

Travel Policy and Procedures

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I. PURPOSE

To clarify the requirements of, and procedures for, making travel arrangements, reporting, and approval of expenses incurred while traveling on University business. Departments may develop more specific or restrictive guidelines in compliance with this policy.

II. AUTHORIZED TRAVEL AGENCY

Egencia (formerly Expedia Corporate) (www.egencia.com) is Northeastern's preferred online and full service travel agency for all individual business travel arrangements.

III. POLICY

It is the policy of Northeastern University to pay for or reimburse employees for actual, reasonable, and proper expenditures incurred in the conduct of the University's business up to any predetermined limits. Such expenditures shall be reasonable in amount and proper in nature and the purpose of the expense shall conform with sound, ethical and legal standards of conduct expected of all Northeastern University employees.

"Reasonable" is defined as that which enables an employee to live comfortably, but not extravagantly while away from home. Employees are expected to exercise the care normally exercised while operating on their own funds.

Good business practice requires that all expenditures be clearly and correctly recorded; any unusual items or amounts must be fully explained. Receipts are recommended for all expenditures and are required for all expenditures of \$75.00 or more.

Each department head is responsible for both approving travel requests and for the careful review and approval of expenses reported by his/her employees. The department head should ensure that the expense was necessary to accomplish the University's objectives and that expenditures were in accordance with this policy. Department heads must sign their names on each expense report. Management is also responsible for informing new employees as to proper travel and lodging policy and procedures while on University business.

IV. GENERAL INFORMATION

Employees must notify their direct supervisor of all travel plans and provide both a complete travel itinerary and emergency contact number prior to departure.

Travelers should exercise common sense in making travel arrangements with respect to the number of employees from a single department and/or senior management/officers traveling together.

V. AIR TRAVEL

Air travel will be charged to either a procurement card (if authorized) or personal credit card. Air travel can not be charged to a central account or ghost card.

It is the policy of the University to effect maximum practical savings in air travel expenses. All employees should book the lowest fare routing (LFR) according to the following guidelines:

On non-stop flights when one airline is less expensive than another, the traveler must take the least expensive regardless of the difference in cost or airline preference.

When bookings can be made with round-trip savings of at least \$200, one-stop flights without a change of planes will be mandatory.

When bookings can be made with round-trip savings of \$300, flights with not more than one scheduled airplane transfer each way will be mandatory.

Reasonable departure and arrival times allowing no more than a 1-1/2 hour change in requested departure and arrival times should be arranged.

The University has negotiated discounted airfares that are only available when making reservations through Egencia (formerly Expedia Corporate). These discounts are available to all employees traveling on University business.

IMPORTANT: All travelers are urged to book their reservations as far in advance as possible to maximize savings while taking into account airline re-ticketing and cancellation penalties.

All personnel should travel coach (or on special reduced fares, when available), except for the following situations:

Business Class Travel will be allowed only in the following circumstances:

On flights exceeding 7 or more hours flying time.

Whenever business class is available at no extra charge relative to LFR.

First Class Travel is not reimbursable.

Airline incentives which provide benefits directly to the traveler, such as mileage programs, must not be considered in selecting a particular flight or airline.

Business trips which also include travel for personal reasons will be reimbursed only for the direct or business portion of the trip, based on accommodations actually used for business purposes. Ticket stubs or legible copies covering the routing of both the direct and indirect portion of the trip should be attached.

The purchase of flight or luggage insurance is not reimbursable.

VI. AUTOMOBILE RENTALS

Rental vehicles should only be used when absolutely necessary to conduct business, not as a personal convenience and should be rented only for the specific time needed.

Rental vehicles normally should not be used unless the cost is less than that of other available transportation, such as taxis or airport shuttle bus services, or the circumstances make a rental car the only reasonable means of travel.

Airport shuttle bus service and taxis should be used as transportation unless these are not available or economical.

The University has contractual relationships with two auto rental companies. The contract rates include all insurance coverage (including collision damage waiver [CDW] where the auto rental agency assumes the risk of loss of, or damage to, the rental vehicle-except where the loss or damage results from a violation of the terms of the rental agreement). Business travelers should decline collision damage waiver insurance when

renting a car from one of the two preferred vendors. Collision damage waiver insurance, if selected, is not reimbursable.

If a car rental company other than preferred vendor is used, all liability will be the personal responsibility of the traveler.

The guidelines for car rentals are as follows:

- 1 or 2 people - intermediate size or below
- 3 or more people - full size or below

When returning a vehicle, please adhere to the car rental company's policy regarding refueling.

All automotive accidents which occur while using a rental car on University business must be reported immediately, in writing, to the Treasurer's Office, 184 Richards Hall, extension 2240.

Fines or other expenses incurred as a result of traffic violations on University business are the personal responsibility of the violator.

VII. PERSONAL AUTOMOBILES

Employees required to utilize personal vehicles for business travel will be reimbursed. The current rate is posted on the Expense Reimbursement Voucher form located on Accounts Payable's website, [click here](#). The number of miles reimbursed is equal to actual miles driven, less the normal commuting miles (i.e., round trip distance between home and the University). The amount to be reimbursed cannot be in excess of the cost of alternate means of transportation, such as air travel. Properly documented parking fees and toll charges are allowed for travel with a personal or rental car.

VIII. LODGING

Egencia (formerly Expedia Corporate) (www.egencia.com) can make all hotel reservations for you. Accommodations should be at a reasonable cost, comfortable and convenient to the place of business. Cost of lodging should be listed daily on the expense report and should begin with the day of registration. For extended residence, the employee should attempt to obtain accommodations on a weekly or monthly basis at reduced rates. Travelers should check with for pre-negotiated, long-term extended stay rates. Attention should be paid to restrictions (cancellation policy, etc.).

