

Travel Guidelines

These guidelines accompany and support SUU [Policy 10.13 University Travel](#).

Upon violation of the University Travel Policy or Guidelines, a point may be added to the Traveler's Purchasing Violations, as determined by the employee's supervisory AVP-level administrator. For more information, see the [SUU Purchasing Guide](#)."

Travel Authorizations/expense reports:

To submit a travel authorization/expense report, please use the 'Travel' button located under the 'APPS' section of the mySUU portal.



<https://my.suu.edu/travelauth/>

More elaborate instructions and walkthrough videos can be found on the Accounting Services page under '[Accounting Services Training & Instructions](#)'. Approvals for travel will be automatically routed to the correct approvers through the travel system. A traveler may also preview their approvers when submitting their travel authorization/expense report before submitting.

Ensure that travel authorizations/requests are submitted and approved before the travel's departure date. Travel expense reports are to be submitted once the traveler returns from their travel with the related valid receipts/explanations attached. An expense report is required to complete the travel, clear encumbrances, and process the reimbursement.

Travel expense reports must be submitted with all receipts/documentation to the Accounts Payable office, through the online travel system, within 30 days of return from travel in order to receive reimbursement. This is to remain compliant with IRS reimbursement regulations.

Fiscal Year End:

Due to fiscal year end deadlines, all travels that have a return date in the previous fiscal year must be submitted to the Travel Office by no later than July 8th. This deadline is to ensure that travel expenses are posted to the correct fiscal year, encumbrances get closed, and helps limit the amount of travels needing to be redone due to the travel system's need for a current fiscal year travel number after a certain date.

Group Travel:

When traveling with a group, only one traveler needs to submit a travel authorization for the travel party if:

- All employees traveling have the same supervisor,
- Departmental expenses, such as conference fees, were purchased all together and are not separate transactions,
- Another traveler does not purchase something on their p-card,
- Only one traveler, or no traveler, is requesting reimbursement and/or per diem,

- The party file includes everyone in the travel group.

If the above criteria are not met, more than one travel authorization must be submitted and approved.

Emergency Situations:

In the case of emergency or otherwise urgent circumstances so that it is not possible for a travel authorization to be submitted and approved prior to the departure date the travel authorization may be submitted after the departure date, but must still be submitted and approved within a reasonable amount of time. The traveler must reach out to Accounts Payable, via comment on the travel authorization, to request eligibility for reimbursement and/or per diem given the exigent circumstances. Eligibility for per diem or reimbursement is not guaranteed if the travel authorization is not submitted prior to departure.

Valid Receipts:

Proper receipts, as defined in the Policy, must contain the name of the business, date of purchase, itemization of charges, amount paid, and method of payment. The only times credit card/bank statements may be considered proper receipts are for parking and mass transit purchases where receipts were not available. Airfare receipts must include the flight details in addition to the amount. Proper Receipts for lodging establishments must also include the rate charged, names of guest(s) or cardholder who paid for the room(s), and date(s) of occupancy. Handwritten receipts on a generic receipt with no printed logo will only be reimbursed up to the \$50 per transaction.

If a fuel receipt is not available, a traveler may upload a picture of the fuel pump, showing the price, along with the bank statement showing the amount paid. Both the photo and the bank statement must be provided in order to receive the full fuel reimbursement.

In the event that a proper receipt is not obtained, or the receipt is lost/unreadable, a full reimbursement of the cost of the expense is not guaranteed. Up to \$50 USD of an expense without a receipt is allowed, as long as the expense is itemized and explained. The [Purchasing Missing Receipt Form](#) is used to accomplish the documentation purpose, but the form itself is not considered a valid receipt.

Required forms:

There are many different travel situations that may require different forms for travel. In general, the more information on a travel request, the better. See below for a non-exhaustive list of required forms.

