Tips for Domestic Travel

This list is only meant to highlight key points within our official travel policy which are sometimes overlooked by travelers. It is the traveler’s responsibility to familiarize themselves with the travel policy before traveling on official business. This list is not complete. Please refer to the CSU Travel Procedures for more information.

1. The Request for Travel Authorization form is due to ORSP at least 30 days prior to travel. The traveler must obtain the signatures of the grant PI and College Dean (or other MPP that the traveler reports to) before submission to ORSP.

2. For students that are traveling as participants (not employees), they must complete the student liability form and attach it to the Request for Travel Authorization. These forms are due to ORSP at least 30 days prior to travel. Students must work with the PI for approval and to complete the forms.

3. Travel arrangements should not be made before travel is authorized. Official university travel (airfare & rental car) may be booked and prepaid using your chart-field string through Global Travel using their online Travel Request. Consult the Instructions for arranging travel with Global Travel that are available online.

4. The maximum daily rate for lodging should not exceed $275 (excluding taxes and fees). Short term rentals in a private home (ex. Air BNB) or vacation rental are not permitted.

5. Reimbursement for lunch is not allowed on trips that do not include an overnight stay.

6. Meals: When overnight stays are necessary, meals will be reimbursed as long as they comply with the CSU Travel Procedures. $55 a day is the maximum amount reimbursable to a traveler and is intended to cover all 3 meals within a 24-hour period. Alcohol is not reimbursable and should not be included with a request for reimbursement.

7. After the first 24 hours of travel, an additional $7 for incidentals (bell hop tip, newspaper, etc.) is allowed per day.

8. Lodging expenses are not reimbursable within 25 miles of your home campus or your residence.

9. California law (AB 1887) restricts travel to states that have passed a law that discriminates against individuals based on sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression. Consult the ORSP Travel Guidelines section IC for more information regarding this restriction. A current list of states is available on the CA Dept. of Justice website.

10. Original, itemized receipts should be retained and submitted for travel-related reimbursements. Receipts should demonstrate the cost (show what was purchased), provide proof of payment (show how it was paid), and include sufficient detail to indicate the charges (e.g., itemized hotel charges). The traveler is responsible for providing additional information as needed.

11. The University does not reimburse “travel packages” purchased from websites such as Travelocity or Orbitz. It is okay to use these sites for hotel or airfare but do not combine purchases such as hotel and airfare together, or it may not be reimbursable.
12. You may drive your personal car on official business and you will be reimbursed the current mileage rate as determined by General Services. You must complete the defensive driving training online and complete the 261 form annually indicating you have personal insurance on your vehicle.

13. If you decide to drive your car when flying is much cheaper, you will be reimbursed the cost of airfare in lieu of mileage.

14. Original itemized receipts are required for any expense over $75. A receipt lists the item, cost of that item, taxes and the method of payment used.

15. Travel expenses should be recorded on an Employee Payment Request form within 30 days after travel. Instructions on the reimbursement form can be found here. Reimbursement instructions.

16. Non-reimbursable travel arrangements are the personal risk and responsibility of the traveler. If a non-reimbursable expense is incurred and not utilized the University will not reimburse the traveler.

17. When airfare is being charged to a federal contract or grant, travelers must be in compliance with the Fly America Act. This mandates travelers to only book flights on US flag air carrier airlines.

18. Meal expenses should not be incurred if the meals were included with a registration fee and provided by a conference. Conference agendas should be printed and attached to travel claim reimbursements to prevent delay of payment.

Please contact ORSP for guideline interpretations or contact the University Accounts Payable Department with additional questions or concerns regarding travel.