Travel Procedure

General Guidelines

The purpose of this procedure is to make travelers, approvers, deans, directors and department heads aware of their respective roles and responsibilities relative to submitting and approving travel and business-related expenses.

Student travel must comply with this procedure, as well as with pertinent requirements found in the College Student Manual for Organizations.

Tax-Exempt

The College is a tax-exempt organization and individuals should request that taxes not be collected. Unfortunately, the travel industry (e.g., airlines, rail, hotel, car rental, restaurants) frequently will not recognize this status and insist that taxes be paid. In these instances, the employee will be reimbursed for the taxes paid. If the supplier requests a tax-exemption document, a tax exemption letter can be obtained from the Fiscal Affairs Office, Accounts Payable Office or the Purchasing Office.

Responsibilities

Employees traveling on official College business are responsible for complying with these procedures and are expected to be prudent and reasonable in their expenditures.

The Budget Unit Manager/Dean and Provost/Divisional Vice President are responsible for administering the travel expenses charged against their budgets and ensuring full compliance with these procedures.

Departments/Divisions are responsible for reviewing and approving all travel disbursements/transactions submitted by employees for expenses anticipated and/or incurred in the course of travel on official business.

Approval Procedures

All travel in connection with official College business must be approved by the Budget Unit Manager/Dean and Provost/Divisional Vice President or authorized agents.

The seven major steps in the process (not necessarily in this sequence, except for the last item) are:

1. Reserve a vehicle from the Motor Vehicle Pool if required or desired.
2. Complete and Submit to the Travel/A/P dept form: Authorization Request for Travel/Vehicle (ARTV),
3. Process Conference Registration Fee (if applicable),
4. Schedule Transportation,
5. Reserve Hotel Accommodations
6. Collect all receipts and
7. Submit Request for Reimbursement of Travel Expenses (Payment voucher form)

Under many circumstances, as outlined in the College’s Ethics Policy, a completed Request for Approval of Attendance Form (Ethics) must accompany the ARTV Form. If you have questions regarding the Request Form, contact Affirmative Action/Ethics Office.
All forms must be signed by the employee and approved by the employee’s Budget Unit Manager/Dean and/or Provost/Divisional Vice President.

Requests for exception or interpretation of these Procedures should be approved by the Budget Unit Manager/Dean and/or Provost/Divisional Vice President and directed to the Travel Officer. Exceptions to these procedures shall be rare and based upon sound justification.

If the amount approved on an original ARTV Form is exceeded by ten percent (10%) because of unanticipated expenses, a letter of explanation detailing the extra expense(s) must be submitted to and approved by the Budget Unit Manager/Dean and/or Provost/Divisional Vice President, then submitted to the Travel Officer.

**Payment Options for Travel and Business Expenses**

*Stockton Travel Card*

Travelers may use the Stockton Travel Card, Master Card credit card, for business travel. Proper use of the card and prompt submission of a Travel Payment Voucher with the appropriate receipts upon the traveler’s return can alleviate the need to use personal funds for business travel expenses. (The credit card will be paid in full by the college; the traveler will complete the travel payment voucher form for reconciliation of the account. Travel cards will be issued to individual employees at the request of an employee’s budget unit manager.)

*Direct Billing Option- Sojern Travel*

The College has an arrangement with the Sojern Travel Agency that can be used if the traveler wants the College to be billed directly. Airline or rail tickets can be ordered and paid directly from the department account through the Sojern Travel Agency. When this process is utilized, department support staff should submit a direct pay document to Accounts Payable for disbursement to Sojern.

*Check Request*

Travelers may request a College check to prepay certain expenses. The department support staff may submit a direct pay document to the Accounts Payable Office for check disbursement to pay for such expenses as conference registrations and hotel reservation deposits. If this option is utilized and the travel is cancelled, the traveler is responsible for arranging reimbursement to the College. The reimbursed or credited amount should be noted on the Travel Payment Voucher Form.