- [Conference/Event Agendas](#): Required anytime the travel is for a **conference** or similar event. *Competitions/Marketing Expos are not required to have an agenda.*
 - o Examples of events that need agendas:

- Conferences,
- Seminars,
- Workshops,
- Etc.,
- Signature Forms: Various signature forms may be required when the traveler gives out funds to other individuals.
 - o If a traveler gives out funds to anyone on their travel for services provided and does not receive a receipt, they are expected to obtain a statement and *signature* from the vendor detailing the *name of the business, the services provided, amount paid, as well as the date the services were provided.*
 - o If a traveler gives out funds to students, either for *gas* or *meal* purposes, they must obtain a document detailing *every student that funds were given to*, the *amount given*, the *date given*, and the *signature of the student* that received the funds. There is no required template for this form.
- Travel Party Files: A party file is required anytime a traveler is traveling with students or other employees.
 - o The travel authorization will include the preliminary list of who will be going on the travel and the expense report will have the final updated list of who actually went on the travel.
 - o When a traveler is traveling with *students*, the traveler must also complete the *CSA training* for Risk Management purposes.
- Travel Mileage Logs: A travel mileage log may be requested if the traveler is claiming mileage that is not easily calculated. In general, mileage is calculated using a mapping website and based on the most direct and usually traveled routes. If this calculation does not match what is being claimed, an explanation will be requested.
- Airfare: In addition to the airline ticket, the flight details must also be included.

If you need assistance with any of these required forms or have questions, please reach out to the Accounts Payable Office.

International Travel:

International Travel in nature is more complicated than domestic travel. SUU Policy 5.30 governs University-approved international travel. These trips are usually longer, costlier, and may require different currencies.

Every international travel should have documentation attached to explain the related currency exchange rates that were used. The exchange rate used should be the applicable exchange rate *on the day the expense was incurred*. However, if the exchange rate did not fluctuate much during the duration of the travel, an overall exchange rate may be used for reimbursement purposes.

The documentation attached to explain exchange rates may be one of two things:

- A credit card billing/bank statement showing the charge in USD, or
- A foreign-currency exchange receipt

Please also include one of the following:

- A note on the individual receipts showing the conversion from foreign currency to USD,
- A separate note on the exchange rate used, or
- A spreadsheet detailing the exchange rate calculations.

There are some countries/areas that do not provide receipts. When this occurs, the traveler will need to create their own receipt that has the following:

- Name of the business,
- Date of purchase,
- Itemization of charges,
- Amount paid,
- Method of payment, and
- Signature of the vendor

The receipt needs to include all of the above for it to be considered a valid and proper receipt.

Travel advances:

An advance of funds for expected travel costs is available for eligible out-of-pocket expenses **exceeding \$300** and must be requested with the initial trip request.

The following are Out-of-Pocket expenses that qualify for advances:

- Daily per diem allowance,
- Personal vehicle mileage,
- Public transport (such as Uber, Taxi, Lyft, etc.),
- Baggage fees,
- Group excursion costs,
- Cash required activities

Expenses that do not qualify for an advance are those that can reasonably be purchased with a p-card. The following is a non-exhaustive list of expenses that do not qualify for advances:

- Airfare,
- Vehicle rental,
- Lodging,
- Registration fees,

These expenses should be paid with a University procurement card (P-card) or a reimbursement requested in the expense report. Exceptions will be rare and should be negotiated directly with the travel administrators within Accounting Services. Students and USF seasonal employees are not eligible for travel advances.

A travel advance request should be received by Accounts Payable at least seven (7) days prior to the departure date. Advance requests received without adequate notice are not guaranteed. No emergency payments will be issued to accommodate a travel advance. Advances will not pay out earlier than 10 days from the departure date. Please note that the 10 days is when the payment pays out and not the day the payment is received by the traveler.

Any amounts that exceed travel expenses must be paid back to the University. Repayments are made at the Cashiers' office and should reference the specific travel number. The receipt showing the refund will need to be attached to the expense report before submitting it for approval. Travel advances need to be accounted for within 30 days of the travel return date.

When advances are requested for per diem being given to multiple students, a list needs to be attached to the expense report with everyone who received the funds and their signature showing that they received it and the date they received it.

