LAMAR UNIVERSITY TRAVEL POLICIES
MANUAL OF ADMINISTRATIVE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

SECTION: Financial Services **MAPP 05.05.04**
AREA: Procurement and Payment Services

Lamar University Travel Policies

GENERAL POLICY

Rules and Regulations covering travel and travel reimbursement from state and local funds are governed by the Travel Regulation Act, Texas Government Code 660, provisions of the latest General Appropriations Act, official interpretations of the Travel Act by the State Comptroller of Public Accounts (State of Texas Travel Allowance Guide) and the Texas State University System (TSUS) Regents Rules and Regulations. Provisions of the Travel Allowance Guide apply to all officers, heads of state agencies, state (University) employees and prospective employees incurring expenses when requested to visit a state agency, department, or institution of higher education for the purpose of being interviewed and evaluated for employment. Additionally, separate regulations may apply to contract, grant, and trust fund accounts. Any or all exceptions must be approved by the University President or his/her designee.

Travel for faculty and staff members of Lamar University (LU) may take place only after proper administrative approval has been obtained in accordance with the travel regulations set forth in this manual.

Trips requiring absence from classes and their duties are permitted to the extent they stimulate professional interest and provide information and ideas related to the betterment of the University and its contacts. However, trips should not be approved until arrangements have been made by the absenting employee, which ensure the adequate performance of his/her duties during the absence at no additional expense to the University. The delegation of duties should also assure the undisturbed continuance of related University operations.

For official University travel, requests for travel must be properly submitted via the Request to Travel at University Expense form (Request to Travel) within sufficient time to receive final approval prior to the commencement of travel. (This includes “zero” dollar reimbursement requests). Similarly, reimbursement for travel expenses will be dependent upon the accuracy, completeness, and expediency with which travel vouchers are submitted at the conclusion of a trip.

It is the responsibility of every employee to adhere to LU’s policy of “conservation of funds,” which is minimizing the amount of travel expenses by ensuring each travel arrangement is the most cost-effective, to ensure travel regulations are followed, and to ensure that all information relevant to travel reimbursement is presented accurately and in a true manner.

GENERAL OVERVIEW

The Travel Section of this manual primarily pertains to LU employees and prospective employees. The

following items supplement this manual:

The State of Texas Travel Allowance Guide (Comptroller)
https://fmx.cpa.state.tx.us/fm/pubs/travallow/index.php

State Travel Management Program Website (Comptroller)

https://comptroller.texas.gov/purchasing/programs/travel-management/

Employees and prospective employees must use the Request to Travel at University Expense (Request to Travel) form and the State of Texas Travel Voucher form. Allowable travel reimbursement rates follow the rates set forth by the United States (U.S.) General Services Administration (GSA) [contiguous 48 states], the U.S. Department of Defense [Alaska, Hawaii, U.S. Territories and Possessions], or the U.S. Department of State [foreign/non-U.S. travel].

Authorized travel expenses incurred by independent contractors, consultants, students, and teams/groups may use different travel forms, but must adhere to University travel policies and procedures in all applicable situations.

ABSENCE FROM USUAL AND REGULAR DUTIES

A. Allowable Purposes of Travel

Travel authorization will be granted to employees and prospective University employees when it is clear the purpose of travel is for official University business. Purposes that may be considered include the following:

1. Travel which benefits LU such as:
    a. Recruitment of staff and faculty, including travel of prospective University employees.
    b. Recruitment of students within the state of Texas. (State funds cannot be used for travel related to recruitment of students outside the state of Texas.)
    c. Representing LU in the various professional organizations which are a fundamental part of higher education. (Attendance at and participation in meetings is not a sufficient "purpose" for travel. Benefit to the University, its employees, or its students must be derived.)
    d. Serving various segments of society which have traditionally called upon higher education functions.
    e. Gathering information to be disseminated to students and employees which may improve instructions, research, or other official University functions.
    f. Performance of other duties which are of benefit to LU and are a part of the professional position held at LU (enhancing the prestige of an employee is not acceptable justification for travel).
2. Formal presentation of original research by an employee before a regional, state, national or international learned society.

B. Continuance of Duties

Travel authorization will be granted for official University business only when:

1. Appropriate provisions have been made by the absenting employee to have his/her duties carried out for the duration of the absence,

2. This delegation will provide for the continuance of associated University operations, and
3. This delegation of duties will not cause additional expense to LU.

CONSERVATION OF FUNDS

The state Travel Regulations Act states, "A state agency shall minimize the amount of travel expenses paid or reimbursed by the agency. The agency shall ensure that each travel arrangement is the most cost-effective considering all relevant circumstances." Therefore, the state of Texas and Lamar University require its employees to practice "conservation of funds."

Cost Efficient Method of Travel (Flying versus Driving)

Lamar University employees should choose the most cost-efficient method of traveling when traveling on University business. A comparison should be made between the cost of flying and the cost of driving to and from the duty point destination. Calculate the cost of flying by totaling mileage to and from the airport, the airline ticket, parking fees, and rental car fees. (The cost of the airline ticket must be determined at the time the travel is planned, not on the day of the travel or when the traveler returns. These latter dates do not reflect the true cost of a ticket if the ticket is purchased in advance, i.e. many tickets are cheaper when purchased 21 or more days in advance). Calculate the cost of driving by totaling mileage, any overnight hotel charges incurred to and from the final business destination, and additional meal money for the extra travel time. The lower of the two should be the form of travel chosen. However, if the higher form of travel is chosen, the traveler will only be allowed reimbursement in the amount of the lower cost. Please note, documentation must be provided on the form of travel not chosen. For example, you must get something in writing from a travel agency or print out something from the Internet showing the cost of an airline ticket to the business destination. A comparison sheet showing the breakdown of both forms of travel must be attached to the travel voucher.

