



## **NEW JERSEY INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY TRAVEL POLICY**

**Effective: September 1, 2022**

### **POLICY STATEMENT**

This policy pertains to faculty, instructional staff, administrative staff and students who incur travel expenses while on university approved business. The university will reimburse travelers for reasonable, necessary, appropriate and approved travel expenses, as defined, while performing university business consistent with full compliance of applicable Federal and State regulations, grant and contractual obligations, and other university policies.

### **I. GUIDING PRINCIPLE**

All approved travel expenses are the responsibility of, and granted at the discretion of, department heads and area Vice Presidents as defined in this Travel Policy. Travelers and approvers have respective roles and responsibilities relative to submitting and approving travel related expenses. Where applicable, all travelers should consider video conferencing or web conferencing as an alternative to travel. Travelers are expected to be prudent when incurring travel expenses.

### **II. PREFERRED BOOKING VENDORS**

NJIT strongly encourages the use of designated travel agencies for business related travel and expects employees to take advantage of University-negotiated travel discounts whenever possible. Payments to the preferred booking vendors are issued directly by NJIT.

The university's preferred vendors for air travel, rail travel, vehicle rentals (cars/vans/trucks) and hotels can be accessed through [NJIT approved Travel Agency](#)

### **III. SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS**

#### **Sponsored Projects and Programs**

University regulations apply to all grant or contract funded travel unless there are special restrictions or guidelines from the sponsor. Refer to the sponsor guidelines for specific compliance

requirements. Questions on sponsored travel with regards to research grants should be directed to the university [Office of Research](#).

For grant or contract funded travel, the University's Office of Research requires

1. Documentation clarifying why the particular person is traveling, why the travel is necessary and how the travel benefits the project.
2. Travel costs to be reasonable and consistent with NJIT's established travel policy and processes.
3. Travelers to confirm the eligibility of grant-funded travel with the appropriate grant accountant prior to incurring costs.
4. Travelers to ensure the proper mileage rates (federal vs state) are applied to the grant based on the funding agency.

Federal policy, [Uniform Guidance 2 CFR 200.475](#), addresses travel expenses specifically and this policy is designed to comply with the required standards. An individual's travel can only be paid on a federally-sponsored award if the participation of the individual is necessary for the award and the costs are a direct result of the individual's travel for the federally sponsored award.

### **Risk Management:**

*Accidents, thefts, and other crimes* while traveling on university business must be reported immediately to the proper authorities, consistent with local/state laws. In addition, these issues must be reported to the university's Department of Public Safety at (973) 596-3120, the Department of Risk Management at [riskmanagement@njit.edu](mailto:riskmanagement@njit.edu), and to the traveler's home department as soon as possible but no later than 5 business days after an event.

### **Athletics**

The NCAA Manual encompasses the rules for which member institutions and individuals are accountable. These policies and procedures are held in the Athletics Department which is responsible for compliance. Travel related to university athletics programs and team sports are handled directly by that department.

## **IV. POLICY ELIGIBILITY**

Prior to making travel reservations, **all employees** must comply with the State Ethics Commission requirement and complete a Travel Pre-Approval Request Report through Chrome River, the university's online travel expense management system, in order to arrange travel reservations and or receive travel reimbursement upon return to campus.

University faculty, staff and students are eligible to receive expense reimbursements for travel provided they occur while conducting university approved business away from their normal work site. Approved dates of travel are any day of the week as deemed necessary for business purposes. Eligible travel destinations are those which are not the employee's typical worksite location, even if that location is not at the university.

Expenses incurred while traveling will be considered for reimbursement when they are necessary to achieve the objectives of the program, project or task. The traveler and respective supervisor, Principle Investigator (PI), responsible person for the index/fund must ensure travel is appropriate, reasonable, and necessary. The traveler's approver (1-up supervisor), in accordance with this policy

and the procedures established within his or her college, division, or department, must authorize all university business travel. (See section V below on pre-travel planning) Under no circumstances may an individual approve his or her own travel or travel expenses.

All expense reimbursements submitted must be approved by the traveler's supervisor, and the index/fund owner. **Approvers** are to review travel expenses for reasonableness, necessity, and appropriateness to allow for reimbursement. **Reasonable expenses** are not excessive and are incurred for the primary benefit of university business or by the terms of federally or privately sponsored agreements. Reimbursement of travel expenses requires proof of payment documentation indicating that the traveler has settled the bill in full with the service provider.

Travel expenses generally include conference fees, travel to and from the meeting location, hotel, and meals for which the employee or student is paying while traveling.

Exceptions to the travel policy must meet a valid business need and must be properly documented. These expenses will only be reimbursed when and if approved by the area Vice President.

