

TRAVEL GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES FOR STUDENTS

It is extremely important that you inform the Honors College of all travel plans at least 10 business days prior to your departure date. You will need written approval of funding to receive reimbursements.

Air or Train Travel

In most cases, you are responsible for arranging your own transportation to and from your destination. You are also responsible for seeking the most cost-effective option(s). Normally, it is only cost-effective to use air transportation when a round trip exceeds 500 miles. We encourage you to look for the best deals that you can find through sites such as Travelocity, Orbitz, Expedia, etc. Be aware that reserving flights or train tickets online will require you to use your own personal charge card. You will be reimbursed for the amount charged once you have returned to VCU and submitted the proper documentation for reimbursement. VCU will not reimburse for first- or business-class tickets; travelers must fly coach/economy.

*****Please see the “Documentation Checklist for Travel Reimbursements” (attached).**

Car Travel

In the event that your travel does not exceed 500 miles round trip, you should consider using a personal vehicle. You may be reimbursed up to the current GSA mileage rate (approximately \$.54/mile), depending on total miles traveled. Mileage is calculated from your starting point to the travel destination and back. You may not request additional reimbursement for gas expenses; this is covered in the mileage rate. **The Honors College does not reimburse car rentals for students.**

Meals and Incidental Expenses (M&IE)

You do not need to save receipts for meals, as the state uses set per diem allowances, which vary depending on your travel location. To determine the per diem meal rates for your destination, please go to: <https://www.gsa.gov/portal/content/104877> . Any location not listed will be allowed the standard rate of \$46.00 per day for meals and incidental expenses.

Please be aware that your allowable M&IE amount includes tips, taxes, and transportation to/from where meals are taken. Therefore you cannot claim separate taxi reimbursement for transportation to or from a dining establishment.

IMPORTANT TO KNOW:

- If you register for a conference and some (or all) meals are covered under the registration fee, you are obligated to inform us which ones so that we can make the necessary adjustments to your per diem allowances.
- Per diem meal rates are reduced by 25% on the days of travel to and from your destination.
- Trips that do not include an overnight stay are not eligible for M&IE reimbursements.
- Under some circumstances, the Honors College may cap daily meal reimbursement at an amount lower than the maximum allowable per diem rate.

Hotels

The allowable reimbursement rate for hotels fluctuates widely depending on the city where you are staying. For a current listing of per diem hotel rates, please go to: <http://www.gsa.gov/portal/category/21287>. Any location not listed will be allowed the standard base rate of \$77.00 per night (before taxes and surcharges).

You are strongly encouraged not to exceed the maximum per diem rate. If you do find it necessary to exceed this rate, Accounts Payable requires that you **provide a valid written reason for doing so**. Examples of valid reasons include:

- It is the conference hotel.
- All other hotels in the area are booked and you could not obtain reservations elsewhere.
- It is the cheapest hotel in the vicinity of your conference or other engagement (in which case you must provide rate quotes from three nearby hotels that are more expensive than the one you have chosen).
- The proximity of the location will enable you to save substantially on ground transportation, and is thus the most economical.

With reasonable justification, you may be eligible to receive reimbursement of up to double the allowable state rate for lodging at a given location. Overages beyond that, however, will not be reimbursed by VCU.

In most cases, you are responsible for making your own lodging arrangements. As with flights, you can often find good deals online through such sites as Travelocity, Expedia, Orbitz, Airbnb, etc.

Sharing Hotel Rooms

If two or more people share a single hotel room, each person should request a separate **itemized** statement at checkout on which his/her name appears. Some hotels will provide separate statements; some will not. If the hotel refuses to issue separate billing statements, please be sure that the **names of ALL guests** in the room appear on the single statement, and that each guest receives a copy of it.

• Payment Options:

- If separate billing statements are issued, each guest pays his/her own bill, obtains a cash or credit card receipt showing exact amount paid, and files for reimbursement later. Remember to save your bill.
- If a single bill is issued:
 - You should each attempt to pay your own portion of the bill. Remember to obtain individual cash or credit card receipts showing the amount paid, as well as a copy of the hotel billing statement that includes your name as a registered guest.
 - If for some reason the hotel does not allow splitting the cost between guests, one person can pay the full amount and request full reimbursement for it later. As long as the base rate of the room divided by the number of guests does not exceed the allowable state rate, this is not a problem. ****Please just be sure that the names of all guests appear on the billing statement.**
 - **Do not, under any circumstances, exchange money among yourselves**— Accounts Payable will not reimburse such transactions.

****Please see the “Documentation Checklist for Travel Reimbursements” (attached).**

Parking, Tolls, and Taxis

Parking, tolls, and taxi expenses **for business purposes only** are reimbursable.

