

Pre-Travel Requirements – All Fund Types Guideline

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I. Title

Pre-Travel Requirements – All Fund Types Guideline

II. Objective

Travel Guideline DIS-T-GL2 provides procedural guidelines for pre-travel requirements – travel request / authorization to travel for official university business, travel cash advance if needed, and permission to travel to Washington, D.C., or any country outside of the contiguous United States (“U.S.”) and U.S. Territories. This guideline also distinguishes the difference between State Appropriated Funds and Local Funds.

University travel conducted must comply with the rules and policies including the State of Texas Travel Regulations Act (Chapter 660 of the Texas Government Code), the General Appropriations Act, the State Comptroller's Office, State Travel Management Program, University of Texas System Board of Regents' Rules, University of Texas System Policies, and the travel guidelines of the University of Texas at Arlington.

This guideline does not apply to individuals traveling for personal reasons with personal funds.

III. Scope – Who Should Know

All University of Texas at Arlington (“UTA” or “University”) employees, students, and travel arrangers for prospective employees and non-employees who are traveling for official University business.

IV. Guidelines

A. Travel and Duty of Care Policy

See UTA [BF-T-PO-01](#) *Travel and Duty of Care Policy* for complete information that applies to this guideline and all University funded travel:

- Definitions
- Relevant federal and state statutes and websites
- Relevant University of Texas System rules and policies
- Applicable UTA policies, procedures, travel guidelines, and additional resources
- Applicable UTA forms

B. State Appropriated Funds vs. Local Funds

1. When planning to travel, the traveler or travel arranger needs to determine the source of funding that will be utilized to pay for the travel. The chartfield value determines whether the cost center / project ID will follow state travel rules or local travel rules.
2. Cost Centers with “2xxxx” or chartfield values with a Fund containing “2100 or 2110” must use travel rules for State Appropriated Funds. See UTA Travel Guideline [DIS-T-GL5](#) *Travel Using State Appropriated Funds* for complete information.
3. All other cost centers and Fund groups are required to follow Local Fund travel rules.

C. Travel Request

1. Travel Request - Purpose of Travel

A Concur Travel Request (“Travel Request”) is required and is used to authorize official University business travel regardless if there is, or is not, a cost to UTA.

2. Travel Request - UTA Employees and Students

- a. An approved Travel Request is required before a trip occurs, whether or not there is a cost to the university. The Travel Request must clearly state how the university will benefit from the trip including, but not limited to, what is learned that can be brought back to the classroom/department/office, or that it is beneficial to the performance of other duties, or other essential criteria.
- b. The Travel Request can be completed by the department. The traveler must certify the Travel Request. The document will then require approval by the traveler's immediate supervisor. A Travel Request will state the traveler's name, dates of travel, destination, purpose and benefit of travel, and the expected funding source(s) that travel expenses will be charged to.
- c. The Travel Request encumbrance must reasonably reflect the anticipated cost of the trip.
- d. If there is no cost to the university, the Travel Request may reflect an encumbrance of \$ 0.01.
- e. For information on how to complete the Travel Request in Concur please see Knowledge Services [Training Resources](#).
- f. Blanket Travel Request for team travel **ONLY** by Athletics and specific Campus Recreation athletes:

Blanket travel requests for team travel require approval of the University's Chief Financial Officer and Vice President. By obtaining this approval the Athletic and Campus Recreation Departments acknowledges that all current and future employees will not receive reminders of submission of travel expense reports from the University.

3. Travel Request - Prospective Employees / Non-Employees

- a. A Travel Request is only required for prospective employees or non-employees when one or all of the following apply:
 - i. UTA funds are used to pay for airfare booked through Concur or one of the University's contracted travel agencies. See Travel Guideline [DIS-T-GL6](#) *Travel Agencies and Concur – All Fund Types*.
 - ii. UTA will be reimbursing the prospective employee or non-employee for approved travel expenses.

