

# **Policies**

## **Travel & Entertainment**

**POLICY:** POL-070

**TITLE:** TRAVEL AND ENTERTAINMENT

**EFFECTIVE DATE:** JANUARY 2000

**UPDATED:** December 2023

### **General**

Travel includes all necessary official transportation on railroads, airplanes, buses, automobiles, and other common carriers. Every situation is different when it comes to travel. Therefore, individuals traveling should make their own travel arrangements in adherence with RWU policies. Entertainment expenses must be prudent and appropriate to the occasion.

This policy is intended to provide for the reasonable needs of travelers, to control travel expenditures, to maximize the University's ability to negotiate discounted rates with preferred suppliers, to facilitate proper reporting, and to ensure compliance with applicable IRS requirements.

While the information in this handbook should be sufficient to cover the majority of scenarios, it is inevitable that certain situations are not addressed. This handbook is not expected to cover every possible situation. For example, federally funded awards may have additional requirements associated with their expenditures. It is encouraged that items of an unusual nature be discussed with the Finance or Purchasing Office.

### **Definitions**

For the sake of clarity, the definitions and procedures in this policy and related practice guides distinguish between "transportation" and "travel."

**Transportation:** leaving campus for a period of less than 24 hours, generally within a 50-mile radius, and not requiring overnight lodging.

**Travel:** leaving campus or home for a period exceeding 24 hours, beyond the general area, and necessitating an overnight stay.

**Domestic Travel:** travel among any of the fifty United States, its possessions and territories. In the case of sponsored projects, domestic travel may be defined in the contractual documents.

**Foreign Travel:** travel outside of the United States, its possessions, and territories. In the case of sponsored projects, foreign travel may be defined in the contractual documents. Federal grants or contracts must comply with the Fly American Act and all applicable federal requirements. Any questions should be directed to the Finance Office.

**Official Travel:** travel on approved university business between home (or normal workplace) and another destination. Commuting between one's home and regular place of employment is not official travel.

**Grant Related Travel:** travel using federal or state funds. Grant policies supersede the university travel policy.

**Supervisor:** Someone to whom the traveler reports in an official capacity. A supervisor does not include administrative assistants or employees that report to the traveler.

### **Pre-Approval of Travel Requests**

All overnight travel on university business should be authorized in advance by the Senior Vice President/ Vice President of the unit and submitted at least two weeks prior to travel. The requester will be responsible for assuring that budgeted funds are available to meet any travel commitment. SVP's, VP's, Deans and Directors will be able to attend up to one national (domestic) conference and one regional conference subject to budget and rationale.

The process begins with an individual contacting an approved travel agency, on-line service, airline, hotel, etc., and requesting an itinerary. Traveler must then complete **The Travel Pre-Authorization Form** and

submit to Department Head, Dean, and/or Vice President for approval before making final arrangements for travel. Travel and entertainment are permitted with the expectation there is a present or future benefit to RWU.

Once arrangements are finalized and the Senior Vice President or Vice President has approved the trip, the traveler must make their travel arrangements utilizing the RWU P-Card. The use of personal credit cards is generally not permitted as the RWU P card is the preferred method of payment.

When travel is completed, all Travel and Entertainment Reimbursement Forms (T&E Form) must be signed and approved by a supervisor. When traveling to conferences, seminars, etc. the conference schedule and agenda must be attached to the T&E form. Athletic teams and recruiters are exempted from this requirement when traveling on prearranged schedules.

### **Travel & Accommodations**

When assistance is required for Travel and Accommodations, it is strongly suggested that all travel and accommodation arrangements should be made through an agency approved by Roger Williams University. Alternatively, "online" travel services may also be used if lower in cost, however, they should always be compared to the RWU approved travel agency. This agency can offer travel assistance away from home should the circumstances require something "online" services do not provide.

### **Travel Agent**

Pearson Travel  
1019 Waterman Ave  
East Providence, RI 02914  
(P) 401-438-8400 or 800- 336-1066  
(F) 401-438-6858 Emergency  
Maryann Sasso President  
(P) 800-817-2508

### **Primary Contact:**

**Phone: 401-438-8400**

Angela Kozinian Ext. 1802  
Virginia Sanchez Ext. 1801  
Lynn Lander Ext. 1804  
[info@pearsontravel.com](mailto:info@pearsontravel.com)

## **Airline and Hotel Accommodations**

The preferred payment of choice for travel expenses is the RWU P-Card. If employees inadvertently utilize their own personal credit cards for prepaid trip expenses (i.e., airline tickets, registration fees, lodging, etc.), reimbursement will only be made when all trip expenses, along with receipts, are submitted to the Accounts Payable office after the completion of travel.

