

## **Travel – Authorization & Reimbursement**

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Date last reviewed: **01/24/2020**

### **Background**

This document outlines the procedure to be followed by any individual traveling on behalf of Northwestern Connecticut Community College.

### **Travel Components**

1. **Travel Authorization Request Form (CO-112)**. An approved Travel Authorization Form is required for all out of state travel, foreign travel, in-state travel involving expenses greater than \$50/trip and any travel related p-card purchases. This form is to be completed and approved *prior* to any individual traveling on behalf of the College.
2. **Insurance Declaration Page** – Individuals authorized to travel on State business using their personal vehicle must submit to the Business Office, prior to reimbursement, a copy of the Declaration Page of their insurance policy which covers the vehicle to be used and the dates of travel. The Declaration Page must show the policy limits, the names of the insured, the effective date of the coverage, and must meet the minimum liability of insurance required by the State of Connecticut’s regulations governing the use of personally owned vehicles used for State business as published by DAS Fleet Operations (General Letter 115). Those minimums currently are:
  - Bodily Injury Liability: \$50,000 each person / \$100,000 each occurrence; Property Damage: \$5,000.
  - Alternatively, in lieu of the above, a combined \$105,000 minimum for bodily injury and property damage is acceptable.

Mileage reimbursements will be not processed without a copy of the Declaration Page. An insurance card is not acceptable as proof as it does not show minimum liabilities.

3. Completion of actual **Trip**.
4. Submission and approval of **Employee Reimbursement Form (CO-17XP-PR)**.

### **Planning Your Trip (Before you go!)**

1. **Travel Authorization Request Form (CO-112)** – complete the form.
2. **Supporting Documentation** - Copies of any relevant material that substantiate the travel expense should be attached to the travel authorization form. This may include: conference registration material, hotel, flight, etc. documentation. A brief narrative on what the purpose of the travel may be helpful should there not be sufficient descriptions on the conference/registration materials. Anticipated dates of travel should also be included. If the trip includes use of your personal car, a copy of your insurance policy Declaration Page should be included in your TA package.
3. **Secure required approvals** – obtain signatures on the Travel Authorization Request Form as follows:
  - **Traveler’s Signature** – By signing the travel authorization, the traveler is certifying that the travel is necessary to the business of the College, the estimated expenses are reasonable, proper and in compliance with travel policies and that no personal expenditures are included. The traveler is also recognizing that the amount of the reimbursement paid may be less than the

estimate shown on the Travel Authorization Form depending on actual expenses as verified by supporting documentation and the amount of funding approved.

- **Supervisor's Signature** – By signing the Travel Authorization Form, the supervisor is certifying that he/she is aware that the travel is necessary to the business of the College, the estimated expenses are reasonable and necessary and that arrangements have been made to cover the position requirements in the traveler's absence.
- **Budget Authority's Signature** – By signing the Travel Authorization Form, the budget authority is certifying that funds are available in the amount of the Travel Authorization. The budget authority is authorized and has the option of declining all or a portion of the submitted trip. To determine who the budget authority is for your trip refer to the chart below:
  - **College operating funded trip** – Your supervisor or Dean
  - **Grant funded trip** – The grant administrator. (Unless traveler is the grant administrator in which case the budget authority would be the supervising Dean.)
  - **Professional Development** – Your supervisor or Dean
  - **Student Senate Funded** – Student Senate Treasurer or designee or Director of Student Activities.
- **Business Office Signature** – It is the Business Office's responsibility to verify:
  - The Travel Authorization Form is complete
  - All required documentation is attached
  - The figures on the form are consistent with the backup documentation
  - The proper authorities have signed the Travel Authorization Form
  - The form is submitted in a timely fashion
  - The request is in compliance with the travel policies of the College

