

Student Union, Inc.  
Travel Policy  
&  
Procedure Guide  
(Revised & SUBOD Approved 12-2017)

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## **Introduction**

This Travel Guide is intended to inform Student Union, Inc. (SU) employees of travel policy and procedures and to guide the employee in the proper preparation for travel and supporting documentation. It should always be at the forefront of the employees thoughts when charging expenses, that the Student Union operates from majority of student fees, therefore we must be fiscally responsible when making arrangements for travel and lodging. The Travel Guide incorporates the Student Union's travel policies, procedures and allowances for travel. The information provided in this document applies to all Student Union employees, students, and others traveling on official SU business whereby the SU incurs charges will be paying for the travel using SU student fees, both operating and trust.

## **Authorization to Travel**

**ATTENTION: Out-of-State domestic travel restriction effective January 1, 2017, applicable to SJSU and its auxiliaries. No travel to state(s) with laws enacted to void or repeal discrimination protections, or, to authorize or require discrimination.**

### **Domestic Travel Restriction States, January 1, 2017**

Alabama  
Kansas  
Kentucky  
Mississippi  
North Carolina  
South Dakota  
Tennessee  
Texas

Domestic ***In-State Travel and Out-of-State*** Travel must be approved in advance through a Travel Request Form before making non-cancellable travel arrangements by the employee's Approving Associate Director and the Executive Director or designee.

**The expectation is that the employee will purchase the most economical rate for lodging, airfare, and car rentals; it is highly advised to make arrangements several weeks in advance in order to mitigate over-inflated charges due in part to last minute arrangements.** The maximum amount allowable for business related lodging expenses the Student Union will pay is \$275 per night per person, excluding taxes, for in-state and out-of-state travel, including Alaska, Hawaii, and other US destinations. You might be able to receive a state rate for lodging and definitely for rental car (see under rental car and attached information sheet) by supplying your state ID. Please ask before making a reservation for both.

International travel requires the same approvals as domestic travel.

## **Employee Responsibility**

Individuals traveling on official SU business must familiarize themselves with and adhere to the SU Travel Guide. Employees must obtain documented authorization to travel prior to embarking on the trip and/or prior to making non-cancellable travel arrangements.

This authorization is obtained by completing a Travel Authorization request form found on SU's Corporation home page. Employees should make certain that the business related expenses they incur are ordinary, reasonable, not extravagant, and necessary to the purpose of the trip. The employee must:

**NOTE: On the rare occasion your credit card or debit card is used for business, a bank or credit card statement, showing the expenses, must be provided along with your receipts/invoices.**

- Fill out a Travel Request form and submit it **30 days prior to travel**.
- Clearly state the business purpose and inclusive dates of each trip:
  - Attach the conference agenda or outline. For “business meetings,” include who the meeting is with and for what purpose.
  - Clearly identify any personal time added onto or included within the trip date range.
- Submit a travel reimbursement request form within 30 days from the return of the trip. Certifying that the employee/individual:
  - Received authorization to travel.
  - Traveled on official Student Union business.
  - A list of the actual expenses.
  - Verified that the amount due is accurate.
  - Regardless of amount, provided detailed/itemized receipts for any prepaid expenses, such as conference/registration fees, lodging, rental car, airplane ticket and miscellaneous expenses(tips, cab fee, etc.)
  - Incidental expenses for travel within the contiguous United States will be based on actual amounts incurred up to a maximum of \$7 per 24 hour period.
- Transportation - **Rental cars may not be used** for travel to northern California conferences, meetings, workshops or events, or within a four-hour travel (260 miles or less), unless a rental car or other means of transportation is the least expensive mode of travel. Exceptions to this policy may occur in the event the employee does not own a car; other modes of transportation are more expensive or not available; and/or no other person

from the university is attending the event. Exceptions must be approved by the Executive Director or designee.

