



OFFICE OF SPONSORED PROGRAMS

TRAVEL GUIDELINES

Effective: September 1, 2016

GENERAL STATEMENT

Travel in support of a sponsored activity is essential to the successful completion of a project and in accomplishing the research mission of the Texas A&M University System (TAMUS). It is the responsibility of the Office of Sponsored Programs (OSP) to provide flexible and expeditious review and approval of travel requests and to provide guidance and assurances that assist the University's Travel Office with processing advances and reimbursements to the traveler that maintain strict adherence to any applicable state, federal or sponsor requirements. When specific travel guidelines are included in the terms of a contract or grant, the provisions of that contract or grant will govern reimbursement. Reimbursements for travel paid on state cost reimbursable contracts are subject to the [State of Texas Travel Management Program and Textravel Rules](#).

In cases where the sponsor is silent on travel requirements, OSP will apply federal travel requirements as the criteria for decision making. Each traveler should be familiar with this policy **prior** to travel to ensure that costs will be reimbursable. Also, the traveler should be familiar with the OSP's requirements for documentation of expenses. Lack of proper documentation may result in unreimbursable expenses to the traveler and/or a delay in processing the travel expense report. It is the traveler's responsibility to report his/her actual travel expenses in accordance with TAMUS ethics regulation and in accordance with the regulations set forth in this guideline. Because of the amount of federal funding administered by the OSP, portions of this guideline parallel those of the Federal Government.

This reimbursement guideline is based upon documentation of reasonable and actual expenses. Some expenses must be supported by original receipts (monthly credit card statements or credit card receipts alone are not acceptable as backup documentation). Others must be documented by the traveler and submitted as a claim for reimbursement. According to Federal guidelines, a cost is reasonable in its nature or amount, if it does not exceed that which would be incurred by a prudent person under the circumstances prevailing at the time the decision was made to incur the costs. In determining the reasonableness of a given cost, consideration shall be given to:

- Whether the cost is of a type generally recognized as ordinary and necessary for the operation of the organization or the performance of the award.
- The restraints or requirements imposed by such factors as generally accepted sound business practices, arms-length bargaining, Federal and State laws and regulations, and terms and conditions of the award.
- Whether the individuals concerned acted with prudence in the circumstances, considering their responsibilities to the organization, its members, employees, and clients, the public at large, and the Federal Government.
- Significant deviations from the established practices of the organization which may unjustifiably increase the award costs.

For charges to sponsored project accounts, the traveler and either the Principal Investigator or the Principal Investigator's authorized representative will be required to certify that the travel and other expenses have been incurred in the conduct or dissemination of the sponsored projects and are properly chargeable to the sponsored project account listed.

The intent of this policy is to ensure that reimbursements comply with IRS accountable plan rules. The Office of Sponsored Programs has elected to participate in an accountable plan in part because accountable plans eliminate the need for travelers to report reimbursements as income on their tax returns. The IRS outlines accountable plan rules as follows:

1. Your expenses must have a business connection – that is, you must have paid or incurred deductible expenses while performing services as an employee of your employer.
2. You must adequately account to your employer for these expenses within a reasonable period of time.
3. You must return any excess reimbursement or allowance within a reasonable period of time.

To comply with IRS requirements, employees should submit business and travel expenses for reimbursement within 90 days of incurring the expense or completing the travel. Any request for reimbursement of an expense submitted more than 90 days following the date the expense was incurred or the travel was completed will be treated as taxable to the employee and both Federal Withholding and FICA will be withheld from the employee's next payroll check. On December 1, 2014, Prairie View A&M University (PVAMU) implement the [Safe Harbor Rule](#) for the taxation of employee reimbursements that exceed a 90 day submission.

REQUEST FOR TRAVEL (APPROVAL)

Request for travel must be submitted through the CONCUR travel system. It is very important to that you **MUST** change the option of Contracts/Grants to "Yes" in order to ensure that the travel request routes to the OSP. Your OSP Project Administrator is **required** to approve the allowability and budget availability of your trip. In some instances, some projects require prior approval of the sponsoring agency. Please refer to the terms and conditions of your sponsored project to determine when and if prior approval of the sponsor is required. Your OSP Project Administrator will be able to assist with this determination. Unallowable costs could result in personal expenses to the traveler, Principal Investigator, and/or the University.