Coordination of Travel (Four-per-car-rule)

In keeping with Texas Government Code, Section 660.044, coordination of travel must occur when two, three, or four University employees employed by the same agency travel on the same date with the same itinerary to conduct the same official University business. When coordination of travel is required, the University may reimburse only one of the University employees riding in the personally owned or leased motor vehicle for mileage to the duty point. If agreed upon prior to the trip, multiple employees may divide the allowable reimbursement if they all choose to drive their own vehicle.

Coordination of travel is not required if the chief administrator(s) of the employees' department(s) or an administrator's designee determines before traveling that coordination of travel is not feasible. That determination may be made only if the lack of feasibility is caused by factors relating to official University business. ***Note.*** The LU Delegation of Authority policy (MAPP 05.01.06) lists the chief administrators and designees who have authority to decide these matters.

FOREIGN TRAVEL

To be approved, all foreign travel must follow the procedures in this manual and the TSUS Rules & Regulations. All travel outside the United States, with the exception of travel to U.S. Possessions and Canada, requires final pre-approval by the LU President or his/her designee. Foreign travel may be reimbursed only if it has been pre-approved by the President or his/her designee. (**Note.** When traveling out of the country, the LU President must obtain pre-approval from the TSUS Chancellor. The TSUS Chancellor must also approve the President's reimbursement for travel outside the United States.)

Travel Advisories & Travel to Level 3 & Level 4 Destinations

As a first step in planning any trip abroad, an employee must check the Travel Advisories for their intended destination. Note that conditions can change rapidly in a country at any time. Current travel warnings may be accessed at the U.S. Department of State Travel Advisories List.

The current TSUS Rules and Regulations related to foreign travel and travel advisories must be followed. The university may not approve faculty, staff, or students to travel for educational purposes to regions of a country that are listed with a Travel Advisory of Level 3 or Level 4 by the United States Department of State, except in limited circumstances. These circumstances or exceptions are addressed in the TSUS Rules and Regulations, Chapter VI, Paragraph 14, "Foreign Travel for Educational Purposes" (pages VI-21 to VI-22). All LU faculty, staff, and students who wish to travel to a foreign destination must understand and adhere to the circumstances under which foreign travel to a Level 3 or Level 4 location is permissible or not permissible.

Lamar University encourages travelers to reconsider taking the trip if the foreign destination is a Level 3 or Level 4. If the traveler decides to continue with the trip, he or she must obtain approval from the LU Vice President for Finance and Operations or the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs as well as complete the "International Travel Release, Hold Harmless, and Indemnity Agreement for Travel to Area with U.S. State Department Warning" form required with all foreign travel.

All LU travelers to foreign locations should adhere to their respective protocols prior to, during, and subsequent to their trips. Protocols differ based on factors such as the traveler's status, means of transportation, number of travelers, and other factors. Protocols include, but are not limited to:

- Students/Teams/Groups Protocols
- Faculty-led Programs Protocols
- Faculty/Staff without students – completing the following documents and following the routing instructions as indicated:
    - Request to Travel at University Expense.
    - Lamar University International Travel Release, Hold Harmless, and Indemnity Agreement for Travel to Area with U.S. State Department Travel Warning Form.
    - TMP Form "Export License Exception for Temporary Exports for LU-Owned Property."
    - Trip Itinerary (list of daily business trip activities).

If the travel request is approved by all parties, the original travel documents will be forwarded to the LU Travel Office. An employee may be reimbursed according to the policies for foreign/non-U.S. travel set forth in this document and related travel policies.

If the travel request is denied by any party, all travel documents will be returned to the traveler with the reason for denial.

TRAVEL TO WASHINGTON, D.C.

The General Appropriations Act, Article IX, Section 6.12, requires state agencies with personnel traveling to Washington, D.C. for activities that involve obtaining or spending federal funds or that impact federal policies must inform the Office of State-Federal Relations (OSFR) in advance of such travel. The agency must include information about the timing and purpose of the trip and provide OSFR with the name of an individual who may be contacted for additional information.

This information is to be provided via the State-Funded Travel to DC Form located on the Office of the Texas Governor State-Funded Travel to DC web page.

The completed form should be attached to the Request to Travel form when obtaining approval to travel.

DESIGNATED HEADQUARTERS

For purposes of calculating reimbursement rates only, the designated headquarters for a Lamar University employee assigned to the main campus is:

Lamar University
4400 S. Martin Luther King Jr. Pkwy
Beaumont, TX 77705

ECONOMY AND EFFICIENCY OF TRAVEL

The employees listed in the Delegation of Authority policy (MAPP 05.01.06), or their designees, are responsible for ensuring that travel is conducted in their department or unit so as to achieve maximum economy and efficiency within the guidelines set forth in this section and for assuring duplicate travel vouchers are not submitted.

Should an employee receive an overpayment for travel expenses, he/she is to reimburse the University for such overpayment immediately.

Employees who must remain at their duty point (i.e., Saturday night stay) in order to qualify for low airfares may be reimbursed for their additional meals, lodging, rental cars, parking, and other reimbursable expenses, so long as the savings incurred by the lower airfare exceeds the additional reimbursable expenses.

ADVANCE OF MONIES

A cash advance is monies requested and received by the employee for travel which is to be reimbursed by the University but is only issued for a trip involving LU students, sport teams, or foreign travel.

Travel cash advances may be issued to current employees of Lamar University, and the following conditions must be considered:

- The travel cash advance is only allowed for the amount anticipated for meal costs of the student group or foreign travel.
- The cash advance cannot be processed until the Request to Travel has been approved.
- The trip will be reimbursed from funds **other than** state appropriation.
- The Request to Travel form with the cash advance amount noted and initialed must be submitted to the LU Travel department at least two (2) weeks prior to the date the advance is needed.
- The requesting employee cannot have an outstanding cash advance from a prior trip.
- Travel cash advances will not be processed for less than $100.

