



Business Travel Procedure Manual

Table of Contents

Business Travel Procedure Statement and Eligibility to Travel.....	4
Group Travel Planning.....	4
Travel Policy Clarification and Pre-Planning.....	4
Event Registrations or Conference Memberships.....	5
Airline Reservations.....	5
Lodging and Hotels.....	5
Rental Cars and Vans.....	5
Local Transportation.....	6
Parking and Airport Parking.....	6
Tolls and Tipping.....	6
Meal Per Diem Rates for Domestic Travel.....	6
Meal Eligibility for non-Overnight Travel and at Conferences and Meetings.....	7
Non-Contiguous/Non-Foreign United States (OCONUS)	7
Privately Owned Vehicle Usage & Mileage Reimbursement.....	7-8
Vehicle Mileage Calculator, Driving Directions, Maps.....	8
Vehicle Insurance.....	8
Standard Monthly Mileage Log.....	8-9
• Mileage Log Reimbursement Example.....	8
International Travel Planning Resources.....	9
• International Travel Advisories, Passports & Visas.....	9
• International Pre-Travel Support Documentation.....	9
• International Guests.....	10
• International Meal Per Diem Schedule.....	10
• International Travel Receipt Requirements.....	10
Payment Options for University Travel Expenses.....	10-11
• Visa Procurement Card.....	10
• Business Travel Office Credit Card.....	10
• Group MasterCard Travel Program.....	11
• Personal Funds Use.....	11
• Invoice from Vendor.....	11
• Preferred Travel Vendors.....	11
• Preferred Travel Vendor Contacts.....	11
Quick Guide for Allowable and Prohibited Expenses.....	12
How to Manage Receipts.....	12
• Hotels.....	13
• Air & Rail.....	13
• Meal Per Diem.....	13
• Local Transportation.....	13
• Parking & Toll	13
• Missing Receipts.....	13
Stratus Travel Authorization.....	14
• Travel Funding.....	14
• Documentation.....	14
• Approvals.....	14
• Timeframe.....	14

• Exception/Modification.....	14
Add or Manage Delegates.....	14
Stratus Travel Expense Report.....	15
• Timeframe.....	15
• Travel Funding.....	15
• Approvals.....	15
• Business Travel Audit.....	15
• Expense Report Reimbursement Process.....	15
DocuSign Student Travel Authorization.....	16
• Travel Funding.....	16
• Estimated Expenses – Payment Options.....	16
• Documentation.....	16
• Approval Workflow.....	16
• Timeframe.....	16
DocuSign Student Travel Expense Report.....	17
• Travel Funding.....	17
• Management of receipts and support Documentation.....	17
• Submission of DocuSign Expense Report.....	17
• Approval Workflow.....	17
• Expense Report Reimbursement Process.....	17
Stratus Travel Resources, Training Opportunities and Contact Information.....	18

Procedure Statement

The intention of this procedure manual is to support and facilitate business travel for all related and reasonable expenses for university faculty, staff, and students in accordance with the University System of Maryland, Towson University, and state of Maryland policies. The procedure manual will provide travel policy clarification, pre-travel planning and resources, information regarding preferred service providers, payment options, and outline the travel authorization and expense report reimbursement process through Stratus Financials.

Eligible to Travel

Travel by university faculty, staff and students must be in support of a specific program of instruction, training, research, business related as part of their job function or public service. Travel regulations and reimbursement rates apply to all university travel regardless of source of funds.

Non-Employees of Towson University may be eligible to travel on behalf of the university. Examples include (job applicants, lecturer's, consultants, guests, researchers, and students.)

Employee

Includes all types (regular, contingent I and contingent II) faculty and staff who receive compensation from Towson University through the State of Maryland Central Payroll Bureau.

Non-Employee

An individual who does not receive wages through the Towson University payroll system. Examples include job applicants, consultants, researchers, guests, and students.

