

CLS TRAVEL BEST PRACTICES

BEFORE TRAVEL

- Submit Travel Authorization (TA) to your department prior to making any purchases (including conference registration)
 - If combining business and personal travel, obtain a business-only comparison quote for airfare. Please see “personal travel” section for more details.
 - Travel Advances are available for request on the TA form. Please be sure to submit the TA form via the CLS Travel website at least 14 days prior to travel. Advances will automatically be released 10 days prior to departure date.
 - If you require accommodations, please contact adacoordinator@montana.edu.

DURING TRAVEL

- Use your pcard for all business expenses, EXCEPT meals – meals will be reimbursed as per diem upon your return and will be calculated based on your departure and arrival times.
- If you do pay out-of-pocket for a business-related expense (e.g., taxi) and would like to be reimbursed, save the receipt to submit with your After Travel form (receipts must be itemized and show payment information).
- Save your boarding passes for proof of travel (boarding passes are preferred, but hotel folios, conference name badges or a receipt for something you purchased in the destination location will work – online confirmations or reservations cannot be accepted for proof of travel).

AFTER TRAVEL

- Submit “After Travel” form to department ***within 5 business days of return with proof of travel***. Please answer all of the questions on the After Travel form and provide complete information regarding your trip. After Travel forms are available in your department.

GENERAL NOTES

- Receipts must always be itemized and show payment information. Confirmations, reservations, etc. cannot be accepted as a receipt.
- Fuel for personal car usage cannot be reimbursed, only mileage. We can reimburse fuel for rental car use, but please try to use pcard or WEX card.
- MSU requires travelers to choose the most economical mode of travel.
 - Upgrades to first and business class are not allowable expenses.
 - If you have an economy class ticket for which you have purchased itemized upgrades, you must explain the business purpose of the upgrade in order to justify the additional charges.
- Travel status begins when the traveler leaves their home or MSU and ends when the traveler returns to their home or MSU without any side trips (direct travel to/from the airport only).

PER DIEM/MEALS

- MSU reimburses a per diem amount for meals (based on travel status times); MSU does not reimburse actual expense for meals, unless you are traveling internationally (see international travel section below).

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- Travelers cannot claim per diem for meals that were provided by the hotel, conference, business meeting or by groceries purchased for extended travel in the field.
- If you are purchasing groceries for extended travel in the field, you can be reimbursed for the amount of the groceries, but you will not receive per diem, and anyone else using the groceries is not eligible to have per diem either. You will also need to document the name of the people using the groceries and the days/meals in the field covered by the groceries and complete a Hospitality Authorization form.
- If you are purchasing hospitality for a training or paying for a meal during a business meeting for several people, you can be reimbursed for this expense, but you cannot claim per diem for the meal, and you will need to complete a Hospitality Authorization form.
- Current per diem rates are:
 - In-state: breakfast \$5, lunch \$6, dinner \$12
 - Out-of-state (domestic U.S.): breakfast \$13, lunch \$14, dinner \$23
 - International: breakfast \$7, lunch \$11, dinner \$18 (or itemized receipts, see below).

PERSONAL TRAVEL

- It is ok to combine business and personal travel, but the trip must clearly have a business purpose and be listed and approved on the Travel Authorization.
- You cannot claim per diem or request reimbursement for any expenses during personal days, and any expenses that span the duration of your trip will need to be pro-rated.
- Paying for mode of travel:
 - **You must obtain a business-only quote for your mode of travel before any purchases for your business+personal travel are made.** If traveling by air, the business-only quote can be a print-out from Travelocity, Google Flights, etc.
 - If the business+personal travel is more expensive than the business-only travel, the traveler must repay MSU the difference (if on a pcard) or only be reimbursed the lesser amount.
 - If the business-only quote is more expensive than the business+personal quote, then it is okay to charge the full amount of the business+personal quote to MSU.
 - The business-only quote must be attached to the business+personal receipt.
- If traveling with family, Montana Travel can split the payment between the P-card and a personal credit card. If this is not practical, the traveler should pay with a personal card and be reimbursed for the business portion once travel is complete.

INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL

- You must register any international travel with OIP. The link is on the TA form.
- When traveling internationally, you can opt to save actual meal receipts and be reimbursed cost, up to 80% of the GSA's M&IE rate, which is available by country at this website:
https://aoprals.state.gov/web920/per_diem.asp
 - Since the unreceipted reimbursement is \$7 for breakfast, \$11 for lunch and \$18 for dinner, you should only save receipts that exceed these amounts if you wish to be reimbursed actual cost.