



Blue Mountain Community College *Administrative Procedure*

Procedure Title: Travel Procedure
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Purpose/Principle/Definitions:

1.0 Purpose and Introduction

1.1 This procedure sets forth the requirements and processes that pertain to travel by college employees (including full-time faculty and adjunct faculty) and students (including groups that travel in conjunction with sanctioned college activities, such as athletic events and field trips).

1.2 This procedure is shaped by a number of considerations, which include:

1.2.1 The college is a public institution in the State of Oregon and is, therefore, subject to state regulations that pertain to public employees, including a requirement that public employees refrain from using personal credit cards to pay for travel expenses that are reimbursed with public funds (Oregon Revised Statute 244 pertains).

1.2.2 The Internal Revenue Service requires employers to comply with certain federal regulations to avoid reporting travel reimbursements as taxable income. This procedure is designed to prevent the necessity of reporting travel reimbursements as employee income.

1.3 Forms used for this procedure include:

1.3.1 In-District Mileage Log

1.3.2 Travel Expense Log

1.3.3 Student Travel Authorization (Parts 1 and 2)

1.4 This is a major revision, so tracked changes are not used to identify individual changes.

2.0 Definitions

Note. The following words and phrases are defined for the purpose of facilitating their use in this procedure. Where these words or phrases appear in the text, they are capitalized for ease of recognition.

2.1 Blanket Travel Authorization: An approval for an employee to travel on multiple occasions for one or more recurring purposes. A Blanket Travel Authorization is limited to travel within the Education District. (Example: A Blanket Travel Authorization might be accorded a technician assigned to the Information Technology Resources department who travels every Tuesday from her Principal Place of Work on the Pendleton campus to the Milton-Freewater campus for the purpose of performing weekly preventive maintenance on installed equipment.)

2.2 Business Meal: A meal expense that is incurred during an authorized business meeting at a restaurant, convention, club, reception, or other dining venue, where a specific college-related agenda is discussed. (See also definition of Net Allowable Business Meal Expense, below.)

2.3 Chaperon: For the purposes of this procedure, college employees or other adults who are designated to travel with and to supervise student groups.

2.4 Education District: For the purposes of this procedure, the counties of Baker, Grant, Morrow, Umatilla, Union, and Wallowa.

2.5 Employee Travel Authorization: A one-time approval for an employee to travel on a single occasion for one or more nonrecurring purposes. An Employee Travel Authorization is required for (a) all travel within the Education District that is not pursuant to an existing Blanket Travel Authorization, and (b) all travel outside the Education District. An employee is authorized to travel when her/his RaPS Travel Request or, when appropriate, Vehicle Release has been approved by her/his supervisor.

2.6 Mileage: An allowance for conveyance by private automobile that an employee may be authorized to receive when traveling on college business. The rate of payment is set

by the president, and the eligibility for and the method of computation is governed by paragraph 3.2.4, below.

2.7 Net Allowable Business Meal Expense: A calculated dollar amount that is the basis for determining the allowable reimbursement for business-related meals; it is equal to the product of 1.17 times [(cost of food, including tax) less (cost of alcohol, including tax)]. The number 1.17 is a multiplier that accommodates a 17% tip for food service.

2.8 Per Diem: A subsistence allowance for meals and incidentals that an employee may be authorized to receive when traveling overnight on college business. The rate of payment is set by the president, and the eligibility for and the method of computation is governed by paragraph 3.2.3, below.

2.9 Principal Place of Work: The college campus or other physical location that is designated by the college as the place where a college employee, including full-time faculty and adjunct faculty, regularly performs her/his primary office, administrative, or management activities.

2.10 RaPS Travel Request: An electronic travel request in the Reimbursement and Purchasing System (RaPS) module of the Automated Information System (AIS). This automated paperless request is used by an employee to request permission to travel on single occasion for one or more nonrecurring purposes. The automated request has a provision for estimating travel expenses.

2.11 Student Ambassadors: Students who, pursuant to the college tuition-waiver program, work for the outreach coordinator and represent the college at recruiting and other outreach venues within the Education District.

