



The University of  
Memphis

## BF4001 - University Travel

### POLICIES

**Issued:** 5/23/2023  
**Responsible Official:** Executive Vice President and Chief  
Operating and Financial Officer  
**Responsible Office:** Accounting Office

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### Policy Statement

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#### Policy Statement

This policy applies to the travel of all employees and students of the University of Memphis in the performance of their official duties and University-sponsored activities. Provisions of this policy may also apply to individuals other than employees who are authorized to travel on University business at the University's expense.

These provisions and reimbursement rates will be consistent with the [Comprehensive Travel Regulations of the State of Tennessee](#).

#### PRINCIPLES:

Employees, students and others authorized to travel on University business (e.g. volunteers) must:

- Conduct University business with integrity, in compliance with applicable laws, policies and procedures.
- Exercise good judgment and travel on University business in a cost-efficient manner.

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### Purpose

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To facilitate effective and economical University travel while maintaining the necessary controls for accountability. The University needs to comply with state and federal law and to the greatest extent possible, minimize administrative costs.

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## Definitions

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<b>Official Travel Status</b>	An employee is considered on official travel status at the time of departure from the employee's official station or residence. This must also meet the conditions for Authorized Travel.
<b>Official Station</b>	The official station of an employee is the office headquarters or designated work location from which the employee performs the major portion of their assigned duties.
<b>Authorized Travel</b>	Authorized travel will be limited to the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Travel which is necessary for the proper execution of official University business, or educational and research objectives.</li><li>• Travel for professional meetings, conferences, workshops/trainings or other activities that are directly connected to the individual's duties and role within the University.</li><li>• Travel that does not include daily commute to and from the employee's official station.</li></ul>
<b>Business Expenses</b>	Business expenses should be ordinary and necessary and qualify as a deductible expense per the Internal Revenue Code (IRC). Ordinary expenses are conference fees, transportation, lodging, meals and incidentals. Necessary expenses are those that are helpful and appropriate in one's trade, business or profession.
<b>Common Carrier</b>	A person or company that provides rental vehicles or transports goods or passengers on regular routes at set rates such as airlines, trains and buses.
<b>Group Travel</b>	University Group Travel is defined as pre-approved travel arranged by the University for several individuals to accomplish a specific common University purpose. University Group Travel may be paid for in full or in part, directly or indirectly by the University; organized by the University with participants or



sponsors paying; organized by others and paid for by the University; or supported by the University in the form of organization, management, staffing, transportation or space provision. University Group Travel may include arrangements for transportation, lodging, activities, events, meals, tours, interaction with experts, conferences, meetings, etc. University Group Travel must be conducted in full compliance with this policy.

**Home Share**

Residential property that is typically rented to a visitor for fewer than 30 days through a centralized online platform whereby the rental is advertised, and rental payments are securely processed. Examples include Airbnb, VRBO.

**Per Diem Rates**

The daily allowance for reimbursement of lodging and meals/incidental expense while on official travel status.

**Rideshare**

Service that arranges one-time shared rides usually through a smartphone app. Examples include Uber, Lyft.

**Travel Rate Schedule**

Reimbursement information for transportation and miscellaneous expenses is maintained by the Accounting Office and can be found on the [University's travel website](#).

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**Procedures**

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**Authorization of Travel**

All travel must be approved by the appropriate authority of the department paying for the travel. Travel expenses incurred that are not properly authorized are the personal responsibility of the traveler.

All individual travel must be paid by using a University-issued travel card or by personal funds which are reimbursable in accordance with this policy.

## International Travel

Travel outside the United States is considered international travel. International travel requests must be submitted at least 10 business days prior to departure date.

**Passports** - Reimbursement for expenses incurred in obtaining or renewing a passport may be made to a traveler who, in the regular course of their duties, is required to travel overseas in the furtherance of official University business. Passport expenses are reported on the same expense report for the traveler's trip.

**Fly America Act** – Travelers using Federal grant funds are required to fly on U.S. flag air carriers as stated in the Fly America Act even if foreign air carriers are cheaper or more convenient. Contact the Office of Research Compliance and Innovation for detailed Federal regulations.

**Export Control** – Travelers must comply with U.S. Export Controls that are regulated by the federal government. Travelers must familiarize themselves with these regulations prior to departure. Violating these government regulations can carry severe consequences for the individual and/or University.

**Travel Warnings** – The University may not sponsor international travel for research, work, travel and study abroad to any country or region for which the U.S. Department of State has issued a level 4 travel advisory (do not travel) or the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has issued a travel warning level 3 (avoid nonessential travel).

For a current list of countries that are under a travel advisory or warning, please refer to the U.S. Department of State website at: <https://www.state.gov/> and the CDC website at: <http://www.cdc.gov/travel/>.

**Duty of Care** – The University must do everything within its power to maintain contact with University travelers in case of an emergency.

**Immunizations** –The cost of immunizations required for University business travel purposes may be reimbursed with receipt(s).

**Exchange Rate** – All expenses are required to be recorded in local currency, with the currency conversion rate clearly noted on the expense report.

