



Policy No. 3
Policy on Travel Rules
Effective Date:

Section 1. GENERAL

1.1 Scope:

1.1.1 This policy implements the guidelines and procedures concerning management of in-state, out-of-state and international travel, hereinafter referred to as "travel," and for reimbursement of expenses to employees, members of the Concord University Board of Governors, hereinafter referred to as the "Governing Board" , and other non-employees traveling on behalf of the Governing Board or its institution.

1.1.2 Consultants and contractors are not required to use these rules and regulations, at the Governing Board's option. Any consultant and contractor travel must be included as part of the consulting/contractor fee agreement.

1.1.3 Reimbursement of travel expenses paid from federal, state and private grants shall be governed by the terms and conditions of the grant if they differ from those contained in this policy; otherwise, this policy shall govern such reimbursement.

1.2 Authority: West Virginia Code §12-3-11; § 18B-1-6

1.3 Filing Date:

1.4 Effective Date:

1.5 This policy amends and replaces Concord University board of Governors Policy No. 3 (effective August 1, 2002.)

1.6 According to the West Virginia Code, it shall be unlawful for the Auditor to issue a warrant in payment of any claim for travel expenses incurred by an employee, Board member, or other non-employee unless such claim meets all the requirements of this rule.

Section 2. Delegation of Authority and Responsibilities

2.1 Authority to manage, approve, or disapprove travel and travel-related expenses is delegated exclusively to the President. Authority may be revoked by the Governing Board.

- 2.2 The President may delegate authority to others within the institution to act as designee(s) for authorizing and approving travel and travel-related expenses as may be required. All such authorizations and approvals shall be made in accordance with the provisions of this policy.
- 2.3 Travel may be authorized only for official business and only if the institution has the financial resources to reimburse the traveler for travel expenses.
- 2.4 The President or designee may develop administrative policies and procedures for the institution consistent with this policy; state and federal laws; and the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) regulations to provide additional guidance to employees and others traveling on behalf of the institution.
- 2.5 The responsibility to audit a traveler's expense account settlement lies with the institution. Approval of a traveler's expense account settlement by the institution means that the expense account settlement meets all criteria established by this policy for reimbursement. The institution shall audit and submit an accurate expense account settlement for reimbursement to the State Auditor's Office in accordance with the West Virginia State Auditor's Office Travel Audit Guidelines.

Section 3. Travel Regulations Applicable to All Employees, Non-Employees, Board Members, and Students

3.1 Employees

- 3.1.1 Approval to travel shall be secured in advance by the employee in accordance with this policy, and the administrative policies and procedures of the institution. Under no circumstances should an employee travel without proper approval of the President or the President's designee(s).
- 3.1.2 Employees are responsible for submitting a Travel Account Settlement Form with all required attachments to the institution in the manner and time prescribed in the institution's procedures after the last day of approved travel.

3.2 Non-Employees

- 3.2.1 When non-employees are eligible to receive payment for travel within the scope of business for the University or reimbursement of travel expenses, such payments or reimbursements shall be made in accordance with this policy and the administrative policies and procedures of the institution.

3.3 Members of the Governing Board

- 3.3.1 This policy shall govern reimbursement of travel expenses to Governing Board members when a Board member requests reimbursement for such expenses.

3.4 Students

3.4.1 When students are eligible to receive reimbursement of travel expenses, such reimbursement shall be made in accordance with this policy and the administrative policies and procedures of the institution.

Section 4. Transportation

4.1 Air Transportation

- 4.1.1 Airline tickets should be purchased using the Purchasing Card (P-card).
- 4.1.2 Allowable reimbursement for commercial airline travel shall include the actual expense or cost for the least expensive logical fare via the most direct route, or a reasonable alternative route if it results in a lower fare. The preferred provider of airline tickets is the state's current provider. Reimbursement may be made in advance up to 180 days prior to the trip if an employee is required to use personal funds, rather than the P-card to book air travel.
- 4.1.3 In order to receive reimbursement, the traveler must submit their E-Ticket receipts, certified copy from the commercial airline ticket receipt, or the original invoice from the travel service vendor. If airfare is obtained in advance, it must be referenced on the expense settlement form and a copy of the paid airfare attached. Refundable or unused airline tickets shall be returned to the ticket issuer for a proper credit or refund.
- 4.1.4 If an increase in the cost of airfare is incurred due to a flight change, the charge may be paid by institutional means, or reimbursed if the traveler is directed by a senior level institutional officer in writing. Increased or extra charges incurred due to the traveler's negligence will be considered a personal expense of the traveler and shall not be reimbursed.
- 4.1.5 Deliberately causing increased costs or delays to obtain personal gratuities such as denied boarding compensation, frequent flier points or similar benefits is prohibited. In addition, conversion of airline tickets for personal benefit such as downgrading tickets, returning unused tickets for cash, credit, or personal airline tickets, or any similar action is prohibited. Any credits, or refunds, from these actions must be returned to the institution.
- 4.1.6 All major airlines charge a fee to issue paper flight coupons in situations where an e-ticket is available. E-tickets are the industry standard and are sufficient for traveling and reimbursement. If a paper

