

<b>Volume F1:</b> Finance & Administration	<b>F1.08.1</b> <b>Travel Regulations</b>	<b>Responsible Office:</b> Controller's Office
<b>Chapter 08:</b> Travel	<b>Effective Date:</b> 12/01/2015 <b>Last Revised:</b> 06/14/2023	<b>Responsible Officer:</b> Controller

## POLICY STATEMENT

Northeastern Illinois University (the “University”) will reimburse employees for authorized travel expenses in compliance with the Governor’s Travel Control Board, the Illinois Travel Regulations Council, and the Illinois Higher Education Travel Control Board.

## PURPOSE OF THE POLICY

Travel regulations are established by the Illinois Higher Education Travel Control Board (HETCB) to govern the reimbursement of state University employees for official travel. This policy documents internal procedures and serves as a resource and informational tool for those traveling on official University business.

## WHO IS AFFECTED BY THIS POLICY

Students, Faculty and Staff.

## DEFINITIONS

**Commuting Expense:** The cost of travel between residence and Headquarters.

**Foreign Travel:** Travel outside the United States and the U.S. possessions and territories (American Samoa, Guam, Midway, the Northern Mariana Islands, Puerto Rico, The U.S. Virgin Islands, and Wake Island).

**Headquarters:** The campus at 5500 North St. Louis Avenue, Chicago, Illinois, is the official Headquarters for all employees of Northeastern Illinois University except for the following:

The Headquarters for those employees assigned to the Carruthers Center for Inner City Studies is 700 East Oakwood Boulevard, Chicago, Illinois, 60653.

The Headquarters for those employees assigned to El Centro is 3390 N. Avondale Avenue, Chicago, Illinois, 60618.

**Local Travel:** Travel within the Chicago metropolitan area, which includes Cook, DuPage, Kane, Lake, McHenry, and Will counties.

**Meal Allowance:** Reimbursement for meals when travel is less than 18 hours and does not include living expenses. (Mileage, parking, tolls, etc.)



**Per Diem:** A fixed daily allowance to cover the cost of meals and tips when travel includes overnight lodging or is 18 or more hours. It is given in lieu of the meal allowance and receipts are not required to support this allowance.

**Spend Authorization (formerly Travel Authorization Request and Encumbrance):** Serves as the official authorization for travel and to encumber the funds to be utilized.

**Travel Status:** Employees shall be considered in "Travel Status" while away from Headquarters on authorized state business. Travel Status begins when an employee leaves a University location or their residence to go to their destination. Travel Status ends when an employee returns to a University location or their residence.

**Expense Report (formerly Travel Voucher):** The form used by employees to claim reimbursement of travel expenses.

## REGULATIONS

[Illinois Board of Higher Education Travel Rules](#)

[Illinois Department of Central Management Services, Travel Guide for State Employees](#)

[Illinois Vehicle Code 625 ILCS 5/10- 101\(b\)](#)

### 1. AUTHORITY TO TRAVEL

The Spend Authorization must be submitted to the Controller's Office prior to any travel.

If University Funds are being used to finance the travel, the Spend Authorization form is routed to the following individuals for approval:

- \$4,999.99 and below – Financial Manager. If traveler is Financial Manager, approval must be from Vice President
- \$5,000 and Above – Vice President. If traveler is Vice President, approval must be from President

Foreign Travel charged to grants requires additional authorization by the Office of Sponsored Programs.

### 2. ALLOWABLE TRANSPORTATION EXPENSES

Employees should use the most direct route and economical mode of transportation possible, taking into consideration travel time, expense, and length of absence. Reimbursement for transportation expenses shall be based only on what charges would have been incurred by the most direct and economical route.

The University Purchasing Card (P-Card) can be used to pay for transportation expenses.

Transportation may include fares and expenses such as baggage transfer and reasonable tips. Receipts for transportation expenses over \$10.00 must be submitted for reimbursement.

