

FROM: J. David Lochala, Director of Procurement
DATE: November 16, 2011
SUBJECT: **Notice of New Travel Regulations**

The Arkansas Department of Finance and Administration recently released new Travel Regulations, which are presented on their website at the following address: <http://www.dfa.arkansas.gov/offices/accounting/Documents/travelRegs.pdf>. If you are a frequent traveler or the coordinator in a department of frequent flyers, we recommend that you print a copy of these regulations for your reference. We would like to take this opportunity to present areas of significance, routine travel facts and address a few frequently asked questions. After reviewing this information, if you have additional questions, please call Robin Lancaster at 569-8701.

Areas of Significance

1. The traveler is only eligible for 75% of the daily allowance for meals on the first and last day of travel. If travel covers a two-day period, then meal reimbursement is up to 75% of the daily allowance for each day. For partial days, meals must be charged in proportion to the time in travel status. The University uses the following percentages: 25% for breakfast, 25% for lunch and 50% for dinner. Under no circumstances may the total of meals exceed 75% for the first and last days of travel. In addition, meals may not exceed the maximum for applicable meals stated in the federal travel directory.
2. Commercial airline tickets should be purchased at least 14 days prior to travel if possible. Airline tickets purchased less than 14 days prior to travel shall be explained in writing to the Travel Administrator and approved in writing PRIOR to the purchase.
3. Agencies may pay or reimburse the traveler for checked personal baggage for the first bag only. Fees for additional personal bags must be paid by the traveler and are not reimbursable. Should the employee be on University travel which requires transporting excess bags, it is recommended that they contact the Travel Supervisor in Purchasing for guidance.
4. Meals are not allowed on CTS or sponsored cards. Exceptions may be made on a case-by-case basis, only by working with the university Travel Supervisor in Purchasing.
5. For trips where the destination is 400 miles or more from the employee's "official station", the minimum miles traveled per day to be eligible to collect a night's lodging must be 400 miles. The requirement to travel a minimum of 400 miles daily has no effect on in-state travel nor does it affect travel outside the State where the destination is less than 400 miles from the employee's "official station". It addresses the period of time the employee spends "en-route" or in "travel status" reaching the destination.

Travel Facts

1. The purchase or reimbursement of alcoholic beverages from any funds held by the University is strictly prohibited.
2. Travel reimbursement is NOT a per diem and is to be claimed for actual expenses for meals and lodging only.
3. The Enterprise Car Rental Contract is now mandatory for all rental cars. Exceptions would be if an Enterprise or National Car Rental is not available in the area of travel.
4. Meal reimbursement is only allowed in connection with overnight travel, whether in state or out of state unless it is a “special authorization/official function” and is approved by the agency head or their designee PRIOR to the event or meal. **The form must include a section where it can be detailed that the meal is of benefit to the State.** The maximum full day meal allowance, including sales tax and up to 15% gratuity cannot exceed the federal per diem rate depending on the destination location.

Frequent Travel Related Q&A

Q. Who should sign as my Travel Administrator on Travel Authorizations, TR-1’s and Special Meeting forms?

The Travel Administrator will be your respected Chancellor, Vice Chancellor, Athletic Director, Dean or Associate Vice Chancellor. These positions may assign signatory authority to others but only if in writing and directly presented to the Purchasing Office. In no case can the traveler and the Travel Administrator be the same person.

Q. Who should sign as the Travel Supervisor?

Travel Supervisors are the travel delegates in Purchasing (LaVonne Colwell or Robin Lancaster) for Travel Authorizations or in Accounts Payable (Bruce Anderson or Lanita Shepherd) for Travel Reimbursements.

Q. Who is a Guest of State?

Guests of State are visiting persons that are NOT employees of the State of Arkansas whether at UALR or any other institution or department of the State. Students can be considered Guests of State. Meals for the Guest of State are NOT subject to federal per diem meal limits, but accompanying State or Federal employees are.

Q. Where do I send my Special Meeting Forms after having them signed by our Travel Administrator?

All Special Meeting Forms should be sent directly to Purchasing, who will decide if additional review is needed by the VCF&A or AVCF.