University allowances:

Daily not-to-exceed per diem:

A traveler may either use the current per diem rate or be reimbursed for the actual costs (with receipts attached to expense report), but not both. If travelers are being reimbursed for actual costs, the costs cannot exceed the current per diem rate.

Per diem rates are subject to change each July, please see [Accounts Payable website](#) for the current per diem rates.

The following areas qualify as a high-cost area and may use the associated premium rate:

- Top United States metropolitan cities also listed as "High Cost" on IRS Per Diem schedules and considered common destinations for SUU travelers:

City	State	City	State
Los Angeles	CA	Atlanta	GA
San Diego	CA	Chicago	IL
San Jose	CA	Boston	MA
San Francisco	CA	St. Louis	MO
Sacramento	CA	New York City	NY
Denver	CO	Cincinnati	OH
Washington	DC	Seattle/Tacoma	WA
Miami	FL	Jackson	WY
Fort Lauderdale	FL		

Discretion is given to departments to use a reduced per diem rate or require actual receipts in order to manage budgets. In the event that budgets cannot cover the full allowance, travelers are not obligated to travel.

Per diem rates and locations qualifying for the premium rate will be evaluated on a regular basis. Travel administrators will use IRS guidelines to determine higher cost areas.

In the case of international travel (not including study abroad), due to the change in exchange rates, the premium rate will be looked at on a case-by-case basis. If the department believes that the premium rate should apply to the travel, they will need to reach out to the Accounts Payable team. They will then look into it and let the department know if the premium rate will be allowed for that travel or not.

- If it is determined that a premium rate is allowed, the traveler will need to attach the email between them and Accounts Payable discussing the premium rate. They will also need to include an “Other” expense category with the description of “Per Diem Premium Rate.”

Provided meals should reduce the requested per diem allowance by the associated amount. Departments may work with travelers to determine what constitutes a provided meal (hot item served, meets dietary restrictions, etc.).

Southern Utah University is a dry campus. It is expected that all alcoholic beverages will be removed from the total of the meal receipt.

Tips:

When the travel party eats together, each traveler will need to take their portion of the meal out of per diem. Tips given for meals eaten as a group, so do not need to be taken out of per diem. If the meals were paid for separately, and there is a tip given, the traveler will need to take the meals and tip out of per diem.

Tips given to tour guides are not considered per diem. There will need to be a receipt for this expense in order to be reimbursed.

Transportation

Mileage and Gas reimbursements:

In the event that a traveler uses a personal, private vehicle during business travel, mileage reimbursement up to the current mileage rate* is allowed. The rate is to cover the costs of gasoline as well as car maintenance and general wear. When mileage reimbursement is requested, no gas reimbursement can be claimed. The traveler can either request mileage or gas, not both.

Unless a mileage log is provided, mileage is calculated using a mapping website and based on the most direct and usually traveled routes. It is calculated from the Traveler's normal place of employment unless it is more essential and prudent to calculate mileage from the Traveler's personal residence. Mileage to common destinations is listed on the [SUU Fleet Operations webpage](#).

If a gas reimbursement is requested, ensure that only *valid receipts* are submitted for the reimbursements. When a receipt is not available, the traveler may attach a picture of the gas pump along with a bank statement to receive full reimbursement.

*The mileage reimbursement rate is subject to change. Please go to the [SUU Fleet Operations website](#) for the current rate.

Rental Vehicles:

There is no mileage reimbursement allowed for rental vehicles. The mileage reimbursement is allowed only for the use of *personal* vehicles. In order to be reimbursed for the cost of the rental vehicle and associated fuel expenses, the traveler needs to attach the related rental vehicle and fuel receipts along with their travel expense report.

In the case the receipt at a fuel pump does not print, and there is no one available to print the gas receipt, the traveler can submit a picture of the gas pump showing the amount it cost and the credit card statement showing the transaction, to receive the full reimbursement.