ADVANCES

The University does not offer travel advances for individual employee travel because employees are eligible for a corporate travel credit card. When traveling with students, student travel expenses should be charged to the department's procurement card (Pro-Card). Therefore travel advances are restricted and only issued for the following reason:

- Foreign study abroad with students.

Travelers may request funds for the reasonably estimated, ordinary and necessary business costs that will be incurred for foreign study abroad with students. The travel advance request should be submitted to the University's Travel Department no less than 10 business days prior to the date of departure or no greater than 30 days prior to the date of departure.

By signing the [Travel Advance Request Voucher](#), the traveler agrees to clear advances within five business days and that any funds advanced which are not expended during the trip are to be returned to Travel Office.

If the travel advance has not been cleared within five business days from the end date of the trip, a temporary hold will be placed on the employees account. This hold will prevent the employee from receiving reimbursements or subsequent travel advances from being issued until the outstanding travel advance is settled. The employee will not be eligible to receive future travel advances.

**Funds not returned within 90 days will cause the traveler to become liable to the University for the unrecovered amount (the amount in which the completed expense report and submitted original receipt(s) were less than the amount of the advance), in addition to possible exposure for assessment of federal income tax on such amounts.*

A traveler should have only one outstanding advance at a time. A second advance can be made only if the traveler can justify in writing why an expense voucher has not been submitted for the first advance. The traveler must submit a Travel Expense Voucher even if he or she is not owed any additional reimbursement in order to document the business purpose for which the advance was issued.

REIMBURSEMENT OF TRAVEL EXPENSES

Ordinary and necessary travel related expenses that are adequately substantiated and that are otherwise allowable will be reimbursed at rates provided in this policy.

Claims for reimbursement of allowable travel expenses must be submitted to the University's Travel Office through CONCUR. Travelers will submit one travel reimbursement per trip for the same business purpose, except when mileage is submitted on a monthly basis. The travel period cannot exceed a 30 day period on sponsored funded projects.

Substantiation of claims **should** be submitted within thirty (30) days of trip completion **in order to ensure that the sponsor will reimburse charges**. The travel expense report must include all required supporting documentation as noted in this policy.

When combining personal travel with business travel, payment will be based upon the least expensive and reasonable means of transportation to the business location. Meals and lodging are limited to the business portion of the trip. Generally, the dates of the conference or meeting and one travel day before and after are allowable for reimbursement. Any additional days must be documented with a business purpose. Reimbursement of meal and lodging expenses for one or more additional days is allowable when the purpose of the additional day(s) is/are to reduce overall travel costs and quotes are provided that validate the savings in cost.

A cancellation or change fee is reimbursable only if the charge is incurred for a business related reason, natural disaster, or a sick leave eligible personal emergency/illness.

DOMESTIC TRAVEL TRANSPORTATION

If a rental vehicle or private automobile is used for out of state business travel for purposes other than transporting equipment, materials or conserving costs, an amount not to exceed the

cumulative economy airfare will be allowable only for the owner of the automobile. Attach an advanced quote for economy airfare to the business destination and compare the mileage. Lodging, meals and parking are allowed based on what the traveler would normally incur with air travel.

Rental Vehicle

Rental vehicles should be used to obtain economical or practical transportation, i.e., when it would cost more to travel by a privately owned vehicle, taxi, bus, etc. It is recommended that travelers use rental vehicles due to personal liability issues. The receipt for the vehicle rental must separately itemize all charges, including the starting and ending dates of the rental, the name of the renter and any other mandated charges. Proof of payment is required.

In order to minimize costs, travelers are encouraged to choose standard class or lower class vehicle whenever possible, as well as, to use the state contracted vendors. For a current list of state contracted vendors visit <https://www.comptroller.texas.gov/purchasing/programs/travel-management/rental/>.

