

# Travel Policy

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## POLICY

### General Information

The Northeastern State University (NSU) Travel Procedures have been developed in accordance with Oklahoma State Statutes. The Travel Procedures apply to NSU officials and employees who perform a substantial and necessary service for Northeastern State University. NSU participates in the State of Oklahoma Agency Travel Program, which establishes the use of the state-appointed online booking tool (OBT) through a Travel Management Company (TMC) for acquisition of travel services in support of official State Business. The OBT must be used for all travel requests and claims, with the exception of multiple funding travel, grant travel, non-employee, and student travel. Paper travel documents are required when travel arrangements cannot be completed using the Online Booking Tool (OBT). The OBT is credit-card-driven to assist NSU departments with tracking and managing travel purchases. All purchases shall be made in accordance with State statutes, administrative code, and policy, which includes but may not be limited to:

- Central Purchasing Act, 74 O.S. § 85.1 et seq.
- State Travel Reimbursement Act, 74 O.S. § 500 et seq.

- Office of Management and Enterprise Services (OMES) Codified Rules 260:115
- NSU Purchasing Card (P-Card) Policy and Procedures
- State of Oklahoma Statewide Accounting Manual
- NSU Internal Purchasing, P-card, and Travel Policies and Procedures

Non-employee travel expenses may be paid by NSU if the travel expenses are:

- Incurred by a student traveling at NSU's request.
- Incurred at NSU's request by an individual in the course of seeking employment with NSU.
- Provided for in a grant or contract for a conference participant when no other honorarium or contract will be made for the individual's service or participation.
- Incurred by an individual who has volunteered his services and payment for the individual's services will not be made.

Persons performing official travel as authorized by their agency are responsible for the preparation and submission of their travel documents. The traveler should obtain appropriate approvals, signatures and receipts for all applicable charges.

This policy aims to adhere with the codes listed above. Contact Accounts Payable with any questions or disputes. Accounts Payable will partner with the appropriate Vice President for any final decisions.

## PROCEDURE(S)

### Typical Travel Request Sequence

A typical travel request consists of the following steps:

1. The traveler attends travel training to obtain online booking tool (OBT) access prior to submitting a travel request (pre-approval) and/or travel vouch/expense report.
2. An NSU Pre-approval Travel Request shall be required for overnight travel, both in-state and out-of-state indicating that the travel has been planned and approved internally according to department

procedures and policies, and establishing a maximum budget for said travel.

\*\* Travel must not be booked until pre-approval is granted.

3. The traveler or travel coordinator accesses the OBT and makes travel reservations using an NSU P-Card or the employee's personal credit card.
4. The traveler or travel coordinator completes the registration or booking of other services not available through the OBT using an NSU P-Card or the employee's personal credit card.
5. Following travel, a travel expense report with all receipts and other documentation of expenditures, whether claimed for reimbursement or paid through an NSU P-Card must be submitted through the OBT. Documentation such as travel request (pre-approval), agenda, flight ticket, registration, hotel receipt, taxi, baggage, etc.

Travel reflected on a Travel Reimbursement Voucher (Substitute OSF Form 19) or the state-appointed online booking tool (OBT) must be submitted to Accounts Payable within 31-days following the return of the trip.

Reminder, if travel expenses have been paid with an NSU P-Card, a copy of the Travel Reimbursement Voucher/Travel Expense Request and Pre-Approval Travel Request must be maintained in the cardholder's P-Card documentation file.

## Training

It is mandatory that travelers, travel coordinators, and travel approvers attend travel training provided by Accounts Payable prior to utilizing the state-appointed online booking tool (OBT) in order to gain access to the system. Training can be requested through the NSU Accounts Payable travel webpage.

The traveler is ultimately responsible for ensuring travel arrangements are in accordance with state and university policies, regulations and statutes. Any excess expenses over state and university limitations may be deducted from the reimbursement. (Statewide Accounting Manual 10.3)

Travelers submitting Travel Reimbursement Voucher/Expense Reports with recurring errors may receive notice of additional training requirements before submitting their next Travel Reimbursement Voucher/Expense report.

