



EAST TENNESSEE STATE
UNIVERSITY

General Travel

Policy Name: General Travel

Policy Purpose

This policy specifies the procedures for travel on behalf of East Tennessee State University (ETSU or University).

Applicability

This policy applies to all ETSU employees who travel on behalf of the University in the performance of their official duties. Provisions of this policy also may apply to individuals other than employees who are authorized to travel at University expense. Departments may adopt more restrictive policies than those included in this document. [write this better Authorization for travel will not be granted and expenses will not be reimbursed unless and until the travel is made and reimbursement claimed in accordance with this policy and any approved exceptions hereto].

Responsible Official, Office, and Interpretation

The Associate Vice President for Tax and Revenue Services is responsible for the review and revision of this policy. For questions about this policy, please contact The Office of Procurement and Contract Services. The Chief Financial Officer (CFO). The Chief Financial Officer in consultation with the Office of University Counsel, has the final authority to interpret this policy.

Defined Terms

A defined term has a specific meaning within the context of this policy.

Official Duty Station

The Official Station of an employee is his or her office headquarters or designated work location. The Official Station is typically the location from which the employee performs the major portion of his or her assigned duties.

Policy Name: General Travel

Policy

1. General

This policy applies to the travel of all employees of the University in the performance of their official duties. Provisions of this policy also may apply to individuals other than employees who are authorized to travel at University expense. Departments may adopt more restrictive policies than those included in this document. Authorization for travel will not be granted and expenses will not be reimbursed unless the travel is made and reimbursement claimed in accordance with this policy and any approved exceptions hereto.

This policy and specific reimbursement rates for travel expenses allowed under this policy shall be consistent with those of the Comprehensive Travel Regulations of the State of Tennessee. Current reimbursement rates can be found in the ETSU Travel Rates section XIX.

All travel must be consistent with the educational, research, and professional needs of the University. Employees must conduct all travel with integrity, in compliance with applicable laws, policies, and procedures, and in a manner that excludes considerations for personal advantage. Employees must exercise good judgement and conduct all aspects of travel in a cost-efficient manner.

1.1. Compliance.

When traveling, employees should be as conservative as circumstances permit. Reimbursement for travel will be based upon the most direct or expeditious route possible. Employees traveling by an indirect route will be personally responsible for any extra expense incurred. It is the responsibility of the employee to be familiar with and adhere to established travel policies. Deliberate disregard of these regulations while traveling on University business or filing of an intentionally misleading or fraudulent travel claim is grounds for disciplinary action, including termination of employment.

1.2. Procurement cards (P-cards).

P-cards may be used for the payment of registration fees and required advance payments for airlines. Procurement cards may not be used for expenses incurred during actual travel time except in the instances of team/group travel.

1.3. Grant, Foundation, and Agency Travel

Travel expenses for grant, foundation (restricted funds), or agency funds will be paid in accordance with the provisions and reimbursement limitations of University travel policies unless otherwise stipulated by the grant or foundation

Policy Name: General Travel

with the exception of airfare. The travel authorization is approved by the respective office.

1.4. Travel Exceptions

The president (or designee) must approve any exceptions to this policy with the exception of lodging exceptions

1.5. En Route Expenses

Traveling to and from a business meeting or event is limited to one day each way prior to and after the event for domestic travel and two days for international travel. Additional expenses related to flight delays and cancellations are reimbursable and do not need to be processed as an exception. A memo is to be attached explaining the additional expenses.

1.6. Travel Packages

The University will reimburse employees when a travel package (airfare, lodging and rental car) is purchased to obtain the best overall cost for a trip. The package, however, must not contain any expenses not allowed by fiscal policy, including first-class airfare, or lodging that exceeds the per diem for the location of travel. The receipt must provide an itemization of each expense and the class of airfare must be documented. Reimbursement will not be made without itemization of each expense.

2. Travel Request.

2.1. Authorization.

The travel authorization request is the official authorization for travel. Traveling to and from a business meeting or event is limited to one day each way before and after the event for domestic travel and two days for international trips. These dates must be reflected in the request. The request should be completed as far in advance of the trip as possible to allow for proper routing and approval. Approvals should include those for grant, foundation and agency funding

2.2. In-State Travel

All employees must obtain prior authorization for in-state travel by the employee's appropriate approving authority. Employees whose employment requires frequent in-state travel may obtain blanket authorization in writing for such travel.

Policy Name: General Travel

2.3. Out-of-State Travel

All employees must obtain prior written authorization for out-of-state travel, which must be approved by the employee's appropriate approving authority. The authorization must show the name of the person traveling, purpose of the trip, destinations, date of departure and return, mode of transportation, estimated expenses, and availability of funds. If, in the normal course of official business, the employee must routinely travel into another state and back in the same day, such travel will be considered in-state travel and shall be subject to the in-state travel provisions. This exception applies for trips which do not exceed fifty (50) miles into another state. Employees whose employment requires frequent out-of-state travel may obtain blanket authorization in writing for such travel.