- **Personal Car Usage - The current mileage reimbursement rates is below and may change each calendar year. Please check with the Associate Director of Accounting and Finance for the most current rates:**
  - Business travel **on or after** January 1, 2017 is .545 cents per mile. The rates of reimbursement for mileage set out in the travel procedures include the cost of maintaining liability insurance at the minimum amount prescribed by law, as well as collision insurance sufficient to cover the reasonable value of a vehicle, less a standard deductible, and normal wear of your vehicle. Note: Mileage and Per Diem rates may change each year. Please refer to the updated rate per diem sheet on the corporate website under travel.
- Return any reimbursement or payment issued by the Student Union which subsequently resulted in a refund due to the business related travel and/or expense within 30 days after the event.

#### **Approver Responsibility**

The Approving Official is responsible for approving travel reimbursements, while ensuring all expenses are reasonable in terms of price, purpose, and necessity. The Approving Official is responsible for:

- Approving release time for travel.
- Ensuring expenses charged to his/her accounts are supported by sufficient funds and ensuring appropriate use of funds.
- Verifying expenses requested are ordinary, reasonable, not extravagant, necessary, and supported by a business purpose or justification, as appropriate.
- Validating, to the extent possible, that the expenses listed were actually incurred by the employee and that appropriate supporting documentation is included with the reimbursement request.
- Reviewing and approving the business purpose and ensuring the request is in compliance with any applicable policies.
- Approving/denying payment of travel reimbursement request in a timely manner.
- Denying expenses not directly related to official university business.

#### **The Accounting Department & AD of Accounting/Finance are responsible for the following functions**

- Review/audit travel reimbursement requests for compliance with SU policy.
- Verify Approving Official.
- Ensure appropriate documentation is submitted.
- Process reimbursements in a timely manner when all appropriate documentation is received.

## **Reimbursement of Travel Expenses**

Non prepaid travel expense reimbursement must go through a Travel Reimbursement Request Process within 30 days, or sooner, of a trips completion. The employee must submit a Travel Reimbursement request to the Associate Director of their Department and Executive Director or designee for approval before sending it to the Accounting Department, along with all the required backup documentation/receipts signed by the employee. This process is required for all trips in which an expense was incurred in connection with Student Union travel, regardless of the expense being paid directly by the Student Union or the employee.

Reimbursement of transportation expenses will be based on the most economical method of transportation and the most commonly traveled route consistent with the authorized purpose of the trip.

Only expenses actually incurred and substantiated are reimbursable. In order to be eligible for reimbursement, the actual expenses must be supported with reasonable documentation.

If an employee is unable to provide supporting receipts, they must include a missing receipt reimbursement form with a complete description of the purpose, who attended, and why the receipt could not be provided.

## **Emergencies**

In the event of an emergency while on travel status, the employee should first contact emergency responders at their location, the employee's appropriate Risk Management Administrator, and their supervisor, as soon as possible, but no later than 24 hrs. of the emergency occurrence.

*Student Union, Inc.  
Risk Manager  
Phone (408) 924-6315*

## **Meals While Traveling or Provided as Part of the Event**

The reimbursement of daily meal expenses for travel within the contiguous United States will be based on actual amounts incurred as per the Per-Diem Rate for each meal for that fiscal year. Expenditures above the cap will not be reimbursed.

In the event an employee foregoes the provided meal event per the conference itinerary, a per diem or reimbursement will not be provided unless it is supported by substantiated health reasons. An explanation for the purchase of the meal replacement must accompany the reimbursement. **Supporting documentation is required.**

Alcoholic beverages are **unallowable** charges and will not be reimbursed. If an alcoholic beverage is found on a travel reimbursement as a meal expense, the amount will be deducted from the meal, even if the meal amount falls within daily limit rate.

### **Travel of Less Than 24 Hours**

When the entire length of a trip is less than 24 hours, Internal Revenue Service regulations state that meals and incidental expenses shall not be reimbursed unless the travel includes an “overnight stay” as supported by a lodging receipt.

For a trip of less than 24 hours within the contiguous U.S. which includes an overnight stay, reimbursement shall be authorized for the actual cost of lodging, meals and incidental expenses subject to the daily maximum amount described in the above and the per diem allowances.

### **Overnight Stay Exception**

If an exception to the IRS overnight-stay requirement is allowed by the Approving Associate Director and Executive Director, the actual expense is reported on the employees Payroll and becomes reportable as taxable income.

