

SUL ROSS STATE UNIVERSITY

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SRSU Policy: Travel Regulations

SRSU Policy ID: APM 3.01

Policy Reviewed by: Director of Accounting Services

Approval Authority: Vice President for Finance and Operations

Next Review Date: August 2027

Sul Ross State University recognizes the value of professional meetings and conferences for faculty and staff, the necessity for faculty to travel to deliver instruction, and the educational benefits provided for students through a variety of travel including but not limited to field trips, performing tours, and intercollegiate athletic trips. Travel for these purposes is encouraged within the framework of available funds.

All travel by faculty and staff, as well as all travel by University sponsored groups on official business, must be approved in advance by their supervisors and division Vice President. All out-of-country travel must also be approved in advance by the President.

Airfare

Reimbursement is limited to the lowest fare available, to the general public, that best meet the traveler's business requirements. State contract fares between city pairs should be given preference to the extent that these are the lowest comparable fare.

Travelers will be reimbursed for airfare purchased, however the University offers the following alternative methods:

- The Central Billed Airfare (CBA) account through the State travel agent.
- The use of a SRSU State issued travel card.

The Central Billed Airfare (CBA) account is available to purchase airfare for SRSU employees traveling on official state business.

Cancellations

Non-refundable airline tickets will NOT be reimbursed unless the travel is cancelled by the University.

Lodging

The University will reimburse employee lodging expenses incurred when traveling on University business, when reimbursement request is accompanied by receipt.

Allowable lodging rates are limited to amounts listed, for the locality, in the U.S. General Service Administration (www.gsa.gov).

If the lodging rate exceeds the allowed GSA rate, for the primary destination of travel, by more than 50% of the GSA rate, approval of the appropriate Dean or Vice President is required to reimburse the additional expense.

If the traveler has secured lodging at a conference site and receives the conference rate, documentation must be provided to be reimbursed the conference rate.

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Guest/Prospective employees are authorized to be reimbursed for actual lodging expenses with written departmental approval and valid receipt.

Lodging expenses may be direct billed from the hotel to the University through the use of a purchase order. This provision is effective only when an agency sends more than one employee to a conference or seminar and is optional. Reimbursement for lodging is limited to no more than the maximum amounts allowed for lodging in-state and out-of-state.

Hotel Occupancy Taxes

State employees are exempt from the State of Texas Hotel Occupancy Taxes when traveling on official state business and must present the applicable tax exemption form to the lodging establishment at check-in. Texas State Hotel Occupancy Taxes inadvertently paid by the state employee are not reimbursable. All other required taxes (county, city, municipal, out-of-state) or fees are reimbursable.

Exceptions

Cancellation charges or “no show” fees may be reimbursable at the discretion of the appropriate University administrator. Employee must provide written justification for the cancellation.

Shared lodging between travelers is reimbursable to one of the travelers or the cost may be split between the two or more travelers.

For a faculty or staff sponsor traveling with a student group, refer to Student Group Travel Procedures for policies regarding group travel reimbursement.

Meals

Employee/prospective employee overnight meal expenses, when traveling on University business, are based on current U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) or U.S. Department of State, per diem rates for the locality.

Travelers may receive M&IE (Meal and Incidental Expense) per diem not to exceed 75% of the approved rates for in-state, out-of-state, or foreign travel for the first and last days of travel.

For travel dates in between, per diem may be paid at 100% of the approved GSA or U.S. Department of State rates, for domestic or foreign travel, respectively.

Please note that receipts are not required, but alcohol is not an allowable expense.

Business Meals within Travel Status

Meals that support the business and educational mission of the university. The consumption of food is incidental to the purpose of the meeting. If a meal meets the business requirements, the traveler must provide a list of attendees and itemized receipt, and business expense form. GSA per diem calculations do not apply for business meals. Business meals consumed within headquarters are not travel expenses and should follow the procurement process.

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Mileage for Use of Personal Vehicle

The current mileage rate reimbursed by the University is found on the SRSU Accounting and Finance website and travelers should be aware this rate may not be the same as the State of Texas maximum rate. The current rate applies regardless of funding source.