The Business Office has the authority to decline all or a portion of the submitted trip based on non-compliance with any of the above requirements.
- 4. **Travel Authorization Number** – Upon completion of final review and signature, the Business Office will assign a travel authorization number to the Form.
- 5. **Distribution & Notification** – A copy of the completed, signed and numbered form (top sheet only) shall be scanned to the traveler for notification that travel has been approved. Original form and all supporting documentation will be filed in the business office pending completion of the trip and submission of travel reimbursement.
- 6. **Booking** – All travel reservations and bookings are the responsibility of the traveler. If purchase orders or college credit cards are being used for payments, this information needs to be clearly indicated on the travel authorization form.
- 7. **Travel Authorization Revisions** – Revisions of Travel Authorizations are not necessary for inconsequential additions or deletions. Revisions are required if the total estimated cost of the trip exceeds 10% of the original travel authorization request cost. Revisions are subject to fund limitations and will not be processed if funds are not available to cover the increase. Revised Travel Authorizations require the same signatures as the original travel authorization request and should be clearly marked "**REVISED**" with the original TA number indicated.
- 8. **Travel Authorization Cancellation** – Cancellation of an approved Travel Authorization must be made in writing by email to the Business Office. Any non-cancellable costs of the trip will be the personal responsibility of the traveler unless

the reason for the cancellation is approved by the traveler's supervising Dean or Associate Dean. ***It is the traveler's responsibility to ensure that all reservations have been cancelled.***

**Preparing Your Reimbursement (When you return!)**

1. **Employee Reimbursement Form (CO-17XP-PR)** - Travelers should submit a Travel Reimbursement Form with all applicable original receipts within 30 days of completion of the trip.
  - No claims may be filed for reimbursement until the trip is complete.
  - Travelers must submit their original tickets, receipts and itinerary and all receipts must show proof of payment.
  - Proof of registration fee payment may include:
    - A paid receipt
    - A copy of both sides of a cancelled check
    - A print out of a web banking statement that indicates payee and amount
  - Altered receipts will not be reimbursed.
  - All bank account statements should have account numbers or credit card numbers redacted for personal protection.
  - Expenses for non-business-related personal expenses such as entertainment, toiletries and alcohol are not reimbursable and should not be included.
  - Reimbursement is made for actual expenses only and may differ from the estimated costs on the Travel Authorization Form.
2. **Professional Development Funded Reimbursements** – Professional Development will be paid out on a first come / first served basis upon completion of trip and submission of all required documentation.

**Note:** For in-state travel which is for mileage only, or other expenses less than \$50/trip, a Travel Authorization Form is not required. A Travel Reimbursement Form with a copy of the traveler's insurance declaration page is sufficient for reimbursement.

**Mileage**

**Determination of Mileage** - For all travel, mileage from point-to-point will be determined through the use of MapQuest, Google Maps, or equivalent website. A copy of the mileage chart start to finish should be printed and attached to the Travel Reimbursement Request Form. All mileage reimbursements should be submitted "Less normal commute mileage" unless the employee left from the campus and returned to the campus after the travel. In that case, the full trip mileage should be submitted.

**Rate of Reimbursement** – The College follows the Comptroller's memorandum for mileage reimbursement. The rate is currently **57.5** cents per mile and is subject to change.

**Parking Fees & Tolls** – Reimbursable with a receipt.

**Road Service, Towage, Damage, etc.** – Not reimbursable.

**Limits** – Mileage and Rail reimbursements cannot exceed the lowest available airfare from Bradley to the same destination. If traveler chooses to drive and the mileage reimbursement exceeds the lowest available airfare, the reimbursement will be for no more than the airfare cost.

**Airfare / Rail**

**Booking** - All airline and rail service may be booked through any available outlet. When booking through an online booking agent, a cost breakdown of all charges should be printed and included with the travel reimbursement package.

**Upgrades** - Any difference in cost for class upgrades will be the expense of the traveler. All travel should be booked using the lowest available commercial airfare unless an upgrade has been authorized by the College President. If approved the following requirements apply:

- Business class rather than first class must be used whenever possible
- First class is only to be used when business class is not available
- Total flight time (actual time in the air) must be a total of 6 or more hours.
- A copy of the flight itinerary must be attached to the Travel Authorization in order to verify flight time.