*Personal Funds*

If the traveler makes all or part of travel-related purchases with personal funds, at the completion of the trip the Travel Payment Voucher Form must be submitted to department support staff. The staff will then submit a direct pay document to Accounts Payable for reimbursement to the traveler. Appropriate receipts and the Travel Payment Voucher Form must be included with the direct pay document.

**Travel Guidelines**

Only the actual and necessary expenses related directly to traveling in the performance of College official duties shall be reimbursed.
Where reimbursement for travel is from a grant or contract, the employee must receive prior approval from the Grants Accountant in order to establish that all anticipated travel costs will be allowable for reimbursement in accordance with the grant/contract terms.

*Per Diem Lodging and Meals & Incidental Expense Rate*

Meal expenses are ordinarily reimbursed using the college approved per diem rate, which can be found on the College’s Travel webpage. Actual cost of lodging shall be reimbursed unless it exceeds the regular Federal per diem rate for the particular location. Reimbursement for tips, gratuities, and similar fees are defined as incidental expenses and are limited by the approved per diem reimbursement rate.

Reimbursement is approved for the full cost of an official convention meal when such a meal is scheduled as an integral part of a convention or conference proceedings. If a meal is included in the registration fee, the allowance for that meal is to be deducted from the per diem subsistence allowance.

Reimbursement of actual cost for lodging at a convention site will be approved when such lodging is an official part of the convention (i.e., the lodging is either in the official convention hotel or in an alternative hotel arranged by the organization sponsoring the convention).

Regardless of actual cost, reimbursement for meals shall ordinarily be at the per diem rate. The travel card may be used for meals. Upon return from traveling, the traveler will be required to reimburse the College for meal costs charged on the card that exceed the per diem rate.

Original receipts itemizing expenditures are required and must be submitted to the Accounts Payable Office when reporting travel expense or seeking reimbursement. If the Federal per diem rate is used, proof of travel will be required under the Internal Revenue Code: Accountable Plans and Adequate Accounting rule.

Note: Itemized credit card slips are acceptable as are cancelled checks if both sides are displayed.

Travel expense reimbursement should normally be requested within ten (10) business days following travel or on a monthly basis. All supporting documentation shall be processed on the travel expense/payment voucher and include expense item chronology, proper column format and totals. Failure to complete related forms properly will cause a delay in reimbursement of expenses.

*Certifications: Employee and Approval Authorities*

All College employees requesting payment or reimbursement for travel-related expenses shall certify the accuracy of the request and its compliance with this procedure. Approval and certification for payment of a Travel Expense Reimbursement Request by a Budget Unit Manager/Dean or Provost/Divisional Vice President should be based upon a diligent compliance review of the reimbursement request.

*Cancellations of Authorization Request for Travel Form (ARTV)*

To cancel an ARTV Form, send a copy of the original ARTV Form or email a request of cancellation to the Travel Officer.
Expenditures That May Not Be Reimbursed

- Personal telephone calls.
- Expenses for personal services, including those appearing on a hotel bill.
- Charges for alcoholic beverages
- Unless required by contract, no meals or lodging expenses at his/her official station, at the place where he resides, or within a radius of ten miles from such station and home.
- Meals served as part of transportation accommodations when the cost is included in the transportation charge.
- Meals served as part of conferences/seminars when the cost is included in the conference/seminar cost.
- Moving expenses unless authorized by the Board of Trustees.
- Fines and other expenses for motor vehicle violations including parking offenses.
- College issued credit card cash advances.
- The differential in cost for parking in an express or standard lot when an economy lot is available.
- Attending educational, instructional or other conferences which involve out-of-state or out-of-country travel when equivalent programs are available locally.

Other Prohibitions

- Using a College vehicle for any personal obligations or with unauthorized persons.
- Using College equipment or vehicles in a manner that is unsafe or in violation of Federal, State or municipal laws including motor vehicle laws.
- Using College vehicles for travel when a substantial part of the total travel time is for parking at an airport or train station.

