

IV 01 01 GENERAL TRAVEL POLICY

The following policy applies to the travel of all employees of Volunteer State Community College in the performance of their official duties. Provisions of this policy also may apply to individuals other than employees who are authorized to travel at the College's expense. Authorization for travel will not be granted and expenses will not be reimbursed unless the travel is made and reimbursement claimed in accordance with this policy and any approved exceptions hereto. Procurement cards may be used for the payment of registration fees and required advance payments for airline or hotel payments. Procurement cards may not be used for expenses incurred during actual travel time except in instances of team/group travel.

This policy and specific reimbursement rates for travel expenses allowed under this policy shall be consistent with those of the Comprehensive Travel Regulations of the State of Tennessee and the Tennessee Board of Regents General Travel Policy 4:03:03:00 located at <http://www.tbr.edu/policies/default.aspx?id=1050>. Current reimbursement rates shall be issued by the Chancellor and can be found in Addendum 1 of the Tennessee Board of Regents General Travel Policy 4:03:03:00 located at <http://www.tbr.edu/policies/default.aspx?id=1050>.

I. GENERAL PROVISIONS:

- A. No authorization for travel by any employee shall be granted, and no reimbursement for travel expenses shall be made, except in accordance with the provisions of this policy. Reimbursement for travel expenses shall be limited to expenses incurred upon travel authorized in advance in accordance with Section II.
- B. Travel which may be authorized, and pursuant to which expenses may be reimbursed, shall be limited to the following:
 - 1. Travel which is necessary for the proper execution of official College business, or in justifiable pursuit of a College's educational and research objectives; or
 - 2. Travel to meetings and conferences of a professional nature which will increase the attending employee's usefulness to the College.
- C. Travel shall not include, and no reimbursement for expenses shall be made for, transportation in connection with an employee's "official station" of employment. The employee's "official station" is his or her regular area of employment activity, e.g., office headquarters, campus, or designated location of an employee established in the field.

The “official station” of an employee shall be designated by the appointing authority. It is normally expected that the “official station” is that location at which the employee spends the major portion of his or her working time. For an employee required to be on call (as determined by his or her job description), either overnight or on weekends, the “official station” of the employee while on call becomes his or her residence, or the location at which the employee receives the call. Reimbursable mileage begins at the location at which the employee receives the call.

Procedures for calculating mileage are based on the fact that the State is prohibited from reimbursing employees for normal commuting mileage.

1. If an employee begins or ends a trip at his/her “official station”, reimbursable mileage will be the mileage from the official station to the destination.
 2. If work is performed by an employee in route to or from his/her “official station”, reimbursable mileage is computed by deducting the employee’s normal community mileage from the actual mileage driven.
 3. On weekends and holidays (or other days employees are not normally scheduled to work), the employee may typically be reimbursed for actual round trip mileage from his/her residence to the destination.
 4. If an employee travels between destinations without returning to his “official station” or his residence, reimbursable mileage is the actual mileage between those destinations.
- D. The employee is considered to be on official travel status, and as such, eligible for reimbursement of travel expenses, at the time of departure from the employee's “official station” for the purpose of traveling on College business. Expenses for meals will be allowed when overnight travel or occasional excessive hours of work are required outside the county of the employee's “official station”. En route lodging will be allowed for only one day each way on trips of long duration. Expenses for lodging will only be allowed in cases where the approved and most direct or expeditious mode of travel will require more than ten (10) hours of continuous travel for trips of long duration. The lodging expense will not be considered en route lodging if it does not add an additional day of lodging expense. For example: An employee has a 9:00 a.m. meeting in Atlanta, GA. Assume the employee needs to work a full day prior to the trip. It would be less expensive and more convenient to drive rather than fly. The employee leaves the night before and drives to within two hours of Atlanta. Then the employee spends the night, continues the drive the next morning and arrives for the 9:00 a.m.

meeting. This will be reimbursed but is not considered en route lodging as it did not add an additional day of lodging expense to the normal travel expenses.

