



TRAVEL POLICIES

And

PROCEDURES

# Table of Contents

## Policies

General Policy for Travel Reimbursements.....	3
International Travel.....	3-4
Travel, Meals & Entertainment Expenses Related to Federal Grants.....	4
Air, Rail, and Bus Travel .....	5
Loss or Excess Baggage.....	5
Transportation to and from Hotels and Terminal.....	5
Automobile Rentals.....	6
Personal Automobile Travel .....	6
Lodging .....	6
Conferences, Conventions & Seminars.....	6-7
Traveling with a Companion.....	7
Authorized Travel by Non-University Employees .....	7
Meals .....	7
Travel Advances.....	7-8
Receipts .....	8
Gratuities .....	8
Laundry & Valet Service .....	8
Miscellaneous Expenses.....	8

## Procedures

How to Book Travel.....	9
How to Pay for Travel.....	10
How to Obtain Travel Advances.....	10
What to Do for International Travel.....	10

# POLICY

## General Policy for Travel Reimbursement

The basic policy governing travel expense reimbursement at Western New England University is that an individual traveling on University business should neither gain nor lose personal funds as a result of an assignment requiring travel.

The purpose of establishing travel policies and procedures is to provide guidelines for reasonable travel expenses that will enable the University to monitor and control costs effectively. Travel expenses incurred by University faculty and staff, on bona fide University business, are reimbursable provided they are necessary and reasonable. The determination of what travel expenses are reimbursable under a particular grant or contract is delegated to the Controller's office for all divisions of the University. Travel expenses must be approved by the traveler's immediate supervisor or by the individual who has authorization to the account being charged against.

Travel expenses for non-University employees, such as consultants, speakers, lecturers, visiting faculty, or candidates for positions are reimbursed in accordance within the written terms in the contract, and these terms should adhere to all Western New England University policies. Expenses for candidates are discussed in advance between the authorized department head and the candidate. All non-University employees shall adhere to the University's travel policy.

Expenses related to travel must be submitted within 15 days after completion of the trip. An employee must clear their expenses in the same fiscal year they were incurred. If expenses are not cleared during the same fiscal year, the employee may not be reimbursed. This will be at the discretion of the Controller's office. All advances must be reconciled prior to 30 days. If the advance is not cleared in 30 days, the University has the authorization to deduct the advance from that individual's payroll. Refer to Travel and Cash Advance Policy.

## International Travel

All International Travel is to be booked through the University's travel agent. This policy is unlike domestic travel that can be booked directly online through an airline, or via an online "brokerage" (i.e. Travelocity, Expedia, etc.). Procurement Services cannot issue a Purchase Order unless a Purchase Order Requisition and a fully completed "International Travel" form are provided. These forms can be obtained from Procurement Services. The purpose of this form is to provide necessary international travel information for the traveler, SOS (our international travel insurer), and documentation for the University's tax return.

Items to consider prior to departure for international travel:

- Valid passports for all travelers are in place
- Verify necessary updates on vaccinations to the country one is traveling
- Review State Department advisories for the country or countries you are traveling to
- Enroll in the STEP Program (Smart Traveler Enrollment Program); a free service provided by the U.S. Government
- Obtain a purchasing card from Procurement Services
- Obtain Travelers checks (Procurement Services can assist you)
- Book lodging accommodations in advance
- Obtain the rate of currency exchange (which will give an indication of costs during your travel)

- Obtain SOS membership cards and other international travel insurance links by visiting the Finance and Administration's Travel website

Obtain necessary waivers, releases, and medical treatment authorizations for those that are traveling, and who are students or non-university employees that may be accompanying faculty, staff, or administration on University sponsored travel. Releases, waivers, and medical treatment authorizations may be obtained by calling the General Counsel's office at extension 1542.

Employees should take notice of countries that have a travel advisory warning by the State Department. The website for the U.S. State Department Travel Advisories is:  
<http://travel.state.gov/content/passports/en/alertswarnings.html>.

