

OLD DOMINION UNIVERSITY
DEPARTMENTAL
FINANCIAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE
PROCEDURES AND PRACTICES MANUAL

TITLE: Lodging/Accommodation Guidelines

Proc #: 6-705

A. PURPOSE

The purpose of this procedure is to outline lodging/accommodation guidelines 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, 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”

G. OTHER ODU OFFICES IMPACTED

Office of Finance – Accounts Payable

APPROVED BY: William R. Fisher

EFFECTIVE DATE: 04/15/09

REVISION DATE: 04/15/09

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H. INVOLVEMENT EXTERNAL TO ODU

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

I. PROCEDURE:

1. Government rates must always be requested by all travelers and confirmed both at the time reservations are made and during check-in.
2. Lodging may be reimbursed when an individual is traveling overnight on official business outside his/her official station.
3. Lodging expenses vary with the area traveled, but all expenditures must be necessary and reasonable. First preference shall be given to selecting lodging in the economy class.
4. Travelers may use CI Travel (Cruise Ventures, Inc.). If you wish to make your own travel arrangements, you should use the Hotel/Motel Lodging Guide issued by the Division of Purchases and Supply to identify lodging establishments offering rates within the current guidelines.

REMEMBER: Out of Country/International Travel requires prior written approval. Please refer to 6-nnn Travel Outside the United States for additional information.

5. Supporting receipts and **original (zero-balance)**, itemized hotel bills covering lodging charges must be submitted with the Travel Expense Reimbursement Voucher, and *any unusual charges must be fully explained*. The itemized hotel bill must show that payment was made, the method of payment, and if paid by charge card, must show the last 4 digits of the charge card number. ***Lodging charges must be listed daily on the Travel Expense Reimbursement Voucher, not summarized.***
6. Since hotels charge for unkept reservations, changes in travel plans must be communicated to the hotel (or travel agent if applicable). Cancellation charges will **not** be reimbursed if the traveler has been negligent in canceling reservations.
7. **Travelers who do not plan with careful consideration to these guidelines will bear the additional expense personally. In such cases,**

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taxes and surcharges will be prorated and reimbursed only for the appropriate rate.

8. The appropriate lodging rate is determined by the physical location of the hotel and *not* the mailing address. If the *physical address* of the hotel is not a city shown on the lodging guidelines chart, but the hotel *is located* within an allowable city or county (i.e., Atlanta, Georgia, includes the counties of Fulton, Cobb, DeKalb), the traveler is responsible for providing documentation that the hotel is located in the city/county. If the traveler does not provide documentation to that effect, the standard guideline, in-state or out-of-state, will apply.
9. **Guaranteed Hotel Reservations** – Hotel industry practice has changed and many hotels are charging credit cards a one-night deposit at the time the reservation is made.
10. **Travelers cannot be reimbursed until after the trip has taken place.**
11. When making hotel reservations using your Corporate Travel Card, you must ask the hotel not to charge your card for a one-night deposit, especially if your travel is scheduled far in the future.
12. Ask the hotel to bill the University directly. If a payment is required immediately, prepare a prepayment purchase order for the one-night deposit.
13. **SpringHill Suites** - (located on Hampton Boulevard) has agreed to offer a lodging rate of \$94 per night for Old Dominion University guests, which is currently within Commonwealth lodging guidelines. In addition to the cost of nightly lodging, there will be an additional Guest Amenities Surcharge of \$25 per room/day and the appropriate taxes, which is also permissible under Commonwealth guidelines. This rate is only available to guests of the University who are not Government employees and have their charges billed directly to a University budget. The Guest Amenities Surcharge is waived for Government employees, but these charges may not be billed to the University. University employees are still bound by the Commonwealth guidelines, and must continue to complete the pre-travel estimate and submit the request for reimbursement, along with supporting documentation, after travel has been completed.
14. When lodgings other than hotels or motels are to be used (e.g., apartments), a comparison statement, **including authorization by the University President or his designee** must be submitted with the Travel Expense Reimbursement Voucher. The comparison statement should show the total cost for using the alternate accommodations and

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length of contract, the cost of the usual accommodations, and the net savings.

15. When two or more people are traveling on official state business and stay in the same hotel room, the lodging guideline applicable to the travel destination in the area they are staying, plus the cost charged by the hotel for any additional persons in the room, will apply. Documentation from the hotel listing additional hotel charges for each additional person, per room, must be provided. This regulation is not intended to discourage agencies from employing cost savings measures such as multiple travelers staying in the same room. However, do not diminish the overall savings that might otherwise be obtained by concurrently upgrading to luxury or premium accommodations. (If lodging exceeds allowable amounts, the Lodging Exception Request section of the ODU Travel Estimate/Excessive Lodging/Out of Country Approval Form must be completed and approved by the University Controller in advance of travel.)
16. The traveler is responsible for obtaining the single rate and any costs for additional persons in the room. This documentation must be attached to the travel expense reimbursement voucher when filed. If this amount is expected to exceed the allowable guidelines, the Request for Pre-Approval of Excess Lodging must be submitted for review and approval prior to travel (see instructions later in this document).
17. ***For non-luxury, conference hotels the agency fiscal officer MAY approve lodging rates that are less than the lodging guideline applicable to the travel destination multiplied by the number of official business travelers in the room.***
18. **Advance Payments** - Advance payments for direct billed hotel/motel expenses are discouraged. Use of the Travel Charge Card is encouraged to secure room confirmations. Actual advance payments using the travel charge card program will not be reimbursed prior to the trip.
19. **If circumstances make advance payments a necessity, advance payments are limited to a one-night deposit for direct bill payments.**
20. **Direct billing** - Direct agency billing of lodging expenses (rates, taxes, and surcharges only) incurred during overnight travel is permitted. **Direct bill charges, however, are still considered travel expenditures and are governed by these travel policies and should be included with the estimated costs of the trip.** A copy of the travel estimate should be included with the vendor payment. Documentation supporting direct bills

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must include: name of traveler, dates, and purpose of travel. Direct agency billing must be supported by a purchase order. Those employees who do not have the Corporate Travel Card should generally use this process.

- 21. Direct agency billing of meal expenses incurred during overnight travel, including charging meals to direct-billed hotel rooms, is not permitted.**

Records Retention:

Original travel documentation should be maintained along with the associated travel expense reimbursement vouchers 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.