

OLD DOMINION UNIVERSITY
ACCOUNTS PAYABLE PROCEDURE MANUAL

TITLE: General Travel & Travel Planning Information

Proc #: 6-700

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

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”
University Policies #1051 – Business Travel Policy
Internal Revenue Code Sections Governing Business Expenses
Accounts Payable 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
Accounts Payable Procedure 6-707, Exceptions to the Meal & Lodging Guidelines
Chrome River Training Guide

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G. OTHER ODU OFFICES IMPACTED

University Departments

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:

Accounts Payable 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 IN ADVANCE, and approved by the Director of Procurement Services 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**, set up an Accounts Payable Direct Deposit on Leo Online.
 7. Employees and students must submit a Pre-Approval Request in the Chrome River system for all international travel.

<http://www.odu.edu/facultystaff/university-business/travel>
 8. If lodging rates exceed GSA CONUS and OCONUS rates, the Director of Procurement Services can approve the excess lodging rate AFTER the trip.

The Expense Report will automatically be routed to the Director of Procurement Services for approval of the excess lodging rate.

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

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Justification for Excess Lodging

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

9. Pre- Approval Requests submitted in Chrome River will be automatically routed to the responsible person (supervisor, Budget Unit Director and Provost/designee, if applicable) to approve the report electronically. Pre-Approval Requests are only required for international travel.
10. For all official State business-related travel, the Agency Head or designee (the Budget Unit Director) is authorized to approve the excess lodging rate up to 100% over the allowable rate after the trip when the excess cost is justified. The Director of Procurement Services will review the excess lodging justification, if the hotel rate is more than 100% above the allowable guidelines.
11. 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.
12. 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 Expense Report submitted 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 form being returned without action.

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

13. If a traveler is required to leave the country on University business,

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the Pre-Approval Request must be completed and approved *before* the trip starts. **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.

14. 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 other 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 Expense Report. If the words "Sponsored Program" are not clearly stated on the Expense Report, then reimbursement for travel expenses will be made based on GSA CONUS and OCONUS rates.

15. 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:

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:

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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.