Combination / package purchases are only allowable if the actual cost of each item (i.e. airfare and lodging), are differentiated on the official receipt.



## **A. Accommodations on Airplanes and Trains**

### **1. Airplane Accommodations**

Travel on airplanes shall ordinarily be coach class. Reimbursement for first class accommodations on commercial air carriers shall be explained on the Expense Report and shall be permitted when any of the following conditions exist:

- Regularly scheduled flights between authorized origin and destination provide only first-class accommodations.
- Space is not available in coach class in time to carry out the purpose of travel.
- First class accommodations are necessary for reasons of the traveler's health.

Fees charged by on-line reservation systems are not reimbursable for flights between Chicago and Springfield.

In lieu of paying for airline tickets in advance, a traveler may use the University approved travel agency to have airfare directly billed to the University. Tickets will not be booked until an approved Purchase Order has been submitted to Accounts Payable in the Controller's Office.

### **2. Train Accommodations**

Employees traveling on Amtrak for the Chicago/Springfield route will be eligible to claim a maximum reimbursement of \$24.00 each direction. The state discounted rate of \$24.00 is only available for Monday – Friday travel and when making reservations by phone, see the [Central Management Services website](#) for details. Departure and arrival times can be found at [www.amtrak.com](http://www.amtrak.com) or by calling (800) USA-RAIL.

## **B. Rented Vehicles**

Where the use of a rented vehicle is required, the most economical vehicle available and suitable for the conduct of the University's business shall be obtained. A full explanation for the use of a rented vehicle must be provided with the Travel Voucher. Additional fees for collision damage waiver and personal accident insurance on rented vehicles are not reimbursable.

In-state Travel: University employees renting and travelling in-state receive a discounted rate from Enterprise Rent-A-Car with damage waiver and liability coverage included.

Out-of-state Travel: The discounted rate and damage waiver are not available for out-of-state rentals. When travelling out-of-state, liability insurance coverage is provided by State of Illinois Risk Management; the purchase of collision insurance at renter's expense is optional. Any and all damages to a rental vehicle are the responsibility of the driver.

See the [Vehicle Services Policy](#) and/or the [Central Management Services website](#) for more detailed information.

## **C. Taxicab and Airport Limousine Fares**

Taxicab expenses are reimbursable. Transportation by airport limousine may be used in lieu of a taxi when available and economical. Receipts are required for fares in excess of \$10.00.

## **D. Local Travel, including Travel Between University Locations**

Employees may be reimbursed for travel (mileage, parking, taxi, and tolls) between University locations and to other Local Travel destinations.



Employees may be reimbursed for travel between their home and University locations other than their Headquarters to the extent the mileage exceeds the employee's regular commute.

Commuting Expenses are not reimbursable.

Meals are not reimbursable for Local Travel.

**E. Privately Owned Vehicles**

Employees using private vehicles on State business must have a valid driver's license and insurance coverage in an amount not less than that required by Section 10-101(b) of the Illinois Vehicle Code [\[625 ILCS 5/10- 101\(b\)\]](#).

Reimbursement for use of a private vehicle shall be on a mileage basis and shall be in accordance with the Illinois Higher Education Travel Control Board ([IHETCB Mileage](#)).

**F. Ride Sharing Services**

Employees using ride sharing services on State business may be reimbursed within certain guidelines.

Employees are required to use the lowest cost services that car sharing services offer such as "UberX" and Lyft Standard." Employees will not be allowed to claim reimbursement for rides obtained by using "Uber XL", "UberSELECT", "UberBLACK", "UberSUV", UberLUX", or LyftPlus". Rides obtained during higher cost periods such as Uber's "Surge Pricing" and Lyft's "Prime Time" are not reimbursable and if taken must be paid for personally by the employee.

**3. OTHER ALLOWABLE EXPENSES**

When the registration fee for approved conferences includes the cost of meals, the traveler shall deduct the appropriate amount as noted in the table below from their requested Per Diem or Meal Allowance reimbursement.

