



## **Rowan College of South Jersey**

Administrative Procedure: 6115

### **TRAVEL AUTHORIZATION AND REIMBURSEMENT**

In order to ensure a uniform basis for reimbursing employees and Board members who travel on Rowan College of South Jersey (College) business, the following guidelines will apply.

These guidelines are applicable to any College employee or Board member who performs authorized, work-related travel on behalf of the College including, educational and professional development, training, conferences, and other events intended to increase knowledge, skills, and professional status. Webinars and on-campus conferences that do not require travel are exempt from this policy, but must follow the normal check request procedures.

It is the policy of the College to provide those traveling on behalf of the College with adequate and sensible levels of transportation, lodging, meals, and other services necessary to conduct the College's business. Travelers exercising good judgment relative to reasonable and necessary expenses consistent with these travel and business expense rules should generally find their expenses allowed. The College expects that employees and Board members will be conscious of their traveling expenditures and adhere to the policy and rules.

Original, itemized receipts are required for all meals and incidental expenses, except those described in the "Miscellaneous" section below. The College will not reimburse employees for any alcohol or personal items purchased. Summary receipts, such as those provided through a credit card bill, are not acceptable. If an original, itemized receipt is not available, the expense will not be reimbursed unless approved by the Executive Director of Financial Services, Assistant Chief Financial Officer.

#### **Pre-Travel Authorization**

All travel requests must be properly approved by submitting the Pre-Travel Authorization and Estimated Expense Form. This form requires two (2) levels of signature, the employee's Dean/Executive Director and Vice President. For all Deans and Executive Directors, the employee's Vice President and the President will approve this travel. Once department level approval has been received, the pre-travel authorization must be

approved by the Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer/Chief Financial Officer.

### **Overnight Travel**

All employee overnight travel must be pre-approved by the President, in addition to all other required signatories. If the expenses upon return from the overnight travel are equal to or less than the amount originally authorized by the President, the expense report can go through the usual approval process for reimbursement and does not require the President's approval. If the expenses for overnight travel exceed the amount originally approved then the report must be signed by the President in addition to the usual approvals. Travel for the President must be approved in advance by the Board chair or designee.

Board member travel is governed by Board policy *1009 Board Member Travel and Conferences*. The College President will endorse reimbursement for Board member travel.

### **Post-Travel Authorization**

Reimbursement for out-of-pocket expenses incurred when traveling will be provided upon submission of a properly approved Post-Travel Authorization and Expense Form. The properly approved pre-travel form must be submitted along with the post-travel form to be reimbursed. Request for reimbursement of expenses must be submitted to Accounts Payable, with original, itemized receipts attached, no later than 30 days from the date returning from the conference or meeting. Travel expenses incurred near the end of the fiscal year should be submitted in a timely manner, but no later than July 31<sup>st</sup>, to ensure they are reported in the correct accounting period.

An exception to the 30-day rule will be made for employees that regularly attend meetings. These employees may submit requests for mileage and toll reimbursement quarterly (March, June, September, and December), or when the reimbursement amount equals or exceeds \$25.00, whichever comes first. These can be requested by submitting the properly approved Post-Travel Authorization and Expense Form to Accounts Payable.

### **Transportation**

Generally where travel time by car or train would be three hours or less, travelers are expected to drive or take the train, rather than fly, since it is more economical and requires less time. The traveler who uses personal automobile for College business must maintain insurance coverage for public liability and property damage as prescribed by state law.

Authorized travel by personal automobile is reimbursed at the rate approved by the IRS per mile. Attach a copy of the mileage from an on-line provider such as MapQuest, Google Maps, etc., with the mileage from employee's home to the travel destination as

well as the employee's home to the College. Mileage from the employee's home to the College is deemed the "commuting allowance" and is not reimbursable.

When submitting for reimbursement, the commuting allowance must be subtracted from the total miles driven to calculate the reimbursable amount. If mileage to the approved travel destination is less than the commuting allowance, reimbursement will not occur. Mileage is reimbursable for multiple college business related visits (i.e. site visits, clinical observations, off-campus meetings, etc.) within the same day. For this type of mileage reimbursement, submit the total miles driven for the day, less the commuting allowance, to arrive at the reimbursable mileage amount used in the calculation.

The mileage reimbursement covers all costs associated with use of the personal automobile (e.g., fuel, oil, maintenance, repairs, insurance, and depreciation). Tolls and parking expenses will also be reimbursed with original, itemized receipts or monthly toll pass statements.

