler's supervisor, and the index/fund owner. **Approvers** are to review travel expenses for reasonableness, necessity, and appropriateness to allow for reimbursement. **Reasonable expenses** are not excessive and are incurred for the primary benefit of university business or by the terms of federally or privately sponsored agreements.

Reimbursement of travel expenses requires proof of payment documentation indicating that the traveler has settled the bill in full with the service provider. This can be a printed or electronic receipt.

- Travel expenses generally include conference fees, travel to and from the meeting location, hotel, and meals for which the employee or student is paying while traveling.

Exceptions to the travel policy must meet a valid business need and must be properly documented. These expenses will only be reimbursed when and if approved by the area Vice President.

Travelers may keep all rewards related to travel (e.g., Delta Sky Miles, Marriot Rewards, etc.). However, enrollment fees for these programs are a personal expense and are not eligible for reimbursement. Travelers will not be reimbursed for the value of any personal points used for business travel.

If personal travel is combined with university business travel, only the business portion of the trip is an allowable expense. Personal expenses should be paid for using personal credit cards or other methods that do not result in the university paying for the personal expense.

## III. Application of Policy

### 1. PRE-TRAVEL PLANNING

- a. Pre-Travel NJ State Ethics Commission Form

In advance of booking travel or incurring any travel-related expenses, all travelers are required to complete the online Travel Pre-Approval Request Report via Chrome River.

- b. Pre-Travel Budget Verification

The traveler is responsible for coordinating with the appropriate department to ensure that funds are available. All necessary travel documents (i.e. conference agenda) must be in

place prior to travel.

c. Pre-Travel Reservations

Travelers are encouraged to use the University's preferred **Travel Management Company** to book air travel and lodging. To the extent possible, travelers should plan at least 30 days ahead, explore multiple transportation and lodging options, and complete their arrangements in the most cost effective manner as far in advance as possible.

Conference Registration

- If a conference or other event requires the registration fee to be paid by credit card as the only acceptable form of payment, these fees may be reimbursed prior to travel.

Transportation to and from a Conference

- To optimize purchase discounts and travel times, travel should be booked at least 30 days in advance.
- Travelers are encouraged to use the University's preferred **Travel Management Company** for airline reservations. Travelers must purchase an economy class airfare that meets the needs of the business trip. Travelers may upgrade the level of service at their own expense or by using their "frequent flyer" points.
- When using Federal Grant Funds or Federal Grant Match funds for air travel, travelers must follow the Fly America Act and the Open Skies Agreement, summarized below:
  - [U.S. law, 49 U.S.C. 40118, known as the Fly America Act](#), requires travelers to use U.S. flag air carrier service for all air travel when available. The Federal Travel Regulations Sections 301-10.131 through 301-10.143 define U.S. flag air carrier service and provide exception criteria for the use of non-U.S. flag air carrier service. This can be accomplished when code sharing is present where two or more airlines "code" the same flight as if it was their own.
  - Under the [Open Skies Agreement](#) qualifying travelers may travel on U.S. Flag Air Carriers, or European Union airlines, as long as they touch down in an EU country. Please refer to the Open Skies Agreement for additional restrictions.
- The university will reimburse bus and rail travel when there is a business justification indicating this as the most cost effective form of travel.

Hotel Class of Service

- When booking a hotel for a conference where there is a special conference rate, the reservation may be made directly with the hotel or conference host.
- The university will reimburse **standard** room accommodations for travelers away from their typical worksite or the university. Hotel documentation must specify rate, date(s) of stay, and evidence of payment.
- Specific exceptions for hotel use for travelers within 100 miles of their home may be authorized by the approver. An explanation of the exception must be included in the reimbursement.

Vehicle Rental

The university will reimburse for a rental vehicle when there is a business justification, limited up to intermediate size classifications for individual travelers. Full size vehicles or vans are allowed only for group travel. Travelers renting vehicles must

complete a [Driver Authorization Form](#) before any travel occurs. Reservations through NJIT's primary vendor, Enterprise Holdings, is the preferred method of booking. The State of New Jersey has a contract with Enterprise Holdings and provides insurance (collision and liability) for domestic rentals. When making plans, please consult with the Purchasing Department to determine the best possible rate.

- NJIT must be named as the rental owner and all authorized drivers must be listed on the contract.
- The use of cell-phones is strictly prohibited and all passengers must use seat-belt.
- For additional information and operating requirements, see the university's "Vehicle Use Policy and Procedure."
- Additional insurance coverage offered by the rental agency is not required and will not be reimbursed.
- For international and other rental agencies, please contact the Director of Risk Management for more information.
- Collision insurance is covered up to a maximum of \$50k.
- All business-related tolls and parking charges related to travel and vehicle rental are allowable expenses and will be reimbursed with proper documentation.

d. Business Required International Travel

Expenses related to vaccinations, passport and visa application fees required for confirmed international business travel is an allowable expense.

