

OLD DOMINION UNIVERSITY  
DEPARTMENTAL  
FINANCIAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE  
PROCEDURES AND PRACTICES MANUAL

TITLE: General Travel & Travel Planning Information

Proc #: 6-700

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**A. PURPOSE**

The purpose of this procedure is to provide general travel and travel planning guidance to travelers and other departmental staff to assist them in complying with University and Commonwealth travel policies.

All travelers, while traveling on official Old Dominion University business, should be aware of the guidelines for travel since the Commonwealth of Virginia will reimburse only **reasonable and necessary expenses**. No reimbursement will be allowed for expenses incurred by individuals unless they are on official business for the Commonwealth.

**B. DESIGNATED STAFF**

University Departmental Staff – traveling on ODU business

**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, 1052 and 1054 combined  
Internal Revenue Code Sections Governing Business Expenses  
ODU Training Materials

**F. CROSS REFERENCE TO OTHER PROCEDURES**

CAPP Topic # 20310, “Expenditures”  
CAPP Topic # 20315, “Prompt Payment”  
CAPP Topic # 20336, “Agency Travel Processing”

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APPROVED BY: William R. Fisher

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**G. OTHER ODU OFFICES IMPACTED**

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:**

**General Travel and Travel Planning Information:**

The Office of Finance is responsible for ensuring that all travel expense reimbursements for the University are processed in accordance with all relevant Commonwealth and University policies and procedures, Internal Revenue Service regulations, and Virginia state code regulations.

The Commonwealth of Virginia and University policy provide specific guidelines for documenting reasonable and necessary travel expenses incurred while an employee is traveling on official University business that must be met in order for these travel expenses to be reimbursed.

To be reimbursed – travel expenses must be –

Reasonable and Necessary  
Incurred while on Official University business

Employees who travel must be mindful that travel expense reimbursements are open to the public and must be able to sustain the test of public review. When planning and paying for travel, economy, prudence and necessity are of primary concern. **The use of State funds to accommodate personal comfort, convenience, and taste is specifically not permitted.**

It is the policy of Old Dominion University to limit travel costs to only those expenses that are necessary for providing essential services and travelers must seek ways to reduce the cost of essential travel.

1. It is Old Dominion University's policy to adhere to Commonwealth of Virginia CAPP Manual Policies without regard to the Ledger being charged.

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2. Exceptions to the University's published guidelines must be requested, and approved, IN ADVANCE, by the University Controller or designee.
  3. Travelers are responsible for understanding and complying with **all** Commonwealth of Virginia and Old Dominion University policies and procedures. Failure to follow travel guidelines could result in a reduced reimbursement, **reimbursements being added to taxable income** or delayed processing of a travel reimbursement request.
  4. Travelers are also reminded that submitting a false reimbursement claim constitutes fraud.
  5. Travelers can use the *Traveler's Checklist for Overnight Travel* to assist in complying with travel policies.
  6. **All** travel reimbursements will be issued through direct deposit. **IF YOU PLAN TO TRAVEL** complete an ODU Accounts Payable Travel Reimbursement Direct Deposit Enrollment Form located on the Office of Finance web site under Faculty/Staff Forms and Submit the form (along with a voided check with your bank's imprinted account number) to the Accounts Payable Audit Supervisor.
  7. All travelers must use the Consolidated Travel Form (ODU Travel Estimate/Excessive Lodging/Out-of-Country Approval Form) available on the Office of Finance website under Faculty/Staff Forms.  
  
[http://www.odu.edu/af/finance/facultystaff/disbursements\\_processing/accounts\\_payable/consolidatedtravelform.xls](http://www.odu.edu/af/finance/facultystaff/disbursements_processing/accounts_payable/consolidatedtravelform.xls)
  8. An ODU Travel Estimate/Excessive Lodging/Out-of-Country Approval Form must be completed *in advance of any OVERNIGHT travel*. The section for excessive lodging must be completed only if lodging costs exceeds the published guidelines. Out of Country travel approval is required for all travel outside the United States. Certain information on this form links to the Travel Expense Reimbursement Voucher.
  9. Deans and Directors reporting directly to a Vice President are authorized to approve the ODU Travel Estimate/Excessive Lodging/Out of Country Approval Form.
  10. If lodging exceeds the allowable guideline, the University Controller must approve the Lodging Exception Request *in advance* of the travel. Approval obtained in advance by completing the Lodging Exception Request section of the *Travel Estimate* tab, getting the required signatures and submitting to the University Controller for

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approval PRIOR to your scheduled travel.

11. For all official State business-related travel, the Agency Head or designee (University Controller) is authorized to approve reimbursement IN ADVANCE for lodging up to 50% over the guidelines when circumstances warrant.
12. If travel is out of the country, the Provost/ Vice President for Academic Affairs must sign in advance of travel (refer to INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL APPROVAL for more details).
13. Budget unit directors are responsible for ensuring travelers understand their responsibilities for making a good faith effort to secure lodging within the published guidelines before requesting exceptions.
14. 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.

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.*

15. If a traveler is required to leave the country on University business, the written approval of the appropriate vice president and the provost or the president must be obtained prior to the beginning of the trip. **It is recommended that this approval be obtained at least 30 days in advance of travel.** See Travel Outside the United States for more information on International Travel.

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16. SPONSORED PROGRAM FUNDS - 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. If funding is split between Commonwealth and grant or contract sources, the maximum allowable lodging and M&IE per diem rates in these regulations apply.

Please remember that the words "Sponsored Program" should be clearly stated on the reimbursement voucher. If the words "Sponsored Program" are not clearly stated on the reimbursement voucher, then reimbursement for travel expenses will be made based on the Commonwealth's published rates contained in these guidelines.

17. Usage of the Internet to purchase travel services is allowed. Use prudent judgment when choosing an Internet travel service site. A cost/benefit analysis must be performed prior to purchasing services via the Internet to ensure that it is cost beneficial for the Commonwealth. The traveler must comply with all procurement guidelines.

**Records Retention:**

Original receiving report documentation should be maintained in the Office of Finance agency file for three years.

**Contacts:**

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

For problems, complaints or to request an exception contact the Assistant Controller for Disbursements at 683-4262 or the University Controller at 683-4983.