

Changes to the UW System Travel Program

Effective **October 5, 2015**, the UW System will be implementing a new travel program rate structure and policies.

In 2011, the UW System Board of Regents received authority to manage a travel program outside of the state of Wisconsin program. The new policies and protocols for meals and incidental expenses, lodging, vehicle usage, miscellaneous travel-related expenses, and general travel provisions apply to all University-funded or University-sponsored travel, regardless of funding source or traveler affiliation (e.g., employees, guests, consultants, students). The following is a summary of the changes:

Per diems

Meals and incidental expenses (M&IE) will be paid or reimbursed on a per diem allowance basis, as defined by the federal government. The daily M&IE per diem allowance is additionally based on the location where the traveler spends the night. The rate for the last day of travel is based on the traveler's location the night before his/her travel ended. Leave and return times are no longer required.

- Travelers are allowed 75 percent of the daily allowance on the first and last days of travel.
- Provided meals **at a conference or meeting** will be deducted from the per diem as a percentage (i.e., 20 percent deducted for a provided breakfast, 30 percent for lunch, 50 percent for dinner).
- Hotel complimentary breakfast and airline meals **are not** required to be deducted from the per diem amount.
- Travelers who are traveling during the day but have no overnight stay may claim a meal allowance of \$15 per day when no meals are provided during the course of their business. In accordance with IRS regulations and current practice, these allowances are tax reportable.

University-sponsored or hosted events

Meal rates for University-sponsored or hosted events, such as receptions, business meetings, and hosting of job candidates, will also be changing. Please work with your institutional travel office for specific receipt requirements and maximum meal rates for locations within Wisconsin and those out of state.

Lodging

Rates for single/standard lodging in Wisconsin and for international locations, Alaska, Hawaii, and US territories are not to exceed the federal rate maximum for the location and dates of stay. Lodging costs elsewhere in the contiguous United States will be allowed up to 125 percent of the federal rates.

- Lodging booking methods will include Concur, Fox World Travel agents, and the hotel property directly. The purchase of lodging using online brokers (e.g., Expedia, Hotels.com) continues to be disallowed because these sites (1) often include costly change/cancel penalties, and (2) they do not provide the receipt requirements in accordance with IRS regulations.
- Lodging rate limits do not apply to externally arranged conference lodging if staying at the conference location or any conference recommended hotel. (The State's current policy only allows the maximum rate to be exceeded if it's at the conference location, not recommended hotels). Rate limits do apply for UW-sponsored conferences or events.

Mileage

- The General Services Administration (GSA) mileage rates of \$0.575 for cars/trucks and \$0.545 for motorcycles will be used.
- UW System institutions will determine their own policies related to the use of fleet vehicles and break-even mileage thresholds.

Filing timely expense reports

All travel expense reports must be submitted within 90 days from the end of a trip. (Note: IRS rules require that all business travel be accounted for in a timely manner, and provides 60 days as a reasonable definition of timely).