Travel Advance Policy

Policy Statement
Travel advances are generally available to paid faculty, staff, and graduate students of Brown to assist in defraying out of pocket cash while traveling for an extended period of time. Travel advances are:

- Issued for daily and per diem expenses only. Prepaid items such as transportation (airfare/train) and conference registration are processed using a travel expense report and can be reimbursed prior to travel.
- Request travel advances two to three weeks prior to the scheduled departure date.
  - If an advance is requested less than two weeks prior to travel, the advance may not be processed in time for the trip.
- Travel advances should be cleared within two weeks of the completion of a trip.
  - Request for any additional payment, advance or reimbursement will not be processed for any traveler with an outstanding advance that is more than two weeks beyond the established trip return date.
- Failure to account for a cash advance after 60 days will result in reporting the advance to the IRS on the traveler’s W-2 and withholding taxes on the advance amount from the traveler’s paycheck.
  - Per IRS regulation, once an unsettled cash advance has been added to a W-2 it cannot be reversed – even if settled.
- The University does not issue long-term operating advances.

Responsibilities
Traveler:

- The Traveler is responsible for requesting a travel advance two to three weeks prior to travel.
- The Traveler is responsible for clearing travel advances within two weeks of returning from travel.
- A Travel Advance is cleared when the receipts provided substantiate the use of the advanced travel funds. The Traveler must return any unused travel advance to the University.

Financial Coordinators: Financial Coordinators initiate the expense report that both requests and clears travel advances. They compile relevant supporting documentation for transactions, document the business purpose of the transaction, and use the correct worktags and expense items for the transaction. When a travel advance requires a return of excess funds, the Financial Coordinator sends the check to the Accounts Payable Department.

Cost Center Managers: The Cost Center Manager ensures compliance with University travel policies and approves the expense report.

Accounts Payable: Accounts Payable ensures compliance with federal and state statutes, and University policies. Accounts Payable deposits any returned travel advances and then approves transactions.

Procedures
Request a travel advance using the Create Expense Report action in Workday. Follow the procedures in the Job Aids below.

Forms/Instructions
- Travel Advance Request
- Return of Advance

Related Information

Job Aids
- Requesting a Travel Advance
- Clearing a Travel Advance When Money is Owed to Brown University
- Clearing a Travel Advance When Money is Owed to the Traveler

Policy Owner Approved by Vice President for Finance and Chief Financial Officer

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