Alfred University
BUSINESS & FINANCE OFFICE

TRAVEL POLICY Updated 11.24.2025

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SUMMARY SHEET

Business Purpose	All travel must have a business purpose and be substantiated within 10 days of return with appropriate receipts, itineraries, and documentation.
Pre-Approvals	All overnight travel must be pre-approved by the area VP/Dean.
Credit Cards	Funded credit cards for travel can be obtained by submitting a pre-approval in the University's travel/expense program a minimum of 14 days prior to needed use.
Travel Advances	Can be obtained by completing a pre-approval in the University's travel/expense program requesting a funded credit card.

Type of Expense	Comments
Vehicle/Mileage	• **Rental Car:** If a trip is more than 100 miles an Enterprise rental car is recommended as the most cost-effective method. • **Motor Pool:** If available, a motor pool vehicle can be utilized for trips under 100 miles. • **Personal Vehicle**: Standard mileage reimbursement is 50 cents per mile.
Meals	Per IRS regulations – an overnight stay is required for reimbursement of meals (unless part of a conference or entertaining an outside person). • **Flat Rate:** Flat rate for domestic travel is $50/day and does not require receipts ($40 for day of travel). All international travel is reimbursed at the per diem rate of the city as calculated in the University's travel/expense program. • **Receipt Method:** All itemized receipts are required where practical. • Reasonableness is determined by comparing daily totals to the federal Per Diem Rate for the associated locality if not entertaining donors. • Receipts are always required when entertaining an outside person.
Alcoholic Beverages	Disallowed, unless for pre-approved entertainment of a donor or University events.
Gratuities/Tips	In general, should not exceed 20% of pretax bill for meals. Special requests and higher associated tipping should be documented.

Non-Reimbursable Expenses	• Travel insurance • Amenities such as movies or video rentals, in-room mini-bar, massages, etc. • Additional Insurance on domestic vehicle rentals (this is covered by AU insurance) • Gasoline, damages, maintenance, or other costs for use of your personal vehicle • Family member/spousal travel • Childcare, baby-sitting, house-sitting, or animal care costs • Fees for personal credit cards (use of AU cards recommended) • Membership dues in airline clubs, athletic clubs, or the like • Magazines, books, or other personal reading material • Personal clothing, grooming expenses, or accessories • Loss of cash advances, airline tickets or personal funds or property • Travelers' personal negligence; including but not limited to fines, parking tickets, towing charges, stolen cash, etc. • Expenses submitted more than 60 days after travel

Purpose

The purpose of the Alfred University Travel Policy is to provide specific guidelines covering University travel, and other travel related business expenses, as well as defining the documentation required to substantiate requests for reimbursement of those expenses. This policy is applicable to the following individuals:

- Employees who travel on University business
- Employees who supervise employees traveling on University business
- Employees who coordinate travel for University business
- Non-Employees traveling for University business

General Guidelines

Alfred University funds may be used for ordinary, reasonable, and necessary business-related travel and entertainment expenses incurred in furtherance of the University's mission.

Any questions pertaining to the Travel Policy should be directed to the Controller.

Reporting & Regulatory Requirements

The University receives, from a variety of sources, funds that carry with them fiduciary responsibilities. Inherent in these responsibilities is the requirement to operate the University under guidance set forth by the Board of Trustees; to follow Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP); to comply with all applicable federal, state, local, and sponsor rules and regulations; and to maintain an IRS accountable plan.

IRS GUIDELINES

For travel and business-related expenses to be excluded from the individual's taxable income, the University policies must meet the IRS definition of an "accountable plan".

Alfred University has implemented the following guidelines.

- Advances and reimbursements can only be made for business expenses in which a clear business reason exists and for which the cost is not excessive.
- Travelers must provide the Travel Expense Report substantiating the amount and business purpose of expenses in a reasonable period of time after travel.
- Travel advances in excess of substantiated expenses must be returned to the Business Office in a reasonable period of time after travel.
- The University has defined "a reasonable period of time" to be 10 days after the trip, or consecutive trips, are concluded. Consecutive trips are defined as trips with less than 5 calendar days between trips.

Employees must keep track of their expenses and substantiate the expenditures by submitting adequate, detailed supporting documentation. Any amounts paid to an employee that are not accounted for and substantiated in this way must be included in the employee's taxable income and are subject to payroll tax withholding. Travel expense reports are subject to audit by government agencies and other sponsors. Employees whose travel is funded by a sponsored grant or contract are expected to be cognizant of the sponsoring agency's procedures and policies and adhere to the restrictions.

Documentation & Review

BEFORE DEPARTURE: Electronic Travel Pre-Approval

University travelers are required to complete a Travel Pre-approval in the University's travel/expense system PRIOR TO securing flights or hotels for all travel requiring overnight accommodations. Cabinet has granted specific departments exemption of pre-approval based on their functional area within the University.

