Travel Meals Policy

Policy Statement
Travel Meals are those taken by the individual employee (faculty, staff or student), or employees traveling together, when away from campus on University business and must be compliant with state and federal regulations.

The University strives to promote safe and economical University travel while maintaining the necessary controls, accountability, compliance with applicable federal and state laws, and administrative efficiency. All University funds including gifts, grants, contracts, and start-up funds, shall be used in a reasonable and prudent manner and only for activities related to Brown’s primary mission of education, research and public service.

Travel meals will be paid by the University if they are reasonable, appropriately documented, properly allocated and authorized, accommodated by the relevant operating budget or sponsored project funding, and within the guidelines of these policies.

Travel meals reimbursements may be either actual expenses incurred or the federal per diem rate for the location visited. Whether actual expenses or per diem, the reimbursement method selected must be consistently applied throughout the trip.

Additionally:

- If a meal has been paid for as part of a registration fee or included in the hotel rate and the traveler wishes to use the federal per diem, a deduction must be made from the per diem allowance based on the following percentages: 15% breakfast, 25% lunch, 60% dinner.
  - Partial days of travel also require the per diem allowance to be prorated based on these percentages.
- IRS regulations permit the reimbursement of travel meals if the business trip exceeds 12 hours or is overnight.
- Departments may elect to impose stricter budgetary controls over travel expenditures than those required by this policy.
- Travel charged to a sponsored project should follow the guidelines set forth by this policy unless the funding agency imposes greater restrictions.
  - The authority for determining which travel expenditures are reimbursable under a particular grant or contract lies with the Office of Sponsored Projects.
- Intentional disregard for the University's travel policy and procedures may be considered grounds for disciplinary action, and/or for prosecution in the case of fraudulent misrepresentation of travel expenses.
- Visitors to Brown University receiving reimbursement for travel meals must comply with this policy.
- In compliance with IRS regulations, expense reimbursement requests must be received by Accounts Payable within 60 days of the expense. This applies to Faculty, staff, students and visitors. Reimbursement requests submitted after 60 days are taxable to the payee.

Definitions
Travel Meals: Travel meals are those taken by the individual employee (faculty, staff or students), or employees traveling together, when away from campus on University business.

Business Meals: Business meals are those taken with business associates, university guests, job...
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applicants, professional colleagues, or donors, during which University business discussions take place or hospitality is extended to distinguished guests. Review the Business Meals policy for further detail.

Senior Officer: A Senior Officer is a member of the President’s Cabinet.

Responsibilities
Employee/Traveler: The employee/traveler is responsible for being aware of and complying with the Travel Meals Policy. Traveler is also responsible for submitting expense reimbursement requests timely. In compliance with IRS regulations, expense reimbursement requests must be received by Accounts Payable within 60 days of the expense. The employee/traveler must also comply with any requirements imposed by a grant if the expenditure is charged to a sponsored award.

Financial Coordinators: Financial Coordinators initiate travel reimbursement transactions using the Workday Create Expense business process. Financial Coordinators compile relevant supporting documentation, document the business purpose of the transaction, and use the correct worktags and expense items for the transaction.

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 process transactions.

Procedures

- Travel meals are typically reimbursed to the employee on an expense report. Review the Workday Create Expense Report Job Aid for guidance on how to create an expense report in Workday
- Travelers meals may either be reimbursed for individual meals or may select the Per diem for the city/state/country they are visiting.
  - Individual meals:
    - Refer to the spending guidelines for limits on the cost of travel meals.
    - Use the meals: travel expense item. If the meal was consumed during an international trip, selected Meals: Travel International. Otherwise, select Meals: Travel Domestic.
    - Receipts are not required for travel meals under $75.
  - Per Diem
    - Refer to the Per Diem websites to find the per diem for the dates traveled in the city/state/country visited.
    - Use the Per Diem expense item. If the meal was consumed during an international trip, selected Per Diem - Meals International. Otherwise, select Per Diem – Meals Domestic.

Related Policies
Alcoholic Beverages Policy
Business Purpose Policy
Business Meals Policy
Expense Reimbursement Policy
Per Diem Amounts: Domestic
Per Diem Amounts: Foreign
Travel Advance Policy
Traveler and Approver Responsibilities
Visitor Travel Reimbursement
Related Information
Job Aid: Create Expense Report for Worker
Job Aid: Create Expense Report via the Mobile App
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Video: Create Expense Report (self-prepared)
Policy Owner Approved by Vice President for Finance and Chief Financial Officer

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