## Travel Authorization

Travel must be necessary for the proper execution of official University business or in justifiable pursuit of the University's educational objectives. An NSU Pre-approval Travel Request must be completed with appropriate approvals prior to booking any overnight in-state or out of state travel.

The employee must clearly state the purpose of travel on the Travel Request (pre-approval) and Travel Reimbursement Voucher/Expense Report. The purpose must be concise but specific. For example, "meeting" is too vague and will require additional clarification. For example, "meeting with the state comptroller about a special account or teaching class in Broken Arrow" provides a useful description of the purpose of travel.

### **Required Documentation:**

- Pre-approval Travel Request approved by account sponsor prior to travel.
- If applicable, include a Presidential approval letter.

## General Expense Information

### **Limitations:**

- University travel authorization and reimbursement is based upon actual expenses incurred.
- If travel expenditures are to be paid from a grant or contract account, travel policies of the grant or contract may specify reimbursement of expenses at a rate different from the amount allowed by the NSU Travel Procedures. Documentation from the specific grant or contract must be attached to the Travel Reimbursement Voucher (Substitute OSF Form 19). If the contract or grant agreement simply provides the availability of amounts without stipulation of how they are to be expended or accounted for, reimbursement of travel expenses shall be subject to the standard provisions of the State Travel Reimbursement Act (STRA)

- An expense that is at the official duty station of an employee will not be reimbursed. The “official station” is defined as the primary employment location.
- The limits on travel expense reimbursement, specified in this policy, are not to be construed as an indication of the amounts that should be spent. These are maximum amounts above which reimbursement cannot be made.
- Specific policies that apply to various types of travel expenses are listed on the next several pages. If you have any questions about reimbursement of expenses, contact Accounts Payable.
- University P-Cards may be used to pay for most, but not all travel expenses. Care should be taken to use the P-Card only for authorized expenses. If there should be an error, the traveler shall reimburse NSU immediately. Repeated use of a P-Card for non-authorized expenses will result in the loss of the use of the P-Card and/or disciplinary action up to and including termination.

## **Non-Reimbursable Expenses**

Non-reimbursable expenses are defined as travel-related costs that are personal, discretionary, or incurred for the traveler’s convenience rather than for official university business, or that otherwise fall outside approved travel authorization, state regulations, or university policy. Examples of non-reimbursable expenses include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Late check-out/room guarantee charges.
- Baggage tips (with the exception of baggage assistance related to a known disability).
- Entertainment.
- Parking tickets or other traffic tickets.
- Transportation tip amounts exceeding authorized amount of up to **20%** of the total fare, must be reimbursed or reduced from travel reimbursement (State of Oklahoma Policy & Procedures for Purchase Card and Online Booking Tool).
- Airline seat preference charges (unless documented disability or medical condition exists and pre-authorized by the appropriate NSU Vice President or the President of the University).
- Valet services (Exception: provided documentation from hotel website that states valet parking is required).
- Pre-flight convenience check-in fees.

- Unauthorized airline ticket change fees (if not approved by the NSU President or the appropriate Vice President, airline ticket changes will be considered unauthorized).
- Travelers may use the pre-check (TSA Pre✓®) program offered by the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) for expedited security screening. Any fees that may be associated with this program are the responsibility of the traveler and are not reimbursable expenses.

## Transportation Expenses

Transportation for persons traveling should be by common carrier (air, train, bus) wherever practical. Travelers should take advantage of round trip rates when available. Travel should be by the most direct route possible. Any individual traveling by an indirect route must bear the extra expense.

Regardless of the mode of transportation (including privately owned vehicles), reimbursement for out-of-state transportation shall not exceed the least cost amount documented through the state-appointed online booking tool (OBT) for coach airplane fare at the time of purchase. If another mode of travel is selected with no justifiable need, reimbursement for out-of-state transportation costs shall not exceed that of state contract coach/economy class fare.

### **Airfare**

The use of airplane travel is required when traveling out of state except in instances when it is cheaper to drive. Accommodations should be limited to coach class. Airfare travel shall be purchased either through a designated departmental travel coordinator or by the traveler using the state-appointed online booking tool (OBT). If the assistance of a travel agent is needed, contact the Travel Management Company (TMC), contact information is located on the Accounts Payable travel webpage. All non-employee/student travel must be booked through the TMC; however, the online booking tool must still be used to search and obtain flight quotes.

