

4.0 Travel

Introduction

In cooperation with regulations promulgated by the State Accounting Office (SAO), the Office of Planning and Budget (OPB) and the Board of Regents (BoR), Georgia Perimeter College has adopted the following regulations regarding travel of employees on official business of the College. It is believed that these travel practices will protect the best interests of the employee and Georgia Perimeter College.

While institutions of the University System shall be guided by general travel regulations set forth in the [Business Procedures Manual](#), these policies and procedures incorporate more specific regulations and limitations particular to the employees of Georgia Perimeter College.

Topics in this section include:

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Links:

State Accounting Office of Georgia, Statewide Accounting Policy & Procedure, Travel
http://sao.georgia.gov/sites/sao.georgia.gov/files/related_files/site_page/State%20of%20Georgia%20Travel%20and%20Expense%20Policy.pdf

University System of Georgia Business Procedures Manual, Section 4 Travel
[Business Procedures Manual](#)

Authorization for Travel

General Provisions

Subject to the provisions outlined in these travel regulations, the State Accounting Office and the Office of Planning and Budget have authorized travel reimbursement for the following expenses:

- Meals associated with overnight lodging and in certain circumstances where there is no overnight lodging;
- Lodging expenses;
- Mileage for use of personal vehicle;
- Transportation expenses; and
- Certain miscellaneous expenses associated with travel, including parking and toll fees.

The specific policies regarding the reimbursement of travel expenses, as well as expense limits and required documentation are outlined in the following sections.

Exceptions to Travel Regulations

Situations may arise in the course of performing job duties that require employees to incur travel expenses that are generally not reimbursable. The State Accounting Office and the Office of Planning and Budget are authorized to grant one-time exceptions for unusual circumstances.

Employee Authorization for Travel

Each employee required to travel in the performance of official duties and entitled to reimbursement for expenses incurred shall have prior authorization for the performance of travel. Approval may be in the form of a standing authorization in the case of individuals required to travel locally on a regular or continuous basis or specific authorization for in-state and out-of-state trips.

A specific authorization is required for each trip with the exception of local travel. Local travel will be defined as day-to-day trips within the metropolitan Atlanta area that do not require registration fees and is approved on a fiscal year basis. A specific travel authorization for local travel will be necessary when registration fees are required.

Specific authorization shall be in such form as to indicate the itinerary, estimate of the cost of travel, mode of transportation, and the general purpose of travel. Prior approval attests to the necessity of the travel and ensures that arrangements are reasonable in nature and amount.

The Prior Approval for Travel Authorization (Prior Approval) must be completed by the employee, signed and approved by the immediate supervisor, and submitted for final approval from the area dean or director. The approval by the dean or director certifies the availability of funding. Any out of country travel must be approved by the area Vice President and the President of the college.

In approving an employee authorization for travel, the approver is certifying:

- The availability of funds budgeted in the appropriate accounts;
- The official business purpose of the travel;
- A reasonable cost estimate;
- Compliance with GPC travel regulations for authorizations; and,
- Submission of complete and accurate documentation

Required supporting documentation includes but is not limited to:

- Proposed Flight Itinerary
- Conference, workshop, seminar agenda
- Conference, workshop, seminar registration form
- Hotel Rate Information

Prior approval attests to the purpose of the travel and ensures that arrangements are reasonable in nature and amount.

Student Authorization for Travel

Each student required to travel on behalf of Georgia Perimeter College shall have written prior authorization. Approval may be in the form of a standing authorization in the case of students required to travel locally on a regular or continuous basis or specific authorization for in-state and out-of-state trips. This documentation is necessary for insurance purposes.

Per Diem Allowance for Meals

General

Meals and certain incidental travel expenses are reimbursable on a per diem basis (not actual expenses) for overnight official business travel outside the traveler's home campus. Per diem expenses do not require receipts.

In-state travel per diem rates only include the cost of meal expenses and not incidental expenses. Incidental expenses include: fees and tips to porters, baggage carriers, bellhops, hotel housekeeping, stewards or stewardesses, and hotel staff, transportation between places of lodging or business and restaurants, and mailing costs associated with filing expense reports and reimbursements. Incidental expenses may be reimbursed separately as they are excluded from the in-state per diem rate.

Out-of-state per diem rates follow the federal per diem rates. The federal rates include both the cost of meals and incidental expenses. Accordingly, for out-of-state travel, incidental expenses are not reimbursable separately as they are included in the per diem rate.

Per Diem Allowance for Meals Associated with Overnight Travel Within Georgia (General Rules)

Employees traveling overnight may be paid a per diem amount designed to cover the cost of meals (including taxes and tips), based on the number of meals per day for which the employee is eligible.

- Employees will no longer be reimbursed at a 100% per diem for the first and last day of travel.
- For overnight trips, travelers will receive 75% of allowable per diem on day of departure and return.
- For non-overnight or single day trips, travelers will receive 75% of the allowable per diem if travel is more than 50 miles from home and equal to or greater than 12 hours.

Example:

- On the first day of travel, an employee has meals that consist of breakfast/lunch/dinner. The per diem allowance will be $(\$28.00 \times 75\%) = \21.00
- For trips involving multiple travel destinations, base the reduction on the per diem in effect for where the night was spent as follows:
 - Departure Day: Where you spend the night.
 - Return Day: Where you spent the night before returning to your Residence or Primary Work Station.
- When meals are provided at no cost in conjunction with travel events on a travel departure or return day, the full meals per diem reimbursement rate is reduced by the full amount of the appropriate meals after the 75% proration. For example, if the per diem allows a \$28 total reimbursement, and lunch was provided at no cost on a travel departure or return day, the total allowable reimbursement for that day would be \$14 $[(\$28 \times .75) - \$7 \text{ lunch} = \$14]$.

Required Documentation of Per Diem (Meal) Expenses

Per Diem (meal) expenses do not require receipts.

- Times of departure (for the day of departure) and return (for the day of return) should be noted on the employee's Travel Expense Statement to substantiate meals eligible for payment of per diem.
- All meals included as a part of conference registration fees should be noted on the travel form.
- Per Diem (meal) expenses incurred that exceed the authorized per diem amounts due to travel in high-cost areas or out-of-state should be itemized separately and explained on the Travel Expense Statement, and are eligible for reimbursement as determined by the approving official.
- Individuals responsible for approving travel expenses should review these explanations to determine whether the higher meal costs are justified and allowable.

The standard In-State per diem rates are as follows:

Eligible Meals	Per Diem Amount
Breakfast	\$ 6.00
Lunch	\$ 7.00
Dinner	\$ 15.00

Note 1: Employees may only receive per diem for meals occurring while officially on travel status.

Meals included in Conference Registrations

If any meal is included as a part of the cost of a conference registration, such meal(s) should not be considered eligible in the calculation of per diem and an employee may not receive per diem for the normally eligible number of meals. For example, if conference registration includes breakfast and lunch, the employee will only receive per diem for the dinner meal (\$15; \$20 for high cost areas). Because most conferences accommodate a variety of dietary needs/restrictions, employees are expected to participate in such meals.

In rare circumstances, an employee may be unable to participate in a conference meal. In such a case, the employee may request the per diem amount associated with the meal purchased. If requesting such reimbursement, a receipt documenting the meal purchase must be attached to the travel expense statement, and a justification for the meal purchase must be indicated on the statement.

Per Diem Allowance for Meals Associated with Overnight Travel within High-Cost Areas in Georgia

Employees are considered to be traveling in high-cost areas of Georgia when their official responsibilities must be performed at a location designated as a high-cost area. The high cost areas in Georgia are limited to the following counties: *Chatham, Cobb, DeKalb, Fulton, Glynn and Richmond counties.*

The In-State high cost rates are as follows:

Eligible Meals	Per Diem Amount
Breakfast	\$ 7.00
Lunch	\$ 9.00
Dinner	\$ 20.00

***Note 1:** Employees who are not both working and spending the night in lodging in a designated high-cost area are subject to the general meal limits.*

Per Diem Allowance for Meals Associated with Overnight Travel Outside Georgia

Employees are considered traveling outside Georgia when their official responsibilities must be performed at an out-of-state location.

