

TRAVEL AND MEAL POLICY

Employees must submit a **Trip Request Form** to the supervisor and Senior Administrator responsible for their department for any travel that is to be funded by University of the Southwest. The form may also be used to request a travel advance. **The Trip Request Form** will be submitted to Accounts Payable at which time a Purchase Order (PO) will be processed. A PO will be provided to the employee before they leave on their trip.

All employees who travel on behalf of University of the Southwest must submit the appropriate detailed receipts for reimbursement. Employees must request a travel advance for overnight travel via an approved **Trip Request Form**. The employee may deposit the travel advance into their personal checking account and access the funds using a debit card or via an ATM. Employees may also use their personal credit cards for pre-approved University travel and submit the expenses on an **Expense Report** within 2 working days upon their return for reimbursement.

Detailed receipts must be submitted with an **Expense Report** within 2 days after completion of trip. Reimbursement checks (if applicable) will be available within 10 days after the completed **Expense Report** and receipts are received in Accounts Payable. **Inaccurate or incomplete Expense Reports will be returned to the employee for correction.**

Transportation expenses will be reimbursed at the lesser of the cost of air travel or miles driven at the applicable mileage reimbursement rate unless prior approval from the Senior Administrator is obtained. Business use of personal vehicles will be reimbursed at the IRS Standard Mileage reimbursement rate. To receive mileage reimbursement, a person must be an employee or officially recognized representative of the University and meet the requirements and be included on the "Approved Drivers List". Contact the Business Office for detailed information regarding the "Approved Drivers List."

Reimbursement for Meals during travel will not exceed \$50.00 per day. The breakdown of maximum reimbursement for partial days of travel will be: Breakfast \$8.00, Lunch \$15.00, and Dinner \$27.00. All reimbursement amounts include tips. **Tips should not exceed 15% of the total food charge.** Detailed receipts of exact items purchased will be required for reimbursement. Summarized credit card receipts are not acceptable.

Employees may choose to be reimbursed for meal expenses incurred while traveling for University business on a **\$30.00 per diem** basis rather than submitting receipts. The \$30.00 per diem reimbursement is for a full 24-hour day. The per diem breakdown for partial days involving travel will be: \$4.50 Breakfast, \$9.00 Lunch, and \$16.50 Dinner.

The employee has the option for per diem reimbursement or receipts for each trip. The employee will have to choose at the time they submit the **Expense Report** following the trip. They cannot use per diem one day and receipts the next.

Meals incurred that are not a part of travel will only be funded by USW if prior approval is obtained by a Senior Administrator and University business is an integral part of the meeting. The University will not reimburse any cost related to alcoholic beverages. The names of all participants and the purpose of the meeting must be provided with the receipts detailing the specific items purchased. **Tips should not exceed 15% of the total food charge.**

A total trip maximum of \$10.00 will be reimbursed for non-receipted expenses such as hotel and airport tipping. The employee should submit an explanation for tips given. Travel to foreign countries will be addressed on a case-by-case basis.

Rental Car Service: National rental car companies have confirmed that they require a major credit card in the name of the individual renting the car. Payment may generally be made by any means. The credit card is required as security for return of the car in good condition. Employees renting cars will need to be prepared to provide their personal credit card to secure the vehicle. The employee may request a cash advance or may use their personal credit card and submit receipts for reimbursements of the rental amount. The employee should confirm acceptable means of payment with the rental car company when making the reservation, as some locations will require that the charge also be made to the card securing the car. **Rental Car Insurance is required to be purchased at the maximum coverage.**

University of the Southwest employees traveling on University sponsored trips at the request of the University as part of their job responsibilities will follow the same travel and meal policies as outlined in the Travel Policy.

University employees wishing to participate in University sponsored trips as a participant other than described above will request the appropriate vacation time from his/hers area Senior Administrator and be expected to incur all expenses associated with the trip. These employees must sign all appropriate waivers releasing USW of any and all liability and provide proof of medical insurance.

September 29, 2022