Travelers may keep all rewards related to travel (e.g., Delta Sky Miles, Marriott Rewards, etc.). However, enrollment fees for these programs are a personal expense and are not eligible for reimbursement. Travelers will not be reimbursed for the value of any personal points used for business travel.

If personal travel is combined with university business travel, only the business portion of the trip is an allowable expense. Personal expenses should be paid for using personal credit cards or other methods that do not result in the university paying for the personal expense.

## **V. PRE-TRAVEL PLANNING**

### Pre-Travel NJ State Ethics Commission Form

In advance of booking travel or incurring any travel-related expenses, all travelers regardless of funding source are required to complete the online Travel Pre-Approval Request Report via Chrome River.

### Pre-Travel Budget Verification

The traveler is responsible for coordinating with the appropriate department to ensure that funds are available. All necessary travel documents (i.e. conference agenda) must be in place prior to travel.

### Pre-Travel Reservations

Travelers are strongly encouraged to use the University's preferred [Travel Agency](#) to book air travel and lodging. To the extent possible, travelers should plan at least 30 days ahead, explore multiple transportation and lodging options, and complete their arrangements in the most cost-effective manner as far in advance as possible.

### Conference Registration

If a conference or other event requires the registration fee to be paid by credit card as the only acceptable form of payment, these fees may be reimbursed prior to travel.

### Airfare or Other Transportation

- a. To optimize purchase discounts and travel times, travel should be booked at least 30 days in advance.
- b. Travelers are encouraged to use the University's preferred [Travel Agency](#) for air, hotel, rail and rental car reservations.
- c. Travelers must purchase an **Economy Class** airfare that meets the needs of the business trip. Travelers may upgrade to Business class or First class at their own expense or by using their "frequent flyer" points.
- d. Bus and rail travel is a reimbursable expense with a qualifying business justification. Travelers must purchase Economy Class tickets, but may upgrade at their own expense.
- e. When using Federal Grant Funds or Federal Grant Match funds for air travel, travelers must follow the Fly America Act and the Open Skies Agreement, summarized below:
  - [U.S. law, 49 U.S.C. 40118, known as the Fly America Act](#), requires travelers to use U.S. flag air carrier service for all air travel when available. The Federal Travel Regulations Sections 301-10.131 through 301-10.143 define U.S. flag air carrier service and provide exception criteria for the use of non-U.S. flag air carrier service. This can be accomplished when code sharing is present where two or more airlines "code" the same flight as if it was their own.
  - Under the [Open Skies Agreement](#) qualifying travelers may travel on U.S. Flag Air Carriers, or European Union airlines, as long as they touch down in an EU country. Please refer to the Open Skies Agreement for additional restrictions.

### Hotel Class of Service

When booking a hotel for a conference where there is a special conference rate, the reservation may be made directly with the hotel or conference host.

The university will reimburse for reasonable lodging. The cost of lodging should be kept to a minimum by requesting standard room accommodations at reasonably priced mid-market hotels whenever possible. Luxury and upscale hotels should not be booked. Hotel documentation must specify rate, date(s) of stay, and evidence of payment.

Transient Accommodations (Airbnb, Vrbo) are not covered under the university's risk management insurance policies and should therefore not be booked.

### Vehicle Rentals

The university will reimburse for a rental vehicle when there is a business justification, limited up to intermediate size classifications for individual travelers. Full size vehicles or vans are allowed only for employee group travel. Travelers renting vehicles (under the University contract **or using their personal credit card**) must complete and submit for approval a [Driver Authorization Form](#) before any travel occurs. A completed Driver Authorization form should be submitted to the Department of Risk Management via: [riskmanagement@njit.edu](mailto:riskmanagement@njit.edu). Drivers must also meet the rental car company's driving requirements. Reservations through NJIT's primary vendor, Enterprise Holdings, is the preferred method of booking. Educational and Institutional Cooperative Services (E&I Cooperative Services) has a contract with Enterprise Holdings and provides insurance (liability and physical damage) for domestic rentals. When making plans, please consult with the

Office of Procurement Services to determine the best possible rate. Additionally:

- NJIT must be named as the rental owner when using the Enterprise Holding's contract. All authorized drivers must be listed on the contract. Vehicles that are rented must be used for NJIT business only.
- A driver may not hold and handle their cell phone at any time while driving. Hands-free usage is permitted..
- All passengers must use seat-belts.
- Additional insurance coverage offered by the rental agency is not required and will not be reimbursed.
- Collision insurance is covered up to a maximum of \$50,000.
- All business-related tolls, gas and parking charges related to travel and vehicle rental are allowable expenses and will be reimbursed with proper documentation.
- If a vehicle is rented outside of this contract, insurance is provided under the University's Automobile Insurance Policy (hired vehicle coverage). All authorized drivers must be listed on the rental contract. Vehicles that are rented must be used for NJIT business only.
- Drivers must adhere to all local laws and regulations. The university will not be responsible for any fees incurred for any moving, parking or other violations (eg. toll evasion) related to a rental vehicle.

