



Traveler's Quick Reference Guide

All travel on the behalf of the State:

- Shall be reasonable, necessary and fully documented.
- Comply with Commonwealth Accounting Policies and Procedures ([CAPP Topic #20335](#)-State Travel Regulations and VCCS SSC Policies.
- Be approved by supervisor or designee and additional approver (as required).

What are your responsibilities as a traveler?

- Pre-planning is essential. Do not wait until the last minute to obtain all necessary pre-approvals.
- Enter Pre-Approval in Chrome River for all **overnight** travel and business meals for supervisor approval prior to travel. **Please note: Your supervisor or designee and additional approvers (as required) must review and approve Pre-Approval in Chrome River before Expense Report can be submitted for reimbursement.**

Air or Rail Travel

- Tickets for airline flight/rail travel may be purchased using personal funds and reimbursed following the travel completion.
- Reimbursement for first class air or rail travel is prohibited. Reimbursement will be limited to the lowest available fare (coach class).
- Original receipts must be retained and submitted with the Expense Report.
- Baggage fees are limited to one checked bag-receipts must be attached to the Expense Report.
- Change Ticket Fees are only reimbursed when necessitated by College business office (Business Manager and/or VP of Finance) and require written explanation. Change fees for the travelers benefit are not reimbursable.

Mileage-Personally-Owned Vehicles

- A state car and car rental should be requested first and taken if available.
- Employees are permitted to use their personally owned vehicle when it is cost beneficial to the College. It is generally considered cost beneficial to drive a personal vehicle 200 or less miles total (single day or multi-day travel).
- For mileage over 200 miles total (single day or multi-day travel), a [cost benefit analysis](#) is required to determine if it is cost beneficial to rent a vehicle (reference Rental Vehicles). If it is cheaper to rent and you choose to drive your personal vehicle, reimbursement will be at the fleet rate of .246 cents/mile.
- If personal vehicle is taken as a matter of convenience,

reimbursement will be at the fleet rate.

Rental Vehicles

- The Department of General Services, Office of Fleet Management (OFMS), maintains a contract with Enterprise Leasing to provide vehicles for short-term travel to State employees. Visit [OFMS](#) and use the trip calculator to determine the costs for the proposed trip. All vehicle reservations must be made at least 24 hours in advance and can be made by calling the local office or by visiting [Enterprise Rental](#) to make an online reservation.
- If it is necessary to rent a vehicle after you reach your destination, these fees are reimbursable.

Insurance

- Employees should **NOT** accept additional insurance. The Division of Risk Management provides a Statewide Self-Insure Automobile plan for State employees.
- Non-employees renting a car should only accept LDW (Liability Damage Waiver) and CDW (Collision Damage Waiver) insurance. Additional insurance is not allowable.

Gas and Extras

- Travelers must ensure that the rental vehicle is refueled before returning it to the rental contractor.
- Fuel purchased from the rental contractor is **NOT** permitted.
- Original receipts for gas purchases must be attached to the Expense Report. These costs must be itemized by date of purchase within the Expense Report.
- If renting a vehicle larger than compact, economy or mid-size, a cost justification must be provided.

Ground Transportation-Tolls-Parking

- While on overnight travel, ground transportation (taxis, shuttles, metro) from the airport/train station to the place of lodging is allowable.
- Transportation between lodging or business places to meal destinations are **NOT** allowable.
- A maximum tip of 15% of the taxicab or shuttle base fare is reimbursable.
- Tolls, parking, and public transit/shuttle/taxi charges that exceed \$75 require a receipt to be attached to the Expense Report.
- These costs must be itemized by date of purchase within the Expense Report.

Internet (WiFi) Access

- Internet access charges for official business purposes is allowed. A full explanation of the business purpose must be stated on the Expense Report.

