LLE INSTRUCTION 1950R

SUBJECT: LLE TRAVEL and EXPENSE POLICY

REFERENCE:  
a. www.rochester.edu/adminfinance/finance/travel.html  
b. www.irs.gov for current mileage rate  
c. www.oanda.com for foreign currency exchange rates  
d. University Personnel Policy #132: Employment of out-of-state residents and establishment of out-of-state assignments  
http://www.rochester.edu/working/hr/policies/pdfpolicies/132.pdf

ENCLOSURES:  
(1) Travel Request and Pre-Approval Form  
(2) Request for Advance Travel Tickets, Form F-2  
(3) Daily Meal Expense Form  
(4) Employee/Student Expense Report, Forms F-3 and F-34

1. **Purpose:** To promulgate LLE procedures and guidelines for official travel in amplification of Reference (a).

2. **Discussion:** As stated in Reference (a) *It is the University’s policy to pay reasonable and necessary travel and conference expenses incurred on official University business subject to appropriate documentation. The University traveler should neither gain nor lose financially.* Additionally, the University desires to ensure that employees that travel for business purposes have available insurance coverage and safeguards. To ensure sound business practices and proper reporting, travel expenses must comply with federal regulations and sponsored agreements (e.g., federal cost regulations under the 2 CFR 200 Uniform Guidance). Toward that end, travelers are responsible for understanding this policy and instruction before planning and commencing travel on behalf of the University. Travelers must complete and submit appropriate travel documentation in a timely and accurate manner to demonstrate the expense was incurred, reasonable, and business related. The University is committed to, within reasonable and practical limitations, and with the appropriate documentary support from travelers, reimbursing travelers for out-of-pocket expenses as rapidly as possible. While *reasonable and necessary* are somewhat subjective and vary dependent on geographical area, some guidelines and limits are appropriate to ensure that overall travel and conference expenses are minimized.

3. **Procedures:** Reference (a) details the policies and procedures for University of Rochester business travel and conference expenses. Included are guidelines and procedures for payment, reimbursable expenses, documentation, insurance, etc. LLE procedures to implement the requirements of Reference (a) are detailed below.
a. **Approval**: All reimbursable business travel must be approved *in advance* using a Travel Request and Pre-Approval Form [Enclosure (1)]. Domestic travel is authorized by the appropriate Group Leader or Division Director. All international travel must be authorized by the Laboratory Director, as well as travel by direct reports (Division Directors). After travel arrangements are completed by the divisions’ Administrator/Administrative Assistants, the Travel Request and Pre-Approval Form will be forwarded to Accounting for review and filing. In addition to authorizing the travel per se, the Travel Request and Pre-Approval Form establishes and/or estimates expense expectations (e.g., lodging and meals). Additionally, if a rental car is not authorized in advance it will not be reimbursed except in special circumstances. Exceptions to these constraints require Division Director approval and concurrence of the Laboratory Controller. This form also serves as the official authorization of University business travel for insurance purposes. Traveling before or after the business event can be authorized by the Division Director, outlined on the Travel Request and Pre-Approval Form. The F-2, Request for Advance Travel Tickets Form [Enclosure (2)] is permission to purchase advance tickets, it is used after the approval the travel.

b. **Expense guidelines/limits**:  

   (1) Air travel will normally be by coach, tourist, or standard class. A business reason must be included on the advance request and/or expense report to justify the travel. Travelers may upgrade to roomier/extended seats, business, or first class at their personal expense including redemption of frequent flyer benefits. Special reduced air fares that are not cancellable or alterable without penalty should only be used with Division Director approval if the risk of change is very low or the cost differential is warranted. Credits from previous cancellations should be applied to future travel.  

   If an airline ticket can be purchased more than 30 days in advance of a trip, the ticket should be directly charged to a University account number using form F-2. The reservations must be made through the University’s contracted travel agency in this situation. If the traveler decides to use another travel agency, act as his/her own agent, or has less than a 30-day window, he/she must pay for the ticket with a personal credit card. Costs will not be reimbursed until the traveler returns from the trip. No finance charges can be reimbursed if incurred on a personal credit card. The University-contracted travel agency will match lower fares offered by other agents and is the recommended approach to eliminate the traveler’s liability for cancellation, changes, credit card payments, and interest finance charges.

   Travel by personal automobile is an allowable expense when it is the most economical and reasonable mode of travel under the circumstances. The current reimbursable expense per mile can be located on the IRS website [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov) [Reference (b)] and is for the use of the automobile regardless of the number of persons transported and is meant to cover all operating expenses such as insurance, fuel, repairs, and wear and tear.
Travelers may be able to obtain reduced airfares by arriving early or departing later from the travel destination than that which is required to fulfill University business. In such cases, additional food and lodging costs are permissible as long as the total trip expenses do not exceed the costs associated with that required to support the shorter, pure business trip duration. These situations should be discussed with the approver.