Students or prospective employees may not request a cash advance. The cash advance will be deducted from the Travel reimbursement. The Travel Voucher must be completed and submitted to the Travel department no later than 30 days from the last date of University-sponsored travel. However, if funds are remaining from the cash advance, those must be deposited with the LU Cashier's office within seven (7) days of the return to headquarters. Failure to return the funds within seven (7) days may result in a Payroll deduction for the funds advanced.

TRAVEL AND RISK-RELATED ACTIVITIES RELEASE FORM

The University's Release and Indemnification Agreement and Medical Information Release forms must be completed and signed by each student or member of the public prior to participating in University-sponsored travel or a risk-related activity.

There are separate forms for adults and minors and for foreign travel. In the case of a minor, the parent or guardian must sign the forms. A minor is any person who has not yet attained the age of eighteen (18). A student is any person presently enrolled in Lamar University. These forms may be found on the LU Office of EHS & Risk Management web page or by request from the Office of EHS & Risk Management.

A designated contact person in the Academic or Student Affairs unit that is sponsoring the travel or activity must maintain the completed forms for a period of two years.

Detailed policies and procedures regarding travel and risk-related activities for students and members of the public are available through the LU Division of Student Engagement and the LU Office of EHS & Risk Management.

REQUEST TO TRAVEL AT UNIVERSITY EXPENSE

All travel conducted by a Lamar University employee on behalf of the University, must submit a completed and approved "Request to Travel" form to the University Travel department BEFORE arrangements are made for the trip. This allows for documented proof that the trip has been approved by all necessary parties. Please note, departments are not required to submit a Request to Travel for Prospective Employees.

Travel Where No Reimbursement is Requested or Allowed

A completed and approved Request-to-Travel form is required for travel where no reimbursement will be requested, as well as a request with local mileage which is non-reimbursable. Travel is considered "local" when there will be no overnight stay and the trip is within a 50-mile radius of the University.

If, in the course of normal duties, an employee must travel "locally," that employee may now submit one Request to Travel form covering all of their "local" travel trips. This may be submitted per semester or fiscal year, whichever is deemed appropriate by their department. With this policy, the department must have on file documentation containing approval of each travel occurrence and the specifics of the travel, i.e. date, time, location, purpose etc. This documentation must be readily available to review for audit purposes.

Travel Where Reimbursement is Requested

For travel where the traveler will be requesting reimbursement of expenses, the Index account manager must first verify there are sufficient funds in their travel pool budget (710000) when approving the Request-to-Travel. Once the completed Request to Travel form has all appropriate signature approvals, the form is to be submitted to the University Travel department. The requested amount will be encumbered, and this encumbrance will signify that the trip has been granted final approval. The travel department will return a copy of the encumbered request to the traveler. If there is insufficient budget when encumbering, the Request to Travel form will be returned to the requesting department noting there is insufficient budget for the encumbrance. Travel expenses will not be considered reimbursable until the travel department has encumbered the request.

TRAVEL VOUCHER

The state of Texas Travel Voucher must be completed, approved, and then submitted at the completion of a trip before travel reimbursement can be provided. Only Lamar University employees and prospective employees are reimbursed using the Travel Voucher. Others, such as students not employed by Lamar, are reimbursed using a Request to Pay Vendor form. When traveling to conferences and special events, travelers are required to provide documentation of their trip for backup, i.e., the brochure, invitation, itinerary, email, etc. describing the event they are attending.

Travel expenses may be reimbursed only from those funds appropriated or authorized for travel. The Travel Voucher must reflect the benefits derived by LU.

Each portion of a trip must be listed on the "Record of Transportation and Duties Performed" section of the

Travel Voucher and must include the following:

- The origin and destination of each portion of the trip.
- The means by which travel was accomplished.
- A statement detailing the purpose of the trip.
- The fares paid, or personal car mileage accrued for each portion of the trip.

For the timely and efficient processing of travel reimbursements, Travel Vouchers must be submitted to the LU Travel department as soon as possible after trip completion but not to exceed thirty (30) days. Such vouchers may be presented as follows:

- Only after completion of travel.
- On a single trip basis for employees whose normal duties do not require full-time travel.
- On a weekly or monthly basis for employees whose normal duties require full-time travel or who make recurring trips.

It is beneficial to the absented employee to submit the voucher as soon as possible after a trip is completed so that expenses incurred by that employee may be recovered in a timely manner.

When vouchers are presented for a specific trip or period, they should reflect the inclusive dates of travel. All reimbursable travel expenses and assignments must be included in the voucher. A Travel Voucher must be submitted within the following time periods, depending upon associated criteria:

- When a travel cash advance was given or when general funds are to be used for reimbursement, the Travel Voucher must be submitted no later than thirty (30) days after trip completion.
- Travel expenses incurred in August must be submitted on a Travel Voucher no later than the second working day in September of the following fiscal year.
- Travel expenses applicable to contracts and grants should be submitted on a Travel Voucher no later than fifteen (15) days after the expiration of the grant or contract.

REQUIRED RECEIPTS

The following receipts must be attached to the Travel Voucher if the associated expenses are to be considered for reimbursement. If a receipt is submitted in a foreign currency it must be converted to U.S. dollars, the exchange rate must be noted, and a copy of the exchange receipt or a print-screen from an internet website showing the conversion rates for the date on the receipt must be attached. One example of a website that shows exchange rates and converts the currency is the OANDA website.