In instances of shared rooms, the names of both occupants and room cost allocation should be explained on the expense report. It is expected that employees will patronize reasonably priced establishments in the proximity of the work location to minimize the cost of local transportation.

Expense reports must detail and properly categorize lodging, meals, and miscellaneous expenses.

In the event it is necessary to change or cancel guaranteed reservations, it is the responsibility of the traveler to cancel the reservations either by direct contact or through Egencia (www.egencia.com). If you do cancel by direct contact, be sure to obtain a cancellation number or the name of the person who took your cancellation call. Please note the cancellation policy listed on your itinerary.

Charges incurred for items such as laundry, movies, health club facilities, etc. are personal expenses and are not eligible for reimbursement. (Laundry may be permitted for extended trips of five days or more).

IX. SUBSTITUTION OF EXPENSES

Reimbursement will not be made for any expenditure which is in lieu of the normally reimbursable type of expense, e.g., when an employee elects to stay at a relative's or friend's home instead of commercial lodging.

X. BUSINESS MEALS

Meal reimbursement during travel is permissible. Employees are expected to exercise good judgment when ordering meals. Recognizing that there are regional differences in meal costs, specific dollar guidelines have not been provided in this document. It is up to the employee to be reasonable in incurring meal costs and it is the responsibility of the department head to review these charges for reasonableness.

XI. OTHER REIMBURSABLE EXPENSES

Other reimbursable expenses include:

- Gratuities (paid in accordance with local custom).
- Telephone and FAX (limited to business purposes and reasonable personal calls).
- All fully explained miscellaneous expenses.

XII. EXCLUSIONS

There are certain expenses which the University believes are not necessary in the performance of the University's requirements; and, therefore, in most cases, are not reimbursable. A partial listing of some of these non-reimbursable items is as follows:

- Dues on airline clubs;
- Tolls and parking in the course of a normal home-to-work, work-to-home routine;
- Fines for traffic violations;
- Damages to an employee's personal vehicle while on company business;
- Loss of personal property - clothes, jewelry, etc.;
- Loss of university- paid airline tickets, or personal funds;

- Insurance of personal property or flight insurance;
- Purchase of clothing;
- Personal grooming items;
- Reimbursement for membership fees covering personal credit cards
- Medical expenses;
- Donations;
- Laundry (except for extended trips);
- Florist expenses;
- Magazines, periodicals, books, except those required for company business;
- Health club or recreational events;
- Cost of travelers' checks on domestic travel.

XIII. TRAVEL ACCIDENT POLICY

Northeastern University provides \$250,000 per trip Travel Accident Coverage (life insurance) for all full-time salaried employees of the University (except truck drivers and their helpers) while they are traveling on official business for the University. This is life insurance coverage for the period of official travel and will be in effect from the time employees leave their residence or regular place of employment, whichever occurs first, until the employee returns. There are the usual exceptions, which include suicide, loss caused by an act of declared or undeclared war, commutation travel (commuting), or other similar circumstances. Individually purchased insurance will not be a reimbursable expense. In addition, the procurement credit card provides \$400,000 in accident death coverage when travel arrangements are made with the procurement credit card.

XIV. TRAVEL EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENTS

Credit cards, either a personal credit card or procurement credit card, are the methods for making and paying for travel arrangements.

If a personal credit card is used, travel expense vouchers should be properly completed, approved and forwarded to the Accounts Payable office within 10 business days of the traveler's return.

If a procurement credit card is used, a *travel expense vouchers* is not needed since expenses incurred are directly billed to the university. ATM privileges may, in a very limited number of situations, be extended to procurement credit card holders thereby enabling the traveler to be reimbursed for out-of-pocket expenses without completing a *travel expense voucher*.

Receipts for all expenses incurred are preferable and are required for all expenses of \$75.00 or more.

If a mandatory receipt is missing, an explanatory memo prepared by the traveler must be provided.

Incomplete or inaccurate Travel Expense Vouchers will be returned to the employee for correction.

Travel Expense Vouchers can be obtained at the Accounts Payable Office at 245 Richards Hall.

XV. PROCEDURES FOR MAKING TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS

Egencia is the university's preferred travel agency for individual business travel. Travelers should utilize Egencia's on-line booking tool at egencia.com for airline, hotel and auto rental arrangements. If agent assistance is required, contact Egencia at 800.401.2932.

Please go to the following website for detailed information:

<http://www.purchasing.neu.edu/travel/mainta.html>

When making air travel arrangements it is important to allow as much lead time as possible prior to departure so that savings can be maximized.

Group Travel

Carlson Wagonlit Travel is the university's preferred travel agency for group travel and has travel specialists who will provide assistance for group travel. Please contact one of the Carlson Wagonlit Travel reservation associates at 800.273.6973.

Problems/Complaints

Should you experience any problems while making travel arrangements or during your trip, please contact the either Egencia (formerly Expedia Corporate) or Carlson Wagonlit Travel.

The Purchasing Department is responsible for administering travel services and should be notified if problems arise.

Personal Vacation Travel

Egencia (formerly Expedia Corporate) is limited to business travel. Expedia.com is a very good online booking tool to assist University employees in making personal vacation travel arrangements. Personal travel should be paid by personal credit card or check.

XVI. SUMMARY

The University's administration feels that the guidelines presented are fair and reasonable and that travelers should comply with them as presented. However, we realize that there will be circumstances in which exceptions to the travel policy may be necessary, such as adherence to government regulations regarding the use of government funds by Sponsored Projects Administration travelers. Any exceptions should be discussed with the employees' supervisor prior to the trip and will require advance approval from their department head.

All policies and procedures set forth herein may be amended from time to time.