Lodging-Hotel & Taxes

The [US General Services Administration \(GSA\)](#) governs all daily lodging rates. These rates are automatically pulled into the Chrome River reimbursement system by entering city and state. The appropriate rate is determined by the *physical* location (county or city) of the hotel. Use the [USPS Zip Code Lookup Tool](#) to determine physical lodging location. Travelers who do not plan with careful consideration to these guidelines will bear the additional expense personally. In such cases, surcharges will be prorated and reimbursed only for the appropriate rate.

- Every effort should be made to check and confirm that the 100% GSA allowable rates are available at the time reservations are made and at check-in.
- Expenses may be reimbursed up to 150% of the lodging limit with proper justification (i.e. conference hotel, minimized ground transportation costs, etc.) **ONLY** if documented and **PRIOR** approval is obtained by the agency head or agency head designee.
- Communicate travel plan changes to the hotel as soon as possible when a confirmed reservation is being held. These charges will not be reimbursed if the traveler is negligent in cancelling reservations as required by the hotel policy.
- Dividing the hotel rate by the number of persons in the room for purposes of justifying rates that exceed the lodging guidelines is not permitted for luxury or premium accommodation.

Meals and Incidentals-Per Diem Allowance

The [US General Services Administration \(GSA\)](#) governs all M&IE rates. Chrome River automatically calculates allowable per diem based on physical lodging location and deductions indicated within the Per Diem widget when the applicable city and state are entered. The applicable rate is payable to the traveler without receipts.

- Meals per Diem is only permitted for overnight travel only.
- On a travel departure or return day, 75% of the M&IE rate is reimbursed. For trips involving multiple travel destinations, base the reduction on the per diem in effect for where the night was spent as follows:
 - Departure Day: Where you spend the night
 - Return Day: Where you spent the night before returning to home base
- When meals are provided at no cost as part of registration or lodging, the applicable meal amount must be reduced from that day's allowable meal per diem.
- If a meal is offered at no charge by the hotel or included in conference fees and the traveler does not partake due to any **reasonable** circumstance (e.g. food was not adequate, dietary restrictions, etc.) the traveler must notate this on the Expense Report.

Business Meals

While in travel status with overnight stay, meals are reimbursed using the per diem allowance (reference previous section for guidance). Individuals who are not in a travel status may be eligible for meal reimbursement if they participate in a business meal. Such meals occur while the individual is on official business and must:

- Include Agency Head or Agency Head Designee **prior** approval
- Bona fide business discussions must be documented (attach agenda if applicable).
- Original itemized receipt must be attached.
- Listing of all persons involved in the group.
- Be reimbursed for actual expenses up to the amount shown for the applicable per diem (breakfast, lunch or dinner).
- Delivery costs and a reasonable tip are reimbursable as long as the total cost does not exceed the allowable per diem.

RECEIPT MANAGEMENT

What type of documentation is required for reimbursement?

- Business purpose that supports VCCS's mission
- Original *itemized* receipts are required for airline/rail, lodging, car rental, and business meals paid by the traveler.
- Original receipts are required for baggage fees, change ticket fees, other airfare/rail, fuel, registration fees, memberships and dues, and miscellaneous expenses
- Original receipts required for parking, tolls, and public transit/shuttle/taxi expenses \$75 or over.
- All receipts must be legible. Please keep original receipts on file in your department.
- Receipt must be electronically on file and moved to images within the correct expense report in Chrome River by uploading to Chrome River (pdf documents) or emailing to receipt@chromefile.com from your primary email address associated with your Chrome River account. Electronic versions of originals are retained in Chrome River for audit purposes.

IMPORTANT

- Travelers should submit their Pre-Approval and Expense Reports in a timely manner.
 - Pre-approval reports should be submitted and fully approved prior to beginning of travel.
 - Expense reports should be submitted to your supervisor within 30 working days of completion of trip.
- By submitting the Expense Report, the traveler is certifying the accuracy and the appropriateness of the expense.
- Approval by the supervisor does not guarantee exact expense reimbursement amount. Final audit and compliance of all expenses will be performed at the Shared Services Center.
- Reimbursements will be direct deposited to the same bank account as your current payroll, unless being reimbursed with Local funds.