

## **General Travel Policy**

### **I. Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to establish procedures for travel on behalf of Dyersburg State Community College.

### **II. Scope**

This policy applies to travel conducted for the educational and professional needs of Dyersburg State Community College in accordance with TBR Policy 4:03:03.00.

### **III. Policy**

#### **I. General**

- A. This policy applies to the travel of all employees of Dyersburg State Community College in the performance of their official duties. Provisions of this policy also may apply to individuals other than employees who are authorized to travel at Institutional expense. Authorization for travel will not be granted, and expenses will not be reimbursed unless the travel is made, and reimbursement claimed, in accordance with this policy and any approved exceptions hereto.
- B. This policy and specific reimbursement rates for travel expenses allowed under this policy shall be consistent with those of the Comprehensive Travel Regulations of the State of Tennessee.
- C. All travel must be consistent with the educational, research, and professional needs of Dyersburg State Community College. Employees must conduct all travel with integrity, in compliance with applicable laws, policies, and procedures, and in a manner that excludes considerations for personal advantage. Employees must exercise good judgement and conduct all aspects of travel in a cost-efficient manner.
- D. Compliance - When traveling, employees should be as conservative as circumstances permit. Reimbursement for travel will be based upon the most efficient route possible. Employees will be personally responsible for any extra expense incurred. It is the responsibility of the employee to be familiar with and adhere to established travel policies. Deliberate disregard of this policy or filing an intentionally misleading or fraudulent travel claim is grounds for disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

- E. Procurement Cards – Individual and departmental procurement cards may not be used for any travel expenses except in the instances of team/group travel, as set forth in DSCC policy 07.09.02.00 [Procurement Card Policy](#). The College’s Travel Procurement Card is available for hotel, airline, and conference registrations upon request through the Director of Administrative Service’s office.
- F. Grant, Contract, Foundation, and Agency Fund Travel - Travel expenses for grant, foundation (restricted funds), contract or agency funds will be paid in accordance with the provisions and reimbursement limitations of DSCC travel policies, unless otherwise stipulated by the grant or foundation. Airfare, however, must always comply with this policy.
- G. Travel Exceptions – The President, or designee must approve any exceptions to this policy.
- H. In-Route Expenses – Employees should not spend more time at the site of travel than necessary—arriving early or staying late should be considered personal travel. Traveling to and from a business meeting or event is limited to one day each way prior to and after the event for domestic travel and two days for international travel. Employees are expected to arrive no earlier than the day before the first substantive portion of an event (i.e., exclusive of social events), and reimbursement will not be provided for the excess portion of a stay unless an exception is provided. Additional expenses related to flight delays and cancellations are reimbursable and do not need to be processed as an exception. A memo is to be attached explaining the additional expenses.
- I. Travel Packages - Internet travel sites such as Expedia, Travelocity or Kayak can be utilized to purchase single travel services such as an airline ticket. Internet travel sites cannot be used to purchase a package of more than one travel service. Purchases of travel packages that combine services such as lodging, airline, or vehicle rentals are not allowed. These package deals do not usually provide sufficient itemized pricing for each service purchased and therefore do not allow for proper comparison to CONUS or conference rates as required by policy.

## II. Travel Request

- A. Authorization - The travel authorization request is the official authorization for travel.
  - 1. The request should be completed as far in advance of the trip as possible to allow for proper routing and approval as follows: The president or designee shall have authority to approve travel by employees of the Institution.

2. The Chancellor or designee must approve all out-of-state travel by the president of the Institution.
  3. Authorization for travel by a student, regardless of the destination, must be approved by the president of the Institution or designee.
- B. In-State Travel - All employees are authorized without further approval for in-state travel where overnight travel and conference fees are not involved. Other in-state travel requires prior authorization by the employee's appropriate approving authority. Employees whose employment requires frequent in-state travel may obtain blanket authorization in writing for such travel.
- C. Out-of-State Travel. - All employees must obtain prior written authorization for out-of-state travel, which must be approved by the employee's appropriate approving authority. The authorization must show the name of the person traveling, purpose of the trip, destination(s), date of departure and return, mode of transportation, estimated expenses, and availability of funds. If, in the normal course of official business, the employee must routinely travel into another state and back on the same day, such travel will be considered in-state travel and shall be subject to the in-state travel provisions. This exception applies for trips which do not exceed 50 miles into another state. Employees whose employment requires frequent out-of- state travel may obtain blanket authorization in writing for such travel.
- D. Extended/International Travel – Authorization for travel by an employee to Alaska, Hawaii, and all out-of-country/international travel, including Canada, shall be subject to approval by the Chancellor or president of the Institution (depending on the traveler, subject to Section II. A1-A3), not the designees. Requests for authorization should reach the appropriate office fourteen (14) days before the date of travel.

