

OLD DOMINION UNIVERSITY
DEPARTMENTAL
FINANCIAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE
PROCEDURES AND PRACTICES MANUAL

TITLE: Exceptions to the Meals and Lodging Guidelines

Proc #: 6-707

A. PURPOSE

The purpose of this procedure is to discuss exceptions to the meals and lodging rules as approved by the Commonwealth of Virginia and Old Dominion University

B. DESIGNATED STAFF & RESPONSIBLE DEPARTMENT(S)

Individual travelers
Budget Unit Directors
Department of Procurement Services

C. PROCESSING CYCLE

Daily or upon need arising for business travel

D. REQUIRED RESOURCE MATERIALS

Pre-Approval Request – online in Chrome River
Expense Report – online in Chrome River
Hotel Zero Balance Receipt
Misc. Receipts

E. GOVERNING POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

CAPP Section 20335 – “Travel Regulations” - most recent effective date
University Policies #1051 – Business Travel Policy
Internal Revenue Code Sections Governing Business Expenses
Office of Finance Policies and Procedures

F. CROSS REFERENCE TO OTHER PROCEDURES

CAPP Topic # 20310, “Expenditures”
CAPP Topic # 20315, “Prompt Payment”
CAPP Topic # 20336, “Agency Travel Processing”
U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) CONUS and OCONUS Rates
ODU Training Materials
Chrome River Training Guide
Office of Finance Procedure 6-705, Lodging/Accommodation Guidelines

G. OTHER ODU OFFICES IMPACTED

Accounts Payable

APPROVED BY: Melissa Snowden

EFFECTIVE DATE: 03/20/09

REVISED 4/2022

PAGE NO: 1

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Proc #: 6-707

H. INVOLVEMENT EXTERNAL TO ODU

Vendors providing travel related goods or services to ODU employees on official University business.

I. PROCEDURE:

1. Sponsored Program Exception

For travel conducted in support of sponsored programs, meal and lodging guidelines stipulated by the sponsoring organization in the grant or contract supersede the standard state guidelines. This sponsored program exception supersedes the following exception requirements. All travel reimbursements for meals, lodging, airfare, etc. funded solely from sponsored program funds are governed by the terms and conditions of the individual grant or contract. You must attach a copy of the terms and conditions of the grant/contract related to travel. *If the grant or contract is silent regarding these monetary reimbursements, the limitations in these regulations will apply.* In all cases, administrative requirements cited in these regulations must be followed.

Solely funded means charged 100% to the grant or contract.

What if funding is split between Commonwealth and grant or contract sources? If funds to cover the travel come from Commonwealth **and** grant or contract sources, the maximum allowable lodging and M&IE per diem rates in these regulations apply.

2. Overnight Travel Meals

Reimbursements in excess of the maximum amount authorized M&IE per diem for meals taken during overnight travel **are not permitted.**

3. Overtime Meals

Reimbursements in excess of the maximum amount authorized under the overtime work meal reimbursement policy **are not permitted.**

Reimbursement of an overtime meal is taxable and must be submitted to Payroll for processing.

4. Official Business Meals

If the agency head or designee determines that circumstances justify reimbursements for official business meals in excess of the amount shown for the

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applicable meal in the M&IE Rate Table, they may authorize non-travel related business meal expense reimbursements up to 50% over the applicable per diem guideline with sufficient justification and the original itemized receipt.

The Budget Unit Director's (BUD) approval of the Expense Report will authorize reimbursement of the excess meal costs up to 50% above the guidelines. The Director of Procurement Services will review the Expense Report for any excess meal expenses that are more than 50% over the applicable per diem guideline. The Business Meal form must be attached to the Expense Report. Any additional information or justification can be recorded in the Comments section.

5. Lodging

Approvals up to 100% over the guidelines

For all official State business-related travel, the Budget Unit Director's (BUD) approval of the Expense Report will authorize reimbursement of the excess lodging up to 100% above the guidelines after the trip is completed, when circumstances warrant. As an example, this exception may be justified for conference hotels where it can be shown that the additional lodging cost will be offset by reduced local travel costs incurred for travel (e.g., taxi or rental car expense avoided) between a non-conference hotel and the conference location. The Director of Procurement Services will review the excess lodging justification, if the hotel rate is more than 100% above the allowable guidelines.

When preparing the Expense Report in Chrome River, the Expense Report will automatically be routed to the BUD and the Director of Procurement Services for approval of the excess lodging rate, as required.

Justification for the excess lodging rate must be recorded in the Comments section of the Expense Report.

Justification for Excess Lodging

- Conference hotel
- No other hotel rooms available within reasonable distance
- Conference hotel booked
- Other (provide explanation)

Dividing the hotel rate by the number of persons staying in room for purposes of justifying rates that exceed the lodging guidelines is not permitted (see 6-705, **Lodging Accommodation Guidelines** for more details)

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Approvals exceeding 100% over the guidelines

Only the Commonwealth of Virginia Comptroller's designee (Director of General Accounting) may grant exceptions for expenses exceeding 100% over the guidelines.

Such approvals must be requested and granted *prior* to the travel, and the approved request must be attached to the voucher for reimbursement.

Requests for such exceptions must include sufficient documentation showing alternative cost comparisons that justify the exception. *The cost comparison must include the name and complete address of the hotels, including the zip code used for the cost comparison.*

Failure to attach this cost comparison will result in the Expense Report being returned without action.

Requests for expenses exceeding 100% over the guidelines must be reviewed, evaluated, and approved by the Director of Procurement Services prior to sending it to DOA. The Director of Procurement Services is responsible for sending these requests to DOA.

All such exceptions must be approved by DOA in advance for lodging, except those that can be approved by the Agency Head or designee (**Director of Procurement Services**), i.e., conference hotel over maximum travel guidelines.

Submit the Lodging Exception Request early enough to allow time for approval, and if the trip involves international travel, ensure the Pre-Approval Request is approved in Chrome River and a copy is attached to the request.

Approval will be granted to reimburse for standard rooms procured at a conference hotel if the hotel rate is more than 100% above the allowable guidelines. The amount that exceeds 100% of the allowable guidelines must be charged to a discretionary budget.

Alternate Lodging

When lodging in dwellings other than hotels and motels, a comparison statement including authorization by the Director of Procurement Services must be submitted with the Expense Report. The comparison statement should show the total cost for using the alternate accommodation, length of contract, the cost of the usual accommodations, and net savings.

Reimbursement for the use of Airbnb or similar lodging alternatives for official state business travel is not permitted. Although Airbnb may be a

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less expensive alternative to hotel/motel lodging in some cases, the safety of travelers is a concern.

Records Retention:

All original travel documentation for reimbursements processed in Chrome River must be centrally maintained in a department file for a minimum of three (3) years and/or until audited by the Auditor of Public Accounts (APA) and/or Department of Accounts (DOA) per CAPP Topic 20310. After three years, all records may be disposed of in accordance with the University's Records Management Program.

Contacts:

For questions regarding this procedure and/or practice contact the Accounts Payable Manager at 683-4813 or the Accounts Payable Travel Supervisor at 683-5020.