(2) Accommodations are expected to be comfortable and appropriate—not luxurious or extravagant. Where available, educational discounts or U.S. Government rates should be used, and the University’s tax exemption should be claimed when applicable. If a spouse accompanies the traveler, reimbursable lodging expenses will be limited to single occupancy rates.

(3) In order to control travel expenses, a reasonable rule of thumb for meals in most cities is $64 to $71 per day, plus $5 per day in incidentals. This is guidance from the gsa.gov site for reasonable allowances. University policy is not a meal allowance, or a per diem. Meal expenses will be reimbursed for the exact amounts incurred, although expenses viewed as excessive (or unreasonable) will be reviewed by the respective Division Director and Administrative Division Director and may require further documentation. For travel exceeding one day, nominal reimbursement for meals on the first and last days are determined by departure and return times and are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Meal</th>
<th>Allowed</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Breakfast</td>
<td>$17</td>
<td>Departure prior to/Return after 8:00 a.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lunch</td>
<td>$18</td>
<td>Departure prior to/return after noon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dinner</td>
<td>$34</td>
<td>Departure prior to/return after 6:00 p.m.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Individual travelers should pay for their own meal costs. In those instances when this is not practical, such as a group of employees gathered together, the most senior University person present should pay and then list the name of each person present on the Employee/Student Expense Report. Each meal must be listed using Enclosure (3) and *an itemized receipt must be submitted for any individual meal of $25 or greater*. A credit card slip or room bill is insufficient documentation.

(4) Meal meetings involving only UR personnel are not normally reimbursable. Exception: If the meeting is held, for reasons essential to University business, away from the University (for example, one or all of those attending are on official travel status), the department head or other responsible officer may approve its being charged as a University expense. An exception may also be made in the case of a special meeting called by a dean or vice president to enable personnel from different schools and colleges to meet on University business.

Expenses of meetings involving meals will be reimbursable only when the purpose of the meeting is to discuss University business which normally must
include non-University people. The expenses of both guests and University participants may be covered. Itemized receipt and list of participants is required.

(5) When business travel requires the use of a rental vehicle, the least costly available vehicle and rental arrangement suitable to the trip, taking into account the number of persons, luggage or equipment, are to be used. Since domestic travelers are protected by the University’s special travel insurance, extra accident or collision insurance offered by the rental company should not be purchased. If extra insurance is purchased, it will not be reimbursed except for overseas car rental insurance, which is allowed. GPS travel assistant devices require Division Director and LLE Administrative Division Director concurrence.

(6) If personal vacation time is combined with business travel and/or conferences, it must be disclosed to and approved by the Division Director in advance with dates specifically indicated on the Travel Request and Pre-Approval Form. This includes weekend days that are not a part of scheduled conference. If approved, reimbursements will apply only to allowable costs during the business days. The purpose of the disclosure is to ensure fair and reasonable treatment for both the traveler and the costs applied to the sponsor. The Division Director and Laboratory Director (foreign travel) will review the cost allocations on a case by case basis and may require some percentage of travel costs to be shared by the individual traveler.

(7) Foreign travel currency exchange will be based on actual exchange receipts, credit card receipts, or prevailing rates at [http://www.oanda.com](http://www.oanda.com) [Reference (c)].

(8) Other incidental expenses, including tips, taxis, parking, tolls, baggage or shipping fees, associated with business purpose will be reimbursed. The University will not reimburse travelers for expenses of a personal and/or entertainment nature including, but not limited to magazines, dry cleaning, movies, recreational fees, airline clubs, hotel clubs, and toiletries.

c. **Extended Travel Duration:** For an employee with a longer-term temporary travel assignment (generally longer than four weeks of continued duration), the employee should seek lodging at an Extended Stay or equivalent apartment-like accommodations to allow for shopping and meals at their lodging, in a similar case to being at home. As such, the traveler is provided a meal allowance of $35 per day. Dry cleaning is an allowable expense in this circumstance. Receipt requirements remain the same.

Employees that are assigned to a full-time, out-of-state assignment of longer duration (one year or more), fall under University Personnel Policy #132: Employment of out-of-state residents and establishment of out-of-state assignments [Reference (d)] and will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

d. **Travel arrangements:** The division Administrator/Administrative Assistant is responsible for making travel arrangements in consultation with the individual traveler.
Such arrangements must comply with those allowed on the completed Travel Request and Pre-Approval Form. Joint arrangements (e.g., lodging, rental car, private automobile, etc.) should be made when possible. The services of any travel agency including the UR contracted travel agency should be used in obtaining information, arranging reservations, and purchasing travel tickets. The division Administrator/Administrative Assistant should brief travelers on arrangements and the requirements of Reference (a) as required. IRS regulations and University policy requires the “Request for Advance Travel Tickets (Form F-2)” to be signed by the traveler. An original signature is preferred, but scans are also an acceptable alternative. Exceptions require a Signature Authority Delegation memorandum on file with the Administrative Division Director.

