

Advocacy Competition Travel Instructions

Cash advances issued by the University now replace personal reimbursements as the preferred method of funding advocacy competition travel. This flyer explains how to plan and take your trip, and report your expenses when you return.

Sign up for travel insurance

When traveling on official University business, employees and students are **covered worldwide, 24 hours a day, for a wide variety of accidents and incidents**. Registration information will verify eligibility to the insurance company in the event a traveler needs to use any benefit, request travel assistance services, or submit a claim.

What you need to do:

Register before each departure and get a **new confirmation for each trip**. Register at <http://www.uctravel.org>. Take a copy of the printed confirmation with you on your trip and be sure to leave copies with your family.

Request your travel advance

The amount of your cash advance will be based on an estimate of your trip expenses for hotel, ground transportation, meals and miscellaneous purchases. Your travel advance paperwork must be **received in the campus Travel office** not less than 10 business days before your departure.

What you need to do:

At least **30 days before departure**, contact FSU assistant, Barbara Andersen, to obtain a budget worksheet. Once Bill Fernholz has approved your proposed trip budget, Barbara will work with you to complete and submit your travel advance paperwork which is due to the Travel office about two weeks before you depart.

Receive your travel advance

Cash advances are available as a direct deposit to your designated bank account or as a paper check you can pick up in person at the Cashier's Office in University Hall. You can tap this advance via your own ATM or credit card to make your trip-related purchases.

What you need to do:

Sign up for electronic funds transfer (EFT) on the web at <http://eftstudent.berkeley.edu/>. This is the fastest way to receive your advance. Otherwise, you will receive a phone call or email alert when your travel advance paper check is ready for pick up.

Buy your airline ticket

Barbara Andersen will arrange airline itineraries for all competition travelers via the campus partner agency, Carlson Wagonlit Travel. Your airline ticket will be sent directly to you via email by the travel agency.

What you need to do:

Contact Barbara Andersen to arrange your itinerary. This allows the cost of your airfare to be charged directly to the University and avoids the need for individual reimbursements after a trip. If you paid any airport fees while traveling – itinerary changes and bag checks, for example - remember to keep receipts and make a note of the business purpose for the expense.

Get around on the ground

Use local public transportation such as buses, subway, or streetcars when possible. Shuttle fares to and from an airport can be reimbursed. Taxi service should be used only when public transportation or shuttles are impractical or unavailable. **Park/Sleep/Fly packages** offered by SF and Oakland airport hotels are not eligible for reimbursement as a business-related expense.

What you need to do:

Ask the taxi or shuttle driver for a receipt. When no receipts are available, make a note of expenses, including any tips, as you incur them.

Get around in your own car

If you prefer driving your own automobile to your destination, instead of flying, reimbursement for expenses while in transit will be limited to the cost of regular commercial coach airfare plus your estimated transportation costs to and from the nearest airport.

When you drive your private automobile, you can be reimbursed for mileage at the current IRS rate of 55¢ per mile (as of Jan 2009). You cannot be reimbursed for gasoline purchases or for any roadside assistance if you have car trouble during your trip. The IRS includes these costs in the standard mileage rate.

What you need to do:

Make sure you carry adequate liability coverage if you plan to carpool with your fellow competitors. The driver can tap the "coach airfare equivalent" rule for each competitor traveling in the same vehicle, up to an amount equivalent to mileage. **A mileage "receipt" is the page from any mapping program** that shows the number of miles between your point of departure and your destination – for a roundtrip, double the mileage. You'll be asked to **provide your vehicle license number and to certify that you carry liability insurance** in order to receive mileage reimbursement (required by policy).

Advocacy Competition Travel Instructions *(continued)*

Get around in a rental car

Hertz and National/Enterprise are the preferred vendors for the University – reservations can be made online or by phone and preferred rates are available for both business-related and personal rentals. Visit <http://travel.berkeley.edu/Car/CarTravel.htm> for more information about how to access these discounted rates.

Students should purchase additional insurance since campus rental car contract benefits apply only to employees. Be aware that there may be minimum age requirements for drivers.

Rent a compact or economy automobile, unless you have justification and advance approval for renting a larger vehicle.

Gasoline purchases can be reimbursed when you drive a rental car.

What you need to do:

When you return your car, go inside to the cashier and pay your bill. You'll be able to get the required detailed receipt showing charges and payment *and* you'll ensure that the agency doesn't claim vehicle damage later. Make sure you get **receipts for gasoline purchases**.

Sleep, eat and tip

Hotel lodging includes a single-occupancy room rate, along with associated taxes and fees. Sharing your room with fellow competitors is usually required.

Personal services are not eligible for payment or reimbursement as business expenses. This includes mini-bar use, in-room movies, spa treatments, and smoking fines. If these charges appear on your bill, deduct them from the total and make sure you clearly indicate that they are not to be reimbursed as business expenses.

If you need to cancel a hotel reservation, make sure to do this in advance to avoid a penalty, and get a cancellation number.

Reimbursement for meals and incidentals is capped at \$45 per day, or \$8/breakfast, \$12/lunch, \$25/dinner. This is not a per diem. You will be reimbursed only for daily actual expenses, up to a maximum of \$45. Unused portions of the \$45 limit do not carry over from one day to the next. For trips of less than 24 hours, without an overnight stay, there is no reimbursement for meals and incidentals.

"Incidentals" are tips and gratuities paid to baggage handlers, porters, bellhops, maids and such.

Miscellaneous expenses, such as internet fees, business phone calls, and copying or fax charges at your destination, can be reimbursed. Laundry expenses to prepare clothing for a trip are not eligible for reimbursement.

What you need to do:

Avoid using express check-out. Instead, check out at the front desk and obtain the required **"zero balance" receipt** showing both your charges *and* your payment.

If you shared a room, note the names of your roommates on your bill. If you prefer to pay for your own expenses separately, ask the front desk if the hotel can provide "split" bills.

Unless you have a **compelling business reason for not having cancelled a hotel reservation** in advance, you may find that the penalty – typically the cost of one night's stay – will not be eligible for reimbursement as a business expense.

Get cash register or credit card receipts for your meal purchases. If a receipt cannot be provided by the vendor, then make a note of your actual expense. Whenever possible, travelers should use cash advances to pay for their own meals. **Group meals** paid by an individual traveler will be reimbursed at 100% of the expense, up to the per-person allowance for entertainment. Indicate group meals by including the names of participants on your receipt.

Since there are no receipts associated with incidental expenses, make a note of your reasonable actual costs as you incur them.

Whenever possible, get a receipt for the miscellaneous expense and make a note of the business purpose on it.

Report your trip expenses

Report how you used your cash advance as soon as you return from your trip. Any unused portion of your advance must be refunded to the University. Only one advance per traveler may be outstanding at any time and the unused portion from one trip cannot be carried over to a future trip. Unreported advances can be recovered from students as a CARS charge.

What you need to do:

Bring your trip receipts to Barbara Andersen immediately following your return to campus. Barbara will complete a Travel Report Form on your behalf and calculate the amount of any unused cash advance that will need to be refunded to the UC Regents. Barbara also tracks the status of pending payments directly with Business Services on your behalf.

Updated 8/7/09