If the vehicle class used is above full size, the traveler must provide a justification for use of that class.

When state contracted rates are not used, the University Travel Office may request additional justification.

An additional driver fee is reimbursable only if the second person is traveling on agency business.

If the car is retained for personal leave days, the rental fee will be reimbursed proportionately to the business days. Ensure that the rental vehicle gasoline usage is prorated as well.

The cost of a collision damage waiver (CDW) or loss-damage waiver (LDW) coverage obtained through the rental car company is reimbursable; however, the cost of personal liability, personal effects insurance, or other liability insurance supplements are NOT allowable. The vehicle should be rented in the traveler's name and therefore, personal automobile insurance policy(s) should be reviewed for adequate coverage as determined by the traveler.

Privately Owned Vehicles

Travel using privately owned vehicles may be desirable to save time, transport equipment, or to reduce cost when a number of persons are traveling together. Mileage will be reimbursed at the rate set by the Internal Revenue Service for business travel. Current rates can be found at <http://www.gsa.gov/portal/content/100715>. This rate covers all fuel, maintenance, insurance, transportation, and operating costs. Damage to a privately owned vehicle used for University business is covered by the individual's private insurance; costs for which are included in the mileage reimbursement. The University does not assume responsibility for deductibles or other uninsured loss/damage to the vehicle.

The University Travel Office requires documentation from Google Maps to determine reimbursable miles, or the actual miles driven as determined from odometer readings. On a scheduled work day, mileage will be calculated to and from the traveler's headquarters to the business destination. On a scheduled day off, mileage will be calculated to and from the traveler's residence or actual location, whichever is less.

Toll, ferry, bridge, road, and tunnel fees are also reimbursable. Receipts are required when each individual expense exceeds \$75.

Mileage for traveling between the place of lodging and the place of entertainment, visiting friends/family, sightseeing, or shopping is not reimbursable.

Motorcycles

The use of privately owned motorcycles is reimbursable at the IRS approved rate. See <http://www.gsa.gov/portal/content/100715> for current rates. All standard insurance coverage and requirements applicable to privately owned vehicles apply to motorcycle usage as well.

Air Transportation

Commercial

Economy/coach or other special discount fares are to be used when available. Federal regulations prohibit reimbursement of business or first class airfare unless it is required to accommodate a disability or special need. If a fare above economy/coach class is used, a written justification must be approved in writing by the OSP prior to purchase and attached to the travel request.

A paid airline receipt should be attached to the travel voucher. An itinerary alone is not permissible. A receipt that has been altered by any person other than the airline is prohibited. A receipt to which additional information has been added is considered unaltered if the additional information does not conflict with or obscure the original information on the receipt. If the ticket is in the form of an Electronic "Ticketless" Ticket, the passenger itinerary or receipt must be attached to the voucher. The name of the employee, airline, ticket number, class of transportation, travel dates, amount of the airfare, the origin and destination of each flight, and proof of payment must be included on the receipt.

If changes to airfare result in non-refundable expenses, a statement as to what steps were taken to obtain a refund or to minimize the costs must be included. These reasons must be related to project business or for other reasons beyond the traveler's control.

NOTE: Principal Investigators are cautioned to be certain that the cost of air transportation will be covered under their account. If the cost is not allowed, travelers must seek approval to charge to their department's state or local account or reimburse the University.

Personally Owned or Rented Aircraft

The Office of Sponsored Programs requires prior notification and approval **before** a traveler utilizes a private aircraft. The traveler must provide their OSP Project Administrator with the following information:

- Destination and purpose of trip
- Dates of travel
- Number/names of passengers
- Type of airplane
- Insurance certificate for the airplane
- Explanation why the personal plane is more economical to use rather than a commercial carrier

If the traveler plans to use the aircraft for more than one trip, all dates and destinations must be included.