2.12 Student Travel Authorization: A one-time approval for a group of students and its Chaperon(s) to travel on a field trip, to an athletic contest, or for some other purpose that is sanctioned by the college. A Student Travel Authorization is required for each incidence of student travel, whether inside or outside the Education District.

2.13 Travel Emergency: An unanticipated, extraordinary circumstance encountered by an employee while on travel that demands immediate action and that may, for example, cause an unforeseen departure from itinerary or an unforeseen travel expense. (Example: An employee traveling by automobile is stranded by a snowstorm and must lay over until the weather abates, causing both a travel delay and a lodging expense.)

2.14 Vehicle Release: A one-time approval for an employee to operate a college-owned automobile while on college travel. (See paragraph 3.5.3, below)

3.0 Requirements

3.1 General. All employees are responsible for complying with this procedure and for ensuring (a) that travel is official, i.e., directly work-related, and is essential to the conduct of college business and (b) that travel is performed in the most economical manner.

3.2 Employee Travel. Except as provided in paragraph 3.2.5, below, all travel – inside or outside the Education District, however frequent or routine – shall be authorized in advance of each trip using a RaPS Travel Request or, when appropriate, a Vehicle Release.

3.2.1 Academic secretaries, program and administrative assistants, and the executive assistant to the president will coordinate travel arrangements for their respective departments. The administrative assistants to the vice presidents will coordinate credit card authorizations for travel reservations and other arrangements, including (a) registrations for conventions, conferences, training, meetings, or other professional events and (b) reservations for transportation and lodging. Where at all possible, the college credit card(s) will be used to pay for travel-related expenses in advance of scheduled travel, including, for example, transportation, airfare, registration fees, lodging, and other event-related costs.

Note. The college standard for lodging is one employee per room; program directors will determine lodging requirements for students.

Note. When requesting authorization to travel to a convention, conference, training, meeting, or other professional or society event, a prospective traveler or Chaperon must provide appropriate supporting documentation to the travel authorizer.

Note. If either travel plans or actual travel events should change subsequent to Employee Travel Authorization, an employee shall notify the travel authorizer of the change and, when appropriate, shall submit a new RaPS Travel Request.

Note. In order to facilitate travel planning, college credit cards will be issued to the president and to the vice presidents for instruction, operations, and economic development. The cards shall be used to make travel reservations or other travel arrangements. Cardholders are responsible for the monthly reconciliation of their respective credit card statements not later than the last working day of each month, including the submission of original, itemized receipts and the reconciled statement to Accounts Payable.

Note. In order to facilitate a timely, rapid response to an extraordinary, unanticipated circumstance while in a travel status (a Travel Emergency), a traveler may use her/his personal credit card to address the emergency.

Note. Per Diem will be provided for an employee only when an employee is traveling overnight; Per Diem will not be provided for same-day travel, whether

within or without the Education District. (The IRS considers meal allowances for same-day travel to be taxable to the employee.)

3.2.2 Employees shall reconcile travel-related expenses within ten (10) business days of their return from travel by (a) using the Reimbursement option of the Travel Expenses tab of the Reimbursement and Purchasing System (RaPS) to record all expenses incurred by a traveler and (b) submitting to Accounts Payable a completed Travel Expense Log), along with the original, itemized receipts for all reimbursable expenses.

3.2.3 Travelers shall be reimbursed for meal expenses based on (a) daily Per Diem rates that are tabulated in the Travel Expenses tab of RaPS and (b) travel that is performed in accordance with the following guidelines:

3.2.3.1 Employees shall be reimbursed for meals based on the established Per Diem rate only when they are on overnight travel.

3.2.3.2 On days when travel begins or ends, Per Diem shall be paid at one-half (1/2) of the full daily Per Diem rate. On days between the beginning day of travel and the ending day of travel, Per Diem shall be paid at the full daily rate.

Note. Receipts for meals that are reimbursed as Per Diem are not required, and Per Diem-based reimbursements will not be reported to the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) as income.

Note. Special Per Diem rates may be established for international travel.