When traveling outside of the United States, ensure that your documentation is updated. Ensure your Passport is current and check to see if you need a visa or touring card. One has to contact their physician to determine if an immunization, vaccination, or other medical intervention is recommended prior to travel to the traveler's destination. For immunization information one can go to the website for Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov). Have emergency telephone numbers, SOS membership card, and medical alert tags/bracelet on your person at all times.

One can obtain tips on foreign currency and conversions at: [www.oanda.com/convert/classic](http://www.oanda.com/convert/classic) or [www.xe.com/ucc](http://www.xe.com/ucc). Usually the conversion rate is better abroad and it is advisable to change the unused local currency back to the U.S. dollars prior to departing from the country. In some cases, one must turn in all foreign currency prior to departing (i.e., Russia).

NOTE: Usually the best exchange rates are on credit cards; therefore the University recommends using your purchasing card whenever possible. When using the University's pro-card outside the United States, ensure that Accounts Payable has notified the bank of your travel plans (destination(s) and dates of travel). For personal credit cards, it is recommended that one notifies their credit card companies.

### **Informational Websites for International Travel**

- Time Zones – go to website: [www.worldtimeserver.com](http://www.worldtimeserver.com)
- National and International Weather – go to website: [www.weather.com](http://www.weather.com)
- Language Translations – go to website: [www.babelfish.com](http://www.babelfish.com)
- SOS International Travel – go to website:  
<https://www.internationalsos.com/MasterPortal/default.aspx?membnum=11BCAS583577>

### **Travel, Meals & Entertainment Expenses Related to Federal Grants**

Entertainment expenses are not allowed on federal grants, contracts or other agreements. Alcoholic beverages are not allowed on federal grants unless otherwise stated in the project or the purpose of the award. Alcohol purchased during dining, travel, conferences or meetings should be deducted from the submitted receipt and personally paid by the traveler or approved by traveler's supervisor to be charged against the department's budget and not charged against the grant.

## **Air, Rail and Bus Travel**

Air (**with the exception of individual and group international travel**), rail, and bus travel arrangements may be done directly through the Internet by going to the commercial carriers' websites or by telephone (see list on page 10). Keep in mind the processing fees from the travel agents when reviewing the best price. Fares booked less than seven (7) days prior to departure are most expensive. Trips that include a Saturday night stay usually yield substantial airfare discounts. Coach travel must be utilized. It is advised to take advantage of the various special low fares offered i.e. check with Southwest to see if they travel to your destination. Travel can be booked through the University's travel agent, Sanditz Travel.

When purchasing the ticket on the Internet, the ticket should be charged on the University's Procurement Card or a personal credit card. When using a credit card for purchasing a ticket, ensure it is a secure site this can be verified by the noting https (note there is an "s") or a locked padlock should appear in one of the corners of your screen.

NOTE: Employees not following this policy risk not being reimbursed for their travel. If a traveler does not have a University Procurement Card, check with your department head to have the ticket charged on his/her card. The traveler can charge the ticket on his/her personal card. Reimbursement will only be approved and processed *after* the trip has been completed, and all appropriate documentation is provided.

## **Loss or Excess Baggage**

The airlines are ultimately responsible for compensating the traveler for lost baggage. The University will not reimburse the traveler for the cost of personal items while traveling on University business. Measures to take to minimize baggage losses are:

- Carry valuables in a carry-on – jewelry, laptop computers, cameras, etc.
- Carry important and/or confidential documentation on board.
- Tag luggage with name, address and telephone number.
- Retain baggage claim receipts for checked-in luggage.
- Purchase luggage insurance. (Costs vary and are the responsibility of the traveler not the University.)

Baggage limits and fees vary from airline to airline. Check baggage limits, fees, and other pertinent information by going to the website: <http://www.netflights.com/baggage-allowances.aspx>. Employees will be reimbursed for excess baggage charges only to the extent the traveler is required to have heavy or bulky business-related materials or equipment. The circumstance or cause for excess baggage fees must be documented on the Expense Form (TME). A traveler will be reimbursed for reasonable checked baggage fees to and from the traveler's destination. Overweight baggage and extra baggage checked in will be at the expense of the traveler.