**Changes** - A traveler may be reimbursed for the actual and necessary expense incurred for changing flight plans, subject to the approval of their supervising Dean or Associate Dean. It is the responsibility of the traveler to substantiate that the charges were necessary and proper and to obtain the approval. Any additional charge for changing flight plans due to personal reasons or for the convenience of the traveler shall be the responsibility of the traveler.

**Flight Insurance & Extras** - Any additional flight insurance or in-flight extras purchased by the traveler are not reimbursable.

**Baggage Fees** - Baggage Fees will be reimbursed for 1 piece of checked baggage each way. Excess weight charges will not be reimbursed. **Receipts are required for all baggage fees.**

**Car Rental**

**Car Rental Requests** - The request to rent a vehicle must be justified in writing and will be considered if public transportation is unavailable or if automobile rental results in a cost savings, which must be documented by the traveler and included as part of the travel authorization. If a traveler is staying at the conference location rental vehicles will not be allowed.

**State contract** -should be used to rent a vehicle for use on state business. If the state contract is used, for passenger cars and mini-vans, third part liability and property damage liability insurance are included in the rental rates, and therefore any additional insurance purchased by the employee will not be reimbursed. If the state contract is not used, collision and personal accident insurance offered by the rental company must be purchased by the employee, and will be reimbursed as a regular travel expense.

**Penalties, etc.** - The College will not pay for penalties, fines, fees, fuel service, fuel surcharges, or extra cost options.

**Receipts** - Travelers must submit a copy of the car rental agreement along with gasoline receipts and mileage in/out receipts, when completing the Travel Reimbursement Form. Credit card receipts are not sufficient documentation.

**Other Transportation**

**Taxis, shuttles, etc.** - Reasonable use of taxis, airport shuttles and similar transport to and from the airport or common carrier terminal and the conference site will be reimbursed at cost if included on the Travel Authorization Form. The lowest cost option should be chosen.

- a. Cost of taxis to and from places of lodging to take meals or participate in non-conference related events, is part of the incidental expenses component of the meal per diem and is not a reimbursable expense.

## **Lodging**

A traveler is normally not entitled to lodging when travel distance is less than 75 miles one way. Exception to this policy will be at the discretion of the President of the College after reviewing and approving the justification provided by the traveler.

**Lodging Costs** - Lodging costs may be reimbursed at the single room rate up to the actual amount incurred by the traveler. The traveler should make every effort to secure the lowest cost lodging possible. *In the case of a conference, the College may allow the employee to stay at the conference hotel instead of seeking the lowest rate available.* All claims for lodging, with or without meals, must be supported by:

1. An original itemized receipt showing a zero balance or
2. All receipts must be itemized showing the dates, room rate and applicable taxes, a zero balance and the traveler's name. If a zero balance is not shown, the credit card statement with the traveler's name, along with the original lodging receipt will be acceptable proof of payment. A confirmation is not proof of payment and a credit card statement along does not satisfy the receipt requirement.
3. Under no circumstances will lodging be paid for a guest or spouse unless they are also traveling for the College. If an employee stays with friends or relatives while on official state business, no reimbursement for lodging is allowed, whether or not payment is made to the friend or relative.

## **Meal Reimbursement and Incidental Expenses**

**One-day seminars/workshops/conferences** – No meal reimbursement will be allowed unless it is included in the registration fee, or, if charged separately, the meal is considered a formal part of the conference.

**Overnight seminars/workshops/conferences** – When the registration fee for a conference includes a meal(s), it must be noted on the Travel Authorization and the daily subsistence allowance must be reduced accordingly. Exception will be made for the following:

1. Continental Breakfast – when only a continental breakfast is served, reimbursement for breakfast will be provided.
2. Reception – If there is only a reception provided in the evening, reimbursement for dinner will be provided.