Transportation Receipts

Commercial Transportation Receipts, i.e. those issued by airline, train, or bus companies:

A complete passenger receipt issued by a commercial airline company or an itinerary issued by the company or a travel agency must include the following:

- The name of the employee and airline, train, or bus company, and
- The ticket number, and
- The class of transportation, and
- The travel dates, and
- The amount of the fare, and

- The origin and destination of each trip, and
- Proof of payment.

A passenger receipt or itinerary that has been altered by any person other than the entity issuing the receipt or itinerary is unacceptable. A receipt or itinerary to which additional information has been added is considered unaltered if the information does not conflict with the original information on the receipt.

Mass Transit, Taxi, Network Transit Driver (Uber, Lyft) Receipts:

An employee may be reimbursed for the actual cost of transportation by subway, taxi, network transportation driver (Uber, Lyft, etc.) if incurred to conduct University business. A receipt for the expense must be submitted for reimbursement. This may include the original subway card with receipt or credit card statement; receipt with business name, date, and amount; or emailed receipt. Tips are not reimbursable.

Car Rental Receipts:

A complete receipt issued by the rental company must be submitted when requesting reimbursement.

The receipt must include the following:

- The name of the rental company, and
- The name of the employee renting the vehicle, and
- The starting and ending dates of the rental, and
- An itemization of expenses incurred, and
- The class of vehicle rented, and
- Proof of payment.

A receipt that has been altered by any person other than the entity issuing the receipt is unacceptable. A receipt to which additional information has been added is considered unaltered if the information does not conflict with the original information on the receipt.

Transportation Incidental Receipts (parking, tolls):

An employee may be reimbursed for a parking or toll expense incurred while traveling in a personally owned or leased vehicle, rental vehicle, or University owned or leased vehicle. Receipts must be provided for reimbursement.

Lodging Receipts

Lodging expenses (both in-state and out-of-state) may only be reimbursed if it is incurred at a commercial lodging establishment. For in-state lodging, LU employees are not required to pay state of Texas Hotel Occupancy Taxes, so the employees must provide the hotel with a Texas Hotel Tax Exemption Certificate (Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts Form 12- 302), as this is not a reimbursable expense. A lodging receipt issued by a commercial lodging establishment, a travel agency or a broker is acceptable and must include the following:

- The name and address of the commercial lodging establishment, and
- The name of the employee, and
- The single room rate, and
- A daily itemization of the lodging charges, and
- Proof of payment.

A receipt that has been altered by any person other than the entity issuing the receipt is unacceptable. A receipt to which additional information has been added is considered unaltered if the information does not conflict with the original information on the receipt. The paper version of a receipt delivered through the Internet or electronic mail by a commercial lodging establishment, travel agency or broker is considered original.

Meal Receipts and Reimbursement

Meal receipts are not required for meal reimbursement. However, reimbursements may not exceed the following:

- Rates established by the U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) for meals during travel within the contiguous United States (48 states).
- Rates established by the U.S. Department of Defense for meals during travel to Alaska, Hawaii, and U.S. Territories and Possessions.
- Rates established by the U.S. Department of State for foreign/non-U.S. travel.

For budgetary purposes, Lamar University departments may set their own maximum reimbursement rates as long as the rates do not exceed the GSA, Department of Defense, or State Department rates and adhere to all reimbursable rules set forth in this manual. Thus, departments may require meal reimbursement at the lower department maximum or require that employees receive reimbursement equal to the actual cost of their meals, as long as the actual cost does not exceed the department maximum or the GSA, Department of Defense, or State Department maximums. Meal receipts would be required for actual cost reimbursement.

Individual employees who wish to receive – or who are required to receive (e.g., recipients of grants, sponsored projects, etc.) – reimbursement at the actual cost of their meals or at a rate lower than a department, GSA, Department of Defense, or State Department maximum should contact the LU Office of Post-Award Administration (for grants/sponsored projects) or the LU Travel Office (all other situations) to discuss this matter. [LU Post-Award Administration and LU Travel can be reached through the Office of Financial Services.] Meal receipts would be required for reimbursement at the actual cost. Actual cost reimbursement may not exceed the maximums established by the employee's department; the GSA, Department of Defense, or State Department; or the grant/sponsored project or similar.

Note. Grants, sponsored projects, and other special awards or funding may have more restrictive rules regarding reimbursement than those required by LU, its departments, or the GSA, Department of Defense, or State Department. Travelers should contact LU's Office Post-Award Administration for guidance.

TRAVEL EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENT

Final reimbursement of travel expenses for employees and prospective employees will be based upon the travel being:

- Performed as official University business,
- In compliance with regulations set forth by the Texas State Comptroller,
- In compliance with the TSUS Regents' Rule and Regulations, and
- In accordance with LU policies set forth in this manual.

Funds budgeted for travel may not be used for reimbursement of travel expenses incurred unless there is a statement on the Travel Voucher, submitted by the absented employee, which clearly identifies persons or places contacted and/or the nature of the official University business.

A. Reimbursement Authorization

The absented employee's department head or administrative supervisor must concur, by signature on the voucher, that travel expenses are accurate and honest. An approval signature must also be on the voucher from the appropriate delegated authority (or designee) listed in the University's Delegation of Authority policy (MAPP 05.01.06).

B. Overpayment of Travel Expenses

If an employee receives an overpayment for travel expenses, he/she is expected to immediately reimburse the University for the amount of overpayment through the LU Travel department. It is the employee's sole responsibility to ensure that any excess reimbursement is returned to LU or the appropriate third party.

C. Double Travel Expense Payments

A University employee may be reimbursed for travel expenses from non-state agency sources and from the State/University so long as the total reimbursement from all sources is not greater than actual expenses.