Student Travel

All students should work with their immediate supervisor, faculty sponsor or Chair regarding travel opportunities. Once travel funding is approved students should reach out to the Business Travel Office for guidance on travel planning, payment options and the reimbursement process.

Group Travel Planning

Most group travel planning has special needs and requires special University resources and instruction. Faculty and staff planning a group travel event (2 or more individuals) should contact the Business Travel Office to schedule an appointment for a pre-travel planning meeting to review policy, procedures, and payment options.

Travel Policy Clarification and Pre-Planning

Travelers are expected to research and make their own travel arrangements. However, the Business Travel Office is available to assist with policy clarification and pre-payment options. All individuals traveling on official university business are expected to exercise the same care incurring expenses, as would a prudent person traveling for personal reasons. Travel for business should be conducted at a minimum cost of achieving the success of the mission.

Event Registrations or Conference Memberships

Travelers should complete their travel authorization as soon as possible to be able to request early bird registration discounts. The preferred payment method would be the departments Visa Procurement Card.

Airline Reservations

University Travelers must make advanced airline bookings using the least expensive and most direct route or other reasonable routing that results in a lower fare. The State of Maryland does not allow first class, business select fares, or any type of upgrade. If an exception is needed to this rule employees must reach out to the Business Travel Office for guidance prior to the purchase of the expense. The employee, if granted the exception, may need to provide documented proof for the expense.

Be sure to consider and fully understand the airfare's applicable restrictions, change and cancellation penalties before accepting the itinerary. In the event of changed plans, cancellation, or penalties the airfare may be reimbursable provided that the cancellation or change was for the convenience of the university or necessitated by circumstances of an emergency nature affecting the traveler.

The State of Maryland provides flight insurance for university employees' airline travel, therefore, additional insurance purchased by the traveler is not reimbursable.

Travelers must use United States air carriers in compliance with the federal "Fly America Act" when flying on federal funds to foreign destinations unless otherwise directed by the federal sponsor.

Lodging and Hotels

All travelers should select the most reasonable and appropriate room accommodations. Airbnb's can be used when it is more cost effective than a hotel, the length of stay is extended and/or when it is more cost effective for multiple travelers to room together for a long period of time. Travelers should request tax exemption, educational or government agency discounts when requesting lodging arrangements.

Cancelling reservations is the responsibility of the traveler. Penalties incurred are reimbursable if the cancellation was for the convenience of the university or based on an emergency with the traveler. Any non-official traveler utilizing accommodations is the personal responsibility of the traveler. Some miscellaneous lodging expenses are reimbursable, such as business telephone calls charged to the room.

Charges for in-room entertainment, room service, damages, or other items of a personal nature are not reimbursable.

For guidance on making, and paying for, hotel accommodations for TU business guests, please see the [Accommodations Payments](#) site.

Rental Cars & Vans

Employees and student groups traveling on university business may request rental cars and vans through [Fleet Services](#). Employees may also rent cars through Enterprise (the USM preferred vendor), travel agencies, or directly from rental car vendors of their choice.

Select the most reasonably priced vehicle that accommodates the trip's requirements. This is typically the economy model. If you select a larger vehicle that's not needed for trip requirements, you must attach a quote for the least expensive, most reasonable option. You may only be reimbursed for this option.

Local Transportation

Travelers should remember to include the costs of local transportation in their travel planning budgets. Examples of local transportation include shuttles, taxi, bus, subways, Uber, and Lyft.

Parking

University travelers may seek reimbursement for reasonable parking with an itemized receipt that contains the merchant's name, date, location, and dollar amount indicating the payment method.

Local Airport Parking (BWI, Dulles International Airport, and Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport)

University travelers will be reimbursed for economical airport parking costs at the three major airports that serve the Washington–Baltimore metropolitan area. Travelers will be reimbursed for parking costs up to \$14/day at BWI and Dulles and up to \$19/day at Ronald Reagan.