2.4. Out-of-Country/International Travel

Authorization for travel by an employee outside of the contiguous United States and all out-of-country/international travel shall be subject to approval by the employee's vice president, not the designees of the vice president. Authorization for travel outside of the contiguous United States and all out-of-country/international travel by the president shall be subject to approval by the Chair of the Board of Trustees. Requests for authorization should reach the vice president's office fourteen (14) days before the date approval is needed. Copies of approved travel authorization forms for outside of the contiguous United States and out-of-country/international travel should be submitted to the Provost's office where a central repository is maintained.

2.5. Release of Liability and Hold Harmless Agreement

When planning any international travel, check the [U.S. Department of State's travel advisories](#) for the intended destination. In some cases, the traveler will need to complete a Release of Liability and Hold Harmless Agreement and turn this in to the Office of University Counsel. A Release of Liability and Hold Harmless Agreement is not required for travel to a United States territory, possession, or freely associated state. ¹

3. Reimbursement.

All employees and students must pay their own expenses and seek reimbursement except where otherwise noted in this policy.

¹ These include, Puerto Rico, Guam, US Virgin Islands, Wake Island Atoll, American Samoa, Commonwealth of Northern Mariana Islands, Republic of the Marshall Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, and the Republic of Palau.

Policy Name: General Travel

3.1. Process

The travel claim form is completed then entered in the eBucs system and submitted for approvals there. All required receipts must be attached and routed electronically through eBucs to the Accounts Payable office for audit and reimbursement processing.

3.2. Timeliness

Employees must submit claims for reimbursement for travel expense no later than thirty (30) days after completion of travel, with the exception of local mileage. Failure to do so could significantly delay the reimbursement. In accordance with Internal Revenue Service Guidelines, claims not submitted in a timely manner may be considered taxable income.

3.3. Rates

Reimbursement per diem amounts (meals, lodging, and mileage) can be found in the General Reimbursement Rate Schedule section of the Comprehensive Travel Regulations of the State of Tennessee. Reimbursement of expenses incurred while on University business is subject to the limitations in this policy. The limits do not indicate the amounts that should be spent but provide maximum amounts that can be reimbursed.

3.4. Receipts

Receipts are required for all expenses exceeding \$8 and they must be issued by the vendor, include the amount, date and must detail the charges. Credit card statements or slips do not qualify as a receipt except in the cases of ground transportation, tolls, and parking. Additional information may be requested if questions arise.

3.5. Eligibility

An employee is considered to be on official travel status and eligible for reimbursement at the time of departure from his or her Official Station or residence, whichever is applicable.

3.6. Official Station

All reimbursement should be based upon the traveler's Official Station. An explanation must be given if the reimbursement is based upon a location other than the Official Station.

3.7. Temporary Assignments

In the event that an employee is temporarily reassigned to a work location other than his or her usual Official Station, that location shall become the employee's

Policy Name: General Travel

Official Station. The employee will not be eligible for reimbursement to the temporary location unless he or she can demonstrate that by commuting to the temporary location he or she has incurred additional expense over the cost of the commute to his or her usual Official Station. Expenses incurred at an employee's Official Station will not be reimbursed by the University and are considered personal.

3.8. Expenses for Others

If an employee pays expenses associated with another employee, guest or student, the expenses must be submitted at the same time as their expenses and each expense report should reference the other.

3.9. Scanned Documents

To reduce costs, improve efficiencies, improve record retention and reduce the amount of time that it takes to process travel reimbursements, receipts must be scanned and attached to the travel claim in eBucs. The documents to be attached include, but are not limited to, travel authorization, travel claim, conference brochures, receipts, and all other pertinent documents supplied by the traveler. Once the reimbursement request has been processed, the scanned, electronic documents in the eBucs system will serve as the official record for legal and accounting purposes. The department should keep any paper records until their ledgers have been reconciled for each trip and then the paper records may be destroyed unless federal funds were used to purchase the travel and the granting agency requires the paper receipts to be retained for longer.

3.10. Personal Travel Combined with Business Travel

When a stay at a business location is extended either prior to or after the business mission for personal reasons, the entire airfare may be reimbursed. Other expenses incurred during the personal portion of the stay such as meals, lodging and other transportation are not reimbursable and the traveler should exercise care not to seek reimbursement for these. If any destinations not pertaining to official University business are included on the airline ticket, the traveler must provide a quote in accordance with the Comparison Quotes section of this policy and they will be reimbursed the lower of the quote or their actual expenses.