For international rentals, travelers must contact the Department of Risk Management prior to renting vehicles. Driver Authorization forms must be completed when renting a vehicle internationally. All authorized drivers must be listed on the rental contract. International automobile coverage is provided through a separate international insurance policy. If contact cannot be made prior to renting a vehicle, please contact the Department of Risk Management within 24 hours of renting the vehicle. Vehicles rented internationally must be used for NJIT business only.

#### Business Required International Travel

Decisions to travel overseas should be made with the understanding of the current world situation, which requires that travelers remain aware, informed, and prepared. Current U.S. Department of State travel advisories may be found [here](#). Expenses related to vaccinations, passport and visa application fees, viral testing, required for confirmed international business travel are an allowable expense.

#### Combined Personal and Business Travel

If personal travel is combined with official university business related travel, only the business portion of the trip is reimbursable. Employees are not covered by the University workman's compensation insurance while on personal travel.

## **VI. TRAVEL RELATED EXPENSES**

#### Business Communications

Business related telephone calls, facsimile, and internet access during a hotel stay will be reimbursed. Any of these items not appearing on the lodging bill must have a detailed receipt attached. Travelers are encouraged to plan ahead and contact the university's Technology Support Center regarding options for internet access.

### Tipping and Gratuities

The following are considered reasonable and appropriate:

1. Skycap, porter/bell person, etc.: \$2 per bag upon check-in/check-out
2. Housekeeping: up to \$4 per day
3. Meals: 15% – 20% (if not included in the charge)
4. Car Service: Tip is included in the negotiated rate. If using a non-contracted service, 15%-20% is appropriate.

### Private/Personal Vehicles

Travelers who use private vehicles on university business are reimbursed at the current [IRS authorized mileage](#) rate for miles incurred at the time of travel, less typical miles traveled to and from the work site, including parking and toll charges.

In the event of an accident involving injuries or damages to other persons or property while operating a privately owned vehicle on university business, the employee must notify the [Department of Risk Management](#) for any potential involvement of the University within 5 business days of the event.

Reimbursement of mileage for sponsored research grants may supersede the university policy.

Travelers who use ride share programs (i.e. Uber or Lyft) to and from an airport, train station or hotel are reimbursed for travel expenses when a receipt is submitted.

Reimbursable expenses include:

- Travel from the traveler's home or work site to the airport, bus, or train station
- Travel from the airport/train station to the hotel and/or location of business

### Meals During Overnight Travel

Meals while traveling will be reimbursed at the GSA Per Diem rate for the particular travel destination. Refer to [GSA Travel Resources](#) for both domestic and international rates. The GSA Per Diem for meal allowances includes incidentals such as tips and applicable sales tax. The payment of GSA per diem does not require the submission of receipts.

Travelers should not seek reimbursement for a meal that is included in any aspect of travel such as a conference registration, included in the hotel stay or by any other source. Such meals must be deducted from the daily per diem.

### Day Trip Meals

Day trips meals will be reimbursed at the GSA per diem rate for the particular travel destination. The determination of an approved day trip meal expense shall be made by the employee's supervisor.

### Business Meals

Business meals are meals which include additional people, internal or external of the university, a clearly substantiated business purpose directly associated with or benefiting the University. The cost for business meals must be prudent, reasonable, and in the best interest of the University. Travelers must submit itemized receipts with proof of payment. A list of attendees must be included. The determination of approved business meal expenses shall be made by the employee's

supervisor.

#### Incidental Expenses

During travel, laundry fees may be reimbursed when business related travel exceeds five (5) consecutive nights.

#### Changes, Cancellations, and Unused Tickets

Changes to airline and rail tickets for business reasons or circumstances beyond the traveler's control are allowable expenses. When air, train, car rental or hotel travel plans change, due to unforeseen circumstances, the traveler is responsible for notifying the University's [Travel Agency](#) immediately. Cancellations must be made in the same manner in which the reservations were booked.

Fees associated with itinerary changes, provided there is a business reason, are allowable. An explanation including how the change fee is a direct benefit to the university is required.

#### Baggage

Reasonable and appropriate baggage fees are allowable.

### **VII. POST-TRAVEL SUBMISSION OF EXPENSES**

Travel reimbursements made to the traveler will not be considered taxable income.