The OSP Project Administrator will review the sponsor guidelines and/or contact the Grant/Contracting Officer to determine allowability. If allowable, the University will reimburse the traveler using the highway mileage between the designated headquarters and point of destination. The rate of reimbursement can be found at <https://fmx.cpa.texas.gov/fmx/travel/texttravel/rates/current.php>.

Taxicab, Shuttle Services, Limousine, Bus, Subways

Taxicab, shuttle services, limousine services, bus fares, subway fares and tips must be itemized. Reimbursable tips are limited to 20% of the fare. Based on IRS guidelines, receipts are required for any single fare or expense over \$75. Limousine service from city to city will be used only when other practical means (i.e., rental vehicle, personal vehicle, bus) are not available or the limousine service is more economical. A justification of why limousine services were used must be submitted with the travel expense report.

Train

Travelers must use coach-class accommodations for all train travel, except when their agency authorizes first-class service. Itemized receipts must be submitted when over \$75.

Parking

In most instances, parking expenses incurred while traveling in a state-owned or leased motor vehicle, a personally owned or leased motor vehicle, or a rented motor vehicle is reimbursable.

A parking expense incurred by an individual while dropping off or picking up a traveler at the airport is reimbursable.

The supporting documentation for the reimbursement of a parking expense must list each day the expense was incurred and the amount of the expense incurred each day, as well as the locations where the expense was incurred. Based on IRS guidelines, receipts are required if over \$75.

LODGING AND MEALS

The traveler may use one of two methods for lodging and meal expenses incurred in connection with official business travel of more than one day. The method selected must be used for the entire trip.

In both methods outlined below, itemized receipts for lodging are required. The receipt must include the name and address of the commercial lodging establishment, name of the traveler, single room rate, daily itemization of charges, and proof of payment. If receipts have been lost or destroyed and cannot be duplicated from the establishment, a statement explaining the circumstances shall be furnished with the expense report form.

Advisory Note: Within the State of Texas, employees of Prairie View A&M University are entitled to an exemption from state hotel occupancy taxes. In order to take advantage of this, the traveler must present the [Texas Hotel Occupancy Tax Exemption Certificate](#) to the Front Desk Clerk at the time of check-in. Many hotels will not honor the exemption if it is presented at check-out. If the traveler fails to submit a Texas Hotel Occupancy Tax Exemption Form, he/she will not be reimbursed or if using the corporate credit card will be responsible for reimbursing the University for the taxed portion of their lodging bill. Reimbursements for Texas hotel occupancy tax charged on lodging will be made only in those instances where the traveler attempted to claim exemption but was denied by the lodging establishment. In this case, the University must report the hotel to the State Comptroller's Office.

Any charges on the meal receipts for alcoholic beverages (which are unallowable) must be deducted before submitting a claim.

Method I - Actual Expenses

With lodging and meal receipts, travelers may be reimbursed for the actual costs of reasonable and necessary meals, lodging, and gratuities. Tips for meals must not exceed 20% of the cost of the meal. Any tip charges in excess of 20% will not be reimbursed. Meal receipts must be attached to the expense report and taxes and tips cannot exceed the maximum GSA rate. The maximum amount that you may be reimbursed under actual meal expenses with receipts is limited to the applicable Federal domestic maximum GSA rate for the location. Please note that the first and last days of travel in the contiguous U.S. have a lower applicable rate (calculated at 75%) <http://www.gsa.gov/portal/content/101518>. The maximum amount you may be reimbursed under actual lodging expenses is limited to 150 percent of the applicable Federal domestic maximum GSA rate for the location. See domestic rates at <http://www.gsa.gov/portal/content/104877>.

If the city is not specifically on the GSA site, then use the rate listed for the county in which the city is located. If neither is listed, use the "Standard Rate" for that state. Use the GSA lodging location if lodging is not at the duty point.

