

Travel FAQ'S

These are some of the most frequently asked questions Research and Sponsored Programs receives regarding travel.

Q - Why can't I get reimbursement for any meals when I leave at 6 a.m. and don't return until 11 p.m.? Even though I don't stay in a hotel overnight, I am away for a significant time when meals are required.

A - Internal Revenue Code (IRC) 162(a) says that meal expenses, reimbursed by an employer to an employee, for travel away from home for less than 24 hours where no overnight stay is required represent taxable and reportable income; therefore, the Foundation will not reimburse for any meals on trips lasting less than 24 hours.

Q - Why can I only get 80 percent of my hotel bill and per diem costs paid in advance, but I can get 100 percent for my airfare?

A - Because there may be unallowable expenses as part of the hotel bill and per diem is supposed to be for actual meal costs that will vary from day to day.

Q - Who determines the rates of reimbursement for mileage?

A -Reimbursement for use of private automobiles on official Foundation business is based upon IRS rates. Each grant or contract may have rates set by the funding agency that are lower than the IRS rates.

Q - How do I request a travel advance?

A - If an advance is desired, a Travel Approval &/or Advance Request form must be completed and attached to a check request. All lines on the form **must** be completed. Normally, checks for per diem will be issued no more than 15 days prior to the first day of a trip. If the traveler is not a CSU, Chico or Foundation employee, the request must be signed by the project director and the traveler, if available. If the traveler is a CSU, Chico or Foundation employee, the request must be signed by the employee and his/her supervisor. Project directors **may not** approve their own travel requests.

Please remember, the state requires that all state employees traveling have a travel request on file with the state **prior** to traveling regardless of whether an advance is needed. Please work with your department for submission of this form.

Travel advances on Foundation accounts will be limited to 80 percent of the estimated total cost of per diem, mileage, and the miscellaneous expenses and will not be paid out earlier than 15 days prior to the trip. An advance of 100 percent for airfare may be requested whenever needed. Registration may be pre-paid at any time and does not require this form. In compliance with IRS regulations any advance not cleared within 60 days of the trip's completion will become taxable

income to the traveler. Foreign travel has special requirements. Refer to the Section D of the Foundation Travel Policy for foreign travel requirements and restrictions.

Q - Is there a form to complete to be reimbursed for travel expenses?

A - Yes. The Travel Expense Claim form must be completed. A state form will be accepted if expenses are shared between the Foundation and CSU, Chico.

Q - What is the per diem rate and mileage rate?

A - See the Foundation Travel and CA State Travel Rates Quick Check lists for complete per diem and mileage rates.

Q - How far in advance can I receive the travel advance?

A - Normally, checks for per diem will be issued no more than 15 days prior to the first day of a trip. If the traveler is not a CSU, Chico or Foundation employee, the request must be signed by the Project Director and the traveler, if available. If the traveler is a CSU, Chico or Foundation employee, the request must be signed by the employee and his/her supervisor. Project Directors **may not** approve their own travel requests.

Q - Do I have to complete a Travel Expense Claim if I only need reimbursement for (airfare or hotel, etc.)?

A - Yes. You must submit a Travel Expense Claim form along with a completed Check Request form.

Q - I don't have an itemized hotel bill. Can I just submit my credit card information that shows I paid the bill?

A - You must submit your hotel bill along with your Travel Expense Claim form and check request. You can request a duplicate bill from the hotel.

Q - I flew to (insert destination here), but didn't keep my boarding pass or a copy of my airline ticket. Will my itinerary and proof of payment be sufficient?

A - A boarding pass or receipt from an establishment located at the destination is required to prove you actually traveled. Exceptions can be made due to extenuating circumstances. Call RESP for more information.

Q - What is the purpose of the Multiple Traveler Form and when must I use it?

A - A Multiple Traveler Form is available as a tool to help verify costs when more than one staff/faculty member's costs are being paid by another.

Q - When should CA State Travel Rates be used?

A - Contracts funded by a California state agency require that travel be reimbursed based on the CA State Travel Rates Guidelines. Your RESP Analyst will inform you when these guidelines must be followed.