4. Travel/Cash Advance.

4.1. Temporary Travel Advances

When temporary travel is authorized for an employee the employee is expected to request reimbursement for their expenses after travel is completed. Travel advances are available only under extraordinary circumstances. The employee

Policy Effective Date: 3/24/2017 • **Policy Revised:** Emergency Policy Effective July 1, 2026
Procedures Effective Date: N/A • **Procedures Revised:** N/A

Policy Name: General Travel

must justify the extraordinary circumstances that warrant an advance. As an exception to policy, the employee may receive an advance, provided a request for the advance is submitted to the appropriate approving authority with the travel authorization request. The employee must prepare a Request for Exception for Travel Advance. Exceptions may be granted by the Associate Vice President Administrative Services based upon written request for exception for an advance approved by the Dean or Director. An amount equal to 80% of the estimated expenditures, excluding airfare and registrations if purchased through the Procard or ETSU check, will be allowed as an advance. No advance less than \$100 will be made.

4.2. Student Travel Advances

Students traveling under individual authorizations or an employee traveling with a student or students who is responsible for disbursing all funds for the trip may be advanced 80% of the amount of the authorization, excluding airfare and registrations if purchased through the Procard or ETSU check.

5. Registration Fees.

Registration fees for conferences, conventions, seminars, meetings, etc. can be processed using one of the processes described below. They should not be processed more than six months prior to the event unless an “early bird” rate applies and it is documented. Expenses such as golf outings, cruises or attendances by spouses are not permissible.

5.1. Advance Payment by the University

5.1.1. Check Request

If Procards are not accepted as a form of payment, the registration can be paid by ETSU check by completing the Registration Fee Prepayment Request Form, attaching a copy of the travel authorization, and forwarding it to the accounts payable office.

5.1.2. Paid by and Reimbursed to the Employee

Employees may pay registration fees with personal funds either in advance or at the conference site. This expense is reimbursed via a travel claim upon completion of the trip. An itemized receipt for the registration must be attached to the travel claim. The employee will not be reimbursed prior to the trip.

Policy Name: General Travel

5.1.3. Paid by Departmental Procard

Departments may pay for conference registration fees with a departmental procurement card. A receipt detailing all of the charges on the procurement card must be submitted with the other travel expenses and recorded as University paid. Departments must file another copy of the conference registration with their procurement card statement. The procurement card may not be used for entertainment, tours, charges for spouses or other family members, banquets, or luncheons.

5.2. Packages that Include Multiple Items

In some instances, a package may include a grouping of items such as a retreat that includes lodging, meals and workshops as a single registration price. In these instances, the following criteria must be met before a package can be purchased:

- 5.2.1. The lodging and meals must be part of a package and listed in the registration materials.
- 5.2.2. The payment must be to the vendor who is collecting the registration fee.
- 5.2.3. The items must be directly related to the official purpose of the conference. Extra fees for golf outings, historical tours, sporting events and similar items are not reimbursable.

6. International Travel.

6.1. Rates

Reimbursement rates for lodging, meals, mileage, and incidentals will be in accordance with the Federal rates (OCONUS) for the city and country for all international travel.

6.2. Receipts

Pertinent information on international receipts must be translated to English and signed by the person who translated the documents.

6.3. Conversion to U.S. Dollars

All amounts on the travel claim must be in U.S. dollars. Any currency conversions must be done outside eBucs. The conversion rate and computation must be shown on each receipt, or the conversion can be calculated on a conversion website and attached to each receipt. The conversion rate and date must correspond to the date shown on the receipt (i.e., conversion rate - 9/01/18; receipt date - 9/01/18). The recommended website for conversions is OANDA -

Policy Name: General Travel

<http://www.oanda.com/>. The 'average' bid rate should be used. Conversions shown on credit card statements are also acceptable, if they contain the amount claimed and are attached to each receipt. Credit card purchases do not need to be converted to dollars, since the credit card does this automatically. International credit card transaction fees are reimbursable.

6.4. Travel Visa Expenses Reimbursable

If permission is required by the government of the country visiting for business.

6.5. Passport Fees Not Reimbursable.

Passport application and photograph fees are not reimbursable. Passports are personal in nature and are good for ten years. The University views the business-related expense as minimal when compared to the personal benefit.

6.6. Insurance

Any type of international travel insurance that is required by the University is reimbursable.

7. Air Travel.

7.1. Coach Fare

In accordance with T.C.A § 49-7-130, reimbursement for airfare will be limited to coach fare. No business, "business select", or first-class fares will be reimbursed. If an employee elects to purchase these fares, they will be reimbursed the cost of a standard coach ticket. Support for this cost must be obtained through a quote in the manner described in the Comparison Quote section.

7.2. Receipts

The cost of the ticket must be supported by the original receipt. The receipt must contain the name of the passenger, dates of travel, complete trip itinerary (including departure and arrival times), amount, and the name of the airline. Additionally, the receipt must contain the class of service that will be identified by either the word "coach" or "economy," or an economy/coach airfare letter (e.g., W, S, Q, L, etc.). The itinerary must be attached regardless of who is paying for the expense.

