

Colorado Mesa University

Travel Procedure

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I. PROCEDURAL STATEMENT

This procedure sets forth requirements for authorizing individual travel, determining allowable travel expenses, and completing the reimbursement process. The following procedure applies to Colorado Mesa University employees and students traveling on University business regardless of funding source. Non-employees representing Colorado Mesa University on official business are subject to the same policies, procedures and fiscal rules as employees.

Expenses for travel must be for the benefit the University, shall only be incurred to the extent necessary to conduct University business, and be reasonable under the circumstances.

II. AUTHORITY

This procedure is authorized under Colorado Mesa University Fiscal Rule 5-1: Travel.

III. DEFINITIONS

- A. Blanket Travel Authorization** – Authorization for multiple trips for the President and designated employees who have been approved by executive management. Blanket travel authorizations cover In-State Travel and Out-of-State Travel, with or without airfare.
- B. Budget Authority (BA)** – Budget authority responsible for authorizing travel and approving travel expenses.
- C. Funding Source** – Travel may be funded by a variety of sources, including but not limited to CMU, conference host, etc.
- D. In-State Travel** – Travel within the State of Colorado and in the immediate area outside of Colorado that is a necessary part of an otherwise “in-state” trip. e.g., conditions warrant that a traveler may be required to travel through Utah due to road conditions in the mountains.
- E. Foreign Travel** – Travel to any destination that is not considered In-State Travel or Out-of-State Travel.
- F. Out-of-State Travel** – Travel within the 48 continental United States, including the District of Columbia, or within Alaska or Hawaii.
- G. Short Term Rental** - Rental properties other than hotels, motels, resorts, etc. Short-term rentals are found on websites such as Airbnb, VRBO, etc.
- H. Travel Authorization** – Authorization allowing a traveler to travel on a single trip, which may or may not include multiple destinations.
- I. Travel Status** – designation given to CMU employees, non-employees, and students traveling on behalf of CMU only when travel requires him or her to be away from regular work location.
- J. US Bank OneCard (Card)** -University issued US Bank Visa credit card used for travel related expenses.

IV. REQUIREMENTS PRIOR TO TRAVEL

Prior to travel, the traveler should assess the needs required to accomplish University business and get approval from the appropriate BA.

A. Obtain Required Approval

1. **Blanket Travel** – Travel is pre-approved, the BA will review and approve the traveler's Travel Expense Report (TER) after each trip is completed.
2. **In-State Travel wholly within a single day with no airfare** – Prior written or electronic authorization by the BA for all in-state travel wholly within a single day with no airfare is not required.
3. **In-State Travel requiring an overnight stay, and/or airfare** - Prior written or electronic authorization by the BA or designee is required.
4. **Out-of-State Travel** – Prior written or electronic authorization by the BA or designee is required for all Out-of-State Travel.
5. **Foreign Travel** – Prior written or electronic authorization by the traveler's BA and the CMU President is required for all Foreign Travel.

B. Traveler Responsibility

1. **Single travel** – The traveler will complete the Travel Authorization section of the TER and submit to the appropriate BA for review and approval prior to travel. The traveler should submit TER paperwork to the BA via email, which will serve as the Traveler's signature.
2. **Blanket Travel** – The traveler is not required to submit the pre-travel portion of the TER to the BA. The authorization has been previously granted.

C. Budget Authority Responsibility

1. **Single travel** – The BA will review the TA section of the TER. Upon approval, the BA will submit the TER to the AP office for processing.
2. **Blanket Travel** – The BA will not review the TA section of the TER prior to travel. The BA will grant blanket travel authorization to the traveler on a fiscal year basis.

V. PROCURE TRAVEL NEEDS

After obtaining BA approval, travelers are authorized to secure travel, lodging and other needs. All appropriate travel related expenses should be booked and paid using your Card. If you do not have a Card and Purchasing determines you do not need a Card, please contact your department administrative assistant for booking assistance.

A. Transportation

- 1. Air Transportation** – Travelers have the option of utilizing the University’s travel agent, [The Travel Society](#), or the use of internet travel sites such as Expedia and Orbitz. Itemized receipts documenting dates and destination of travel is required.