Official point-to-point mileage can be determined using odometer readings or distance calculations from an online mapping tool. The official mileage calculator is Google Maps.

Coordination of travel should occur when two (2) to four (4) employees employed by the same department travel from the same headquarters to the same duty point at the same time. When coordination of travel occurs, only one of the employees may be reimbursed for mileage. However, mileage incurred to travel to a pick-up point by other employees may be reimbursed. Coordination of travel is not required if it is determined infeasible for business reasons.

Expenses for travel between the traveler's residence and headquarters (commuting expense) are not reimbursable.

Transportation Allowance Out-of-State Travel

Airfare is the recommended travel source for all out-of-state locations. The time and cost is typically the most cost effective means of travel.

Mileage may be reduced to the amount of the airfare if the cost comparison proves that flying is more cost effective than driving. Screenshot of airfare should be provided as proof of estimated cost. Travelers can also use the cost comparison form for additional expenses typically associated with airfare cost.

Rental Cars

The current State rental car contracts are with Hertz and Enterprise. [State Travel Management Program – Car Rental Contract \(texas.gov\)](#) Sul Ross State University cards may be obtained from the Accounting and Finance Office in Alpine or from the Business Services Department for RGC. When making your rental car reservations, the State of Texas contracted rate must be requested and the appropriate number must be used. Please note that the State Contracted Rates include provisions for loss/damage waiver protection and this additional cost will not be reimbursed. State contract must be used unless one of the following exceptions applies: contractor is not available, contractor is sold out, non-contract rental car lower total cost, disabled traveler/transporting person in custody/medical, or security/safety risk.

University Vehicles

The University maintains a small fleet of vehicles for use by employees in conducting official State business. Any employee desiring to drive a University vehicle must first be cleared and approved by the Physical Plant.

Unauthorized Passengers

All trips involving University vehicles are for official state business only. Spouses, children or friends may generally not travel in University vehicles unless otherwise approved in writing by the Dean or Division Vice President.

Liability Insurance

The University carries automobile liability insurance on University vehicle drivers and passengers. Student employees may only drive University vehicles if accompanied by a full-

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time faculty or staff member.

An exception to this rule may be made for graduate teaching or research assistants, provided they are at least 21 years of age and have the written permission of the Department Chair to drive a University vehicle unaccompanied by a full-time faculty or staff member. Students who are not employed by the University are not insured under the policy and are not authorized to drive University-owned vehicles.

Vehicle Request

Approval for an employee to use a University vehicle on official business is handled through the “Request for Use of University Vehicle” form. This form is available on the Physical Plant website at [request_for_use_of_university_vehicle_2014.pdf\(d1zyo2o8kyjaow.cloudfront.net\)](http://request_for_use_of_university_vehicle_2014.pdf(d1zyo2o8kyjaow.cloudfront.net))

Travel Reimbursements for Guest Speakers

The accounting services department requires a copy of the written contract which supports the expenses to be reimbursed for speakers. Expenses may include lodging, meals, and other business incidental expenses not to exceed the State of Texas maximum. A purchase requisition must be completed for speakers that are non-state employees.

Travel Approval Process

Approval for any employee to travel on official State business is handled through the Travel Requisition process. A requisition is done for Travel assigned with a T#. Procedures on Accounting and Finance website outline this process.

Travel Advances

The University may approve a cash advance for employees making out-of-town trips which extend overnight. Advances are limited to 70% of the amount of estimated travel expenses, excluding any expenses for University-owned vehicles or airfare charged to the CBA; state the amount of requested advance on the Travel Requisition. A form is available online to request the travel advance. [Promissory Note \(jotform.com\)](http://Promissory Note (jotform.com))

Receipt Requirements

No receipts are required for meal per diem.

Reimbursable expenses that require receipts:

Transportation by airline, railroad, rental car, ferry and ship (tip not to exceed 15% of the taxi/limo fare)

Lodging

Parking and tolls

Registration fees

Fuel for rental cars

Miscellaneous expenses