

Chapter Name: **Compensation and Fiscal Affairs**

**Policy 5-14**

Policy Title: **Professional Travel**

Date Approved: 07/00

Date Revised: 02/03, 10/03, 11/04, (08/05), (07/07), (10/08),  
10/11, 09/13, 10/15, 04/16, 10/18

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## **5-14 Professional Travel**

Faculty and professional staff members are encouraged to attend professional meetings, workshops, and other college-related activities, which lead to further professional development, when affordable. Faculty and staff must have their travel authorization approved by the appropriate Senior Administrator prior to leaving on travel that is to be reimbursed. When performing official duties for the college outside of the state of North Carolina, written authorization for travel must be obtained from the college President.

### **I. Travel Expense Reimbursement**

Expenses for travel may be authorized by the President, Vice Presidents, Senior Administrators, or Deans.

### **II. Prescribed Forms**

The following forms are to be used in connection with travel:

<u>Form</u>	<u>Use</u>
A. Travel Request/Advance	To obtain authorization for all travel; to obtain in advance for specific trips.
B. Mileage Log (college vehicle)	To record trips in college vehicle(s). Forms are located in the vehicles. Driver of the vehicle should complete forms and leave forms in Vehicle.
C. Daily Log for Local Travel (private vehicle)	To support monthly claim for travel within the state of North Carolina.
D. Request for Reimbursement of Travel	To obtain reimbursement.

### **III. Purpose of Regulations**

The travel matters presented herein are designed for all travel without regard to the funding source (state, local, private grants, federal grants, etc.), unless the funding source requires use of its regulations on travel.

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Employees have their travel expenses reimbursed by the college, subject to the limitations contained in these regulations. Under no circumstances may duplicate reimbursement be made for that portion of an employee's or trustee's expenses paid or reimbursed from a non-state source.

The President and his/her designees can use Purchasing Card for travel.

All travel is contingent upon proper authorization and the availability of funds in the proper budget line item.

#### **IV. Policies Governing Travel and Expense Allowance**

It is the intent of the College that college employee travel shall be conducted in the most efficient manner and at the lowest and most reasonable cost to the college. With regard to passenger vehicle travel, whether in- or out-of-state, college travel policy shall;

- A. Maximize utilization of college-owned vehicles.
- B. Reimburse for use of personal vehicles on a limited basis.

Expenses for travel on official business by college employees of institutions that operate from funds deposited with the State Treasurer shall be reimbursed at the following rates:

##### **A. Private Car**

- (i) Use of Private Cars - College employees on official college business may use their private cars according to the rate of determined by the Board of Trustees, not to exceed the State of North Carolina's established rate for personal vehicle mileage or air-coach rate, whichever is less.
  - a. In a case where air travel is the most cost effective method of travel and a private car or college owned vehicle is used for the convenience of the employee, the subsistence expense (i.e. lodging and meals) is reimbursable only for the period required by airline travel.

Reimbursement of costs incurred through use of a private car must be for direct mileage between points on the employee's itinerary. Mileage must be from the employee's assigned duty station or home, whichever is less. Duty station is defined as the campus or job location assigned by the college. Tolls and parking are reimbursable to employees when using personal vehicles. Actual cost of tolls and parking are reimbursed with a receipt.

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Reimbursement may not be made for commuting between an employee's home and his duty station, except for temporary or part-time instructors, not coordinators.

Reimbursement may be made to College Board of Trustees for their commute from their home to their duty station to conduct official College Board meetings.

- B. College-Owned Vehicles - Reimbursement for institution-owned automobiles on official state business shall be ~~at a~~ determined by the Board of Trustees, not to exceed the State of North Carolina's established rate for personal vehicle mileage.
- C. For transportation by airline, bus, railroad or by other conveyance, actual coach fare;
- D. For subsistence, per diem rates as established by the State for a 24-hour period when traveling in-state or out-of-state. These amounts are subject to change and the travel request form will always contain the correct amounts authorized by the State;
- E. For registration fees, which have received prior approval by the Senior Administrator prior to departure, payment of registration fees is not a replacement for authority to travel.
- F. The actual cost of road, bridge, and ferry tolls paid.

#### **V. Authorization Procedure**

All travel that requires reimbursement in excess of mileage or is out-of-state, by institutional or non-institutional employees on institutional business must be authorized by the Senior Administrator at least two weeks prior to the commencement of travel. Failure to comply with this procedure could result in the college's denial of reimbursement.