Rental Vehicle – Travelers should avoid additional charges for picking up a rental vehicle too far in advance or returning it later than necessary.

If the traveler is using a rental vehicle, the traveler should use their Card to rent from an agency under a State of Colorado contract, currently Avis, Budget or Enterprise. The state contract includes liability insurance and Card benefits include Collision Damage Waivers (CDW) for most vehicles and vans designated specifically as small group transportation vehicles with a maximum of eight (8) people including the driver. The traveler should charge the vehicle to their Card and decline CDW insurance on vehicles with up to eight (8) people.

Renters using a personal credit card should be familiar with their card benefits and any insurance exclusions that may apply when using a personal card for business purposes. Also, some rental agencies outside of Colorado may require renters to purchase insurance. If either of these cases apply and additional insurance coverage is required, submit an explanation with the rental agreement for reimbursement.

Travelers in Foreign travel status must purchase the additional rental car insurance in order to be properly covered.

Travelers who accept unnecessary automobile rental insurance will not receive reimbursement for the insurance. Itemized receipts documenting dates of rental will be required.

- 2. Personal Vehicle** – If the traveler chooses to use a personal vehicle, the traveler may choose to be reimbursed for either mileage or fuel, but not both. Fuel will be reimbursed for the actual cost while mileage will be reimbursed at the Colorado State Fiscal Rule rate. Accounts Payable may request documentation of personal vehicle mileage in order to substantiate fuel or mileage expense.

Reimbursement for 4-WD rates is permitted between November 1st and April 1st. Justification for use of 4-WD is required for travel occurring outside these dates. The 4-WD rate will only be claimed for vehicles with 4-WD transmission, all-wheel drive vehicles are not included in the 4-WD category.

The mileage rate covers insurance, fuel, and wear and tear on your vehicle. If the traveler is claiming mileage, expenses related to personal vehicles will not be reimbursed and are not allowed to be charged to the Card. Because the mileage reimbursement rate covers the cost of insurance, travelers will not be reimbursed for damage or deductibles if the traveler is involved in an accident.

3. **Other Transportation** – Transportation such as boat or train is allowable and itemized receipts showing dates of travel and destination will be required. Any other mode of transportation outside of those discussed in this document should be discussed and approved with the Purchasing or Accounts Payable department **prior to booking**.
4. **Emergency Notification** – If an accident occurs while a traveler is on foreign travel status, the traveler must work with and submit an incident report to the Purchasing Department because of risk management concerns. If an employee incurs injury in the course of foreign travel, the employee must notify University's Human Resource Department because of Worker's Compensation implications.

B. Lodging

1. **Hotel/Motel** – Hotel and motel lodging should be booked at the single room rate while making every effort to obtain the lowest cost lodging reasonably possible. In the case of a conference or similar event, the University permits the employee to stay at the conference hotel instead of seeking the lowest rate available. Itemized receipts showing date of check-in and check-out will be required.
2. **Rental by Owner** – Rental by Owner accommodations often require an additional contract. Prior to booking rental-by-owner accommodations, determine if your host requires a contract or additional terms and conditions. These agreements must be reviewed and approved by the Purchasing Department **prior to booking or a making a deposit**. In order to streamline your rental by owner reservations and avoid additional contracts, Airbnb is the recommended platform.

When additional documentation is required by the rental property owner, please contact the Purchasing department for further assistance as **these agreements must be reviewed and approved by the Purchasing Department in advance of booking**.

3. **Other Lodging Options** – Campsites, Hostels, and other lodging options are allowed in lieu of hotel rooms. Please note that the receipt requirements are the same as those for staying in hotels. If an itemized receipt is not available, the traveler must obtain a statement that includes a breakdown of charges. Any documentation that will help substantiate this statement should be used when obtaining receipts is not possible.

C. Meals

- 1. Per Diem** – Travelers may claim up to the maximum per diem for the city to which they are traveling. The maximum per diem amount is a daily amount rather than an amount assigned to individual meals and under no circumstances shall an employee claim more than the established maximum per diem rate. The only time individual meal rates are a factor is when travel is for a partial day.