****Please see the “Documentation Checklist for Travel Reimbursements” (attached).**

Conference Registration

Registration fees are reimbursable. As a reminder: if you are going to request reimbursement for meal per diem, you must disclose any meals that are covered by the registration fee.

****Please see the “Documentation Checklist for Travel Reimbursements” (attached).**

IMPORTANT TO KNOW:

- You should use **YOUR OWN** personal credit card and/or personal checks when making non-cash travel purchases (i.e. online payments) so as to ensure reimbursement of expenses. Parents or family members should not use their checks/credit cards to pay on your behalf, as we can only issue reimbursements that were paid by the student traveling and making the reimbursement request. We do not reimburse parents or family members. If this poses a problem for you, please let us know immediately.
- Do not mark or use highlighters on receipts—doing so may cause the print to fade.
- Travel reimbursement checks are sent to your permanent address as it is listed in eServices/Banner.
- If you are currently on VCU payroll, reimbursements will be deposited directly into your bank account
- You should submit all travel documentation within **two weeks** of your return in order to ensure reimbursement. The sooner that you provide your documentation, the sooner you will be reimbursed. Please do not delay in this. The Honors College reserves the right to deny reimbursement requests received a month or more after your return.

Please print the page below and keep them with you on your trip as a reference/checklist for what documents you will need to provide upon your return...

DOCUMENTATION CHECKLIST FOR TRAVEL REIMBURSEMENTS

___ If you are not a VCU employee, fill out and submit a Non-Employee Reimbursement Form (below). This can be done before your travel to expedite your reimbursement.

PROOF OF BUSINESS PURPOSE

___ Ex: Conference registration documentation (such as a letter or email from the conference authority stating that you have registered for the event). Accounts Payable will not authorize reimbursement unless a valid business purpose has been established.

AIR OR TRAIN TRAVEL EXPENSES

___ **Printed flight or train itinerary** showing total cost, class (VCU will not reimburse for business or first class travel), dates, and destination(s) of travel (an email receipt/confirmation is fine).

___ **Boarding passes or ticket stubs.** Many of these are electronic; feel free to submit screenshots in PDF format to confirm travel.

PERSONAL VEHICLE EXPENSES

___ **Full address** of both your starting point (can be the Honors College or your residence) and destination. Mileage will be automatically calculated between these points, including the return trip.

HOTEL EXPENSES

___ **ITEMIZED** statement from hotel reflecting total amount paid (the bill or receipt **must** show breakdown of taxes, fees, room charges, etc.). Must show a zero balance.

CONFERENCE REGISTRATION EXPENSES

___ Receipt of payment (usually an email). Please be sure to note any meals that conference registration fees cover so that they may be deducted from meal per diem requests.

TAXIS/SHUTTLE/UBER/RAIL TRANSPORTATION

___ Printed receipts for each cab trip.

___ **Written explanation of business purpose** (can be a brief note attached to the receipt).

****Please remember that taxis to and from where meals are taken will not be reimbursed, as they are already covered under the M&IE allowance.**

REIMBURSEMENT FOR ANYTHING ELSE...

___ All receipts.

___ **Written explanation of legitimate business purpose.**

Please contact Kate Schmitz at 804.828.1803 if you have any additional questions regarding reimbursements.

Virginia Commonwealth University
Procurement Services
Non-Employee Reimbursement Set-up
Not for VCU employee reimbursements

The purpose of this form is to request a non-employee be added to Banner for the purpose of receiving a reimbursement through Chrome River. After receiving the form, Procurement Services will validate the information provided with the IRS and set up the person in Banner accordingly. Non-employee Banner information is sent to Chrome River. Non-employees are not given access to Chrome River.

Email the completed form to Procurement Services' secure email vendinfo@vcu.edu

Privacy Reminder:

- Delete email from your sent folder
• Do not keep a hard copy
• Do not include in Chrome River documentation

Full Legal Name: First Last M.I.

Home Address*: City: State: Zip: Country:

*A completed wire transfer form http://procurement.vcu.edu/files/DomesticWiresForm.pdf must be included with the Chrome River expense reimbursement request documentation for individuals with a foreign address. Do not send wire transfer form to vendinfo@vcu.edu.

Social Security Number (SSN)

If the individual is currently in Banner, provide Banner Vendor Number (V#)*
Banner Vendor number (V#)

*Please confirm that the individual's "Remit to" address in Banner (FTMVEND) is correct

Certification: Under penalties of perjury, I certify that:

The number(s) shown on this form is my correct taxpayer identification number(s) and (2) I am a US person (including a US resident alien), and (3) I am not subject to backup withholding either because I have not been notified that I am subject to backup withholding as a result of a failure to report all interest or dividends, or the Internal Revenue Service has notified me that I am no longer subject to backup withholding. You must cross out item (3) above if IRS has notified you that you are currently subject to backup withholding because of underreporting interest or dividends on your tax return.

Non-Employee Signature

Date