

**BLUEFIELD STATE COLLEGE
BOARD OF GOVERNORS
POLICY NO. 22**

TITLE: TRAVEL

SECTION 1. GENERAL

1.1 Scope: All Employees

1.1.1 Approval to travel will be secured in advance by the employee via the employee's supervisor.

1.1.2 Employees/supervisors are responsible for submitting a State of West Virginia travel expense account settlement form with all required receipts and direct bill attachments to the Accounting Office who forwards to the Auditor of Travel within five business days from the last day of travel.

1.2 Authority: West Virginia Code

1.3 Filing Date: January 19, 2006

1.4 Effective Date: March 17, 2006, February 21, 2008, May 15, 2008

SECTION 2. AIR TRANSPORTATION

2.1 Commercial airline reimbursement will include the actual expense or cost of the least expensive logical fare via the most direct route, or a reasonable alternative route if it results in lower fare. Travelers may not specify a particular airline in order to accumulate mileage or promotional plans, such as frequent flyer programs, if this results in a higher airfare.

2.2 Travelers are required to consult with the state contracted travel service provider. Travelers should check all available rates and select the least expensive rate. Documentation of rate from the state contracted service provider is to be provided if more expensive than the purchase rate. Travelers should use the state corporate credit card for preferred form of payment when possible.

2.3 In order to receive reimbursement, the traveler must submit the "passenger receipt" or certified copy of the commercial airline ticket. Commercial airline tickets may be purchased and reimbursed up to 180 days (six months) prior to departure. The State of West Virginia expense account settlement form should be submitted for the airfare cost only. On the final expense account settlement form, a copy of the previously reimbursed ticket must be attached, and noted. Refundable or unused airline tickets will be returned immediately.

- 2.4 If a change in the cost of airfare is incurred, the charge is reimbursable if the traveler is directed by the appropriate institutional officer to change his/her travel plans, or if extenuating circumstances arise. A receipt with the change in cost will be provided for reimbursement. Increased charges incurred due to the traveler's negligence will be considered a personal expense. Deliberately causing increased costs or delays for the purpose of obtaining personal gratuities, such as denied boarding compensation, frequent flier points or mileage, or similar benefits is prohibited. Conversion of airline tickets for personal benefit, such as downgrading tickets, returning unused tickets for cash, credit, or personal airline tickets, or similar actions, is also prohibited.
- 2.5 For use of an aircraft owned and managed by the Department of Administration and other agencies the traveler will follow the rules of such agencies in scheduling, making reservations, utilizing, and making payment to these agencies for use of their aircraft.
- 2.6 If authorized by the Chancellor or Chief Executive Officer or his designee(s), chartered aircraft service and privately owned aircraft may be used by the traveler if it will result in the lowest airfare, and if it is approved in advance by the appropriate institutional officer. Direct billing may be used to pay for such service and aircraft use, and must follow the guideline for any direct billed expenses, such as approved by the department chair and submitted to the Accounting Office on a travel authorization form.
- 2.7 In cases where a traveler chooses to drive rather than fly while on business, reimbursement will be based on actual in-transit expenses (mileage, hotel, meals, etc.) not to exceed the lowest available commercial airfare plus local transportation to and from the airport.

SECTION 3. GROUND TRANSPORTATION

- 3.1 Travelers may use a state owned vehicle, privately owned vehicle, commercial rental vehicle, or rail service for ground transportation, when traveling on official business for Bluefield State College. Request for a state-owned vehicle is to occur before seeking other ground transportation. Personal vehicles should not be used when reimbursement costs are expected to exceed \$50 per day unless approved in advance by the President or Vice President of Financial and Administrative Affairs. Personal vehicles should not be used when an employee's duties and responsibilities require travel in excess of 12,000 miles per year.
- 3.2 State owned vehicles will be secured in advance by completing a Vehicle Request form and submitting it to the Physical Plant for final approval.
- 3.3 Privately owned and courtesy vehicles may be used. Reimbursement will be made at the rate per mile established by the Board of Governors or designee not to exceed rate established by the Internal Revenue Service. Reimbursement for

courtesy vehicles will be made at the rate established by the Board of Governors or designee not to exceed rate established by the Internal Revenue Service or less than the rate the State of West Virginia establishes.