- E. The limitations on travel expenses contained herein are maximum amounts above which reimbursement shall not be made. Employees are expected to be as conservative as possible in incurring travel expenses.
- F. Reimbursement for travel expenses shall only be allowed for actual expenses incurred, subject to the maximum limitations shown on the Tennessee Board of Regents website cited in Addendum 1 to the General Travel Policy 4:03:03:00 located at <http://www.tbr.edu/policies/default.aspx?id=1050>. Receipts must accompany claims for reimbursement for all expenses exceeding the amount cited on the Tennessee Board of Regents website cited in Addendum 1 to the General Travel Policy 4:03:03:00 located at <http://www.tbr.edu/policies/default.aspx?id=1050>. The exceptions to this rule are for meals, taxi fares, tolls and ferry fees, with no receipt required. Lodging receipts are required and must itemize room charges and taxes. No expenses shall be reimbursed until after travel has been completed.
- G. When using websites (such as Expedia.com, Travelocity.com, Hotwire.com, etc.) to make travel arrangements using package deals, documentation is required for each specific item included in the package such as airfare, hotel, and rental car. Documentation should be provided to substantiate the conformance with set rates as established in CONUS and in the general travel policy. If such documentation cannot be obtained from the website or vendors, the employee is responsible for comparing the package price to the separate coach airfare rates, hotel rates (as allowed by CONUS/conference rate) and vehicle rental rates and providing documentation to reflect that the package price is less expensive than fares allowed individually. When the website documentation is not sufficiently detailed, a signed statement by the employee (along with documentation from separate coach airfare rates, hotel rates, etc.) referencing the comparison above is to be attached to the travel claim to certify that a reasonable effort was made to procure the best price for the College. The employee is responsible for abiding by rates as approved by the Tennessee Board of Regents.

II. AUTHORIZATION OF TRAVEL:

- A. Approving Authorities - The president or his or her designees shall have authority to approve travel by employees of Volunteer State Community College. Authorization for travel by a student, regardless of the destination, shall be approved by the president of the College or his or her designee.

- B. In-State Travel - All employees must obtain prior authorization for in-state travel by the employee's appropriate approving authority. Written authorization may not be necessary for in-state travel where the expected expenses will not be substantial, or when there is no advance notice of the circumstances necessitating the travel, and such travel is approved orally by the appropriate approving authority. Employees whose employment requires frequent in-state travel may obtain blanket authorization in writing for such travel.
- C. Out-of-State Travel - All employees must obtain prior written authorization for out-of-state travel, which must be approved by the employee's appropriate approving authority and the president of the college. The authorization must show the name of the person traveling, purpose of the trip, destinations, date of departure and return, mode of transportation, estimated expenses, and availability of funds. If, in the normal course of official business, the employee must routinely travel into another state and back in the same day, such travel will be considered in-state travel and shall be subject to the in-state travel provisions. This exception applies for trips which do not exceed 50 miles into another state.
- D. Canadian Travel - Authorization for travel by an employee to Canada shall be approved by the president for employees of the college.
- E. All Other Travel - Authorization for travel by an employee to Alaska, Hawaii, and all out-of-country travel shall be subject to approval by the president. Authorization for travel to Alaska, Hawaii, and all out-of-country travel by the president shall be subject to approval by the Chancellor (or his/her designee).

III. TRANSPORTATION:

- A. General - All travel must be by the most direct or expeditious route possible and any employee who travels by an indirect route must bear any extra expense occasioned thereby. When work is performed by an employee in route to or from the "official station," reimbursable mileage is computed by deducting the employee's normal commuting mileage from the actual mileage driven in performing the work in route to or from the "official station". For example, if an employee normally commutes 10 miles (20 miles round trip), and performs work on the way home from the "official station" which results in 12 miles driven, the mileage reimbursement will be for 2 miles only, as that is the amount of mileage in excess of the employee's normal commute. In no instance shall mileage claimed for reimbursement exceed actual miles traveled.
- B. Mode of Transportation - Transportation for employees traveling singly should be by common carrier (air, train, or bus) whenever practical. The use of air travel is

recommended when time is an important factor or when the trip is so long that other methods of travel would increase the subsistence expense. Automobile transportation may be used to save time when common carrier transportation cannot be satisfactorily scheduled, or to reduce expenses when two or more employees are making the trip. Reimbursement for personal vehicle use may be claimed at the standard mileage rate provided that the cost of such reimbursement is less than comparable cost of commercial transportation including taxi fares and/or limousine charges.