### **Travel Advances**

Travel advances are available for per diem, incidentals and team travel. Conference fees, lodging, shuttle service, car rentals, should be paid with your Student Union business credit card, if applicable.

**Personal credit cards** should not be used for Student Union business, with exception of emergencies and/or with prior approval by the Executive Director or designee.

Employees or group leaders with an advance in delinquent status will not be allowed to receive any additional travel advances or approval of subsequent trips until such delinquent status has been settled.

A travel advance is considered delinquent if a travel expense claim form or travel receipts for a trip have not been received by Accounting Department within 30 days of completion of travel.

### **Airline Travel**

Transportation by scheduled airlines must be at the lowest fare available at time of booking. **Purchase of advance boarding or special boarding is not allowed and will require repayment to the SU for any above related charges incurred.**

### **Purchasing Airline Tickets through an Internet Service**

Purchasing such ticket(s) is the employee’s responsibility to ensure that nothing will prevent them from taking the scheduled flight(s). When tickets are purchased in this manner, the employee assumes all financial responsibility. Should the trip be cancelled, the Student Union will not reimburse for tickets purchased and/or the employee is required to reimburse the SU for related expenses incurred.

### **Rail or Bus Transportation**

Rail or bus transportation is an available resource if it happens to be the best mode of transportation.

Reimbursement for roomette Pullman accommodations will be allowed. If more expensive accommodations are used, the employee must justify the expense in a written explanation submitted with the travel reimbursement request.

Any unused portions of railroad and sleeping car tickets are subject to being refundable to the Student Union.

### **Rental Cars**

**Enterprise Rent-A-Car** is used as the state's primary rental car agency. In the event that the primary vendor is unable to provide service, the secondary vendor, Enterprise Holdings, Inc. (National Rental US) must be used. In order to rent a vehicle under the State contract, the employee must be identified as a State employee with an SJSU ID, and have a valid California driver's license.

Whenever possible, a compact or economy vehicle should be requested. These classes should be used unless a no cost upgrade is provided. Business justification is required for any rental vehicle upgrades above the aforementioned classes.

Upgrades for items such as GPS, surround sound, premier interior will not be paid for by the Student Union.

Employees are **strongly encouraged** to return vehicles with a full tank of gas prior to dropping off the vehicle. Gas **should not** be purchased through the rental car agencies due to increased cost and additional fees that may be applicable.

The following rules apply to insurance coverage for rental cars obtained through the aforementioned approved State car rental agency:

- For SU employees on SU business, the SU has a self-insurance policy that covers vehicle rentals in the fifty U.S. states and the District of Columbia.
- The cost of full collision coverage for rental cars used in Alaska, Hawaii, U.S. possessions, and foreign countries, is allowable. A deductible may apply according to procedures administered by Risk Management Services. SU's self-insurance policy covers employee rentals only.

For insurance coverage purposes, an official Student Union business trip begins when the employee leaves his/her residence or normal work location, whichever occurs last, and

ends when the employee returns to his/her residence or normal work location, whichever occurs first.

**Special Vehicles:** Special vehicles (e.g. 16-passenger vans and trucks) can only be requested through a requisition with prior approval from their designated Associate Director and the Executive Director or Designee.

**Special Vehicles with Hand Controls:** State employees requiring vehicles with hand controls are free to make their own arrangements.

### **Transportation by Privately Owned Vehicles and Insurance Requirements**

Expenses arising from travel between an employee's home and the university are not allowable. In the instance where a trip commences or terminates at the employee's home, the distance traveled will be calculated from either the employee's home or the university, whichever results in a lesser of the two distances.

#### **Authorization**

A request form must be on file with the supervisor who has approved the travel. By signing this form, you are acknowledging that you have your own personal insurance (not reimbursable) that will become the primary coverage. The Student Union's liability coverage will only apply after the limits of your own coverage has been exceeded.

- The vehicle must be covered by liability/collision insurance.
- The vehicle must be in safe mechanical condition and be equipped with safety belts in operating condition.
- If an employee uses their own vehicle for business more than once a month, the employee must have satisfactorily completed a defensive driving course that is offered on campus.

