

Travel Policy: Miscellaneous Expenses

Introduction

The Miscellaneous Expenses Policy articulates necessary, customary and reasonable expenses that are reimbursable, and not reimbursable, when travelling on university business.

The purpose of the Travel Policies is to provide clear policies and procedures that are compliant with state and federal regulations, promote safe travel, and allow for reasonable and manageable travel expenses while maintaining the necessary controls and accountability.

This policy is organized as follows:

- Reimbursable Expenses
- Non-Reimbursable Expenses

Additional Travel Policies for the various components of travel can be found in the Related Policies section below.

Policy Statement

When travelling on university business, miscellaneous business expenses will be paid by the University if they are reasonable, appropriately documented, properly allocated and authorized, must be accommodated by the relevant operating budget or grant and within the guidelines of these policies.

Through this policy the University strives to promote safe and economical University travel while maintaining the necessary controls, accountability, compliance with applicable federal and state laws, and administrative efficiency. All University funds-including grants shall be used in a reasonable and prudent manner and only for activities related to Western Michigan University primary mission of education, research, and public service.

Additionally:

- Departments may elect to impose stricter budgetary controls over travel expenditures than those required by this policy.
- Travel charged to a grant should follow the guidelines set forth by this policy unless the funding agency imposes greater restrictions.
- The authority for determining which travel expenditures are reimbursable under a particular grant lies with Grants and Contracts.

Miscellaneous Travel Expenses

Travel expenses that are necessary, customary and reasonable are reimbursable. The following definitions give guidance on what necessary and customary travel miscellaneous expenses will be reimbursable, or not reimbursable but not an exhaustive list.

Definitions

Reimbursable Necessary and Customary Travel Expenses include:

- Baggage handling/storage
- Business Office Expenses (fax, copy services, web access, etc.)
- Business phone calls
- Conference Registration
- Gasoline for rental cars
- Gratuities: Travelers will be reimbursed for reasonable gratuities. Gratuities for meals are part of the meal expense. All other tips should be identified as “tips” on the employee reimbursement request.
- Laundry (if duration of the trip exceeds five days)
- Telephone: Reasonable telephone call charges will be reimbursed. The purchase of international phone cards will be reimbursed. Western Michigan University will not reimburse the purchase of cell phone plan upgrades.

Non-Reimbursable Travel Expenses include:

- Airline Club Membership dues
- Auto repairs
- Baggage insurance
- Barbers and hairdressers
- Child care services
- Clothing/toiletry items
- Credit card annual fees, delinquency fees, or finance charges
- Frequent flyer tickets
- Hotel safety deposit box (safe)
- Insurance-rental vehicle for domestic travel
- Loss or theft of personal funds or property
- Lost baggage
- Luggage or briefcases
- Massages/saunas
- Medical expenses while traveling
- Membership fees for any travel/cost-reduction programs
- Mileage for rental cars
- Movies/video games/No-show charges for hotel, car or restaurant services
- Over-the-counter medication
- Parking ticket and traffic violations
- Personal automobile routine maintenance

- Personal entertainment
- Personal property insurance
- Reading materials (magazines, books, newspapers, etc.)
- Shoeshine
- Souvenirs or personal gifts
- Spouse/dependent travel
- Vacation: expenses related to personal days before, during or after a business trip