- C. Common Carrier Travel - When travel is by common carrier, the fare must not exceed the regular coach fare charged the general public, and advantage must be taken of round trip rates when available. The employee's copy of the ticket, or an acceptable receipt, must be submitted for reimbursement of common carrier expenses.
- D. Chartered Aircraft – Generally, faculty and staff (including group travel and athletics) whose duties require travel will use commercial ground and air carriers or a college automobile. However, a chartered aircraft may be used if time and/or distance preclude ground travel or if a commercial air service is either unavailable or does not meet the needs of the traveler(s). The following guidelines apply:
1. The President the College shall assign the following duties to a responsible official: (1) reviewing and approving requests for charter air services, (2) scheduling charter flights, and (3) informing those who request charter flights of the charter company's policy on canceling scheduled flights.
 2. Charter services will be obtained only when it can be shown that the charter does not exceed the sum of all traveling costs by commercial carrier (e.g. transportation, meals, and lodging) or that circumstances necessitate travel when no other means is available.
 3. The charter company must provide the College with an original, itemized invoice showing the beginning and ending dates of the charter, the origin and destination of each flight, and the names of passengers on each flight.
- E. Automobile Travel - When travel by automobile is appropriate, employees may use state-owned automobiles whenever available and feasible. However, state-owned vehicles should be used only on official business.
1. State Owned Automobiles - When transportation is by a state-owned automobile, tolls, parking, gasoline and storage expenses are allowable. When using motor pool automobiles, employees will be furnished with courtesy cards for purchase of gasoline, oil, and other automobile services,

and such expenses should not be claimed by employees as travel expenses. Emergency out-of-pocket expenses, such as towing or emergency repairs, will be reimbursed but must be accompanied by proper receipt identifying the automobile and itemizing the services. Such expenditures must be of an emergency nature when immediate service is required and access to a state facility is not possible. Major repairs should be approved by campus officials prior to work being performed. Such expenditures are allowed but should be filed for reimbursement separately.

2. Personally-Owned Automobiles - Use of a personally-owned automobile must be authorized. Mileage reimbursement rates are provided on the Tennessee Board of Regents website sited in Addendum 1 to the General Travel Policy 4:03:03:00 located at <http://www.tbr.edu/policies/default.aspx?id=1050>. The authorized mileage allowance includes all operating expenses such as gas, oil, and repairs precluding any separate claim for such items. Employees may use reputable websites to determine point-to-point and/or vicinity mileage.
 3. The travel claim must indicate the employee's itinerary and must show the official business mileage. Business mileage, as indicated by the official state map and that published by Rand-McNally or reputable websites for out-of-state mileage will be regarded as official. Vicinity mileage must be reported on a separate line and not included with point-to-point mileage. Only mileage on official business may be claimed. See Section I, Paragraph C regarding normal commuting mileage.
 4. Necessary charges for hotel and airport parking will be allowed provided that airport parking fees do not exceed normal taxi fare to and from the airport or the cost of two round trips in the employee's personal car (see item K below). Receipts must be furnished on airport and hotel parking.
- F. Limousine and Taxi Service - When travel is by common carrier, reasonable limousine and taxi fares will be allowed for necessary transportation. Bus or limousine service to and from airports will be used when available and practical. After arrival at destination, necessary taxi fares for traveling between hotel or lodging and meeting or conference will be allowed. No receipt is required for reimbursement of reasonable taxi fares.
- G. Car Rentals at Destination - Charges for automobile rental shall be allowed whenever it is more economical than alternative methods of transportation or it is the only practical means of transportation. Charges for insurance for rented

automobiles are not reimbursable. Whenever possible, employees should refuel before returning vehicles.

- H. Tolls and Ferry Fees - Reasonable tolls and ferry fees will be allowed when necessary. No receipt is required for reimbursement of tolls and ferry fees.
- I. Daily Parking Fees - Those employees required to utilize commercial parking facilities in the daily performance of duties, or while on travel status, will be allowed reimbursement for actual costs. Receipts are required if the fee exceeds the maximum indicated per day (see Addendum 1 to the TBR General Travel Policy (4:03:03:00) located on the Tennessee Board of Regents website located at <http://www.tbr.edu/policies/default.aspx?id=1050>).
- J. Unnecessary meals and lodging expenses which are occasioned by the use of an automobile for reasons of the employee's personal convenience, or which are due to travel by an indirect route, will not be allowed.
- K. If travel is by common carrier, the employee will be reimbursed for expenses in traveling to and from the common carrier including but not limited to the reasonable cost of one of the following options, whichever is less:
 - 1. one round trip taxi fare,
 - 2. or parking of the employee's personal car at the location of the common carrier, plus mileage of one round trip,
 - 3. or mileage of two round trips in the employee's personal car (subject to a 200 mile maximum for two round trips).