### III. Reimbursement

- A. Reimbursement - All employees and students must pay their own expenses and seek reimbursement except where otherwise noted in this policy.
- B. Process – The travel claim form is completed and submitted for approvals. All required receipts must be attached and routed electronically to the appropriate review and approving offices for audit and reimbursement processing.
- C. Timeliness - Employees must submit claims for reimbursement for travel expense no later than 45 days after completion of travel. Failure to do so could significantly

delay the reimbursement. In accordance with the Internal Revenue Service Guidelines, claims not submitted in a timely manner may be considered taxable income. Claims submitted past 45 days require a written explanation memo with signature by the employee's direct supervisor as well as the area VP and the Vice President for Finance and Administrative Services.

- D. Rates – Reimbursement rates for per diem amounts for lodging and meals & incidentals (M&I) can be found via the [CONUS website](#) (in-state and out- of-state) and the [OCONUS website](#) (outside the Continental U.S.) Reimbursement of expenses incurred while on official business is subject to the limitations in this policy. The limits do not indicate the amounts that should be spent but provide maximum amounts that can be reimbursed. The per diem for meals related to Group Travel will be based on the amounts outlined in DSCC policy 05.04.07.00 [Group Travel Policy](#).
- E. Receipts – Receipts are required for all expenses (excluding meals), and they must be issued by the vendor, include the amount, date and must detail the charges. Credit card statements or slips do not qualify as a receipt except in the cases of ground transportation, tolls, and parking. For parking where no receipt is available, the maximum reimbursable amount is \$8.00.
- F. Eligibility - An employee is considered to be on official travel status and eligible for reimbursement at the time of departure from his or her official station or residence, whichever is applicable.
- G. Official Station - The official station of an employee is his or her office or designated work location. The official station is typically the location from which the employee performs the major portion of his or her assigned duties. For remote employees, the official workstation is generally considered to be their residence. The Institution reserves the right to define the official station for its employees. All reimbursement should be based on either the traveler's residence or the official station, whichever is less, unless starting from the office. Additionally, reimbursement for travel from an employee's residence to a location considered to be the Institution's physical work location will be based on the total mileage less the mileage from the employee's residence to their official station. An explanation must be given if the reimbursement is based upon a location other than the employee's residence or official station. On weekends, holidays, or other off-duty days, the employee's residence will be designated as the official station, and the reimbursement will be based on the mileage from the residence to the destination. An employee with a remote work arrangement is

not eligible for reimbursement when traveling to the location that is considered to be the Institution's physical work location. See DSCC policy 06.08.01.02 [Alternate and Remote Work Arrangements](#).

- H. Temporary Assignments - If an employee is reassigned, either on a temporary or permanent basis, to a work location other than his or her usual official station, that location shall become the employee's official station. The employee will not be eligible for reimbursement to the new location.
- I. Expenses incurred at an employee's official station will not be reimbursed by the Institution and are considered personal.
- J. Expenses for Others - If an employee pays expenses associated with another employee, guest or student, the expenses must be submitted at the same time as the employee's expenses, and each expense report should reference the other.
- K. Scanned Documents – Supporting reimbursement documents and receipts must be scanned and attached to the travel claim. The documents to be attached include, but are not limited to, travel authorization, travel claim, conference brochures, hotel folio, mileage maps, receipts, and all other pertinent documents supplied by the traveler. When traveling to or from a destination listed in the [DSCC Business Mileage Chart](#), the mileage in the chart must be used and no mileage documentation needs to be attached to the travel claim. Once the reimbursement request has been processed, the scanned, electronic documents will serve as the official record for legal and accounting purposes. The department should keep any paper records until their ledgers have been reconciled for each trip and then the paper records may be destroyed unless federal funds were used to purchase the travel, and the granting agency requires the paper receipts to be retained for longer.
- L. Personal Travel Combined with Business Travel - When a stay at a business location is extended for personal reasons either prior to or after the official business is concluded, the entire airfare may be reimbursed. Other expenses incurred during the personal portion of the stay such as meals, lodging and other local transportation are not reimbursable, and the traveler should exercise care not to seek reimbursement for these. If any destinations not pertaining to official Institution business are included on the airline ticket, the traveler must provide a quote for that specific destination, and they will be reimbursed the lower of the quote or their actual expenses.