**Methods of M&IE Reimbursement** - Meals and incidentals can be claimed by two methods. Only **one** method of reimbursement is allowed per trip! The methods are:

1. **Per Diem Method – Preferred -No receipts required!**

Reimbursement for meals and incidentals will be based on current General Service Administration (GSA) rate. To obtain the most up to date Meals and Incidental Expense (M&IE) Allowance please refer to [www.gsa.gov](http://www.gsa.gov). Eligibility for meal allowance reimbursement is determined by the following schedule:

- More than 12 but less than 24 hours = 75% of the applicable M&IE rate.
- Day of departure and Day of return = 75% of the applicable M&IE rate.
- More than 24 hours = 100% of the applicable M&IE rate.

***M&IE rates include: tax, gratuities, fees, tips, laundry, cleaning, pressing of clothing, transportation between lodging and meals. These items should not be submitted as additional expenses for reimbursement.***

## **2. Actual Expense Method – Not preferred**

Reimbursement for meals and incidentals will be based on actual receipts submitted for reimbursement. No expenses will be reimbursed without an itemized receipt.

- Actual Meal expenses reimbursed are only non-reportable up to the per diem rate. If the actual meal expense reimbursed exceed the per diem and the difference will be considered reportable wages and are subject to withholding and employment taxes.
- Meal expenses submitted without clear detailed receipts will be denied.
- Meal expenses submitted including alcohol, cover charges, or other non-reimbursable expenses will be denied.
- All receipts need to be dated, itemized and indicate paid in full.
- Receipts need to be taped to an 8 ½ x 11 sheet of copy paper for ease of copying and filing.
- All receipts must be original

## **Travel Days**

For non-foreign out of state travel, reimbursement of expenses is allowed for one travel day preceding a conference and one travel day following the conference. No reimbursements will be made for any additional days preceding or following beyond the one day.

Travel must be by the most direct route possible and any employee traveling by an indirect route must assume any additional expenses incurred.

## **Telephone, Internet, Computer and Facsimile Charges**

Charges for telephone, internet, computer and facsimile usage are reimbursable expenses. Travelers must provide an original receipt with a zero balance for these reimbursements.

**Parking** -Parking charges for airports are reimbursable. Proof of payment is required.

## **Conference and Registration Fees**

Supporting documentation must be provided showing the conference and registration fees.

Travelers have the option to request that a conference or registration fee be pre-paid by the College. To request this payment, travelers must indicate on the Travel Authorization Form that they are requesting a pre-payment and submit the materials two weeks prior to the conference or registration due date. **A completed registration form must be attached.** In

addition, a completed W-9 for the vendor must be included with their correct name, address and FEIN.

### **Travel Expenses for Students**

Students may be reimbursed for their expenses while traveling on behalf of the College, performing services for the College, or representing the College.

Students may travel in-state or out-of-state under the same regulations and procedures as a College employee. An approved Travel Authorization Form is required as well as a Travel Reimbursement Form upon completion of the trip. ***All the same travel policies apply.*** If the student is not on the College payroll at the time of travel, a W9 form will be required with the submission of the Travel Reimbursement Form.

### **Refreshment Policy**

**Recruiting** - Expenses of luncheon or dinner meetings held in connection with College business or with the entertaining of guests visiting the College are allowable. Expenses are limited to the cost of food only - no alcohol is permitted. Luncheon expenses of staff members are usually a personal responsibility; however, reimbursement of noontday meals of employees may be allowed when:

- A member of a search committee hosts a candidate for a position
- A department member hosts a visiting lecturer, potential donor, or other official guest to the College
  - The reimbursable amount of the luncheon expense shall be limited to \$50/person. No alcohol allowed.
  - Prior authorization by department Dean must be obtained in writing and attached to the Travel Reimbursement Request.
  - A potential donor is defined as a person other than a CSUS or System Office employee.

### **Records**

**Forms** - All Travel Authorization Forms and Travel Reimbursement Forms must be typed or neatly hand written. Any illegible or incomplete forms will be returned unprocessed.

**Receipts** - All receipts must be taped to an 8 ½ x 11 sheet of white copy paper for ease of filing and copying. Receipts not submitted in this fashion will be returned unprocessed.

**Packaging** - All receipts and supporting documentation must be stapled or clasped firmly to the applicable forms upon submission. Forms submitted without proper documentation or documentation submitted without the corresponding form will be returned unprocessed.