e. **Travel reimbursement:** An Employee/Student Expense Report, Enclosure (4) will be prepared by the division Administrator/Administrative Assistant. The traveler, within 15 business days of returning, will provide supporting information, including receipts, to their Administrator/Administrative Assistant. Itemized receipts are required for expenditures such as lodging, car rental, registration, and airline expenditures and for any other individual item of expense exceeding $25. Listing of an expense is also necessary when the total expense exceeds $25 (e.g., two taxis @ $15 per ride) even though the individual expenses are less than $25 and no receipt is required. In completing this report, the preparer must ensure that only expenses allowable, allocable, and reasonable are claimed. The completed Employee/Student Expense Report by the Administrator/Administrative Assistant will be reviewed by Accounting for accuracy and allowability of expenses. Once approved and initialed at the lower right-hand corner of the F-3/F-34, it can then be signed by the employee/student; supervisor; Division Director; and/or Laboratory Director; and Administrative Division Director before being processed for payment.

4. **Responsibilities:** In general, all persons traveling or entertaining on behalf of the University and those who approve associated expense reimbursements are responsible for knowledge of University travel policies and procedures and for compliance with sponsoring agency regulations.

All individuals requesting reimbursements are responsible for ensuring his/her incurrence of expense(s) and related reimbursement request complies with all applicable policies, is properly authorized, and is supported with required receipts and other documentation. The signature on the reimbursement request of the individual requesting reimbursement affirms that these responsibilities have been met.

a. **Traveler**

   (1) Be familiar with the travel guidelines and procedures of Reference (a).
   (2) Have travel authorized in advance using the Travel Request and Pre-Approval Form.
   (3) Submit information required to prepare an Employee/Student Expense Report to the Administrator/Administrative Assistant within 15 days of completing travel.
Sign the completed form once returned from Accounting’s review indicated by their initials in the lower right-hand corner.

(4) Sign “Request for Advance Travel Tickets (Form F-2)” and/or “Employee/Student Expense Report, Forms F-3 and F-34.” Exceptions to the traveler’s signature requires a Signature Authority Delegation memorandum be on file with the Administrative Division Director.

b. Division Administrator/Administrative Assistant

(1) Arrange travel and brief traveler on arrangements and requirements.
(2) Assist in the preparation of the Travel Request and Pre-Approval and F-2 Forms and forward completed forms to Accounting. For conferences and invited talks, attach some form of conference information including the affiliation, name, dates, and location. F-2, students are considered “Non-Employees.” Please check the box accordingly, leave “Empl ID” field blank, and receive Administrative Division Director’s signature as Department Head before receiving other signatures and booking travel.
(3) Complete Employee/Student Expense Reports using information provided by the traveler and the Travel Request and Pre-Approval Form and forward completed forms to Accounting for review.

c. Accounting

(1) Review Employee/Student Expense Reports submitted by the traveler.
(2) Verify encumbrance of Employee/Student Expenses.
(3) Once review of F-3/F-34 is complete, initial lower right-hand corner and return to division Administrator/Administrative Assistant to circulate for signatures.
(4) Once signatures have all been received, the Administration Division’s Administrative Assistant returns them to Accounting for scanning and processing. At that time, the Travel Request and Pre-Approval Form are matched to the travel before sent for payment processing.

d. Division Director and/or Other Authorizers

(1) Approve travel and allowed expenses for division personnel using the Travel Request and Pre-Approval Form.

(a) Employee/student must request on this form any additional dates of travel for University business and/or personal travel to be added to trip. This form is the official authorization of University business travel for insurance purposes. Therefore, any other University business or personal intentions must be documented and approved on this form in advance of trip and reservations.
(2) Approve F-2 Advances for employees. Students are considered “non-employees.” The Administrative Division Director’s signature is required at the top of the page for all students and other non-employees (Visiting Trustees, etc.).
(3) Countersign the Employee/Student Expense Report once it has been reviewed and initialed by Accounting and signed off by employee.

e. **Administrative Division Director/Laboratory Controller**

(1) Promulgate LLE travel and expense policy and resolve exceptions.
(2) Complete administrative review of all Employee/Student Expense Reports for travel paid from LLE accounts once Accounting has verified accuracy of expenditures and signatures have been acquired by the Employee/Student and their Division Director/Supervisor.
(3) Approve F-2 Advances for Administrative Employees. Authorize F-2 advances also for non-employees (this includes but is not limited to students).

f. **Laboratory Director**

(1) Approve Travel Request and Pre-Approval Form for all international travel.
(2) Approve F-2 Advances for direct reports
(3) Approve allowed expenses on the Employee Expense Report for Division Directors.

E. M. Campbell
Director