Receipts must be furnished on airport and hotel parking exceeding maximum parking allowance sited in Addendum 1 to the TBR General Travel Policy (4:03:03:00) located on the Tennessee Board of Regents website located at <http://www.tbr.edu/policies/default.aspx?id=1050>.

IV. LODGING:

- A. In-State Lodging - Lodging expenses incurred within the state while on authorized travel will be reimbursable to the maximum shown on Addendum 1 to the TBR General Travel Policy (4:03:03:00) located on the Tennessee Board of Regents website located at <http://www.tbr.edu/policies/default.aspx?id=1050>.

- B. Out-of-State Lodging - Lodging expenses incurred out of the state while on authorized travel will be reimbursable according to the maximum reimbursement rates for out-of-state travel maintained by the U. S. General Services Administration for federal employees within the continental United States (CONUS). The CONUS list, available on the General Services Administration web site located at http://www.gsa.gov/Portal/gsa/ep/contentView.do?contentId=17943&contentType=GSA_BASIC, contains a standard reimbursement rate for lodging and meals and incidentals, and several pages of exceptions. Most destinations for out-of-state travel fall within the list of exceptions. En route lodging will be allowed for only one day each way on trips of long duration. En route lodging will only be allowed in cases when the approved and most direct or expeditious mode of travel will require more than ten (10) hours of continuous travel. (Refer to Section I.D. for explanation of en route lodging expenses.)
- C. Additional Lodging Expenses - Sales taxes on lodging costs will be reimbursable. Higher rates for lodging at the location of a convention or conference will be allowed, without special approval, up to the amount indicated in the convention or conference brochure or conference website.

Additional lodging for presidents will be approved on the same basis as approval is granted for other employees. Any exceptions must be approved by the Chancellor.

The convention or conference brochure which indicates the lodging rates must be included with the travel claim. Otherwise, reimbursement will be limited to the applicable lodging rate as provided in these regulations.

- D. Shared Lodging – In the event of double occupancy for state employees on official travel, both employees should attach an explanation to his/her travel claim detailing dates and other employees with whom the room was shared. The lodging cost may be claimed by the employee who incurred the cost, or one half the double occupancy charge may be allowable for each employee.

If a room is shared with other than a state employee, actual cost subject to the maximum sited in Addendum 1 of the TBR General Travel Policy (4:03:03:00) located on the Tennessee Board of Regents website located at <http://www.tbr.edu/policies/default.aspx?id=1050> will be allowed. The receipt for the entire amount should be submitted with the expense account.

Lodging expenses incurred within the state while on authorized travel will be reimbursable to the maximum shown on Addendum 1 to the TBR General Travel Policy (4:03:03:00) located on the Tennessee Board of Regents website located at

<http://www.tbr.edu/policies/default.aspx?id=1050>.

V. **MEALS:**

A. In-State and Out-of-State Meals

In-state meals eaten while on authorized travel will be reimbursed, subject to the meal allowance provided on the Addendum 1 to the TBR General Travel Policy (4:03:03:00) located on the Tennessee Board of Regents website located at <http://www.tbr.edu/policies/default.aspx?id=1050>. The maximum per diem rates include a fixed allowance for meals and for incidental expenses (M&I). The M&I rate, or fraction thereof, is payable to the traveler without itemization of expenses or receipts. Incidentals are intended to include miscellaneous costs associated with travel such as tips for baggage handling, phone calls home, etc.

Out of Country meals are reimbursed at actual expense with receipts. If no receipts are provided, the maximum rate will be the maximum CONUS rate of Out-of-State travel.

The M&I rates for out-of-state travel are the same as those for federal employees, and are available on the General Services Administration's web site located at http://www.gsa.gov/Portal/gsa/ep/contentView.do?contentId=17943&contentType=GSA_BASIC. As with lodging, there is a standard rate for the continental United States (CONUS), and a list of exceptions.