Per Diem will be reimbursed upon completion of travel and successful completion of audit of the trip expenses. Please see the [How to Determine Per Diem](#) help guide in order to determine the appropriate per diem to request.

Per Diem shall not be claimed when meals are provided as part of a conference, meeting, etc.

- 2. Meals for Days Traveler Departs and Returns** – Travelers may claim meals based on departure and arrival times. Breakfast cannot be claimed unless departure is prior to 5:00 A.M. at the departing city. Lunch cannot be claimed unless departure is before 11:00 AM at the departing city, or return is after 1:00 P.M. at the destination city. Dinner cannot be claimed, unless return is after 8:00 P.M. at the destination city. Under this method, the applicable per diem rate is based on where the meal is eaten. The incidental portion of the Per Diem may only be claimed on days which include an overnight stay.

Table 1

	Total Per Diem	Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner	Incidental
Standard Rate	\$51.00	\$11.00	\$12.00	\$23.00	\$5.00
High Cost Rates	\$54.00	\$12.00	\$13.00	\$24.00	\$5.00
	\$59.00	\$13.00	\$15.00	\$26.00	\$5.00
	\$64.00	\$15.00	\$16.00	\$28.00	\$5.00
	\$69.00	\$16.00	\$17.00	\$31.00	\$5.00
	\$74.00	\$17.00	\$18.00	\$34.00	\$5.00

VI. TRAVEL ADVANCE

Travel advances are rarely approved. In the extraordinary circumstance that a traveler will require a travel advance, the traveler shall complete a Direct Request form to obtain an advance for approved travel expenses. The Direct Request must include a statement describing the purpose of the travel, a breakdown of estimated costs and be approved by the BA. The amount of the advance will be determined using the applicable per diem rates and other allowable estimated out of pocket costs. Under no circumstance shall a Travel Advance exceed the \$1,500 statutory limit per traveler per trip.

VII. USE OF US BANK ONECARD (CARD)

Travelers are encouraged to utilize their Card for all travel expenses, with the exception of meal expense.

VIII. NON-ALLOWABLE TRAVEL EXPENSES

The following is a list of expenses which are not allowed to be charged to the Card or be reimbursed by the University. Non-allowable travel expenses which are charged to the Card must be reimbursed to the University within **10** days of notification from the Accounts Payable office

- Alcoholic beverages
- Entertainment expenses
- Personal expenses incurred during travel that are primarily for the benefit of the traveler and not directly related to state business
- Political expenses
- Traffic fines and parking tickets
- Late fees for credit cards
- Purchasing unnecessary additional rental vehicle insurance when using the Card

The expenses listed are not all-inclusive and should serve as a guideline for travelers.

IX. SALES TAX EXEMPTION EXPECTATION

The use of your Card will allow you to obtain sales tax exemption for all purchases within the State of Colorado. Certain vendors will still require a tax exemption affidavit be completed and submitted prior to your stay. If this is the case, document your efforts to obtain the sales tax exemption. If a traveler is unable to obtain the exemption and has made reasonable attempts to obtain the exemption, sales tax will be allowable.

X. RECEIPT REQUIREMENT

The table below describes receipt requirements.

Table 2

Type of Travel Expense	Rate	Receipt Required?
Lodging	Actual	Yes
Meals	Per Diem Rate	No
Incidental Expenses	Per Diem Rate	No
Transportation (other than airfare)	Actual	Yes, if over \$25

Rental Vehicle	Actual	Yes
Mileage for Personal Vehicles	Miles x 90% of current fed. mileage rate (or 95% for 4-wheel drive)	No
Airfare	Actual	Yes
Registration	Actual	Yes
Other Allowable Expenses	Actual	Yes, if over \$25
Tips Included in Per Diem Rate	Actual, not to exceed 20% of subtotal	No

A. Receipts not obtained

If a receipt is not obtained by the traveler, the traveler must make an attempt to obtain the original, itemized receipt by contacting the vendor and requesting the receipt. Only after all reasonable attempts have been made to obtain an original receipt, the traveler will complete and submit a [Missing Receipt Acknowledgement](#) form and submit to their BA for approval. See Missing Receipt Acknowledgment form guidelines for additional information.