## **Travel Advances**

Travel advances for employees may be approved for an amount up to 80% of the meal per diem and must be accessed via the University travel card. Per diem and other travel advance requests for employees are on an exception basis only and must be approved by the Controller. The Controller has been designated by the President to approve travel advances.

Students traveling under individual authorizations or an employee traveling with a student(s) who is responsible for disbursing all funds for the trip may be advanced up to 100% of the amount of the authorization (excluding any prepaid University expense).

In the case of a cash travel advance for a student, the Travel Advance request must be approved by the traveler's appropriate approving authority and should be received by the Accounting Office no less than fifteen (15) business days prior to departure. The Controller has been designated by the President to approve travel advances.

Any unused amount of the travel advance must be returned to University and Student Business Services (USBS) within 5 business days of completion of the trip.

If an employee receives a travel advance and fails to submit a timely travel expense report, the University is authorized to recover the funds from the employee per policy [HR5065 - Employee Debt to the University](#).

## **Transportation**

**Mode of Transportation** - Transportation for the traveler should be by common carrier or personally-owned vehicle, whichever is most practical. The traveler is expected to exercise fiscal discretion when making travel arrangements. Additional costs incurred due to combining personal travel and business travel will be at the expense of the traveler.



**Air Travel** - The traveler is strongly encouraged to book well in advance of travel to secure the lowest fares. Travel by commercial airlines should be in coach or most economical and reasonable class.

The traveler may book travel through personal funds, University travel card or through the University's Authorized Travel Agency.

Any changes to airline reservations that result in an additional cost must be reviewed and approved by the appropriate approving authority.

**Airline Fees** – Non-optional fees imposed by the airline industry such as seat assignment fees, boarding pass fees, baggage fees and similar fees will be reimbursed, provided a receipt is furnished.

**Chartered Aircraft** - Chartered aircraft may be used if time and/or distance preclude ground travel or if a commercial air service is either unavailable or does not meet the needs of the traveler(s).

**Ground Transportation** - The traveler will be reimbursed for expenses when traveling to and from the common carrier, including parking. After arrival at the pre-approved destination, reasonable and justifiable transportation fares will be allowed for taxi or rideshares, including tips up to 20%.

**Automobile Travel** - Transportation that is by University-owned, personally-owned or courtesy vehicle. Automobile transportation may be used when air or other ground transportation cannot be arranged satisfactorily, or to reduce expenses.

**Personally-Owned Automobiles** - Mileage reimbursement rates are at the State of Tennessee's rate as indicated on the [University Travel Rate Schedule](#). The authorized mileage allowance includes all operating expenses such as gas, oil and repairs.

**University-Owned Automobiles** - When transportation is by University-owned automobile, all necessary repair bills, tolls,

parking, gasoline and storage expenses are allowable. Emergency out-of-pocket expenses, such as towing or emergency repairs, are allowable but must be accompanied by a proper receipt identifying the automobile and itemizing the service(s). Major repairs should be approved by campus officials prior to work being performed.

**Courtesy Automobile** – If an employee has a courtesy vehicle due to their association with the institution, they must use the courtesy mileage reimbursement rate of the [University Travel Rate Schedule](#).

**Auto accident reporting requirement** - If you are involved in an auto accident with a member of the general public or a vehicle not owned by an agency of the State of Tennessee, whether driving a state-owned, rental or personal automobile on University business, the accident must be reported to the State of Tennessee Auto Accident Call Center immediately. Refer to the [Reporting Automobile Accidents](#) web page for further details.

**Air Travel vs Ground Transportation** – The choice of air travel versus ground transportation is influenced by distance, time, cost and reasonable accommodation of the traveler's preference.

**Mileage** - Only mileage on official business may be reimbursed and must be submitted with supporting documentation. Fuel and vehicle maintenance are not reimbursable when claiming mileage.

Mileage includes all operating expenses such as gas, oil, maintenance and repairs. If an employee travels between multiple destinations without returning to their official work location or their residence, reimbursable mileage is the actual mileage between those destinations.

A request for local mileage reimbursement should be submitted once monthly.

**Car Rentals** - Charges for automobile rental will be allowed when it is a practical and reasonable means of transportation. Optional add-ons such as, but not limited to, insurance, satellite



radio, car seats, etc. will not be reimbursed. Mileage is not reimbursable when using a rental car.

Information on the University-preferred rental car vendor can be obtained on the [Procurement and Contract Services website](#).

**Toll and Ferry Fees** - Reasonable tolls and ferry fees will be allowed and reimbursed, when necessary.

## **Lodging**

Lodging expenses are allowed up to the maximum per diem rate or conference rate, or in circumstances when these rates are not available, the government rate. Expenses must be supported by receipts detailing daily room rates, taxes and fees, and the name(s) of the individual(s) occupying the room.

Home Share rentals are an allowable form of lodging (ex: Airbnb, VRBO).