7.3. Airline Fees

Fees imposed by the airline industry such as seat assignment fees, comfort seats, boarding pass fees, luggage fees and similar fees will be reimbursed, provided a receipt is furnished.

Policy Effective Date: 3/24/2017 • **Policy Revised:** Emergency Policy Effective July 1, 2026
Procedures Effective Date: N/A • **Procedures Revised:** N/A

Policy Name: General Travel

7.4. Trip Insurance

Charges for trip insurance are not reimbursable. The State of Tennessee is self-insured and does not purchase separate insurance, and therefore will not reimburse for insurance purchases for trips.

7.5. Airport Parking

Parking receipts must list the vendor, date and amount. The employee can be reimbursed for one of the following for traveling from their official workstation or residence to and from the airport:

7.5.1. Mileage for one round trip and airport parking

7.5.2. The cost of one round trip taxi fare

7.5.3. Mileage for two round trips and short-term parking when driven by a friend or relative.

7.6. Comparison Quotes

A comparison quote must be obtained for airfare when any of the following circumstances prevails:

7.6.1. Personal travel is combined with business travel and includes additional destinations. If there is not an additional destination, the airfare is reimbursable and a quote is not needed.

7.6.2. Leaving from a destination other than the Official Station or flying into a city other than the business destination.

7.6.3. A first, business, business select class ticket has been purchased.

7.6.4. Mileage of 1,000 miles or more is being claimed for out-of-state travel for one person, without multiple destinations or the need to transport cargo.

A comparison quote of the standard coach price (for the business portion only) must be obtained from the same source using the same carrier and on the same day the original ticket was purchased. A quote obtained after the date the ticket was purchased is not considered sufficient support of savings. If a quote is not obtained at the time the airline ticket is purchased, a quote for the standard coach fare (from the same carrier and day of the week) for the business portion only with at least a 21-day advance purchase will be used to determine the amount of reimbursement. Instances where a qualifying quote is provided should not be treated as an exception. For example: an employee travels to a conference in Orlando on Monday July 1 and instead of returning on Thursday to his Official Station they travel to Tampa and return on Saturday from Tampa. The traveler should get a quote on the day that they purchase their ticket showing the cost of

Policy Effective Date: 3/24/2017 • **Policy Revised:** Emergency Policy Effective July 1, 2026
Procedures Effective Date: N/A • **Procedures Revised:** N/A

Policy Name: General Travel

just traveling to the conference and back to their Official Station. If they fail to obtain this quote, they need to attempt to recreate the cost of just attending the conference by obtaining a quote at least 21 days out, departing on a Monday, returning on Thursday to their Official Station and using the same airlines. They will be reimbursed the lesser of the cost of their ticket or the quote for the business only flight.

8. Chartered Aircraft

- 8.1. Chartered aircraft may be used to conduct official University business when it is an efficient use of University resources.
- 8.2. Chartered aircraft may be used only to conduct official University business and in accordance with the University's travel policy. Personal use and commuting are not allowed. The University shall include on the employee's W-2 or issue an I.R.S. Form 1099 for the total cost of using the charter aircraft (calculated according to normal University business practices) if required by applicable I.R.S. regulations.
- 8.3. Chartered aircraft may be used only when official business cannot be conducted more economically through the use of regularly scheduled commercial aircraft. Specifically, it is appropriate to use chartered aircraft when the destination is not served by commercial carriers; the time required to use such a carrier interferes with other University obligations; or the number of officials and employees traveling makes the use of charter aircraft cost effective. Time is an important consideration for the president, vice presidents, other senior staff, and board of trustee members.
- 8.4. When a University official is required to attend an event where spouses are expected to attend, spouses are permitted to fly in chartered aircraft, including: spouses of members of the University board of trustees, spouses of the University president's executive staff, and spouses of the president and president emeritus. Invited guests of the University who are involved in official functions of or on behalf of the University are also permitted to fly in charter aircraft.
- 8.5. When a flight has been scheduled for official purposes and unassigned seats remain on the aircraft, persons other than those for whom the flight was scheduled may be accommodated on a space-available basis when travel is deemed in the University's best interest. These include, but are not limited to, employees, persons conducting business on behalf of the University, and spouses accompanying staff on official University business.
- 8.6. Scheduling Chartered Flights

Policy Effective Date: 3/24/2017 • **Policy Revised:** Emergency Policy Effective July 1, 2026
Procedures Effective Date: N/A • **Procedures Revised:** N/A

Policy Name: General Travel

All flights on chartered aircraft are scheduled through the president's office. The responsible staff will make every effort to schedule such flights in the most efficient and economical manner possible. Every effort will be made to accommodate all requests consistent with the most efficient use of the aircraft and flight crews.

