

# College of Architecture

## Travel Procedures

(revised 3/29/06)

1. These policies and procedures implement the policies and procedures specified in the following rules and regulations attached hereto. System Regulation 25.02.01 Travel Regulations; Standard Administrative Procedure 25.02.01.M2.04 Travel Procedures; Standard Administrative Procedure 25.02.01.M2.05 Reimbursements for Tips and Gratuities; TAMU Rule 25.02.01.M1 Foreign Travel.
2. There are three levels of responsibility for travel. The College is responsible for approving, funding and reporting International Travel; the Departments are responsible for approving, funding, and reporting Domestic Travel; and the traveler is responsible for following these procedures. Travel on grant funds is a Departmental responsibility.
3. Definitions: The following definitions should help understand these procedures:
  - a. **RFT** – Request for Travel. This is the form authorizing traveling away from the campus regardless if the trip is funded or not. Anytime an employee is on salary, approval of this form is required in advance of the trip. A copy of the RFT form is attached to these procedures.
  - b. **Per Diem** – Travelers are reimbursed for the actual cost of meals and lodging up to the maximum allowable rate for the particular state.
  - c. **CBA** – Central Billing Business Account. This is a credit card used by the Departments and the College to purchase airline tickets in advance of a trip.
  - c. **Starting Location** – the starting location is College Station or wherever the traveler begins their trip whichever is closer to their destination. For Example, if a traveler is on vacation in New York and leaves from vacation for a trip to Houston, the starting point is College Station, not New York.
4. The traveler should complete a [Request for Travel \(RFT\)](#) and have it approved by their Department Head for domestic travel and by both the Department Head and the College for foreign travel. Approved RFT's should be submitted to the Business Office for all business travel (i.e., conferences, donor visits, research trips, etc.) at least 30 days prior to travel for domestic trips, 45 days prior to travel for foreign trips. RFT's for day trips should be submitted at least one week prior to travel. RFT's requesting funds from the College's Foreign Travel Pool will be forwarded to the Dean's Office for approval. Approval will be sent to the traveler and the Department after their bi-weekly meeting. Per TAMU Rule 25.02.01.M1 – Foreign Travel, foreign travel using local funds must be approved by the Dean prior to travel. Foreign travel using state funds (accounts numbered 1xxxxx and 29xxxx) must be approved in advance by the Board of Regents no later than 30 days prior to travel. If TEES, TTI, Development Foundation or Research Foundation funding is to be used, the traveler must also complete the RFT for that agency including Department Head signature and submit it to the Business Office within the same timeframe described above. Granting Agencies require day-by-day itineraries.
  - a. A complete RFT must be submitted prior to travel for every person, including students, regardless if reimbursement is requested or the type of funds used. If a completed RFT is not submitted to the Business Office prior to domestic travel, the traveler may only be reimbursed at the Department's discretion. Per the State of Texas Travel Allowance Guide, Chapter 2, Section 2B, the College may reimburse an employee for foreign travel expenses ONLY if the traveler has been provided advance written approval by the appropriate authorizing agent.
  - b. Per the Disbursement of Funds Guidelines, students cannot be reimbursed for travel using state funds. They may be reimbursed for their travel expenses on unrestricted gift funds or an account that allows student travel.
5. Unless the Department Head or designee approves otherwise, arrangements must be made in accordance with the State Travel Management Program guidelines (Disbursement Manual – III.B.1.a Policy). Travel on state and department funds must follow the State Travel Management Program guidelines, with the exception of lodging at the conference hotel.
  - a. Payments will not be made for conference registration and/or airfare until a completed RFT is submitted and approved. Airfare booked online must be less than or equal to the state contracted rate. If less costly airfare can not be found online, travelers must book airfare through a travel agent to obtain the state rate. Airfare may be paid by the Department Administrative offices using the CBA if airfare is booked through a travel agent or online via the department's administrative staff. The Department is responsible for registering the traveler if attending a conference. The Business Office is responsible for payment of conference registration if the Department wishes to

pay registration in advance and directly to the vendor. The Department should notify the Business Office at least three weeks in advance to ensure timely payment prior to travel. The traveler should pay for any remaining expenses.