- 3.4 Commercial rental vehicles may be used when traveling on institutional business. Reimbursement will be made at actual cost for the daily rental fee of a mid-size or smaller vehicle, plus mileage fees and fuel costs. For travel of more than a few days in duration, weekly rental rates may be reimbursed if they will result in a lower total cost than the daily rate. Reimbursement may be made for full-size vehicles if more than three people are traveling together on institutional business and for larger vehicles if a group of five or more is traveling together. Reimbursement may also be made for a larger or specially equipped vehicle if required to accommodate a traveler with a disability or handicap.
- 3.5 The State corporate credit card will be the preferred method of payment. When using this card all insurances must be declined. When using other forms of payment, such as personal credit card, or direct billing options, the insurance should be claimed. Liability and collision damage waivers for rentals of more than seven days are not reimbursable and should not be taken. The State of West Virginia insurance program automatically covers liability and collision insurance for vehicle rentals in excess of seven days. No other insurance or insurance-like product is reimbursable for rentals used in the United States, unless required by law. Full coverage insurance is a reimbursable expense for any approved vehicle used outside the United States.
- 3.6 Original receipts and/or documentation are required for reimbursement of car rental and mileage charges or fees. Reimbursement may be made for actual fuel costs, and receipts are required. Travelers are encouraged to return rental cars with a full tank of fuel to avoid high refueling costs charged by rental agencies.
- 3.7 Roadside assistance services for fleet, rental and personal vehicles, if needed, may be reimbursed at actual cost if deemed appropriate and reasonable by an institutional officer authorized to approve travel expenses.
- 3.8 The operator of a vehicle must possess a valid operator's license. The operator is personally responsible for any fines/penalties resulting from citations, charges, or warrants attributable to the operator's negligence. Such fine/penalties are not reimbursable.
- 3.9 Rail service may be used for ground transportation in accordance with the institution's guidelines and procedures. Travelers are expected to make advanced bookings and use the least expensive logical fare via the most direct route, or other reasonable route that results in lower fare. Original receipts/documentations are required for reimbursement.

SECTION 4. LODGING

- 4.1 Reimbursement for lodging will be at the most cost effective room rate available at the most convenient facility. For multiple occupancy, reimbursement may be claimed fully by one traveler with no claim filed by the other traveler, or each traveler may be reimbursed at equal percentages of the total actual cost for accommodations. If percentages are utilized, each traveler must provide original receipts, and all related travel forms must be processed at the same time. Reimbursement for multiple occupancy, when only one of the travelers is on higher education business, will be at the least expensive single room rate. In the event that a single room rate cannot be documented or otherwise determined, reimbursement will be made at eighty percent of the actual lodging costs. Reimbursement will include actual expenses for overnight accommodations, use of a room during daytime and all applicable taxes and surcharges. Reservations for lodging will be made according to the institution's policies and procedures. Original itemized receipts are required for lodging reimbursement. The hotel/motel statement, invoice, or folio will be the official document utilized for reimbursement to the traveler. Lodging receipts should indicate a zero balance.
- 4.2 If a change in the lodging charge is incurred, the charge is reimbursable if the traveler is directed by the appropriate institutional officer to change her or his travel plans, or in other extenuating circumstances, as approved by the immediate supervisor of the traveler. Charges incurred due to the failure of the traveler or the traveler's representative to notify the facility will be considered the personal expense of the traveler.
- 4.3 Lodging may be direct billed; however the traveler must obtain prior approval from the department chair and submit a travel authorization form to the Auditor of Travel. Attach a copy of the approval, along with the lodging invoice or other proof of lodging to the traveler's final expense account settlement.

SECTION 5. MEALS

- 5.1 Meal expense reimbursement is limited to ACTUAL expenses for food, service and gratuities up to, not to exceed the maximum daily rate. The current maximum daily rate is \$35.00 for in-state travel and \$50.00 for out-of-state travel.
- 5.2 Alcoholic beverages and entertainment expense are non-reimbursable.
- 5.3. Receipts are not required for meal reimbursement for audit by BSC personnel. When meals are provided for an individual traveler, the traveler's maximum daily rate will be reduced by an appropriate amount. For the purpose of determining the amount of deductions for meal on a uniform basis, allowances for meal expenses will be deducted accordingly:

Breakfast.....	20%
Lunch.....	20%
Dinner.....	60%

SECTION 6. REGISTRATION FEES

- 6.1 Fees or charges for attendance at conferences, meetings, seminars, and/or workshops, as well as event-related materials, are reimbursable expenses to the traveler. Registration fees may also be direct-billed to the institution when feasible. However, the first method of payment for registration fees is the State corporate credit card, or the State’s purchase card.
- 6.2 Receipts are required for reimbursement. The receipt/documentation provided by the event sponsor will be sufficient for reimbursement.
- 6.3 The traveler will not receive an allowance or reimbursement for lodging or food that is included in the registration fee. Association dues/membership dues that appear on the registration form are not a reimbursable expense.