Travel coordinators may enter their P-Card number in a traveler's profile to purchase airfare. The travel coordinator's email must be in the traveler's profile and upon receipt of the invoice, the travel coordinator should delete their card number from the traveler's profile. If the travel coordinator needs to book several trips within a short period of time, the card number may be left in the traveler's profile for a limited period of time.

Travelers booking through the state-appointed online booking tool may use pre-check (TSA Pre✓®) program offered by the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) for expedited security screening. Any fees that may be associated with this program are the responsibility of the traveler and are not reimbursable expenses.

Charges incurred for exchange of travel tickets or change in transportation schedules may only be reimbursed or paid by the state if there is a true business or emergency reason and the change is advantageous to the state. Costs associated with changes made for personal convenience or benefit of the employee may not be reimbursed and if the agency pays directly for those costs, the employee must reimburse the agency. Charges incurred for weather related change may be reimbursable and are on a case by case basis. Contact Accounts Payable before submitting a Travel Expense Report.

*Personal credit or debit cards shall not be entered into the online booking tool to hold a flight reservation unless the traveler is paying out-of-pocket and being reimbursed for airfare. The card number entered to hold the reservation will be charged for the airfare.*

## **Using a Different Online Booking Tool (web-based)**

There may be instances when a traveler is able to document additional savings by booking directly through an airline instead of using the booking tool provided by the state. A refundable ticket should be purchased when not booking through the state-appointed online booking tool (OBT) or with the travel management company (TMC). Trip or ticket insurance would be allowed only in the case where the combined total of the airfare and the insurance is less than or equal to the cost of a refundable ticket. Travel booked through the airline will only be authorized with documentation of those savings.

In order to document savings, a quote for the same travel (including dates, approximate times, and point-to-point locations) from the OBT at date of purchase and the same airline must be provided. Authorized travel will be limited to the lower cost option. If the traveler does not provide an acceptable comparison, their airfare will be considered non-authorized and the traveler will be responsible for payment of this expense.

**Required Documentation:**

- State-appointed online booking tool (OBT) flight quotes showing least cost prices at time of booking, not pre-approval.
- Airline receipt showing \$0 balance due.
- Airline direct booking require fully refundable ticket documentation.

Documentation must be attached with your Travel Voucher/Expense Report to receive reimbursement.

**Flying vs. Driving Cost Comparison**

When traveling out of state, the default mode of transportation is flying. To receive reimbursement for mileage or a rental car for out-of-state travel, the cost must be compared to the cost of coach/economy airfare. A cost comparison to document savings must be done if the claimant drives a vehicle outside the state of Oklahoma on an overnight or day trip. In order to do the comparison, the Cost to Fly and Cost to Drive must be determined and submitted with the Travel Reimbursement Voucher/Expense Report.

**Required Documentation:**

The below items are required to be included on the fly vs drive comparison worksheet and submitted with the Travel Reimbursement Voucher/Expense Report if driving out-of-state.

*Cost to Fly*

1. A quote from the state-appointed online booking tool for the cost of airfare must be obtained before travel (unless it's an emergency trip) at least 21 days before the date of travel. The quote should be for dates and time reasonably applicable to those reflected on the conference agenda or trip itinerary.
2. The cost of the mileage to and from the airport with supporting Google Maps.
3. The round trip cost of ground transportation to/from airport to the conference/hotel at the destination. Obtain this information by providing Uber/Lyft quotes or taxi rates from the city destination.

4. Cost of check baggage fee. Rate cost must be for the same airline in items number 1.
5. Lowest cost of airport parking.

The total of the above five items will equal the total "cost to fly" on the fly vs drive worksheet.

### Cost to Drive

A comparison must be documented with a copy of a map from Google Maps showing the miles of travel from the point of departure and the destination. The total number of miles driven, times the mileage rate, will equal the "cost to drive." The maps must be included with the Travel Reimbursement Voucher/Expense Report. If a NSU Motor Pool vehicle is used, the daily fee amount must also be included in the comparison.