When traveling for work or pleasure, USM employees are also encouraged to use the BWI Airport Fast Park perk. Employees can enroll in the [Fast Park Rewards Program](#) using a TU email address to receive discounts and rewards for parking at BWI. Employees using this perk will be reimbursed for parking costs related to business travel.

Tolls

Travels can be reimbursed for tolls with an itemized receipt that contains the dollar amount, date, location, and name of the merchant. If the traveler has an EZ Pass account they may upload the itemized report which indicates the date, time, location, and dollar amount of the toll.

Tipping

Reasonable tips are reimbursable. Tips should not exceed 20% of the subtotal on any travel expense except for baggage handling and maid service. Travelers can tip \$ 1.00 per bag on the day of arrival and departure for bagging handling and can tip housekeeping \$1.00 per day.

Meal Per Diem Rates for Domestic Travel

Travelers should use the meal per diem rates listed below for domestic travel. Rates are subject to change each fiscal year. All meal rates are inclusive of taxes and tips; alcoholic beverages are not reimbursable. Use the [high-cost metropolitan area listing](#) to determine if the high-cost rate applies to your destination.

Meal	Standard	High Cost
------	----------	-----------

Breakfast	\$15.00	\$15.00
Lunch	\$18.00	\$20.00
Dinner	\$30.00	\$33.00
Total Meal Cost	\$63.00	\$68.00

Note: These are the FY24 per diem rates. Rates are subject to change each fiscal year.

Meal Eligibility for non-Overnight Travel

Breakfast: Reimbursable when an individual's trip begins two hours or more prior to normal work start time. Lunch: The cost of lunch may not be reimbursed unless the travel involves absence overnight or unless an employee meets eligibility requirements for both breakfast and dinner reimbursement.

Dinner: Reimbursable when the trip stop time falls two hours or more after normal work stop time.

*Generally, the standard workday for full-time employees is 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. Please refer to the university's [Hours of Work and Attendance Policy](#) for more details.

Meal Eligibility at Conferences & Meetings

If the registration fee for a conference, convention, seminar, or training meeting includes the cost of meals, travelers may not request additional per diem or reimbursement for the included meal. For example, if lunch is provided and included as part of the registration fee, travelers cannot also claim per diem for lunch on that day.

Non-Contiguous/Non-Foreign United States (OCNUS)

For non-continental travel, Towson University refers to the "Local Meals" column found on the Defense Travel Management Office website for determining reimbursable meal per diems. Examples of non-continental travel include Puerto Rico, Guam, U.S. Virgin Islands, etc.

For partial day travel, per diem should be calculated based on the total Local Meal Rate as follows: 15% Breakfast, 25% Lunch, and 60% Dinner. When using the [Defense Travel Management Office Per Diem](#) page, select "Exclude Military Installations" to simplify search results.

For Non-Travel meal reimbursements, please see the University's [Catering and Meal Coupon Policy](#).

Privately Owned Vehicle Usage & Mileage Reimbursement

Any employee who is properly insured may use their privately-owned vehicle for travel on university business. Employees who use a privately-owned vehicle can request reimbursement in accordance with the current approved rate established by the State of Maryland Department of Budget & Management. The chart below details the most recent mileage rates. New rates are typically announced each January and July.

Mileage Allowance	Effective Dates
.67 cents per mile	January 1, 2024

65.5 cents per mile	January 1, 2023
62.5 cents per mile	July 1, 2022
58.5 cents per mile	January 1, 2022
56.0 cents per mile	January 1, 2021

An employee can claim two types of mileage reimbursements:

- Regular individual day or overnight travel
- Monthly or semester mileage – For employees who travel frequently throughout the month or semester. These employees should keep a mileage log and consult with their department regarding mileage/travel deadlines for reimbursement.

Vehicle Mileage Calculator, Driving Directions, Maps

The employee will document travel using the mapping device [Google Maps](#). It is only necessary to provide a screen shot of the total mileage results. The employee is not required to provide step by step driving directions. PDF or Doc is the preferred file type when attaching the screenshot to a travel authorization or expense report.