Travelers are required to exercise [Fiduciary Responsibility](#) when submitting travel expenses for reimbursement. Travel expenses reimbursed and later found not to be in compliance with university policy must be refunded to the university.

Adhering to best business practice, travelers should submit their Travel Expense Reports through Chrome River, the online Expense Reimbursement Management system, within 45 days of the date of the expense. Travel expenses submitted beyond one year after the date(s) of receipt will not be reimbursed regardless of the funding source.

The person responsible for the index/fund must ensure the correct accounting distribution is used and sufficient funds are available to cover the total expense.

### **VIII. AUDIT OF TRAVEL EXPENSE DETAILS**

To ensure proper internal controls are in place, randomly selected travel reimbursements will undergo "internal audit" review. Questions will be directed to the traveler and supervisor and if necessary, the appropriate Vice President.

### **IX. EXPENSES RELATED TO OFFICIAL UNIVERSITY FUNDRAISING**

Travel, meals and associated expenses (including alcohol) incurred while conducting official

university fundraising business on behalf of the Office of the President or the Office of Development and Alumni Relations are reimbursable only when appropriate documentation is provided, including: itemized receipts, names of guests in attendance and the purpose of the meeting.

## **X. MISCELLANEOUS NON-REIMBURSABLE EXPENSES**

The following are some examples of expenses that will not be reimbursed by the university:

1. Expenses and/or fees associated with social or non-mandatory activities at conferences, such as tours, sports activities, movies, theater tickets, in-room movies, in-flight movies, mini-bar etc.
2. As mandated by the Federal Government and the State of New Jersey, alcohol is not typically an allowable expense. Alcoholic beverage reimbursement is not permitted on any grants, contracts or other restricted funds without specific advance approval from the sponsor and justified as part of the budget narrative for the research being conducted. Any alcoholic charges on a meal reimbursement must be excluded including the associated sales tax. For unrestricted funds, alcohol may be a reimbursable business expense in certain limited circumstances when there is an approved business justification made at the Vice President level or except when part of official fundraising activities for the Office of Development & Alumni Relations or the Office of the President.
3. Any portion of a traveler's expense provided by an outside entity will not be reimbursed
4. Spouse's/family member's travel costs, unless otherwise specified in an employment contract.
5. Lost/stolen cash or personal property
6. Personal items, gifts and services (e.g., shoe shines, haircuts, manicures, saunas, massages, pet care costs, souvenirs or personal gifts, child care costs, and personal reading materials)
7. Late payment penalties and interest on personal credit cards
8. Entertainment, lobbying, or the acquisition of goods or services for personal use
9. Meals provided by event sponsor, conference, hotel, etc.
10. Fees incurred for changing reservations unless there is a business justification
11. Costs associated with upgrades to business/first class
12. Chartered or private aircraft is prohibited
13. Personal or Rental vehicle expenses related to damage or repairs, tickets and fines associated with parking and moving violations, and charges for vehicle lockouts

## **XI. COMBINING BUSINESS AND PERSONAL TRAVEL**

Only travel expenses directly related to university business can be paid/reimbursed by the University, and all expenses are subject to audit. It is best to keep all business expenses separate from personal expenses when possible, as it makes the supporting documentation clearer. When personal and business are combined, cost comparison information is required at the time of booking and must be attached to the pre-approval and expense reimbursement request in Chrome River. Cost comparison information should indicate what the cost of travel would have been if an employee traveled on actual business dates compared to the dates traveled due to personal reasons. In such cases, reimbursement will not exceed the cost of travel had it occurred on the business mandated dates.

**EFFECTIVE DATE OF POLICY**

This policy takes effect September 1, 2022 and supersedes and revokes any former policies and procedures.

**REVIEW:**

Holly C. Stern 8/2/22  
Date  
Holly C. Stern, Esq.  
General Counsel  
Vice President for Legal Affairs

**APPROVAL:**

Teik C. Lim 8-2-22  
Date  
Teik Lim  
President

Atam P. Dhawan  
Date  
Atam Dhawan  
(Interim)Provost & Senior Executive Vice  
President

Catherine Brennan 8/2/22  
Date  
Catherine Brennan  
Senior Vice President for Finance and  
Chief Financial Officer

Andrew P. Christ 8/2/22  
Date  
Andrew P. Christ  
Senior Vice President for Real Estate  
Development & Capital Operations

Kenneth Alexo, Jr. 8/2/22  
Date  
Kenneth Alexo, Jr., Ph.D.  
Vice President for Development and  
Alumni Relations

Marybeth Boger 8/2/22  
Date  
Marybeth Boger, Ph.D.  
Vice President for Student Affairs  
and Dean of Students

Dale A. McLeod 8/2/22  
Date  
Dale A. McLeod  
Vice President for Human Resources