**A. Per Diem / Meal Allowance**

**1. Per Diem - for travel exceeding 18 hours or including overnight lodging**

Per Diem amount is reimbursed when the travel period is overnight or exceeds 18 hours. Per Diem includes meals and meal tips.

Submission of receipts for meals is not required when receiving Per Diem.

The IHETCB designates Per Diem as follows:

Category	In-State	Out-of-State
Breakfast	\$8.50	\$9.50
Lunch	\$12.50	\$13.50
Dinner	\$23.00	\$25.00
Per Diem – Daily	\$44.00	\$48.00

The University Purchasing Card (P-Card) may not be used for meal purchases when in Travel Status. The only exception is if the employee is hosting an allowable business meal with other employees or guests that will not be reimbursed with Per Diem. For details, see the policy on [Non-Travel Related Business Expenses and Reimbursement](#).



The start or end of travel which is eligible for per diem is calculated on a quarter of the day basis. In order to determine the reimbursable amount of meal expenses incurred during the fractional part of the day, the 24-hour period is divided into four 6-hour periods:

- 12:00 midnight – 5:59 a.m.
- 6:00 am – 11:59 a.m.
- 12:00 noon – 5:59 p.m.
- 6:00 pm – 11:59 p.m.

The Per Diem for each 6-hour period or fraction thereof will be provided as follows:

Category	In-State	Out-of-State
Per Diem – Quarter	\$11.00	\$12.00

**2. Meal Allowance - for travel less than 18 hours that does not include overnight lodging**

For travel less than 18 hours that does not include overnight lodging, meals are reimbursed up to the following limits (Per Diem is not eligible):

Category	Criteria	In-State	Out-of-State
<b>Breakfast</b>	Breakfast is payable when an employee in Travel Status leaves Headquarters or their residence (if reporting directly to the destination) before 6:00 a.m.	<b>\$8.50</b>	<b>\$9.50</b>
<b>Lunch</b>	Lunch is not a reimbursable meal allowance expense.	<b>N/A</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b>Dinner</b>	Dinner is payable when an employee in Travel Status arrives back at Headquarters or their residence (if reporting directly from destination) after 7:00 p.m. For employees commencing travel after close of business, but before 6:30 p.m., dinner reimbursement is allowed if the traveler would not be eligible for Per Diem.	<b>\$23.00</b>	<b>\$25.00</b>

Receipts are not required to support this meal reimbursement.

**B. Lodging Allowance**

Employees must request the lowest available lodging rate at the time of making reservations and confirm that the “state government” rate will be received. A detailed lodging receipt showing a zero balance must be submitted for reimbursement. Rates for travel lodging acquired before the October 1 seasonal adjustments can be found on the [Illinois Higher Education Travel Control Board Allowances](#) page.

**1. In-State Lodging Amount Maximums**

<b>Major Downstate Areas</b> (Counties of Champaign, Kankakee, LaSalle, McLean, Macon, Madison, Peoria, Rock Island, St. Clair, Sangamon, Tazewell, and Winnebago)	\$85.00
<b>Other Downstate Areas</b>	\$75.00



<b>Cook County: Seasonally Adjusted Rates effective October 1, 2022</b>	
October 1, 2012 – November 30, 2012	\$218.00
December 1, 2012 – March 31, 2023	\$134.00
April 1, 2023 – June 20, 2023	\$216.00
July 1, 2023 – August 31, 2023	\$187.00
September 1, 2023 – September 30, 2023	\$218.00
<b>Counties of DuPage, Kane, Lake, McHenry and Will</b>	<b>\$95.00</b>

**2. Out-of-state Lodging Amount Maximums**

<b>Areas except for District of Columbia</b>	\$110.00
<b>District of Columbia: Seasonally Adjusted Rates effective October 1, 2012</b>	
Washington DC (also the cities of Alexandria, Falls Church, and Fairfax, and the counties of Arlington, and Fairfax, in Virginia; and the counties of Montgomery and Prince George's in Maryland)	
October 1, 2023 – October 31, 2022	\$257.00
November 1, 2022– February 28, 2023	\$188.00
March 1, 2023 – June 30, 2023	\$258.00
July 1, 2023 – August 31, 2023	\$172.00
September 1, 2023 – September 30, 2023	\$257.00

**3. Foreign Travel**

If receipts are provided, reimbursement will be made for actual, reasonable costs. The U.S. State Department rates apply if receipts are not available. Current rates can be found at the following website: [Foreign Travel Per Diem Rates](#).