8.7. The department requesting a charter flight is responsible for ensuring that a CHARTER FLIGHT REQUEST FORM is completed listing all passengers and documenting the purpose of each passenger's trip on the form. A certificate of insurance from the charter operator must be obtained and submitted with the form if a current form for covering the flight dates is not on file with an existing charter contract for the operator.

8.8. When flights are scheduled, the user department will be responsible for all costs incurred. It is customary for the charter service to assess an additional wait-time charge when the layover exceeds one hour, for the cost of the co-pilot, and for the time and expenses of the crew when overnight travel is involved.

8.9. Fringe Benefits Associated with Charter Flights

Per the I.R.S., in some circumstances travel on chartered flights for personal reasons is taxable as a fringe benefit. This applies to employees, trustees, spouses, dependent children, surviving spouses, and retired employees. When fifty percent (50%) or more of the regular passenger seating capacity of the chartered plane is filled with employees flying for substantiated business reasons the value of the flight will not be included in the income of those employees who are flying on the chartered plane for personal reasons. If a spouse's attendance is primarily social in nature it does not qualify as a bona-fide business reason. When applicable the value of the travel will be added to the employee's W-2 or 1099. Generally, taxable fringe benefits are valued at their fair market value (FMV). Valuation of the FMV will be determined by the associate vice president for tax and revenue services.

8.10. Donated Aircraft and Flight Services

When an aircraft and flight services are donated for official University business, employees must ensure that the plane and flight crew meet Federal Aviation Agency regulations and have the appropriate liability insurance. The CHARTER FLIGHT REQUEST FORM must be completed and certificate of insurance provided when using donated aircraft and flight services.

8.11. Required Supporting Documentation for Payment of Charter Flights

The charter company must provide the University with an original, itemized invoice with the following information included:

Policy Effective Date: 3/24/2017 • **Policy Revised:** Emergency Policy Effective July 1, 2026
Procedures Effective Date: N/A • **Procedures Revised:** N/A

Policy Name: General Travel

- 8.11.1. Beginning and ending dates of the Charter
- 8.11.2. Origin and destination of each flight
- 8.11.3. Names of all passengers of each flight
- 8.11.4. Seating capacity of the aircraft

9. Automobile/Ground Travel

9.1. University Owned Automobiles

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 contiguous U.S.

9.2. Personally-Owned Automobiles/Trip Optimizer

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.

- 9.3. 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.
- 9.4. The authorized mileage allowance includes all operating expenses such as gas, oil, and repairs precluding any separate claim for such items. Employees may use

Policy Effective Date: 3/24/2017 • **Policy Revised:** Emergency Policy Effective July 1, 2026
Procedures Effective Date: N/A • **Procedures Revised:** N/A

Policy Name: General Travel

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.

- 9.5. 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.

9.6. 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.

9.7. 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

Policy Name: General Travel

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.

9.8. 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.

9.9. 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:

9.9.1. 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.

9.9.2. 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.

Policy Name: General Travel

9.9.3. 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.

9.9.4. 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.

9.9.5. Fifteen (15)-Seat Passenger Vans

All 15-seat passenger vans must be booked by calling 423-282-0361 with as much advanced notice as possible or by emailing the request to EnterpriseRentACar5647@ehi.com. The Johnson City Enterprise office will offer a delivery of 15-seat-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.

9.10. Tolls

Toll fees will be reimbursed when necessary and toll charges added to rental car charges for toll pass devices are also reimbursable.

9.11. Ground Transportation

If a person travels by air, reasonable taxi, bus, ride-share (e.g., 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. Reasonable gratuities for taxi, shuttle, bus, and ride-share services incurred during authorized University travel are reimbursable. Reimbursement for transportation gratuities may not exceed twenty percent (20%) of the fare. When available, the gratuity should be reflected

Policy Name: General Travel

on the receipt. If the gratuity is not separately itemized, the traveler must document the amount on the travel claim or attached receipt.

9.12. Parking

Charges for routine parking while on travel status will be reimbursed. Receipts must be furnished for parking fees over \$8.

10. 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.

11. Lodging.

11.1. Non-Conference Lodging

Lodging expenses will be reimbursed subject to the maximum amounts shown in the U.S. General Services Administration's Per Diem Rates (CONUS) or the Department of Defense (OCONUS). Receipts are required and must include the address of the hotel, name of the individual occupying the room, the daily room charge, applicable tax, and total charges. The reimbursement rate for lodging and meals is based upon the city where the employee spends the night. Therefore, the address including the zip code of their lodging location must be listed on their expense reimbursement request.

11.2. Short-term rentals from services such as Airbnb, Vacation Rental by Owner, and others are allowed if the cleaning fees, service fees and other charges do not exceed the applicable CONUS rate. The traveler is responsible for any charges related to damages incurred during their stay. Receipts for these rentals must be from a company that rents the property.