Request exceeding 150% of the maximum lodging rate requires submission of an In-State/Out-of-State Higher Lodging Request Form located at <http://www.pvamu.edu/pds/travel/forms>. The form requires a written statement explaining the circumstances that caused the existing rate to be inadequate and will be subject to the Senior Vice President of Business Affairs approval. Request for hotel reimbursements of more than 150% and up to 300% over the standard rate do not require submission of an In-State/Out-of-State Higher Lodging Request Form in the following instance:

- Lodging is at a prearranged place such as a hotel where a meeting, conference or training session is being held.

Based on Federal Travel Regulations, requests for hotel reimbursements of more than 150% and up to 300% over the standard allowable rate are unallowable except in the following instances:

- Lodging is at a prearranged place such as a hotel where a meeting, conference or training session is being held or;
- Costs have escalated because of special events; lodging within prescribed allowances cannot be obtained nearby; cost to commute to/from the nearby location exceed the cost savings from occupying less expensive lodging.

Method II - Actual Lodging Expense and Meal Allowance, up to the Applicable GSA Rates

The traveler may be reimbursed for actual lodging cost plus actual meals up to the published applicable GSA rates. Meal reimbursement includes the actual cost of food, beverages, gratuities, taxes, and other incidental expenses. Receipts are required to claim actual lodging expenses, but do not have to be submitted for the meals.

Office of Sponsored Programs/Travel Guidelines

Reimbursements will be based on the applicable Federal domestic maximum GSA rate for the location. Please note that the first and last day of travel in the contiguous U.S. have a lower applicable rate. See domestic rates at <http://www.gsa.gov/portal/content/101518>.

If the city is not listed in the Federal domestic maximum rates, then use the rate listed for the county in which the city is located. If neither is listed, use the "Standard Rate" for that state. Use the GSA location if lodging is not at the duty point.

Request exceeding 150% of the maximum lodging rates requires submission of an In-State/Out-of-State Higher Lodging Request Form <http://www.pvamu.edu/pdsv/travel/forms/>. The form requires a written statement explaining the circumstances that caused the existing rate to be inadequate and will be subject to the Senior Vice President of Business Affairs approval. Request for hotel reimbursements of more than 150% and up to 300% over the standard rate do not require submission of an In-State/Out-of-State Higher Lodging Request Form in the following instance:

- Lodging is at a prearranged place such as a hotel where a meeting, conference or training session is held

Based on Federal Travel Regulations, requests for hotel reimbursements of more than 150% and up to 300% over the standard allowable rate are unallowable except for the following:

- Lodging is at a prearranged place such as a hotel where a meeting, conference or training session is held or;
- Costs have escalated because of special events; lodging within prescribed allowances cannot be obtained nearby; cost to commute to/from the nearby location exceed the cost savings from occupying less expensive lodging.

Travelers using the meal allowance should not seek separate reimbursement for incidental expenses. Incidental expenses should be covered by the meal reimbursement. The Federal Travel Regulations describe incidental expenses as:

- Fees and tips given to porters, baggage carriers, bellhops, hotel maids, other hotel workers, stewards or stewardesses and others on ships.

Meals furnished in registration fees must be adjusted by deducting the appropriate amount shown in the chart below for contiguous U.S. travel. The meals and incidental expense deduction can be found on the GSA website at <http://www.gsa.gov/portal/category/26429>. The current breakdown for each IRS category is as follows:

Total	Continental Breakfast/ Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner	IE
\$51	\$11	\$12	\$23	\$5
\$54	\$12	\$13	\$24	\$5
\$59	\$13	\$15	\$26	\$5
\$64	\$15	\$16	\$28	\$5
\$69	\$16	\$17	\$31	\$5
\$74	\$17	\$18	\$34	\$5

Telephone Calls

Travelers are expected to use the most economical means of making phone calls while traveling on business. If the traveler receives a cell phone allowance, they are expected to use the cell phone. Travelers will be reimbursed for phone calls that are reasonable and necessary for conducting business.

Reimbursement requests with telephone call expenses must be accompanied by a hotel bill showing itemized call information or by an original, itemized phone bill when the expense exceeds \$75.

Internet Connections

Travelers will be reimbursed internet connection charges that are reasonable and necessary for conducting business. A receipt is required when expense exceeds \$75.

