



Western Michigan University Travel FAQs

- 1. Do I turn in receipts for meal per diems?**
 - a. You should not turn in receipts for meal per diems.

- 2. Can I use my University procurement card to book a hotel?**
 - a. No. The procurement card cannot be used to book hotels. The only travel related transactions that can be charged to the procurement card is a Hertz car rental and a conference registration.

- 3. What if I find a cheaper flight than AAA?**
 - a. If you are able to provide documentation that you can find a lower price from an outside source, contact AAA at 800-854-5044 to see if they can match the price. If they are unable to match the price, a waiver can be obtained as long as it is done before the tickets are purchased. Purchases of airline tickets from another source without a waiver will not be reimbursed.

- 4. What do I need to include with a voucher to get reimbursed for hosting meals?**
 - a. All restaurant meals and food purchases need to include: a list of individuals present (set out a sign-up sheet for large groups), business affiliation, business purpose, date and place of meeting and itemized receipt.

- 5. If I commute to and from a conference that is more than one day long, can I get reimbursed for my meal?**
 - a. No. Meals are only reimbursed if there is an overnight stay.

- 6. Does the per diem individual meal rate include taxes and tip?**
 - a. Yes the individual meal rates for breakfast, lunch and dinner do include taxes and tip.

- 7. How long does it take for a travel expense voucher to be reimbursed?**
 - a. Employee reimbursements are processed in order they are received and are typically paid within two weeks.

- 8. Do I need to include prepaid items such as airfare and car rental on the travel expense voucher?**
 - a. Prepaid expenses do not need to be included on the travel expense voucher unless required by the department. Prepaid expenses should not be included in the totals column on the travel expense voucher.

9. Can I get reimbursed for alcohol?

- a. All alcohol purchases must be signed by the area Dean and VP. No purchases of alcohol can be made from a fund 11 department or Grant funds 25-30. Alcohol paid for individuals who travel or for employees who are dining together will not be approved. To facilitate timely processing of reimbursement requests, please monitor reimbursement requests for alcohol closely.

10. When is VP approval required and when is it not?

- a. Dean and/or VP approval is required when there is an exception to the policy and for alcohol. Departmental policy and procedures may also require Dean and/or VP approval.

11. Is the per diem rate the same for first and last day of travel?

- a. No. The GSA per diem rate for first and last day of travel will be 75% of the total day per diem.

12. Can employees get reimbursed for local mileage when using a personal vehicle?

- a. Local travel within the city area that you are employed is not reimbursable. Exceptions are based on job requirements and need VP approval.

13. Can I get reimbursed for meals without an overnight stay?

- a. No. meals for one-day trips WILL NOT be reimbursed as the Treasury Department regulations classify meal reimbursements during day trips as taxable income. An exception to that rules applies for hosting meals that includes non-university personnel.

14. Can I change my departure city without filling out a new travel authorization?

- a. Yes. You can change a departure city before the airline ticket is issued without creating a new travel authorization if the departure city is considered local to Michigan which will include Chicago, South Bend, Grand Rapids and Detroit.

15. Is a new travel authorization required if the flight is a day different?

- a. Prior to a ticket being issued a new travel authorization is not required when there is a change of date within two dates on either side of the original travel authorization.

16. Is there a travel checklist for WMU travelers?

- a. Yes, the checklist can be found on the Travel website.

17. Does the University allow travel advances?

- a. The University only allows travel advances for international travel and student group travel of more than five. The minimum is \$250 and estimated expenses need to be completed and turned in with the travel expense voucher with authorized signatures to receive a check.

18. Can I assign a temporary approver in my absence for the travel authorization system?

- a. Yes. In the Travel Authorization tile select Approve/Review and then select Workflow Reassignment. Under the Alternate User section, enter the Bronco Net ID of the employee you want to approve the travel authorizations in your absence as well as the range of dates you plan to be out of the office and click Save.

19. Does AAA book one way tickets?

- a. Yes. AAA does book one way tickets.

20. Can I request a nonstop international flight if I stay within the travel authorization authorized amount?

- a. Yes. If a non-stop international flight is available and is not the lowest fare, you can request the non-stop flight if the cost stays within your travel authorization approved amount.

21. How do I book a hotel if I cannot use a University procurement card?

- a. Use a personal credit card to book the reservation and submit a reimbursement after the stay.
- b. If partial payment is required when booking a hotel, request the hotel direct bill the University by sending the invoice directly to your department and processing a voucher to Accounts Payable.

22. What is considered a per diem incidental expense?

- a. The University defines the incidental portion of the per diem as expenses related to snacks fees and other tips.

23. Do I have to book a flight through AAA?

- a. Yes. All flights must be booked through AAA.

24. Where do I find additional information regarding traveling abroad?

- a. More information on traveling abroad can be found on the Travel website.

25. How do I get the government state discount rate at hotels?

- a. When making lodging reservations outside of AAA or conference housing, a special state rate may be available for University employees using hotel chains that have a participating program and when space is available. Individual travelers may inquire when making a reservation.

26. What is a travel authorization?

- a. A travel authorization is a form used as a preapproval for travel on University business.

27. When should a blanket travel authorization be used?

- a. A blanket travel authorization is used when the traveler has recurring travel on multiple dates.

28. Where do I find per diem rates?

- a. Per diem rates can be found on the GSA website.