

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA TRAVEL POLICY

DOMESTIC TRIPS

*This flyer explains how to adequately plan and substantiate the most common expenses you will incur during domestic trips with a single destination or multiple destinations. You may use the Berkeley Law Travel Report Form—Domestic Trips or the travel form templates available on the [CSS website](#). You should submit your travel report **within 45 days** of your return to home or office.*

BUSINESS TRAVEL INSURANCE

When traveling on official University business and properly insured, employees and students are **covered worldwide, 24 hours a day, for a wide variety of accidents and incidents**. Print and carry your travel insurance card on your trip and remember to leave a copy with your office or family.

What you need to do:

Book your travel through Connexus travel agents. Travel insurance coverage, coverage confirmations, and insurance cards are automatically issued to the traveler.

Travel booked without a Connexus travel agent – register for insurance coverage in advance of departure via the [Connexus](#) website.

BUSINESS PURPOSE OF YOUR TRIP

Your trip must have a clear business purpose in order for you to receive tax-exempt reimbursement for your travel expenses. Under no circumstances should personal travel expenses be charged to, or temporarily funded by, the University.

Hosted trips - if your trip expenses will be reimbursed by an off-campus host, you should not use University funds to prepay any trip expenses, including airfare. The best practice is to use your personal credit card for these expenses and to seek reimbursement from your host.

What you need to do:

Include a copy of **any document that describes the event**, such as a program, agenda, invitation, announcement, or e-mail message. This is the easiest way to explain the trip's business purpose.

At the very least, **provide the complete title of the conference or meeting** (no acronyms) or a concise description of why you took the trip.

For travel supported by contract and grant funds, include the project title or keywords in your business purpose.

AIR TRAVEL

Use the **Connexus travel portal** to book your flights, including Southwest Airlines internet-only fares.

Approval must be obtained in advance for **air travel via first or business class service**, and for use of Economy Plus® and similar **seat upgrades** when used in lieu of first or business class for a qualifying condition.

Avoid purchasing discounted travel packages from other internet vendors unless you can confirm that every item in the package will be itemized separately (airfare, hotel daily room rate, number of nights, and tax/fees, for example).

Airline and airport club membership fees are not eligible for reimbursement. **One-day club memberships** may be eligible for reimbursement as a miscellaneous travel expense if required for a business purpose.

What you need to do:

Provide a copy of your direct-billed airline itinerary with our reimbursement request, or ask your budget officer to retrieve a copy of your itinerary from the DBID system.

If you paid any special fees in addition to your airfare, or purchased a one-day club membership, remember to explain the business purpose on receipts.

If you used first or business class service, or a seat upgrade, include documentation describing the circumstances.

Seat upgrades for non-qualifying conditions and internet travel packages lacking adequate detail cannot be reimbursed. IRS rulings on these issues prevent the University from making any exceptions.

No reimbursement is permitted when airfare is paid via redemption of **frequent flyer miles**.

GROUND TRANSPORTATION

Use local public transportation such as buses, subway, or streetcars when possible. Shuttle service to and from an airport is allowed. Taxi service should be used only when public transportation or shuttles are impractical or unavailable. **Park/Sleep/Fly packages** offered by the traveler's local 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.

AUTOMOBILE TRAVEL

If you prefer driving your private automobile to your destination, instead of flying, reimbursement for expenses while in transit will be based on the equivalent coach airfare plus your estimated transportation costs to and from the nearest airport. You must drive at least 300 miles per day in order to be eligible for reimbursement.

When you drive your private automobile, you can be reimbursed for mileage at the current IRS rate of **54¢ per mile** (as of 1/1/16, 57.5¢ for 2015 trips). 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.

Use Connexus to reserve your rental car.

University contract rates include collision and liability insurance, so any insurance coverage you purchase on your own will not be eligible for reimbursement. Do purchase additional insurance for travel in Alaska and Hawaii since this expense is eligible for reimbursement. Students should always purchase the additional insurance since campus contracts apply only to employees. Motorcycle rentals are prohibited. If you use a UC contract, you may rent up to an intermediate-size car.