## **Transportation to and from Hotels and Terminals**

Where practical, the most economical mode of transportation should be used to and from hotels and terminals (air, bus and rail). These expenses, including gratuities, are reimbursable provided that the service is not included in the fares. Most hotels provide complimentary shuttle service to and from the airport. The traveler should ask about this service when making reservations.

## Automobile Rentals

Automobile rentals should be limited to situations where other means of transportation are not practical, economical, or available, and for emergency situations. The most economical car should be used as a general rule. The traveler does not need to purchase collision damage waiver insurance as this is covered under the University's insurance and the employee will not be reimbursed if paid to a car rental company. Traffic and/or parking violations are not reimbursable. In the event of an automobile accident, report the accident to the Finance and Administration office at 413-782-1219 along with sending a copy of all accident reports. In case of an emergency or accident call Public Safety 413-782-1300 and report all accidents within 24 hours. All accidents involving a University, rental, or personal vehicle must be reported immediately to the proper local/state authorities.

See the list below of Massachusetts Higher Education Consortium (MHEC) and Educational & Institutional Cooperative Services (E & I) automobile rental companies' telephone numbers and websites. Any questions regarding these automobile rental companies, please contact Procurement Services.

- Alamo Rent-A-Car 800-836-1130 or 770-319-1190 [www.alamo.com](http://www.alamo.com)
- Avis Rent-A-Car 800-331-1212 or 860-745-1081 [www.avis.com](http://www.avis.com)
- Budget Car Rental 800-455-2848 [www.budget.com](http://www.budget.com)
- Enterprise 800-736-8222 [www.enterprise.com](http://www.enterprise.com)
- Hertz Corporation 800-243-3722 (MHEC) [www.hertz.com](http://www.hertz.com)
- National Car Rental 800-227-7368 (E & I) [www.nationalcar.com](http://www.nationalcar.com)
- North Amherst Auto Rental 877-222-9058 (MHEC) [www.northamherstmotors.com](http://www.northamherstmotors.com)
- Thrifty Car Rental 800-698-7368 [www.thrifty.com](http://www.thrifty.com)

## Personal Automobile Travel

Reimbursement for use of personal automobiles by employees traveling on University business will be at the current mileage rate permitted by the IRS plus tolls and parking charges. Gas, oil, insurance premiums, repairs, or other costs presumed included in the mileage rate are not reimbursable. Fines for automobile violations or personal misconduct are not reimbursable. Personal automobile can be used if it's less expensive than renting a car, taking a taxi, or using alternate transportation or for convenience (i.e. as a time saver).

## Lodging

The University's travel agent, Sanditz Travel, who has arranged preferential rates, can make lodging arrangements with the hotels in major cities throughout the U.S. The traveler should stay at the hotel or motel where the meeting, convention or conference is being held or at a nearby reasonable priced hotel or motel. The actual hotel bill is required for reimbursement and should be attached to the Expense Form.

## Conferences, Conventions & Seminars

Often the organizers of the conferences, conventions and seminars will announce discounted rates for transportation and lodging that may be obtained by arranging travel through their organizations. In these instances, the traveler should still consult with the Internet or the University's travel agent, Sanditz Travel, to

Updated 9/27/2022

ensure that the least expensive arrangements are being provided. In the case of identical prices (i.e., sponsoring organization vs. Sanditz Travel), the traveler may choose to stay at the hotel where the event is taking place to minimize other travel expenses and to take part in activities that can run later in the evening.

### **Traveling with a Companion**

Should an employee desire to have someone accompany him/her on a business trip, all expenses relating to the companion including transportation, meals, and additional lodging expenses are a personal expense to the traveler and are not reimbursable. These expenses should be booked and itemized separately from the employee.