Travel advances are provided in the form of a funded credit card and are requested when completing the pre-approval in the University's travel/expense system. Initial request of funded cards must be completed a minimum of 14 days prior to travel booking to ensure the card is received timely. All funded cards must be shipped to Alfred University and can be picked up at the business office. Once the physical funded card is received, the card can be reloaded and funded for future travel without the 14 day minimum.

All travelers should review their credit card limits within the appropriate University credit card portal prior to departure and request card limit increases in accordance with the Credit Card Policy as appropriate.

DURING THE TRIP: RECEIPTS

University travelers must request and save all itemized receipts. If a receipt for an expenditure is lost, the traveler may attach a Missing Receipts Form signed by their supervisor, acknowledging the lost receipt and authorizing reimbursement. The traveler must make all reasonable attempts to contact the company and obtain missing receipts prior to completing the missing receipts form. Expenses exceeding $75 without receipts cannot be reimbursed. Small incidental charges where receipts are not practical should be listed on a missing receipts form and attached.

UPON RETURN: Electronic Travel Expense Report (TER)

Once the traveler has completed their trip(s), the traveler is required to complete their electronic TER in the University's travel/expense system. The electronic TER requires a documented business purpose and itemized receipts. Once completed, the TER is routed for proper approval prior to completion and/or reimbursement. The electronic TER must be **submitted** on the University's travel/expense system within 10 days of trip(s) completion. The University will not reimburse employee expenditures over 60 days old.

SUPERVISOR REVIEW & APPROVAL

When a traveler submits a Travel Pre-Approval or an Electronic Travel Expense Report, supervisor approval must be done timely. Timely supervisor approval is generally within 3 days after report submission. Supervisor approval includes review of expenses for reasonableness, review of expenses against budget, and review of FOAP's for accuracy.

Important Links

Travel/Expense Portal: https://travel.alfred.edu
Forms & Tax Emptions: https://my.alfred.edu/business-office/travel.cfm
Motor Pool Reservations: https://my.alfred.edu/facilities/motorpool.cfm
Enterprise Direct Bill #: 829888 Enterprise Corporate #: P86461
Need Assistance?: businessofc@alfred.edu

Sales Tax Exemptions

Alfred University is a not-for-profit institution, and the New York State sales tax exemption should be used for travel expenses within New York State and elsewhere, as appropriate. This would include hotels, restaurants, or other business-related purchases. Travelers may obtain copies of Tax-Exempt Forms from the Business Office website to present to the vendor at the time service is rendered or goods are received and paid for.

Foreign travel

All general policies pertaining to travel apply to foreign travel. Actual costs are reimbursable, to the extent reasonable and necessary, provided adequate documentation is submitted with the TER. In addition, fees for currency exchange are reimbursable. The traveler is responsible for converting travel costs into US dollars.

The Fly America Act requires use of U.S.-flagged air carriers for foreign air travel that is funded by federal government grants, contracts, or scholarships. There are exceptions to the Fly America Act requirement. The Office of Sponsored Research Administration provides a "Fly America Act Waiver Checklist" to determine if exceptions apply to any particular foreign trip. In addition, some federal contracts require trip-specific prior approval by the sponsor, even if the awarded budget includes foreign travel expenses. The Office of Sponsored Research Administration should be consulted regarding any planned foreign travel using federal funds before travel arrangements are made.

Please note the costs of obtaining a passport or other items necessary for foreign travel are considered a personal expense and will not be reimbursed by the University.

For international travel advisories, please check the Department of State website:
https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/traveladvisories/traveladvisories.html/

Lodging

Lodging costs are expected to be the least costly available, consistent with a reasonable level of comfort and convenience for the traveler. Employees must obtain itemized lodging receipts and submit the originals with the Travel Expense Report.

Travelers should be aware that hotel stays are exempt from room tax in New York State (and several other states). The Business Office will provide the necessary tax exemption certificate to the traveler, which must be presented to the hotel when paying for the room.

HOSPITALITY

Should the traveler decide to stay with colleagues, family, or friends in lieu of a hotel, the traveler may request reimbursement for gratuity expenses of a reasonable value (for example, a meal) offered to the hosts. These gratuities would be in place of meals and/or lodging for the accommodations provided by an acquaintance of the traveler. Please contact the Controller for specific details.

Air & Ground Transportation

AIR TRANSPORTATION

The class of air travel chosen is expected to be the least costly; generally, this is coach class or standard accommodations. Travel in any other class of service must be approved by the area VP/Dean. Air transportation is restricted to regularly scheduled commercial airlines.