**4. Specially Discounted Hotel Rates Negotiated by the Central Management Services**

The State has negotiated special rates with certain hotels in Illinois. Employees should review the list of hotels when lodging is required and attempt to obtain the discounted rate before reserving a hotel room at the State's maximum allowed rate. The rates listed do not include applicable taxes. Identification as a State of Illinois employee may be required at check-in. To view a listing of State of Illinois preferred hotels, go to: [Preferred Hotel Listings](#).

**5. Reimbursement for Local Lodging**

University employees are typically not reimbursed for hotel expenses within the Chicago metropolitan area. Reimbursement is allowable with Vice President or President approval if one of the following circumstances occurs:

- The employee has a special role in the conference that requires early arrival or staying late at the conference site.
- The cost of traveling between the conference and Headquarters or the conference and the employee's residence would be greater than the lodging expense.

**6. Exceptions to Lodging Rates**

Exceptions to the lodging rates are approved under special circumstances. The traveler's justification for exception must be provided on the Travel Claim Addendum form and be submitted with the Travel Voucher. Lodging rate exceptions are reviewed quarterly by the IHETCB. Amounts disallowed by the IHETCB must be refunded to the University by the traveler.

**7. Utilization of Airbnb**



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The use of Airbnb is not allowed for official State of Illinois business travel and employees choosing to utilize Airbnb will not be reimbursed for their lodging.

### **C. Conferences/Official Meetings**

If staying at a conference hotel with rates greater than the allowable lodging rates indicated in Section B. 1-4 above, a copy of a brochure, schedule of events, or registration form for the conference that indicates the name of the conference, hotel, and dates must be submitted with the Travel Voucher. If the conference is held somewhere other than the hotel in which the traveler stays, a list of the recommended hotels must be attached.

### **D. Special Expenses**

Travelers may be reimbursed for reasonable miscellaneous expenses incurred in connection with official duties.

#### Reimbursable

- Internet charges for business use
- FAX service
- Storage and handling of baggage
- Conference room rental for official business
- Laundry and dry cleaning if on Travel Status for at least seven days

#### Non-Reimbursable

- Traffic and parking tickets
- Entertainment
- Alcoholic beverages
- Coat check
- Late check-out and room guarantee charges
- Meals for other state employees or officers
- Early bird flight check in
- Seat upgrades on flights

All special expenses shall be itemized on the Travel Voucher. A receipt is required for any special expense that exceeds \$10.00.

## **4. REGISTRATION FEES**

Registration fees paid on site of \$50.00 or less may be charged to Travel (720000). All other conference registration fees are charged to Contractual (710000) or directly paid by the University and are charged to Contractual Services (710000).

## **5. ITEMS BILLED DIRECTLY TO THE UNIVERSITY**

Direct billing to the University for transportation expenses is only allowed when arrangements are made through the University-approved travel agency.



## PROCEDURES

Employees have three purchasing options for travel expenses:

- Use of the University P-Card,
- Billing the University directly for transportation expenses through the use of the University-approved travel agency, and/or
- Paying for expenses personally and being reimbursed via an Expense Report after completion of the trip.

Please refer to the [University's Purchasing Card Manual](#) for further details on use of P-Card.