- iii. Renting a vehicle that will be direct billed to the University. See Travel Guideline [DIS-T-GL7 Transportation Options in Travel Status – All Fund Types](#).
- b. The Travel Request is to be processed electronically in Concur. For information on how to complete the Travel Request in Concur, see Knowledge Services [Training Resources](#).
- c. If required, a Travel Request must be fully approved prior to the start of a trip. 'Approved' indicates that all required workflow approvals have been completed by the department and approved by the department head or designee.
- d. A Travel Request will state the traveler's name, dates of travel, destination, purpose and benefit of travel, and the cost center / project ID to be charged for travel expenses.
Note: All travel by prospective / non-employees must be expensed from Local Funds only.
- e. The Travel Request encumbrance must reasonably reflect the anticipated cost of the trip.

4. **Travel Request – Not Created or Final Approved**

If any of the circumstances below apply to a Travel Request, use the [SharePoint Supplemental Travel Request \(STR\)](#) and reference the STR number in the comment section when settling travel in Concur Expense.

- a. Travel Request was not final approved in Concur prior to the first day of travel.
- b. Travel Request was not created in Concur prior to first day of travel.

Note: The STR is used in lieu of submitting a Business Affairs Exception Request (see [Section G](#)).

5. **Travel Request – Change of Travel Dates by 2 or More Calendar Days**

If there is a change of travel dates of two (2) or more calendar days, the Travel Request must be cancelled and re-created. If the travel has passed, the Travel Request must be canceled and a STR must be created.

D. Travel to Washington, D.C. – State Appropriated Funds Only

All University travelers that travel to Washington, D.C. for activities that involve obtaining or spending federal funds, or that impact federal policies, and are using state appropriated funds for travel, are required to inform the Texas Office of State-Federal Relations (OSFR) about the trip.

The traveler must include information about the timing and purpose of the trip and provide OSFR with the name of an individual who may be contacted for additional information.

1. Go to the [OSFR website](#) and click “State Funded Travel to DC”. The traveler must download, print, and fill out the *State-Funded Travel to DC Form*, and email to OSFR@gov.texas.gov
2. The *State-Funded Travel to DC Form* must be attached to the Concur Travel Request.

E. Foreign Travel – State Appropriated Funds Only

If using State Appropriated Funds and traveling to any country outside of the contiguous U.S. and U.S. territories, the Travel Request will route to one of the following positions authorized by the President to act in the official capacity of approving foreign travel.

1. **Faculty:** Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs
2. **Staff:** Associate Vice President for Business Affairs & Controller

Note: Students and non-employees travel cannot be expensed from State Appropriated Funds.

F. Cash Advance for Travel

A cash advance is available for a traveler on official UTA business who meets all stated requirements.

Note: Current employees are encouraged to apply for a UTA Travel Card in lieu of requesting a travel cash advance. See Travel Guideline [DIS-T-GL1 Travel Card – All Fund Types](#) for complete information.

1. Cash Advance – IRS Requirements

- a. The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) requires the University to issue travel cash advances within the requirements published in [IRS Publication 463, Travel, Entertainment, Gift, and Car Expenses](#).

- b. IRS allows issuance of a cash advance for travel expenses within 30-calendar days of the travel expense. To ensure compliance with the IRS restrictions the traveler must comply with the guideline herein for the issuance and reconciliation of a cash advance.

2. Cash Advance – Student Requirements

A travel cash advance to a student requires the student to have a valid EMPL ID prior to processing the Cash Advance.

3. Cash Advance - Eligibility Requirements

A Traveler may be eligible for a cash advance if any of the following are true:

- a. The cash advance request is a minimum of \$100.00.
- b. The destination is in an isolated area or region with limited access to suppliers or services that accept credit cards.
- c. Travel is for an extended period of time.
- d. A faculty member takes a group of students overseas for educational purposes, such as for a study abroad program.
- e. It would be a financial hardship for the traveler to pay the travel expenses out of pocket.

4. Cash Advance - Promissory Note - Acknowledgement

The cash advance is a promissory note, and must be acknowledged by the traveler that:

- a. The traveler will accept the travel cash advance terms
- b. The traveler will acknowledge and comply with all University travel guidelines
- c. The traveler will repay unused funds no later than 30 calendar days after the last day of travel (see [Subsection 8](#)).

