

General Travel Policy

CAR RENTAL & MILEAGE

**Note: this document contains excerpts from the policy as well as helpful information. For full reference, always refer to the full Travel Policy.*

VIII. Automobile/Ground

- A. University Owned Automobile - A University-owned (departmental) automobile should be used when available. If a Procard is not used, gas receipts must be processed on the travel claim. The use of University vehicles is restricted to the continental U.S.
- B. Personally-Owned Automobiles - Use of a personally-owned vehicle must be authorized. The minimum mileage that can be driven for personal purposes without using the Enterprise Trip Optimizer is 250 miles per trip. This will enable faculty, staff, and students to include trips to Knoxville and other locations within a 125 mile radius to use their personal vehicles and be reimbursed without using the calculations of the trip optimizer. The trip optimizer function of the National/Enterprise website should be used to determine if the use of a personal vehicle is cheaper than the anticipated cost of a rental car. Reimbursement for a personal vehicle when the trip optimizer indicates the use of a rental vehicle will be at less cost, will be limited to the amount shown by the trip optimizer. A copy of the trip optimizer calculations must be included with all travel claims where personal mileage is being claimed. When travel by personal vehicle is shown to be less mileage reimbursement, rates are provided in the Comprehensive Travel Regulation of the State of Tennessee.

When using the trip optimizer, pickup and drop off times may be utilized when determining the number of days for a rental. For example, on a one day trip to Nashville where the employee is required to be in Nashville at 9 a.m. for a meeting that is expected to last until 4 p.m., this would require an Enterprise vehicle to be picked up the day before the trip and returned the day after the trip due to hours of the Enterprise location. Since this would require a three-day rental for a one-day trip, the three (3) days may also be used for the trip optimizer when computing the savings and determining what the reimbursement rate would be if the decision was made to drive a personal vehicle.

The authorized mileage allowance includes all operating expenses such as gas, oil, and repairs precluding any separate claim for such items. Employees may use reputable websites to determine point-to-point and/or vicinity mileage. Commuter mileage procedures for calculating mileage are

based on the fact that the State is prohibited from reimbursing employees for normal commuting mileage. If an employee begins or ends a trip at his/her official station, reimbursable mileage will be the mileage from the official station to the destination. If work is performed by an employee in route to or from his/her official station, reimbursable mileage is computed by deducting the employee's normal commuting mileage from the actual mileage driven. If an employee begins or ends his/her trip at his/her residence without stopping at his/her official station, reimbursable mileage will be the lesser of the mileage from the employee's residence to his/her destination or his/her official station to the destination. On weekends and holidays, the employee may typically be reimbursed for actual mileage from his/her residence to the destination. If an employee travels between destinations without returning to his/her official station or his/her residence, reimbursable mileage is the actual mileage between those destinations. When personal automobile is used by the employee for convenience on a work related trip, a more comprehensive review of all costs of flying versus driving must be considered and employee/traveler must submit supporting documentation to substantiate the claim for mileage; the lowest expense, automobile mileage vs airfare, will be reimbursed.

The travel claim must indicate the employee's itinerary and must show the official business mileage. Business mileage as indicated in the Rand-McNally or reputable websites for out-of-state routes will be as official. Vicinity mileage must be reported on a separate line and not included with point-to-point mileage. Only mileage while on official business may be claimed.

- C. Vehicle Allowance/Courtesy Cars – Employees receiving a vehicle allowance or a courtesy car will be reimbursed the Government Furnished Automobile rate regardless of which car they used. Individuals assigned a University car for personal use are not eligible for a mileage reimbursement.
- D. Flying vs. Driving – The choice of flying versus driving is influenced by distance, time, cost and one's preference. When the destination is out-of-state and flying is the economical choice but one chooses to drive and the round trip is 1,000 miles or more, the reimbursement may not exceed the cost of the lowest available airfare from the same points of origin and destination plus associated estimated costs for parking, and ground transportation. The traveler must obtain an airfare quote in accordance with the guidelines in the Comparison Quote section, if they are claiming 1,000 miles or more and the destination is out-of-state. The quote should be obtained on the date that the trip request is approved or at least 21

days prior to the trip. This requirement does not apply if two or more employees are traveling in the same vehicle, if there are multiple business destinations, or if the traveler is required to transport large amounts of cargo for University business.