The lesser of the "cost to fly" or the "cost to drive" will be paid. The amount that is being paid is listed under mileage, with a note of explanation attached.

Any questions concerning the purchase of air travel should be directed to Accounts Payable.

## Automobile Travel

Generally, automobile travel pertains to in-state travel. Mileage is reimbursed following the State of Oklahoma reimbursement rate. The current rate can be found on the Accounts Payable webpage. Reimbursements are based upon shortest distance using Google Maps or the Car mileage map function in the state-appointed online booking tool.

Automobile transportation for out-of-state travel may be used to save time when common carrier transportation cannot be satisfactorily scheduled to cover a number of outlying places, or to reduce expenses when two (2) or more University employees are making the trip. A Flying vs. Driving cost comparison (detailed above) is required.

## Using Google Maps

- [Google Maps](https://www.google.com/maps) may be found at <https://www.google.com/maps>.
- If filing a Travel Reimbursement Voucher/Expense Report for multiple trips, be sure to use the paper Mileage Worksheet for miles to be

claimed or submit mileage on the state-appointed online booking tool (OBT).

The official duty station should be used on a regular working day unless the distance to/from home is shorter to/from the destination. For weekend or holiday travel, the start and end point may be the employee's home.

- Use round-trip maps only when travel begins and ends on the same day. For travel on different days, separate maps are required for each day.

Mileage reimbursement for multiple trips in a month must be submitted together by calendar month within 31 days following the last day of travel.

Note: State liability insurance will not cover damages to personal vehicles when traveling out of state.

#### **Required Documentation:**

- Google maps showing the shortest distance for each trip day.
- If not claiming mileage for an out-of-state trip, provide a short explanation (i.e., motor pool use, carpooled, family member drop off at airport, etc.).

Documentation must be attached with your Travel Reimbursement Voucher/Expense Report to receive reimbursement.

#### **Public Transportation**

Public transportation refers to local transportation used at the traveler's destination, including taxis, limousines, buses, subways, shuttles, and similar services.

- Charges are allowed for transportation between the airport and the hotel, or the location of an event or meeting.
- Charges are also permitted for travel between the hotel/lodging and a meeting or conference site located at a different address.
- Any other local transportation fares must include a clearly documented business purpose on the travel claim.
- Courtesy shuttles should be used when available.

#### **Tipping Guidelines:**

- Reasonable tips are allowed, not to exceed **20%** of the total fare.

## **In-State Reimbursement:**

- When requesting reimbursement for local transportation within the **State of Oklahoma**, a letter of justification signed by an account sponsor must accompany the reimbursement request.

## **Required Documentation:**

- An itemized receipt is required for any individual fare of \$25 or more. Each trip must show the to and from location of travel.
- Local transportation may be paid using a P-Card. In such cases, a receipt or ticket stub must also be retained with your P-Card file.
- Personal use of public transportation without a documented business purpose is **not reimbursable**.
- A letter of justification signed by an account sponsor must accompany the reimbursement request for In-State local transportation.

## **Leased Or Rented Automobiles**

NSU participates in the State of Oklahoma vehicle rental contract and has its own Motor Pool department from which a vehicle may be reserved. The current vendor is Enterprise. To lease an Enterprise vehicle, within the State of Oklahoma, please contact [NSU Motor Pool](#). A letter of justification signed by the Account Sponsor must be provided for utilizing rentals in and out-of-state if not from Enterprise.

## **In-State Vehicle Rentals**

Reimbursement for vehicles rented or leased within Oklahoma (whether from a rental agency or private party) for official state business shall not exceed the mileage reimbursement rate allowed for the use of a privately owned vehicle.

- In-State Vehicle Liability Coverage-The State of Oklahoma is self insured through the Risk Management Division of OMES. A copy of NSU's Certificate of Coverage may be obtained from your NSU Risk Management Coordinator or Motor Pool.

## **Out-of-State Vehicle Rentals**

Rental cars are generally not the preferred option for local travel at the event destination unless justified as the primary mode of transportation for the entire trip. However, a rental car may be approved if its total cost (rental plus parking) is less than the cost of available alternatives (e.g., taxi or shuttle). In such cases, cost comparison quotes (e.g., from taxi services) must be provided to show that the rental car was the most economical option.