In the unusual event when an employee seeks reimbursement for airline travel, claims for reimbursement must be supported by the original passenger receipt. The payment receipt or other documentation that supports the actual cost paid must be provided. Reimbursement for e-tickets should be accompanied by the itinerary showing “e-ticket”, name of the traveler and the amount paid or the original payment receipt or other documentation that supports the actual cost paid must be provided whenever possible.

A copy of the final hotel bill, with all charges clearly identified, should be attached to the T&E form. Method of payment should be displayed as well as an explanation of why these charges were not placed on the RWU P-Card.

Air travel must be economy class seating. Seat upgrades and preferred seating within economy class are not permitted. Hotel reservations must be made at moderate priced hotels.

## **Railway Service Taxis and Shuttles**

Travelers are expected to obtain receipts for taxis, railway services and shuttles. These receipts must be original and on the letterhead of the outside vendor. Amtrak tickets purchased on the RWU P-Card must be

receipted with a ticket stub that clearly defines the cost of the ticket and destination. Amtrak tickets purchased online must be receipted with a receipt that clearly defines the destination and the total amount of the ticket.

## **Private Auto Use**

When travel by private automobile is chosen over a common carrier to save time, transport equipment, or reduce costs when a number of people are traveling to the same destination together, reimbursement to the traveler will be on the basis of actual business mileage traveled. Reimbursement for private vehicle use cannot exceed the cost (or sum of costs for more than one traveler) of round-trip air travel between the nearest airport of origin and destination, including coach fare and incidental expenses to travel to or from the airport. If several travelers share a privately-owned vehicle, only the owner of the vehicle will be reimbursed for mileage.

**Reimbursement of Costs:** An accurate daily record of miles traveled must be maintained and submitted with the T&E form. The reimbursement rate will be preset and published annually. The mileage reimbursement rate covers all operating costs of the vehicle, including but not limited to gasoline, repairs, depreciation and insurance. Private vehicles used for business travel are not covered by university insurance. No reimbursement is permitted for costs of repairs or damages to vehicles, costs for locksmiths, car washes, or towing whether they result from the acts of the traveler or others. Fines for moving or parking traffic violations are not reimbursable.

Commuting costs (transportation between home and workplace) are never reimbursable.

Actual mileage will be reimbursed.

The mileage reimbursed cannot exceed the mileage from the place of employment to the destination.

## **Motor Vehicle Use Policy**

### **Car Rental**

EHI Holdings (comprised of Enterprise Rent-A-Car and National Rental Car) is RWU's preferred car rental company. You may make reservations with Enterprise or its' affiliated company National Car Rental. Rental cars should be no larger than mid-size.

You may make reservations in the following manner:

#### **TO BOOK DIRECTLY ONLINE:**

##### **Enterprise & National Rental Car**

Please use the link below for all car rentals – whether renting locally or when traveling on University business:

<https://elink.enterprise.com/en/rogerwil.html>

When traveling for RWU purposes the traveler should always decline insurance as the damage waiver is included in the University rate and RWU also carries blanket coverage for all employees. Every reasonable effort should be made to return rentals with the same amount of fuel as initially received. Both Enterprise and National make the same discounted rates available to RWU employees for personal travel (please click the appropriate box on the website). When this service is utilized, employees are reminded they must make payment with personal funds. Please note that the damage waiver is not included when vehicles are rented for personal use.

Use of personal vehicles is permitted with reimbursement based on miles traveled at rates which are published to the campus community from time to time.

##### **Approval Process**

The T&E form together with required documentation must be submitted to the traveler's immediate supervisor or a more senior officer who has the authority to approve such expenditures. A supervisor or senior officer

cannot approve the T & E form if they also traveled with the individual on University business. A more senior officer would need to approve the expenditures.

In the absence of the immediate supervisor, approval from the next higher level of supervision is required. The President or Vice President for Finance may approve expense reimbursement if the above-mentioned supervisory approvals cannot be obtained due to the supervisor's' absences.

Supervisors approving expense reports are responsible to ensure the following: Expenses reported are proper and reimbursable under this policy. The expense report has been filled out accurately and has the required documentation. The expenses are reasonable and necessary.

All expenses (with the exception of Meal and Incidental Expenses) must be reported on an actual-cost basis, with substantiating original receipts. The University does have a per diem allowance for meals and incidental expenses. Travelers are not required to obtain meal receipts when using meal per diem however, business purpose is still required. Reimbursement will not be made if a meal has already been paid for as part of a conference. A partial day's travel is eligible for proportionate meal allowance.