Reimbursement for meals and incidentals for the day of departure shall be three-fourths of the appropriate M&I rate (either the in-state rate or CONUS rate for out-of-state travel) at the rate prescribed for the lodging location. Reimbursement for M&I for the day of return shall be three-fourths of the M&I rate applicable to the preceding calendar day.

Reimbursement for meals will not be permitted when overnight travel is not involved. Revisions that are required solely by changes in CONUS rates will not be subject to Board approval.

- B. Official Banquets - When the expenses for an official banquet of a meeting or conference is in excess of the meal allowance, the excess will be allowed provided a receipt or proper explanation of the charge is submitted.
- C. Business Meals – See VSCC Policy IV: 02:03 for criteria on reimbursing business meals.

VI. MISCELLANEOUS EXPENSES:

- A. Personal Expenses - Expenses for entertainment (employee or others), laundry, valet service, tips and gratuities, etc., are personal expenses and will not be reimbursed in excess of the incidental portion of the M&I rate.
- B. Telephone, Telegram and Fax Expenses - Charges for long distance telephone calls, telegrams, and/or fax on official business will be allowed provided a statement is furnished showing the date, the name and location called, and the purpose of the call. Charges for necessary local calls on official business will be allowed.
- C. Registration Fees - Registration fees for approved conferences, conventions, seminars, meetings, etc., will be allowed including cost of official banquets and/or luncheons, if authorized in advance by the appropriate approving authority, and provided receipts are submitted with the travel claim. If the registration fee is paid with the College procurement card, a copy of the travel authorization along with any other applicable documentation must be kept with the procurement card log.
- D. Handling Fees - Fees for the handling of equipment or promotional materials will be allowed up to the maximum indicated (see Addendum 1 to the TBR General Travel Policy (4:03:03:00) located on the Tennessee Board of Regents website located at <http://www.tbr.edu/policies/default.aspx?id=1050>).

VII. CLAIMS:

The standard form for claims for travel expenses approved by the President shall be used for reimbursement of expenses. The form must show movement and detail of expenses on a daily basis, be signed in ink by the employee, and be approved by the appropriate approving authority prior to reimbursement. All signatures on travel claims must be original or electronic. Receipts for appropriate expenses must be attached to the form. Expenses for books, supplies, postage, and other items that do not constitute actual traveling expenses should not be included in the claim form. Claims for reimbursement for travel expenses should be submitted no later than thirty (30) days after completion of the travel.

VIII. TRAVEL ADVANCES

- A. General - Normally travel expenses should be paid when incurred by an employee, with reimbursement made to the employee for actual expenses upon proper submission of a claim for travel expenses. Advances to employees for anticipated travel expenses may be made under the circumstances hereinafter described as (1) permanent travel advances and (2) temporary travel advances. All travel advances must be approved by the president or his or her designees for employees of the College.
- B. Temporary Travel Advances - When temporary travel is authorized for an employee, the employee may receive an advance, provided a request for the advance, including estimated expenses, is submitted to the appropriate approving authority with the request for written authorization for the travel, and is approved. An amount equal to 80% of the estimated expenditures will be allowed as an advance, however, no advance less than \$100 will be made. Students traveling under individual authorizations or an employee traveling with a student or students who is responsible for disbursing all funds for the trip may be advanced 100% of the amount of the authorization.
- C. Payroll Deduction Authorization - Each employee receiving a temporary travel advance for the first time must sign a payroll deduction authorization form which will allow the State to recover the advance from any salary owed the employee in the event of termination of employment or failure to submit a travel claim. This deduction from payroll should be used as a last resort only in the event all other efforts to collect the advance have failed.
- D. Expense Claim - Upon return, the employee should submit an expense claim detailing his or her actual expenditures. This claim should show the total expenses incurred. The advanced amount should be subtracted from this total. A voucher should then be prepared requesting the additional amount due the employee. No advance should exceed actual expenses. If this does happen, however, the excess

should be returned by the employee to the business office for deposit as a credit against the original advance with proper distribution being made of the actual expenses incurred. In the latter instance, the expense account claim should be forwarded to the business office with notification to file it with the advance request.