#### **VI. Blanket Travel Authorization**

Blanket travel authorization is required for travel mileage by individuals who must frequently travel within the state of North Carolina in order to carry out their official duties. This requires the approval of the President and the Chief Financial Officer. While blanket travel authority covers the liability of the individual while on official travel, local travel should also be authorized in advance. This may be accomplished verbally, by e-mail or

other means. This travel should be reported on the Daily Log for Local Travel.

**VII. Travel Advance**

At the discretion of the Senior Administrator, an advance of funds, which does not exceed the estimated travel expense, may be issued to an employee. Estimated expenditures per trip, however, must exceed \$50 before consideration will be given to grant an advance. All advances must be deducted from the employee's travel voucher for that trip.

A log of advances indicating issuance and repayments is maintained in the Business Office for purposes of control.

**VIII. Travel of Prospective Employees**

Advance approval for reimbursement of transportation expenses of prospective professional employees visiting the college for employment interviews must be obtained in writing from the President. These expenses are limited to transportation and subsistence for up to three (3) days at the in-state rate. The State President and the Office of State Budget and Management must approve amounts in excess of \$1,000.

**IX. Student Travel**

Students who travel on official institution business and whose expenses are paid or reimbursed by the state of North Carolina are subject to COA travel regulations, including statutory subsistence allowances, to the same extent, as are college employees. Travel by students for the purpose of participating in activities of student organizations must be paid from funds supporting the particular organization or activity, not from state funds.

**X. Student Drivers**

Only those licensed students employed by the college (work-study students, lab assistants, etc.) are authorized to drive college vehicles. These individuals are covered by the college insurance policy for Worker's Compensation.

## **XI. Subsistence**

### **A. 24-Hour Period**

The Rate of Allowance is specified by the Office of State Budget and Management (State) of North Carolina and provided to the college. This information is available on the travel request form.

### **B. Less than 24-Hour Period**

1. Lodging – The maximum allowances are provided by the State for traveling in-state and when traveling out-of-state. Reimbursement of actual costs of overnight lodging whether in-state or out-of-state, must be documented by a receipt of actual lodging expenses from a commercial establishment. This documentation shall be attached to the reimbursement request.
2. Meals – The per diem rates are established by the State and are subject to change.
3. Partial Days- Employees may receive allowance for meals for partial days of travel when the partial day is the day of departure or the day of return. To be eligible, the employee must be traveling as follows:
  - a. For breakfast – Depart duty station prior to 6 A.M.
  - b. For lunch – Depart duty station prior to noon on the day of departure or return to duty station after 2 P.M. on the day of return
  - c. For dinner – Depart duty station prior to 5:00 P.M. on the day of departure or return to duty station after 8 P.M. on the day of return

### **C. Limitations on Meal Allowances**

Employees on overnight travel may be reimbursed for meals, including lunches, when their job requires their attendance at the meeting of a board, commission, committee, or council in his/her official capacity and the lunch is preplanned as part of the meeting for the entire board, commission, committee, or council.

Employees may be reimbursed for meals, including lunches, when the meal is included as an integral part of a congress, conference, assembly, convocation, etc. Such congress must involve the active participation of persons other than the employees of a single state

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department, institution, or agency; the employees' attendance is required for the performance of their duties, but must not be part of the employees' normal day-to-day business activities; the congress must be planned in advance with a formal agenda; and the congress must provide written notice or an invitation to participants. Employees claiming reimbursement under this provision shall be allowed the statutory rates.

Employees must list times of departure and arrival on the reimbursement request.

The reimbursement rates, which must be listed on the reimbursement request, is inclusive of gratuities.

Cost of meals furnished with other related activities (registration fees, conference costs, in a transportation charge such as an airline fare, etc.) may not be duplicated in reimbursement requests.

#### **D. Excess**

No excess will be allowed for meals unless such costs are included in registration fees and/or there are predetermined charges or the meals were for out-of-country travel.

##### **1. Additional Policies and Procedures**

- a. When an employee stays in a state-operated facility and the lodging charge is less than the established rate, the maximum amount reimbursed will be the amount charged.
- b. Registration fees may be paid by the institution or by the employee. Employees may not claim reimbursement for meals included in registration fees. Such assembly must involve the active participation of persons other than the employees of a single institution of agency and must be necessary for conducting official institution or state business. When a registration fee includes the cost of one or more meals, it is the responsibility of the institution and employee to ensure that reimbursement for such meals is not made to the employee.
- c. Each meal reimbursement rate must be listed on the reimbursement request when overnight lodging is not incurred on that day or when travel involves less than a 24-hour period. Daily hotel allowances are to be reported as incurred on the

date in which the night's lodging begins. (Each employee is responsible for their own request for reimbursement.)