D. Natural Disaster or Other Natural Occurrence

A University employee may be reimbursed for a travel expense incurred as a result of attempting to conduct University business if the employee is unable to conduct the business due to a natural disaster or other natural occurrence and the expense would be reimbursable had the business been conducted.

E. Packaged Travel Arrangements

If a travel package of at least two travel arrangements (i.e. meals, lodging, transportation, incidental expenses, registration fees) is purchased, each type is reimbursable only to the extent it would have been reimbursable had it been purchased individually. The receipt for the purchase must separately state the cost of each type of travel expense.

TRANSPORTATION ALLOWANCE

Mileage in Personal Vehicle

An employee is allowed to be reimbursed for mileage incurred to conduct University business. The reimbursement may not exceed the total of the number of miles traveled for business multiplied by the maximum mileage reimbursement rate set forth by the University. The mileage reimbursement rate is inclusive of all expenses associated with the employee's use of his or her vehicle. The University is not required to reimburse employees at the maximum rate. The University may specify a mileage reimbursement rate that is lower than the maximum allowable rate.

The number of reimbursable miles may not exceed the number of miles of the most cost-effective, reasonably safe route between an employee's origin of travel and the final duty point. In determining the most cost-effective reasonably safe route, a University may consider the route that provides the shortest distance, the quickest drive time, or the safest road conditions. All Travel Vouchers requesting mileage reimbursement must include a printout which verifies the amount of mileage claimed from the online mapping site of MapQuest or Google Maps, or by using their vehicle odometer reading. These are the only methods for mileage calculation that will be accepted.

Four-per-car-rule (Coordination of Travel)

In keeping with Texas Government Code, Section 660.044, when University employees travel on the same dates with the same itinerary, they must coordinate travel. When four or fewer employees travel on the same itinerary, only one may be reimbursed for mileage. When more than four employees travel on the same itinerary, only one out of every four may be reimbursed for mileage. If agreed upon prior to the trip, multiple employees may divide the allowable reimbursement if they all choose to drive their own vehicle.

Rental Vehicles

An employee traveling to conduct official University business by rental vehicle is entitled to reimbursement for the cost of renting the vehicle, including all applicable taxes and mandatory charges. It may include a charge for a collision damage waiver or a loss damage waiver if not already included in the contracted rate for the rental. For an employee to claim the aforementioned waiver expense, a reason why a state contracted rental agency was not used for the rental must be provided. A charge for an additional driver may only be reimbursed if incurred for a business reason. A charge for a liability insurance supplement, personal accident insurance, safe trip insurance or personal effects insurance is not reimbursable. The employee is allowed to rent up to a full-size vehicle. If a group must rent a van, the van must be a 12 passenger or less van rental. The rental of a 15-passenger van is not allowed.

Commercial Transportation (Airline, Train, Bicycle, Boat)

An employee traveling to conduct official University business by commercial transportation is entitled to a transportation allowance equal to the actual cost of the necessary transportation to perform the official business. The reimbursement may not exceed the cost of the lowest available fare between the employee's designated headquarters and the employee's duty point.

Mass Transit, Taxi, Network Transit Driver (Uber, Lyft) Receipts

An employee may be reimbursed for the actual cost of transportation by subway, taxi, network transportation driver (Uber, Lyft, etc.) if incurred to conduct University business. A receipt for the expense must be submitted for reimbursement. This may include the original subway card with receipt or credit card statement; receipt with business name, date, and amount; or emailed receipt. Tips are not reimbursable.

LODGING ALLOWANCE

Lodging expenses, both in-state and out-of-state, may only be reimbursed if it is incurred at a commercial lodging establishment. Only single occupancy rates may be claimed. In cases where more than a single occupancy charge is reflected on the receipt, indicate the single occupancy rate on the receipt. The employee may only be reimbursed for his or her actual lodging expense not to exceed the rates set forth by the U.S. General Services Administration (GSA). https://www.gsa.gov/travel/plan-book/per-diem-rates. The only exception to claim more than the GSA rate is when the expense is being paid by local funds and the hotel is considered a "Host Hotel". A Host Hotel is a hotel where the conference, seminar or convention is being held. If the Host Hotel room rate is higher than the GSA allowable rate for that city, you may be reimbursed for the full amount of the hotel charges if you provide documentation that indicates the hotel was the Host Hotel. An example of the acceptable documentation would be the conference brochure or the seminar schedule listing the hotel as the conference location or designated hotel site for that conference.

Lodging expenses incurred the night before University business begins and the night after University business ends are reimbursable. Lodging expenses incurred more than one night before or after the University business begins or ends are not reimbursable unless the expenses are incurred to qualify for discount airfare or if travel to or from the duty point reasonably requires more than one day. (Texas Administrative Code Section 5.22).

When an LU employee incurs lodging expenses in the state of Texas, they are not required to pay State of Texas hotel occupancy taxes, so the employees must provide the hotel with a Texas Hotel Tax Exemption Certificate (Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts Form 12- 302), as this is not a reimbursable expense.

A University employee may be reimbursed for lodging obtained outside of the duty point if he/she is unable to obtain reasonable lodging within the duty point. The lodging expense reimbursement may not exceed the maximum allowable lodging rate for the location where the lodging is obtained.

Shared lodging by two or more University employees is reimbursable to each employee for his/her share of the lodging expense. The reimbursement to each employee may not exceed the maximum lodging reimbursement rate. Each employee must submit a travel voucher to receive reimbursement. When only one of the individuals sharing lodging is a state employee, the employee may only be reimbursed the room rate for a single occupancy.

For foreign travel, an employee is entitled to be reimbursed for actual lodging expenses incurred while conducting University business at a duty point in a foreign country while adhering to the University's "conservation of funds" policy.

