

The City University of New York

Travel Training

For Medgar Evers College

Travel Guidelines

Travel on Official CUNY Business

CUNY is an agency of NYS:

State entities have to adhere to the policies and procedures of the NYS Office of the State Comptroller as set forth in the Office of the State Comptroller – Travel Manual, [OSC Travel Guidelines](#).

When an employee travels on official CUNY business, *only actual, necessary and reasonable business expenses* will be reimbursed.

Travel Guidelines & Policy

➤ Traveler's Responsibility:

- Know the travel rules and regulations
- Know CUNY's Policies and Procedures
- Know your Official Station and its effects on your eligibility for travel reimbursement
- Obtain necessary approval for travel, including method of travel
- **Secure the most economical method of travel in the best interest of MEC and The City University of New York**
- Obtain all necessary travel documents, tax exempt certificate, vouchers, etc.
- Maintain an accurate record of expenses including departure and return times, and mileage
- Obtain, in advance of travel, all necessary approvals for lodging, car rentals or any other necessary accommodation
- **Obtain required receipts or documentation**
- Claim reimbursement only for actual allowed expenses within reimbursement rates

Travel Guidelines & Policy

➤ Supervisor's Responsibility:

- Know all travel rules and regulations
- Know CUNY's Policies and Procedures
- Know your staff's official station and its effects on their eligibility for travel reimbursement
- Approve requests for staff to be in travel status only when necessary
- Ensure that adequate funds are available for travel
- Review traveler's itinerary to ensure the most economical method of travel is used in the best interest of MEC and CUNY
- Verify that travel vouchers are within allowable rates and all required documentation is attached
- Verify that all necessary approvals have been requested and obtained in advance of travel
- Review and certify traveler's vouchers completely
- Forward vouchers to the Accounts Payable Travel Unit in a timely manner

What is Travel Status- State

- ▶ When you are on assignment at a work location more than 35 miles from both home and official station you are considered to be in travel status.
- ▶ This determines that you are eligible for reimbursement of travel expenses such as meals and lodging.
- ▶ When travel is to a work location within 35 miles of your residence or official station, you are not considered to be in travel status and not covered by travel reimbursement policy.

Where is your Official Station - State

- Your Official Station is your usual work location. The purpose of an official station is to establish when you are in travel status and eligible for travel expenses. Travel between your home and official station is considered commuting and is not reimbursed.

Travel in Proximity of Official Station or Home - State

- ▶ When an employee is assigned to work at an alternate work location which is less than 35 miles from either his or her home or his or her official station, the employee is not considered to be in travel status, but rather is considered to be traveling in the proximity of his or her official station.
 - When traveling in the proximity of home or official station, an employee using a personal vehicle is entitled to reimbursement of transportation expenses associated with travel:
 - from home to an alternate work location
 - between the official station and an alternate work location
 - between alternate work locations
 - from an alternate work location to the employee's home
 - **Lesser Mileage Rule applies, which states in summary that when traveling in proximity from home to alternate location or from Official Station to alternate location the lesser rate applies.**

Expenses

- ▶ **Reimbursable expenses.** Agencies are responsible to ensure that only actual, necessary and reasonable expenses are reimbursed for official travel.
- ▶ (b) **Nonreimbursable expenses.** Travel shall be by the most direct route. Any person traveling by an indirect route shall assume any extra expense incurred. Expenditures for laundry, valet service, entertainment, gym fees, and other personal charges will not be reimbursed. First class fares are not reimbursable.

Transportation Expenses

State and City

➤ Transportation Expenses

- When choosing the method of transportation you should consider several factors, such as distance traveled, time to travel this distance, number of travelers, numbers of locations to be visited, and what type of transportation may be available. NYS Contracts should be used whenever possible.

- There are several State Contract Travel Agents that can be used to book Travel (see next slide)
- When using the State Contract Travel Agents you must make it clear that you are looking to book the Government Rate for Airline Travel.

The OGS Contracts offer discounted prices for city pairs between NYS and other domestic and foreign destinations. Also, other benefits of using the Travel Agents include:

- No Costs for refunds or ticket changes

- No minimum stay requirements

- No advance purchase requirements

For more information go to the [OGS Statewide Travel](#)

- If a more expensive method is used, you are required to obtain approval from your finance office before the travel occurs. The approvals from Finance must be in writing on a letterhead as they will be part of the travel record. All approvals must be submitted with the travel voucher.
- Premium services, such as leg room or upgrades are not usually reimbursable. If there is a justification as to why an employee requires the premium service, you must obtain approval from the Finance office prior to the travel occurring.