- d. Out-of-state travel status begins the day the employee leaves North Carolina and remains in effect through the day the employee returns to the state.
- e. Supervisors certifying the reimbursement requests as necessary and proper must require from the traveler a receipt of actual lodging expenses from a commercial establishment. This documentation shall be attached to the reimbursement request.
- f. Tips for the handling of baggage at common carrier terminals and tips for the handling of baggage when arriving at or departing from the place of lodging are allowed and must be itemized under "other expenses." These tips are counted toward authorized subsistence maximums. Tips for room service, valet, and other hotel services are not reimbursable. The costs of laundry, entertainment, alcoholic beverages, "set-ups," between-meal snacks or refreshments, and other personal expenses are not reimbursable.
- g. Office phone calls are reimbursable under "other expenses." Calls over \$5.00 must be identified as the point of origin and destination.
- h. Excess Subsistence Authorization
  - i. When extraordinary circumstance indicate that more economical accommodations are not available and that the daily cost of subsistence for this excess which sets forth, in detail, the nature of such extraordinary circumstances may be submitted to the Senior Administrator. Reimbursement to an employee sharing a room with a member of his or her family will be limited to the single occupancy rate.
  - i. Authorization (or denial) to claim reimbursement for excess subsistence will be noted by the Senior Administrator on the Travel Request Form and will be returned to the employee. No reimbursement for excess subsistence may be made except to the extent for conventions. Excess subsistence, when authorized, will only apply to lodging.
- i. Stipends – Stipends may not be paid in addition to subsistence.

## **XII. Registration Fees**

Convention registration fees may be reimbursed based on the actual amount expended as shown by an actual receipt or invoice and must have received prior approval by the President or his/her designee. Registration fees shall be distinguished from tuition fees. It is the responsibility of the employee and the institution to ensure that any meals included in the registration fee are not claimed in the daily meal allowance. No authorization will be granted unless full justification is given on the request form. A copy of brochures, fee schedules, or other materials listing the costs included in the registration fee should accompany the request.

## **XIII. Transportation**

Authorization of the mode of travel is to be made by the President or President's designee, subject to the regulations noted herein.

### **A. Private Cars**

1. Use of private car – institution employees may use their private cars at a reimbursement rate determined by the Board of Trustees, not to exceed the State of North Carolina's established rate for personal vehicle mileage.
2. Reimbursement of costs incurred through use of a private car should be for direct mileage between points on the employee's itinerary.
3. Reimbursement may not be made for continuing between an employee's home and their duty station, except for temporary or part-time extension instructors.
4. Reimbursement for travel between the employee's duty station and the nearest airline terminal and for appropriate parking may be made under the following circumstances:
  - a. Airport limousines - round trip limousine fare;
  - b. Taxi – two round trips maximum taxi fare; and
  - c. Private car – IRS standard mileage rate per mile for a maximum of two (2) round trips with no parking charge or for one (1) round trip with parking charges for a reasonable period of time (Receipts are required for airport parking claims exceeding \$3)



5. Reimbursement for travel to and from the airline terminal at the employee's destination may be made under the following circumstances:
  - a. Airport limousines – one (1) round trip limousine fare;
  - b. Bus – one (1) round trip bus fare;
  - c. Taxi, when limousine service is available – one (1) round trip limousine fare;
  - d. Taxi, when limousine service is not available – actual fare to and from the airline terminal; and
  - e. In situations where round trip costs, other than limousine, exceed \$15 – complete justification must be presented with the employee's expense account.

#### **B. Commercial Airlines**

Tickets for commercial air travel may be purchased by the institution or by the traveler and claimed on the travel reimbursement form. Travel by "air coach" must be utilized. Extraordinary conditions requiring the use of "first class" accommodations may warrant reimbursement provided a statement of the condition is attached. A receipt is required for reimbursement. Flight insurance is not reimbursable.

#### **C. Non-Commercial Air Travel**

Requests for all travel as passengers on non-commercial (charter flights) aircraft are made and approved in the same manner as transportation by other means.

#### **D. Scheduled Bus and Train Service**

The actual cost of coach fare for rail and bus service on institutional business is reimbursable, as is the actual cost of pullman fare when overnight trips are required.

#### **E. Taxis and Limousines**

The actual cost of taxi and limousine fares is reimbursable when required for travel on institution business. Taxi fares are not reimbursable for inter-city transportation except in emergencies when a less expensive mode of transportation is available within a reasonable period.

