

Transportation

The traveler is responsible for selecting the mode of transportation, preferably the least costly to the institution, and obtaining approval from the president or agency head. The traveler is entitled to reimbursement for actual and necessary expenses incurred based on the authorized mode of transportation. Below are policies and procedures regarding transportation. If a travel scenario exists that is not specifically addressed in the following policies and procedures, presidents will use discretion in deciding whether to approve a mode of transportation considering the best interest of the institution and sound fiscal judgment.

For short distance travel (i.e. less than 8 hours travel time via vehicle), the order of preference for mode of transportation is 1) an agency-owned vehicle; 2) the traveler's personal vehicle. Commercial airfare may be utilized for long distance trips. Personal vehicles may be utilized for long distance trips. However, mileage cost for the trip must be equal to or less than the cost of a round-trip commercial airline ticket or agency vehicle costs to the travel destination. Comparable quotes should be within a reasonable time from departure date.

Presidents may pre-approve up to \$150 for a traveler to utilize local transit such as taxi or subway service while at the travel location. A traveler must submit receipts for local transit in order to qualify for reimbursement. A traveler who spends more than \$150 on local transportation may be reimbursed for actual expenses in excess of \$150 by providing receipts and additional written justification for the local transit in excess of the pre-approved amount.

If a traveler has a College-owned vehicle, or a personal vehicle at the travel site, the traveler may still be authorized by the president to utilize local transit during the travel provided that the use of local transit is work-related, reasonable and not excessive. For example, going to dinner while in travel status or to an off-site conference-sponsored event will qualify for reimbursement; going to a nightclub, bar, or sightseeing will not qualify for reimbursement. In cases that qualify for reimbursement, a traveler will be expected to provide an explanation for the expenditure, provide receipts, and will be reimbursed for actual expenses incurred. This is intended to provide flexibility to travelers who are working in a location where driving or parking is particularly difficult or onerous.

The College will reimburse reasonable parking fees. Criteria: self-parking unless valet parking is 1) the only option available; or 2) no more costly than self-parking; 3) medical, safety or other reasons justify paying for alternative parking options. If other than self-parking is authorized, the reimbursement should contain an explanation and justification for incurring a greater expense for parking. Tips related to transportation (shuttle, UBER, taxi) are included in per diem for M&IE and will not be reimbursed as a travel-related expense.

Receipts Required

Receipts will be required for the following expenditures, except where the disclosure of the identity of the traveler would be detrimental to the State's interest.

- Commercial transportation (economy fare), vehicle rental (the State does not pay for rental insurance), and gasoline purchases.
- Motel / hotel lodging (single rate only).
- Registration fees with itemized breakdown.
- Operating expenses of agency-owned vehicles, such as gasoline, oil, and emergency repairs. Repairs must be itemized.
- Travel related fees such as parking, toll and/or taxi fees and miscellaneous expenses. Receipts must be itemized. Taxi fees should be shared whenever possible during an event. Miscellaneous expenses must be itemized.

Mileage Expenses

Reimbursement for mileage expenses for persons traveling in privately owned vehicles is covered by Code of Alabama § 36-7-22, as amended. The approved electronic map with mileage calculation must be attached. Mileage reimbursement must be approved by the president or agency head on the Request for Out of State Travel. Employees who are authorized to travel in either a State or privately-owned vehicle shall be reimbursed for the amount of parking paid while on travel status. Attorney General's Opinion issued September 8, 1952.

Mileage is to be reported in whole miles. The total number of miles is to be calculated and then multiplied by the current mileage rate for the entire travel statement.

Lodging

A traveler should stay at the hotel that is hosting the conference or event for which travel occurred and obtain the government or conference lodging rate. A traveler may choose a less-expensive hotel provided that the choice of hotel will not substantially increase transportation costs. Incurring lodging costs that exceed the conference or government rate must be justified in writing and approved by the president or agency head prior to travel.

Tips for bellhop and maid services are included in per diem for M&IE and will not be reimbursed as a travel-related expense.

Annual Leave or Personal Time Before or After an Official Travel Event

Individuals traveling under this section may desire to take annual leave or personal time before or after official travel. In such cases, the institution will reimburse a traveler for costs incurred as if the personal time were not included. For example, a traveler attends a conference in service of the state in Scottsdale, Arizona. The conference begins on Monday and concludes on Friday. The traveler desires to spend the weekend sightseeing in Scottsdale, and returns to Montgomery on Sunday. The institution will reimburse the traveler the lesser of 1) actual costs of airfare; or 2) for the cost of a round-trip airline ticket as if the traveler departed on Sunday before the conference and returned to Montgomery on Saturday following the conference. The traveler will not be entitled to reimbursement for any expenses incurred following the official travel day. In the hypothetical involving travel to Scottsdale, the traveler would be entitled to reimbursement for lodging costs on Friday night, and partial per diem for Saturday (the official return travel day), but no other expenses would be reimbursed.