Use of Rental Vehicles on personal leave days:

- When there are personal days, rental vehicles need to be purchased via personal funds and only the portion related to SUU business will be reimbursed.
- University motor pool charges the department a mileage and daily rate for the use of the vehicle. The traveler will need to return any funds to the university for the use of the motor pool vehicle on personal days.
- Rental vehicles are rented through a car rental agency. University motor pool vehicles are university owned vehicles that departments may use for university business for a fee that is charged to the department via interdepartmental transfer.
- University motor pool vehicles are covered by the University's auto insurance policy.
- Rental vehicles that are reserved through the state contract are covered for liability and collision insurance. If rental vehicles are not on the state contract, they are not covered through the university's insurance and are subject to a \$5,000 deductible payable by the traveler.

Other Transportation Costs:

When a traveler is unable to get a receipt for mass transit, a credit card statement may be used as a proper receipt.

If a traveler is unable to get parking receipts, a credit card statement may be used as a proper receipt.

When traveling with large groups of students, and a charter is used, we understand that gratuity is customary. In order to be reimbursed for those tips that are not included on an invoice, the traveler will need to "create" an invoice with the following included:

- Name of the business,

- Date of purchase,
- Itemization of charges,
- Amount paid,
- Method of payment, and
- Signature of the vendor

We also understand that each travel is unique. Please reach out to Accounts Payable, before the travel, to discuss your need for providing a tip.

Alternative transportation options and examples:

Travelers are expected to choose the most prudent method of transportation for their situation. Listed below are guides and examples for alternate transportation methods.

The following are examples of transportation costs for a travel to Salt Lake City when you fly out of St. George. The dates used were May 9th-May 14th*:

Personal Vehicle:

Mileage - \$71.40

Parking at airport - \$7.00/day = \$42.00

Flight - \$238.00

Baggage - \$30.00

Total Transportation costs = \$381.40 (Amount will differ if gas is reimbursed instead of mileage)

SUU Motor Pool:

5 Passenger Sedan Rate - \$0.35/mile and \$30/day = \$221.30**

Parking - \$7.00/day = \$42.00

Flight - \$238.00

Baggage - \$30.00

Total Transportation costs = \$531.30

Rental Car (Take rental car to St. George and turn it in. Pick up another to return to Cedar City):

Average cost is approximately \$56.00 - \$56.00 x 2 cars = \$112.00

Parking - \$0.00

Flight - \$238.00

Baggage - \$30.00

Total Transportation costs = \$380.00 (Amount will differ if gas is also reimbursed)

St. George Shuttle from SUU to St. George:

Shuttle leaves SUU Football Stadium: 10:14am, 1:14pm, 4:29pm, 7:34pm, and 9:59pm each day

1-way ranges from \$28-\$40, using \$40 -> $\$40 + 2 \text{ times} = \80.00

Parking - \$0.00

Flight - \$238.00

Baggage - \$30.00

Total Transportation costs = \$348.00

*This data was pulled 4/15/2025 so amounts will vary from the day the data was pulled.

**Cost of motor pool vehicles varies. Please contact motor pool for the actual costs.

Lodging

The expense report should include all lodging expenses and receipts, including purchases made via p-card, Purchase Order (departmental expense), or reimbursable expenses the traveler made with personal funds (out-of-pocket expense). If the traveler is not being reimbursed for lodging, please make a note of why a lodging expense is not included.

When traveling with others, and the lodging is a departmental expense purchased all together, only one travel request and corresponding expense report needs to include the lodging expense and receipts. The other travel reports must reference the travel request number (TR#) that has the lodging expense. If the lodging is purchased separately (will have separate receipts) each travel request and corresponding expense report needs to have the lodging expense and receipt attached that applies to them.

When traveling with students, and there is a lodging expense, there needs to be one bed per traveler. Each traveler needs to have their own bed, and the lodging receipt needs to clearly show this.

Non-conventional lodging:

Where travelers elect to lodge at non-commercial locations (with friends/relatives, campgrounds, etc.) the traveler qualifies for an allowance of **\$20 per night**. Whether the traveler is requesting the allowance, or not, there needs to be an explanation of where the traveler lodged. This can be accomplished with a comment explaining the lodging.

Travel with Personal Leave Included:

When personal leave is taken during a travel, the traveler must exclude any expenses that are incurred during the personal leave days.