State Contract Travel Agents

May also be used by City Entities

Air Travel Services

(Award # 21991 – replaced award # 21137)
Effective August 15, 2011 through August 14, 2014

Authorized users are required to arranged all travel via New York State contract travel agents

NEW YORK STATE CONTRACT TRAVEL AGENTS

IATAN/ARC NUMBERS	Contractor's name & Address	Reservation Telephone No.
33-52916-0	Advantage Travel 18 Green St. Albany, NY 12207	(888)444-4240 (518)426-0052
33-87903-1 33-83265-4 05-51749-2	Euro Lloyd Travel 1640 Hempstead Turnpike East Meadow, New York 11554	(212)629-5470 (800)445-4256

Preferred Travel Service

The State of New York encourages the use of WSCA/NASPO. This is a new State Contract and some of the benefits listed are:

BENEFITS OF WSCA LODGING:

- Participating hotel includes value added amenities (examples include breakfast, free parking, transfers, newspaper and others) in the rates
- Participating hotels offer a 4PM cancellation day of arrival and have no hidden fees property or online booking fees
- Program includes than 10,000 properties with an easy-to-use searchable data

More information can be found at: [WSCA Travel Center](#)

▶ Another Service available to all users is Fedrooms, at [Fedrooms.com](#)

Vehicle Rentals

Rental Cars

- There is a current State contract with Enterprise Holdings and Hertz.

Contract	Contractor & Address	Telephone #	Fed Ident. #	Vendor #
PS65506	Enterprise Holdings Inc. 600 Corporate Park Drive St. Louis, MO 63105	Andrea Houle andrea.r.houle@ehi.com 518-788-2100	43-0724835	1000049835
PS65507	The Hertz Corporation 225 Brae Blvd. Park Ridge, NJ 07596	Sean Reardon sreardon@hertz.com 315-527-7049	13-1938568	1000051614

- Optional Services are NOT reimbursable, (i.e., pre paid fuel option)

Mileage Rates – State Only

Personal Vehicles:

When using your own car for State business, you will be reimbursed a specified rate for mileage. This rate includes all charges for gas, oil, maintenance, repairs and insurance on your car. No other charges will be reimbursed.

The mileage rate can be found on this website.

*Note: Mileage rate is adjusted (varies) each year.

**Note: When using your car – expenses incurred for gas, maintenance, or repairs are NOT reimbursable.

Meals Per Diem Rates- State

- You have a choice of two different methods for reimbursement of Meals. (State Only)
- Method 1: (The un-receipted method)
 - Allows for a fixed (flat) per diem reimbursement without receipts. To be entitled you must be in overnight travel status and eligible for both breakfast and dinner. Lunch is not reimbursed.
- Travelers using this un-receipted method are eligible for breakfast on the day of departure if they leave at least one hour before their normal work start time. They are eligible for dinner on the day of return if they return at least two hours later than their normal work ending time.
- For the State, the per diem rates are apportioned between Breakfast and Dinner, Lunch is not reimbursed. GFO Chapter XIII, Section 4

Meals Per Diem Rates- State

The Federal per diem meal allowances for breakfast and dinner are allocated as follows, with different allowances based on location:

2009-2015 Rates	Breakfast	Dinner
\$71 Meal Allowance	\$14.00	\$57.00
\$66 Meal Allowance	\$13.00	\$53.00
\$61 Meal Allowance	\$12.00	\$49.00
\$56 Meal Allowance	\$11.00	\$45.00
\$51 Meal Allowance	\$10.00	\$41.00
\$46 Meal Allowance	\$9.00	\$37.00

*Method 1 – No receipt necessary. Reimbursed for breakfast and dinner only.

**Note: Meal allowance is determined by the city and state of the travel destination.

Meals Per Diem Rates- State

- Method 2: (The receipted method)
 - Allows for reimbursement of actual meal costs up to a specific amount (GSA Per Diem Rates, revised periodically). Receipts are required. For the State, the per diem rates are apportioned between Breakfast and Dinner, Lunch is not reimbursed. GFO Chapter XIII, Section 4

*Method 2 – Retain receipts for all meals. Cost of meals for the day should not exceed the GSA Per Diem Rate. Receipts must be submitted for reimbursement.