5. Cash Advance - How to Request

In Concur Travel Request, a travel cash advance must be added and submitted to the Office of Disbursements (“Disbursements”) but funds won’t be released at a minimum of seven (7) business days, but no more than thirty (30) calendar days prior to the first date of travel. To request a travel cash advance, follow these steps:

- a. Add a Cash Advance to the Travel Request prior to submitting the Travel Request in Concur. The travel cash advance amount cannot exceed the estimated cost of expenses given in the Travel Request.
- b. A Travel Request must be certified by the traveler and approved by both the traveler's supervisor, cost object approver(s), and Disbursements in Concur before the payment can be released.
- c. Traveler must accept and certify the following conditions associated with a travel cash advance:
 - i. All travel expenses are taxable under UTA's accountable plan in accordance with [IRS Publication 463](#) *Travel, Entertainment, Gift and Car Expenses* after the 60th calendar day after the last date of travel.
 - ii. Promise to make full repayment of any unused portion of the travel cash advance to UTA within 30 calendar days after the last day of travel.
 - 1) If the travel cash advance is not fully reconciled after the 60th calendar day after the last day of travel, the entire amount will become taxable to the traveler. This is in accordance with IRS Publication 463.
 - iii. In the event that the travel cash advance is repaid/reconciled, the University is not required to return any tax that may have been deducted.

6. Cash Advance - Prohibitions

Travel cash advances are not normally made under the following conditions:

- a. When the employee or student has an outstanding advance.
- b. When the traveler is a Non-Employee or Prospective Employee.
- c. The travel cash advance requested is less than \$100.00

7. Cash Advance - Methods of Distribution

a. Check

Travel cash advance checks are held for pick-up at the Student Accounts Office, Room 130, Administration Building.

b. Direct Deposit

When this method is used, the funds will be deposited into the travelers' bank account approximately 2-3 days after final approval of the cash advance by Disbursements.

8. Cash Advance - Reconciliation

a. Returning Unused Funds

i. All unused funds related to a travel cash advance must be repaid and deposited by the traveler or department at the Student Accounts Office, no later than 30 calendar days after the last day of travel. To deposit the unused funds:

- 1) Retrieve the Travel Request in Concur
- 2) Deposit into the chartfield encumbered in the Travel Request
- 3) Use GL Account Code of 11704

ii. Forms of repayment for unused funds:

- 1) Cash (must be exact change)
- 2) Check
- 3) Traveler's Check
- 4) Money Order

b. Reconciliation Timelines

i. Within 30 Calendar Days

All unused funds related to a travel cash advance must be repaid and deposited by the traveler or department, at Student Accounts, no later than 30 calendar days after the last date of travel.

Travelers with an approved Travel Request, their travel ended over 30 days, and have not processed or submitted an expense report to Disbursements for review, will receive a communication of non-compliance.

ii. More than 60 Calendar Days

Travelers that reconcile travel cash advance funds more than 60 calendar days after the last date of travel will be subject to income and employment taxes.

iii. More than 120 Calendar Days

All travel cash advances that are more than 120 calendar days after the last date of travel will be charged to the traveler's department.

NOTES:

- Travelers cannot request new travel cash advances until all prior cash advances have been reconciled.
- If the traveler routinely does not reconcile travel cash advances/expense reports in a timely manner, the traveler may be subject to refusal for future travel cash advances.

G. Exceptions to the Guideline

Exceptions to the travel cash advance guideline must be documented in writing and approved by the Associate Vice President for Business Affairs and Controller, or designee. The request must be submitted using the **Business Affairs Exception Tracker** (BAET) located in [SharePoint](#). Each request must include detailed justification for the exception and the benefit to the University if the exception is granted. **Concur Expense must reference the approved BAET number.** Documentation of the request and its disposition will be maintained in the Business Affairs Exception Tracker. In every case the account administrator is responsible for ensuring that all travel and charges are appropriate and support the mission of the University.

Note: The circumstances of the request will be taken under consideration. Any exception ultimately granted does NOT alter this guideline, or any of the travel guidelines, and should not be construed as precedent for allowing repeated exceptions to existing guidelines.

V. UTA Office(s) Responsible for Guideline

Responsible Officer: CFO and Vice President for Business and Finance

Sponsoring Department: Office of Disbursements

VI. Dates Approved or Amended

August 1, 2019

July 13, 2021

July 12, 2024

November 4, 2024

VII. Contact Information

Questions regarding this guideline should be directed to the Office of Disbursements at 817-272-2194, or email travelservices@uta.edu.

Send notifications of errors or changes to: travelservices@uta.edu