

Travel Procedure

West Virginia Northern Community College's (WVNCC) travel procedure provides guidelines for necessary and reasonable travel for authorized College business by employees, students, contracted service providers and governing board members. The intent of these guidelines is to set reasonable expectation of reimbursable travel expenses and the mechanisms to ensure appropriate authorization and reimbursement. Reimbursable expenses are defined as expenses that would not occur under normal, or every day circumstances.

Each traveler is responsible for reviewing the travel procedures. Accountability for carrying out the College travel procedure rests with the CFO or their designated representative. These procedures apply to all travel expenses regardless of the source of funds. At its discretion, the College Administration may impose more restrictive guidelines for budgetary or control reasons. Proper notice of changes to the procedures will be sent to all employees.

TRAVEL REQUEST

The Business Office will maintain forms for the request of travel. Detailed instructions will accompany the forms and the Business Office will designate a Travel Coordinator to offer assistance.

The intent of the Travel Request Form is to identify all expenses, including both those pre-paid by the College and those to be reimbursed, that will be incurred in association with the travel. Reasonable estimates may need to be employed, see Exhibit A, Customary Expenses.

Requests for travel should be e-mailed to the Travel Coordinator (Travel@wncc.edu) at least five business days before the start of travel. It is advised for more lead time with more involved arrangements such as air travel, hotel stays, etc.

While customary travel will be approved by the Travel Coordinator, when necessary, the supervisors and/or other College Administration approval will be obtained. The Supervisor will review the Travel Request for:

1. Completion of the form with accurate information
2. Benefit to the College and alignment with the College's Strategic Plan
3. Impact to the College's operation during the period of travel

If the travel is for professional development, the Professional Development Committee will determine eligibility and available funding. Endorsement from this committee will be required prior to approval.

If the travel is Perkins eligible, the Perkins Grant Administrator will determine eligibility and available funding. Endorsement from this person will be required prior to approval.

The Travel Coordinator will review the Travel Request for complete and accurate information, as well as appropriate approval if necessary. Any substantial deficiencies will result in a denial of travel with the traveler and authorizer informed of the deficiencies and instructions on how to submit correctly.

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If there are no deficiencies, the Travel Coordinator will note exact travel arrangements, which are based on cost and convenience, on the travel request. Travel Coordinator will return an approved Travel Request with exact travel details to the traveler, supervisor, and Professional Development / Perkins when appropriate. At this time, travel is approved and arrangements for travel should be booked.

TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS

No travel arrangements should be booked before an approved Travel Request is returned from the Travel Coordinator. The approved Travel Form will list the parameters of the travel.

It will be the traveler's responsibility for selecting the place of lodging and airline arrangements based on the approved guidelines. The Travel Coordinator will review comparable, standard arrangements for reasonability. If requested arrangements exceed standard arrangements, the Travel Coordinator will work with the traveler to understand specific requirements that may necessitate the increase in cost.

Items that can be pre-paid should be done by a P-Card holder within the traveler's department or division. If the arrangements exceed the P-Card holder's limits, or other circumstances arise, the Business Office will assist.

If travel is canceled for any reason, it is the traveler's responsibility to cancel all arrangements, including contact of the Travel Coordinator, to ensure unnecessary charges are not incurred.

TRAVEL SETTLEMENT

The Business Office will maintain forms for the settlement of travel. Detailed instructions will accompany the forms and the Business Office will designate a Travel Coordinator to offer assistance when needed. Any traveler who incurs expenses beyond fuel purchased on a College gas card, requires the submittal of a Travel Settlement.

The intent of the Travel Settlement Form is to identify all expenses, including both those pre-paid by the College and those to be reimbursed, that were incurred in association with the trip. Expenses should be evidenced with original, itemized receipts.

The traveler shall complete the Travel Settlement Form, attach supporting documentation, and submit to the Supervisor who authorized the trip for review. The review should include:

1. Completion of the form with accurate information
2. Comparison to original request for reasonability
3. Appropriate reconciliation of receipts

Any deficiencies should be corrected before Supervisor approval. After approval, the information is forwarded to the Travel Coordinator. The Travel Coordinator will review the information similarly to the authorizer. Any deficiencies will be returned to the traveler and authorizer with notes for correction. If there are no deficiencies, the Travel Settlement will be approved and forwarded to submittal to the state.

The state will issue paper check and mail to the address on the Travel Settlement form. If the preference is a direct deposit into a bank account, the appropriate form may be filled out. Direct Deposit

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Reimbursement forms can be obtained from the Business Office. (This is separate from HR/wage direct deposit.)

All Travel Settlements should be received by the Travel Coordinator within 30 days from the last day of Travel. Any Travel Settlements exceeding this time will only be granted with the exception from the CFO.

Any expenses not covered, deemed beyond the scope of the policy or an overpayment, will be the responsibility of the traveler.

PROVISIONS FOR SPECIAL ARRANGEMENTS

From time to time, there are special circumstances. Any traveler may make a reasonable proposal for alternative settlements. The proposal must be made as part of the request and must be approved by the Travel Coordinator. Some of the more common circumstances are listed below:

Intercampus Travel for Teaching –Faculty who are required to teach away from their home campus, but start and end on their home campus, may complete travel requests encompassing all similar trips for a calendar month. Similar trips mean the same starting and ending location for the same purpose.

Intercampus & Local Travel for Cabinet – Members of Cabinet travel frequently to other campuses and local meetings. IF a College vehicle is available and will not be needed for other travel, a Cabinet Member, or designee, may take the College car without the request process. It is understood that the only expense should be the gasoline in the vehicle and done with the College gas card. If a College car is not available, the regular request process should occur. Mileage tracking is still required.