### **Motor Vehicle Accident Reporting**

The immediate supervisor who authorized or permitted the employee to use the vehicle will ensure that the employee completes a Vehicle Accident Form or should the employee become unable to do so, the supervisor will complete it for the employee. Be sure to keep a copy for your internal records.

In all vehicle accidents that result in injury or serious damage, immediately telephone our insurance company Risk Manager at (916) 376-5302. If no answer, leave a message where you can be reached on the next business day. Submit a Vehicle Accident Report (Std. 270) form within 48 hours. Advance copies of accident reports may also be sent to ORIM by fax at (916) 376-5277. Contact your immediate supervisor and the Risk Manager for the Student Union.

To report new accidents involving serious injury after normal working hours, on weekends, or holidays, call (916) 322-8967 and leave a message. You will be contacted on the next business day for more details.

### **Moving Policies and Relocation Expenses**

- The new employee possesses highly specialized skills needed by the campus;
- The new employee is currently located in a geographic location that makes commuting impractical;
- Doing so provides incentive for the individual to accept the position.  
Hiring managers must obtain approval of the proposed dollar amount of moving and relocation expenses to be reimbursed prior to extending the offer to the new employee. Executive Director approval is necessary for reimbursed expenses.
  - **Employee:** An individual who has formally accepted an authorized offer of employment the Student Union.
  - **Household Goods:** Personal effects and items used, or to be used, in the employee's residence necessary for the maintenance of a household.

**NOTE: If your personal credit card or debit card is used, a bank or credit card statement, showing the expenses, must be provided along with your receipts/invoices.**

### **If Employment Terminated Within Two Years**

If an employee's moving and relocation expenses have been reimbursed, and he/she does not continue his/her employment with the university for a period of at least two years, the employee shall repay the SU the following percentage of the reimbursement amount:

- 100% of total cost Employed less than six months
- 75% of total cost Employed at least six months, but less than 12 months
- 50% of total cost Employed at least 12 months, but less than 18 months
- 25% of total cost Employed at least 18 months, but less than 24 months Employees whose discontinuance of university employment was the result of death, disability, or similar unexpected cause beyond the control of the employee as determined by the appointing authority, are exempt from this repayment policy.

### **Moving and Relocating Reimbursements**

The SU has no contractual arrangement for moving the employee's household goods. The employee must negotiate a personal contract with a mover. Full or partial reimbursement may be allowed for the actual and necessary expenses incurred for packing, insurance, transportation, storage in transit (not to exceed 60 calendar days), and unpacking and installation of the employee's household goods at the new residence, when properly documented by invoices and receipts.

Should the employee move himself/herself, reimbursement for such moves may not exceed the cost that would have been incurred had he/she used a commercial moving firm. An employee and spouse or domestic partner may be reimbursed for travel expenses incurred in relocating. Travel expenses include lodging, meal allowances, incidental allowances for every complete 24 hour period, and mileage traveled.

The following limits apply:

- Meals \$55.00 per day per person Incidental Allowance \$7.00 per person for each 24 hour period Mileage \$0.17 per mile.
- Procedures for Payment of Moving Reimbursements Receipts and invoices verifying the actual costs of a move should be submitted Travel Reimbursement on the SU Corporate homepage. Also include a copy of the offer letter stating the date of hire and total amount to be reimbursed. The university will reimburse the employee upon receipt of this form or pay the commercial moving company directly if you submit a Requisition. Your reimbursement form should include all move information and an estimate of moving expenses.

### **Reportable and Taxable Expenses**

Please note that authorized moving and relocation expenses may result in taxable income to the employee pursuant to state and federal regulations. Examples of taxable expenses include, but are not limited to:

- All meals connected with the move
- Pre-move house hunting trips
- Temporary living expenses
- Mileage reimbursement in excess of \$0.17 cents per mile

Taxable moving expense reimbursements subject to Federal/State income taxes, applicable Social Security/Medicare taxes, and State Disability Insurance withholding, are reported via Payroll to the State Controller's Office. These additional tax withholdings will appear on the employee's next available payroll.