- Any purchases made with university funds, such as with a university purchasing card, for expenses that are for those personal days, must be returned to the University by going to the cashier's office.

Any vehicles rented through the state contract cannot be used for personal days. If a traveler is going to be using personal days, they need to rent the vehicle using their personal funds and ask for reimbursement for only the cost of the business days. If they do use a vehicle from the state contract, they will need to return that vehicle when the business days are over and rent a vehicle with their personal funds for the personal days.

If a SUU motor pool vehicle is used, the traveler will need to pay back the amount it costs to have the vehicle during the personal days. Even if the vehicle is not driven during those days, there is still a daily cost for using a motor pool vehicle, and the traveler will need to pay back those funds to the cashier's office.

What are the travel dates?

- The traveler should put the actual dates of travel, even if the travel occurs on personal days. Per Diem/reimbursement requests must accurately reflect business-related requests, not personal expenses or personal time.
- A note/comment should be included to explain which are personal days and which are business-related.

Expense Categories

Departmental:

- Motor Pool
- Anything purchased using a purchasing card (p-card)
- Anything the department pays for via Purchase Order (PO)

Out-of-Pocket:

- Purchases made with traveler's personal funds that are eligible, business expenses.
- Personal vehicle expenses
 - Mileage expenses
 - Gas expenses
- Per Diem

Non-Reimbursable:

- Anything that was purchased via personal funds, but the traveler does not want reimbursement for or does not qualify for reimbursement.

- Anything not purchased with personal or University funds.
 - For example, a conference covers the traveler's conference fee. This fee was not paid with personal or University funds, so it is non-reimbursable.

When a Travel is Needed

Needs a Travel Authorization:

- Traveling with students
 - Students that are not working under the capacity of an employee.
- Traveling outside of Iron County
- Traveler wants reimbursement for mileage, gas, per diem, etc.
- When a remote employee is required to come to campus, even if they are not being reimbursed
- Taking a motor pool vehicle
 - Anytime a university motor pool vehicle is used, regardless of distance, a travel must be submitted and approved.
- Traveler wants to be covered by Workers Compensation fund or the state liability insurance.
 - If the traveler is within Iron County, and is traveling by themselves, they do not need a travel authorization request submitted, since they will already be considered covered.
- Taking a state rented vehicle
- Overnight accommodations
- A group of employees traveling to meet somewhere, even if no one is being reimbursed.

No Travel Authorization is Needed:

- Traveling within Iron County in a personal vehicle by yourself or with one other employee.
 - For example, a traveler takes their personal vehicle to pick up supplies from Walmart, they do not need a travel.
 - When an hourly student employee travels with you, they are working under the capacity of an employee, so no travel authorization is required.
- Employee traveling in a SUU departmental owned vehicle (not motor pool) within Iron County.
- An employee uses a personal vehicle to travel to another SUU site within Iron County.
- Graduate travels
 - These are generally considered professional development and need to go through as a Direct Pay Request.
- Travel, within Iron County, that is required for class, **but the employee does not facilitate how students get there.**
 - Class is being held somewhere other than the usual meeting place,
 - Field trips,
 - Etc.

(If employees facilitate how students get there, travel authorization is needed).

Note:

- When a travel has split FOAPALs, there are a few things that can be done:
 - Include all the FOAPALs in the Accounting Distribution section and input the amounts that go to each FOAPAL.
 - Only include one of the FOAPALs and request an expenditure transfer to move the funds to another FOAPAL.
 - This can be the easiest thing to do when there is only one item that needs to come from another FOAPAL.
- When a travel expense report is returned, click on the 'Edit' button on the bottom of the expense report page in order to correct the error and avoid creating another report.
- When a travel authorization is created and then something comes up, so no travel occurs, an expense report still needs to be submitted and approved. This clears the encumbrance that was created when the authorization was approved. A comment should be made on the expense report so those approving it can know that the travel never occurred. \$0.00 amounts will need to go in the actual amount column for those expenses that did not occur. For expenses that did occur, and no refund for the expenses were given, they need to be included on the travel expense report with a comment that they could not get a refund for those expenses.