Personal Car Convenience – If for any reason a traveler would prefer to use their personal vehicle over the availability of the state car or rental, arrangements can be made to reimburse for gasoline at current price and 25 MPG.

Travel at Start or End of Day – If there is convenience to be gained by leaving or returning to a travel's home at the start or end of the day, consideration will be made for personal car use. If coming to, and returning to, campus would add more than 25 miles to a trip, arrangements can be made using personal car for convenience.

Traveling With Other WVNCC Personnel – If there are multiple travelers that will be reimbursed by the college, each person is to keep their expenses / itemized receipts separate. Sharing transportation will also be the normal procedure unless valid exception can be demonstrated.

Combining Personal Travel with Business – It is the intent of the College to pay, and/or reimburse for only expenses directly related to the purpose of WVNCC business. If personal travel is added to the business travel, the traveler will pay the personal portion separately or repay the College any pre-paid expenses that are charged in error and not submit any reimbursement request, for personal portion of travel.

Personal expenses not related to College business should not be submitted and kept completely segregated.

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Exhibit A – Customary Expenses

College Vehicles - Fuel, oil, windshield washer fluid, parking fees, toll charges, and reasonable charges for car washing. All repair or service should be coordinated by calling (800) car-care, or (800) 227-2273.

Rental Vehicles - Rental fee of economy class vehicle, fuel charges, tolls, and parking.

Personal Vehicle - Mileage allowance, tolls and parking fees.

Ground Transportation – Ground transportation to and from hotels, airports, or railroad stations. The cost is to be less than, or equal to, the cost of a customary charge. Sharing of ground transportation when more than one College representative is traveling is expected.

Air Transportation – Travelers are expected to use the lowest-priced economy class rates available. Whenever possible, travelers should take advantage of discounts and purchase airline tickets 30 days in advance. The College will reimburse individuals for change or cancellation penalties imposed by the airlines provided the change or cancellation was caused by unavoidable circumstances.

Airport Parking - Long-term airport parking

Lodging – Hotel accommodations can vary greatly. The Travel Coordinator will do their best to accommodate specific requests, but price will be a large factor. If a conference is hosted in a hotel, that will be considered primary choice with less consideration of cost. Tipping for housekeeping service should not exceed \$2 / night. In-room amenities and room service are not included.

Meals - Actual meal expenses will be reimbursed based on \$66 for in-state and the US GSA Per Diem rates with gratuities included for out-of-state. It is recognized that the location of travel can greatly affect these estimates. All expenses should be reasonable for the area and the CFO may provide an exception during the Travel Approval Process to exceed the daily per diem. Alcohol will not be reimbursed. Note – Receipts for reimbursement must be itemized.

The following is a list of items that are non-reimbursable expenses; in-room movies or pay TV; laundry; personal telephone calls; personal toiletries; mini-bar refreshments; entertainment or recreational activities; and/or newspapers.

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TRAVEL TERMS & CONDITIONS

Travel Status - Employees are considered to be on travel status only if traveling on approved College business away from both home and the traveler's assigned campus address. However, reimbursement for lodging and meals will occur only if the destination is fifty miles or more from employee's assigned campus address or home when necessary.

Personal Travel - When personal and business travel is combined, expenses must be clearly documented and may not exceed the lowest available cost of a direct or uninterrupted route. If the traveler uses an indirect route or interrupts travel for personal convenience, any additional expenses incurred are the sole responsibility of the traveler.

Personal Travel Companion - Travel expenses for an employee's friends or family that may travel with the employee are not reimbursable. All employee expenses should be segregated from travel companion(s). The College discourages personal travel companion(s) from traveling with employees while on College business.

Violations & Fines - The College will not reimburse employees for parking tickets, fines for moving violations, or vehicle towing charges for parking violations.

College Vehicles - Any operator driving a College-owned vehicle must be employed by, or working on behalf of (i.e. official students), the College. The operator must have a valid driver's license on file in the Business Office, and comply with all traffic laws. College-owned vehicles are to be used for official business only. Operators of such vehicles should only transport passengers who are also traveling on official business. Under no circumstances are the travelers permitted to transport or consume alcohol prior to or while operating a state/college owned vehicle. Violations of this procedure will result in appropriate disciplinary action.

Rental Vehicles - The use of a rental car should be justified as an economical and/or business necessity. All rental arrangements will be made through the Travel Coordinator and will be a compact, economy, or mid- sized car unless an upgrade is necessary for specific circumstances; the traveler will not be reimbursed for the difference in price unless the traveler provides a specific business or medical reason for the upgrade, which must be explained on the Travel Request Form.

Personal Vehicle - Reimbursement for personal vehicle use will be determined at the then current rate established by the College, with guidance from the State of WV. This rate is subject to change. Mileage is measured from the College to the destination and return. Mileage between an employee's residence and place of work is not reimbursed. When two or more passengers travel in one private automobile on official College business, only one employee may claim reimbursement for mileage.

Ground Transportation - The costs of taxis or other transportation to and from hotels, airports, or railroad stations in connection with business activities is reimbursable. The costs of limousine or transporter services are allowed as a reimbursable expense only if the cost is less than, or equal to, the cost of a customary taxi charge. Long-term airport parking is reimbursable but should be avoided when alternative arrangements for travel to and from airports will not exceed the cost of a round-trip taxi or other transporter service.

Meals - Employees traveling on College business are eligible for reimbursement for their personal meal expenses including gratuity. Employees must submit detailed receipts for their actual meal expenses. Alcohol will not be reimbursed.

Unexpected Travel - Items not approved in the Travel Request process will be examined on an individual basis and cannot be guaranteed reimbursement. If possible, it is suggested to call the Travel Coordinate to discuss options prior to arrangements being made.