### I. **Prior to Travel**

Special consideration should be taken while planning a trip abroad. Traveling to countries with travel warnings may pose an increased risk to the University and its travelers due to an increase in unpredictable circumstances. It is recommended that foreign travelers check the following websites for daily news, safety reports, and security alerts:

- Overseas Security Advisory Council (OSAC) of the U.S. Department of State at [www.osac.gov](http://www.osac.gov).
- Unity Resource Group at [www.crisisresponse.info](http://www.crisisresponse.info). A login is required. Username: U713-85470. Password: hccunity.

### **Spend Authorization**

A Spend Authorization is completed and routed for approval prior to travel.

### II. **After Conclusion of Travel - Expense Report**

1. An Expense Report must be completed, routed for approval, and submitted to the Controller's Office within 30 days of conclusion of travel and include the following:
  - Name, home address, Spend Authorization number, purpose of travel, applicable dates and times of travel, and the points of departure and destination for departure and return.
  - Itemized expenses for which the traveler seeks reimbursement such as lodging and transportation (along with original receipts) and per diem or meal allowance reimbursement requests. Attached paperwork should also include conference documentation, and any expenses that the traveler paid for with a P-Card.
  - Local Travel expenses must be supported with appropriate receipts for expenses over \$10.00. The Expense Report must include an attachment listing sites visited with complete addresses for mileage reimbursement.
2. When the Financial Manager is the traveler, the Traveler's supervisor is needed for approval. In those instances where the traveler is a Dean, Director, or Associate Vice President, Vice Presidential approval is required. In those instances where the traveler is a Vice President, Presidential approval is required.
3. If the travel expenses exceed more than \$100 of the travel encumbrance, and additional reimbursement is approved, Spend Authorization must be revised increasing the amount of reimbursement in the Expense report.
4. The Controller's Office audits the paperwork for completeness and compliance. Reimbursement is processed once all proper documentation is received.





## AUTHOR REFERENCE

Northern Illinois University - Business Procedure Manual / Travel Regulations  
Western Illinois University - Travel Guide

## HISTORY

06/14/2023 Revised: Updated to match the state's travel guidelines  
03/21/2023 Revised: Updated Lodging Allowances  
08/30/2022 Revised: Updated Lodging Allowances  
08/12/2019 Revised: Updated Lodging Allowances  
07/10/2018 Revised: Updated Lodging Allowances  
10/01/2017 Revised: Updated Lodging Allowances  
07/25/2017 Revised: Updated related policies.  
09/26/2016 Revised: Updated Lodging Allowances and added information regarding Ride Sharing Services and Airbnb.  
Formerly Fiscal Agent Handbook: Travel F1: Travel Overview, effective dated 07/01/2003.  
Formerly Fiscal Agent Handbook: Travel F2: Travel Authorization Request & Encumbrance, effective dated 07/01/2003.  
Formerly Fiscal Agent Handbook: Travel F3: Travel Voucher, effective dated 07/01/2003.  
Formerly Travel Regulations, effective dated 10/01/2006

## RELATED POLICIES AND OTHER INFORMATIONAL MATERIAL

[F1.03.1 Direct Payment Voucher](#)  
[F1.03.2 Non-Travel Related Business Expense and Reimbursement Policy](#)  
[F1.08.2 Group Travel Involving Students](#)  
[Financial Manager's Handbook: G4: Search and Screen Job Candidate Travel Expenses](#)  
[Financial Manager's Handbook: F7: Class Field Trips](#)  
[Financial Manager's Handbook: F9: Employee Group Travel](#)  
[G2.02.4 Vehicle Services](#)  
[Northeastern Illinois University Purchasing Card Manual](#)

## CONTACT INFORMATION

Please direct questions or concerns about this policy to:

Contact	Phone	E-Mail
Accounts Payable	773-442-5146	<a href="mailto:accountspayable@neiu.edu">accountspayable@neiu.edu</a>

## DISCLAIMER

The University reserves the right to modify or amend sections of this policy at any time at its sole discretion. This policy remains in effect until such time as the Responsible Officer calls for review. Requests for exception to any portion of this policy, but not to the policy statement, must be presented in writing to the Responsible Officer.