***Note:** Employees who are working in Georgia but lodging in another state are not traveling outside Georgia. Travel to points just beyond the state border necessary for the accomplishment of in-state business shall not be construed as out-of-state travel for the purpose of these regulations.*

The federal per diem rates and meal amounts applicable to travel outside of Georgia can be found at: *

- Federal per diem rates for locations within the continental United States: <http://www.gsa.gov/perdiem>
- Breakdown by meal for federal per diem amounts: <http://www.gsa.gov/mie>
- Federal per diem rates for foreign travel: http://aoprals.state.gov/web920/per_diem.asp
- Breakdown by meal for foreign per diem amounts: http://aoprals.state.gov/content.asp?content_id=114&menu_id=81
- Federal per diem rates for Alaska, Hawaii, and US territories and possessions: <http://www.defensetravel.dod.mil/site/perdiemCalc.cfm>

Per Diem Allowance for Meals Not Associated with Overnight Travel

Employees traveling for their job who do not stay overnight may be reimbursed for meal expenses under the following situations.

1. Employees acting as an official representative for their department may receive per diem for meals that are an integral part of a scheduled, official meeting. Per diem is only authorized, however, if the meeting is with persons outside the employee's department and if the meeting continues during the meal. Employees are not authorized to receive this per diem if they leave the premises of the meeting site.
2. Employees may be reimbursed for noon meals that are part of a required registration fee that is paid by the employee.
3. Employees on state business who travel more than fifty (50) miles from home or home campus on a work assignment, and are away for more than twelve (12) hours, may receive 75% of the total day's per diem rate, even when there is no overnight lodging.

Employees who are reimbursed for any of these circumstances are still expected to remain within the authorized meal limits

Meal Expenses Incurred While Taking Leave

Employees who take annual leave while on travel status may not be reimbursed for meal expenses incurred during the period of leave.

Meetings

Luncheon or dinner meetings sponsored by the State will be paid under contract; therefore, no claims for such expenses may be presented on the travel expense statement.

Employees on official business attending luncheon or dinner meetings, not sponsored by the State, are entitled to receive reimbursement for actual costs incurred, provided that:

- The luncheon or dinner meeting is planned in advance and includes persons not employed by the State.
- The meal is an integral part of the meeting.
- The meal is served at the same establishment that hosts the meeting.
- The purpose of the meeting is to discuss business and the nature of the business is stated on the travel expense statement.

Employee Group Meals

Under certain infrequent circumstances, employees may be required to remain at the work site during mealtime. Such circumstances include emergency situations, but may also include intra-departmental meetings or training sessions, where the meeting or training session extends beyond the meal times and the employees are not permitted to leave the premises of the meeting site.

Under these and similar circumstances, the college may purchase meals for the affected employees. Purchase of such meals should be approved by a higher level approving authority prior to the date of the event (for non-emergency situations). Such expenditures are limited to the purchase of meals and necessary beverages only (this does not include snacks). Meal limits outlined in the GPC Travel Policy and Procedures must be adhered to. Meal expenses associated with meetings/training sessions must be documented by a copy of the formal written agenda. In all instances, the traveler for whom meals were purchased must be included in a list of attendees.

Employee Group Meals will be subject to special audit scrutiny, to ensure that such expenditures are infrequent, rather than routine.

Non-Employee Group Meals

Meals may be provided to individuals who are not employed by the college under the following circumstances (**all** criteria must be met):

- Such individuals are serving in an advisory capacity or providing pro bono service to a State organization.
- A meal is required because the timing of the meeting/service is such to allow for adequate travel time to the meeting site in the morning, and return to residence in the afternoon, so as to avoid unnecessary travel expenses (overnight stay) on the part of the participants.
- The meal is approved by a higher level approving authority prior to the date of the event. Such expenditures are limited to the purchase of meals and necessary beverages only (this does not include snacks), and meal limits outlined in the GPC Travel Policies and Procedures must be adhered to.

A copy of the meeting agenda or description of the service activity (with appropriate approval) should be included as backup documentation and attached as a receipt. Additionally, a general description and the total number of people that will be attending the activity (e.g., advisory board members, local government leaders, etc.) should be attached.

Non-Employee Group Meals will be subject to special audit scrutiny, to ensure that such expenditures are infrequent, rather than routine. This policy does not allow the purchase of meals for a “lunch meeting” in which the meal and the meeting are one in the same. See the “Meetings” section above.

Lodging Expenses

General Provisions

Employees who travel more than fifty (50) miles (and outside the county) of their home campuses or places of residence may be reimbursed for lodging expenses associated with overnight travel.

Employees will be reimbursed for the actual lodging expenses, provided the expenses are reasonable.

Employee Responsibilities

Employees traveling overnight are responsible for ensuring the most reasonable lodging rates are obtained. To accomplish this, employees should:

- Make reservations in advance, whenever practical,
- Utilize minimum rate accommodations,
- Avoid the “deluxe” hotels and motels, and
- Obtain corporate/government rates, whenever possible.

Many hotels grant commercial rates upon request to state employees who show identification. These rates may be exceeded, but must be justified, if an employee stays at a higher cost hotel where a meeting is held in order to avoid excessive transportation costs between a lower cost hotel and the location of the meeting, or for the safety of the individual.

Cancellation

Travelers should not book non-refundable rates or rates that require a deposit unless required by conference lodging. It is the traveler’s responsibility to understand the cancellation rules of the room confirmed. No-show charges and penalties will not be reimbursed when the traveler does not cancel reservations within the allotted time. Non-refundable rates cannot be changed or cancelled; therefore, the traveler is accepting the risk of a non-reimbursable cancellation fee.

In a case where all efforts have been taken, and a fee is still charged, an explanation must be provided when submitting the traveler’s expense report in order for the fee to be reimbursed.

Reimbursement of Lodging Expenses for Overnight Travel Outside Georgia

Employees traveling out-of-state should refer to the federal per diem rates to identify high-cost areas of the United States, and to determine whether higher expenses are “reasonable and customary.” The federal per diem rates can be found as follows:

- Federal per diem rates for locations within the continental United States: <http://www.gsa.gov/perdiem>
- Breakdown by meal for federal per diem amounts: <http://www.gsa.gov/mie>
- Federal per diem rates for Alaska, Hawaii, and US territories and possessions: <http://www.defensetravel.dod.mil/perdiem/perdiemrates.html>

Note: The rates published by the federal government should only be used as a guide to determine whether an expense is “reasonable and customary.”

Lodging Associated with a Meeting or Seminar

Employees who stay at a hotel that is holding a scheduled meeting or seminar may incur lodging expenses that exceed the rates generally considered reasonable. The higher cost may be justified in order to avoid excessive transportation costs between a lower cost hotel and the location of the meeting.

Authorization for Lodging within the 50 Mile Radius

On occasion, institutions are required to sponsor conferences, trade shows, and other functions which require personnel to work at the event. In many cases, the persons planning and coordinating the event may reside or work less than 50 miles from the scheduled meeting site.

The Dean or Director must approve overnight travel for such persons who are coordinating institution-sponsored events. In addition to lodging, affected employees may be reimbursed for meals and mileage in accordance with the provisions of the Travel Regulations.

The following information is required for approval:

- Name of the employee,
- Date and purpose of the event,
- Responsibilities at the event; and,
- The approval of the Dean or Director

Authorization for such travel must be completed in advance of the scheduled event. The Dean or Director is responsible for providing the information noted above to the college Controller in Accounting Services. The Controller will retain approved authorizations in a central file on an annual basis.

It should be noted that this provision only applies to conference and other institution-sponsored events that occur. This provision does not authorize persons to claim travel reimbursement for activities which are part of their normal responsibilities. In addition, this provision would not apply for persons who are required to attend evening meetings as part of their normal responsibilities.

Shared Lodging

When a room is shared with other college employees on travel status, reimbursement will be calculated, if practical, on a prorated share of the total cost. However, when a prorated share of lodging cost is claimed, the expense statement must show the name or names of the employees with whom the room is shared. The simplest method would be for each employee to ask for a separate bill for his or her share of the room cost.