### **Authorized Travel by Non-University Employees**

Travel for an individual who is not an employee of the University such as a job applicant, speaker, performer or trustee must be authorized by the appropriate University department chair or budget supervisor. The University's travel policy must be adhered to, and reimbursement will be provided in accordance with the University's general travel policies. The department or school authorizing the travel can make all transportation and lodging arrangements through Sanditz Travel. Contact the Assistant to the President at 413-782-1243 to reserve the guesthouse. The University has negotiated discount prices with hotels in the Springfield area. Contact Procurement Services to confirm pricing at 413-782-1538.

### **Meals**

Maximum expenses incurred for business meals while on a University business trip are reimbursable in accordance to IRS's yearly-posted per diem M & IE rates for cities. Go to the GSA website; <http://www.gsa.gov/portal/content/104877> or <http://www.gsa.gov>. This rate is inclusive for breakfast, lunch and dinner; **additional costs over the per diem rate will be the responsibility of the traveler.** This must be noted on the Expense Form and the difference included either by check made payable to Western New England University or cash (if hand delivered to Accounts Payable). Unless business is discussed, reimbursed meals from a day trip constitute taxable income to the employee. To be reimbursed for meals, the meal receipt is to be attached to the Expense Form (TME). If the restaurant will not provide individual checks, request that a representative of the restaurant provide a signed business card or receipt that has the cost of one's meal. All group meal receipts must have the names of the attendees and the purpose of the function. Meal directly associated with a conference or seminar (i.e., the conference or seminar places an additional charge for one or more meals) is excluded from the daily per diem rate. When a meal includes another individual, provide the name(s) and reason why the meal was paid for by University.

### **Travel Advances**

See both Travel and Cash Advance and Student Travel and Cash Advance policies. Travel and Cash or Student Travel and Cash forms are to be filled out and submitted to Accounts Payable. Only full-time salaried faculty and staff of Western New England University may receive travel advances. Students are allowed cash advances when they are attending a University sanctioned event. Funds may be drawn from a student-funded account or a department's funds with appropriate signatures. Advances should be applied for by Tuesday noon for a Thursday after 3:00 p.m. distribution of the same week to be picked up at Student Administrative Services (SAS).

## **Receipts**

Receipts must be submitted with the Expense Form (TME) for all expenditures. All Expense Forms are subject to review by Accounts Payable and by internal and external auditors for compliance with University regulations. When submitting meal receipts for reimbursement, both the meal breakdown and credit card slip are required. In the event of a “group meal” or a business meeting held during a meal that is to be reimbursed, please provide the purpose of the meal and who the meal was with as lack of information may delay the reimbursement.

In the event of a missing receipt under \$25, the traveler can provide a detailed explanation of the expense and reason for the missing receipt accompanied by signatures from the traveler and his/her supervisor. Over \$25 the traveler must contact the restaurant, hotel, etc. to have a copy of the receipt forwarded. Reimbursement may be denied if proper documentation is not provided.

## **Gratuities**

The reasonable costs of gratuities to porter, bellhops and other service personnel are reimbursable and are to be listed on the Expense Form (TME). Tipping a porter, bellman, or chambermaid, is based on the quality of the service rendered. Reasonable tips for airport porters and hotel bellman are \$1.00 per bag. Lavish or unreasonable gratuities will not be reimbursed.

## **Laundry & Valet Service**

Reasonable charges for laundry and valet services are reimbursable for a prolonged business trip or in an emergency situation. Receipts and/or supporting documentation are required for reimbursement and should be attached to the Expense Form (TME).

## **Miscellaneous Expenses**

Expenses that are incurred for spouses, dependents and /or guests and personal charges are not reimbursable to the employee. Health spa fees, childcare, recreational activities, toiletries, mini-bar, theft, loss of personal belongings, money, etc. are the responsibility of the traveler.



## PROCEDURES

### How to Book Travel

- Using the University's Official Travel Agency

Sanditz Travel, a full-service travel agency, was selected to organize and operate travel for Western New England University. As the University's officially designated travel agency, Sanditz Travel will book and confirm all requests for air, bus and rail travel, and handle all hotel and automobile rental reservations for Western New England University business travelers. Sanditz Travel has been instructed to follow all University policies regarding business travel.