## **F. Rental Cars**

Rental car charges at the least expensive available rate are reimbursed when required for inter-city travel when no alternate mode of transportation is practical. No reimbursement may be made for using a rental car in-state when an institutional car or a private car is available.

## **G. Tolls and Parking**

Tolls and parking are reimbursable to employees when using personal vehicles. Receipts must be provided where the cost exceeds \$3 per day.

# **XIV. Assemblies Sponsored by Institutions**

## **A. Formal Assemblies**

1. Whenever feasible, assemblies should be held in facilities owned by the college. When necessary, other facilities may be rented and the cost charged to "Rental of Conference Rooms" without allocations to participants' daily substance allowances.
2. Assemblies sponsored or co-sponsored by the college are considered formal when they meet the following limitations:
  - a. There are a substantial number of participants with at least 25 percent (25%) of the participants coming from outside the local area;
  - b. The assembly is planned in detail in advance, with a formal agenda or curriculum;
  - c. There is a written invitation to participants setting forth the calendar of events, the social activities, if any, and the detailed schedule of costs.
3. Registration fees collected shall be deposited to a special fund and used to defray expenses of the particular assembly. Any unused funds may not be used for other programs and must be remitted to the state.
4. The college may provide refreshments for "coffee breaks" from registration fees.

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5. When assemblies are to be held under the sponsorship of the college and the funding for all participants is budgeted, lump-sum payments to a conference center or a service organization may be made upon written authorization from the President. The authorization must specify the following information:
  - a. The purpose and duration of the assembly;
  - b. The number of persons expected to attend;
  - c. The specific meals to be served at the assembly;
  - d. The approximate daily subsistence cost per person; and
  - e. The name of the conference center, hotel, caterer, or other organization providing the service.
6. Payments will be made only when the college attaches to the payment vouchers an itemized invoice, approved by the President or the President's designee, with a list of names, addresses, and affiliations of those attending. The college must ensure that reimbursement for meals included in the lump sum payment is not also included in the reimbursement payments made to assembly participants.

## **B. Expense Reimbursement and Payment for Participants at Formal Assemblies**

Reimbursement for expenses of college employees or payment of expenses incurred on behalf of college employees participating in any formal conferences, convention, school, workshop, institute, seminar, or other organized gathering sponsored or co-sponsored by an institution, shall be in accordance with all provisions of these travel regulations and shall be based on in-state rates.

The college will pay a registration fee for its employees when they are attending meetings sponsored by an institution. If any portion of the registration fees is to be used to defray meal costs, it is the responsibility of the institution and employee to ensure that its employees are not reimbursed for the same meals charged in the registration fees.

## **C. Informal Meetings**

1. Guests of Institutional Presidents

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The President of the college may be reimbursed from state funds for actual cost of a meal for himself/herself and non-institutional employees who are his/her official guests, when accompanying them in the course of conducting official business. Such meals are subject to the daily maximum limitations on amounts contained in these regulations. (The limitations pertaining to minimum distance from duty station and meal limitations, however, do not apply.)

#### **XV. Timely Filing**

All reimbursement requests shall be filed for approval and payment within 30 days after the travel period has ended. In the case of continuing education instructors who are paid at the end of a semester, the travel period may be considered to be the end of the contract. Wages will be garnished if the Business Office does not receive proper documentation.

#### **XVI. Consultant**

The President or President's designee must approve Professional Service Agreements under \$25,000. All agreements over \$25,000 must be submitted to the State President's office for approval and then to the Purchase and Contract Division for approval.

Approval of subsistence and travel reimbursement is not required from the State President when the consultant fee includes such items or when the daily subsistence does not exceed the in-state rate for college employees.

#### **XVII. Travel and Allowances for Part-time Instructors**

Temporary or part-time curriculum or occupational extension instructors who travel more than 15 miles to or from a duty station for the purpose of teaching curriculum or occupational extension courses may be paid mileage expense in justified cases approved in writing by the President or his/her designee. These payments must be included on an employee's W-2 form as salary payment.

Subsistence and lodging for temporary or part-time instructors may be paid when it is deemed more economical for the employee to stay overnight than to charge transportation costs on successive days.

#### **XVIII. Travel from home**

Travel reimbursement may not be made for commuting between an employee's home to their duty station. An employee normally assigned to

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one campus location traveling to another location, may be reimbursed for costs incurred through use of a private car provided the travel is direct mileage between points on the employee's itinerary. Mileage must be from the employee's assigned duty station or home, whichever is less.