An individual on travel status accompanied by husband, wife, or other individual who is not an employee on travel status will only be entitled to reimbursement at the single room rate.

Taxes Associated with Lodging Expenses

Employees should review hotel/motel receipts to ensure that taxes have been applied correctly to their lodging expenses, in accordance with the state tax laws and regulations. Employees should attempt to resolve any problems with the billing prior to checkout.

Lodging Paid Directly by Employees

If lodging is paid directly by the employee by personal credit card, personal check, or cash, state and local government officials and employees traveling within the state on official business are *exempt* from paying the *county or municipal excise tax* on lodging (“hotel/motel” or “occupancy” tax) pursuant to OCGA 48-13-51. Employees *are required* to pay any state/local sales and use taxes. The exemption when paying by personal credit card, check or cash *only* applies to the hotel/motel tax.

This exemption does not apply to employees staying at an out-of-state hotel/motel.

Employees should provide proper identification to document their employment as a state or local government employee when they check in at the hotel/motel. Employees should also submit a copy of the hotel/motel tax-exemption form when they register. The form is available on the Travel website.

If the hotel refuses to accept the hotel/motel tax-exemption form at check-in, the employee should attempt to resolve the issue with hotel management before checking out at the end of their stay. Employees should also review hotel/motel receipts prior to leaving the premises to ensure that taxes have been applied correctly to their lodging expenses in accordance with the state tax laws and regulations and resolve any potential problems and overcharges.

If the matter is not resolved by the time the employee checks out, the employee should pay the tax. The employee should explain the payment of the tax as an unusual expense on their travel statement. Institutions are authorized to reimburse employees for the hotel/motel tax if the employee provides the institution with the following information:

- Employee name;
- Date(s) of lodging;
- Name, address, telephone number of hotel; and,
- Documentation from the hotel/motel of their refusal to omit the tax.

Institutions should forward this information to the SAO by email to: SAO_Reporting@sao.ga.gov , or by regular mail to: 200 Piedmont Avenue, Suite 1604 West Tower, Atlanta, GA 30334.

Lodging Paid Directly by the College

If lodging is paid directly by the college via the accounts payable process, the hotel/motel should not collect any taxes associated with the lodging expenses. A hotel quote and the Travel Authorization must be submitted to Accounts Payable for prepayment. A copy of the State tax exemption form should be provided to the hotel when the check is presented.

Resort and Other Fees

Some hotels include a charge for “resort” or other fees. These are not tax-exempt fees, and should be reimbursed as an eligible lodging expense.

Internet Usage Charges

Employees may be reimbursed for work-related Internet usage charges. These charges should be separately identified on the itemized hotel/motel bill, but should *not* be listed on the travel expense statement as “lodging.” Rather, these charges should be treated as Miscellaneous Travel Expenses on the travel expense statement.

Lodging Expenses Incurred While Taking Leave

Employees who take annual leave while on travel status may not be reimbursed for lodging expenses incurred during the period of leave.

Required Documentation of Lodging Expenses

Daily lodging expenses, including applicable taxes, must be itemized on the employee travel expense statement. Employees requesting reimbursement for lodging expenses are required to submit receipts with their expense statement. The employee should verify that their hotel receipt shows a zero balance, indicating the lodging charge was paid. Individuals responsible for approving travel expenses should review any explanations presented for higher costs to determine if they are justified and allowable.

Georgia's "Green Hotels" Program

The Georgia Department of Natural Resources has developed a program to identify and certify lodging properties that are taking significant steps to reduce their demands on Georgia's natural resources and to act as good corporate citizens. These certified "Green Hotels" meet a stringent standard for environmental stewardship and operational efficiency. By using less toxic cleaning and maintenance chemicals, these hotels provide healthier conditions for guests and employees.

When traveling on state business and hosting meetings, state employees are encouraged to explore opportunities to support these properties where cost-competitive. The current list of certified properties is available at the following Internet address: <http://www.greenseal.org/FindGreenSealProductsandServices/HotelsandLodgingProperties.aspx>

Travel by State-Owned or Personal Vehicles

General Provisions

Employees are encouraged to utilize college-owned vehicles, if available, for travel within the state of Georgia, and when appropriate for travel outside the state. However, if college-owned vehicles are not available, employees may use personal vehicles. Institutions may reimburse employees for the mileage incurred during the employee's business use of a personal vehicle.

The mileage reimbursement encompasses all expenses associated with the operation of a personal motor vehicle, with the exception of tolls and parking expenses, which are reimbursed separately. Fuel costs are included in the per-mile reimbursement rate.

Use of College-Owned Vehicles

Employees traveling in college-owned vehicles (from the college motor pool) should purchase fuel using the state contracted fuel program credit card at fuel program network fuel stations.

Use of Personal Motor Vehicles

The following rates should be used for mileage reimbursement for personal vehicles.

Note: Mileage rates are changed only upon notification from the State Accounting Office/Office of Planning and Budget via revisions to this policy; new rates should not be applied based solely on GSA updates.

For **travel on or after January 1, 2013**, reimbursement rates for the business use of personal motor vehicles are as follows:

https://sao.georgia.gov/sites/sao.georgia.gov/files/related_files/press_release/Communication%20Mileage%20Rate%20Jan%202013.pdf

1. **Tier 1 Rate.** When it is determined that a personal motor vehicle is the most advantageous form of travel, the employee will be reimbursed for business miles traveled as follows:
 - Automobile: \$0.565 per mile
 - Motorcycle: \$0.535 per mile
 - Aircraft: \$1.33 per mile

2. **Tier 2 Rate.** If a government-owned (institution-owned) vehicle is available, and its use is determined to be most advantageous to the state, **OR** if it is determined that a rental vehicle (state rental contract) is the recommended method of travel, but a personal motor vehicle is used, the employee will be reimbursed for business miles traveled at the rate of \$0.24 per mile.

Any reimbursement of mileage claims paid to an employee in excess of rates stipulated in this policy must be refunded to the State or characterized as taxable compensation to the employee.

Determination of Business Miles Traveled

Employees may be reimbursed for the mileage incurred from the point of departure to the travel destination, as noted below.

1. If an employee departs from home campus, mileage is calculated from home campus to the destination point.
2. If an employee departs from his/her place of residence, mileage is calculated from the place of residence to the destination point, **with a reduction** for normal one-way commuting miles. For the return trip, if an employee returns to the home campus, mileage is calculated based on the distance to such home campus.
3. If an employee returns to his/her residence, mileage is calculated based on the distance to the residence, **with a reduction** for normal one-way commuting miles.

The initial point of departure during an employee's normal workweek shall be the place of residence or home campus, whichever is nearer the destination point. The initial point of departure on weekends or holidays, however, should be the individual's actual point of departure. Employees should attempt to travel together when appropriate.

Exceptions include:

1. If travel occurs on a weekend or holiday outside of the normal work schedule, mileage is calculated from the point of departure with **no** reduction for normal commuting miles.
2. If an employee utilizes state-sponsored transportation alternatives (e.g. MARTA), for which payments have been made for the period of time the employee is on travel status, the "normal commuting mileage" should be calculated as the mileage from the employee's residence to the boarding site of the alternative transportation method.

3. If an employee does not regularly travel to an office (home campus) outside of his/her place of residence (i.e., residence is “home campus”), the requirement to deduct normal commuting miles does not apply.