All other expenses are reimbursed on an actual cost basis and must be substantiated with actual itemized receipts.

Exceptions are limited to Admissions Travelers, certain Federal Grants, and Law School student competitions. Expenses which are prepaid by or charged directly to the university on behalf of the traveler (e.g., airline tickets, hotel accommodations) must be itemized on the T&E form, with the notation

"prepaid" in the amount column. Amounts prepaid by or charged directly to the university on behalf of the traveler must not be reflected in the expenses claimed by the traveler.

## **Timeframe (Deadlines) for Submitting Requests for Reimbursement**

In order to comply with Internal Revenue Service regulations, RWU employees must reconcile travel expenses, on an RWU T&E Form within 60 days of the date of return from the trip. Failure to perform this reconciliation within the 60-day time period will result in any funds disbursed for trip related expenses being treated as taxable wages paid to the employee and subject to Federal and State Income Tax, Social Security and Medicare withholdings. Any University related travel expenses incurred using personal funds will be ineligible for reimbursement after 90 days. Obtain your supervisor's approval and give the completed, approved T&E Form to your Departmental Administrator to keep on file while you travel. Reimbursements will be made on the basis of approved expense reports only.

Under no circumstances will travel expenses for travel completed during a fiscal year be reimbursed after the close of that fiscal year. The Finance Office / Controller shall publish reasonable deadlines at the fiscal year end for reimbursement requests to be processed.

## **Per Diem for Meals & Incidentals Expenses**

A per diem (daily) allowance is available to all RWU faculty and staff who have received prior authorization for Meal and Incidental Expenses associated with overnight travel in the amount listed for the City or Region in the IRS guidelines (see link below). This per diem allowance does not apply to foreign, study abroad, federal/state grant-related, development-related travel, athletics team travel, or admissions-related travel expenses. This allowance is also not applicable if the event fees include meals provided by the sponsor.

On the first day and the last day of travel, the traveler can only be reimbursed 75% of the per diem rate. In other words, the traveler must deduct 25% of the meal per diem for both the first and last days of travel.

**With the change to a per diem structure, no meal receipts are required for reimbursement.** Please note that non-meal related incidental expenses in excess of eight dollars (\$8) are not covered by the per diem



allowance. Receipts are still required for these expenditures when paid by the traveler.

(see below) Examples of non-meal related incidentals would be parking fees, bridge/tunnel tolls, fax/internet charges, taxi fees, gas for rental cars, etc.

The per diem allowance must match the traveler's submitted Preauthorization Form. Expenditures that exceed the per diem allowance are out of pocket for the traveler and will not be reimbursed. Confirmation of the overnight travel should be attached to the RWU T&E Form.

Please note that while the per diem allowance does not apply to non-travel related meals for RWU faculty and staff, the allowance rate must be considered in the cost of the meals for each RWU employee / participant. Accordingly, the value of each lunch must not exceed \$22 per person and the value of each dinner must not exceed \$36 per person.

The IRS guidelines – including a map and rate tables - can be accessed at: <http://www.gsa.gov/portal/content/104877> (Please be sure to use the M&IE Rate Column)

Per Diem Allowances will not be prepaid for business-related travel. Prepaid travel exceptions include foreign travel and travel which exceeds a 5-day period.

Please note that meals and incidentals while traveling cannot be paid for by the RWU P-Card.

### **Non-Reimbursable Expenses**

The following is a list of personal expenses (in addition to those that have been identified in other sections of this document) that are not eligible for reimbursement as University business expenses:

- Amenities such as movies, in-room bars, saunas, massages, etc.
- Childcare costs, babysitting, or house-sitting costs.

- Any personal clothing or accessories.
- Grooming expenses such as haircuts, toiletries, etc.
- Prescriptions, over-the-counter medication, or other medical expenses.
- Fees for boarding pets or other animal care.
- Magazines, books, newspapers, or other personal reading material.
- Outlays for personal expenses such as: personal services and entertainment, alcoholic beverages\*, or personal membership fees and charges.
- Expenses related to non-RWU activities or personal time off taken before, during, or after a business trip.
- Airline club membership dues.
- Airline travel insurance costs.
- Incremental airline ticket costs to obtain frequent flyer benefits.
- Fines for automobile or parking violations.
- Cost differential on premium and luxury car rentals.
- Charges from unwarranted failure to cancel hotel reservations, airline tickets, etc.