6. Travel vouchers will be processed in the order in which trips are taken by the traveler. If the traveler has submitted a RFT for a previous trip(s) and has not submitted receipts for that trip, a voucher for a more recent trip will not be processed until either: (1) receipts are submitted for all previous travel or (2) the traveler informs the Business Office in writing that they will not be claiming reimbursement for previous travel.
7. The Business Office will process the travel voucher for only those receipts received in the travel log envelope when it is submitted. Expenses should be listed on the travel log envelope. An itinerary outlining the events of each day should also be included. Only one voucher will be processed per trip. Original itemized receipts are required for all expenses (**except meals**) for which the traveler requests reimbursement. For reimbursement of meals please fill out the College's new [travel related meal form](#).
  - a. Travelers may only be reimbursed for their own travel expenses or those of another state employee accompanying them on the same business trip. Remember those traveling on grant funds require separate vouchers.
  - b. Texas state tax cannot be reimbursed for any travel expense. The Texas State Tax Exemption Form, located in the travel envelope, should be presented to every vendor within the State. Travelers will be reimbursed for local taxes on lodging within the State and any taxes outside of the State.
  - c. If the traveler attended a conference, a copy of the conference brochure and registration form should be included in the travel log envelope.
  - d. If attending a conference, the traveler will be reimbursed the actual lodging costs at the single room rate if the traveler stays in the conference hotel. If the traveler does not stay in the conference hotel or is not traveling to attend a conference, they will only be reimbursed up to maximum allowable rate for that state. The traveler will be responsible for any amount that exceeds the maximum allowable rate.
  - e. For any transportation costs other than airfare, car rental or personally owned vehicle (i.e., taxi, subway, tram, etc.), the traveler should fill out the travel log on the outside of the envelope, noting origin, destination and date of expense, and place original receipts inside.
  - f. According to State and University Rules, reimbursements for meals may not exceed the amount of meal expenses actually incurred up to the maximum allowable rate. The Department or the traveler will be responsible for any amount that exceeds these rates. Maximum allowable rates for meals are calculated at 20% for breakfast, 30% for lunch and 50% for dinner of the maximum per day rate. Breakfast will be reimbursed if traveler leaves before 7:00 a.m. or returns after 9:00 a.m. Lunch will be reimbursed if traveler leaves before 11:00 a.m. or returns after 1:00 p.m. Dinner will be reimbursed if traveler leaves before 5:00 p.m. or returns after 7:00 p.m. Per the State of Texas Travel Allowance Guide, the College "may not reimburse a state employee for the purchase of an alcoholic beverage..." and gratuity is not reimbursable on state accounts. The traveler will not be reimbursed for a meal already included in another expense, such as hotel, airfare or conference registration fee, even with receipts. For example, if a conference provides lunch, the traveler will not be reimbursed for receipts submitted for lunch if they chose not to eat the meal provided.
  - g. If the voucher requests reimbursement of foreign travel expenses in excess of the amount approved on the RFT, **a separate request must be made to the foreign travel committee**. The traveler will be reimbursed only up to the final approved amount from the committee.
8. GENERAL INFORMATION: If a traveler is going to the Washington D.C. area or the surrounding states of Maryland and Virginia, the Office of State and Federal Relations must be notified. The form to fill out is located at <http://www.osfr.state.tx.us/travelform.asp>
9. Reimbursable receipts should be taped to 8 ½ x 11 plain white sheets of paper. Tape the receipts by category in chronological order, i.e. taxi receipts all together in day by day order. Please do not tape over any writing on the receipt because the chemicals in the tape will dissolve the writing making the receipt useless.

The administrative staff in each department and the business office staff are all available to help.