When not using a personal automobile or College car, travelers will use regularly scheduled commercial transportation (e.g., airlines, trains, or bus), unless special circumstances require other arrangements such as a charter flight. For employees, such travel must be approved in advance in writing by the President or appropriate Vice President.

Air travel will be by coach class, unless lower-fare classes such as super-saver, economy, etc., can be arranged in advance. Upgrades to business or first class will be at the expense of the person traveling. Train and taxi fares will also be reimbursed with original, itemized receipts. All train travel should be at standard or economy fares.

Those traveling must seek the lowest available air or train fares without consideration for travel incentive programs and should exercise judgments and caution in using guaranteed, nonrefundable, or penalty fares. If there is a good chance that travel arrangements may change on short notice, travelers should use non-guaranteed, non-penalty fares. Whenever a traveler needs to change a flight after a trip has begun, the change and reason must be documented on the College Post-Travel Authorization and Expense Form.

Travelers on College travel are not permitted to volunteer to be bumped from a flight to a later flight so as to receive free travel benefits, if the change in travel affects the ability of the employee to conduct business according to the originally planned schedule.

### **Lodging**

Overnight lodging is not permitted within sixty (60) miles of the College campus. An exception may be made to the sixty (60) mile and overnight lodging procedure when a written explanation delineating the necessity of an overnight stay is submitted during the pre-approval process. In addition to the existing approval process, the President must approve this exception during the pre-approval process.

Employees and Board members should arrange accommodations for the lowest available rate. Hotel or motel accommodations should be made without consideration of incentive programs. Upgrades or extra costs for traveling companions will be at the expense of the person traveling.

The College will reimburse the actual reasonable cost based on the lowest available single room rate. Where and when agreeable to all parties, hotel reservations may be shared to save the College costs. An original, itemized receipt is always required for lodging. A credit card receipt showing the “total amount” is not adequate documentation.

Hotel reservations may be secured in advance. Checks will be issued in the name of the hotel indicated. An original, itemized receipt from the hotel must be submitted upon return, and any remaining advance moneys must be returned to the College.

If not secured in advance, lodging expenses will be reimbursed to the employee upon submission of a Post-Travel Authorization and Expense Form with an original hotel itemized receipt showing payment.

### **Ground Transportation and Transfers**

Ground transportation via airport/hotel limousine, bus, or taxi services is encouraged when cost effective, rather than a car rental, and should be used whenever available. Car rentals will be approved only when the cost of ground transportation exceeds the automobile rental cost. The business purpose of a rental car must be clearly documented on the Post-Travel Authorization and Expense Form. Justification for the expense of the rental as compared with transport by common carrier must be documented. The employee is responsible for automobile rentals for personal convenience.

### **Traffic Violations and Accidents**

When driving a College car, personal car, or rental car on College business, the traveler is expected to observe all traffic laws and to accept responsibility for the payment of any fines incurred.

If, while on College business, the employee or Board member is in an automobile accident (College, personal, or rental car) you must report it in writing to Human Resources within 24 hours. The statement should include the following information:

- Location of accident;
- Time and date of accident;
- Name, license number, and insurance information of the driver of any other vehicle, involved;
- Name of police department that took the report;
- Names, addresses, and phone numbers of any witnesses; and;
- Details of the accident with a sketch showing the accident scene.

To protect the College's insurability, the traveler must report all accidents to the police immediately. Travelers will be held responsible for any damages resulting from negligence and should also notify their personal automobile insurance and the College of any accidents.

### **Personal Travel Combined With College Travel**

The College expects that there will be occasions when the employee may elect to combine personal travel, such as for a weekend or vacation, with College travel. Such combination is permissible under the following conditions:

- The primary reason for the trip is business and the personal travel is incidental to the College travel;
- The employee pays all extra expenses such that the College incurs no additional expenses beyond those incurred, as if only the College travel had occurred;
- The personal travel does not interfere with College business, such as causing late arrival at or early departure from employment obligations; and
- The personal travel has been approved by the employee's vice president as not interfering with College business.

### **Weekend Travel**

In cases where the employee arranges to be on travel status over a Saturday night in order to gain deep discounts on airfare, hotels, and rental cars, the employee will be reimbursed for the weekend days of travel when it is clearly demonstrated that the authorized costs were less than if travel had not included the weekend.

### **Incentive Programs**

Consistent with the College policy to make travel, lodging, and rental car arrangements on a lowest available cost basis without consideration of incentive programs, the traveler may accumulate non-cash benefits under incentive programs.