## 2. ***TRAVEL RELATED EXPENSES***

a. Business Communications

Business related telephone calls, facsimile, and internet access during a hotel stay will be reimbursed. Any of these items not appearing on the lodging bill must have a detailed receipt attached. Travelers are encouraged to plan ahead and contact the university's Technology Support Center regarding options for internet access.

b. Tipping and Gratuities

The following are considered reasonable and appropriate:

- Skycap, porter/bell person, etc.: \$2 per bag upon check-in/check-out
- Housekeeping: up to \$4 per day
- Meals: 15% – 20% (if not included in the charge)
- Car Service: Tip is included in the negotiated rate. If using a non-contracted service, 15%-20% is appropriate.

c. Private/Personal Vehicles

- Travelers who use private vehicles on university business are reimbursed at the current [IRS authorized mileage](#) rate for miles incurred at the time of travel, less typical miles traveled to and from the work site, including parking and toll charges.
- Reimbursement of mileage for sponsored research grants may supersede the university policy
- Travelers who use ride share programs (i.e. Uber or Lyft) to and from an airport, train station or hotel are reimbursed for travel expenses when a receipt is submitted.
- Reimbursable expenses include:
  - Travel from the traveler's home or work site to the airport, bus, or train station
  - Travel from the airport/train station to the hotel and/or location of business

- d. Meals- Travelers have two (2) options for meal reimbursement, per diem or meals actual. **The method selected for the reimbursement must be consistent for the entire trip.**

**PER DIEM – Receipts are NOT required.** The following criteria apply to personnel who incur an overnight stay while on university business.

A reimbursement rate of \$45.00 on the departure and return travel days:

<i>Breakfast</i>	<i>\$9.00</i>
<i>Lunch</i>	<i>\$9.00</i>
<i>Dinner</i>	<i>\$27.00</i>

A reimbursement rate \$60.00 per day for all days in between departure and return travel days:

<i>Breakfast</i>	<i>\$12.00</i>
<i>Lunch</i>	<i>\$12.00</i>
<i>Dinner</i>	<i>\$36.00</i>

Per Diem must be prorated if any meals are provided at a conference, by the hotel or by any other source.

**MEALS ACTUAL – Receipts required for all meals.** Reimbursement of meals purchased for university faculty, staff and students. Travelers must be in travel status, and must submit itemized receipts with proof of payment for all meals to be reimbursed. A list of university attendees, if applicable, must be included.

**BUSINESS MEALS-** All other meal reimbursements while traveling, which include additional people, are allowable and should follow the [Business Expense Reimbursement Policy](#). The determination of approved business meal expenses shall be made by the employee’s supervisor.

- e. Incidental Expenses  
During travel, laundry fees may be reimbursed when business related travel exceeds five (5) consecutive nights.
- e. Changes, Cancellations, and Unused Tickets
- Changes to airline and rail tickets for business reasons or circumstances beyond the traveler’s control are allowable expenses. When air, train, car rental or hotel travel plans change, due to unforeseen circumstances, the traveler is responsible for managing cancellations in the same manner in which the reservations were booked.
  - Fees associated with itinerary changes, provided there is a business reason, are allowable. An explanation including how the change fee is a direct benefit to the university is required.
- f. Baggage
- Reasonable and appropriate baggage fees are allowable (typically 2 bags per person).

### **3. POST-TRAVEL SUBMISSION OF EXPENSES**

- a. Travel reimbursements made to the traveler will not be considered taxable income.
- b. Travelers are required to exercise [Fiduciary Responsibility](#) when submitting travel expenses for reimbursement. Travel expenses reimbursed and later found not to be in compliance with university policy must be refunded to the university.
- c. Adhering to best business practice, travelers should submit their Travel Expense Reports through **Chrome River**, the online **Expense Reimbursement Management** system, within 45 days of the date of the expense. Travel expenses submitted beyond one year after the date(s) of receipt will not be reimbursed regardless of the funding source.
- d. The person responsible for the index/fund must ensure the correct accounting distribution is used and sufficient funds are available to cover the total expense.

### **4. AUDIT OF TRAVEL EXPENSE DETAILS**

To ensure proper internal controls are in place, randomly selected travel reimbursements will undergo “internal audit” review. Questions will be directed to the traveler and supervisor and if necessary, the appropriate Vice President.

### **5. EXPENSES RELATED TO OFFICIAL UNIVERSITY FUNDRAISING**

Travel, meals and associated expenses (including alcohol) when incurred while performing official university fundraising business by the Office of the President or the Office of Development are reimbursable only when appropriate documentation is provided including receipts, names of guests in attendance and purpose of the meeting. Meals should be reimbursed as Business Meals, not meals taken while traveling.

### **6. MISCELLANEOUS NON-REIMBURSABLE EXPENSES**

The following are some examples of expenses that will not be reimbursed by the university:

- Alcoholic beverages, except when part of official fundraising activities for the Office of Development or the Office of the President.
- Expenses and/or fees associated with social or non-mandatory activities at conferences, such as tours, sports activities, movies, theater tickets, in-room movies, in-flight movies, mini-bar etc.
- Any portion of a traveler’s expense provided by an outside entity will not be reimbursed
- Spouse's/family member's travel costs, unless otherwise specified in an employment contract.
- Lost/stolen cash or personal property
- Personal items, gifts and services (e.g., shoe shines, haircuts, manicures, saunas, massages, pet care costs, souvenirs or personal gifts, child care costs, and personal reading materials)
- Late payment penalties and interest on personal credit cards
- Entertainment, lobbying, or the acquisition of goods or services for personal use
- Meals provided by event sponsor, conference, hotel, etc.
- Fees incurred for changing reservations unless there is a business justification
- Costs associated with upgrades to business/first class
- Chartered or private aircraft is prohibited
- Personal or Rental vehicle expenses related to damage or repairs, tickets and fines associated with parking and moving violations, and charges for vehicle lockouts