Note. Some travelers will, from time to time, incur Business Meal expenses that the college will reimburse to the extent that they exceed Per Diem (see paragraph 3.9, below).

3.2.4 For travel by private automobile, employees shall be reimbursed for round trips that exceed 40 miles as measured from their Principal Place of Work based on (a) Mileage rates that are set by the president and are tabulated in the Travel Expenses tab of RaPS and (b) travel distances that are tabulated in the official Mileage table published by the Oregon Department of Transportation.

Note. Classified employees shall be reimbursed for all mileage incurred while performing assigned duties.

3.2.5 Some employees will be assigned duties that necessitate frequent or routine same-day travel on a recurring basis within the Education District. They may request a Blanket Travel Authorization from their associate vice president, vice president, or president in order to perform same-day travel within the district and without advance authorization.

Note. Travel by full-time faculty and adjunct faculty within the Education District is controlled by Notices of Assignment (NOAs) rather than Blanket Travel Authorization(s). However, faculty shall reconcile associated travel expenses in accordance with this paragraph and its subparagraphs, below.

3.2.5.1 Blanket travel may be authorized for periods up to and including an entire fiscal year. A Blanket Travel Authorization shall expire not later than the end of the college fiscal year (June 30) for which it was authorized.

3.2.5.2 Authorizers shall notify the Accounts Payable clerk by email of employees who are granted Blanket Travel Authorizations.

3.2.5.3 Employees who travel pursuant to a Blanket Travel Authorization and who use a private automobile for all or a portion of that travel must maintain an In-District Mileage Log. A log entry must be made for each trip at the time that travel occurs.

3.2.5.4 Employees may reconcile travel-related expenses monthly or quarterly by (a) using the Reimbursement option of the Travel Expenses tab of the Reimbursement and Purchasing System (RaPS) to record all expenses incurred by a traveler and (b) submitting to Accounts Payable the completed In-District Mileage Log for the period in question, along with any itemized business-related receipts.

3.2.5.5 The president, vice presidents, associate vice presidents, and the outreach coordinator, whose duties typically necessitate frequent or routine travel within the Education District, may perform same-day travel within the district at their sole discretion and without advance authorization (this paragraph constitutes Blanket Travel Authorization for these staff members).

3.2.5.6 Student Ambassadors are eligible for Blanket Travel Authorization. Student Ambassadors must (a) obtain advance permission to travel from the outreach coordinator, which shall be documented in the In-District Mileage Log or Vehicle Release for each traveler, and (b) travel in company with either a Chaperon or another Student Ambassador.

Note. If travel plans should change subsequent to the outreach coordinator's express permission, then new permission and new log entries are required prior to the commencement of travel.

3.3 Student Travel. Student groups regularly take trips that are organized or sanctioned by the college, e.g., field trips, student conferences, and athletic events. A faculty member, an athletic coach, or a college administrator who desires to sponsor student travel shall request permission by submitting a RaPS Travel Request and a Student

Travel Authorization form in advance of each trip. A Chaperon shall accompany each student group on travel.

Note. Students shall be reimbursed based on Per Diem rates established by their respective departments. Students may be paid Per Diem for same-day travel.

Note. If either travel plans or actual travel events should change subsequent to authorization, a revised Student Travel Authorization form shall be submitted for review and approval prior to the commencement of travel or immediately upon return from travel, respectively.

3.4 Travel Advances. Cash advances for Per Diem and/or Mileage, may be authorized only for travel to (a) athletic events, (b) recruiting venues, (c) student conferences or other student activities, or (d) foreign countries.

3.4.1 Vice presidents may authorize cash advances for employees who would suffer extreme financial hardship if they had to await post-travel reimbursement. In such instances, a vice president will communicate to the originator of the RaPS Travel Request that a cash advance has been authorized; the originator will so note in the comments section of the request. The following guidelines pertain:

3.4.1.1 The cash advance amount must be at least \$200 and shall not exceed 80% of the total Per Diem-plus-Mileage estimate for the trip. (Transportation, airfare, registration fees, lodging, and other expenses paid directly by the college are not taken into consideration when calculating 80% of the total Per Diem-plus-Mileage estimate.)