\*Certain exceptions will be granted for development

### **Miscellaneous Travel Costs**

Tips are reimbursable for services associated with business travel including food services and porters. As a general rule, travelers should not tip more than 15% - 20% of the bill. Tips paid for reimbursable meals should be documented on the receipt. No receipt is required for small miscellaneous tips paid to maid, bellhop, etc. where receipts are not attainable. Tips should be of a reasonable amount. Travelers should note that all tips are included in their daily per diem allowance.

## **Travel & Entertainment Reimbursements**

Certain T&E Expenditures are not covered by the traveler's daily per diem allowance. These include incidental expenses greater than eight dollars (\$8) and "entertainment meals" (as opposed to "traveler meals") this is a meal where the RWU faculty or staff person entertains someone from outside the University. Please note that while the per diem allowance does not apply to these meals, the rate should be considered in the cost of the meal. Please note, alcohol is not an allowable expense and will not be reimbursed by the university. There are times that exceptions are made under certain circumstances; however, this exception must be approved by the EVP of Finance and Administration prior to the date of occurrence. An email or letter of approval must accompany your request in order for finance to process the reimbursement.

For travel reimbursements and payments to be considered non-taxable income, the university's policies and procedures must comply with the IRS Accountable Plan Rules, meeting three conditions:

**Business Connection:** Reimbursements and advances provided to travelers must be for work-related expenses only. An advance payment must be reasonably related to the business expenses that a traveler is expected to incur. The names of all meal participants must be included in any expense description.

**Substantiation:** Travelers must provide, within 30 days, a statement substantiating the amount, time, use, and business purpose of the expenses.

**Return of Advances:** Travelers must return any advanced amounts in excess of the substantiated expenses within 30 days of completion of the travel assignment.

It is the responsibility of the traveler to keep clear and complete records of expenses. To maintain efficient business processes, travel documentation that is incomplete, inaccurate or not well-organized will be returned to the traveler and could delay reimbursement processing.

Accounts Payable will review each employee T&E form for:

- Proper approval signatures
- Identified business purpose
- Correct totals
- Supporting documentation and receipts
- Policy compliance

The T&E Form must be completed for all personal reimbursements. Entertainment expenses are subject to extensive scrutinizing by the Internal Revenue Service. The business purpose of entertainment, names of attendees and their relationship to RWU must be clearly indicated on the form. Original receipts must be attached to all T & E reimbursement requests along with proof of payment.

The receipt must support the propriety of the transaction and contain the following information:

- Vendor name
- Detailed listing of goods purchased, including item description, quantity and price
- Transaction date
- Total dollar amount of purchase

Photocopies of invoices, credit card statements or record of charge slips accompanying the monthly billing statement, receipts or restaurant stubs are not acceptable unless the original document was lost, and the photocopy is signed with a full explanation of the circumstances.

If a receipt is lost the RWU Missing Receipt form must be attached. Under no circumstances may an individual approve his or her request or that of his or her superior.

## **Foreign Travel**

Because of the varied nature of foreign travel, special arrangements for a cash advance can be made by contacting the Finance Department at ext. 3853 or 3886.

All general policies pertaining to travel apply to foreign travel. It is the university's policy to use a federally established per diem rate for meals when traveling. The per diem rate is \$48.00 per day. Rates are revised monthly, and reimbursement will be made at the rates effective during the actual travel days. You are strongly encouraged to check these rates prior to travel. Please check the following web location for the IRS publication.

[http://aoprals.state.gov/content.asp?content\\_id=233&menu\\_id=81](http://aoprals.state.gov/content.asp?content_id=233&menu_id=81).

Receipts are not required when the traveler is using the per diem allowance. The per diem does not extend to lodging or any other aspect of the trip. Therefore, actual itemized receipts must be submitted for those costs. A VP must approve all travel in advance and in writing.

Employees who travel internationally must provide supporting documentation for exchange-rate conversion with the T&E Form. A separate travel expense report page should be completed for each type of currency in which expenses are incurred. U.S. dollars may be combined with one type of foreign currency. All expenses must be recorded in U.S. dollars, with the currency conversion rate clearly noted on the travel-expense report and on all supporting receipts.

## **Travel Abroad Insurance**

INSURANCE INFORMATION FOR ROGER WILLIAMS UNIVERSITY &  
ROGER WILLIAMS UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF LAW

### **EMPLOYEES TRAVELING ABROAD**

University and Law School employees traveling abroad on University or Law School business have access to a number of insurance and travel assist programs and benefits, as follows:

## 1. Medical Insurance

Medical coverage for accidents or a sickness occurring outside the United States is primarily through the employee's own health insurance coverage.