To calculate the mileage eligible for reimbursement, employees should deduct their daily commute miles from the total miles claimed on the trip expense report. This is done because employees' daily commute miles from home to their regular work location are not reimbursable per state regulations. Exceptions to this are if the trip starts and ends at the regular work location or if the trip starts or ends on a non-duty day. In that case, travelers can claim the total trip miles on the expense report.

Vehicle Insurance

Employees who drive state vehicles, rented vehicles or their privately owned vehicle for state business must be properly insured. Please contact the Office of Environmental Health & Safety for insurance information regarding collision damage coverage, personal liability, and other insurance considerations. Car Rental Coverage Collision Damage Waiver (CDW/LDW) is only reimbursable for car rentals outside the United States or when a non-employee is renting a car on university business. Maryland is self-insured; therefore, CDW/LDW is not reimbursable for employees' renting cars in the United States.

Standard Monthly Mileage Log

The [Standard Mileage Log](#) is available on the Business Travel website for faculty and staff to use when tracking monthly mileage. Individuals who request mileage reimbursement for a day or overnight trip do not need to submit a mileage log. Travelers who use the log create an expense report in Stratus, select the expense type Daily Mileage along with other expenses related to the trip, and attach the log to the expense report.

Mileage Log Reimbursement Example

The employee in this example below has various travel scenarios. Their regular work location is at the main campus. Their one-way commute miles from home are 10 miles. Their regular duty days are Monday through Friday.

Travel Day	Example Purpose	Trip Type	Starting Point	Destination	Ending Point	Miles Traveled	Commute Miles	Reimbursed Miles
Monday	Instruct Class	Round Trip	Home	TUNE	Home	81.2	(20)	61.2
Tuesday	Meeting	Round Trip	TU	UMCP	TU	93.4	0	93.4
Wednesday	Meeting	Round Trip	Home	UMCP	Home	113.4	(20)	93.4
Thursday	Meeting	One Way	TU		UMCP	46.7	0	46.7
Thursday	Meeting	One Way	UMCP		Home	56.7	(10)	46.7
Friday	Meeting	One Way	Home	UMCP	TU	103.4	(10)	93.4
Saturday	Depart for Conference	One Way	Home		BWI	30	0	30
Sunday	Away at conference							
Monday	Return from Conference	One Way	BWI		Home	30	(10)	20

Explanation: The first Monday and the Wednesday trips are from home to destination, then return home. Deduct round trip commute miles = 20.

Tuesday's example is from campus to destination, then return to campus. No commute miles involved.

Thursday is an example of an employee's workday traveling from campus to UMCP and then home.

- Two entries are used here – each expressed one way.
 - For the first half, enter TU to College Park. No commute miles involved.
 - For the second half, enter College Park to home. Subtract one way commute miles = 10.

Friday is an example of an employee going to a meeting before coming to the office. Commute miles = 10.

Saturday is an example of an employee leaving for a conference. This is a non-duty day for this employee, so no commute miles are deducted.

The second Monday is the employee returning from their conference. This is a regular duty day, subtract commute miles = 10

International Travel Planning Resources

International Travel Advisories, Passports & Visas

University travelers should regularly check the [US State Department website](#) for travel restrictions and cautions as well as information regarding passports and Visas.

International Pre-Travel Support Documentation

All university travelers who plan to travel internationally must complete a travel waiver agreement and travel warning representation. These approved documents must be attached to the Travel Authorization before submitting for approval in Stratus. Information on these documents can be found on the [TU Office of the Provost](#) website. Prior to making any International Travel arrangements, please refer to the published policy regarding International Travel.

International Guests

Departments wishing to invite international faculty, guests and advisors should first contact the Non-Resident Alien (NRA) Tax Office to initiate the international travel approval process prior to extending an invitation to their guest. Once the NRA tax office has approved their travel funding sources and obtained required approvals, university resources may be used to assist in purchasing travel arrangements.