- Contacting the Travel Agency

Sanditz Travel's main office is located at 98 Washington Street, Middletown, CT 06457. To make travel reservations, call 860-623-0151 or our contact person, Tammy at 413-241-7546.

- Reservation Instructions

Call Sanditz Travel and provide them with the necessary information to obtain pricing. They will fax you an itinerary. Once you have determined your department has the funds available, and have permission from your supervisor, bring a completed purchase order requisition form to Procurement Services. Sanditz Travel will hold your space for 24 hours. Procurement Services will fax a purchase order to call within the allotted time frame. Sanditz Travel will need the necessary information to make arrangements:

- Traveler's name on formal identification, department and office extension
- Traveler's date of birth
- Date and preferred time of departure, destination, date and preferred time of return
- Preferred time and date of ticket delivery
- Automobile rental requirements (i.e., size of car, when/where the car will be picked up and returned)
- Special instructions applicable to the trip, including passport and visa applications for international travel; passport number and expiration date

Sanditz Travel will subsequently:

- Inform you of any special discounted airfares available consistent with your timeframes
- Confirm all air reservations
- Confirm all automobile and hotel reservations
- Provide, when possible, a confirmed seat reservation and boarding pass
- Prepare an itinerary - a service fee may apply to subsequent itinerary changes

**Note:** Please check your itinerary and tickets for accuracy upon receipt. Picture ID such as a driver's license or passport is required at airport check in.

- Using the internet for Travel or Contacting the Airlines Directly:

**NOTE: All International and group travel must be booked through the University's travel agent and students must sign a Student Travel and Release Form.**

## **Airlines, Rail and Bus**

- |                         |              |  |
|-------------------------|--------------|--|
| • American Airlines     | 800-433-7300 | <a href="http://www.aa.com">www.aa.com</a>                   |
| • Delta Airlines        | 800-325-1999 | <a href="http://www.delta.com">www.delta.com</a>             |
| • Northwest Airlines    | 800-447-4747 | <a href="http://www.aa.com">www.aa.com</a>                   |
| • Southwest Airlines    | 800-435-9792 | <a href="http://www.southwest.com">www.southwest.com</a>     |
| • United Airlines       | 800-241-6522 | <a href="http://www.united.com">www.united.com</a>           |
| • Amtrak                | 800-872-7245 | <a href="http://www.amtrak.com">www.amtrak.com</a>           |
| • Coach USA/Bonanza Bus | 888-751-8800 | <a href="http://www.coachusa.com">www.coachusa.com</a>       |
| • Greyhound Bus Lines   | 800-231-2222 | <a href="http://www.greyhound.com">www.greyhound.com</a>     |
| • Peter Pan Bus Lines   | 413-781-3320 | <a href="http://www.peterpanbus.com">www.peterpanbus.com</a> |
|                         | 800-343-9999 |  |

## **How to Pay for Travel**

All air and rail travel made through the University's travel agent will be charged to the University's account and the expense subsequently allocated to the appropriate department by means of a purchase order.

When making travel arrangements through the internet, one can use the University's purchasing card. If one doesn't have a University card, they can use their personal credit card. All receipts and stubs must be attached to the Expense Form.

All other travel expenditures (automobile rental, hotel, meals, etc.) should be listed individually on the Expense Form (TME), accompanied by original receipts and supporting documentation, the traveler's and supervisor's signatures and then submitted to Accounts Payable for reconciliation.

## **How to Obtain Travel Advances**

Refer to Travel and Cash Advance Policy on page 7.

## **What to Do for International Travel**

Refer to International Travel policy on pages 3 and 4.

- Contact University travel agent to obtain name of airline, rates, dates of departure and return
- Fill out "International Travel" form
- Submit completed "International Travel" form with purchase order requisition to Procurement Services
- Procurement Services will issue a purchase order to travel agent
- A copy of the "International Travel" form will be decimated by Procurement Services to the Finance and Administration office (for insurance), the General Counsel office (for waivers), and the Controller's office (for tax return documentation)