When traveling to or from a duty point reasonably requires more than one day, the maximum per commercial lodging establishment that the University may reimburse the employee for lodging expenses incurred on a day is equal to the maximum lodging reimbursement rate for the location in which lodging is obtained.

MEAL ALLOWANCE

A University employee may be reimbursed for a meal expense incurred on a day that the employee conducts University business outside of his/her designated headquarters and the trip includes an overnight stay. Meal receipts are not required for travel; however, reimbursements may not exceed the rates set by the U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) [contiguous 48 states], the U.S. Department of Defense [Alaska, Hawaii, U.S. Territories and Possessions], or the U.S. Department of State [foreign/non-U.S. travel].

The employee may only be reimbursed for his/her actual meal expenses. For meals included as part of an event (i.e., conference, workshop, etc.) or meals paid for by others, an employee may not claim reimbursement and must adjust the per diem as applicable. (Example. If a lunch is included as part of an event or a dinner is paid for by a colleague, the employee must adjust the per diem according to the following percentages: Breakfast 20%, Lunch 30%, Dinner 50%).

Meal expenses incurred while traveling to and staying at a duty point the day before University business begins and traveling from a duty point the day after University business ends are reimbursable. When traveling to or from a duty point reasonably requires more than one day, the maximum amount the University may reimburse the employee for meal expenses incurred during that day is equal to the maximum meal reimbursement rate for the location in which lodging was obtained on that day. If lodging is not obtained on that day, then the maximum reimbursement is equal to the maximum rate for the location in which lodging was obtained on the day after or prior.

For foreign travel, an employee is entitled to be reimbursed for actual meal expenses incurred while conducting University business at a duty point in a foreign country while adhering to the University's "conservation of funds" policy..

The University calculates the allowable meal reimbursement rates by multiplying the GSA, Department of Defense, or State Department maximum rate by the designated percentage rates depending on the time of departure and return.

A. Percentage rates: Breakfast 20% Lunch 30% Dinner 50%

B. Departure Times

1. If the traveler leaves at or before 8:00 a.m., he/she is entitled to be reimbursed for breakfast, lunch, and dinner.

2. If the traveler leaves after 8:00 am, but before 1:00 p.m., he/she is entitled to lunch and dinner.

3. If the traveler leaves at or after 1:00 p.m., he/she is entitled to dinner.

C. Arrival Times

1. If the traveler returns to headquarters after 8:00 a.m., he/she is entitled to breakfast.

2. If the traveler returns to headquarters after 1:00 p.m., he/she is entitled to breakfast and lunch.

3. If the traveler returns to headquarters after 6:00 p.m., he/she is entitled to breakfast, lunch, and dinner.

REIMBURSEMENT RATES

A traveler may be reimbursed up to a maximum daily rate of payment for actual expenses incurred for meals and lodging when expenses are incurred as a result of official University travel. For budgetary purposes, individual Lamar University departments may set their own maximum reimbursement rates as long as the rates do not exceed the GSA, Department of Defense, or State Department rates and adhere to all reimbursable rules set forth in this manual.

Reimbursement rate exception: An individual who is a chief administrative officer of a state agency is entitled to be reimbursed for actual meal and lodging expenses incurred while performing the duties of the individual's office or employment. Texas Government Code Section 660.203(a) If the individual is being reimbursed for meal and lodging expenses incurred inside the contiguous United States, then the maximum amount of that reimbursement is equal to twice the amount that could be reimbursed to a regular state employee. The chief administrator may designate one (or more) state employees to *represent* the designating party at a particular meeting or conference and that designee qualifies for this exception. Also, the chief administrator may authorize one or more state employees traveling with the authorizing party to a particular meeting or conference to receive reimbursement of their actual expenses for meals and lodging while attending the meeting or conference. Texas Government Code Section 660.206(b) If the expenses are incurred within the contiguous United States, the reimbursement is limited to twice the amount that could be reimbursed for regular state employee travel. A reimbursement for actual expenses may be paid even if the itineraries for the authorizing party and the employee receiving the reimbursement are not identical. For example, it is not necessary for both individuals to fly to the duty point on the same flight.

Reasons why reimbursement is not allowed or may be reduced:

A. Conditions When Expense Reimbursement is Not Allowed

An employee may not receive payment for meals and lodging when the employee is:

1. At his/her designated headquarters,

2. Absent from his/her duty position for personal reasons (i.e. due to illness, family emergency, repairs to a personal automobile, etc.),

3. Absent from his/her duties for any reason not connected with official University business, or

4. Away from his/her designated headquarters when the travel does not include an overnight stay.

B. Personal Business on Official Travel

When an employee on official travel conducts business not connected with his/her official duties for the University, that employee must clearly show on the Travel Voucherthat he/she is absent for personal reasons. The hour and date of departure from official business must be shown as well as the hour and date of return to official business.

C. Authorized Reduction of Reimbursement Allowance

When conditions warrant, and based upon University established rates, persons authorizing travel may reduce the daily reimbursement allowance of an employee, provided that employee is notified of the reduction prior to incurring any travel expense.

The intention is that employees whose living costs are unusually low when engaged in official travel, such as those using camping facilities, staying with friends/relatives, etc.,need not be paid the maximum allowance rate.

Computation of Allowable Reimbursement Rate

For the purpose of calculating maximum reimbursement rates only, an employee's designated headquarters is the place at which the employee is required to maintain his/her official headquarters. Reimbursements are not allowed for travel to any cities, towns or independent subdivisions surrounded by the employee's designated headquarters. Mileage reimbursement is not allowed within a 50-mile radius of the employee's designated headquarters. In computing maximum reimbursement rates, the actual time of departure from designated headquarters and arrival to designated headquarters must be shown for each trip. If an employee passes through his/her designated headquarters "nonstop" from one point to another, and this constitutes the shortest line of travel, he/she will be considered on continuous duty for purposes of calculating allowable reimbursement rates from the initial departure point to the destination.