*Note: This exception **does not apply** to those operating under the institution’s [telework policy](#).*

Employees may also be reimbursed for business miles traveled as follows:

- Miles traveled to pick up additional passengers
- Miles traveled to obtain meals for which employee is eligible for reimbursement; and,
- Miles traveled to multiple work sites

Examples to clarify mileage rules:

1. **Home Campus to Remote Site.** An employee’s normal commute is 15 miles, one way. The employee is required to travel to job site 40 miles from home campus. Employee drives to home campus, then to remote site, then back to home campus before returning home. Employee business miles traveled: 80 miles.
 - From Home Campus to Remote Site: 40 miles
 - From Remote Site to Home Campus: 40 miles
 - Total Business Miles: 80 miles
2. **Residence to Home Campus to Remote Site.** An employee’s normal commute is 15 miles, one way. The employee is required to travel to job site 18 miles from home campus. The employee drives to home campus, then to the remote site, then home, which is 19 miles from remote site. Employee business miles traveled: 22 miles.
 - From Home Campus to Remote Site: 18 miles
 - From Remote Site to Residence: 19 miles
 - Less Residence to Home Campus: -15 miles
 - Total Business Miles: 22 miles
3. **Residence to Remote Site.** An employee’s normal commute is 15 miles, one way. The employee leaves from home to attend a conference 200 miles from the employee’s residence. At the conclusion of the conference, the employee returns directly home. Employee business miles traveled: 370 miles.
 - From Residence to Remote Site: 200 miles
 - Less Residence to Home Campus: -15 miles
 - From Remote Site to Residence: 200 miles
 - Less Residence to Home Campus: -15 miles
 - Total Business Miles: 370 miles
4. **Home Campus to Remote Site with Lodging.** An employee’s normal commute is 15 miles, one way. The employee leaves from home campus on Monday for a remote work site 150 miles from home campus. The employee acquires lodging 5 miles from remote work site, and then returns to home campus on Friday. Employee business miles traveled: 340 miles.
 - From Home Campus to Remote Site: 150 miles
 - From Remote Site to Lodging – Mon: 5 miles
 - Lodging/Remote Site Round Trip – Tues: 10 miles
 - Lodging/Remote Site Round Trip – Wed: 10 miles
 - Lodging/Remote Site Round Trip – Thurs: 10 miles
 - From Lodging to Remote Site – Fri: 5 miles
 - From Remote Site to Home Campus: 150 miles
 - Total Business Miles: 340 miles

Campus Mileage

An employee traveling on required College business will be reimbursed for local mileage provided these miles are in **excess** of the daily commute between the place of residence and home campus. Claims for local mileage must show points visited and the return location. A point-to-point and purpose of trip explanation is required.

Employees cannot claim mileage if the trip is part of their normal daily commute. For example:

- If an employee lives in Clarkston and his/her home campus is Decatur, he/she cannot claim mileage from Decatur to Clarkston or vice versa if the trip is at the beginning or end of the day.

Reimbursement for local campus travel will be limited to the following:

Between Alpharetta and		Between Lakeside and		Between GSU and	
Clarkston	30	Alpharetta	24	Alpharetta (Ga400)	27
Decatur	37	Clarkston	4	Clarkston (I-20)	17
Dunwoody	14	Decatur	13	Decatur (I-20)	11
Lakeside	24	Dunwoody	9	Dunwoody (Ga400)	18
Newton	63	Newton	43	Newton (I-20)	42
Between Clarkston and		Between Newton and		Lakeside (I-85)	18
Alpharetta	30	Alpharetta	63		
Decatur	10	Clarkston	40	*All Mileage One Way	
Dunwoody	13	Decatur	35		
Lakeside	4	Dunwoody	51		
Newton	40	Lakeside	43		
Between Decatur and		Between Dunwoody and			
Alpharetta	37	Alpharetta	14		
Clarkston	10	Clarkston	13		
Dunwoody	22	Decatur	22		
Lakeside	13	Lakeside	9		
Newton	35	Newton	51		

Prohibited Mileage Reimbursements

Employees are not entitled to mileage reimbursement for:

- Travel between their place of residence and their home campus, or
- Personal mileage incurred while on travel status.

Any reimbursement of mileage claims paid to an employee in excess of rates stipulated in this policy must be refunded to the college or characterized as taxable compensation to the employee.

Reimbursement for Parking Fees and Tolls

The college may reimburse employees who incur parking and toll expenses while on official travel for the institution. These expenses are reimbursable for travel in both state- owned and personal vehicles.

While there are no maximum limits for parking, employees are encouraged to utilize low-cost, long-term parking to minimize the cost.

Insurance

While driving your personal vehicle on State business, the State provides full liability coverage and personal immunity for the employee for damages and injuries the employee may cause to others. It does not, however, provide coverage for the damages to your personal vehicle.

Cost of repairs to a vehicle, whether or not they result from the traveler's acts, are not reimbursable.

Under no circumstances will the State reimburse parking fines or moving violations.

Required Documentation of Mileage, Parking, and Toll Expenses

All requests for reimbursement of mileage, parking, and toll charges must be documented on the employee travel expense statement.

Personal/commuting mileage is excluded to determine the actual state-use miles. Employees should claim mileage based on the most direct route from the point of departure to the destination. Deviations from the most direct route (i.e., due to field visits, picking up passengers, etc.) should be explained on the travel expense statement.

Requests for reimbursement of parking fees and tolls paid should also be recorded on the travel expense statement. Receipts are required.

Employees who share a state-owned or personal vehicle with another employee and do not claim reimbursement for mileage should indicate the name of the person they rode with and the dates of the trips on the travel expense statement.

Instances in which employees utilize state-owned aircraft should also be noted on the travel expense statement.

Vehicle Rental

Employee travelers requiring the use of a rental vehicle will comply with all State of Georgia policies and procedures and will utilize state-approved service providers. The employee must have approval in advance from their budget manager utilizing the Prior Approval for Travel Authorization.

Vehicle rental must be limited to the vendors contracted by the State Purchasing Division (SPD). Exceptions to this policy must be approved by Logistical Services and/or the SPD in advance. Current State of Georgia vehicle rental vendor contract(s) may be found by using the “vehicle rental” link in the Georgia First Marketplace accessed through eProcurement.

Employees traveling on state business in a rented motor vehicle are covered by the state’s liability policy. Therefore, liability coverage should be declined when renting a motor vehicle. Loss Damage Waiver/Collision Damage Waiver (LDW/CDW) insurance is included in the statewide contract at no additional cost. Contact DOAS Risk Management Services or go to <http://doas.ga.gov/StateLocal/Risk/Pages/RiskInsurance.aspx> for more information.

***Note:** The State liability policy is only in effect while the employee is using the rented vehicle for official State business. For this reason, personal use of the vehicle is prohibited.*

Employees requiring the use of commercially leased vehicles will be reimbursed for gasoline purchases associated with the business use of such vehicle, provided appropriate receipts are included. Maintenance and oil changes are the responsibility of the rental company and will not be reimbursed by the college.

There are three authorized methods to pay for all state-approved vehicle rentals:

1. The college Visa Purchase Card (P-Card) is the preferred method of payment for car rentals. Prior Authorization for Travel is required. Fuel must NOT be purchased on the P-Card. A copy of the rental contract must be submitted with the cardholder monthly reconciliation statement.
2. Rental and fuel costs are paid by the employee and reimbursed in accordance with GPC travel policy.
3. As a last resort, a direct billing account may be used through Logistical Services. This form of payment requires no out of pocket expense for the rental. However, all fuel costs must be paid by the employee and reimbursed in accordance with GPC travel policy and the funds must be encumbered prior to the travel event.

Other Transportation

The most reasonable and customary means of transportation should be used when traveling to and from airports or other transportation terminals. The college will reimburse for shuttle or taxi fares to and from airports and railroad stations when such service is not included in air and rail fares, and where public transportation is not practical. Taxi fares between business meetings while on travel status are reimbursable with receipts.

Travelers who incur parking and toll expenses while on official business for an agency may be reimbursed with receipts.

Travel by Commercial or Public Transportation

General Provisions

The most cost-effective method of transportation that will accomplish the purpose of the travel should be selected. Among the factors to be considered should be length of travel time, employee's salary, cost of operation of a vehicle, cost and availability of common carrier services. Common carrier shall be used for out-of-state travel unless it is documented that utilization of another method of travel is more cost-efficient or practical and approved in accordance with these regulations.

Approving officials must approve travel by rented or public transportation prior to the date of travel. When considering such a request, approving officials should consider the distance to be traveled, the travel time, and the cost.