#### IV. Travel/Cash Advance

- A. Temporary Travel Advances - An employee is expected to request reimbursement for

travel expenses after travel is completed. As an exception to policy, a travel advance may be available under certain circumstances. An employee may receive an advance by submitting a request documenting the circumstances with the authorization for travel, and receiving approval from, the appropriate approving authority. Exceptions may be granted by the chief financial officer for the Institution based upon written request for exception for an advance approved by the employee's direct supervisor. An amount equal to 80% of the estimated expenditure, excluding airfare, hotel and registrations if purchased with the College travel card or Institution check, will be allowed as an advance. No advance less than \$100 will be made.

- B. Student Travel Advances - Students traveling under individual authorizations or an employee traveling with a student or students who is responsible for disbursing all funds for the trip are subject to travel advance specifications as set forth in DSCC Policy 05.04.07.00 [Group Travel Policy](#).
- C. Registration Fees - Registration fees for conferences, conventions, seminars, and meetings can be processed using one of the processes described below. They should not be processed more than six months prior to the event unless an "early bird" rate applies and is documented. Expenses incurred for social/personal events, such as golf outings, cruises, etc. or attendance by a spouse or personal guests are not permissible.
- D. Advance Payment
  - 1. Check Request. If credit cards are not accepted as a form of payment, the registration can be paid by check and processed through the Institution's travel process with a copy of the travel authorization attached.
  - 2. Paid by and Reimbursed to the Employee. If an employee chooses to pay registration fees with personal funds either in advance or at the conference site, the expense is reimbursed via a travel claim upon completion of the trip. An itemized receipt for the registration must be attached to the travel claim. The employee will not be reimbursed prior to the trip.
- E. Paid by Departmental Procurement/College Travel Card - Departments may pay virtual conference registration fees using a departmental procurement card. The College travel card must be used for registration fees related to conferences involving travel, as well as all other travel expenses. Receipts detailing all charges on the College travel card must be submitted with the travel reimbursement request and recorded as institution-paid. Departments must also submit receipts for all fees and travel expenses charged to the College travel card to Administrative Services so they can be

reconciled with the College's travel card statement and properly recorded.

1. Packages that Include Multiple Items – In some instances, a package may include a grouping of items such as a retreat that includes lodging, meals and workshops as a single registration price. In these instances, the following criteria must be met before a package can be purchased:
  - a. The lodging and meals must be part of a package and listed in the registration materials.
  - b. The payment must be to the vendor who is collecting the registration fee.
  - c. The items must be directly related to the official purpose of the conference. Extra fees for golf outings, historical tours, sporting events and similar items are not reimbursable.

#### V. International Travel

- A. Rates - Reimbursement rates for lodging, meals, mileage, and incidentals will be in accordance with the Federal rates ([OCONUS](#)) for the city and country for all international travel.
- B. Receipts - Pertinent information on international receipts must be translated to English and signed by the person who translated the documents.
- C. Conversion to U.S. Dollars - All amounts on the travel claim must be in U.S. dollars. The conversion rate and computation must be shown on each receipt, or the traveler may use the conversion shown on a credit card statement and attach it to each receipt. If neither a receipt with a conversion rate nor a credit card statement is available, the traveler may use a conversion website and attach the converted amount to each receipt. The conversion rate and date must correspond to the date shown on the receipt (i.e., conversion rate - 1/01/24; receipt date - 1/01/24). International credit card transaction fees are reimbursable.
- D. Travel Visa Expenses are Reimbursable - if permission is required by the government of the country visiting for business.
- E. Passport application fees and photographs are not reimbursable. Passports are personal in nature and are good for ten years. TBR views the business-related expense as minimal in comparison to the personal benefit.
- F. Insurance – Only international travel insurance that is required by TBR/Institution is reimbursable.

