

TRAVEL BASICS FOR TRAVEL PLANNERS

This is a general guide to how the travel process works for a typical trip.

When an employee travels, a verbal approval from the supervisor is requested and then the trip details are arranged.

Before any money is committed, a travel authorization/encumbrance needs to be input in Banner for each person traveling. The Banner process assigns a system-generated "T" number to the trip. This travel encumbrance not only sets aside the funds for the travel, but also establishes College liability and approval for the trip.

If the trip is to an international destination, there are some specific forms and approval to be completed before any expenses are committed to by the traveler or travel planner. Please refer to the "International Travel Criteria and Process" document for current forms and guidelines on the Accounts Payable web page, under Travel Forms. In general, travel to international destinations requires appropriate Vice President and President pre-approval. Travelers should also consult the "International Programs" policy and procedure.

The department administrative assistant or secretary generally acts as the "travel planner" for the department. Although the traveler may express preferences, final travel arrangement decisions are made by the department. The travel planner makes the travel arrangements for the employee's airline reservations, hotel reservations and, if necessary, rental car reservations. The travel planner also needs to make sure any registration fees are paid for the conference or events the employee will be attending by either paying for them on a purchasing card, with a check request stamp, or requesting in the Document Text section of the travel encumbrance that a check be sent. The traveler may also pay these fees with personal funds and be reimbursed for all expenditures with the travel settlement. Information as to how all these details are going to be handled should be given to Accounts Payable by noting them on the Document Text of the encumbrance. More is always better!

The travel planner is also the person who usually inputs the travel encumbrance into Banner. The instructions for inputting a travel encumbrance are in the on-line Banner Finance I training manual and are part of the IT training for new Banner users. They are step-by-step directions, easy to follow, and can be retrieved on-line by going to MyPage, Banner Links and selecting Banner Finance (under Banner Resources heading). If for some reason the travel authorization cannot be completed when first started, it is important that the needed information be gathered and the authorization completed and then approved in a timely manner before expenses are incurred. Remember: If the traveler is the Budget Center Manager, the specific BCM account codes need to be used on the travel encumbrance and not the usual "staff" account codes. In this way the travel encumbrance is electronically sent to the BCM's supervisor for approval. A Budget Center Manager may not approve his/her own travel.

If the travel encumbrance "Document Text" instructs Accounts Payable to make advance payments of a registration fee, hotel deposit or a cash advance for meal per diems, etc. (Cash advances are generally given up to 80% of estimated costs), backup for the requested payment, such as the completed conference registration form, hotel itinerary and conference brochure/agenda, must be sent to Accounts Payable with the "T" number noted in order for payment to be made. Regardless of how registrations are paid, the conference brochure or agenda should be sent to Accounts Payable with the

travel settlement as back-up for the trip. The travel encumbrance must be completed and approved before any payments can be made. Further details about different types of advance payments follow:

- Registration fees – send the completed registration form to Accounts Payable to mail with the check;
- Hotel prepayment – Hotels should be reserved and paid for by the traveler on a personal credit card or an employee’s SLCC travel card and then be reimbursed as part of the travel settlement. If first-night rooms are charged to the credit card far in advance of the trip, the receipt may be sent to Accounts Payable for reimbursement so the traveler may pay his credit card without incurring finance charges. If the traveler does not have a credit card available for hotel charges, the hotel confirmation/quote amount may be included in the travel advance. Although prepayment of hotel stays are discouraged; but if required, please alert Account Payable of that requirement to make that arrangement.
- Airline tickets are reserved by the travel planner or traveler with the State Travel Office using the online Reservation Request Form, <http://fleet.utah.gov/fleet/state-travel.html> or calling 801-528-3352 or 801-538-3350. Again, the traveler may not dictate the airline, but it is a departmental decision based on the most economical and reasonable option available. Airline tickets purchased by the State Travel Office are billed directly to the College. State Travel will ask for an authorization number (“T” number) and Accounts Payable will re-allocate the charges to the department index listed on the travel encumbrance via the interdepartmental billing process. With departmental concurrence, travelers may also purchase airfare directly over the internet under the following conditions:
 1. A quote from the State Travel Office must be obtained for a 14-day advance purchase airline ticket going from Salt Lake City to their destination city during the time frame that they would normally go to attend the business event.
 2. The price of the airfare to be purchased personally by the traveler would be a savings as compared to the airfare quoted by State Travel plus the booking fee.
 3. The department accepts the risk of all internet terms and conditions of the purchase.
- Hotel Arrangements: in general, the traveler and travel planner are responsible for making hotel reservations. The State Travel Office is also able to make hotel arrangements if there isn’t a specific hotel being used by the conference. If the employee will be staying at the conference hotel, the travel planner or traveler will need to make the hotel reservations for the trip.
- If the employee is approved to drive in lieu of flying, it should be noted on the “Document Text” page of the travel encumbrance. The traveler will be reimbursed at the lesser of the actual mileage using the most direct, normal route and the lower mileage rate or the cost of the airline ticket plus service charge had the traveler flown. Therefore, the most economical, reasonable airline quote must be obtained in advance of the trip. The reimbursement for the mileage in lieu of flying will be accounted for on the travel settlement voucher submitted following the trip. Generally for in-state destinations, flying is not reasonable so the traveler will be reimbursed for actual mileage at the lower rate and airfare quotes are not required.
- If a rental vehicle is needed, it must be authorized by including it in the “Document Text” page of the travel encumbrance. A rental vehicle may be reserved with the State Travel Office, or arranged by the traveler directly with the rental car agency using the contracted rental car agencies and instruction located on the current STARR. The rental expenses will be charged on the credit card (corporate travel card or personal) of the person driving the vehicle at the time the vehicle is checked out at the rental agency.

- If an 80% advance check for per diem is needed, the information needs to be noted on the "Document Text" page of the travel encumbrance, showing the dates of the event and any meals that will be provided.

The College prefers that employees who are traveling on College business use a credit card for trip expenses in lieu of carrying large amounts of cash. The employee may apply for a corporate travel card offered by the College or use a personal credit card for the travel costs. If the employee does not have a personal credit card, or does not want a corporate travel card, it is possible to issue a travel advance check for up to 80% of the estimated trip costs that will be paid by the employee.

It is College travel policy that each traveler submit a Travel Settlement Voucher to Accounts Payable within 15 days of the traveler's return to Salt Lake to reconcile the trip costs and process any reimbursements needed for expenses that have not already been advanced to the employee. The travel settlement is also necessary to finalize/close the travel encumbrance in Banner and release any remaining funds encumbered on the department budget.

Revision 9/15