3.4.1.2 The authorizing RaPS Travel Request must be submitted to the Accounts Payable clerk at least two (2) weeks prior to the date of travel.

3.4.1.3 Cash advances not settled within thirty (30) days of return from travel may be referred for collections (additional fees might be assessed by outside collection agencies). In addition, an employee who has not settled her/his account may not travel again until the account has been settled.

3.4.2 The administrator (coach, advisor, or Chaperon) of a college program or activity, with the concurrence of her/his unit vice president, may request a cash advance for Per Diem and/or Mileage, as appropriate, for student groups that travel (same day or overnight) in connection with college programs or activities. As in paragraph 3.4.1, above, the vice president will communicate to the originator of the RaPS Travel Request that a cash advance has been authorized; the originator will so note in the comments section of the request. The following guidelines pertain:

3.4.2.1 The authorizing RaPS Travel Request and the Student Travel Authorization form must be submitted to the Accounts Payable clerk at least two (2) weeks prior to the date of travel.

3.4.2.2 A cash advance will be made payable to the coach, advisor, or Chaperon, and, in turn, they shall dispense the cash to students.

3.4.2.3 The coach, advisor, or Chaperon must reconcile cash advances within ten (10) business days of a group's return from travel. Any unused funds must be counted, verified, returned to the Accounts Payable clerk.

3.4.2.4 Cash advances not settled within thirty (30) days of return from travel may be referred for collections (additional fees might be assessed by outside collection agencies). In addition, a coach, advisor, or Chaperon who has not settled her/his account may not travel again until the account has been settled.

3.5 Automobile Travel. The following guidelines pertain to travel via automobile, including college-owned, privately owned, and rented/chartered automobiles:

3.5.1 Travel by private automobile is authorized if a college-owned automobile is not available or cannot reasonably meet transportation needs.

3.5.2 For travel that originates locally, i.e., at a Principal Place of Work, travel by rental automobile is authorized if a college-owned automobile is not available or cannot reasonably meet transportation needs. For travel that originates at a remote location – at a destination airport, for example – travel by rental automobile is authorized if travel by taxi or public conveyance cannot effectively and efficiently meet transportation needs.

3.5.3 Reservations for college-owned automobiles shall be made in accordance with Procedure 01-2005-0008, *College Vehicle Reservations*.

3.5.4 Each traveler who operates a college-owned motor vehicle shall have a current, valid driver license. Each traveler who operates a private or rental automobile shall have (a) a current, valid driver license and (b) personal automobile insurance coverage that meets or exceeds the minimum requirements set forth by statute or motor vehicle code. A copy of the driver license and insurance certificate must be provided to the Accounts Payable clerk prior to the first instance of travel during each fiscal year.

3.5.5 Each traveler who operates a motor vehicle shall obey all traffic laws, whatever the jurisdiction. The college will not reimburse any employee or student for fines or other financial penalties assessed for the unlawful operation of any vehicle while on college business.

3.5.6 Group travel is required when two or more travelers travel to the same location for the same purpose, unless their respective vice president or the president authorizes individual travel, which shall be noted in the comments section of the RaPS Travel Request.

Note. Prospective group travelers who hail from a single organization or who are members of the senior leadership team, should consider the adverse impact that a disabling or fatal travel accident could have on the continuity of college operations and, when appropriate, should travel in two or more subgroups.

3.5.7 Travelers shall immediately report vehicle accidents to the proper legal authorities, to the associate vice president of human resources, or another college executive if such authorities are unavailable. If applicable, report to the rental car company. Each college vehicle has an accident checklist that will assist travelers to take proper action. Upon return from travel, an incident report should be filed in accordance with Procedure 01-2006-0018, *Incident Reports*.

3.6 Airline Travel. The following guidelines pertain to travel by commercial airline:

3.6.1 Travelers shall travel by commercial airline when it is appropriate to do so from the standpoint of cost or schedule.

Note. Prospective group travelers who hail from a single organization or who are members of the senior leadership team, should consider the adverse impact that a disabling or fatal travel accident could have on the continuity of college operations and, when appropriate, should travel in two or more subgroups.

