

SUBJECT: TRAVEL REIMBURSEMENT**1. Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to outline the procedures to be followed by all University employees when incurring business related travel expenses and submitting travel claims.

2. Scope

This policy and its procedures apply to all employees of the University travelling on University operating funds or other funds such as research grants. They have been developed for standardization, based on the following principles:

- to ensure that individuals travelling on University business do not incur any personal financial hardship;
- to meet the requirements of the University auditors;
- to meet the requirements of granting agencies (NSERC, SSHRC, CIHR, etc.); and
- to ensure that all travel expenditures are reasonable and appropriate.

3. Authority/Responsibility

The Vice-President (Administration and Finance) is responsible for the implementation of this policy.

4. Procedure**4.1. Non-Tri-Council Travel Claim Form**

All Non-Tri-Council requests for reimbursement of allowable travel expenses (please see below) must be submitted on a *Travel Claim Form* within **30 days** of travel. The claim form must be completed in full as follows:

- name of individual travelling, department they belong to, phone number;
- purpose of travel including dates of travel, destination;
- itemized record of expenditures with all original receipts attached where applicable;
- fund, organization and account coding information;
- signature of claimant; and
- signature of supervisor. **

** A signed *Travel Authorization form* must be attached to all claim forms. Where the amounts claimed do not exceed the budget submitted on this form it is not necessary to have the supervisor's signature on the travel claim as well.

When expenditures are submitted in foreign currency, all conversions will be done at the current rate, as provided by the University's bank unless the claimant provides proof of the rate they paid (either a credit card statement or bank receipt).

Duly sworn claims submitted for which no original receipts are available will not be considered for reimbursement where the amounts are greater than \$10.⁰⁰. No receipts are required for the per diem allowances. In exceptional circumstances, an affidavit may be substituted for lost receipts (the Affidavit is available from the Purchasing department).

All travel claims will be subject to a two-week turnaround for reimbursement.

4.2 Travel Authorization Form

A *Travel Authorization form* must be completed in advance of any travel (please see the *Travel Authorization* policy on this subject). This form provides information regarding the purpose of the travel, dates and destination as well as a budget for the trip. The form requires the signature of the employee's supervisor, and an approved form indicates the consent of the University for the employee to conduct business as requested and to be absent from the campus. All travel claims must be accompanied by a copy of the completed and approved Travel Authorization to be eligible for reimbursement.

4.3 Travel Advances

It is not the intent of the University that employees be required to finance their travel expenses from their own pocket while on University business. A travel advance will be provided to an employee with approval from their supervisor. The request should be made on a cheque requisition and must have a copy of an approved Travel Authorization form attached. Requests for advances may be **made no sooner than three weeks** prior to the commencement of the travel and a completed travel claim, with all original receipts, must be submitted within 30 days of the travel to account for the disposition of the advance. All future requests for reimbursement or travel advances will be held pending the submission of the travel claim.

PLEASE NOTE: Travel advances will *NOT* be made available for those goods and services for which arrangements can be made through Purchasing (i.e. air fare, car rentals). Those individuals who wish to use their own credit cards to pay for these types of purchases must be prepared to finance these expenditures themselves until the travel has been completed. Travel advances will not be given to any person who is not an employee of the University. Budget holders wishing to provide travel funds in advance to a guest must take the advance in their own name. The budget holder will then be solely responsible for this advance and must provide the original receipts attached to an approved Travel Claim form in the same manner as if they themselves were travelling.

5. Tri-Council Travel Claims (applies to Tri-Council Grant Holders ONLY)

5.1 Travel Claim Requirements

All Tri-Council Agencies (NSERC, SSHRC, and CIHR) Travel claims must be accompanied by the following information so that the expenses of the entire trip can be assessed by the granting agency:

- i) Purpose of the trip
- ii) Dates and Destinations (person or institution visited)
- iii) Official supporting documentation (e.g., prospectus or program, indicating the dates of conferences and workshops)
- iv) Details of daily claims for expenditures relating to those visits
- v) Details of any vehicle used
- vi) Original receipts, such as hotel bills, car rental agreements (credit cards slips are not valid receipts)
- vii) Original air travel tickets AND boarding passes (airline boarding passes will not be accepted in lieu of ticket receipts except in the case of electronic tickets)

5.2 Supporting Documents

The Tri-Council Agencies do not want situations where travel-related expenses are reimbursed without all the required supporting documentation. Travel Claims that do not contain all supporting documents for that particular trip, whether the expenses are to be reimbursed or have already been claimed, will be returned to the claimant by the UNBC Finance Office as the expenses for the entire trip must be submitted together in one batch. For example, when airline tickets are purchased through Purchasing, and there is no link between the trip's other expenses (hotel, car

rental and per diem) and the airfare, the travel claim will not meet the Tri-Council Agencies' compliance verification process.