Policy Name: General Travel

11.3. Conference Lodging

Employees attending a conference, seminar, or group meeting where a block of rooms has been negotiated will be reimbursed for room and tax at the conference or group rate. A conference brochure/agenda or other documentation must be attached to the reimbursement request and contain the name of the designated conference and/or overflow hotel(s) and the applicable room rates. The absence of the room rate in the conference brochure/agenda will limit the reimbursement to the CONUS/OCONUS rate.

11.4. In the event the employee lodged in a hotel of their choice, the amount of the reimbursement will be limited to the rate of the conference hotel, documented by conference literature, and attached to the expense report. As long as the lodging rate is equal to or less than the conference hotel rate, the reimbursement request does not need to be treated as an exception. In the event the conference materials do not contain a conference-lodging rate, CONUS/OCONUS rates will be applicable.

11.5. Sharing A Room

When two employees authorized to travel on University business share a room, each employee should pay for their own lodging and request their own receipt. They are entitled to a combined applicable CONUS or OCONUS lodging rate and this doesn't need to be treated as an exception. If it is not possible to get separate receipts, one employee may pay the entire amount and claim the expenses. In these instances, the travel claim for both employees must identify the other's name, personnel number and the person incurring the expense will be reimbursed.

11.6. Hotel Fees

Early departure, late check-out and other hotel fees will be reimbursed, provided an explanation and a receipt are obtained. Resort fees will be reimbursed if the hotel is the conference lodging.

12. Meal Allowances.

12.1. Rate

Daily meal allowances are provided in US General Services Administration (CONUS) or the Department of Defense (OCONUS). The meal allowance will be in accordance with the per diems for locations of travel and will be based upon the city where the employee spent the night.

Policy Effective Date: 3/24/2017 • **Policy Revised:** Emergency Policy Effective July 1, 2026
Procedures Effective Date: N/A • **Procedures Revised:** N/A

Policy Name: General Travel

12.2. En-Route Days

Reimbursement for meals for the day of departure and the day of return will be 75% of the normal reimbursement rate regardless of the time of departure or return. If one trip ends and another begins on the same day, meal deductions should be made on one of the trips and noted on both trips so that the traveler is not reimbursed more than 100% of the meal allowance for that day.

12.3. Official Banquets

When the expense for an official banquet of a meeting or conference is in excess of the per diem limit, the excess will be allowed provided a receipt or other documentation of the charge is submitted with the travel claim.

12.4. Reimbursement for meals will not be permitted when overnight travel is not involved.

13. Other Expenses.

13.1. Personal

Personal expenses will not be reimbursed. These include, but are not limited to, laundry, honor bars, TSA pre-check expenses, and other types of personal expenses.

13.2. Business Expenses

Items such as printing, duplication, and promotional materials required for official business are allowable expenses and will be reimbursed. A detailed receipt is required.

13.3. ATM

Expenses to obtain funds at automated teller machines (ATM) are not reimbursable except for international locations where this is a desirable method to obtain cash. Receipts supporting the fee must be submitted on the travel claim.

13.4. Internet

Computer connect charges to access or connect to the University will be reimbursed. An explanation and receipt for the charge must be provided on the travel claim.

13.5. Telecommunications

Business-related phone charges while on international travel, will be reimbursed for airtime, roaming, and applicable taxes for individuals who do not have a cell phone allowance or a University phone. Support for these charges must be provided with the Travel Expense Report.

Policy Effective Date: 3/24/2017 • **Policy Revised:** Emergency Policy Effective July 1, 2026
Procedures Effective Date: N/A • **Procedures Revised:** N/A

Policy Name: General Travel

13.6. Tips

Reimbursement for tips associated with hotel stays is not permissible, since those expenses are included in the traveler's applicable per diem/incidental allowance. Transportation gratuities are governed by Section 9.11 and are not considered part of Meals and Incidental Expenses (M&IE) for purposes of this policy. Tips with other allowable expenses, including group travel, are considered a reimbursable expense and should be based upon the level of service, but reimbursement will not exceed twenty percent (20%) of the total.

14. Reward Points

University employees are allowed to earn points and miles associated with airline, hotel and rental car frequent travel programs for business travel expenses. The University will not purchase or reimburse employees any costs associated with redeeming and/or earning these points, even if the redemption is for University business.

15. Team Travel and all Other Group Travel.

15.1. The University recognizes the unique characteristics associated with travel by athletic personnel, teams, and other groups. For purposes of this section, other group travel is defined as a group, traveling as a single unit, that does not consist entirely of University personnel.

15.2. Generally, other groups are student groups participating in programs or activities of the University; however, on occasions, may include, or consist of, individuals that are not University students. This section addresses practical considerations for, and is applicable only to, travel related specifically to the performance of intercollegiate athletic recruiting, athletic team travel, and other group travel. ETSU shall comply with all pertinent regulations on the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) and the athletic conference of which the University is a member.