ticket is requested, the service charge will not be reimbursed. In the case of a traveler experiencing problems with e-tickets when exchanging due to flight cancellations or delays, particularly when changing airlines, the travel service vendor is required to assist and provide proper documentation.

4.2 Ground Transportation

- 4.2.1 The traveler may use a state-owned vehicle, commercial rental vehicle or a privately-owned vehicle for ground transportation. The preferred method of ground transportation is the use of one of the institution's vehicles. If an institution vehicle is not available, the second preferred method of ground transportation is commercial rental vehicle.
- 4.2.2 Any traveler who uses ground transportation must possess a valid operator's license. The traveler is also responsible for passing Institutional Driver's training. The traveler is personally responsible for any fines or penalties resulting from citations, charges or warrants attributable to operator negligence. Such fines or penalties shall not be reimbursed.
- 4.2.3 When flying is the recommended travel method, and the traveler chooses to drive rather than fly, reimbursement will be based on actual in-transit expenses (mileage, hotels, parking, meals, etc.) not to exceed the lowest available commercial airfare plus local transportation to and from the airport and parking.
- 4.2.4 When courtesy transportation is provided by a hotel, motel, or other service facility, the traveler is encouraged to use such service.
- 4.2.5 Travelers may be reimbursed for taxi (Uber, Lyft, etc.), bus and other forms of public transportation. Receipts should be provided. If a P-card is used for payment a receipt is required.
- 4.2.6 A commercial vehicle rental should be used when an institution vehicle is unavailable and the cost will be less than the reimbursement associated with a privately owned vehicle. Only institution employees are permitted to operate the vehicle. All vehicles should be rented from the institution's approved vendor.
- 4.2.7 Vehicle rentals should be paid with the P-card. Rentals are to be mid-size, standard, or small depending on the needs of the employee. If 3 or more employees are traveling together, a larger vehicle may be rented.
- 4.2.8 If travel is in excess of three (3) days, the weekly rate should be compared to the cost of the daily rate. The lowest cost option should be used.

- 4.2.9 The P-card provides Collision Damage Insurance (CDW) at no cost for rentals up to 31 days. CDW costs will not be reimbursed for covered P-card rentals. However, the P-card does not cover the rental of trucks, vans that seat more than 8 (eight) people, off-road vehicles, motorcycles, and other various specialty vehicles. CDW should be obtained for vehicles not covered by the P-card.
- 4.2.10 For a vehicle rental not paid by P-card, CDW is reimbursable for all rentals of a duration of seven (7) or fewer days. CDW for rentals greater than seven (7) days will not be reimbursed and should not be taken. Insurance for rentals in excess of seven (7) days is covered under the institution's insurance policy.
- 4.2.11 CDW is a reimbursable expense for any approved rental vehicle used outside the United States.
- 4.2.12 Travelers should return rental cars with the fuel tank at the same level as was initially in the rental vehicle. Refueling costs charged by the rental car vendors are not reimbursable except for extraordinary circumstances where the traveler could not refuel the car prior to return. Such circumstances must be presented for approval to the VP for Business & Finance upon receipt of appropriate justification.
- 4.2.13 Privately owned vehicles may be used for state travel with the Institution's approval, when an institution owned vehicle is not available. Reimbursement will be made at the prevailing rate per mile, as established by GSA, for the shortest practicable route to the point of arrival. This reimbursement is intended to cover all operating costs of the vehicle including fuel, maintenance, depreciation, insurance, etc., and no additional reimbursement will be made. Receipts are not required for mileage reimbursement using privately owned vehicles.

Section 5. Lodging

- 5.1 Allowable reimbursement for lodging shall include the actual expenses for overnight accommodations and all applicable taxes and surcharges.
- 5.2 Travelers should secure the lowest rate available at a reasonably priced facility. Certain hotels and motels offer special reduced rates to government employees and should be requested at the time of the reservation. Sales tax may be paid by the traveler unless the lodging facility is located in the state of West Virginia and billed to the P-card. In certain instances, if the traveler is paying directly for the lodging, the hotel may exempt the employee from paying the tax upon presentation of a tax exempt form. The traveler should inquire if the hotel will accept a tax-exempt form when the reservation is made.
- 5.3 The location of the lodging facility should be as convenient as possible to the place where business is being transacted.