#### VI. Air Travel

- A. Coach Fare - In accordance with T.C.A §49-7-130, reimbursement for airfare will be

limited to coach fare or equivalent. No business, "business select," or first-class fares will be reimbursed. If an employee elects to purchase these fares, they will be reimbursed for the cost of a standard coach ticket, which must be documented. The cost of the ticket must be supported by the original receipt. The receipt must contain the name of the passenger, dates of travel, complete trip itinerary (including departure and arrival times), amount, and the name of the airline. Additionally, the receipt must contain the class of service that will be identified by either the word "coach" or "economy," or an economy/coach airfare letter (e.g., W, S, Q, L, etc.). The itinerary must be attached regardless of who is paying for the expense.

- B. Airline Fees - Fees imposed by the airline industry such as seat assignment fees, boarding pass fees, luggage fees and similar fees will be reimbursed, provided a receipt is furnished.
- C. Trip Insurance – Charges for trip insurance are not reimbursable. The State of Tennessee is self-insured and does not purchase separate insurance and therefore will not reimburse for insurance purchases for trips.
- D. Airport Parking/Transportation - Parking receipts must list the vendor, date and amount. The employee can be reimbursed for one of the following for traveling from their official workstation or residence to and from the airport:
  - 1. Mileage for one round trip and airport parking
  - 2. The cost of one round trip taxi or ride-share fare, including a tip of up to 20% of the fare
  - 3. Mileage for two round trips when driven by a friend or relative.
- E. Chartered Aircraft – Generally, faculty and staff (including group travel and athletics) whose duties require travel will use commercial ground and air carriers or an Institutional automobile. However, a chartered aircraft may be used if time and/or distance preclude ground travel or if a commercial air service is either unavailable or does not meet the needs of the traveler(s).
  - 1. The chief executive officer of each Institution shall assign the following duties to a responsible official:
    - a. Reviewing and approving requests for charter air services;
    - b. Scheduling charter flights; and
    - c. Informing those who request charter flights of the charter company's policy on cancelling scheduled flights.
  - 2. Charter services will be obtained only when it can be shown that the charter does



not exceed the sum of all traveling costs by commercial carrier (e.g., transportation, meals, and lodging) or that circumstances necessitate travel when no other means is available.

## VII. Automobile/Ground

- A. Institution-Owned Automobile - An Institution-owned (fleet) automobile may be used when available. Employees will be furnished with courtesy cards for purchase of gasoline, oil and other automobile services and such expenses should not be claimed by the employee as travel expenses. The use of Institution vehicles is restricted to the continental U.S. Employees that are furnished with an Institution-owned automobile for business travel are not eligible for mileage reimbursement.
- B. Employee-Owned Automobile - The authorized mileage allowance includes all operating expenses such as gas, oil, and repairs precluding any separate claim for such items.
  - 1. When a personal automobile is used by the employee for convenience on a work-related trip, a more comprehensive review of all costs of flying versus driving must be considered and employee/traveler must submit supporting documentation to substantiate the claim for mileage; the lowest expense, automobile mileage vs airfare, will be reimbursed.
  - 2. The travel claim must indicate the employees' itinerary and must show the official business mileage. Business mileage as indicated on MapQuest, Google Maps or reputable websites for out-of-state routes will be as official. Vicinity mileage must be reported on a separate line and not included with point-to-point mileage. Only mileage while on official business may be claimed.
- C. Flying vs. Driving – The choice of flying versus driving is influenced by distance, time, cost and one's preference. When the destination is out-of- state and flying is the economical choice but one chooses to drive and the round trip is 1,000 miles or more, the reimbursement may not exceed the cost of the lowest available airfare from the same points of origin and destination plus associated estimated costs for parking and ground transportation. The traveler must obtain an airfare quote if they are claiming 1,000 miles or more and the destination is out-of-state. The quote should be obtained on the date that the trip request is approved or at least 21 days prior to the trip. This requirement does not apply if two or more employees are traveling in the same vehicle, if there are multiple business destinations, if the traveler is required to transport large amounts of cargo for Institutional business, or if the traveler can

establish that driving is more economical.