- The actual cost of renting a vehicle outside of Oklahoma for official business may be paid using a P-Card.
- In this case, the liability insurance offered by the rental company should be included in the rental.

## **Personal Mileage**

If a rental car is used for both business and personal purposes, personal miles must be tracked. Reimbursement will be reduced proportionally based on the percentage of personal use.

## **Required Documentation:**

- A letter of justification signed by the account sponsor must be provided for rentals in and out-of-state rentals.
- Itemized rental receipt(s) showing \$0 balance.

Documentation must be attached with your Travel Reimbursement Voucher/Expense Report to receive reimbursement.

- **Out of State Vehicle Coverage** – The commercial insurance policy, provided through the Risk Management Division of OMES, provides liability coverage for out-of-state travel; however, an additional physical or Collision Damage Waiver (CDW) is advisable and strongly recommended if not renting a vehicle from the statewide contract vendor, Enterprise. Personal Accident Insurance (PAI), Personal Effects Insurance (PEI) and other supplemental liability insurance are considered personal expenses and are not reimbursable.

- **Purchasing Liability** coverage offered by the vendor nullifies state coverage and should not be purchased.
- **Foreign Vehicle Coverage** – It is strongly recommended that a Collision Damage Waiver (CDW) be purchased from the rental company, if renting a vehicle in a foreign country.
- **Foreign Travel Coverage** – All foreign travel should be reported to the Risk Management Division at least 30 days prior to overseas travel to receive area specific insurance coverage information. NSU’s Risk Management office can assist with this.

## Miscellaneous Travel Expenses

All miscellaneous travel expenses must be itemized on the Travel Reimbursement Voucher/Expense report. Original receipts are required to document P-Card expenditures or to request personal reimbursement.

## Authorized Miscellaneous Expenses

Reimbursement may be claimed for the following miscellaneous expenses:

- **Communications:** Telephone and internet charges may be reimbursed when incurred while conducting University business; a memo of explanation must be attached.
- **Registration:** Registration is an authorized expenditure.
  - A copy of the registration form is required documentation.
  - If registration was paid with an NSU Purchase Order, please include the PO Number and the amount.
  - If it was charged to an NSU P-Card, please write NSU CC on the Travel Reimbursement Voucher/Expense Report and the amount.
  - If the claimant paid for the registration, please include a copy of the receipt showing a \$0 balance or both sides of a canceled check, or a copy of the credit card statement.
  - If meals were included in the registration fee, the number of meals provided should be indicated on the form. If a dinner/banquet ticket is purchased along with the registration, include the cost of the ticket in the cost of the registration and subtract the meal from the total Per Diem amount.

- Parking Tickets or Moving Vehicle Violation Fines: all tickets/fines are the personal liability of the traveler and are not reimbursable expenses (except tickets for broken lights, etc. on State vehicles when the employee is not at fault). All fines shall be paid to the ticketing entity by the traveler. Fines may not be paid with the NSU P-Card.
- Parking: parking fees are authorized expenditures that may be paid with a P-Card when a receipt is provided, with the exception of Valet Parking which is a non-reimbursable expense.
- Toll Road Fees: tolls are authorized expenditures; however, the cost may not be paid with a P-Card. Receipts are required if over \$25.00.
- Baggage Fees: baggage fees are authorized expenditures limited to one bag each way. Receipts are required to document P-Card expenditures or to request personal reimbursement.
- Optional Business Activities: optional business activities are authorized expenditures, however may not be paid with a P-Card. A paid receipt that itemizes any optional business activities is required for reimbursement. These expenses should be "essential and necessary" activities that are related and connected with the general purposes of the conference, meeting, seminar, etc. A statement signed by the claimant attesting that these activities were essential and necessary expenses and a brief description of their importance must accompany the Travel Reimbursement Voucher/Expense Report. If the optional business activity included a meal, it must be deducted from the Per Diem total as described with the registration fees.

### **Required Documentation:**

- Itemized receipt showing \$0 balance for any authorized items purchased above.