A. Computation of In-State Maximum Reimbursement Rates

Lamar University must use the federal Domestic Maximum Per Diem Rates provided by the General Services Administration (GSA) for in-state travel. If the city is not listed, but the county is listed, use the daily rate of the county. For locations not listed (city or county), the daily rates are noted on the Texas Comptroller TexTravel website.

Any hotel expense overages for travel on state funds require local funds to be used for the difference between the Federal hotel per diem and the actual expense.

The only exception to claim more than the GSA rate is when the expense is being paid by local funds and the hotel is considered a "Host Hotel." A Host Hotel is a hotel where the conference, seminar or convention is being held. If the Host Hotel room rate is higher than the GSA allowable rate for that city, you may be reimbursed for the full amount of the hotel charges if you provide documentation that indicates the hotel was the Host Hotel.

B. Computation of Out-of-State Maximum Reimbursement Rates (Contiguous United States)

Lamar University must use the federal Domestic Maximum Per Diem Rates provided by the General Services Administration (GSA) for out-of-state travel within the contiguous United States (48 states). If the city is not listed, but the county is listed, use the daily rate of the county. For locations not listed (city or county), the daily rates are noted on the Texas Comptroller TexTravel website.

C. Computation of Maximum Reimbursement Rates for Alaska, Hawaii, and U.S. Territories and Possessions

Lamar University must use the federal Maximum Per Diem Rates provided by the U.S. Department of Defense for out-of-state travel to Alaska, Hawaii, U.S. Territories, and U.S. Possessions.

D. Computation of Maximum Reimbursement Rates for Foreign Travel

Lamar University must use the federal Maximum Per Diem Rates provided by the U.S. Department of State for travel outside the United States (i.e., "foreign" travel).

E. Direct Billing of Lodging Cost for Conferences or Seminars

Lamar University may be billed by commercial lodging establishments for the lodging expenses of their employees when attending conferences or seminars. This provision is effective only when an agency sends more than one employee to a conference or seminar. Reimbursement for lodging is limited to the maximum amounts allowed for lodging in-state and out-of-state.

F. Daily or Weekend Return to Headquarters

An employee in travel status may return to headquarters daily or on the weekend instead of remaining at the duty point if the cost of returning to headquarters is less than or equal to the cost of remaining at the duty point. The lowest cost rule also applies to an employee who leaves one duty point and returns to headquarters before reporting to a new duty point. An employee who is required to return to headquarters for University business is reimbursed for the actual cost of transportation. If more than one employee returns to headquarters in one of the employees' own personally owned automobiles, the expense of each employee will be included in the comparison of mileage to duty point expenses.

G. Meals/Lodging Not Payable

An employee may not receive meals and lodging when the employee is:

1. At his/her official designated headquarters,

2. Absent from duty point for personal reasons such as illness, family emergency or car trouble,

3. Absent from duty point for any reason not connected with duties of the employee's agency, or

4. Away from designated headquarters when the travel does not include an overnight stay.

The employee must show the date and hour of departure from duty point and the date and hour of return to duty point.

H. Discontinuance of Travel Due to Mechanical Failure

An employee may not receive per diem or mileage when University business is interrupted due to mechanical failure of a personal automobile. Once the automobile is repaired and the employee returns to University business, per diem and mileage may be claimed.

OTHER TRAVEL EXPENSES

A. Registration Fees

Reimbursement for registration fees, or similar expenses incurred when attending any type of organization or association meeting, will be made only if the associated membership is directly related to the duties performed by the employee and the type of conference attended. Receipt showing who paid and the form of payment must be submitted with the Travel Voucher.

A membership fee may be paid in advance by the University via the University Request to Pay Vendor form. The form must include the following:

1. Vendor name and address for payment. If it is a new vendor, a completed and signed IRS W9 form will be needed to set the vendor up in the system.

2. The amount to be paid.

3. Description including the place of the meeting/conference, the title of the event (no abbreviations), dates of the event, and for whom the fee is being paid.

4. Attached copy of the approved and encumbered Request to Travel for the trip.

B. Membership Fees and Dues

Membership fees and dues must be paid through LU's Payment Services department via a Request to Pay Vendor form, not through Travel.

Memberships in professional organizations must be in the name of the University and require written approval from the President or his designee prior to payment. Reimbursement for membership fees and dues in professional organizations will be made if there is a direct relationship between the duties performed by the employee and the organization. Receipts are required, with a justification statement explaining the necessity of paying the membership fee.

C. Miscellaneous (Incidental) Reimbursable Travel Expenses

1. Phone calls, both local and long distance, for official business.

2. Gasoline for rental or University-owned vehicles.

3. Parking fees for personal, rented or University-owned vehicles.

4. Toll charges incurred while actively conducting University business.

5. Repair parts and labor, plus towing charges to University-owned vehicles.

6. Copies made by the employee that are required by the University for informational or investigative purposes.

7. Freight charges to ship University equipment or materials.

8. Admittance fees to functions while accompanying clients of the University.

9. Notary fees for official documents.

10. Passport or visa charges, departure taxes and inoculations.

11. Charges to exchange U.S. currency and vice versa. The exchange rate used for the conversion of monies must be stated. Losses caused by exchange rate fluctuations are not reimbursable.

12. Gratuities (Tips) for meals are reimbursable in the following circumstances: group-related travel or activities (i.e., athletic team travel, etc.); President, VPAA, or VPFO travel in their roles as chief administrative officers of the University; and situations in which an establishment imposes a mandatory service charge that cannot be refused by the customer. Gratuities (Tips) are not reimbursable in other circumstances.

