

## TRAVEL EXPENSES REFERENCE GUIDE

### Overview

Individuals traveling on University business should exercise good stewardship and are responsible for complying with internal policies and procedures, external regulations, and sponsor requirements. The University will not reimburse travel expenses that are unreasonable, unallowable, or are not required for official University travel.

Expenses (Travel Cards and direct Reimbursements to Employees) should be submitted via the Expense Requests system in a timely manner. Absent exceptional circumstances, expenses submitted more than 60 days after completion of travel will be reported as taxable income to the individual.

Reimbursable travel expenses on behalf of Stanford include:

- ❖ Air Travel
- ❖ Car Rental, Taxis, Ride Services, Shuttles
- ❖ Lodging
- ❖ Personal Automobile Use
- ❖ Meals During Business Travel

All reimbursements require dated, original itemized receipts, and proof of payment as well as statement of business purpose. Stanford will not reimburse for personal expenses (e.g., movies in the hotel room, parking tickets/moving violation citations, spouse expenses without advance and proper approval, meal tips exceeding 20%, and flight/car insurance).

**NOTE:** Any plans to travel on behalf of Stanford University to countries identified as "State Sponsors of Terrorism" must be reviewed and approved by the University Export Control Officer in advance of travel. Stanford will not reimburse travelers to these countries without the Export Control Officer's written pre-approval: Cuba, Iran, North Korea, Sudan, Syria, and Crimea Region of Ukraine.

Additional documentation is required for reimbursements to foreign visitors and students and post docs attending conferences or meetings. See [Policy Notes: Required Documentation for Travel Expense Reimbursement](#).

### Best Practices

- Use [Stanford's Travel Card \(TCard\)](#) for purchasing travel & travel-related expenses required for University business
- Stanford Travel is the preferred travel management service for Stanford's travelers and arrangers. To arrange travel or to learn more, go to [Stanford Travel's Online Booking Tool](#).

## Roles & Responsibilities

Payee



Preparer



Approver



T&R Auditor



### Originators/Initiators: Faculty and Staff (Payee/Preparer)

- ✓ For direct reimbursements via Expense Reports, preparers should successfully complete course FIN-0500: Introduction to the Expense Requests System and required prerequisite/applicable training via [STARS](#).
- ✓ For Travel Card (TCard) charges submitted via Expense Reports, preparers should also successfully complete course FIN-0402: Expense Reports with Travel Card Charges and required prerequisite/applicable training via [STARS](#).
- ✓ Both direct reimbursements and Travel Card charges are submitted via the Expense Requests system.
- ✓ In addition, pay special attention to the travel and food policies and procedures (See [Policy Notes: Required Documentation for Travel Expense Reimbursement](#)):
  - a. **Receipts & documentation:** All reimbursements require dated, original itemized receipts, and proof of payment for transactions of \$75 or more. If conference expenses are charged to a sponsored project, a copy of the conference agenda or program should be included with the backup documentation.
  - b. **Airfare:** Flights must be booked on a U.S. carrier per the [Fly America Act and Open Skies Exceptions](#) when charged to a government contract or grant. Compliance with this Act takes precedence over booking the lowest available fare. Travelers should book coach class for domestic and international flights.
  - c. **Car Rental:** Rental contract, itemizing all charges and proof of payment must be submitted. Stanford carries blanket car rental insurance policy for travelers and travelers should not accept any other insurance for car rental within the continental US.
  - d. **Lodging:** Itemized bill showing all charges and proof of payment, unless per diem is claimed. Travelers are expected to select the lowest standard room rates available.
  - e. **Personal Auto Use:** Mileage from home to airport may be claimed when traveling weekends or outside business hours; otherwise, mileage is the distance from Stanford to the airport.
  - f. **Meals during Business Travel:** Stanford's meal guidance still applies to travelers (See [Expense Guidance for Business Meals](#)). Travelers may claim actual meal expenses or [per diem](#) (per diem rates are based on city visited). If claiming actual expense reimbursement for meals, receipts for transactions of \$75 or more are required, including the amount spent on alcohol or a statement that no alcohol was included in the meal.

### Approvers/Reviewers: Director of Finance and Administration and/or designee

- ✓ Approvers/Reviewers should complete FIN-0103: Approving Financial Transactions and required prerequisite/applicable training via [STARS](#) and ensure Originators/Initiators roles and responsibilities are performed appropriately in accordance with policies & regulations.
- ✓ Review and ensure expenses incurred are allowable, allocable, and reasonable to be directly charged to unrestricted, restricted or sponsored awards.

- ✓ Approver should not be someone who reports to the payee or initiator (either directly or indirectly).
- ✓ Review and ensure transactions are approved in a timely manner within 60 days of transactions.

## **Other Reviewers:** Travel & Reimbursement (T&R) Auditors

- ✓ Ensure Originators/Initiators and Approvers/Reviewers roles and responsibilities are performed appropriately in accordance with policies & regulations.
- ✓ For expense report transactions, T&R Auditors will approve the transaction for payment if compliant. If non-compliant, T&R Auditors will reject and notify the person initiating the transaction of required corrective action.
- ✓ If a transaction has unusually high cost, T&R Auditors will escalate to the department escalation designee for final review and approval.

## Penalties for non-compliance

*The Travel Card (TCard) may not be used for personal expenses (except for incidental expenses that cannot be easily separated from a business charge). The cardholder is personally responsible for repaying Stanford University for any non-reimbursable TCard charges. Cardholders who do not comply with University policies and procedures may have their Stanford University cardholder privileges revoked. This revocation may be extended to include the Purchasing Card (PCard), if the employee also has the PCard. Misuse of the Travel Card may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.*

## **Policies and Regulations**

### **Administrative Guide Memos:**

[AGM 5.4.3 Reimbursable Expenses](#)

[AGM 5.4.2 Travel Expenses](#)

### **Stanford's Gateway to Financial Activities - Fingate:**

Fingate: [Staff Travel Resources, Procedures, and Policies](#)

Fingate: [Faculty Travel Resources, Procedures, and Policies](#)

Fingate: [Stanford Travel Packet](#)

Fingate: [Guidelines for Writing a Clear Business Purpose](#)

Fingate: [Meals](#)

Fingate: [Certification for Student Travel Form](#)

Fingate: [Stanford's Travel Card Program](#)

Fingate: [Stanford Travel Card Policy](#)

Fingate: [Fly America Act and Open Skies Exceptions \(Air Carrier Requirements\)](#)

## Questions?

Financial Management Services Center – [Financial Support Center](#) (FSC)

Email [finhelp@stanford.edu](mailto:finhelp@stanford.edu) or call 650-723-2772