Lodging Per Diem Rates- State

- You have a choice of two different methods for reimbursement of Lodging. (State Only)
- Method 1: (The unreceipted method)
 - Allows for a fixed (flat) per diem reimbursement without receipts.
 - Lodging Rates:
 - New York City and Nassau, Suffolk, Rockland and Westchester Counties - \$50.00
 - Cities of Albany, Binghamton, Buffalo, Rochester, Syracuse and their respective surrounding metropolitan areas - \$40.00
 - All other locations in New York State - \$35.00
 - Out of State (includes any out of state tax on lodging) - \$50.00.

Meals and Lodging Per Diem Rates- State

- Method 2: (The receipted method)
 - Allows for reimbursement of actual lodging costs up to a specific amount (GSA Per Diem Rates, revised periodically). Receipts are required.
 - No taxes should be paid within New York State. You should be prepared to submit a completed ST-129 Sales Tax Exempt form to the place of lodging. For out-of-state travel, local and state taxes will be reimbursed.

Day Trips – State Only

Travelers may be reimbursed for breakfast and/or dinner for day trips based on departure and return times. Travelers are entitled to reimbursement for breakfast if they have to leave at least one hour before their normal work start time, and/or for dinner if they return at least two hours later than their normal work ending time.

➤ Travelers without meal receipts:

Will be reimbursed \$5.00 for breakfast and/or \$12.00 for dinner.

➤ Travelers with meal receipts:

Will be reimbursed up to the maximum amount of the meal per diem allowance specified for the particular area of travel. The meal per diem allowance is apportioned for breakfast and dinner. ([GFO Chapter XIII, Section 4](#)).

Day trip meal reimbursements are reportable as income to the IRS.

Conference Considerations-State

On occasion an employee may attend conferences sponsored by other than a state agency, there is no control over the location of the conference. If the lodging rate exceeds the maximum per diem rates, the traveler must receive prior approval from the head of their Finance Office.

The written request with appropriate justification must be in writing on a letterhead and the resulting, dated, approval must be submitted with the travel voucher.

Conference Considerations

The traveler should consider and include as part of the justification

- Available lodging within the rate at a location nearby
- Transportation costs saved by staying at the conference site
- Late evening or early morning conference events
- Whether the attendee is a speaker or is performing other functions essential to the conference

Social Activities such as sightseeing and golf outings are considered personal expenses and will not be reimbursed.

Foreign Travel

► Foreign Travel

- Travel outside of the continental United States is reimbursed based on the maximum per diem allowance established by the U.S. Department of State. The foreign per diem rates are published monthly and are available on [Department of State Website](#).
- Foreign Travel rates provide for lodging costs up to a maximum amount and an allowance for meals and incidental expenses.
- Expenses should be converted to American dollars, based on the exchange rate in effect during the period of travel.

Foreign Travel Cont.

- ▶ Outside of Lodgings and Meals, there are some expenses unique to foreign travel that are reimbursable. Example of some of these expenses include:
 - Passport Fees
 - Visa Fees
 - Departure Taxes
 - Travelers' checks fees

State Travel Vouchers

From Planning To Reimbursement

Travel and CUNYfirst

➤ Travel Preparation

- With the implementation of CUNYFirst before traveling you must :
 - Log on to CUNYFirst:
 - Complete a Travel Authorization
 - Estimate all of your costs
 - Lodging/Meals: Look up Per Diem Rates for the location you are going to
 - Upload a copy of the event's official notice, program, agenda, invitation letter, etc.,
 - Estimated costs include:

▪ Transportation	* Lodging
▪ Registration	* Taxi
▪ Parking	* Other Travel Associated Costs
 - Travel Authorization must be completed for:
 - Travel Expenses that exceed \$1,000.00 per person
 - Out of State Travel
 - International Travel

Travel and CUNYfirst Cont.

► Travel Preparation

- The Travel Authorization form must be completely filled out AND approved by all managers prior to travel.
- You must ensure that you have budget to travel.
- The Travel Authorization gives permission to travel and allows department managers to manage their travel budget.
- The Travel Authorization ensures that funds will be available for reimbursement when the traveler returns.

Required Documentation

- When you return from travel, log on to CUNYFirst to complete an Expense Report
 - Fill out a State of New York Travel Voucher Form
 - All Original Receipts (Hotel, Transportation, Registration, etc.)
 - Detail of all expenses identifying business purpose
 - Any approval for per diem overages that you have requested and obtained before the Travel has occurred.
- Expense Reports must be submitted within a reasonable amount of time after the completion of the trip, but no more than two weeks after completion of trip.

Note: There will be no reimbursements without a receipt.