If you are enrolled in the University-sponsored medical program through Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Rhode Island you have access to BlueCard Worldwide, which provides coverage when traveling outside the US. Information on BlueCard Worldwide, including contact information regarding finding a doctor or hospital outside the US, is attached.

If you are not enrolled in the University-sponsored BCBSRI medical program you should, before your scheduled trip, contact your own medical insurer and request coverage information regarding travel outside of the US.

## 2. Business Travel Accident Insurance

The University has obtained a Business Travel Accident insurance policy, currently issued by Chubb insurance company, which provides benefits in the event of accidental death or dismemberment. Such coverage applies to any University or Law School business travel both within and outside the US. In addition to the base benefits, the policy also provides various travel assistance programs, including identify theft assistance. A listing of such programs is attached. The attachments contain current coverage cards identifying the group name and number that you may carry with you while traveling.

## 3. Foreign Liability Insurance

The University & School of Law maintain a general liability policy, currently issued by ACE insurance company, generally insuring their actions, and the actions of their employees, in most foreign countries. In addition to the liability protections, the policy also provides a small medical insurance benefit, along with travel assistance services similar to those offered by the Business Travel Accident policy. A listing of such programs and benefits is attached. The attachments contain information that may be carried with you while traveling.

In the event of a personal medical situation, you should contact both your primary health insurer (see Section 1 above) along with ACE.

#### 4. Automobile/Van Rental

Employees should not rent automobiles or vans when outside the U.S. Public transportation or transportation through other service providers (taxis, tour guides, etc.) should be utilized. If there are unique circumstances that warrant renting an automobile or van, please contact one of the individuals noted below under Section 7 in advance of the trip to discuss insurance coverage.

#### 5. Personal Property

There is no University or Law School insurance for personal property. Employees are encouraged to speak with their homeowners or rental insurance company in advance of a trip to determine whether such items will be covered or whether a supplemental policy is necessary.

#### 6. Notification of Potential Liability

If, while traveling overseas, you become aware of any matter that may give rise to liability of the University, the Law School, a faculty or staff member, or student – such as damage to third-party property or injury to a third-party - please notify the following upon your return to the U.S.

**Rachel Nuzzo**

Co-General Counsel  
Roger Williams University  
Phone: (401) 254-5728  
E-Mail: rnuzzo@rwu.edu

#### 7. Questions

If you have any questions regarding this information, please do not hesitate to contact the following:

**Rachel Nuzzo**

Co-General Counsel

Roger Williams University  
Phone: (401) 254-5728  
E-Mail: rnuzzo@rwu.edu

## **TRAVEL FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

Faculty who plan travel for professional development must apply to the Professional Development Committee before making travel arrangements. Professional development travel is not considered official university travel and individuals must seek reimbursement according to the faculty contract guidelines.

## **TRAVEL FOR FOUNDATIONS TO PROMOTE GRANTS**

Any approved grant requests that include a travel component should be submitted through the normal travel reimbursement process. The university policy is to provide a per diem for meals and incidental expenses for all overnight travel. The university's standard per diem rate for meals and incidental expenses is \$48 and is reimbursed upon trip completion. The federally established domestic per diem rates may be used if they exceed the university's standard rate of \$48 per day. Rates by city and county may be found at

[http://www.gsa.gov/Portal/gsa/ep/contentView.do?contentType=GSA\\_BASIC&contentId=17943](http://www.gsa.gov/Portal/gsa/ep/contentView.do?contentType=GSA_BASIC&contentId=17943).

Per diem amounts must be prorated in the following instances:

- on day of departure and the day of return for meals not incurred
- when a meal is provided by another source (including meals provided at conferences)
- Same day travel

In these instances, the following are the reimbursement rates:

Breakfast - \$8 (25% when using federal table)

Lunch - \$15 (25% when using federal table)



Dinner - \$25 (50% when using federal table)

All other expenses are reimbursed on an actual cost basis and must be substantiated with actual itemized receipts. Please reference the foreign travel section for all non-domestic travel.

### **Spousal/Companion Travel**

The IRS has ruled that the expenses of a spouse or other person accompanying a traveler cannot be reimbursed if the person has no significant role or performs only duties of a clerical, secretarial, or medical nature. All requests for reimbursement of spousal travel require the advance approval of the appropriate Vice President, and the supporting documentation must note that the accompanying person is performing significant duties as stipulated by the IRS before approving. Generally, any additional costs incurred because of these additional travelers are non-reimbursable.