The difference between coach and first class/business class travel, if any, is considered a personal expense and will not be reimbursed by the University. Travel insurance should not be purchased. Flight purchases should be completed by using a University issued credit card.

GROUND TRANSPORTATION

Rental Car: Rental cars are encouraged for trips over 100 miles and should be reserved at the time travel arrangements are known.

The University has a corporate agreement with Enterprise Rent-A-Car; as such, this agency should be used when making your travel arrangements. Use of other car rental firms is authorized when the cost is less than that of Enterprise or Enterprise does not have an agency in the city of travel. Rental cars must be returned to the rental company with the appropriate amount of fuel.

Motor Pool: if available, a motor pool vehicle may be reserved for trips under 100 miles. Motor pool reservations should be made at the time travel arrangements are known.

Personal Vehicle: Personal vehicles may be used and are reimbursable at the stated mileage reimbursement rate.

Taxi/Shuttle Service: Local taxi fares, train fares, UBERs and shuttles are reimbursable and may be the most cost effective once at your travel destination.

Use of rental cars at travel destinations is limited to circumstances where other transportation is either more expensive or impractical. When vehicle rental is necessary, the least costly type of rental vehicle (i.e., compact, or economy car) should be used when possible.

The difference between the cost of taxi travel and limousine travel (unless the business purpose renders it a necessity and the area VP/Dean approves the cost in advance) is considered a personal expense and will not be reimbursed by the University.

Parking tickets, fines for moving violations, vehicle towing charges, auto repairs and maintenance, and gasoline purchased for a personal vehicle are considered personal expenses and will not be reimbursed by the University.

MEALS & ENTERTAINMENT

Depending on the circumstances under which the expenses are incurred, charges for meals will be treated as either:

- Business entertainment expenses incurred while conducting business that includes an outside party, (these expenses should be charged to Meals & Entertainment); or
- Business travel expenses (these expenses should be charged to Travel)

BUSINESS ENTERTAINMENT:

Meals and functions are considered entertainment if they are intended to provide hospitality to non-University individuals, which is deemed necessary and customary in furthering the University's business interests. Entertainment expenses should be reasonable in relation to the nature of the function and the resulting business benefit.

Examples of business entertainment include:

- Receptions for University guests and visitors
- Alumni reunions or similar alumni functions
- Entertaining donors or prospective donors
- Welcoming receptions for parents and students
- Hosting prospective employers and employees
- Recruitment of prospective students

Required Documentation:

- Description of the business purpose clearly documented in the Travel Expense Report
- Name(s) of individual(s) being hosted
- Number in attendance
- All original, itemized receipts for entertainment must be attached

Since entertainment expenses are not allowable costs of federally sponsored grants and contracts, it is imperative that they be segregated in the appropriate account code.

BUSINESS TRAVEL:

The University will reimburse employee travelers for the reasonable cost of their own meals incurred during the time they are traveling overnight on University business. The University allows the use of either the receipt method or the flat rate method. One method must apply for the entire trip.

Reimbursement for alcoholic beverages will not be allowed unless one is entertaining a guest of the University and the necessity for doing so is approved by the area VP/Dean.

Receipt Method: Original, itemized receipts must be submitted as documentation for each business meal. The reasonableness of the reimbursement for meals will be determined by using the daily federal Per Diem Rate for the destination city (the Department of State rate for international travel).

Flat Rate Method: If a traveler does not choose to collect receipts, for all domestic travel, a flat rate of $50 per day may be used for meals. The first and last days of travel are reimbursed at $40 per day. For all international travel, the reimbursement rate is the per diem rate for the city of travel, as calculated in the University's travel/expense program.

Gratuity & Tips

The University will reimburse travelers for usual and customary tips. Generally, between 18-20% is an acceptable amount, depending on the type and level of service.

Auto Liability & Property Damage Insurance

Generally, insurance coverage for authorized business travel is provided through the University's insurance policy.

FOR RENTAL CARS USED ON UNIVERSITY BUSINESS:

Insurance coverage for University authorized car rentals reverts initially to the rental agency. Supplemental coverage is provided through the University's insurance policy, as such, it is not necessary to purchase extra coverage when entering into an agreement with the rental agency.

There is a deductible for physical damage which would be the responsibility of the traveler's department. Any accident involving a rental vehicle must be reported to both the car rental agency and the VP for Business & Finance for handling of claims and coordination of coverage.

Additional insurance purchased through the rental company is considered a personal expense and will not be reimbursed by the University.

FOR PERSONAL CARS USED ON UNIVERSITY BUSINESS:

Coverage carried by the owner is primary in the event of an accident. The traveler is responsible for any deductibles under the policy. If personal limits are exceeded supplemental coverage may be provided through the University's insurance policy. Physical damage insurance for personal autos used on University business is not provided. A minimum of $100,000/$300,000 liability and $50,000 no-fault insurance should be carried by an individual using his/her private automobile on University business.