Travel Outside the Continental USA: Employees/Students

All travel requests for College-authorized travel and reimbursement outside of the Continental United States shall be requested on an ARTV Form and shall require approval of the employee’s Budget Unit Manager/Dean, Provost/Divisional Vice President, the Travel Officer, and the President of the College. Unless approved by the President, no employee shall be permitted to travel outside of the continental USA. Employees must attach to requests for travel outside of the continental USA any State Department issued prohibitions on travel or travel warnings to area. Employees must sign a waiver of liability prior to travel outside of the continental USA.

Employees and Students are to have passports and medical/evacuation insurance in order to be approved for travel outside of the United States.

It is the sole responsibility of the employee and student approved for travel outside the Continental USA to ensure that he/she has appropriate insurance coverage; is medically suited for travel, and is fully capable of undertaking this travel.

Health insurance policy as well as medical and emergency evacuation should be examined to ascertain whether coverage is effective (in force) at travel destination. The insurance information will be kept on file in the Office of Risk Management. The College’s student health insurance generally is sufficient for most foreign travel. Travelers must comply with all immunization requirements and immunization records should be on file with the College’s Health Service Office.
Reimbursement for foreign travel will be in accordance with the most current IRS Foreign Travel Index (www.irs.gov).

Each student (parent or guardian if student is under 18 years of age) will sign a Waiver of Liability Form. The form will be kept on file in the Office of Risk Management.

The Division of Academic Affairs has prepared a checklist for student travel (including foreign travel). The list is very comprehensive and should be reviewed as a planning tool for student travel.

Third Parties: Non-Stockton Persons, the College’s Waiver of Liability Form must be signed. As with College employees and students, health insurance, passports and immunizations are imperative for each traveler.

**Ground Transportation**

All travel must be by the most direct, economical and usually-traveled route.

**Use of College-owned Vehicles**

The College maintains a central pool of automobiles for use of College employees on official travel within the State and for limited travel outside the State. These vehicles are located at the Office of Plant Management (Building 70). Since the number of available vehicles is not adequate to meet all requirements, they are assigned on a first come, first served basis.

Employees must drive College-owned vehicles with care and observe all motor vehicle laws. All employees, including student employees, using College-owned vehicles in the performance of their duties for the College or other approved function, must have on file in the Travel Office and/or Plant Office copies of their valid drivers’ licenses.

Students and non-College employees are not permitted in College-owned vehicles unless these passengers have been pre-approved and have signed waivers of liability. Waivers must be kept on file for each trip, the sponsoring department must retain a copy of the waiver, the original waiver must be sent to the Office of Risk Management.

College-owned vehicles may not be checked out overnight unless the official travel involves overnight lodging and an ARTV Form for such travel has been approved. An exception may be authorized if the trip requires early departure from home or if it is not cost effective for an employee to return to the College to pick up a vehicle. Additional requirements are approval by the budget unit manager on an ARTV Form and availability of a vehicle for the planned duration of its use by the traveler.

Vehicles may be reserved by emailing/calling the Office of Plant Management (email vehiclerequest@stockton.edu). It is recommended that vehicle reservations be submitted at least two weeks in advance of travel in order to assure the availability of a vehicle. When reserving a vehicle, times of departure and approximate return must be given. The reservation will be canceled if the vehicle is not picked up within one (1) hour of the time scheduled. Vehicles must be returned at designated time since others may be waiting to use them. Persons who continually return vehicles late may be denied future use.

The operator of a College-owned vehicle is encouraged to use the employee issued College credit card for the purchase of gasoline and oil. The operator must fill out a Vehicle Log Sheet before departure and a Trip Ticket must be completed and turned in when returning the vehicle.
Operators of College-owned vehicles are personally responsible for vehicles assigned to or operated by them. If damages result through negligence, misuse, or abuse, the operator may be charged for such damage and may be subject to disciplinary action.