Commercial Air Transportation

Employees should utilize commercial air transportation when it is more cost-effective and efficient to travel by air than by motor vehicle. Under such circumstances, institutions may reimburse employees for expenses incurred for air travel, provided these expenses were approved prior to the date of travel.

Note: Employees who choose to travel by motor vehicle, whether personal, state-owned, or commercial, when air transportation is more cost-effective, may only receive reimbursement for the cost of the lowest available airfare to the specified destination.

Booking

The college encourages the use of the GPC Purchasing Card for airline ticketing. If the college finds it necessary to cancel a trip that is already ticketed, the employee may not receive reimbursement if the flight was not booked with the college P-Card. For example, if college funding is no longer available, the college may find it necessary to cancel the trip.

Note: If there is not a P-Card holder within the traveler's department, Logistical Services may be contacted to request assistance in charging airfare. Departments with frequent travelers, however, will be required to designate a P-Card holder.

Travelers who are combining personal travel with business travel may only do so when the personal portion does not add any cost to the college. Travel arrangements must be made to accommodate the business duties of the traveler and not personal preference.

State contracted airfare tickets are not available for personal, companion or spouse travel. This is a requirement of the airlines and our failure to monitor the use of these contract airfares could cause their cancellation. Accordingly, persons booking tickets for non-official business using contracted rates will be subject to disciplinary action as well as payment of the difference between contracted airfare and full coach fares.

The college will pay for the airfare and/or penalty incurred for a change in plans or cancellation when the change or cancellation is required by the college or other unavoidable situations approved by the area Vice President or designee. Travelers must state the business reason for the need to alter the flight reservation, and the total cost of the flight should be evaluated and approved as reasonable by the approver when completing the final expense report submission.

Advanced Booking

Travel plans should be made as far in advance as possible, once travel dates have been confirmed. To obtain discounted rates, all flights should be booked at least 14 days in advance. Flights booked with less than 14 days advanced purchase require a written explanation for the booking delay for the approver. Approvers may deny charges that result from last minute airline booking. In order to avoid change fees, travel should not be made too far in advance and is suggested to be no more than 21 days.

Connecting Flights

Connecting flights should be chosen over nonstop flights when the connection does not add more than two hours to travel time and the connection saves \$200.00 or more. Travelers are not required to take a lower fare if a change of airline at the connection point is required.

Alternate Airports

Travelers should view alternate airports for additional savings opportunities. Alternate airports within 60 miles of the home airport or the traveler's destination should be considered if the savings is \$200.00 or more.

Lowest Logical Airfare

Employees who require air travel should obtain the lowest available airfare to a specified destination, which may include the use of the Internet, a travel agent, or the state airfare contract. The state strongly encourages the use of the lowest logical airfares, not state contract fares. Travelers should use penalty or nonrefundable fare whenever feasible. If a refundable fare must be used, the difference in the cost of the flight should not exceed \$150.00.

Lower cost flights should be chosen within two hours before or after the preferred flight time when the alternative flight saves \$200 or more round-trip. If lower fares are declined, a written explanation should be attached to the travel expense statement when presented for reimbursement.

Note: If an employee makes travel arrangements that favor a preferred airline to receive promotional items/points and this circumvents purchasing the most economical means of travel, they are in violation of this travel policy. Costs for travel arrangements subject to this violation are non-reimbursable.

Use of Travel Agents

Many travel agencies now charge small fees for issuing tickets. These fees, if reasonable, are part of the cost of travel. Employees may, therefore, be reimbursed for such costs, regardless of whether the airfare tickets were purchased through the state airfare contract or not. **However, employees are strongly encouraged to use the Internet in order to avoid travel agency fees.**

Travel agencies used for making travel arrangements should not be related to the employee making, authorizing, or approving the arrangements. The travel agencies also should not be related to the employee actually traveling. A "related" party would include any members of the employee's family or any organizations in which the employee or his/her family members have a financial interest. The purpose for not using such travel agencies is to maintain the institution's integrity in financial matters.

Business and First Class Tickets

Business and first class tickets are not reimbursable for domestic flights. Business class is only allowable for specific international travel (see Appendix B). It is not permissible to confirm a higher fare for upgrade eligibility or personal reasons. Upgrades at expense of the college are not permitted. Upgrades may be purchased after the travel is booked, at the traveler's expense only.

Indemnification Received Due to Travel Inconveniences Imposed by Airlines

Occasions may arise when airlines overbook, change, delay or cancel flights, thereby imposing travel inconveniences on their passengers. In these instances, airlines often offer the impacted passengers indemnification for these inconveniences. Examples of indemnification that may be offered by an airline include vouchers for meals or lodging, upgrades to non-coach travel, and credits toward future flight costs. College employees are authorized to accept such indemnification if the travel inconvenience was imposed by the airline and there is no additional cost to the college.

Additional Airline Charges (Cancellations, Luggage)

Most airlines charge an additional fee for changes in flights. Employees should make every effort to avoid changes, but if an additional fee is imposed for rescheduling, this becomes part of the travel expense and is reimbursable. The reason for the change must be documented in the expense report.

If a portion or all of the airline ticket is not used for reasons beyond the control of the employee, the employee may be reimbursed for the cost of the airline ticket, with the approval of his/her supervisor. This reimbursement will not be considered a travel expense. The reason for not using the ticket must be documented on the request for employee reimbursement. Any credits for tickets should be used as soon as possible. It is the traveler's responsibility to use airline credit prior to the expiration.

Most airlines also charge a fee for paper tickets that could be electronically ticketed. **Employees are strongly encouraged to avoid this fee by using the Internet.** If there is a valid reason for a paper ticket and a fee is charged, it becomes part of the travel expense and is reimbursable. In the event there is a charge for checking luggage, the State will reimburse for a maximum of one (1) piece of checked luggage. In the event additional bag(s) are required, requests for reimbursement must include an associated explanation.

Fly America Act

Airline travel reimbursement on Federal and Federal pass-through sponsored agreements are subject to the requirements found in the Fly America Act (49 U.S.C. 40118), which requires that federal employees, and others performing U.S. Government financed travel to use U.S. flag carriers for all air travel funded by the United States government unless U.S. carriers are unavailable. This includes U.S. federal government employees and their dependents, consultants, contractors, grantees, and others.

Note: U.S. flag air carrier service is considered available even if:

- *A foreign air carrier would be at less cost to the traveler or agency; or,*
- *A foreign air carrier would be more convenient to the traveler.*

Travel by Railroad

Employees may be reimbursed for the actual cost of rail transportation, provided the appropriate personnel authorized the travel expense in advance. Employees traveling by rail are encouraged to obtain the lowest possible fare. There is no statewide contract for transportation by rail.

Travel by Mass Transportation, Taxi, or Airport Vans

Employees officially on travel status may be reimbursed for necessary costs of transportation by bus, taxi, or airport vans for the following situations:

- Between the traveler's departure point and the common carrier's departure point;
 - Between the common carrier's arrival point and the traveler's lodging or meeting place;
- and,
- Between the lodging and meeting places if at different locations.

It is expected that airport vans will be utilized when available, when arrival or departure is during daylight hours, and when they are the lowest cost alternative.

Reimbursement for Baggage Handling Services

Employees may be reimbursed for expenses associated with baggage handling services (portage) when such an expense is necessary and actually is incurred in moving luggage into or out of lodging places, common carriers, and/or airports. Employees should not be reimbursed for such expenses when they choose to use baggage-handling services as a convenience to them.

Required Documentation of Expenses

All travel by commercial or public transportation must be recorded on the employee travel expense statement. Employees requesting reimbursement must submit imaged or actual receipts for travel by commercial air carrier or railroad and for the cost of rented vehicles, including the cost of gasoline purchased. Employees must include a point-to-point explanation for each item reimbursed. All transportation expenses should be itemized on the employee travel expense statement.

Travel by Private Aircraft

Employees may be reimbursed for the use of a private aircraft. Reimbursement will be at the same rate as mileage reimbursement for travel in a personal vehicle. Reimbursement is made for the most direct route via highway miles from the employee's residence or home campus to the destination point(s), whichever is nearer.

