

Travel

Original Implementation: October 31, 2000

Last Revision: October 26, 2020

Purpose

This policy establishes regulations related to allowable expenditures for university business travel and identifies the Stephen F. Austin State University (SFA) Travel Guidelines and the Textravel website maintained by the Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts as the authoritative resources for travel laws and rules.

Definitions

University business travel is travel undertaken for the benefit of the university.

General

The university shall make every effort to minimize the amount of travel expenses paid and/or reimbursed, and to ensure that each travel arrangement is the most cost-effective considering all relevant circumstances. Travel expenditures must be reasonable, necessary, appropriately documented, and properly approved.

The SFA Travel Guidelines are located on the university's travel website. These guidelines apply to employees, students, and prospective employees traveling in a university capacity, except the president, members of the Board of Regents, and intercollegiate athletics. Travel by the president and Board of Regents will be made in accordance with applicable law. Travel related to intercollegiate athletics will be made in accordance with the Intercollegiate Athletics Policy and Procedure Manual.

The reimbursement limits stated in the SFA Travel Guidelines may be exceeded only if funds are available in, and the additional costs are charged to, a discretionary account controlled by the budget manager authorizing the additional expenditure. For this policy, discretionary funds shall be defined by the controller's office. A list of funds that can be used for discretionary purposes will be published on the controller's office website.

Employees traveling under contracts and grants (federal, state, local, or private) shall be reimbursed for travel expenses and allowances on the same basis as other university employees, except in those instances where the terms of the contract or grant specify travel guidelines and reimbursement rates which differ from university reimbursement rates.

Generally, the Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts (TCPA) is the authoritative source regarding travel. TCPA travel rules, Textravel, are located on the university's travel website. In case of conflict between SFA Travel Guidelines and Textravel, SFA Travel Guidelines take precedence except where state of Texas law prevails. The university president, at his/her discretion, may establish lower travel reimbursement rates than those in Textravel. Travelers will be notified in advance of the effective date of any rate change.

Travelers are responsible for ensuring their travel complies with applicable state law and SFA Travel Guidelines. Failure to comply may result in reimbursement delays and/or rejection of the traveler's claim for travel reimbursement. Fraudulent travel claims will be grounds for disciplinary action, including termination.

Cross Reference: Tex. Gov't Code § 660.203; Tex. Educ. Code § 101.19; SFA Travel Guidelines; Intercollegiate Athletics Policy and Procedure Manual; Textravel (Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts travel rules); Fraud (2.7)

Responsible for Implementation: Vice President for Finance and Administration

Contact for Revision: Controller

Forms: None

Board Committee Assignment: Finance and Audit