Documentation must be attached with your Travel Reimbursement Voucher/Expense Report to receive reimbursement.

### **Non-authorized Miscellaneous Expenses:**

- Food, including room service. All food expenses are reimbursed at Per Diem rates.
- Personal services such as haircuts, shoeshines, etc.
- Gas, oil and repairs to privately owned vehicles.

# Meals And Lodging Expenses

## **Meal Per Diem**

Expenses for food while in travel status are authorized only on a reimbursement basis using established Per Diem rates. P-Cards may not be used to purchase food items or meals for an employee while traveling. Per Diem is only available for overnight travel. Because a Per Diem rate is used, it is not necessary to provide meal receipts as documentation.

To calculate per diem for travel reimbursement, use the state-appointed online booking tool (OBT) or the per diem calculator provided with the paper Travel Reimbursement Voucher. A copy of the Per Diem calculator for the location of travel must be printed and included with the Travel Reimbursement Voucher.

## **Travel Timing Limits:**

- Domestic Travel-Continental United States (CONUS)-Reimbursement for meals and lodging may begin no more than one calendar day before the event and may continue no more than one calendar day after the event ends.
- Out-of-Country or Non-CONUS Travel (e.g., Alaska, Hawaii)-Travel may begin up to two calendar days before the event and extend up to two calendar days after the conclusion of the event.

## **Per Diem Rates:**

- Rates vary by travel location and are based on the U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) Continental United States (CONUS) Per Diem rates for domestic travel.
- For international or non-CONUS travel (including Hawaii and Alaska), special rates apply.

## **Meal Deductions from Per Diem:**

- If meals and lodging are provided as a package, reimbursement may be based on a combined receipt, but the total must not exceed the amount that would have been allowed if meals and lodging were reimbursed separately. The receipt must show a breakdown of costs (e.g., meals, lodging, registration).
- Complimentary hotel breakfasts (included at no additional charge) do not need to be deducted.

- Continental breakfasts included in the registration fee must be deducted from the Per Diem
- Any meals included in the cost of registration or provided during the event must be deducted from the daily Per Diem, unless:
  - The meal required a separate payment and was not purchased by the traveler.
  - The traveler did not attend due to:
    - Attendance at a conflicting meeting
    - Required special attire
    - Documented medical reason

In such cases, a signed statement by the traveler explaining the reason for non-participation must be attached to the Travel Reimbursement Voucher/Expense Report.

### **Per Diem Calculation:**

- Per Diem is no longer calculated by quarters of the day.
  - The first and last day of travel are reimbursed at  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the daily Per Diem rate.
  - All intermediate travel days are reimbursed at the full daily rate, minus any meals provided.

### **Require Documentation:**

- A detailed conference agenda must be provided and must clearly show the start and end dates of the event, as well as the meals that were provided. These dates determine the number of days eligible for Per Diem reimbursement.
- A copy of the applicable Per Diem rates page from the GSA website must be printed and submitted with the Travel Reimbursement Voucher/Expense Report.
- Per Diem worksheet(s) is required to submit paper travel documents.

## **Lodging**

Lodging is an authorized expenditure when in overnight travel status. When required by the lodging establishment, the traveler's lodging may be posted to the P-Card in advance provided there is a full refund cancellation policy in place. A copy of the cancellation policy is required documentation for the P-Card expenditure.

Lodging expenses authorized will vary depending on the location of travel as identified in the Government Services Administration's (GSA) Continental United States (CONUS) rates for domestic locations. Special rates apply to out of the country trips. A complete listing of these rates can be obtained from the [GSA Per Diem](#) website. GSA updates rates on October 1 of each year. If lodging has been designated by a conference, the conference rate may be paid instead of the GSA rate. If you are unable to utilize the offered conference hotel rate, contact Accounts Payable for a list of accommodation exceptions.

Claimants who acquire less expensive lodging are authorized to be reimbursed up to the actual lodging expense, as long as both the room rate and the local transportation cost to the meeting location does not exceed the designated lodging rate.