Required Documentation

New York State Office of The State Comptroller Guide To Financial Operations

XIII.2.A Expense Report Submission

SECTION OVERVIEW AND POLICY

An expense report must be submitted within thirty days of (i) the end of a travel event or (ii) the date the qualified non-travel expense is incurred.

Expense reports must be submitted for all expenses whether the employee is receiving reimbursement, receiving no reimbursement, or owes money to the State. State employees must pay the State any amount due at the time the expense report is submitted. Employees may not apply the amount owed to the State to future or past expense reports. Likewise, any amount due to the employee may not be applied to past or future expense reports where the employee owes money to the State.

An expense report should detail all expenses incurred for the travel event, including State travel card charges (see [Section 4.A – Employee Travel Card Reconciliation](#) of this Chapter for more information) and out-of-pocket expenses.

Expense reports shall be submitted by the employee or the employee's assigned proxy. If a proxy is used, the Business Unit must follow the process outlined in [Section 2 – Employee Expense Reimbursement Policies](#) of this Chapter. Additionally, the proxy must be approved by the employee's supervisor and the Business Unit's finance office. Business Units must not assign the same individual to be the employee's proxy and the employee's supervisor in the Statewide Financial System (SFS).

Expense reports should only be submitted for expenses that an employee has incurred or to which an employee is entitled through collective bargaining agreements while doing official State business. An approved expense report creates a financial transaction in the SFS based on the expenses submitted. There may be repercussions, up to and including termination and legal ramifications, for the submission of expenses that are not actual, reasonable and necessary.

All expense reports must be independently reviewed to ensure appropriateness prior to being approved. Approval of an expense report shall be by an authorized official other than the employee or his/her proxy. Where the expenses are incurred by the head of an agency, the approver reviewing the expenses should be someone in a position of authority who is knowledgeable of the rules governing the reimbursement, including, where applicable, the travel rules and regulations.

Required Documentation

New York State Office of The State Comptroller Guide To Financial Operations

XIII.3

Record Retention – Travel and Expense

Section Overview

The purpose of this section is to provide guidance to Business Units about requirements for record retention for documents supporting expense reports. Effective April 1, 2015, online Business Units using the SFS will be required to use the attachment feature in the SFS to store electronic documents in support of Travel and Expense transactions. ***If a traveler's documentation in the SFS is not included or is determined to be incomplete during the review process, the transaction in its entirety should be returned so the traveler (or his/her proxy) can attach the necessary documentation.*** Bulkload Business Units will need to continue to retain supporting documentation for expense reports at the agency and make this documentation available to OSC auditors upon request.

Attaching electronic documents in support of Travel and Expense transactions facilitates the audit and review process. The increased efficiency associated with having all documents necessary for review and approval attached to the transaction benefits the traveler, supervisor, agency approvers and OSC auditors. For online Business Units, to the extent possible, OSC will use the expense report attachments in SFS to review and approve transactions prior to payment. In addition, OSC may contact online or bulkload Business Unit personnel to request documentation be sent to OSC or schedule time for an on-site review. In either case, supporting documentation must be readily available to OSC's auditors to facilitate timely payment approval.

Business Units should note that OSC's request for payment documentation is in support of its constitutional and statutory authority and responsibility to audit State payments. Business Units should not anticipate an engagement letter or opening conference in conjunction with these requests.

Note: There will be no reimbursements without a receipt.

Payment Process

Reimbursements in SFS

Effective mid-April, due to the implementation of SFS, (OSC's new State Financial system) all travel/expense reimbursements to New York State employees will be tied to their method of payment in the NY State payroll system.

1. Employees that receive part or all of their pay in a check will continue to receive a check for their travel/expense reimbursements. The check will be mailed to the same address that appears on the employee's paycheck. Travel/expense checks **will not** roll into an employee's paycheck, separate checks will be issued.
2. Employees who have their full paycheck directly deposited into one bank account will have their travel/expense reimbursements deposited into the same account. Travel/expense deposits **will not** roll into an employee's paycheck direct deposit; separate deposits will be made.
3. Employees who have their paycheck direct deposit split against multiple bank accounts will have their travel/expense reimbursements deposited into the account where the balance/excess of their pay goes.

Employees will not receive any notification from the NYS Treasury that a direct deposit has occurred; they are advised to be aware of the forthcoming deposit based on travel/expense reimbursements submitted to the Procurement/Travel office.

Employee reimbursements for travel/expenses will be paid on an ongoing basis and will not be affected by the payroll schedule. Payments will be made on an ongoing basis as vouchers are submitted and processed.