Employees utilizing private aircraft should document the expense on the employee travel expense statement. In the Comments section of the employee travel expense statement, the employee should add following comment: "Traveled by private aircraft, registration number Nxxxx; mileage calculated from the official highway map." The traveler will be reimbursed up to the value of the lowest coach fare.

Lodging and meal expenses en route will not be reimbursed if the expenses are a direct result of the decision to take a personal aircraft, rather than commercial aircraft.

Use of a private aircraft will be left to the discretion of the Vice President for Financial and Administrative Affairs.

Registration Fees

Registration Fees Paid by the Employee

Registration fees required for participation in workshops, seminars, or conferences that an employee is directed and/or authorized to attend will be allowed when approved in advance and supported by a paid receipt or a copy of the check showing payment. Any part of a registration fee applicable to meals will be reported as a meal expense, and not as a registration fee, if the costs can be separately identified.

Under this circumstance, reimbursement will be processed after the trip via the Travel Expense Statement.

Registration Fees Prepaid by the College

Registration fees required for participation in workshops, seminars, or conferences that an employee is directed and/or authorized to attend may be paid in advance by the College. In order to request advance payment of registration fees, the following items must be submitted to Accounting Services-Accounts Payable, Decatur Campus:

1. A completed and approved Payment Request, including the Federal Identification Number of the Payee.
2. Copy of a completed and approved Prior Approval for Travel Authorization.
3. Original and one additional copy of the completed registration form complete with conference agenda.

All checks for the payment of registration fees will be routinely mailed to the payee unless noted otherwise by the employee on the Payment Request. An employee planning to prepay a registration should allow adequate time for processing. It is strongly recommended that the appropriate information for the payment of registration fees reach Accounting Services-Accounts Payable, Decatur Campus, at least two weeks prior to the registration deadline.

Registration Fees Charged to the Purchasing Card

Registration fees may be charged using the departmental Visa Purchasing Card (P-Card). The registration fee must be documented on the Prior Approval for Travel Authorization and use of the purchasing card must be indicated.

Additional meal allotments are not allowed if the meal is included in a registration fee.

Miscellaneous Travel Expenses

Telephone/Telegraph/Fax Expenses

Employees may be reimbursed for expenses incurred for work-related telephone, telegraph, and fax messages. Employees must document these claims on the travel expense statement, and indicate the location from which each call was made, the person contacted, and the reason for the communication. Personal calls made while on travel status are not reimbursable. Receipts/invoices should accompany the travel expense statement.

Stationary/Supplies/Postage Expenses

Reimbursement for stationery, supplies, stenographic, or duplicating services may be reimbursed, provided the expense is directly associated with a work-related project and the cost is reasonable. In addition, work-related postage expenses may be reimbursed. Employees requesting reimbursement for these expenses must document actual expenses on the travel statement and explain the purpose for these expenses. Receipts/invoices should accompany the travel expense statement.

Internet Usage Fees

Employees may be reimbursed for work-related Internet usage charges. These charges should be identified separately on the itemized hotel bill, but should *not* be listed on the travel expense statement as “lodging.”

Visa/Passport Fees

When travel required by an employer necessitates the use of a passport and/or visa, and the employee does not currently possess such valid document(s), the related visa/passport fee is eligible for reimbursement when documented by a receipt.

Baggage Check Fees/Carry-On Fees

In the event there is a charge for checking luggage, the State will reimburse for a maximum of one (1) piece of checked luggage. In the event additional bag(s) are required, requests for reimbursement must include an associated explanation.

Reimbursable Expenses

Reimbursable expenses include but are not limited to the following:

- Business office expenses (copy services, postage, supplies) and business related phone calls, faxes and internet fees
- Conference/Registration fees
- Costs related to passports and travel visas when necessary to accomplish the official business purpose of the trip
- Currency conversion fees
- Baggage handling services
- Laundry or cleaning expenses on trips lasting seven (7) days or more

Unallowable Expenses

Non-reimbursable expenses include but are not limited to the following:

- Airline, car, and card membership dues and club fees; travel upgrade fees (air, rail, car)
- Alcoholic beverages
- Bank charges for ATM withdrawals, except on international travel
- Childcare costs
- Clothing or toiletry items
- Commuting between home and workplace
- Country Club dues
- Expenses related to vacation or personal days taken before, during or after a business trip
- Haircuts and personal grooming
- Laundry, cleaning, pressing costs for trips of less than seven days
- Loss Damage Insurance when State agency is available and another auto agency is utilized
- Loss or theft of cash advance money or airline tickets
- Loss or theft of personal funds or property
- Lost baggage
- Luggage or briefcases
- Medical expenses while traveling
- Mini-bar charges
- Movies
- •No-show/Cancellation fees or fees related to hotel late check-out (unless business or weather related)
- Personal reading materials (magazines, newspapers, etc.)
- Personal vehicle maintenance
- Personal entertainment
- Personal Pet care

- Recreational expenses
- Saunas, massages
- Shoe Shines
- Souvenirs or personal gifts
- Tipping for hotel concierge or maid services
- Traffic citations (moving violations), parking tickets, court fees and other fines
- Trip cancellation premiums for domestic flights
- Travel accident insurance premiums
- Valet services for parking, when self-parking options are available, unless there are valid security reasons

Corporate Charge Cards and Travel Advances

Georgia Perimeter College does not offer corporate charge cards. Departments are encouraged to utilize their departmental purchasing card (P-card).

Note: If there is not a P-Card holder within the traveler's department, Logistical Services may be contacted to request assistance in charging airfare. Departments with frequent travelers, however, will be required to designate a P-Card holder.

Georgia Perimeter College does not issue travel advances except for the following: Athletics or sponsored funded student travel.

Employees have access to the following methods of prepayment for travel expenditures:

- Airfare - department P-Card
- Lodging – payment request to the hotel
- Registration fee – department P-Card or payment request
- Rental Car – department P-Card

Utilizing these prepayment methods, the employee would be responsible for per diem/meals or any other incidental expenses.

Travelers with Physical and Medical Conditions

Compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is mandatory. The college has the authority to provide reasonable accommodations during state travel for travelers with disabilities.

All state employees are to be afforded equal opportunity to travel on official state business even if the travel costs for disabled travelers will exceed what would normally be most economical to the state. For example:

- When a traveler uses a wheelchair, it may be necessary to use a higher priced fare in order to select an airplane that can accommodate the wheelchair.
- When a traveler has hearing or vision impairments, there may be costs associated with providing auxiliary aids and services to enable the traveler to successfully accomplish the purpose of the travel.

The extra travel costs required to comply with ADA shall be documented and kept on file by the authorizing approver.

Reimbursement of Travel Expenses

General

Employees are expected to exercise good stewardship of funds when traveling on official business. Any expenditure disallowed by the State is the responsibility of the employee.

Note: IRS guidelines state any expense not submitted within 60 days of the completion of the trip becomes taxable income to the traveler.

Expense Reimbursement Timing

Travelers should submit all expenses for reimbursement and reconciliation ideally within 10 days of the completion of the event or trip but no later than 30 calendar days, but preferably held until a reimbursement of at least \$10 is due.

- Due to year-end closeout procedures, a specific date will be established during the last quarter of the fiscal year. Travel Expense Statements received after the designated date will not be subject to reimbursement in the current fiscal year.

Expense Reimbursement Submission

Employees are responsible for ensuring that expenses claimed in the travel expense report are proper, accurate, and incurred for official business. A traveler who knowingly presents a false or fraudulent claim may be subject to penalties under criminal statutes.

Reimbursement due to the traveler will be made by direct deposit or check from Accounting Services.

Required Documentation of Travel Expenses

- Employees requesting reimbursement for travel expenses are required to submit their claim, approved by their supervisor, on the GPC Travel Expense Statement
- Users must not combine in-state and out-of-state expenses on the same reimbursement form
- Reimbursement of personal expenses shall not be authorized for payment at any time
- Location, date, and time of departure and return
- Lodging, mileage, transportation, and miscellaneous expenses, the types of which and their allowable limits are discussed in subsequent sections
- Listing of meals included in conference registration fees

- Itemized listing of expenses related to authorized meals not covered by the per diem allowance;
- Explanations of any expenses exceeding the established limits;
- Explanation of any unusual expenses submitted for reimbursement;
- Explanation of the purpose for the trip; and,
- Description of the type(s) of transportation used during the trip.