LODGING, MEALS AND INCIDENTALS

Reserve your hotel via Connexus with a personal credit card whenever possible and take advantage of UC contract rates. “Lodging” includes a single-occupancy room rate, along with associated taxes and fees. Sharing your room with a non-business traveler, such as your spouse, does not impact your reimbursement when the single rate is the same as the double-occupancy rate.

When there is a difference in room rates and you have shared your room with a non-business traveler, ask the front desk at check-out to quote the single rate and associated taxes and fees. Make a note directly on your zero-balance receipt – the single rate will be your reimbursement.

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

If you stay with a friend or relative while on official University business, you may provide your host with a non-cash gift (flowers, groceries, restaurant meal) – one gift per stay.

“Incidentals” are separate tips and gratuities paid to baggage handlers, porters, bellhops, maids and such. Meal and taxi tips should be included in the reported costs of those services.

Reimbursement for meals and incidentals is capped at \$74 per day (as of 1/1/16, \$71 per day for 2015 trips). You will be reimbursed only for daily actual expenses, up to a maximum of \$74, for domestic trips lasting more than one and less than 29 days. Unused portions of the \$74 limit do not carry over from one day to the next. **Domestic trips lasting longer than 29 days** are eligible for a per diem.

What you need to do:

Before your departure, print a page from the airline website showing an equivalent roundtrip coach airfare for your destination and trip dates, and provide the basis for your estimated transportation costs with your trip receipts.

A mileage “receipt” is the page from any mapping program that shows the number of miles between your point of departure and your destination. Double the mileage for a roundtrip. **Provide your vehicle license number and city/state of residence** on the travel form to receive mileage reimbursement.

Avoid express check-in with car rentals. When you return your car, go inside to the counter and pay your bill. This will allow you to obtain the detailed receipt showing charges and payments you’ll need for reimbursement *and* you’ll ensure that the agency doesn’t claim vehicle damage later.

Make sure you always **get receipts for gasoline purchases.** You can be reimbursed for gasoline purchases, but not for mileage, with rental cars.

What you need to do:

Avoid express check-out at hotels. Always check out at the front desk in order to obtain the required **“zero balance” receipt** showing all of your charges and your payment. Express check-out statements are not accepted as a receipt - you must have a statement that shows the amount and date of your actual payment to the hotel.

Personal services, such as mini-bar use, in-room movies and spa treatments, are not eligible for reimbursement. 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.

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 – is not eligible for reimbursement.

The actual cost of a gift to your host is eligible for reimbursement up to \$75. Receipts are required for gifts costing \$25 or more.

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

Always get a cash register or credit card receipt for your food purchases. If a receipt cannot be provided by the vendor, then make a note of your actual expense.

If you submit meal receipts that exceed the daily limit, the online travel reimbursement system will automatically cap your payment at the daily limit.

Trips lasting less than 24 hours require an overnight stay for meal reimbursement.

Overnight stays must be documented with a hotel bill and your destination must be at least 40 miles from your home or office.

If you **host a business meal** with colleagues during your trip, you can be reimbursed for the full cost of the meal, up to the appropriate per-person meal limits, as “entertainment while on travel status.” Report these meals as a travel expense; don’t separate these receipts and report them via an Entertainment Certification form.

For group meals you hosted during your trip, provide the names and business affiliations of meal participants and a description of the business purpose, along with your receipt. Per-person meal expense limits are available on the entertainment policy flyer.

Miscellaneous expenses, such as internet fees to connect remotely with the campus, phone calls, and hotel business center charges can be reimbursed. Laundry expenses while traveling can be reimbursed if the trip exceeds six days at your destination.

Whenever possible, get a receipt for the miscellaneous expense and make a note of the business purpose on it. If these expenses are included on your hotel bill, make a note of the business purpose for each cost.

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Updated 1/7/16*