15.3. Authorization for Official Travel

A single travel request may be executed for all travel for the group. If known, all individuals traveling in the group must be listed on the travel request or as an attachment to the request. A blanket travel authorization may be used for scouting and recruiting.

Policy Name: General Travel

15.4. Transportation

In all cases, transportation will be arranged through established University procedures, and travel itineraries are to be arranged in advance. Documentation must be maintained in the Athletic Department, or other appropriate University department or office, indicating that various cost alternatives have been explored before making all arrangements and reservations.

15.5. Travel

- 15.5.1. A team/group roster, signed by all of the participating individuals, must be included with the travel claim for proper accounting and auditing purposes if any cash was received. Students must sign the team/group Travel Roster and Certification, which certifies participation on the trip, date, and the amount of the cash received, if any.
- 15.5.2. A travel advance for athletic team travel, or other group travel, in the amount of one hundred percent (100%) of the estimated trip expenses may be allowed. One (1) person from the Athletic Department, or other appropriate University department or office, who is familiar with the travel regulations will be responsible for the advance and all bills connected with team or group travel.
- 15.5.3. Receipts are required for all team or group travel expenses, consistent with this policy.
- 15.5.4. Actual lodging expenses (unless reduced by department) will be reimbursed. Documentation must be maintained in the Athletic Department, or other appropriate department or office, indicating that various cost alternatives have been explored before making all arrangements and reservations
- 15.5.5. Miscellaneous expenses, such as movies while on team trips, must be supported by receipts. Telephone calls by staff members for business purposes may be claimed consistent with this policy.
- 15.5.6. Individual meals associated with team or group travel will be reimbursed, consistent with this policy. All team or group meals, (including pre-game and after-game meals for athletic teams) will be reimbursed at actual cost. Gratuities, not to exceed 20%, are allowed. Appropriate documentation and receipts are required.
- 15.5.7. All travel claims and requisitions for team or group travel must be approved, in writing, by the appropriate approving authority.

Policy Effective Date: 3/24/2017 • **Policy Revised:** Emergency Policy Effective July 1, 2026
Procedures Effective Date: N/A • **Procedures Revised:** N/A

Policy Name: General Travel

- 15.5.8. Procards may be used for team/group travel expenses incurred during actual travel time, only as approved by the University Procard administrator.
- 15.5.9. Travel by student groups, or other groups of participants in programs or activities of the University, may be reimbursed under the same provisions as included in Section B. above. A Release of Liability & Hold Harmless agreement is provided by the Office of the University Counsel on their website. A release is not appropriate for travel that is required as part of an academic program.

16. Student Recruits.

- 16.1. Staff members are responsible for compliance with pertinent NCAA and conference rules regarding student recruits.
- 16.2. Lodging in University facilities should be arranged, if space is available. If University space is not available, arrangements may be made for lodging in local motels/hotels, and, with the approval of the Athletic Director, may be charged to the Athletic Department.
- 16.3. If available, the use of University dining services should be arranged, and costs may be charged to the Athletic Department. If necessary, staff members will be reimbursed at cost
- 16.4. for off-campus meals, including gratuities not to exceed 20%. Receipts must accompany claims.
- 16.5. Transportation may be arranged through a local travel service and charged to the Athletic Department, with the approval of the Athletic Director.
- 16.6. Automobile mileage may be reimbursed to a student recruit at the maximum rate allowed under this policy for the use of a personal vehicle.
- 16.7. Entertainment expenses may be reimbursed at cost within NCAA and conference rules.

17. Visitor Travel.

All terms and conditions of University travel regulations apply to official University visitors, except where specified below. Reimbursement rates apply to visitors. Lodging rates will be based on the in-state or out-of-state location where the lodging occurs. Meals will be presumed to be in-state if travel is to Johnson City, Tennessee, unless a satisfactory explanation is provided.

Policy Name: General Travel

18. TBR Reimbursed Travel.

Tennessee Board of Regents (TBR) Reimbursed Travel – If a travel is being reimbursed by TBR, the individual will need to follow the TBR reimbursement rates. These can be found on the TBR website, General Travel Policy: 4:03:03:00. The TBR System Office Travel claim form will need to be completed. All receipts and the travel authorization should be attached to the claim. The traveler and their supervisor should sign the claim form. Once completed and approved, the paper claim should be routed to Accounts Payable for processing.

19. Exceptions.

19.1. The President shall have the authority to grant exceptions to any part or all of the provisions of this policy, in individual instances when deemed appropriate and necessary; however any exception directly affecting the president must be approved by the Board.

19.2. Standing exceptions to the policy are:

19.2.1. Provisions for travel contained in this Exception shall be applicable to the President, University employees traveling in the company of the president, or University employee representing the president; and

19.2.2. All provisions of Sections 1-16 of this policy shall be applicable, unless superseded by the Department of Finance and Administration Special Travel Regulation Three.

