



# Lock Haven University Travel Expense Regulations

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**Effective:** January 1, 2014

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## **A. General Policy**

These travel expense regulations are applicable to management and all non-coalition bargaining unit employees of Lock Haven University (hereafter referred to as "university"). In cases where specific travel matters are addressed in the collective bargaining agreements of employees covered by this policy, the collective bargaining agreements shall take precedence over this policy. An employee not covered by this policy should refer to the appropriate provisions of the collective bargaining agreement covering the employee's classification.

The president (or designee) may authorize travel on official business at university expense. All persons who travel at university expense are expected to exercise prudence and economy.

Reimbursement to employees for official travel shall be made on the basis of approved travel expense vouchers. Travel vouchers will be audited by the Procurement Office prior to payment. Each voucher must be signed by the employee and by the employee's supervisor, with the exception of the university President, whose travel vouchers shall be submitted to the Vice President for Finance & Administration. **Employees are liable for repayment of expenditures disallowed by any audit of a travel voucher or other travel related documents.**

## **B. Special Provisions**

Within the limitations of available funds, university presidents, university vice presidents, and—when designated by the president—official volunteers in service to the university, are not subject to the maximum rates herein prescribed and shall be eligible for reimbursement for actual expenses associated with official travel. Substantiating itemized receipts shall be attached to the travel voucher.

## **C. Rates of Reimbursement**

Employees shall be entitled to receive reimbursement of expenses incurred in the performance of their official duties within prescribed maximum rates.

### 1. Air Travel

University travelers are expected to book the lowest priced coach class airfare for domestic and international flights. Business and first class tickets are not reimbursable. It is not permissible to confirm a higher fare for upgrade eligibility or personal reasons. Upgrades at the university's expense are not permitted.

University travelers who are combining personal travel with official university business may only do so when the personal portion does not add any cost to the university. Travel arrangements must be made to accommodate the business duties of the university traveler and not personal preference.

## 2. Personal Automobile

Employees must utilize preferred commercial rental car supplier's Trip Optimizer to determine if renting an automobile is more cost effective than using a personally-owned vehicle. If an employee chooses to use his or her personally-owned vehicle, the employee shall only be reimbursed at a rate equal to the most economical means available, as calculated by the Trip Optimizer. An employee traveling as a passenger in a personal automobile is not entitled to reimbursement.

This is the only reimbursement the employee may receive for use of a personal automobile on official travel, except for parking and tolls (see item C. 4). Privately owned vehicle (POV) mileage reimbursement rates can be found at <http://www.gsa.gov>.

Mileage traveled by employees between their residence and their office headquarters is considered commuting miles. Commuting costs are not reimbursable. University travelers, who are required to travel from their residence to a temporary worksite, **excluding Sieg Conference Center**, will be reimbursed either from their residence or their office headquarters, whichever distance is shorter.

## 3. Car Rental

The most economical means available, including automobile rentals, should be used consistent with the purpose and constraints of the travel. An employee who does not use the most economical means of travel available, consistent with the purpose and constraints of the travel, will be reimbursed as if the most economical means of travel has been used.

Car rentals must be reserved through the online booking tool of the preferred vendor, currently Enterprise. 15 Passenger van reservations must be made through the branch office at (570) 748-3669.

University travelers, including student employees operating vehicles pursuant to their employment responsibilities, who are 21 years or older and have a valid driver's license may operate vehicles under the agreement with the preferred vendor; however, for 15 passenger vans the minimum age is 25.

Approved rental car sizes are economy, compact, or intermediate (midsize), including hybrids. Other vehicle types require business need justification. Upgrades to other vehicle types are permitted so long as there is no additional cost to the university.

Collision damage waiver insurance and liability insurance are included in the university rates. University travelers, at their option, may purchase personal accident and personal effects insurance coverage; however, the university will not reimburse these expenses.

The rental receipt and car rental contract must be included with reimbursement submission of receipts.

#### 4. Miscellaneous Expenses

Employees may be reimbursed for business expenses incurred for such items as telephone, telegraph, Wi-Fi, /internet services, registered or certified mail, taxi, local transportation, and other miscellaneous expenditures. Charges for laundry, dry cleaning, or other personal services are not reimbursable unless the employee is in continuous travel status for more than five days.

Employees may be reimbursed for parking, tolls, and similar expenses, regardless of the type of vehicle used (i.e., personal, university, or rented). Employees may be reimbursed the actual cost of fuel for rented vehicles, but not personal vehicles. Employees may not be reimbursed for the cost of citations for traffic violations of any kind, regardless of the type of vehicle used.

Itemized receipts are required for any single miscellaneous expense reimbursement requested.

## 5. Overnight Lodging

University travelers should expect services and accommodations that are safe and comfortable, not lavish or extravagant.