D. Non-Reimbursable Travel Expenses

1. Alcoholic beverages are not a reimbursable expense.

2. Meal expenses when there is no overnight travel.

3. Meal expense incurred within the employee's designated headquarters is not reimbursable unless it is mandatory and connected with training, a seminar, or a conference.

4. A charge for a liability insurance supplement, personal accident insurance, safe trip insurance or personal effects insurance is not reimbursable when renting a vehicle.

5. Excessive baggage is only reimbursable if the excess is a result of a business-related purpose, such as necessary equipment, extra items for presentation at a conference, etc.

6. Discounts and travel expenses at no cost: A University employee may not be reimbursed for the value or cost of a discount on a travel expense unless the employee paid money to obtain the discount. If an employee receives a discount as a benefit of making unrelated purchases or conducting unrelated business with the provider of the discount, the discount is considered to be provided free to the employee. For example, a state employee who receives free transportation or lodging in exchange for mileage, points or other non-monetary credits has not incurred an expense for reimbursement purposes.

TRAVEL REGULATIONS FOR SPECIAL FUNDING

Provisions of the preceding general travel regulations apply to all LU employees and all funds. However, if applicable, employees may travel under the auspices of contracts, gifts, grants, or other special funds, in which case they may elect to take advantage of the following exceptions.

A. Contracts

Travel allowances under research and other contracts, which are fully reimbursable,will be in accordance with the terms of the contract. However, if the contract does not specify travel allowances, then the general travel regulations will apply.

B. Gifts, Grants and Other Special Funds

1. For grants from, or derived from, federal or state agencies, travel allowances will be those specified in the general travel regulations.

2. For all gifts, grants (other than those from, or derived from, federal or state agencies), and other special funds, travel allowances will be for actual expenses involving meals, lodging and airport parking fees not to exceed rates specified in the general travel regulations per day. This applies to both in-state and out-of-state travel. Lodging receipts must be submitted for reimbursement of claims. The transportation allowances will follow the provisions of the general travel regulations.

The provisions of B1 and B2 above are subject to the terms and conditions of the particular gift or grant involved, which may supersede the above provisions.

When not prohibited by specific terms, employees may be reimbursed for required registration fees or similar expenses incurred while attending meetings of organizationsor associations. Receipts for such expenses must be secured and attached to the Travel Voucher if reimbursement is expected.

PROSPECTIVE EMPLOYEES

In its search to fill administrative, professional and faculty posts with highly qualified personnel, the University may invite certain candidates for on-campus interviews. An individual who is requested to interview with the University for the purpose of being interviewed and evaluated for employment may be

reimbursed for travel expenses.

Prospective employees are required to do the following:

A. Follow the same travel policies which govern University employees, except he/she is not required to complete a Request to Travel.

B. Complete a State of Texas Travel Voucher. A University employee may complete the form on behalf of the prospective employee; however the prospective employee must sign the travel voucher.

C. All appropriate receipts must be attached to the travel voucher.

D. A prospective employee who has been accepted for employment may not be reimbursed for reporting to work.

TRAVEL BY STUDENTS

Students traveling on LU business must adhere to all University travel policies. In addition, students traveling on LU business must adhere to all policies established by the University's Division of Student Engagement and Office of EHS & Risk Management.

TRAVEL BY INDEPENDENT CONTRACTORS AND CONSULTANTS

The University will reimburse travel expenses for independent contractors and consultants if the travel has an approved business purpose, and the travel is preapproved. If the travel is part of a contract, Lamar University contract practice will encourage a flat fee for services to include any reimbursable travel expenses.

If an independent contractor or consultant chooses to have actual travel expenses reimbursed, all LU travel rules must be followed, and the associated travel documents will be reviewed by the Travel Office to verify those rules have been followed. Travel expenses must be validly incurred by the independent contractor or consultant directly and solely in support of the agreed-upon services provided to the University. An independent contractor or consultant will not be reimbursed for expenses that are invalidly incurred or beyond the agreed-upon services, that are prohibited under these travel policies, or that exceed the allowable amounts indicated in these travel policies. To receive reimbursement, an independent contractor or consultant must submit to LU receipts, invoices, and other documentation requested by the University.

Reimbursement will not exceed a maximum expense cap mutually agreed upon by the independent contractor or consultant and the University, without the prior written approval of the University. This maximum expense cap will be indicated in the contract or agreement between the independent contractor or consultant and the University.

Individuals hired by the University as consultants or independent contractors must be identified and approved in advance of services being provided. The traveler typically purchases their own ticket and is reimbursed. Reimbursement of travel expenses incurred by consultants/individual contractors are reimbursed via the Request to Pay Vendor Form. This reimbursement will be reviewed by the LU Travel Office.

AUDITING OF TRAVEL

Each submitted Request to Travel at University Expense, Travel Voucher, Travel-related Request to Pay Vendor, and Travel-related Requisition will be audited by the LU Travel Office. Any form submitted which does not satisfy the requirements and regulations set forth in this manual will be returned to the appropriate

department or claimant with an explanation indicating items or discrepancies in need of completion or correction, or the reason the expense is not allowed.

REVIEW AND RESPONSIBILITY

Responsible Party: Vice President for Finance and Operations

Review Schedule: Every three years on or before September 1

APPROVAL

Jeremy C. Alltop	02/25/2022
Vice President for Finance and Operations	Date

Dr. Jaime R. Taylor	02/25/2022
President	Date

REVISION LOG

Revision Number	Date	Description of Changes
1	2010	Initial version.
2	02/24/2022	Revised version created.
	02/25/2022	Version approved by President.