

OLD DOMINION UNIVERSITY  
DEPARTMENTAL  
FINANCIAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE  
PROCEDURES AND PRACTICES MANUAL

TITLE: Meals (overnight)

Proc #: 6-709

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**A. PURPOSE**

The purpose of this procedure is to outline the reimbursement guidelines for overnight meals. Meal expenses are reimbursable only for **overnight** official business travel outside the traveler's official station. Exceptions to this rule are discussed in Proc 6 – nnn "Meals – Non-Travel Related" and in Proc 6- nnn "Exceptions to the Meals and Lodging Guidelines".

**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  
Business Related Meal Expense Statement - 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

**H. INVOLVEMENT EXTERNAL TO ODU**

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APPROVED BY: William R. Fisher

EFFECTIVE DATE: 03/20/09

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

**I. PROCEDURE:**

1. Meals and certain other incidental travel expenses are reimbursable only for **overnight** official business travel outside the traveler's official station.
2. Reimbursement for such expenses (including all related taxes and tips) shall be made to the traveler based on a fixed allowance. The fixed allowance is referred to as the **meals and incidental expense (M&IE) per diem**.
3. Direct agency billing of meal expenses incurred during overnight travel, including charging meals to direct-billed hotel rooms, **is not permitted**.
4. **M&IE Per Diem** - The M&IE per diem shall be paid directly to the traveler, even where it can be shown that one traveler incurred the expenses on behalf of another.
5. The M&IE per diem used shall correspond to the location of the related overnight lodging.
6. The applicable M&IE per Diem, or fraction thereof, is payable to the traveler without itemization of expense or receipts. Please type the per diem used on the travel expense reimbursement voucher; it is not necessary to list the number of meals unless you are claiming a prorated amount.
7. **Prorating the M&IE Per Diem** - On a travel departure or return day, 75% of the per diem is allowable based upon where the night was spent as follows:
  - a. Departure Day: where you spend the night
  - b. Return Day: where you spent the night *before* returning to home base.
8. In order to claim all or a portion of the M&IE per diem, the departure and arrival (return) times must be entered on the travel expense reimbursement voucher. **Vouchers submitted without departure/return times will be delayed until corrected information is provided.**
9. **No cost meals** –
  - a. When meals are provided at no additional cost in conjunction with travel events, the applicable M&IE per diem shall be reduced by the amount shown for the applicable meal in the M&IE Rate Table, excluding the incidental allowance. Meals included with registration

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or lodging expense as part of a package plan must be recorded on the travel voucher and the applicable deduction must be taken from the M&IE per diem for that day.

- b. When meals are provided at no cost in conjunction with travel events on a **travel departure or return day**, the full **Meals** per diem is reduced by the full amount of the appropriate meal (or meals) *followed by a 75% prorating of the balance. For example, if the M&IE rate allows a \$39 total reimbursement, and lunch was provided at no cost on a travel departure or return day, the total allowable reimbursement for that day would be \$21.75 [(( \$36 - \$11 lunch) x .75))+3].*
- c. *When meals are included with registration or lodging expense as part of a package, the number and type of meals (breakfast, lunch, dinner) must be recorded on the travel voucher. If a continental breakfast or reception is offered as part of the travel event and the food/timing is sufficient to serve as a meal, the traveler must reduce the per diem by the appropriate allowance amount. If a meal is offered as part of a conference and the traveler has medical restrictions, the traveler should make every effort to have the conference facilitate his/her needs by the deadline specified by the conference. If the conference does not honor the request, the traveler is not required to deduct the applicable meal allowance from the per diem. However, the traveler must include a note or other documentation with the Travel Expense Reimbursement Voucher documenting this information.*

- 10.** Meal expenses not involving an overnight stay are generally not reimbursable. Exceptions are noted in **Proc 6-*nnn Meals (Non-Travel Related)*** that covers *Business Meals* and *Overtime Meals*.

**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.