University travelers on official university business are allowed lodging expenses when their destination is located more than 50 miles from both their office headquarters and residence. Written pre-approval from the university traveler's dean and/or vice president must be obtained when lodging is required within the 50 mile radius. The approval must be submitted with the university traveler's itemized receipts when requesting reimbursement.

The university's maximum per night lodging rates follow the U.S. General Services Administration (herein after referred to as "GSA") maximum allowable lodging rates excluding taxes. Reimbursements to employees are limited to the actual cost of lodging, within the maximum allowable rate, and must be substantiated with itemized receipts. Employees may not be reimbursed for personal services such as the incremental cost of lodging family members or friends, movies, recreational charges, etc.

- The commonwealth is not subject to hotel occupancy or sales taxes imposed by local or county governments. The commonwealth is subject to state hotel occupancy tax only, (72 P.S. 7210). University travelers will be reimbursed for this 6%.
- University travelers must request a completed REV1220 form from Financial Operations for tax exemption (42 Pa C.S.A. 8522) to present to the hotel upon check-in.
- These tax provisions apply only to lodging in Pennsylvania. Lodging outside Pennsylvania is not tax exempt and all taxes are reimbursable.

Employees are required to identify themselves as State System employees and request state or governmental rates when obtaining price quotations for lodging. Lodging costs in excess of the maximum are authorized as follows:

- a. When lodging cannot be located with a reasonable effort within the maximums.
- b. When employees must stay in a specific hotel or motel where their presence is required by the nature of the official business.
- c. When employees reside at a host establishment while attending a conference or convention on official business.
- d. Claims for lodging and meal expenses will be allowed under the American Plan (i.e., when the cost of lodging and meals is contracted as a package) when contracted for at the minimum rate, and when incurred by employees residing at a host establishment while attending a conference or

convention on official business.

A complete explanation of lodging costs in excess of the maximum must be included on the travel expense voucher.

6. Subsistence - Subsistence shall be paid as follows:

Allowances for subsistence are not flat rates and only amounts actually expended may be claimed. Reimbursement is subject to the limitations set forth in this section.

Reimbursement for alcoholic beverages is prohibited.

Overnight travel status – Employees in overnight travel status may be paid for the actual cost of meals and other subsistence expenses substantiated with itemized receipts, not to exceed maximum GSA overnight subsistence allowance in a 24-hour period. The subsistence rate shall cover meals, tips, tax, and all other expenses not specifically addressed in this policy, for each 24-hour period spent in a continuous overnight travel status. The 24-hour period begins upon departure from home or office headquarters, whichever is applicable, on official travel status. Detailed information is available at <http://www.gsa.gov>.

For overnight travel not part of a full 24-hour period, the subsistence rate shall be prorated (rounded to the nearest dollar) as follows:

0 minutes to less than 3 hours	No reimbursement
3 hours to less than 6 hours	25%
6 hours to less than 15 hours	62.5%
15 hours to less than 24 hours	100%

The maximum allowable reimbursement amount must be reduced for meals provided to the employee at no cost, included in a registration fee, facility rental, or the cost of lodging. Subsistence allowances follow the GSA Meals and Incidental Expenses (M&IE) table. Information is available at <http://www.gsa.gov/portal/content/101518>.

Non-overnight travel status

- a. Employees who are not in travel status should refer to their collective bargaining agreements/memoranda of understanding for guidelines with regard to when and at what rates subsistence reimbursement may be available. University travelers who work more than two hours before the normal start of the work day or past the scheduled quitting time in non-overnight travel status will be reimbursed for the cost of a meal, up to \$8.00 substantiated with itemized receipts, only if the travel assignment takes the

employee 50 miles or more from both residence and office headquarters. An employee must state his or her normal work hours on the travel voucher.

- b. Reimbursement for the cost of noontime meals is not permissible for employees not engaged in overnight travel except as specifically directed by PASSHE Board of Governors Policy 2010-01-A, *Expenditures of Public Funds Guidelines, Standards, and Limits*, effective September 1, 2010.

#### **D. Reimbursement of Travel Expenses Incurred by Applicants**

The Office of Human Resources may reimburse applicants for employment for the cost of travel in connection with the interview process. The number of applicants authorized to travel at the university's expense shall be held to the minimum required, in the opinion of the Associate Vice President for Human Resources.

#### **E. Responsibility**

The university and a third party (e.g., professional organizations, governmental agencies) may share in the payment of travel costs as long as an employee is not reimbursed twice for the same costs. If an employee receives payment by a third party, the employee must reduce the amount of reimbursement requested from the university by the payment received, or refund that amount to the university.

Supervisors are responsible for reviewing and approving travel vouchers submitted by employees. Employees are responsible for insuring that expenses claimed on their travel reimbursement vouchers are proper and accurate. Careless, fraudulent, or negligent preparation of a travel voucher will require financial restitution and may result in disciplinary action. A traveler who knowingly presents a false, fraudulent, or fictitious claim may be subject to penalties under criminal statutes.