### **Travel Advances**

In extraordinary circumstances where the employee can demonstrate hardship, advances will be considered. The exception will be when travelling with students, i.e. athletic teams.

The President or designee must approve the travel advance in writing. The employee or Board member will deduct the amount of the travel advance from the travel and business expenses on the Post-Travel Authorization and Expense Form before submitting for reimbursement. All outstanding advances will be cleared within one month (30 days) of

travel. For employees, any outstanding balances after this period will be deducted from the employee's next payroll check.

### **Reimbursement for Meals and Incidentals Related to Subsistence**

There will be no meal allowance for meals included as part of conference registration fees. A copy of the conference agenda must be attached to the Post-Travel Authorization and Expense Form. An original, itemized receipt is always required for meals and incidentals. A credit card receipt showing the "total amount" is not adequate documentation. For one-day conferences where lunch is not provided, the meal allowance will be \$15 and must be accompanied by an original, itemized receipt. When the one-day conference extends until 6 PM or beyond, the employee will also be eligible for a \$25 dinner allowance, which must be accompanied by an original, itemized receipt.

The standard maximum daily meal allowance for official overnight College travel, including gratuities and tips, will be fifty (\$50.00) dollars per day. The daily per diem will be adjusted as follows:

1. For travel on the first and last days of the trip, the per diem will be adjusted based on the times of departure and arrival.
  - On the first day of travel, if the departure is after 1 pm, breakfast may not be claimed and \$10 will be deducted from the per diem rate.
  - On the last day of travel, if the time of home arrival is before 3 pm, dinner may not be claimed and \$25 will be deducted from the per diem rate.
2. On days where a meal is provided by the conference, the daily per diem must be adjusted using the following guidelines:
  - breakfast deduction \$10
  - lunch deduction \$15
  - dinner deduction \$25

Prior to travel and as part of the pre-approval process, employees traveling to a higher cost of living area are to contact the Executive Director of Financial Services, Assistant Chief Financial Officer to determine the General Services Administration's (GSA) per diem rate for that area. This information is to be submitted with the employee's Post-Travel Authorization and Expense Form in order to ensure proper reimbursement.

For meal expenses that include more than one individual, all names must be listed on the expense report.

### **Conference Registration Fees**

Conference fees may be requested in advance. Requestor must submit a check request and a copy of the approved Pre-Travel Authorization and Estimated Expense Form along

with a conference fee schedule to Accounts Payable. This form must detail the attendee, date, and location of the conference. You must include copies of the conference agenda/materials (documenting specific items, such as meals, lodging, and shuttle included in conference fee). Checks will be issued to the organization sponsoring the conference.

If not secured in advance, conference fees will be reimbursed to the employee upon submission of a Post-Travel Authorization and Expense Form or check request with an original, itemized receipt.

### **Telephone/Internet**

The College will reimburse the employee or Board member for necessary and/or official College business calls upon submission of an original, itemized receipt or bill. Travelers are responsible for all personal telephone calls.

Reasonable internet charges directly related to the traveler's business with the College will be reimbursable.

### **Miscellaneous**

Reasonable miscellaneous expenses will be reimbursed to the traveler without necessity of receipt due to the nature of the expense. These may include gratuities for luggage and baggage handling, etc.

### **Miscellaneous Expenses Non-Reimbursable**

- Transportation charges to and from meals unless there is no restaurant in the hotel;
- Airline, automobile, train, and accommodation upgrades;
- Airline hospitality room memberships;
- In-flight movies, books, magazines, in-room movies, and other personal entertainment expenses;
- In-flight telephone calls;
- Roaming charges on personal cell phones;
- Laundry/valet services (unless travel is a week or more);
- Sporting events, theater, or other entertainment expenses;
- Health club charges;

- Towing or automobile repair charges;
- Non-business related meals (e.g., employees eating together in their local area);
- Interest on personal credit cards; and
- Non-business related expenses are not permissible; i.e. luncheons, staff parties,

Employee expense reports are subject to audits by the College, the College's auditors, and the IRS. The employee and approver of the expense report are responsible to provide clear, concise, and complete documentation to assist the auditors and to ensure full reimbursement.

Area: Finance  
Approved: 07/01/19  
Revised: 02/20/24

President's Authorization:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jim Keating", is written over a horizontal line.

References:

Rowan College of South Jersey Board of Trustees Policy Manual, *1009 Board Member Travel and Conferences* and *6115 Travel Authorization and Reimbursement*.