When using a College-owned vehicle, no deviations from the direct travel route for personal use are permitted. If the mileage actually traveled in a College-owned vehicle substantially exceeds the anticipated mileage for an approved use, employees may be required to provide documentary evidence that the travel mileage was all for official College business. Such evidence might include receipts, a statement of expenses, an account book, a diary, or similar records of other expenses at or near the time the unanticipated vehicle use occurred. Mapquest or other similar on-line tools may be utilized to ascertain the standard mileage for a particular trip.

Each day of the trip, there must be one driver for every 400 miles. Driving guidelines: No single driver may drive more than 300 miles at one time. No single driver may drive more than eight hours per day and no more than 4 consecutive hours.

Damages to vehicles should be reported to the Office of Plant Management (via completion of the Trip Ticket) and to the Office of Campus Police (Building 71). A vehicle accident report is to be filled out and signed for any accident involving a College vehicle. These forms are available at the Office of Campus Police.

When the number of persons in a group exceeds twenty (20), a charter bus should be used for the trip, rather than personal or College-owned vehicles.

The use of a State vehicle must be noted on all travel approval or payment request documents.

When an employee uses a College-owned vehicle for official College business, the College and its employee are covered for claims arising out of the negligent operation of motor vehicles under a self funded auto liability program maintained by the State of New Jersey in conjunction with the New Jersey Tort Claims Act (NJSA 59:1-1 et seq.). The program provides for the defense and indemnification of employees for their negligent act or omissions arising out of the operation of motor vehicles while the employees are acting within the scope of their employment and the act or omission is not due to actual fraud, willful misconduct or actual malice.

**Personally Owned Vehicle (Mileage Basis)**

Employees are encouraged to use College vehicles; however under certain circumstances they may use their private vehicles for official College business. Mileage reimbursement at College allowance rate, in lieu of all actual expenses of transportation, is allowed provided an employee using his/her own automobile on official business away from his/her official station has been previously approved by the Budget Unit Manager/Dean and/or Provost/Divisional Vice President. In addition to the mileage allowance, parking and toll charges are allowed.

When employees use their own personal automobiles for official business, they should be aware that the employees’ auto insurance is primary. The State’s self funded auto liability program, described in the previous section, may provide coverage for claims in excess of the coverage under employees’ personal automobile insurance policy provided the employees are using their personal automobile on official College business. The State does not cover any physical damage to an employee’s auto, nor will it reimburse collision or comprehensive deductibles.
Because of the potential liability resulting from the use of a personally-owned car to transport students on field trips, the College must maintain a record of all such usage. Any employees proposing to use a personally-owned car to transport students must complete an ARTV Form and submit it to the designated Travel Officer at least five (5) working days prior to the trip. A copy of the statement must be attached to the Travel Expense Reimbursement Request when claiming reimbursement for mileage or other expenses involved with the trip.

Reimbursement for travel to points outside the State by automobile shall be permitted when such arrangements prove to be more efficient and economical than other forms of public transportation. In determining the relative costs of private and public transportation, all associated costs (i.e., tolls, taxicabs, airport, or station transfers, etc.) should be considered.

If you are operating your own vehicle and deviate from the course of travel necessary for completing the business purpose trip to handle personal business, you cannot claim a mileage reimbursement for those miles that are attributable to your personal use.

When employees travel in their personally-owned vehicles on official college business they will only be reimbursed for the difference between the cost of traveling from their residences to their official station and the cost of traveling from their residences to the location of the official college business. Reimbursement will only be made if the total cost of travel exceeds the regular traveling cost from home to the College.

Travel on non-scheduled workdays or holidays to anywhere other than the official stations is reimbursable from the employee’s home.

The official station is defined as an employee’s regular, assigned work location at the College or at any of its branch locations or offices. Employees are not entitled to mileage reimbursement from their residence to their official station.

