

OLD DOMINION UNIVERSITY
DEPARTMENTAL
FINANCIAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE
PROCEDURES AND PRACTICES MANUAL

TITLE: Lodging/Accommodation Guidelines

Proc #: 6-705

A. DESIGNATED STAFF & RESPONSIBLE DEPARTMENT(S)

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
Department of Procurement Services

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” - most recent effective date
University Policies #1051 – Business Travel Policy
Internal Revenue Code Sections Governing Business Expenses
Office of Finance Policies and Procedure

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
Chrome River Training Guide
Office of Finance procedure 6-706, M&IE Per Diem and Lodging Guidelines
Office of Finance procedure 6-707, Exceptions to Meal & Lodging Guidelines
Office of Finance Procedure 6-714, Travel Outside the United States

APPROVED BY: Melissa Snowden

EFFECTIVE DATE: 04/15/09

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G. OTHER ODU OFFICES IMPACTED

Accounts Payable

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 be requested by all travelers and confirmed at the time the 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 depending on the location, but all expenditures must be necessary and reasonable. First preference shall be given to selecting lodging in the economy class.
4. Travelers may use Cruise Ventures, Inc. (CI Travel) or any other travel agency, or use the GSA CONUS and OCONUS per diems to identify lodging establishments offering rates within the current guidelines when making travel arrangements.

REMEMBER: Out of Country/International Travel requires pre-approval. Please refer to 6-714 Travel Outside the United States for additional information.

5. Supporting receipts and **original** itemized hotel bills with a balance due of zero must be centrally maintained in a department file. Copies of the receipts must be attached to the Expense Report submitted in Chrome River to request reimbursement of lodging expenses. *Any unusual charges must be fully explained in the Comments section.*

The itemized hotel bill must show that payment was made. ***Lodging charges must be listed daily on the Expense Report, not summarized.***

6. Since hotels charge for non-cancelled reservations, changes in travel plans must be communicated to the hotel or travel agent, if applicable.

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Cancellation charges will **not** be reimbursed if the traveler has been negligent in canceling reservations.

- 7. Travelers will cover the additional expenses personally if the trip is not planned with careful consideration of the travel guidelines. In such cases, taxes and surcharges will be prorated and reimbursed only for the allowable 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, 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. i.e., - Atlanta, Georgia, includes the counties of Fulton, Cobb and DeKalb.

The city and state where the hotel is located must be input when preparing an Expense Report in Chrome River. The system will automatically calculate the per diem rate based on the city and state that is input.
- 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, if your travel is scheduled far in the future. Instead of charging the card, ask the hotel to bill the University directly. If a payment is required immediately, prepare a prepayment purchase order for the one-night deposit.
- 12. SpringHill Suites** - (located on Hampton Boulevard) has agreed to offer a lodging rate of \$89 per night for Old Dominion University guests. 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 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

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Amenities Surcharge is waived for Government employees, but these charges may not be billed to the University. University employees are bound by the Commonwealth guidelines but are not required to obtain pre-approval for overnight travel in the United States. University employees are only required to submit a Pre-approval Request in Chrome River to obtain authorization to travel to international destinations. Travel guidelines established by the University departments may require pre-approval for other trips. An Expense Report must be submitted in Chrome River with supporting documentation to request reimbursement after the travel has been completed.

13. When lodging in dwellings other than hotels or motels, a comparison statement, **including authorization by the Director of Procurement Services** must be submitted with the Expense Report. The comparison statement should show the total cost for using the alternate accommodation, length of contract, the cost of the usual accommodations and the net savings, e.g. Apartments.

Reimbursement for the use of Airbnb or similar lodging alternatives for official state business travel is not permitted. Although Airbnb may be a less expensive alternative to hotel/motel lodging in some cases, the safety of travelers is a concern.

14. When two or more people traveling on official state business stay in the same hotel room, the lodging rate applicable for the hotel location 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 lodging 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 the actual hotel rate exceeds the allowable guidelines, the Budget Unit Director's (BUD) approval of the Expense Report will authorize reimbursement of the excess lodging up to 100% above the guidelines after the trip is completed. The Director of Procurement Services will review the excess lodging justification, if the hotel rate is more than 100% above the allowable guidelines.

The traveler is responsible for obtaining the single room rate and the costs for additional persons in the room. This documentation must be

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attached to the Expense Report when submitted. If this amount exceeds the allowable guidelines, justification for the excess lodging rate must be recorded in the Comments section of the Expense Report.

Justification for Excess Lodging

- conference hotel
- no other hotel rooms available within reasonable distance
- conference hotel booked
- Other (provide explanation)

Approval will be granted to reimburse for standard rooms procured at a conference hotel if the hotel rate is more than 100% above the allowable guidelines. The amount that exceeds 100% of the allowable guidelines must be charged to a discretionary budget.

When the Expense Report is submitted in Chrome River, it will automatically be routed to the BUD and the Director of Procurement Services for excess lodging approval, as required.

15. ***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.***
16. **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.
17. **If circumstances make advance payments a necessity, the traveler may request a direct billing from the vendor, and the University may process a payment before the trip to prepay costs for one night of lodging to cover the hotel deposit.**
18. **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, if applicable.** A copy of the Pre-Approval request should be included with the vendor payment for international travel only. Documentation supporting direct bills must

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include: name of traveler, dates, purpose of travel, and the Pre-Approval request number, if applicable. Direct agency billing must be supported by a purchase order, or may be submitted on an Authorization for Purchase form if paying a government agency or if less than \$500. Those employees who do not have the Corporate Travel Card should generally use this process.

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

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:

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.