- D. Local Mileage - Reimbursement may not be requested for commuting from the traveler's home to their official station regardless of the frequency of these trips per day. Reimbursement requests for local mileage should be submitted no more than once a month. Business mileage as indicated in MapQuest, Google Maps, or other reputable websites for routes will be official.
- E. Automobile Rentals - Rental cars are permissible when flying to a business destination and it is less expensive than alternative means of transportation (taxi, Uber, train) or when convenience or safety issues justify the additional cost. The total rental, including parking and gas, should be considered. Restrictions related to rental cars include:
  - 1. Refueling Rental Vehicles – The Pre-Paid or Fuel Service Option is not permissible. Travelers should refuel the automobile prior to returning the automobile to the fuel level at time of pick up. Gas receipts should be obtained and submitted with their reimbursement request.
  - 2. Rental of Luxury Vehicles - When renting a vehicle, the traveler should select the most economical vehicle that serves their needs. The rental of luxury class vehicles is prohibited.
  - 3. Insurance – All insurance associated with car rentals should be declined and will not be reimbursed, except for the collision damage waiver coverage for international car rentals. Travelers are encouraged to purchase this coverage for all international rentals.
  - 4. 15 Passenger Vans – For all 15 passenger vans, renters must be mindful of restrictions related to delivery or pick up. It is the renter's responsibility to reschedule the delivery or to pick up the van at the rental location if the renter cannot be present at the scheduled delivery time.
- F. Tolls - Toll fees will be reimbursed when necessary. Toll charges added to rental car charges for toll pass devices are also reimbursable.
- G. Ground Transportation - If an individual travels by air, reasonable taxi, bus, ride-share (Uber, Lyft), or shuttle, charges to and from airports can be reimbursed. Reimbursement for ride-share will be limited to basic fare, unless obtaining a larger vehicle to accommodate multiple people is more cost efficient. No upgraded fares will be reimbursed, unless justification exists. If an employee elects to purchase these fares, they will be reimbursed the cost of a basic fare, which must be documented. The cost

of the ride must be supported by the original receipt. Reasonable taxi and ride-share fares will also be allowed for travel between lodging and meeting sites. Ground transportation charges will not be reimbursed for travel off property for meals while attending overnight meetings or conferences. This is considered covered in the daily M&I per diem. Regardless of the amount of the fare, the destination and reason for each fare reimbursement claimed must be listed on the receipt. Credit card statements showing ground transportation charges can be submitted as reimbursable receipts. Tips paid on ground transportation are reimbursable for up to 20% of the fare.

## VIII. Lodging

- A. Non-Conference Lodging - Lodging expenses will be reimbursed subject to the maximum amounts shown in the U.S. General Services Administration's Per Diem Rates (CONUS) or the Department of Defense (OCONUS). Receipts are required and must include the address of the hotel, name of the individual occupying the room, the daily room charge, applicable tax, and total charges. The reimbursement rate for lodging and meals is based upon the city where the employee spends the night. Therefore, the address including the zip code of their lodging location must be listed on their expense reimbursement request.
  - 1. Short-term rentals from services such as Airbnb, Vacation Rental by Owner and others are allowable if the cleaning fees, service fees and other charges do not exceed the applicable CONUS rate. The traveler is responsible for any charges related to damages incurred during their stay. Receipts for these rentals must be from a company that rents the property.
- B. Conference Lodging - Employees attending a conference, seminar, or group meeting where a block of rooms has been negotiated will be reimbursed for room and tax at the conference or group rate. A conference brochure/agenda or other documentation must be attached to the reimbursement request and contain the name of the designated conference and/or overflow hotel(s) and the applicable room rates. The absence of the room rate in the conference brochure/agenda will limit the reimbursement to the CONUS/OCONUS rate.
  - 1. In the event the employee lodged in a hotel of their choice, the amount of the reimbursement will be limited to the rate of the conference hotel, documented by conference literature, and attached to the expense report. As long as the lodging rate is equal to or less than the conference hotel rate, the reimbursement request does not need to be treated as an exception. In the event the conference materials

do not contain a conference-lodging rate, CONUS/OCONUS rates will be applicable.

