

Travel - Reimbursement - General Policies

FIACCT 10-02.00

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These are the basic state travel policies. These policies apply to all travelers that are being reimbursed by the State. Detailed explanations of the policies are contained in the remaining sections of this policy.

- A. **Definition: Home-Base** – The last location the employee leaves from and the first location the employee returns to. The traveler may leave from one home-base and return to a different home-base. In determining the employee’s home base, a department should consider the following non-exclusive factors:
- If the employee is leaving on travel directly from home, or if there a valid business reason for the employee to go to a designated work location before leaving for the travel destination, the home base should be the last location the employee was in, home or designated work location, prior to leaving on travel.
 - If the employee is going directly home after the trip, or if there a valid business reason for the employee to first go to a designated work location prior to the employee returning home, the ending home base for travel is the first location the employee goes to when returning from travel.
- B. **Prior Approval** – For insurance purposes, all travel on state business, whether reimbursed by the State or not, must have PRIOR APPROVAL by an appropriate authority. **This also includes non-state employees where the State is paying for the travel expenses.**

♦ **In-State Travel**

Must be approved by the employee’s supervisor or higher-level supervisor such as a manager, director or Executive Director. Approval can be documented one of two ways: (1) using a request for In-State Travel Authorization, form FI5_IS (optional); or (2) approving the applicable in-state travel reimbursement form.

♦ **Out-of-State Travel**

Must be approved by the Executive Director or designee using a Request for Out-Of-State Travel Authorization, form FI 5. Any delegation of this responsibility by the Executive Director must be in writing and maintained in the department for audit purposes.

Exceptions – Exceptions to the prior approval must be justified in the comments section of the Request For Out-Of-State Travel Authorization, form FI 5, or on an attachment, and must be approved by the Executive Director or the designee.

More than two travelers to the same function – The Executive Director or the designee must approve all travel to out-of-state functions where more than two employees from the same department are attending the same function at the same time.

Document the approval in a memo or on the Out-Of-State Travel Authorization, form FI 5, signed by the Executive Director or designee explaining the reason for more than two persons attending the function and the total costs associated with the trip. Attach the approved memo to the Travel Reimbursement Request, form FI 51B or FI 51D.

♦ **International, NON-CONUS, Alaska, Hawaii, U.S. Territories Travel**

(Refer to memo from Governor's Office)

Must be approved by the employee's supervisor, up through the department Executive Director. Once approved by the Executive Director, the travel request must be electronically submitted to the assistant to the Governor's Chief of Staff. The Chief of Staff will make the final decision as to whether to approve or decline the request. Such travel must not be booked until formal authorization is given via mail through the assistant to the Chief of Staff. All travel outside the contiguous 48 states requests must be received by the Chief of Staff at least two months before the date of travel. Email subject line must indicate "Travel Request for [Employee Name] to [Location Name], [Date(s) of planned travel]." The request must also include:

- a completed FI-5 form with an estimate of costs for flight, hotel, meals, etc.
- an agenda for the meeting/conference/event
- a memo detailing the importance of the meeting, why the employee must travel for this specific meeting, confirmation that a similar meeting is not available in the U.S. in the near future, confirmation of which parties will be paying for which portions of the trip and how much they will be paying, and confirmation that payment from outside groups does not violate state ethics policies.

Travelers are strongly encouraged to record international travel with the U.S. State Department. <https://step.state.gov/step/>

♦ **State Employees reporting to the Governor or Chief of Staff as a Traveler**

- The Governor's Chief of Staff serves as the manager/supervisor for all Executive Directors, cabinet members, or other state employees that report to the Governor. Therefore, if the traveler is a state employee reporting to the Governor, travel reimbursement approval as well as related travel prior-approval must be performed by the Governor's Chief of Staff, or designee. Any reference to a manager/supervisor or Executive Director approval in FIACCT 10.02 shall be interpreted to be the Governor's Chief of Staff or designee for these individuals. **If exception to this FIACCT 10.02 is needed for a state employees reporting to the Governor, it shall be justified in writing and approved by the Governor's Chief of Staff. This documentation must be maintained for audit purposes.**
- If the traveler is the Chief of Staff, travel reimbursement approval as well as related travel prior-approval must be performed by the Governor, or designee. Any reference to a manager/supervisor or Executive Director approval in FIACCT 10.02 shall be interpreted to be the Governor or designee for the Chief of Staff. **If exception to this FIACCT 10.02 is needed for the Chief of Staff, it shall be justified in writing and approved by the Governor. This documentation must be maintained for audit purposes.**

C. **Reimbursable Costs** – It is the general intent to reimburse travelers for necessary and reasonable costs associated with travel required for state business. Reimbursements described in this policy intend to cover all normal areas of expense. Requests for exceptions shall be made **in writing to the Director of Finance, shall state reasons for the exception, and shall be subject to the written approval of the Director of Finance, unless otherwise stated in the related section of the policy or unless the traveler is an Executive Director reporting to the Governor or the Chief of Staff.**

D. **Reimbursement** – Requests for reimbursement must be accompanied by **original itemized receipts/invoices** detailing items purchased, unit cost (if applicable), and date of purchase, except

for expenses for which flat allowance amounts are established (i.e., meals or mileage).