IX. TRAVEL REIMBURSEMENT FOR PROSPECTIVE EMPLOYEES:

Volunteer State Community College may reimburse travel expenses for prospective employees at the discretion of the dean or director with the pre-approval of the

appropriate vice president under the following conditions.

- A. Reimbursement can only be offered if there are available funds in the departmental budget.
- B. Mileage reimbursement can only be offered to those prospective employees who are required to travel 300 miles or more roundtrip. The mileage reimbursement rate will be the same given to Volunteer State Community College employees.
- C. One night's hotel accommodation can be paid if an overnight stay is required using the same rules and the same rates allowed Volunteer State Community College employees.
- D. Airline expenses can be reimbursed if it is determined that air travel is the most reasonable mode of travel and the cost of an airline ticket is less than that the cost of automobile mileage for the same trip.
- E. Per diems may be offered using the same rules and rates offered to Volunteer State Community College employees.

X. EXCEPTIONS: THIS SECTION HAS BEEN CHANGED AS THIS ONLY APPLIES TO TRAVEL OF THE PRESIDENT IN THE COMPANY OF THE CHANCELLOR AND IS COVERED UNDER THE TBR POLICY.

The President shall have the authority to grant exceptions to any part or all of the provisions of this policy when deemed appropriate and necessary. Provisions regarding travel expense for the President when traveling in the company of the Chancellor of the Tennessee Board of Regents fall under Exception I of the Tennessee Board of Regents General Travel Policy Number 4:03:03:00 located on the Tennessee Board of Regent's website <http://www.tbr.edu/policies/default.aspx?id=1050>.

XI. REIMBURSEMENT RATES:

A. General Reimbursement Rates

Current general reimbursement rates can be located on the Tennessee Board of Regents website in Addendum 1 to the General Travel Policy 4:03:03:00 located at <http://www.tbr.edu/policies/default.aspx?id=1050>.

B. In-State Travel Reimbursement Rates

Current in-state reimbursement rates can be located on the Tennessee Board of Regents website in Addendum 1 to the General Travel Policy 4:03:03:00 located at <http://www.tbr.edu/policies/default.aspx?id=1050>.

C. Out-of State Reimbursement Rates

Employees are to utilize the U.S. General Services Administration CONUS (Continental United States) rates provided by the federal government. The CONUS rates are located on the U.S. Government's web page at <http://www.gsa.gov/>.

Use the CONUS standard rates for all locations within the continental United States not specifically shown on the web page as a listed point.

D. Out-of-Country Reimbursement Rates

Current out-of-country reimbursement rates can be located on the Tennessee Board of Regents website in Addendum 1 to the General Travel Policy 4:03:03:00 located at <http://www.tbr.edu/policies/default.aspx?id=1050>.

E. International Education Reimbursement Rates

The President or his/her designee may grant exceptions to reimburse at an amount less than the standard reimbursement rate for expenses incurred for group travel by employees and students participating in activities associated with the International Education Program. Exceptions may be granted on a case-by-case basis, i.e. for each travel event. Documentation for the exception should be provided.

TBR Source: 4:03:03:00: TBR Meetings, June 25, 1976; March 3, 1978; September 29, 1978; September 26, 1980; September 30, 1983; March 23, 1984; September 21, 1984; December 13, 1985; June,26, 1987; September 18, 1987; June 30, 1989; September 21, 1990; June 28, 1991; March 20, 1992; October 22, 1993 (Interim action), February 1, 1996 (Interim Action), June 21, 1996, March 27, 1998, August 1, 1998 (Interim Action), March 26, 1999, September 17, 1999, September 1, 2001 (Interim Action), September 26, 2003, December 5, 2003, May 1, 2004 (Interim Action), September 24, 2004; December 3, 2004; June 10, 2005; December 2, 2005; March 31, 2006; March 30, 2007; June 29, 2007; September 28, 2007; March 28, 2008. October 1, 2008 (Interim Action); October 1, 2009 (Interim Action); Board Meeting September 24, 2010; December 9, 2010, June 24, 2011; October 13, 2011 (Interim Action); June 28, 2012: June 21, 2013; October 1, 2013 (Interim Action).

VSCC Source: July 1, 1989, March 27, 1996, October 28, 1998, December 11, 2000, December

30, 2002, President; January 6, 2009, President's Cabinet; January 23, 2017, President's Cabinet.