

HEALTH SCIENCE CENTER HANDBOOK OF OPERATING PROCEDURES

Chapter 6	Fiscal Policies and Procedures	Effective:	May 2000
Section 6.2	Travel Policies and Procedures	Revised:	October 2010
Policy 6.2.14	General Reimbursement Policies	Responsibility:	Assistant Vice President for Business Affairs

GENERAL REIMBURSEMENT POLICIES

Policy

Reimbursement for travel expenses is obtained by submitting a [Travel Voucher](#) to the Accounting Office within thirty (30) days of the last day of the trip. Reimbursement checks are generally issued within seven to ten working days of the time the complete, signed voucher is received in the Accounting Office.

A Health Science Center employee may not accept a reimbursement or advance for the same travel expense from more than one source. A University employee who anticipates receiving or actually receives a reimbursement or advance for a travel expense from a person other than the University may seek a reimbursement for the expense from the University only to the extent that the amount of the employee's advance or reimbursement from the person is less than the amount of the total expense incurred.

Items Not Reimbursable from University Funds

The following items may not be reimbursed from a University fund:

1. Gratuities or tips of any kind.
 2. Personal phone calls.
 3. Personal cleaning and laundry services or clothing rental.
 4. Baby-sitting services.
 5. Personal entertainment fees of any kind including purchase/rental of alcoholic beverages, videotapes, movies, and/or games.
 6. Excess baggage charges for personal belongings.
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Documenting Use of Contract Vendors

Any [Travel Voucher](#) covering travel for which airfare, car rental, or lodging was used must be accompanied by a [State of Texas Travel Contractor Usage Statement](#) to ensure that state and The University

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of Texas System documentation requirements are met. Use of travel vendors may be indicated with check marks on the form with brief explanations as necessary. Submit the white copy with the travel voucher.

Check Pick-up

Travel reimbursement checks must be picked-up at the Cashier's Window in the Bursar's Office by the reimbursed traveler or by a person authorized by the department for check pick-up.

Paying for Others

The reimbursement to one employee of expenses incurred for or by another employee or guest is prohibited. Each employee must pay for his/her own expenses.

Official Entertainment

Payments for official entertainment must be made on a [Local/State Voucher](#).

Travel Expenses In Excess of State and Federal Rates

Travel expenses for meals and lodging in excess of state and federal fund rates may be charged to non-state funds (Auxiliary Enterprise, Practice Plan, Designated, or Current Restricted funds). However, the total expenses for meals and lodging may not exceed the maximum per diem rate established for that particular fund. See [Section 6.2.22](#) of the *Handbook of Operating Procedures* (HOP), "Meals and Lodging Expenses on Travel Voucher".

Travel Expenses Less Than State and Federal Rates

Actual expenses for meals and lodging should be claimed on the [Travel Voucher](#) even if less than state and federal fund per diem rates.

Reduction of Expenses

Persons approving a PeopleSoft travel requisition may limit travel expenses provided the employee is notified in advance of the travel. Persons approving a [Travel Voucher](#) may reduce unreasonable expenses provided the employee is notified.

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Petty Cash

No travel expenses may be reimbursed from petty cash.

Claiming Extra Per Diem

An employee may be permitted to claim per diem for extra travel time if both of the following conditions are met:

1. The amount of the additional travel expenses (including meals and lodging at the duty point) plus the airfare is less than or equal to (1) the state contract airfare if one exists between the employee's designated headquarters and the duty point city or (2) the full coach airfare between the employee's designated headquarters and the duty point city if no state contract airfare exists in that market.
 2. It is in the best interest of the state to allow the employee to be absent from duties for the extra travel time. The department must determine that it is an efficient use of state resources to have an employee away from headquarters for that extra time.
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Cancellation Charges

The Health Science Center will pay or reimburse an employee for a cancellation charge related to a transportation expense that was paid in advance to obtain lower rates and is incurred because the employee was unable to use the transportation because of an illness or a personal emergency.

Employees with Disabilities

The Health Science Center allows for reimbursement of an employee with a disability for attendant care and other expenses incurred while traveling inside or outside the employee's designated headquarters if approved in advance on a case-by-case basis by the Office of the Vice President and Chief Financial Officer. An explanation of the circumstances must be included on the PeopleSoft travel requisition.

Direct Payment for Non-Employee Lodging Expenses

1. In order to facilitate the payment process for incoming travelers, including consultants, prospective employees, and other official visitors, the Accounting Office will accept vouchers from departments seeking direct payment to hotels for related lodging expenses.
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2. An in-coming traveler does not include University employees, faculty, residents, interns, fellows, and students. These individuals must use the travel reimbursement process.
 3. Allowable charges on direct billings are lodging, local taxes (the University is exempt from state taxes as a State of Texas institution of higher education), meals, and business telephone calls as long as the charges are in conformity with prescribed University travel regulations. Any other incidental expenses billed will not be paid. Departments will be responsible for settling disputes with the hotel regarding any unpaid balances.
 4. A [Prior Approval](#) form must be completed and attached to the voucher requesting payment. In addition, the [Prior Approval](#) must indicate that lodging will be paid directly to the hotel.
 5. All arrangements with area hotels are subject to and governed by University travel regulations.
 6. The travel reimbursement process is available for those wishing to utilize it.

**Illness or
Personal
Emergency**

The Health Science Center will pay or reimburse an employee for a travel expense incurred when the employee returns, before official University business is completed, from a duty point to the employee's designated headquarters because of illness or personal emergency. In such cases the [Travel Voucher](#) must be approved in the Office of the Vice President and Chief Financial Officer.

**Attending
Funerals**

The Health Science Center will pay or reimburse an employee for a travel expense the employee incurs while attending the funeral of an individual who was a state employee, a board member, or a legislator if:

1. It is determined that the employee's attendance at the funeral is appropriate under the circumstances; and
2. The PeopleSoft travel requisition is approved by the Office of the Vice President and Chief Financial Officer; and

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3. The expense is paid or reimbursed only to the extent it would have been paid or reimbursed had it been incurred while conducting official University business.
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Inability to Perform Official Business (Natural Disaster or Natural Occurrence)

The Health Science Center will pay or reimburse an employee for a travel expense the employee incurs as a result of attempting to conduct official University business if:

1. The employee is unable to conduct the business because of a natural disaster or other natural occurrence and
2. The expense would be payable or reimbursable had the official University business been conducted.

In such cases, the [Travel Voucher](#) must be approved in the Office of the Vice President and Chief Financial Officer.

Death of an Employee

The Health Science Center will pay or reimburse the expense of preparing and transporting the remains and personal property of an employee who dies while conducting official University business outside the employee's designated headquarters either to the employee's designated headquarters or to another location designated by the executor or administrator of the employee's estate. If the remains and personal property are transported to a location other than the designated headquarters, then the amount of the Health Science Center's payment or reimbursement may not exceed the amount that would have been paid or reimbursed had they been transported to the headquarters. In such cases, the [Travel Voucher](#) must be approved in the Office of the Vice President and Chief Financial Officer.

Medical Care for Traveling Employees

The Health Science Center will pay or reimburse an employee for a travel expense the employee incurs while obtaining medical care for the employee if:

1. The expense is incurred outside the employee's designated headquarters; and
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2. The purpose of the employee traveling outside the employee's designated headquarters is to conduct official University business; and
 3. Waiting to receive the care until the employee returns to the employee's designated headquarters would be unreasonable; and
 4. The expense is paid or reimbursed only to the extent it would have been paid or reimbursed had it been incurred while conducting official University business.

In these cases, the [Travel Voucher](#) must be approved by the Office of the Vice President and Chief Financial Officer.