If the purchase is made online or if the vendor does not provide a paper invoice, a printout of an electronic or faxed invoice or an electronic file of the invoice should be used. For purposes of this policy, 'original itemized receipt/invoice' includes any hardcopy original or faxed or scanned receipt/invoice received directly from a vendor. Employees and those approving payment should take necessary precautions prior to approval of payment to ensure the receipts/invoices are for actual goods and services received and are not duplicate payments.

Subject to Division of Finance oversight through post-audit, when an original itemized receipt is not available, a Department Finance Director or designee may use discretion on a case by case basis in determining sufficient documentation for the reimbursement request.

- E. **Reimbursement of Travel Upgrades** – It is the intent of these policies to reimburse expenses that are ordinary to the business as well as reasonable in the circumstances. Unless a specific exception exists in other sections of FIACCT policy, employees may not be reimbursed for upgrades to any travel accommodations, including, but not limited to, transportation or lodging without an exception in accordance with Section C of this policy. Any approval requested for upgraded accommodations must include a business justification for the upgrade.

- F. **Travel Agency** – The State has contracted with an outside travel agency that has an office in the Taylorsville State Office Building, to provide travel services including but not limited to airline, rental car, hotel, rail and bus service.

All state employees, except legislative officials, are required to use this service. Legislative officials are strongly encouraged to use this service also, so that the benefits of the contract may be maximized. This also includes non-state employees where the state is paying for their travel.

Exceptions to this policy may be granted when the travel is being paid for by a third party other than the State and the third party makes the arrangements and payments directly to their own travel agency or travel vendor.

- G. **Visa Business Travel Account** – ALL airline tickets must be purchased using the Visa Business Travel Account (BTA).

Each department may set up one or more BTAs for purchasing airline tickets. Tickets charged to the BTA are billed to the account holder (department, division, etc.) each month. A single warrant request will be processed by the Division of Finance to pay the monthly bill for all travelers.

BTA Benefit – The BTA account allows the State to pay for all airline tickets on a monthly basis. If airline tickets have to be purchased early in order to qualify for a discount, the department can easily pay for the tickets before the trip.

In addition, if the traveler purchases the airline ticket on the BTA, he/she is covered by insurance for \$500,000 against death or dismemberment arising from accidents occurring while traveling on a common carrier. A common carrier is described as any scheduled airline, land, or water conveyance licensed for transportation of passengers for hire. This does not include traveling in a private or state vehicle. (See the [FIACCT 10-03.04 Visa – Business Travel Account](#) policy).

- H. **Travel Advances** – Departments are encouraged to use travel advances only for anticipated lodging, meals and incidental expenses (taxi, tips, etc.).

I. Travel Via Neighboring States

♦ **Out-of-State Travel**

Not applicable.

♦ **In-State Travel**

In-state travel requiring travel through neighboring states is authorized as in-state travel when traveling on routine state business and such route is the nearest or most practicable to reach a destination in Utah. (For example, a Natural Resources employee may travel through Wyoming to get to his work area in the Uinta Mountains.)

J. Personal Time

1. Personal time before traveling on official state business:

The airfare is calculated by pricing what the fare would have been if traveling for business only. Then price out the itinerary with the personal portion added. If the fare is higher by adding the personal portion, the ticket is to be paid using the department's BTA account and the traveler must reimburse the state for the difference at the time the ticket is issued.

Other reimbursable expenses:

- Mileage to/from their home-base to the departing airport.
- Long-term parking, if used, for the number of days the traveler would have been traveling on business if not taking personal time before the trip.
- Taxi/Shuttle – calculate what the taxi/shuttle cost would have been from the arrival airport to the hotel the traveler is or would have stayed at for business (up to \$19.99 without receipt).
- Lodging - allowable for the night before the official state business (with receipt) if the traveler would have been required to stay overnight if traveling on official state business only.
- Any other incidentals as allowed per policy.

Per Diem for meals will begin at the time the traveler would have departed their home base if traveling for business only.

2. Personal time after traveling on official state business:

The airfare is calculated by pricing what the fare would have been if traveling for business only. Then price out the itinerary with the personal portion added. If the fare is higher by adding the personal portion, the ticket is to be paid using the department's BTA account and the traveler must reimburse the state for the difference at the time the ticket is issued.

Other reimbursable expenses:

- Mileage to/from their home-base to the departing airport.
- Long-term parking, if used, for the number of days the traveler would have been traveling on business if not taking personal time after the trip.
- Taxi/Shuttle – calculate what the taxi/shuttle cost would have been from the hotel the traveler is or would have stayed at for business to the airport (up to \$19.99 without receipt).
- Lodging - allowable for the night after the official state business (with receipt) if the traveler would have been required to stay overnight if traveling on official state business only.
- Any other incidentals as allowed per policy.

Per Diem for meals will end at the time the traveler would have arrived at their home base if traveling for business only.

3. Documentation:

A copy of the itinerary as it would have been for business only, including the airfare, must be obtained from the State Travel Office and attached to the reimbursement request. This will be used to determine the allowable reimbursement rates for parking, meals, taxi/shuttle and to determine if the traveler owes money to the state for part of the airfare.