International Meal Per Diem Schedule

Towson University refers to the [US State Department Meal Per Diems](#) as a guideline for establishing reimbursable meal per diem limitations for international travel.

Reimbursement rates are based on the applicable Meal and Incidental Expense (M&IE) rate of the U.S. State Department in effect at the time of travel. A partial day's per diem should be calculated based on the Total Meal and Incidental Expense Rate as follows: 15% breakfast, 25% lunch, and 60% dinner.

International Travel Receipt Requirements

Travelers should record the rate of currency exchange in effect at the time of travel on each receipt and show how the reimbursement amount was calculated. Travelers should also provide brief English translations of any receipts written in a foreign language to identify what the receipt is documenting.

If travelers do not have evidence of the exchange fee paid, they must use the state of Maryland's required [converter tool](#) which will allow the traveler to provide screen images for each travel expense.

Payment Options for University Travel Expenses

Visa Procurement Card

Departments may use this payment method to pay conference or travel-related registration fees. All other travel-related expenses are blocked by the vendor on the VISA Procurement card.

Business Travel Office Credit Card

The Business Travel Office can assist with hotel accommodations and major transportation using the BMO Diners Club MasterCard. We encourage all staff, faculty, and students to take advantage of this payment option. The traveler must have their travel authorization submitted with all approvals before any travel arrangements or payments can be made.

To request a Business Travel Office payment for hotels, please contact the hotel to make your reservation and request the hotel to send a quote and room confirmation, along with a credit card

authorization form to travel@towson.edu. The Business Travel office will confirm that the traveler has an approved travel authorization in Stratus Financials before confirming the payment reservation.

For all other travel items using online payment arrangements, such as airfare, rail or registration, travelers should make an appointment to use the Business Travel Office Support Station by sending a request to travel@towson.edu.

Group MasterCard Travel Program

The University offers a Group MasterCard through BMO Financial Diners Club to all Towson University faculty and staff **who travel out of the country or lead departmental programs**. Any traveler requesting a Group Diners Mastercard must send an email to travel@towson.edu explaining the travel needs for the card. The Business Travel Office will determine if the Diners MasterCard is the best payment option to the employee or provide other payment options to assist with travel needs.

Personal Funds Use

Travelers should use personal funds to pay for nominal travel costs such as per diem, parking, tolls, and gas associated with day trips and university event meal expenses. All travelers may seek reimbursement for personal expenses after the trip or event.

Invoice from Vendor

Travelers may have a situation in which a vendor will agree to invoice the university for travel-related expenses such as registration, training fees, lodging or transportation expenses. Vendors should submit invoices electronically to stratusAPinvoices@towson.edu and reference your department name or a specific contact. See the [Accounts Payable website](#) for more information on vendor invoicing.

Preferred Travel Vendors

The University System of Maryland (USM) contracted travel agencies to assist university employees with their travel plans. Contact your travel agent below to book your flight or train tickets. The travel agent will contact the Business Travel Office regarding your travel request for payment. The Business Travel Office will confirm that your travel authorization has been approved and that you have enough funding to cover the expense. The Business Travel Office will send an email providing approval for the travel agency to charge our Group Mastercard on file. The travel agencies do charge a service fee which will be charged to your department along with the cost of flight.

Preferred Travel Vendor Contacts

Globetrotters (Service Fee \$24.00)	Town and Country Travel (Service Fee \$20.00)
Kim Noppenberger, Reservations Manager	Dino Luzzi, President 102 W Pennsylvania Ave Suite # 504 Towson, Maryland 21204
301-570-0800 ext. 123	410-825-4535
kima@globetrottermgmt.com	ocmd125@aol.com