Employees must sign their travel expense statement, attesting the information presented on the form is accurate and complete. Employees who provide false information are subject to criminal penalty as a felony for false statements, subject to punishment by fine of not to exceed \$1,000, or imprisonment for one (1) to five (5) years.

Travel Expense Receipt Requirements

Travelers must always obtain receipts, except when per diem travel allowances are claimed. Itemized receipts should include:

- Name and address of the vendor
- Date of service
- Description of service
- Amount paid for each individual item

Credit card slips and statements are not acceptable in lieu of receipts. Travel expense reports may be selected for audit at any time and all required receipts must be retained by the traveler for three years after the travel date if not attached to the expense report.

Receipts are required with the travel expense statement for the following expenses regardless of the dollar amount:

- Airline or railroad fares
- Lodging, with an itemized breakdown such as room charge, parking, Wi-Fi, laundry, etc.
- Rental car expenses
- Breakfast, luncheon, or dinner meetings unless claiming a per diem
- Meals purchased in lieu of those provided at the conference/training
- Registration fees
- Visa/Passport fees
- Any other valid expense such as: gas purchase for rental vehicles, parking/toll fees, mass transit fares, taxi fares, airport van/shuttle fares.

No expense will be approved if a required receipt is missing.

Additional Receipt Requirements:

1. **Supply and Material Charges.** Any expenses submitted by an employee for office supplies or materials must be accompanied by a receipt, regardless of the amount.
2. **Local and Long Distance Phone Charges.** Any expenses submitted by an employee for local or long distance phone calls must be accompanied by a receipt, regardless of the amount. Only hotel access charges, official local or long distance business calls are eligible for reimbursement. Receipts must itemize the date, number of minutes used and the charge for each phone call.
3. **Personal Cell Phone Charges.** Any expenses submitted by an employee for personal cell phone usage must be accompanied by a statement or receipt, regardless of the amount. Receipts must itemize the date, number of minutes used, and the appropriate computation of the cost per minute, calculated by any method resulting in the lowest cost per minute to the state of Georgia. Business related communications made using minutes or measured service within a user's pre-paid plan shall not be reimbursed.
4. **Baggage and Luggage Fees.** Any expenses submitted by an employee for baggage handling must be accompanied by a statement or receipt, regardless of the amount. The State will only allow reimbursement for a maximum of one (1) piece of checked baggage. When combining personal travel with state business travel, baggage and luggage fees should be evaluated for reasonableness and allocated appropriately.

Approval Requirements

A traveler's immediate supervisor or higher authority must approve a travel expense statement before reimbursement will be issued. The final approver in the submission process is held accountable. The approving official should review the expense statement for **accuracy and compliance with travel regulations**.

- Deans or directors should designate a person (or persons) to examine and approve claims for reimbursement under these travel regulations.
- Claims should be reviewed to ensure they are reasonable, accurate, and cover expenses actually incurred by the employee during the authorized travel dates and times.
- Appropriate receipts and documentation must be provided for reimbursement.
- Claims exceeding established limits should receive special scrutiny to ensure the explanations are sufficient to justify the higher amount. Employees should not assume all expenses exceeding allowable limits will be automatically approved for reimbursement.

Institutional Responsibilities

Responsibility for appropriate audit, approval, and reimbursement of Travel Expense Statements is vested with the Vice President for Financial and Administrative Affairs or designated representative of the institution. Georgia Perimeter College Accounting Services-Accounts Payable Department processes completed and approved travel statements. Each Travel Expense Statement must be signed by the employee's approving official(s) before submission to Accounting Services.

In cases where the prior approval denotes a pre-authorized amount, reimbursement will not exceed this authorization unless specifically approved by the dean or director. Travel expense statements cannot be resubmitted at a later date or at year-end for additional reimbursement.

Forms for travel reimbursement consist of the standard forms approved for use by the University System of Georgia. All travel forms: Prior Approval for Travel Authorization, Travel Expense Statement, and the Tax Exemption Certification are available on GPC Travel Information web site. No other forms will be accepted.

Frequency of Reimbursement

Complete and accurate claims for travel reimbursement will be processed weekly by Accounting Services. The reimbursement is made available to the recipient by direct deposit or check through Accounting Services.

Travel Procedures Summary

There are two forms used in connection with the preparation and processing of travel:

1. Prior Approval for Travel Authorization
2. Travel Expense Statement

All forms are available on the GPC Travel Information website.

Prior Approval for Travel Authorization

The Prior Approval for Travel Authorization (Prior Approval) must be completed by the employee, signed and approved by the immediate supervisor, and submitted for final approval from the area dean or director. The approval by the dean or director certifies the availability of funding. Any out of country travel must be approved by the area Vice President and the President of the college.

Required supporting documentation includes but is not limited to:

- Proposed Flight Itinerary
- Conference, workshop, seminar agenda
- Conference, workshop, seminar registration form
- Hotel Rate Information

Prior approval attests to the purpose of the travel and ensures that arrangements are reasonable in nature and amount.

Travel Expense Statement

Upon returning from a trip, the employee should submit a completed Travel Expense Statement to the approving official. The approving official should review the expense statement for **accuracy and compliance with travel regulations**. Approval also signifies that appropriate receipts and documentation are included. If the statement is in order, the travel expense statement and documentation should be forwarded to Accounting Services-Accounts Payable, Decatur Campus, for processing.

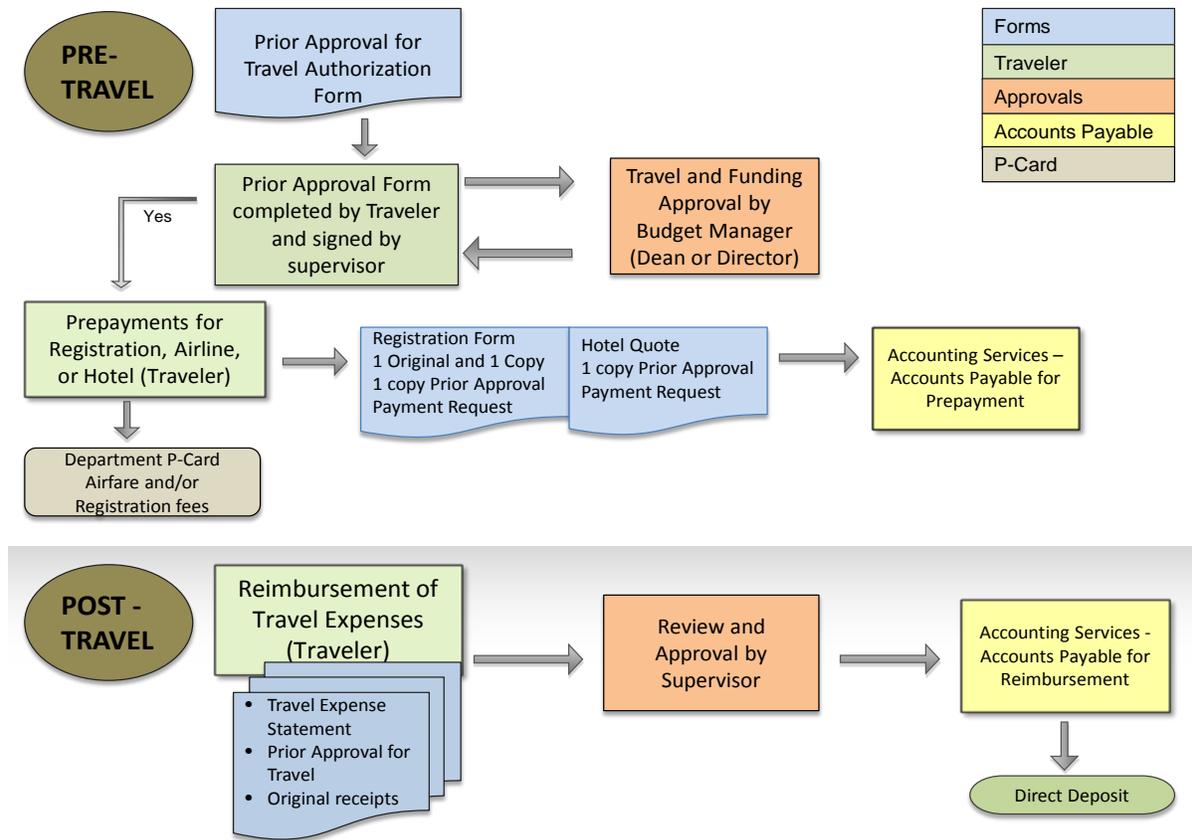
- Reimbursement to an individual may cover only those expenses pertaining to that individual; it may not include expenses pertaining to other individuals regardless of who paid the expense. Each individual must request their own reimbursement.