Example of Mileage reimbursement calculation:

- An employee lives in Cape May, NJ which is approximately 47 miles from Stockton College and is traveling to Trenton which is approximately 113 miles;
- Employee’s official station is Stockton main campus
- The reimbursement for traveling to a meeting in Trenton from home and returning home, not leaving from Stockton will be calculated as follows:
  - Cape May to Trenton and return: round-trip = 226 miles
  - Normal commute round-trip = 94 miles
  - Reimbursement mileage = 132 (226 miles minus 94 miles)

Other transportation

The most economical air travel must be used. Charges for extra costs for classes of service other than economy/coach (e.g., Business or First Class) are ineligible for payment or reimbursement from College funds.

Employees are prohibited from receiving “Frequent Flyer” benefits accruing from College funded travel.

If rail travel is authorized, the most economical fare is to be utilized.
Travel on cruise ship as transportation to an event is prohibited.

Necessary taxicab charges are permitted. However, travel to and from airports and downtown areas should be confined to regularly scheduled shuttle service, whenever such service is less costly than taxicab service. If shuttle service between the airport and downtown destination is not available, taxicabs may be used.

The rental of a “stretch limousine” is not authorized.

Expenses for car rentals, either utilized for airport transportation or transportation at a conference, convention etc., are not permitted unless a car rental is absolutely necessary for the conduct of State business and the use of public transportation is impractical. If approved, the most economical car rental is to be used, including the use of college authorized vendors and use of subcompacts, discounts and special rates.

**Candidate Travel**

Prospective employees who are invited for College employment interviews are eligible for reimbursement based on actual costs limited by the regular Federal per diem rate. Original receipts must accompany any request for reimbursement attached to the direct pay. In general, reimbursement for candidate travel expenses is subject to the same restrictions that apply to reimbursement of employee travel expenses.

Prospective employees, who are authorized to receive travel reimbursement, shall submit a fully completed Reimbursement Form. Original receipts that substantiate the expenditures for which reimbursement is requested must be attached. The prospective employee’s certification and legal signatures must be in ink. The Budget Unit Manager/Dean and/or Provost/Divisional Vice President are responsible for the review and approval of a Direct Pay and must forward the form and original receipts to the Accounts Payable Office for reimbursement.

**Credit Cards- Stockton Travel Credit Card Program**

*Introduction*

A Travel Credit Card has been developed to provide College travelers with an alternate method of payment for business travel expenses. The Travel Credit Card will simplify both travel arrangements and payment for travel expenses incurred on official College business.

*Card Issuance, Use and Restrictions*

Travel cards will be issued to employees who have been authorized by their budget unit manager after the employee completes the required application. The card issuer (bank) will issue the card and establish an account, generally within seven to ten business days after receipt of an authorized application.

Whenever feasible, the card shall be used to pay for authorized travel-related expenses such as registration fees, air/rail travel, lodging and car rental. The card may not be used for personal spending or for purchase of goods or services not related to business travel on behalf of the College.

The travel card shall not be used for fuel for a personal vehicle, as the cost of fuel is included in the mileage reimbursement rate. Mileage and other allowable expenses that were not paid using the travel
card (e.g., tolls, parking, tips) will be reimbursed to travel cardholders just as such expenses are reimbursed for employees who do not hold the travel card.

Whenever a Travel Request Authorization ARTV is required, no expenses shall be charged on the travel card prior to approval of the ARTV form.

The College will pay the credit card bills in full each month when it receives them. Cardholders are required to complete the Travel Expense Payment Voucher form within 15 calendar days of returning from the trip. Original receipts must be attached to the Travel Expense Payment Voucher form.

Upon termination of employment, a College cardholder must return the card to his/her immediate supervisor who will send it to the office of the Card Administrator. The terminated cardholder must also promptly reconcile, account for, and pay any remaining balance.

**There will be no cash advances for holders of the Travel Card.**

**Card Eligibility**

With the approval of the employee’s Budget Unit Manager/Dean and/or Provost/Divisional Vice President, travel cards will be issued to faculty and full-time staff employees who travel on official business of the College and who have completed a brief application. The credit limit of the card will be established by the Card Administrator based on the type and frequency of College authorized travel.