XI. SPECIAL SITUATIONS

- A. Mileage and Parking Only** – Travelers may use the Mileage and Parking Form for travel completed wholly within a single day, within the State of Colorado, for travel that only includes mileage and parking charges.
- B. Meals for Travel Wholly Within a Single Day** - Meal(s) may be reimbursed for travel completed wholly within a single day. If the traveler is required to be in travel status, a meal reimbursement will be allowed.
- C. International Travel Insurance** – Employees traveling internationally should purchase travel insurance for their international trip. Travel insurance covers evacuation and emergency medical insurance should situations arise while in foreign travel status; additionally it insures against in-country travel interruption such as disrupted flights or rail service.

XII. REQUIREMENTS POST TRAVEL

A. Traveler Responsibility

- 1. Blanket Travel** – Traveler will submit TER with Post-Travel Info section completed to the appropriate BA.
- 2. Single Travel** – The traveler will submit the TER with the Post-Travel Info section completed to the Accounts Payable office. The TER does not require any review from the BA as long as the actual cost does not exceed the estimated cost. The approval for the travel and related expenses is granted when the BA submits the TER to the Accounts Payable office pre-travel.

B. Budget Authority Responsibility

- 1. Blanket Travel** – The BA will review the TER for reasonableness before submitting to the Accounts Payable office for processing.
- 2. Single Travel** – The BA has already given the approval for the travel and related expenses with the submission of the reviewed TER prior to travel. Therefore, no additional approval is required unless the actual expenses exceed the estimated expense. If the actual expense does exceed the estimated expense, the Accounts Payable office will seek additional approval from the BA.

C. Travel Expense Report (TER)

The TER shall include all expenses incurred in relation to the travel. However, the reimbursement portion of the travel will include only those expenses that are deemed to be out of pocket such as mileage, cash only tolls, and expenses in which the using the Card is not an option.

All reimbursement paperwork shall be submitted via email to travel@coloradomesa.edu within 10 days of completion of travel. All necessary receipts substantiating out of pocket expense reimbursement are to be attached to the email containing the TER. Accounts Payable will verify accuracy of receipts and audit against the TER. Upon satisfactory audit, the Accounts Payable office will approve all travel related expenses in US Bank.

D. Allocation and Submission of Expenses

Upon completion of travel, all expenses must be allocated, receipts uploaded to the US Bank website, and routed to the travel queue for review. The allocation deadline for each monthly statement cycle is five days after the close of the cycle. The Card cycle typically begins on the 16th of the month and closes on the 15th of the following month. For example, if a cycle started on November 16th it would close on December 15th, unless the 15th falls on a weekend or a holiday, then the cycle would close on the next business day. Assuming the 15th was not on a weekend or holiday, the allocation deadline would be December 20th at 10:00 p.m. Mountain Standard Time. A Cycle Close & Allocation Deadline Calendar is available [here](#).

For travel expenses incurred in which the traveler does not use the Card, receipts must be scanned and sent to travel@coloradomesa.edu with the submission of the TER.

E. Reconciliation of Expenses

Upon completion of TER audit, any expenses deemed personal or out of compliance with this procedure must be rectified. The Accounts Payable office will notify the traveler of any expenses that may be considered out of compliance with this procedure. If the expense(s) is determined to be out of compliance, the Accounts Payable office will notify the traveler and the traveler will have **10** business days to reimburse the University for the expense(s) in question.

XIII. FORMS

[Travel Expense Report \(TER\)](#)

Accounts Payable

1100 North Avenue • Grand Junction, CO 81501-3122
970.248.1098 (o) • 970.248.1974 (o) • 970.248.1136 (f)

[Missing Receipt Acknowledgment](#)

[OneCard Cycle Calendar](#)

[Mileage and Parking Only](#)