Non-Employee Travel

Non-employees include but are not limited to; students, individuals who are prospective employees, and/or those traveling on behalf of Alfred University. All general policies pertaining to employee travel apply to non-employee travel, with the following notes:

Non-Employee, Non-Student Travel (Visiting Guests)

Visiting guests are not eligible to receive cash advances.

Departments/Supervisors of visiting guests may use their University issued credit card to purchase airfare or hotels for visiting guest travel. Upon doing so, these charges are included and reconciled by the employee in the University's travel/expense system. All itemized receipts must be obtained.

For all items not purchased on a University issued credit card, visiting guests should complete the paper "Non-Employee Travel Expense Report", within 10 days after their trip is complete. The form must include documentation of business purpose, itemized receipts, and appropriate approvals prior to being sent to the business office for processing.

Non-Employee, Student Travel

On occasion, students may travel individually or as a group and need funding for meals, entrance fees, hotels, airfare, etc.

Travel with Supervisor: If the supervisor is attending and the cost can be paid for in one lump sum (i.e.: event entrance for the group), the supervisor should complete a pre-approval in the University's travel/expense system and use their University issued card or obtain a funded card. Upon return, these transaction are reconciled on the Supervisors electronic expense report in the University's travel/expense system.

Travel without Supervisor: If a supervisor is not attending, the students should use the University's Contingency card for hotel, airfare, or lump sum day of event payments. The supervisor can complete a pre-approval in the University's travel/expense system and contact the Business Office to arrange student pick-up of the card. Upon return, these transaction are reconciled on the Supervisors electronic expense report in the University's travel/expense system.

Group Cash Advance: If the student group needs each student to have their own funds (ie: athletic meals), a group cash advance should be requested. To receive a group cash advance, the group supervisor must complete a check request form and submit to the business office for processing a minimum of 10 days prior to the trip. The check request must include the calculation to determine the total dollar amount needed; a roster of students; and appropriate approvals. For meals, this amount may not exceed the University determined per diem rate. Cash advances cannot exceed $300/student. Upon return, the supervisor must collect all receipts from the students and submit the receipts to the business office within 10 days. Group meals do not need receipts as they fall under the University per diem rate policy.

Please note, group travel funded by a grant *may* need all itemized receipts. Please work directly with the Office of Sponsored Research Administration to determine your grant specifics on student group travel.

Miscellaneous

SINGLE DAY TRAVEL

Traveling for a single day to conduct University business that includes entertainment of a guest is allowable and must follow Business Entertainment required documentation as noted in the "Meals & Entertainment" section of this travel policy.

Single day Business Travel (without a guest) must use the receipt method for meal reimbursement as noted in the "Meals & Entertainment" section of this travel policy. Single day business travel without receipts will be submitted to payroll to be included in an employee's W-2 as taxable wages.

PERSONAL BUSINESS CONDUCTED DURING BUSINESS TRAVEL PERIOD:

The University will not reimburse travelers for expenses which are inherently personal in nature. Expenses of a strictly personal nature, as well as any incremental travel costs incurred to conduct personal business during the course of a University business trip, are the responsibility of the traveler. For example, gas and mileage charges for out-of-the-way travel to visit friends or relatives are personal expenses. Such incremental expenses must be identified and deducted from the expense report.

Every effort should be made to avoid charging personal expenses to the University, despite the intention of the traveler to reimburse the University.

ACCOMPANYING FAMILY MEMBERS:

IRS guidelines require that any amounts paid by an employer for familial travel expenses be included in the employee's W-2 as taxable wages. To avoid a tax reportable situation, it is the University's policy that except on the infrequent occasions when attendance of a spouse at an event furthers the business interests of the University, expenses incurred for accompanying spouses are considered personal in nature and will not be reimbursable. Pre-authorization at the executive level is required for an exception, along with the stated business purpose.

FAQ's

MILEAGE CALCULATION:

Mileage should be calculated from Alfred University to the trip destination. If leaving from a location other than Alfred University (i.e.: your home) results in fewer miles, this should be the starting point for your mileage calculation. If the alternate location results in more miles, Alfred University should be your starting point.

Google Maps should be used to calculate mileage and a copy of the Google Maps calculation should be included with your expense report.

MEALS INCLUDED AS PART OF A CONFERENCE:

When using the Flat Rate Method of meal reimbursement, you must consider meals that are included as part of your conference fee. The total meal reimbursement should be decreased by the following amounts when a particular meal is included in your conference or event registration:

- Breakfast - $10
- Lunch - $15
- Dinner - $25