**Conference Lodging** - Travelers attending a conference, seminar or meeting will be reimbursed for room and all taxes and fees at the conference group rate. Documentation must note the conference dates, designated hotel(s) and negotiated rates. Lodging expenses at locations other than the conference or overflow hotels will limit the reimbursement to the published conference rate(s).

**Shared Lodging** - If more than one person occupies a room, the lodging expense will be reimbursed to the traveler or travelers who incurred the expense. Each traveler must submit documentation showing the amount paid and method of payment they used for their portion of the expense.

Any lodging rate over per diem rate, conference rate or government rate may be considered with the appropriate justification for the higher rate.

## **Meals and Incidental Expenses (M&I)**

Meals while on authorized travel will be reimbursed at the per diem rate for meals and incidentals (M&I) based on the lodging location. Incidentals are for miscellaneous costs associated with travel such as tips for baggage handling, etc.



Meals & incidentals are not reimbursed if travel does not include an overnight stay. Refer to policy [BF4002 - Purchase of Meals](#) for business meal reimbursements.

**Day of Departure and Return** – Reimbursement shall be three-fourths of the appropriate M&I rate.

While on travel status if more than a single meal is provided as part of a state-sponsored session or conference, and used by the employee, then the employee should deduct the cost of those meals from the per diem for that day, using the schedule provided on the US General Service Administration website

### **Miscellaneous Expenses**

Telephone, Internet/Wi-Fi Access and Fax expenses for official business will be allowed.

Registration fees for conferences, conventions, seminars, meetings, etc., will be allowed including cost of official banquets and/or luncheons with a demonstrated business purpose. When the expenses for a banquet or event dinner at a meeting or conference are in excess of the per diem meal allowance, the excess will be allowed provided a receipt and proper explanation of the charge is submitted.

Legitimate business expenses incidental to travel will be allowed provided a receipt and proper explanation of the charge is submitted.

### **Expense Report**

A Travel Expense Report must be submitted with receipts or by exception with a Missing Receipt Statement no later than thirty (30) days after completion of the travel.

The traveler must make every attempt to obtain a copy of the original receipt from the merchant. The Missing Receipt Statement must be used only by exception when a receipt or copy cannot be obtained from the vendor. Repeated use of the statement in place of providing receipts could result in the expense being denied.



In accordance with IRS publication 463, reimbursement paid sixty (60) days after the date of travel may be considered as taxable income. All reimbursements will be paid via direct deposit in accordance with the State of Tennessee mandate. A separate Travel Expense Report must be submitted by each traveler seeking reimbursement of their expenses. The Travel Expense Report must be approved by a higher authority. Approving officials are responsible for the reasonableness of the claim. Expense reports submitted in an untimely manner, lacking proper documentation and/or otherwise incomplete may be subject to audit resulting in delayed reimbursement or rejection.

Only Business Expenses related to travel will be reimbursed. Any expenses related to personal activities during the travel period are not reimbursable. For travel within the continental US, reimbursements are based on amounts published by US General Services Administration (CONUS). Travel rates for Hawaii and Alaska can be found on the Department of Defense website (OCONUS). For international travel, the University reimburses the traveler in accordance with the published U.S. Department of State per diem amounts.

#### **Visitor Travel**

All terms and conditions of University travel regulations apply to official University visitors. Lodging, meals and incidentals will be based on the per diem rates where the lodging occurs. Visitors may pay their own airline tickets or lodging expenses and claim reimbursement. Travel advances cannot be authorized for visitors.

#### **Travel Packages**

Purchases of travel packages are not allowed. These package deals do not usually provide sufficient itemized pricing for each service purchased and therefore do not allow for proper comparison to the per diem rates or conference rates as required by policy.

#### **Exceptions**

The University Chief Financial Officer or designee shall approve exceptions to the travel policy.

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## Links

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### Travel

Resources <https://www.memphis.edu/travel/>

### Comprehensive Travel

Regulations of the State of Tennessee [https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/finance/documents/fa\\_policies/policy8.pdf](https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/finance/documents/fa_policies/policy8.pdf)

### Fly America Act

<https://www.gsa.gov/policy-regulations/policy/travel-management-policy/fly-america-act>

### Export Control

[https://www.memphis.edu/research/researchers/compliance/export\\_control.php](https://www.memphis.edu/research/researchers/compliance/export_control.php)

### Auto Accident Reporting

<https://www.memphis.edu/vehicles/>

### International Travel for Student Groups/Classes

[AA3025 - International Travel for University of Memphis Students](#)

### Purchase of Meals

[BF4002 - Purchase of Meals](#)

### Distribution of Salary Payments (Direct Deposit requirement)

[BF4004 - Distribution of Salary Payments](#)

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## Revision Dates

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BF4001 -Revised July 1, 2022  
BF4001 – Supersedes UM1309 April 26, 2018  
BF4001 – Revised June 30, 2020  
UM1309 - Revised: September 9, 2014  
UM1309 - Revised: June 19, 2014  
UM1309 - Revised: March 27, 2014  
UM1309 - Issued: May 17, 2011

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## Subject Areas:

Academic	Finance	General	Human Resources	Information Technology	Research	Student Affairs
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