

## **SFA International Travel Rules and Guidelines**

### **Prior Approval for Travel**

All international travel must be directly related to the university's mission and must require a duty that cannot be performed without the travel.

Official university business travel to any international country requires advance approval from the university International Oversight Committee (IOC), regardless of the traveler's citizenship or the funding source. The travel authorization request is submitted through SAP Concur accessed through the Resources tab at mySFA. The request is automatically routed to the IOC by selecting an international travel in the Trip Type of the Request Header. The travel authorization request must be submitted in sufficient time to be reviewed and approved at all appropriate administrative levels prior to any university funds being obligated and prior to the date of departure.

#### **❖ OnCall**

All international travelers are required to use OnCall. OnCall is a resource that can be utilized to provide assistance to travelers in the event of medical emergencies, natural disasters, political upheavals, and more. This will provide important information about safety conditions in the destination country and help to contact the traveler in case of an emergency. In the event of an emergency, here are several ways to contact OnCall:

- +1-978-651-9722 (UT System's dedicated line)
- 24/7 Live Chat: [www.oncallinternational.com/chat/direct](http://www.oncallinternational.com/chat/direct)
- mail@oncallinternational.com

Once the flight has been booked, the traveler is required to submit their flight itinerary to [trips@oncallinternational.com](mailto:trips@oncallinternational.com).

#### **❖ OnSolve**

After the flight itinerary has been submitted to the email above, the traveler will receive an email from OnSolve shortly prior to the trip start date. The email will contain an invitation to download an app from OnSolve. OnSolve provides the technology platform that can be used to track all international travelers in case of emergencies. This app provides warnings to the traveler based on the area of the provided flight itinerary. Use of the app is not required, but is strongly recommended, especially in areas with higher levels of travel risk.

### **Safety and Health**

#### **U.S Department of State – Bureau of Consular Affairs**

The U.S. Department of State issues Travel Warnings and Travel Alerts to inform travelers of problems at foreign destinations.

<https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/traveladvisories/traveladvisories.html/> . It is the responsibility of every traveler to check for these Warnings and Alerts prior to travel. No employee or student shall be required to travel on university business to a country that is subject to a U.S.

Department of State Travel Warning or Travel Alert, or to a destination where they feel unsafe. The assessment as to whether it is safe to travel is ultimately the decision of the traveler.

### **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention**

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website provides information about travelers' health, including vaccine requirements, medicines, travel health notices and advice.

<https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/notices> . Travelers are encouraged to utilize this information.

### **Expense Reporting and Reimbursement**

In accordance with state travel reimbursement guidelines, expenses for international travel may only be reimbursed for travel supporting university business. Any personal benefit from an employee's participation in international travel must be solely incidental to the official purpose of the travel. It is the obligation of both the traveling employee and the supervisor to ensure that all international travel conforms to this mandate.

Like domestic travel, foreign travel expense reporting and reimbursement is entered using SAP Concur accessed through the Resources tab of mySFA. It is the traveler's responsibility to submit a travel expense report along with supporting itemized receipts after the completion of travel, regardless of whether the expenses were charged to the traveler or directly to the university on a Travel Card (T-Card). Travel expenses should be submitted within 15 days after the last day of the trip.

### **International Currency Conversion**

All expenses submitted for reimbursement will use the SAP Foreign Currency Function if the itemized receipt does not show a total in U.S. Dollars (USD). When expenses are not charged to a credit card, SAP Concur will automatically convert any foreign currency into USD when the information from the itemized receipt is entered into the Details tab of the expense. The correct date of purchase, amount of purchase, and type of foreign currency will ensure that the conversion to USD is accurate. If expenses are charged to a credit card, the converted amount will appear on the credit card bill. The applicable credit card transactions showing the USD amounts should be uploaded to the travel expense report.

### **Lodging**

Travelers will be reimbursed actual, locally-reasonable expenses for international lodging with an itemized receipt.

### **Meals**

Travelers will be reimbursed actual, locally-reasonable expenses for international meals with an itemized receipt. In lieu of itemized meal receipts, the state standard rate may be claimed. Tips are reimbursable only for group travel.

## **Transportation**

The most economical means of transportation should be used when traveling on university business. The total cost of the travel and efficient use of staff time should be taken into consideration when making transportation decisions.

### **❖ Airfare**

Airline tickets should be purchased at the lowest available standard coach/economy airfare. First class airfare and priority boarding are not reimbursable expenses. Seat upgrades for extra leg room are not reimbursable expenses except for medical or disability reasons. In these cases, an "Accommodation Request" must be submitted to the director of human resources for approval prior to the trip.

### **❖ Important Note about Air Travel Funded by U.S. Government Grants**

The Fly America Act (49 U.S.C. §§40118 et seq.) requires travelers using federal funds to travel "to use United States air carrier service for all air travel and cargo transportation services funded by the United States Government. One exception to this requirement is transportation provided under a bilateral or multilateral air transport agreement ("Open Skies Agreement"), to which the United States Government and the government of a foreign country are parties, and which the Department of Transportation has determined meets the requirements of the Fly America Act." Travelers whose airfare will be paid or reimbursed by grants funded by the U.S. Government should contact the SFA Office of Research and Sponsored Programs for complete information prior to obligating funds for air travel.

### **❖ Trains, Buses and Taxis**

Travelers will be reimbursed actual expenses for international train, bus and taxi fares with an itemized receipt. Tips are reimbursable only for group travel.

### **❖ Travel to U.S. Airports**

As with domestic travel, mileage reimbursement is limited to the most cost-effective means of travel incurred from the departure point or the employee's "official duty point".

## **Airport Parking**

The traveler should complete a cost comparison to determine if it is more economical to rent a vehicle from Enterprise Rent-A-Car and return it at the airport or to use a personal vehicle and park it at the airport. The most cost-effective option will be reimbursed with an itemized receipt.

## **Incidental Expenses**

Travelers will be reimbursed actual, reasonable expenses for incidental costs with an itemized receipt. Examples include baggage fees, foreign conversion fees, tips if in a group, costs of required immunizations, required visa fees, and power converters/adapters if they become the property of SFA after the trip. Fees for passports, Global Entry and TSA Pre✓® are not reimbursable.

## **Telephone and Data Usage**

Travelers may be reimbursed up to \$10 per day for international data, talk and text plans on personal devices with an itemized receipt. The itemization should include the phone numbers called

or texted. Only usage for business purposes will be reimbursed. Reimbursement for expenses exceeding \$10 per day will be considered with written justification and approval of the applicable dean.

**Usage of Frequent Flyer Miles or Loyalty Award Points**

A traveler may choose to utilize personal frequent flyer miles or loyalty award points to buy or upgrade services such as airline tickets, seat upgrades, hotels, car rentals and amenities.

Reimbursement is not allowed for such items that are provided free of charge. Any charges related to redemption, purchase or use of frequent flier or loyalty points are not reimbursable.

**Expenses Paid or Reimbursed by a Third-Party**

Expenses that will be paid or reimbursed by a third-party source are not reimbursable.

**Travel Card**

Employees utilizing a Travel Card (T-Card) are advised to notify the card issuer of travel plans prior to the trip. The card issuer's telephone number is on the back of the card. This should allow the T-Card to accept international charges and avoid a card block. The traveler may also wish to place the telephone number in a separate location in case of lost card or other issues while traveling.