*Please note that booking lodging is only permitted through the following options: state-appointed online booking tool, the conference if lodging is designated, or directly through the lodging establishment. Booking outside of these options is prohibited.*

The lodging establishment must provide a final receipt (folio) to the traveler once lodging services have been provided. All folio's must be itemized where room rate and taxes are separated. It is the traveler's responsibility to obtain the folio. Folio must be retained by the P-Card holder for the corresponding P-Card transaction and by traveler for the employee's corresponding reimbursement claim.

Please examine the hotel receipt to ensure that it reflects a \$0 balance:

- If the receipt shows more than one person in the room you must supply additional information to document reimbursement is being requested appropriately.
- Amounts that can be reimbursed under lodging are the daily single room charges plus taxes.
- Verify that in-state lodging does not include charges for the State of Oklahoma state, city and county tax. INSU's tax ID # is printed on the P-Card or the traveler can obtain a tax-exemption letter from the Purchasing department. Other taxes such as lodging tax, Municipality tax, Occupancy tax and Tourism tax may not be tax exempt.
- NSU is not exempt from Out-of State or Tribal taxes.

## **In-State Overnight Lodging**

Travel must be at least **60 map miles** one-way from claimant's official duty station and/or the traveler's home to qualify for reimbursement of lodging expenses.

### **Required Documentation:**

- The GSA lodging per diem rate for the location of travel. The applicable lodging rate for the trip depends on the location of the event, not the location of the lodging.
- The conference designates a hotel.
- If a conference hotel rate was used, documentation must reflect that the conference was held at that hotel and what the published conference rate was.
- Itemized hotel receipt reflecting \$0 balance.

Documentation must be attached with your Travel Reimbursement Voucher/Expense Report to receive reimbursement.

If there are no lodging expenses claimed on the Travel Reimbursement Voucher/Expense Report, such as when a claimant stays overnight with family or friends or receives free hotel cost, include this information in the remarks box or comment box.

## **Third party payment**

Occasionally the host of a conference may select an NSU employee as a guest speaker. In the event the host chooses to pay the airfare and lodging for the employee, the Travel Reimbursement Voucher is filed without seeking reimbursement for those expenses. It must be documented on the Travel Reimbursement Voucher/Expense Report that there will be no airfare and lodging claimed.

## **Travelers With Disabilities Or Medical Conditions**

Employees with documented disabilities or medical conditions may be authorized to incur baggage assistance or other disability-related expenses. For passengers of size requiring additional space during travel, consult the airline's policy. Travel requiring the booking of an additional seat will need to be made by phone through the Travel Management Company's toll-free number. It is required that a written exception approval be obtained prior to traveling to ensure smooth processing of the Travel Reimbursement

Voucher/Expense Report. Submit a request explaining the special situation to the appropriate NSU Vice President or the President of the University.

## **Non-Employee/Student Travel**

Reimbursement for travel must follow all sections within this policy. See P-card policy for approved expenses.

## **Signatures**

OMES Form 19 Travel Reimbursement Voucher/Expense report must be signed/approved by the traveler, attesting the claim is true and correct and no frequent travel miles earned from official state transportation have been used for personal purposes. Traveler is responsible to keep track of frequent travel miles and provide documentation on miles received and claimed when necessary.

An additional form signed by the traveler may be requested by Accounts Payable when it is known that frequent travel miles are being collected.

## **Reimbursement For Travel Expenses**

Upon completion of travel, a Travel Reimbursement Voucher/Expense Report must be submitted with all required documentation to Accounts Payable in the Business Affairs Office. All trip expenditures whether paid with P-Card or to be reimbursed must be included.

The traveler is responsible for preparation and submission of their travel documents. Proper completion of all pertinent information fields on the Travel Reimbursement Voucher/Expense Report is essential for prompt payment. Incorrect or partial completion of any of the required information risks return and/or rejection of the Travel Reimbursement Voucher/Expense Report.

Two Employee identification numbers are required for proper and timely processing of the Travel Reimbursement Voucher/Expense Report. If assistance is needed in retrieving either number contact Accounts Payable.