5.3 Claimants Other Than Grantee

For claimants other than the Tri-Council Grantee, the affiliation with the Grantee's research group must be specified on the claim form. If the traveler is a student, the travel claim must be signed by the Grantee. In the event that the traveler is the Grantee or a visiting researcher, the travel claim must be countersigned by the Chair or Dean confirming the relevance of the travel to the research being funded.

5.4 Eligible Tri-Council Travel Cost

Eligible travel and subsistence costs can be found in the Tri-Agency *Financial Administration Guide – Use of Grant Funds* section.

5.5 Funding Agency Audit

Travel expenses and supporting documents are subject to audits for compliance and evaluation of eligibility by funding agencies.

6. Allowable Expenditures

6.1 Per Diem - Domestic Travel

While travelling on University business in Canada a per diem allowance should be claimed to cover meal and incidental costs while away from home. Employees who are travelling partial days or attending functions where meals are provided should claim only those meals for which they incurred the expense. Effective April 1, 2001, the total allowable per diem is \$54.00 (if travel occurs in the United States, the reimbursement will be based on US funds) split as follows:

Breakfast	\$12. ⁰⁰
Lunch	\$15. ⁰⁰
Dinner	\$22. ⁰⁰
Incidentals	\$ 5. ⁰⁰

It should be noted that the meal per diem incorporates the cost of the food, beverage and gratuity as well as any incidental costs. While \$54.⁰⁰ is the daily maximum, it is acceptable to claim less than that amount if desired. Receipts are *not* required when claiming a per diem.

6.2. International Travel

While travelling internationally on University business the per diem allowance will be reimbursed at 75% of the Federal Treasury Board rates for the country visited as described in the Treasury Board Travel Directive, Appendix D – Allowances.¹ Allowances in the United States of America are the same as in Canada but paid in US funds.

6.3 Meal Expenses - Business Meeting

When a business meeting is conducted over a meal, the associated costs may be claimed (for food, beverages and gratuity). Original receipts must be submitted when requesting reimbursement and must indicate the purpose or nature of the University business discussions and identify, by name, all individuals attending. Please ensure that the per diem for this meal is not also claimed.

¹ http://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/pubs_pol/hrpubs/TBM_113/d-eng.asp (Search by name of country visited)

6.4 Accommodation

To the extent possible, hotel accommodation should be arranged where provincial government rates are honoured or where prices are moderate. Original receipts must be submitted as proof of payment.

A per diem of \$30.⁰⁰ is available to employees who stay with relatives or friends. It is intended that this per diem be provided to the host.

6.5 Telephone

Long distance calls for business purposes are reimbursable as are fax charges and internet charges. Personal calls are not reimbursable. Original receipts must be submitted as proof of payment.

6.6 Transportation

6.6.1 Air

Whenever possible, air travel should be booked well in advance to take advantage of lower rates. MyTravel is the exclusive travel agents of the University and where possible, all arrangements must be made through them. The University will reimburse for economy class only. Original receipts must be submitted as proof of payment.

6.6.2 Taxis

The University will reimburse taxi fares to and from the airport to the location of business meetings and accommodation. The airport shuttle bus should be used whenever possible. Original receipts must be submitted as proof of payment.

6.6.3 Rail

Travel by rail taken by the most direct route is reimbursable. However, where air service to the destination is also available, the total rail fare claimed may not be in excess of the equivalent advance booking economy airfare. Original receipts must be submitted as proof of payment.

6.6.4 Personal Automobile

When the personal vehicle of an employee is used for the performance of University business allowance of \$0.49/km may be claimed. This allowance is intended to cover the costs of fuel and lubricants as well as wear and tear. However, where air service to the destination is also available, the total allowance claimed may not be in excess of the equivalent advance booking economy airfare. Associated costs that may be claimed with submission of original receipts are: parking fees (including airports), bridge and highway tolls, and ferry charges.

6.6.6 Rental Vehicles

If required for reasons of economy or efficiency, employees travelling out of town may rent a small to mid size vehicle. If a group is travelling together an upgrade is acceptable to accommodate the increased passengers. Original receipts must be submitted as proof of payment. Whenever possible, the following agencies should be used to take advantage of negotiated government rates:

- National
- Enterprise
- Budget
- Thrifty
- Avis

Original receipts must be submitted to recover associated costs such as fuel, parking, bridge and highway tolls, and ferry charges. Please note that the \$0.49/km allowance is available only when a personal vehicle is used.

7. Associated Costs

Registration and/or conference fees paid by the employee can be claimed. Original receipts must be provided that show both the cost of the conference and evidence of payment. A credit card statement will be acceptable providing it is accompanied by a copy of the registration form.

8. Non-allowable Expenditures

The following expenditures will not be considered eligible for reimbursement:

- gratuities
- laundry or dry-cleaning
- mini-bar or movie charges
- personal phone calls
- extra costs incurred when accompanied by family/friend (such as double instead of single rates on a room)
- liquor (when not included as part of a meal)

The incidental portion of the per diem allowance is intended to offset expenses such as those listed above.