Cards will not be issued to:
- Part-time employees other than faculty and coaches
- Temporary employees
- Employees on extended personal leave of absence
- Independent service providers and consultants
- Student employees
- Visiting faculty

**Responsibilities of Authorized User or Cardholder**

In general, users of the College travel card are required to comply with all provisions of the Travel Procedures regarding the expenditure of College funds for travel on official business.

The following provisions also apply to use of travel cards:

- Travel card users are responsible for the physical safeguarding of the credit card. It is the cardholder’s sole responsibility to take appropriate action should a credit card be missing. A lost or stolen travel card must be reported as soon as the traveler discovers it is missing. To report a lost or stolen card, please call the Card Administrator and Card Vendor.
- It is the responsibility of the cardholder to review and comply with the “Commercial Credit Agreement” enclosed with the original issuance of each credit card.
- It is the responsibility of each cardholder to review and provide adequate documentation, including all original receipts, to support all charges to the account.
- All unsupported charges and charges that are not authorized under these procedures will be charged back to the cardholder.
- Misuse of the travel card may result in cancellation of the card and is subject to disciplinary action.
• Use of the card for personal expenses is prohibited except when personal expenses are included in a bill, such as a hotel bill, that is for allowable business travel expenses. The traveler will be required to reimburse the College for all such personal expenses that have been charged to the card.
• Regardless of actual cost, reimbursement for meals shall ordinarily be at the per diem rate. The travel card may be used for meals. Upon return from traveling, the traveler will be required to reimburse the College for meal costs charged on the card that exceed the per diem rate.
• Although the College will pay the credit card bills upon receipt, the cardholder is responsible for all transactions made using the travel card that was issued to him or her. Cardholders will receive copies of their credit card bills and should check to make sure that there was no unauthorized use of the card. For each charge, the cardholder must act in a timely way either to provide appropriate documentation to show that it was for an acceptable travel-related business expense or to reimburse the College for the charge. Documentation of allowable charges and payment to the College for expenses that aren’t allowed should be submitted to Accounts Payable along with an approved Travel Expense Payment Voucher Form.
• RSC is a tax-exempt organization. The College tax-exemption will be printed on each travel card. The cardholder should make this status known to the supplier any time the travel card is used and request that sales tax not be charged. The supplier may or may not recognize this request, but an attempt must be made by the cardholder.
• The Cardholder is responsible for canceling his/her card account upon termination, suspension, or extended personal leave of absence from Stockton. Notification must be provided to the Card Issuer and the Card Administrator.

Disputing a Charge

If the Cardholder does not recognize a charge or it appears to be incorrect, the Cardholder should:
• Use his/her best efforts to resolve the charge
• Contact the Card Issuer if unable to resolve the issue with the vendor
• The Card Issuer will require the Cardholder to submit a bank dispute form following the date of the Cardholder Statement on which the disputed transaction or fee first appears.
• Pending an investigation, a conditional credit in the amount of the dispute will be applied to the Cardholder account. The Card Administrator will work with the Cardholder to resolve the disputed charge.

Responsibilities of the Department:

• The department reviews and approves Travel Expenses/Payment Voucher forms for compliance with these procedures.
• The department is also responsible for informing the Card Administrator in the event of a cardholder’s termination, suspension or extended personal leave so that the card can be canceled. This requirement does not relieve the cardholder of primary responsibility for cancelation but does supplement that responsibility and provide a backup source of information.

Responsibilities of the Card Administrator:

• Maintains record of cardholders
• Reviews cardholder applications for accuracy and completeness
• Serves as the liaison between the cardholders and the Card Issuer
Charge and/or Card Suspension

The Card Administrator can suspend charge and/or card privileges if the Cardholder does not submit expense report or if the cardholder fails to reimburse the College promptly for expenses that do not qualify for payment by the College. Renewal cards will be issued only if the Cardholder is in good standing. Request for replacement cards should be made directly by the Card Administrator.

Cancellation of Cards

If for any reason the Cardholder wishes to cancel his/her card, the Cardholder and/or department should notify the Card Administrator.