Quick Guide for Allowable and Prohibited Expenses

Type of Expense	Allowed?
Alcoholic beverages and associated taxes	No
Registration fees – conference-related	Yes
Airline or hotel cancellation fees (except for emergencies and for the convenience of the university)	No
Excessive baggage when needed to support university equipment and supplies	Yes
Telephone, fax, and Wi-Fi for the performance of official university duties	Yes
Mileage reimbursement at rate approved by the state	Yes
Rental car	Yes
Ground transportation – reasonable use of taxi, bus, Uber, Lyft, shuttles and subways	Yes
Toll charges	Yes
Parking for events, meetings, hotels, etc. Airport parking maximum \$12 per day	Yes
Laundry after the first week of travel	Yes
Gratuities – Not to exceed 20% of the subtotal – exception baggage handling \$1.00 per bag & housekeeping \$1.00 per day	Yes
Personal items – Example: sunscreen, toothpaste, deodorant, soap, etc.	No
Any expenses incurred on the behalf of a spouse, family member or companion	No
Flight insurance	No
Personal Accident Insurance (PAI)	No
Personal Effects Insurance (PEI)	No
Collision damage waiver/non-employee traveler	Yes
Exchange rate fees	Yes
Foreign car rental	Yes
Passport/Visa for official travel	Yes

How to Manage Receipts

Itemized receipts are required for all travel expenses including airfare, airport/train station parking, rail ticket, car rental, ground transportation, lodging, conference/event registration, rental vehicle fuel, and any meal reimbursed more than the USM per diem amount allowed for that meal. A credit card or bank statement alone does not satisfy the receipt requirement. Receipts are used to verify that the travel services purchased were used for the approved traveler, dates, and location for which official travel was approved. Receipts also document the actual cost and payment of each expense. PDF, DOC and JPEG are the preferred file types to receipts and back up documentation. Please keep this in mind when saving or storing receipts and documentation.

Hotels

Hotel confirmations do not qualify as a receipt. All travelers upon check out from the hotel or any type of lodging must obtain an itemized receipt which provides the dates of service, sales tax, room or county occupancy tax, room charges, parking, and any additional incidentals. Travelers may use third party travel sites such as Airbnb, Expedia, Priceline, Booking.com etc., but should be aware that their receipts sometimes do not provide all the information that is required for reimbursement. Therefore, in addition to the receipt or confirmation provided from the third party the traveler is still required to obtain an itemized receipt from the hotel or lodging facility which reflects the arrival and departure date even if the statement balance is zero dollars. **The importance of the itemized receipt is to make sure only allowable charges are submitted to the state for reimbursement.**

Air & Rail

A valid flight receipt will include the travelers name, confirmation number, amount paid which should display payment method, flight credit confirmation number with original payment method, and flight itinerary. A rail ticket receipt will have the travelers name, reservation number, amount paid indicating payment method and itinerary.

Meal Per Diem

No receipt is required to receive up to the per diem for a meal.

Local Transportation

A valid itemized receipt is required for reimbursement for Uber's, Lyft's, Buses, Taxi's, Subway, and shuttles. Most transportation merchants email you a receipt immediately after the ride which provides a detailed receipt including driver, location, date, and payment method. Most transactions are paid online or through a mobile application which gives the traveler access to their receipt history.

Parking & Toll

A valid itemized receipt is required. Most parking facilities require the transaction at a park pay machine or meter which provides an itemized receipt with the company name, date, time, and amount paid. Most tolls are now cashless, therefore, the easiest way to obtain a receipt is through an E-Z-pass statement which documents date, location, time, and dollar amount paid.

Missing Receipts

Travelers are to make every effort to obtain an itemized receipt. Employees that are missing itemized receipts that have requested reimbursement will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis, and exceptions granted on an extremely limited basis. If the Business Travel office grants an exception after consulting with the state of Maryland, a Missing Receipt Affidavit will be required to be attached to the expense report.

Stratus Travel Authorization

All official, overnight university travel must be preapproved and documented. Any traveler who fails to obtain prior authorization may be liable for the expenses incurred. The Stratus travel authorization navigational guides and instructions can be found on the [Business Travel website](#).

Travel Funding

It is the responsibility of the traveler to consult with their department to determine financial support for their business trip. Travelers may use one or multiple cost centers.

