

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
Office of Finance

C. PROCESSING CYCLE

Daily or upon need arising for business travel

D. REQUIRED RESOURCE MATERIALS

Estimated Cost of Proposed Travel Form - online
Travel Expense Reimbursement Form – online
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”
ODU Training Materials

G. OTHER ODU OFFICES IMPACTED

APPROVED BY: William R. Fisher

EFFECTIVE DATE: 03/20/09

REVISION DATE: 07/08/11

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Office of Finance – Accounts Payable

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.**

4. Official Business Meals –

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

An explanation justifying the higher amount, a receipt showing the actual itemized expenses incurred, and the agency head or designee's signature of approval must be included with the voucher and the Business Related Meal Expense Statement.

Business meal reimbursements above 50% over the applicable per diem guideline are not permitted.

5. Lodging –

Approvals up to 50% over the guidelines

For all official State business-related travel, the Agency Head or designee (**Director of Finance and Accounting Operations**) is authorized to approve reimbursement **IN ADVANCE** for lodging up to 50% over the guidelines when circumstances warrant. The **ODU Travel Estimate/Excessive Lodging/Out of Country Approval Form** (Lodging Exception Request section of the *Travel Estimate* tab) must be completed and attached to the Travel Expense Reimbursement Voucher **in all instances where approval for excessive lodging is requested**. 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.

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 ***Lodging Accommodation Guidelines*** for more details)

Approvals exceeding 50% over the guidelines

Only the Commonwealth of Virginia Comptroller's designee (Director of General Accounting) may grant exceptions for expenses exceeding 50% 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.

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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 zip code, used for the cost comparison.*
Failure to attach this cost comparison will result in the form being returned without action.

Requests for expenses exceeding 50% over the guidelines must be reviewed, evaluated, and approved by the Office of Finance prior to sending it to DOA. The Office of Finance is responsible for sending these requests to DOA.

All such exceptions must be approved in advance for lodging, even those that can be approved by the Agency Head (**Director of Finance and Accounting Operations**), i.e., conference hotel over maximum travel guidelines.

Please be sure to submit the **ODU Travel Estimate/Excessive Lodging/Out of Country Approval Form** with the Lodging Exception Request portion completed early enough to allow for the approval

Records Retention:

Original travel exception documentation should be maintained along with the associated travel expense reimbursement voucher in the Office of Finance agency file for three years.

Contacts:

For questions regarding this procedure and/or practice contact the Accounts Payable Manager at 683-6977, Accounts Payable Travel Supervisor at 683-5020.