- 5.4 In the case of multiple occupancy, reimbursement may be claimed fully by one traveler with no claim filed by the other traveler, or each traveler may be reimbursed at equal percentages of the total actual cost for accommodations.
- 5.5 Booking hotels through vendors such as Hotels.com, Travelocity and Expedia will not be reimbursed based on the current travel audit procedures put in place by the State Auditor's Office. Third-party vendors are unable to provide an invoice or folio for reimbursement and charge fees that are not reimbursable.
- 5.6 Receipts are required for all lodging. An invoice or folio shall be the official document utilized for reimbursement to the traveler.

Section 6. Meals

- 6.1 Meal expense reimbursement is based on the travel location and is not to exceed the maximum Per Diem established by the federal government (GSA).
- 6.2 Meal reimbursement is allowed when lodging is listed as "gratis" or "no charge". Alcohol and entertainment expenses are specifically excluded.
- 6.3 Employees will be reimbursed the cost of meals up to the GSA Per Diem when there is an overnight stay. If reimbursement is requested in excess of the federal rate, receipts are required for the meal and incidental expenses for the entire day, and the VP for Business & Finance must approve the expense voucher.
- 6.4 When meals are provided for a traveler, the traveler's maximum daily rate shall be reduced by the appropriate amount as identified on the GSA website. A meal provided by a common carrier or as a complimentary meal provided by a hotel/motel does not reduce the maximum per diem rate.
- 6.5 Meal and incidental rates differ by travel location. These are identified on the GSA website. Incidental rates include tips given to porters, baggage carriers, bellhops, hotel maids, steward or stewardesses and other applicable individuals.
- 6.6 The first and last days of travel of an overnight trip when no meals are provided, the allowable reimbursement is based on 75% of the GSA Per Diem rate for the specific city.
- 6.7 If a meal(s) is provided gratis or included within a registration fee of the business travel, the Per Diem rate must be reduced by the appropriate amount.
- 6.8 Single day travel is not eligible for meal reimbursement except in the case of a traveler being away longer than 12 hours. For a traveler who is away in excess of 12 hours, up to 75% of the prescribed federal Per Diem is allowable.

Section 7. Registration Fees

- 7.1 Fees or charges for attendance at conferences, meetings, seminars or workshops as well as event-related materials are reimbursable, and must be supported by a receipt. Employees should verify acceptable payment methods with the conference prior to attending. Registration fees should be charged to the P-card when possible. Travelers are to adjust meal reimbursement requests for meals included in the registration fee. A copy of the schedule of events for the meeting, conference, seminar or workshop should be provided with the travel reimbursement request.
- 7.2 If a traveler is directed by the institution to change their travel plans, or if other extenuating circumstances arise, cancellation charges made by the event sponsor will be reimbursed. Charges incurred due to the failure of the traveler to notify the event sponsor of a change will be considered a personal expense.

Section 8. Other Expenses

- 8.1 Travelers may incur miscellaneous business-related expense for which reimbursement may be made, if appropriate. Original receipts are required for expenses over \$75.00. Receipts for items under \$75.00 are suggested to be provided if readily available. Receipts are required for any P-card charge, regardless of the dollar amount. If an original receipt is lost, a faxed or copied original may be substituted but must be certified by the traveler and the VP for Business & Finance/representative.

Such expenses and reimbursements may include, but are not limited to:

- a. Baggage storage fees between appointments and/or between hotels and meeting places.
 - b. Tolls, garage and parking fees.
 - c. Communication expenses such as local calls that include a surcharge; long distance business calls which may include toll charges; facsimile charges and charges related to internet connections.
 - d. Currency conversion costs.
 - e. Guides, interpreters and visa fees.
 - f. Laundry and dry cleaning when an employee is in travel status in excess of seven consecutive days without returning home.
- 8.2 Non-reimbursable travel-related expenses include the cost of passports (not as a travel expense but may be considered as a direct charge to the institution) and personal flight or baggage insurance.
 - 8.3 Employees traveling in foreign countries should report their expenditures in US dollars. The total expenditure in foreign currency must be converted into US dollars using the rate/rates at which the foreign money was obtained. The rates of conversion and the commissions must be shown.

Section 9. Reimbursement Forms

9.1 Travelers must use the Travel Expense Settlement Form for travel related activities.

Section 10. Other Provisions

10.1 In accordance with WV Code § 6B-2-5(2), employees may use bonus points acquired through frequent traveler programs while traveling on official government business, as long as the employee's participation in the program does not result in an additional cost to the state.