SECTION 7. OTHER EXPENSES

- 7.1 Travelers may incur other business-related expenses for which reimbursement may be made if appropriate. Receipts are not required unless reimbursement is in excess of current IRS limits for miscellaneous expenses.
- 7.2 Such expenses and reimbursements may include, but are not limited to:
 - a. Baggage handling and gratuities when using public transportation (i.e., taxi, limousine, air porter services, or airport/rail curbside check-in), or lodging facilities that have porter services.
 - b. Baggage storage between appointments, and between hotel and meeting places.
 - c. Tolls, garage and parking fees.
 - d. Communication expenses such as (1) local calls which may include a surcharge; (2) long-distance calls which may include toll charges and surcharges; (3) surcharges for long distance calls when the toll charges are direct-billed; (4) cellular telephone charges; and (5) facsimiles, cablegrams, or telegrams which may include toll charges, surcharges, or delivery charges.
 - e. Currency conversion.
 - f. Guides, interpreters, and visa fees; and
 - g. On trips involving multiple days of travel or for single day travel where the traveler is unexpectedly delayed for business reasons, the traveler may be reimbursed for one personal telephone call home per day. Reimbursement will be made at the actual cost, not to exceed \$3.00 per day, provided the call is not charged to a telecommunications card issued by the State or the Governing Board.

- 7.3 Non-reimbursable travel related expenses include the cost of passports (not as a travel expense, but may be considered as a direct charge to the institution), interest on late payment of individually held credit cards, laundry fees, and personal flight or baggage insurance. Exceptions may be approved by the Chancellor, Chief Executive Officer, or designee.
- 7.4 Persons traveling in foreign countries will report their expenditures in United States dollars. The total expenditure in foreign currency should be converted into United States dollars at the rate or rates at which the foreign money was obtained. The rates of conversion and the commissions charged must be shown.

SECTION 8. FORM OF PAYMENT FOR BUSINESS TRAVEL

- 8.1 Travelers should use the corporate charge card issued by the State of West Virginia for business-related travel expenses.
- 8.2 Cash advances from the State Auditor's Office for official travel may be requested according to the procedures established by the Auditor for employee and student travel, and for group travel such as bands, athletic teams and organized student groups. Request and settlement of cash advances will follow the policies as defined by the State Auditor's Office.
- 8.3 Cash advances may be received by employees for their own business travel or as representatives of students for the payment of registration fees, and/or daily miscellaneous expenses where the state corporate charge card is not accepted. Cash advances may be issued for: (a) out-of-state travel; (b) a minimum of four (4) days and a maximum of the number of days approved for travel at the rate of \$25.00 per day for miscellaneous expenses; (c) the exact amount of registration fee exceeding \$100.00; (d) the total estimated expenses for a student or student group; and (e) other circumstances approved by the appropriate institutional officer.
- 8.4 Cash advances for the travel expenses of bands, athletic teams and organized student groups may be made in the exact amount estimated for the designated trip. Such cash advances may be issued for: (a) the total estimated amount of travel expenses, including the expenses of appropriate representatives, staff and/or employees accompanying the band, team or student group; and (b) the total amount of event-related expenses as determined by the band or athletic director or the faculty/staff advisor or sponsor of the student group.
- 8.5 All cash advances must be settled by the individual traveler, student representative, student group advisor/sponsor, or band and athletic department. Such settlement will be submitted by the institution to the State Auditor's Office for final settlement within the time-frame prescribed by the State Auditor's Office.

- 8.6 Failure to settle a cash advance within the time-frame prescribed by the State Auditor's Office will result in suspension of cash advance privileges for the traveler, student group, band or athletic department until such settlement is made.
- 8.7 Cash Advances from an Automatic Teller Machine (ATM) using the State's corporate credit card are permitted. Employees may secure a cash advance for business travel expenses only. Cash advances for personal use are not permitted.
- 8.8 A cash advance for either in-state or out-of-state travel is permitted when an employee travels a minimum of (2) consecutive days on official state business. The preferred method of obtaining a cash advance is to use the State's corporate credit card at an ATM. Cash advance and ATM transaction fee reimbursements are limited to the amount and number authorized by the Commission. Receipt(s) from the ATM are required for reimbursement of the ATM transaction fee.

SECTION 9. DIRECT BILLING

- 9.1 All direct billed expenses must be approved by the department chair and submitted on a travel authorization form to the Accounting Office who forwards to the Auditor of Travel.

RELATED POLICIES: Title 133 Procedural Rule Higher Education Policy Commission Series 29 Travel

RESPONSIBLE OFFICE: Vice President of Financial and Administrative Affairs