Documentation

All travel authorizations must have support documentation regarding the purpose of the trip. The documentation must layout the event, dates, and location. Examples of acceptable documentation could be a support brochure, agenda of events, invitation, image of a website, or an itinerary of planned research. Travelers should refer to their specific department or college level if any additional documents are required. PDF, DOC, and JPEG are the preferred file types to receipts and back up documentation. Please avoid attaching HTML, MSG, and EXCEL files to your Travel Authorization.

Approvals

Once submitted by the traveler, the Stratus travel authorization form will route to the traveler's immediate supervisor and the Business Travel Office for review and approval.

Timeframe

All travelers must submit their travel authorization requests prior to the trip departure date. The Business Travel Office suggests 30 days in advance of trip departure to allow time for university approvals. This will enable travelers to have better access to the least expensive travel arrangements, discounts, and the opportunity to explore payment options for travel expenses. There is no limitation on how far in advance a travel authorization may be completed.

Exception/ Modification

The only travel that does not require pre-approval is travel with no overnight stay.

Business meals or event food reimbursements do not require a travel authorization form. See the university's Catering and Meal Coupon Policy for additional information.

If a traveler (faculty or staff) requires any modification or special accommodation to travel plans that are outside of the University System of Maryland (USM) and State policy, they **must** reach out to the Business Travel Office who will work with Human Resources to obtain approval PRIOR to the trip.

occurring. Travelers who do not obtain proper approval prior to incurring the expense will be responsible for the difference.

Add or Manage Delegates

Travelers can add and/or manage delegates to allow someone to prepare expenses on their behalf. See the navigation guide on Adding or Managing Delegates.

Stratus Travel Expense Report

Faculty and staff will request reimbursement on an expense report for all business and travel-related personal expenses. **No prepaid expenses.** The Stratus Travel Expense Report navigational guides and instructions can be found on the [Business Travel website](#).

Timeframe

All employees should file an expense report as soon as they return from their business trip. The Business Travel Office recommends 5 Business days to ensure prompt reimbursement. All employees should be aware of their departmental deadlines and make sure all travel is processed within the fiscal year guidelines.

Travel Funding

Travel funding cost center(s) were already approved prior to the trip when the travel authorization was completed. Travelers should use their approved travel authorization as a reference when completing their travel expense report for reimbursement of personal expenses only.

Approvals

Once the expense report is submitted for approval, the travel expense report will route to the traveler's immediate supervisor, cost center manager (s), financial steward (s), and lastly the Business Travel Office for review and approval.

Business Travel Audit

The Business Travel Office is responsible for auditing expense reports by making sure that all travel related expenses are compliant with all applicable USM, Towson University and State of Maryland travel policies.

Expense Report Reimbursement Process

Once the Business Travel Office completes the audit process, the expense report displays a status of "Paid." This means the expense report was sent to the State of Maryland for payment processing. From that "Paid" date, it will take approximately 14-21 days to receive payment either via direct deposit or check. * All employees that receive payroll funds by direct deposit will also receive their expense

reimbursements by direct deposit. Checks will only be issued from the Treasurer's Office for employees who are not signed up for direct deposit through payroll.

TU employees can access the [General Accounting Division's Online Service Center](#) to track payment status once it has been submitted to the state.

DocuSign Student Travel Authorization

All official, overnight university travel must be preapproved. Any student who fails to obtain prior authorization may be liable for the expenses incurred. Day trips do not require a travel authorization. The Student Travel Authorization Request link can be found on the [Business Travel website](#).

Travel Funding

Students and their supervisor or sponsoring faculty will determine how their travel is going to be funded. Prior to completing any travel forms the student should know the total dollar amount, cost center(s), department name, and approver names and emails. It is the responsibility of the sponsoring department to make sure the student is fully aware that their travel experience may not be fully funded by the department, grant, or travel award. Therefore, any travel expenses not covered by the university is the student's personal responsibility.