3.6.2 Airline reservations shall be booked at the lowest available fare, including discounted (restricted, nonrefundable) fares; in no case shall the fare exceed the cost of a full fare (unrestricted, refundable) economy ticket.

Note. As presented in paragraph 3.2.1, above, the college credit card must be used to pay for airfare. However, it is the name of the traveler – and not the name of the college – that necessarily appears on an airline ticket, which effectively renders ticket ownership to the traveler. As a direct result, if a ticket holder should not perform scheduled air travel subsequent to ticket purchase, then (a) the ticket shall be remanded to the traveler for her/his own use and (b) the cost of the airline ticket will be reported to the IRS as income.

3.6.3 Travelers shall use the least expensive mode of transportation between terminals, lodgings, or workplaces that is appropriate to the circumstance; the use of taxis, shuttles, rapid-transit systems, buses, rental automobiles, and other conveyances is authorized when and where prudent.

3.7 Reimbursable Expenses. The college will reimburse expenses when they are ordinary, necessary, and reasonable to accomplish the official purpose of a trip, and when supported by original, itemized receipts. While some of the following circumstances will rarely apply, the broad scope of reimbursable expenses includes, but is not limited to:

3.7.1 Taxi, shuttle (including a customary tip or gratuity), automobile rentals, parking fees, and ferry and bridge tolls

3.7.2 Registration fees required in connection with attendance at approved conventions, conferences, official meetings of professional or learned societies

3.7.3 Room rental in a hotel or other place that is used to conduct official college business (the room rental is reimbursable as a separate item from lodging), and other mandatory fees charged by lodging facilities for items such as room safes

3.7.4 Charges for necessary internet connectivity, facsimile (fax) services and stenographic services

3.7.5 The actual cost of laundry or dry-cleaning services for travelers that are in a continuous travel status for five (5) or more days

3.7.6 Charges for checked baggage (up to two pieces that are not overweight) on domestic airline flights

3.8 Non-Reimbursable Expenses. The following travel expenses are not reimbursable:

3.8.1 Expenses incurred as the result of a deviation from the most direct and usually traveled route, whatever the mode of transportation

3.8.2 Additional expenses incurred because a college employee is accompanied by a spouse, a family member, or another non-official companion

3.8.3 Alcohol

3.8.4 Meal Tips (except for Net Allowable Business Meal Expense)

3.8.5 Rental car insurance options

3.8.6 Mileage between home and Principal Place of Work

3.8.7 Fines for traffic violations

3.8.8 Reimbursement for airline tickets “purchased” with frequent flyer miles

3.8.9 Personal expenses: telephone calls, movie rentals and other non-business-related activities, travel insurance, and repairs to private automobiles that are used for official travel in accordance with the provisions of this procedure

3.9 Business Meals. Employees will occasionally incur Business Meal expenses in legitimate business settings for which they may be reimbursed, and at times incur expenses for others. The following guidelines pertain:

NOTE. An employee shall incur a business-related meal expense only if the expense is in strict accord with the standards of ethical conduct legislated by the State of Oregon. Consult with the associate vice president of human resources for an interpretation of these standards, as necessary.

3.9.1 Vice presidents, associate vice presidents, and members of the president's staff may incur business-related meal expenses as they deem reasonable and prudent, without prior approval. Other employees shall incur such expenses only with the prior authorization of a vice president or the president.

3.9.2 When an employee is on travel and incurs a business-related meal expense that exceeds the Per Diem entitlement for the day during which the meal expense is incurred, then s/he may calculate and record the Net Allowable Business Meal Expense in the Travel Expense Log. The amount for which the employee will be reimbursed will be equal to the difference between the Net Allowable Business Meal Expense and the Per Diem entitlement for the day in question. Original, itemized receipts must be provided.

NOTE. When an employee is not on travel but incurs a Business Meal expense, then the employee may record the expense in an In-District Travel Log in an amount equal to the Net Allowable Business Meal Expense.

Special Forms: Travel Expense Log
In-District Mileage Log
Student Travel Authorization