Laundry

Expenses incurred for laundry, cleaning and pressing of clothing are reimbursable within the U.S., including Alaska, Hawaii, U.S. Territories, and Possessions. However, the employee must incur a minimum of four (4) consecutive nights at the place of lodging to qualify. A receipt is required when the expense exceeds \$75.

Conference Registration

Supporting documentation for registration fees for conferences, meetings, etc. should include a receipt from the conference sponsor with the full name of the conference, dates of the conference and name of attendee, along with proof of payment. If optional meals are purchased please be aware that they are part of the meal expense for that day.

Miscellaneous Expenses

Based on IRS guidelines any other single expense over \$75 for any allowable miscellaneous expense must have a receipt in order to be reimbursed.

Reimbursable

Examples of allowable miscellaneous expenses include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Miscellaneous supplies (not office supplies)
- Fees for traveler's checks/currency exchange. When a loss is incurred in currency exchange, the loss may be claimed.
- Portage, special transportation and tips for handling business equipment and materials
- Postage for official mail
- Gasoline for rental cars
- Checked baggage fee – Limited to one bag per trip; business justification must be provided if more than one bag is checked
- Overweight baggage fee – Business justification must be provided
- Oversized baggage fee – Business justification must be provided
- Fees for money orders and/or certified checks
- Transaction fees for use of automated teller machines (ATMs) – amount of the ATM withdrawals may not exceed the amount of funds approved for authorized travel
- Passport and/or visa fees
- Costs of photographs for Passports and Visa
- Foreign country exit fees
- Business meals must be allowed as a sponsored expense. Reimbursement for business meals must contain sufficient documentation to satisfy the Internal Revenue Service's five W's: who, what, where, when, and why

Not Reimbursable

Examples of expenses that will NOT be reimbursed include, but are not limited to the following:

- Entertainment expenses and non-project related social activities such as tours and dances
- Frequent flyer mileage fees
- Costs incurred by unreasonable failure to cancel transportation or hotel reservations
- Fines for automobile violations including parking tickets
- Gasoline purchases for personal vehicles when claiming mileage
- Personal items purchased due to lost/delayed baggage
- Lost or stolen tickets, cash, or property
- Hotel movie rentals and airline headsets
- Health club fees
- Magazine, newspapers, and books unrelated to business
- Personal credit card delinquency fees or finance charges
- Office supplies not related to the travel purpose of the trip
- Memberships - According to Federal guidelines memberships are not allowable unless their applicability to the special circumstances or purpose of the project is clearly established in the scope of work

FOREIGN TRAVEL

Foreign travel is reimbursed at actual costs. Receipts submitted in a foreign currency are to be converted to the U.S. dollar equivalency of the date expenses were incurred. Use historical rates during the duration of travel or submit a credit card statement showing the U.S. dollar amount.

DEFINITION

In general, foreign travel is defined as travel outside of the United States, U.S. Territories and Possessions, Canada and Mexico. However, sponsors differ in defining this term, so travelers should contact their OSP Project Administrator to be sure the contemplated travel is correctly classified.

APPROVAL

Any Prairie View A&M University student traveling internationally and any faculty, staff or student leader who is traveling abroad with students are required (per University policy) to complete a Student Travel Itinerary Form and a Recognition and Assumption of Risk Agreement. Please visit the University's International Affairs Steps to [Study Abroad Process](#) in order to facilitate the study abroad process.

It is required that all foreign travel by state employees and graduate students on state business except for travel to Canada, Mexico, or any state or possession of the United States be approved in advance including any required safety or export control reviews. This includes travel at no charge to the University.

State funds cannot be used to reimburse foreign travel expenses.

Foreign travel by any state employee on state business must be for the benefit of the State of Texas and any personal benefit thereby accrued must be solely incidental to the official purpose of the travel. It is the obligation of both the individual employee who is traveling and his or her supervisor to ensure that all foreign travel conforms to this mandate.