Estimated Expenses – Payment Options

Prior to making any payments or arrangements, students should be sure to research all estimated expenses necessary for the travel such as registration fee, hotel, transportation, meals, parking, mileage, tolls, etc. The student's sponsoring department may be able to use the department's Visa Procurement Card for registration fees if the expense is fully funded. The Business Travel office can assist students with major transportation and hotel accommodations if the full expense is funded by their cost center.

Documentation

The only documentation required to be attached to the travel authorization is a supporting document such as a conference brochure along with agenda, research project, invitation to present a paper, field work, etc. The document must include dates, location, and the type of event. Some departments may require additional documentation before approval is granted. Check with the department who is funding your travel for any documentation that may be required.

Approval Workflow

The approval workflow for the DocuSign form is student (initiates the form in DocuSign), immediate supervisor and or sponsoring faculty/chair, and final approval from the Business Travel office. Students must know the name and email address of their immediate supervisor and or sponsoring faculty/chair to initiate the DocuSign form.

Timeframe

All students must submit their travel authorization requests prior to the trip departure date. The Business Travel office suggests 30 days in advance of trip departure to allow time for university approvals. This will enable students to have better access to the least expensive travel arrangements, discounts, and the opportunity to explore payment options for travel expenses. There is no limitation on how far in advance a travel authorization may be completed.

DocuSign Student Travel Expense Report

All students that are requesting reimbursement for business travel personal expenses will complete a Student Travel Expense report in DocuSign.

Travel Funding

The travel funding that was submitted on the pre-approved travel authorization for overnight trips will be used on the travel expense report for personal expenses only. **No prepaid expenses.** The student will need to know the cost center (s) and department, as well as the names and emails of all approvers when completing the DocuSign form. The student will need to know this information in order to initiate the DocuSign form.

Management of receipts and support documentation

Students will need to upload any required itemized receipts for personal expenses as well as any supporting documentation for the trip. No receipt is required for meals up to the per diem amount.

Submission of DocuSign Expense Report

All students should file an expense report in DocuSign as soon as they return from their business trip. The Business Travel Office recommends five business days to ensure prompt reimbursement. All students should be aware of their departmental deadlines and make sure all travel is processed within fiscal year guidelines.

Approval Workflow

The approval workflow is the student (initiates the form), immediate supervisor or sponsoring faculty/chair, cost center manager (s), financial steward (s), and lastly the Business Travel Office for final audit and review.

Expense Report Reimbursement Process

Students can expect to receive reimbursement approximately 14 to 21 business days from when the report is transmitted to the state. Expense Reports are sent to the state after the Business Travel Office completes the expense report audit. Then the expense report and all supporting documentation are submitted to the state of Maryland for payment processing. Once the Business Travel Office receives a fully executed student expense report, it will be sent to the State of Maryland within 5 business days, if there are no issues on the expense report.

Stratus Travel Resources, Training Opportunities and Contact Information

Desk Top Resource Guides

[Stratus Travel Checklist](#)

[Travel Guide](#)

[Business Travel Manual](#)

Web Support

<https://www.towson.edu/financialservices/travel/>

[University Of Maryland System Board of Regents Policy VIII-11.00](#)

Business Travel Training Opportunities

This Business Travel Training will provide all travelers with policy clarification, pre-travel planning and resources, information regarding preferred service providers, payment options, and provide navigation and instructions on the travel authorization and expense report reimbursement process. This training is designed to meet everyone's needs, from a new TU employee to the TU traveler wanting to brush up on their knowledge and skills.

Mileage Reimbursement Training

Mileage reimbursement using the mileage log is for those travelers who keep monthly, mid-semester, and semester long mileage for travel. Request an appointment on how to complete your expense report using the mileage log by emailing travel@towson.edu.

Business Travel Office Contacts

Email: travel@towson.edu

Business Travel Support Line: 410-704-5421

Travel Support Station Appointment: 410-704-5421

Individual and Departmental Training Requests: 410-704-5421