- In cases where the prior approval denotes a pre-authorized amount, reimbursement will not exceed this authorization unless specifically approved by the dean or director. Travel Expense Statements cannot be resubmitted at year-end for any additional reimbursement.
- Employees should submit expense reports within 30 calendar days of completion of travel.
- Employees must return any Travel Advance amount in excess of allowable substantiated expenses within 30 calendar days after the completion of the trip.
- Due to year-end closeout procedures, a specific date will be established during the last quarter of the fiscal year. Travel Expense Statements received after the designated date will not be subject to reimbursement in the current fiscal year. Travel Expense Statements received after the cutoff date cannot be charged to the subsequent fiscal year.

Frequency of Reimbursement

Complete and accurate claims for travel reimbursement will be processed weekly by Accounting Services-Accounts Payable. The reimbursement is made available to the recipient by direct deposit or check.

**PRIOR APPROVAL FOR TRAVEL AUTHORIZATION
AND REIMBURSEMENT WORK FLOW**



Appendix A - Glossary

Accountability – means that employees are responsible for accounting for their travel expenses accurately. All staff will ensure travel is conducted in the most efficient and cost effective manner.

Commercial Transportation - means any entity that offers transportation of people or goods to the public for pay.

Commuting Miles – means the miles traveled on a regular (usually daily) bases from an employee’s residence to the location most frequently associated with work performed outside of that residence (generally “home campus”). This should be a standard distance that does not change from one reimbursement request to the next.

County and Municipal Excise Tax - means the local taxes charged by hotels/motels for lodging, also referred to as “hotel/motel” or “occupancy” tax. This tax is separate from the state sales tax.

Employee Travel Expense Statement - means the accounting document used as the basis to reimburse a state employee for travel expenses incurred while on official business.

Federal Per Diem Rate - means the maximum allowance for expenses of federal employees who are on travel status. The available rates only include locations within the continental United States. Separate per diem limits have been established for non-contiguous U. S. and foreign travel.

Guest Traveler - means travelers who are not employed by the State of Georgia.

Government Owned Vehicles – means a state agency owned vehicle or the interagency motor pool that is operated on behalf of the Department of Administrative Services’ Fleet Support Services through Enterprise Rent-a-Car.

High-Cost Area - means any area within Georgia within which meal expenses may be reimbursed at a higher amount than the limits that otherwise apply to travel within Georgia. High cost areas are limited to the following counties: Chatham, Cobb, DeKalb, Fulton, Glynn, and Gwinnett counties.

Lodging - means a hotel, motel, inn, apartment, or similar entity that furnishes lodging to the public for pay.

Miscellaneous Travel Expense – means a necessary and reasonable expense incurred by a state employee while traveling on official business. This term does not apply to meals, lodging, mileage, or transportation costs.

Official Station – means the physical work location an employee is permanently assigned.

Personal Motor Vehicle – means a motor vehicle that is owned or leased for personal use by an employee. Personal motor vehicles include automobiles, aircraft, and motorcycles.

Per Diem Allowance – refers to the maximum food allowance for which employees can be reimbursed per day. The amount is not a reimbursement of actual expenses incurred. Receipts are not required for meal per diem amounts.

Point of Departure – means the beginning location used to calculate state-use miles traveled in a personal motor vehicle.

State Fund Sources – means all revenue types for a State agency, i.e., GPC.

Travel Advance – means any payment to an employee for travel expenses that will be incurred for a scheduled future trip.

Travel Advance Authorization form – used to document approval of cash advances by the college and to document receipt of the cash advance by the employee.

Travel Exception – means written authorization for travel reimbursement of expenses generally not allowable under the Statewide Travel Regulations or the University System of Georgia.

Travel Expenses – means meal, lodging, mileage, transportation, parking, and miscellaneous.

Travel Status – means an individual is on travel status from the time they start from and return to their official (primary) work station. The primary work station may be a physical location (i.e. building) for some employees and it may be a district or geographic location for others.

Appendix B – International Travel

Approval Authority

In addition to all other policies set forth, the following policies must be adhered to when traveling internationally. The area Vice President and the college President must approve international travel in advance. The approval must be dated and submitted with the traveler's expense report upon return.

Air Travel

The guidelines stated previously for air travel also apply to international travel. **Business class** travel may be approved under the following circumstances:

- When it does not cost more than the lowest available tourist/coach fare (comparison must be attached to travel voucher), or
- For travel to western Europe if the business meeting is conducted within three hours of landing, or
- For transoceanic, intercontinental trips involving flight-time of more than 10 consecutive hours.

Reimbursement for first class travel is prohibited.

With proper documentation, justification, and approval the State will reimburse:

- Commission for currency conversion or traveler checks when deemed necessary.
- Services of guides, interpreters, packers, or drivers when deemed necessary.
- Fees for the issuance of passport or visa, inoculations, and affidavits when required for business international travel.

The Fly America Act was enacted to mandate the use of U.S. flag air carriers for federally funded international travel. The Federal Travel Regulations requires international flights be on U.S. flag air carriers whenever possible, which is accomplished when code sharing is present. Code sharing occurs when two or more airlines “code” the same flight as if it was their own. In other words, the international flight may be on a foreign air carrier's plane, but is considered the same as one operated by an U.S. flag air carrier. Compliance with the Fly America Act is satisfied when the U.S. flag air carrier's designator code is present in the area next to the flight numbers on the airline ticket, boarding pass, or on the documentation for an electronic ticket (passenger receipt).

What does this mean to you? If you are scheduling international travel that is federally funded, you must ensure that all flights, where possible, are scheduled on U.S. flag air carriers or on foreign air carriers that code share with a U.S. flag air carrier.

Meal Reimbursement

Federal per diem for meals also applies to international travel and when traveling to destinations outside the Continental United States (OCOUS), including Hawaii and Alaska. Per diem rates include both the cost of meals and incidental expenses. Incidental expenses include: fees and tips given to porters, baggage carriers, bellhops, hotel housekeeping, stewards or stewardesses, and hotel staff, and transportation to restaurants. Incidental expenses cannot be reimbursed separately as they are included in the per diem rate. Ground transportation (e.g., taxi, shuttle) to and from airports and railroad stations, and between business meetings while on travel status, is not included in the per diem incidentals. Travelers are eligible for 75 percent of the total per diem rate on the first and last day of travel. For a complete listing of the GSA per diem tables visit the GSA per diem website.

Foreign Currency Conversion

When a traveler incurs expenses in a foreign currency, each expense should be converted to United States dollars (USD). The following methods are acceptable:

- A. Credit card statement: If the expenses are charged, the credit card company will convert them to USD.
- B. Conversion of charges via the internet for the dates of travel. An acceptable site is: Oanda Converter - this site allows for built in exchange fees and specific dates.
- C. Currency rate conversion based on actual cash exchange. Use the following formula:
 - $F \times C = U$
F = amount of charges in foreign currency
C = conversion factor = USD's per unit of foreign currency.
U = expense in USD's

Example: \$100 expenses in Canadian Dollars
\$.68 USD's per Canadian Dollar
 $\$100 \times .68 \text{ USD/CD} = \68 USD