- C. Sharing A Room – When two employees authorized to travel on Institution business share a room, each employee should pay for their own lodging and request their own receipt. They are entitled to a combined applicable CONUS or OCONUS lodging rate, which does not need to be treated as an exception. If it is not possible to get separate receipts, one employee may pay the entire amount and claim the expenses. In these instances, the travel claims for both employees must identify the other's name, personnel number, and the person incurring the expense will be reimbursed.
- D. Hotel Fees - Early departure, late check-out and other hotel fees will be reimbursed, provided an explanation and a receipt are obtained. Resort fees will be reimbursed if the hotel is the conference lodging.

#### IX. Meal Allowances

- A. Rate - Daily meal allowances are provided in US General Services Administration (CONUS) or the Department of Defense (OCONUS). The meal allowance will be in accordance with the per diems for locations of travel and will be based upon the city where the employee spends the night. The per diem for meals related to group travel, including athletics and student groups, will be based on the amounts outlined in DSCC policy 05.04.07.00 [Group Travel Policy](#).
- B. In-Route Days - Reimbursement for meals for the day of departure and the day of return will be 75% of the normal reimbursement rate regardless of the time of departure or return. If one trip ends and another begins on the same day, meal deductions should be made on one of the trips and noted on both trips so that the traveler is not reimbursed more than 100% of the meal allowance for that day.
- C. Official Banquets – When the expense for an official banquet of a meeting or conference is in excess of the per diem limit, the excess will be allowed provided a receipt or other documentation of the charge is submitted with the travel claim.
- D. Reimbursement for meals will not be permitted when overnight travel is not involved.

#### X. Other Miscellaneous

- A. Personal Expenses – Personal expenses will not be reimbursed. These include, but are not limited to, laundry, honor bars, TSA pre-check expenses, and other types of personal expenses.
- B. Business Expenses - Items such as printing, duplication, and promotional materials required for official business are allowable expenses and will be

reimbursed. A detailed receipt is required. These items should be included in the Other Expenses column of the Travel Claim Form.

- C. ATM - Expenses to obtain funds at automated teller machines (ATM) are not reimbursable except for international locations where this is a desirable method of obtaining cash. Receipts supporting the fee must be submitted on the travel claim.
- D. Internet - Computer connect charges to access or connect to the Institution will be reimbursed. An explanation and receipt for the charge must be provided on the travel claim.
- E. Telecommunications - Business-related phone charges while on international travel, will be reimbursed for airtime, roaming, and applicable taxes for individuals who do not have a cell phone allowance. Support for these charges must be provided with the Travel Expense Report.

#### XI. Reward Points

- A. Institution employees are allowed to earn points and miles associated with airline, hotel, and rental car frequent travel programs for business travel expenses. Institutions will not purchase or reimburse employees any costs associated with redeeming and/or earning these points, even if the redemption is for Institution business.

#### XII. Exceptions

- A. General
  - 1. The President shall have the authority to grant exceptions to any part or all of the provisions of this policy, in individual instances when deemed appropriate and necessary; however, any exception directly affecting the President must be approved by the Chancellor.

#### XIII. Addendum

- A. This section provides the specific expense considerations cited in the general travel policy.
  - 1. The reimbursement rates included in this policy, based on the current [Comprehensive Travel Regulations of the State of Tennessee](#) for mileage and the [CONUS/OCONUS](#) rates for accommodation and meal per diems, may be revised from time to time.

#### **IV. Compliance**

The policy applies to the travel of all employees of Dyersburg State Community College in the performance of their official duties. Provisions of this policy also may apply to individuals other than employees who are authorized to travel at institutional expense.

#### **V. Definitions**

Commuting: Travel from your home to your workplace/official station and from your workplace/official station back home.

#### **VI. Revision History**

Policy approved by Administrative Council on 10/31/2014. Revision approval by Admin council on May 19, 2016. Revision approved by Admin Council on 3/26/2018. Revision approved by Admin Council on 8/31/2018. Revision approved by Admin Council on 4/26/2019. Revision approved by Admin Council on 10/27/2022. Revision approved by Admin Council on 09/28/2023. Revision approved by Admin Council on 11/20/2025.