19.2.3. Provisions for travel contained in the Exceptions shall be applicable to the Board of Trustees.

19.2.4. Members of the Board of Trustees shall be reimbursed for travel in the performance of their official duties in accordance with applicable provisions of this policy, unless superseded by the following, which corresponds with the Department of Finance and Administration Special Travel Regulation Four.

20. ETSU Travel Rates.

This section provides the specific expense considerations cited in this policy. The reimbursement rates listed below are consistent with the current Dept. of Finance and Administration Policy 8-Comprehensive Travel Regulations, which may be revised from time to time.

Policy Name: General Travel

20.1. General Reimbursement Rates

20.1.1. Standard mileage rate, which is currently \$0.47 per mile. Rate approved in Dept. of Finance and Administration Policy 8-Comprehensive Travel Regulations.

20.1.2. Maximum parking fee without receipt is eight dollars (\$8.00) per day.

20.1.3. Fee for handling of equipment or promotional materials is twenty dollars (\$20.00) per hotel.

20.2. Per Diem Rates for Travel within the Contiguous U.S.

20.2.1. Lodging and Meal Allowances

The maximum allowances for both lodging and meals will be in accordance with the rates published by the U.S. General Services Administration (CONUS). The meal allowance includes both the allowance for meals plus \$5.00 for incidentals. For purposes of this policy, incidentals within M&IE do not include ground transportation charges or gratuities associated with taxi, shuttle, bus, or ride-share services. The CONUS rates applicable for all cities can be found at the U.S. General Services Administration website. The lodging and meal per diem will be determined by the CONUS/OCONUS rate for hotel address, “where you lay your head”, not the meeting destination.

20.2.2. Partial Meal Allowances for Day of Departure and Day of Return for Both In-State and Out of State Travel

Reimbursement for meals for the day of departure and the day of the return will be 75% of the normal reimbursement rate regardless of the time of departure or return.

20.3. Per Diem Rates for Travel Outside the Contiguous United States

The maximum allowances for both lodging and meals will be in accordance with the rates published by the Department of Defense (OCONUS). Reimbursement for meals for the day of departure and the day of return will be 75% of the normal reimbursement rate regardless of the time of departure or return.

20.4. Special Rates Under Exception No. 1 and Exception No. 2.

This exception applies to the President and Board of Trustees members. This exception rate schedule corresponds with the Dept. of Finance and Administration Special Travel Regulation Three.

20.4.1. Out-of-State Reimbursement Rates

The President and Board of Trustees members are to utilize the CONUS rates provided by the federal government.

Policy Effective Date: 3/24/2017 • **Policy Revised:** Emergency Policy Effective July 1, 2026
Procedures Effective Date: N/A • **Procedures Revised:** N/A

Policy Name: General Travel

20.4.2. In-State Travel Reimbursement Rate:

President and Board of Trustees Member – In-State Travel Reimbursement Rates

The President and Board of Trustees Member lodging rate of \$104.00 and the standard rate of \$55.00 for meals and incidentals should be used for all in-state locations not listed below.

Counties	Maximum Lodging	Maximum Meals & Incidentals	75% of Meals & Incidentals
Davidson (Nashville) (July and August only)	\$189 \$183	\$61	\$45.75
Shelby (Memphis)	\$131	\$61	\$45.75
Williamson (Brentwood/Franklin)	\$139	\$61	\$45.75
Hamilton (Chattanooga)	\$117	\$61	\$45.75
Knox (Knoxville)	\$107	\$56	\$42.00

Both in-state and out-of-state meals and incidentals are reimbursed at 75% for day of departure and/or day of return.

Policy Name: General Travel

Procedures

N/A

Applicable Forms and Websites

[Business and Finance/ Travel Forms](#)

Authority and Revisions

Authority: TCA § 49-8-203, et seq.

Previous Policy: TBR POLICIES

The ETSU Board of Trustees is charged with policy making pursuant to TCA § 49-8-203, et seq. On March 24, 2017, the Board delegated its authority to ETSU's President to establish certain policies and procedures for educational program and other operations of the University, including this policy. The delegation of authority and required process for revision to this policy can be found on the [Policy Development and Rule Making Policy webpage](#).

To suggest a revision to this policy, please contact the responsible official indicated in this policy. Before a substantive change to the policy section may take effect, the requested changes must be: (1) approved by the responsible office; (2) reviewed by the Office of University Counsel for legal sufficiency; (3) posted for public comment; (4) approved by either Academic Council or University Council; and (5) approved by ETSU's President.

Policy Effective Date: 3/24/2017 • **Policy Revised:** Emergency Policy Effective July 1, 2026
Procedures Effective Date: N/A • **Procedures Revised:** N/A