- OSF Vendor number must be entered on the Employee ID line. (Ex: 0000123456)
- Your NSU Banner ID number must be entered below the words "Banner ID" (upper right corner). (Ex: N00123456)

## Paper Travel Documents

The following items should be submitted to Accounts Payable in the Business Office for auditing and processing:

- The original NSU Pre-Approval Travel Request form for any overnight or out-of-state trip.
- One completed original NSU Travel Reimbursement Voucher signed and dated by Claimant and the account sponsor. See above for all required documentation.
- One Mileage Worksheet with the NSU Travel Reimbursement Voucher if claiming mileage for multiple trips signed and dated by the traveler and account sponsor.
- Per-diem calculation sheet(s) with GSA rates for date and location of travel.
- The original of any required letters of justification to explain unusual expenses of amounts claimed.
- All required documentation mentioned in the above procedures.

**Failure to provide the required receipts may result in revision of the claim and/or may not be reimbursable.**

All purchases made, with the exception of tolls under \$25 for a single day, regardless of the method of payment, require a copy of an itemized receipt including a minimum of the following information.

- Merchant name
- Date of purchase
- Description
- Unit price and quantity
- Transaction total

## Definitions

**Boarding Pass** - Means a document allowing a traveler to board an airline. A boarding pass may be presented in digital form on a smart phone, iPhone, or other electronic device.

**Conference Rate** - lodging designated by a conference.

**Expense Report** - Once the trip is completed, an expense report can be created for submission for reimbursement on the state-appointed online booking tool (OBT).

**Folio** - Means a document issued by a lodging facility detailing lodging charges.

**F.O.P.** -The fund, organization and program code paying for travel cost and listed on pre-approval travel request.

**Invoice** - Means a document issued by a vendor to effect payment for goods and services purchased using the P-Card or to be paid by check.

**Itinerary** - A document in which the places you will be traveling are listed.

**Lodging facility** - Hotel, motel, hostel, etc., that provide resting accommodations for travelers.

**Lodging rate** - The amount a lodging facility charges for nightly accommodations. Allowable lodging rates for each State are listed on the Government Services Administration (GSA) website.

**Official Duty Station** - The official duty station is the employee's or officer's official workstation/office.

**Online Booking Tool (OBT)** - Means an application that assists Travel Management Companies and travel agents to cater economically and quickly to large numbers of travelers. Synonymous with "online booking engine (OBE)."

**Payment confirmation** - A transaction document that can be part of a receipt, which shows a payment was issued and results in a \$0 balance.

**Per Diem** - The standard daily allowance for meals and incidental expenses (M&IE) incurred while in travel status. Allowable Per Diem rates for each state are listed on the Government Services Administration (GSA) website.

**Pre-Approval Travel Request**- Required request approved by account sponsor of the F.O.P. for all overnight and out-of-state travel prior to booking trip expenditures.

**Reimbursement** - Compensation by the State of Oklahoma for authorized out-of-pocket expenses incurred by the traveler while conducting NSU business.

**Single transaction limit** - Means the maximum spending (dollar) limit a traveler or Travel Coordinator is authorized to charge to a P-Card in a single transaction. For travel purposes, lodging and transportation are considered separate transactions

**State Business** - Business conducted for and in the interest of NSU and/or the State of Oklahoma. Synonymous with "Official Business."

**State Travel** - Travel required in the process of conducting NSU and/or State of Oklahoma business. Synonymous with "Official Travel."

**State Travel Reimbursement Act (STRA)** - The portions of Title 74 that governs the reimbursement of State travel expenses.

**Ticket** - A document created by an airline or travel agent to confirm that a traveler has purchased a seat on an airline or other public means of transportation.

**Transaction** - A single purchase. A credit also constitutes a transaction.

**Travel Reimbursement Voucher** - A form filed by a traveler on NSU Substitute OSF Form 19 for reimbursement of out-of-pocket expenses incurred as a result of NSU travel.

**Travel Coordinator** - Means the designated person or persons within NSU who has been assigned the duty of booking travel for NSU for official NSU business.

**Travel Management Company (TMC)** - A contracted company that uses cost-comparing global distribution systems to locate and book discounted flights and hotels for clients.

**Travel status** - The time period between the beginning of a trip and the end of a trip (including, but not exceeding 24 hours or 48 hours, as appropriate, prior to or after the event).