- E. Local Mileage - Reimbursement may not be requested for commuting from the traveler's home to their official station regardless of the frequency of these trips per day or if it occurs after business hours or on weekends. Requests for local mileage reimbursement must be submitted on the Mileage Only form. Reimbursement requests for local mileage should be submitted no more than once a month. Business mileage as indicated in the Rand-McNally or other reputable websites for routes will be official.
- F. Automobile Rentals - Rental cars are permissible when flying to a business destination and it is less expensive than alternative means of transportation (taxi, Uber, train) or when convenience or safety issues justify the additional cost. The total of the rental including parking and gas should be considered. Travelers should use the National/Enterprise website to book rental cars. Restrictions related to rental cars include:
 - A. If the total trip miles are over 250 miles, the Enterprise Trip Optimizer tool must be used. For trips up to 250 miles, the traveler may receive reimbursement for a personal vehicle and the full computed rate even if more than the Enterprise cost. For trips over 250 miles, reimbursement for a personal vehicle will be limited to the Enterprise rate calculated by the trip optimizer.
 - B. Refueling Rental Vehicles – The Pre-Paid or Fuel Service Option is not permissible. Travelers should refuel the automobile prior to returning the automobile to the fuel level at time of pick up. Gas receipts should be obtained and submitted with their reimbursement request.
 - C. Rental of Luxury Vehicles - When renting a vehicle, the traveler should select the most economical vehicle that serves their needs. The rental of luxury class vehicles is prohibited.
 - D. Insurance – All insurance associated with car rentals should be declined and will not be reimbursed, with the exception of the collision damage waiver coverage for international car rentals. Travelers are encouraged to purchase this coverage for all international rentals. For domestic rentals through National/Enterprise, collision damage waivers are included in the agreement, if the vehicle is rented for business use.
 - E. 15 Passenger Vans – All 15 passenger vans must be booked by calling 423-282-0361 with as much advanced notice as possible or by emailing the request to EnterpriseRentACar-5647@ehi.com. The

Johnson City Enterprise office will offer a delivery of 15 passenger vans only Monday – Friday, 7:30 am to 5:30 pm to a location on campus arranged by the renter and the Johnson City Enterprise office. It is the renter's responsibility to reschedule the delivery or to pick up the van at the rental location if the renter cannot be present at the scheduled delivery time.

- G. Tolls - Toll fees will be reimbursed when necessary and toll charges added to rental car charges for toll pass devices are also reimbursable.
- H. Ground Transportation - If an individual travels by air, reasonable taxi, bus, ride-share (Uber, Lyft), or shuttle, charges to and from airports can be reimbursed. Reasonable taxi fares will also be allowed for travel between lodging and meeting sites. Receipts are required for expenses over \$8 for ground transportation. Regardless of the amount of the fare, the destination and reason for each fare reimbursement claimed must be listed on the receipt. Claiming expenses that were not incurred is considered theft and employees will be subject to disciplinary action, including termination. Credit card statements showing ground transportation charges can be submitted as reimbursable receipts. Tips paid on ground transportation are not reimbursable since they are included in the traveler's per diem.
- I. Parking - Charges for routine parking while on travel status will be reimbursed. Receipts must be furnished for parking fees over \$8.

IX. Direct Bill of Vehicle Rental

National/Enterprise Rental Cars – The University operates under a state contract for the use of National/Enterprise which is to be used for most travel. Employees must be registered as an Emerald Club member in order to rent a vehicle. Approved individuals may also have approval to have the rental car direct billed to the University. Cars may be rented using the State of Tennessee specialized website at www.enterprisecarshare.com/tennessee. The contract with National/Enterprise provides all required insurance coverage so all insurance should be declined when renting a vehicle as it will not be reimbursed. When submitting the National/Enterprise invoice in eBucs, the approved travel authorization must be uploaded along with the invoice.