It is the responsibility of every employee and student to check their foreign destination for any Travel Warnings/Alerts when requesting approval for foreign travel. Travel Warnings, as defined by the U.S. Department of State, are issued to describe long-term, protracted conditions that make a country dangerous or unstable. A Travel Warning is also issued when the U.S. Government's ability to assist U.S. citizens is constrained due to the closure of an embassy or consulate or because of a drawdown of its staff.

If not using Concur, a request for foreign travel to a country under a Travel Warning must be made by completing and signing a Recognition and Assumption of Risk Agreement.

The current Travel Warning from the U.S. Department of State for the country the employee is traveling to must be printed and submitted along with the form. See travel warnings at <https://travel.state.gov/content/passports/en/alertswarnings.html>.

Sponsoring agencies may also require prior approval. It is the responsibility of the traveler to contact their OSP Project Administrator. To initiate the sponsor approval process, the approval request should be submitted **at least 45 days prior to** the anticipated departure date.

TRANSPORTATION

For all transportation categories not specifically listed below, please refer to the Domestic Travel sections of this document regarding other allowability and receipt requirements.

Rental Vehicles

Rental vehicles should be used to obtain economical or practical transportation (i.e., when it would cost more to travel by taxi, bus, etc.). When leasing vehicles in foreign countries, it is advisable to purchase all available and reasonable levels of insurance including Personal Accident Liability Insurance (PAI). Itemized receipts are required. Please refer to the Domestic Travel sections regarding other allowability and receipt requirements.

Air Transportation

Generally, if a traveler is traveling on funds provided by the federal government, he/she must use a U.S. Flag Air Carrier (an airline owned by an American company), regardless of cost or convenience. If you are scheduling international travel that is federally funded, you must ensure that all flights, where possible, are scheduled on U.S. Flag Air Carriers or on foreign air carriers that code share with a U.S. Flag Air Carrier. Code sharing occurs when two or more airlines "code" the same flight as if it was their own. In other words, a U.S. airline may sell a seat on the plane of a foreign air carrier; this seat is considered the same as one on a plane operated by the U.S. Flag Air Carrier. Compliance with the Fly America Act is satisfied when the U.S. Flag Air Carrier's designator code is present in the area next to the flight numbers on the airline ticket, boarding pass, or on the documentation for an electronic ticket (passenger receipt).

Exceptions to the Fly America Act

The biggest exception to the [Fly America Act](#) is the [Open Skies Agreement](#). October 6, 2010, the United States and European Union (EU) "Open Skies" Air Transport Agreement was published by the U.S. General Services Administration providing full explanation of the multilateral agreement in place so that qualifying travelers whose travel is supported by federal funds, may travel on European Union airlines as well as U.S. Flag Air Carriers. A list of current member countries of the European Union is available at http://europa.eu/about-eu/countries/index_en.htm.

There are also Open Skies agreements with Australia, Switzerland and Japan. There are other exceptions to the Fly America Act which may be appropriate as well. A list of exception criteria may be found in the [Federal Travel Regulation Guidelines](#). Please note that lower cost and personal convenience are not acceptable criteria for justifying the non-availability of a U.S.–flag air carrier. To document the exceptions, you must complete and attach the [Fly America Act Exceptions Form](#).

Please refer to the Domestic Travel sections of this document regarding other allowability and receipt requirements.

LODGING AND MEALS

Please refer to Domestic Travel sections of this document regarding allowability and receipt requirements. Either of the two methods for meals and lodging reimbursements may be used.

For foreign travel location applicable rates, please obtain current rates from the State Department at https://aoprals.state.gov/web920/per_diem.asp.

For travel to Alaska, Hawaii, U.S. Territories, and Possessions, please obtain current rates from the US Department of Defense at <http://www.defensetravel.dod.mil/site/perdiemCalc.cfm>.

Laundry

Separate claims for laundry and dry cleaning expenses outside of the United States are not allowed. These are included in the incidental calculations (part of the meal maximum).

All Other Expense Categories

Please refer to the Domestic Travel sections of this document regarding allowability and receipt requirements for all other expense categories.