



Good morning,

As you can imagine, there have been several questions about the updated Travel policy from the Department of Finance & Administration. These updates apply **ONLY** to State Employee Travel. Official Guest and Non-State Employee regulations are addressed in [A.C.A § 19-4-904](#). Those have not been updated at this time.

An Office Hours session is scheduled for March 29 at 10:00 a.m. If you have questions about these updates or questions in general. The zoom link is available on the [Employee Development Calendar](#) in the Course Description.

This listserv message includes additional information not previously communicated and should be read in its entirety. Below is a summary, with more details for review following. The full documentation is available at:
https://www.dfa.arkansas.gov/images/uploads/accountingOffice/TravelPolicy_StateEmployee.pdf.

SUMMARY

Meals Included in Conference Registration –The conference agenda must be provided if requesting any type of meal reimbursement.

Meals Included as a cost for a Bed & Breakfast –Documentation showing what is included in the cost of the b&b must be provided.

Meals Associated with Other Lodging Types –Allowed to purchase food to be prepared on site provided the cost of the food, when divided among the number of travelers, does not exceed the maximum meal allowance per the Federal Travel Directory for the travel destination. **Attendee list required.**

Lodging –For all charges listed on a hotel folio or Airbnb statement that are not specifically related to a tax (resort fee, cleaning fee, etc.), should be considered as part of the room rate. If the room rate is above the GSA federal per-diem allowance, please enter a justification for the additional costs. Justifications would include:

- Conference Hotel
- Safety
- Location to meetings/events
- Limited availability because of sporting events, graduation, concert, etc.

Items Not Reimbursable –Expenses for **tips (i.e., taxi, porters, housekeeping staff)**. Gratuity up to 15% is allowed on meals for the individual traveler and 20% for Guest/Group

Meals with Official Function Form and Itemized Receipt. Official Function Form not required for Group Travel unless travel includes some per diem meals.

Reimbursement for Use of Privately Owned Vehicle – The source for map mileage used by the agency personnel shall be **used exclusively on all mileage claims** beginning with Expense Reports created after **March 15, 2024**.

- The exclusive source has been determined to be the map feature using Google Maps to calculate an estimated driving route distance between the addresses you submit in the address fields provided in the Item Details of the Expense Report.

DETAILS

Meals Included in Conference Registration

Meal reimbursement requests must be reduced for meals provided as part of the conference registration by deducting the appropriate amount as shown under the Meals and Incidental Expenses (M&IE) breakdown at: <https://www.gsa.gov/travel-resources>. **A copy of the conference agenda will need to be included in the documentation provided for meal reimbursement.**

Allowances may be made in writing to allow the traveler to claim meal reimbursement if any of the conditions below are met:

1. The traveler is unable to consume the meal provided because of medical requirements or religious beliefs.
2. The traveler purchased substitute meal(s) in order to satisfy their medical requirements or religious beliefs.
3. The traveler was unable to take part in the provided meal due to the conflict of official business.

Meals Associated with Other Lodging Types

Travelers utilizing a rental obtained through an online marketplace for nontraditional short-term lodging or recreational vehicle (trailer/camper) are allowed to purchase food to be prepared on site provided the cost of the food, when divided among the number of travelers, does not exceed the maximum meal allowance per the Federal Travel Directory for the travel destination.

If the traveler is utilizing a bed & breakfast (B&B) and specific meals are included as part of the cost of the lodging, then if the traveler chooses to eat those meals out, he or she will not be reimbursed that cost. Documentation will need to be provided showing what is included in the cost of the B&B.

Lodging Other Types

Reimbursement for other types of lodging is allowed if a benefit to the State can be shown. This would include nonconventional lodging such as a nontraditional rental obtained through an online marketplace, bed & breakfast, lodging with family or friends, and even a recreational vehicle (trailer/camper).

If multiple travelers use a nontraditional rental obtained through an online marketplace, documentation must be submitted breaking down the cost per traveler. In addition, **reasonable cleaning charges** may also be reimbursed if, when added to the cost of the rental, would not cause the amount per traveler to exceed the lodging costs listed in the Federal Travel Directory for the travel destination.

Lodging with family or friends (with or without charge) is allowed; however, the traveler will not be reimbursed an amount comparable to conventional lodging in the area or a flat “token” amount.

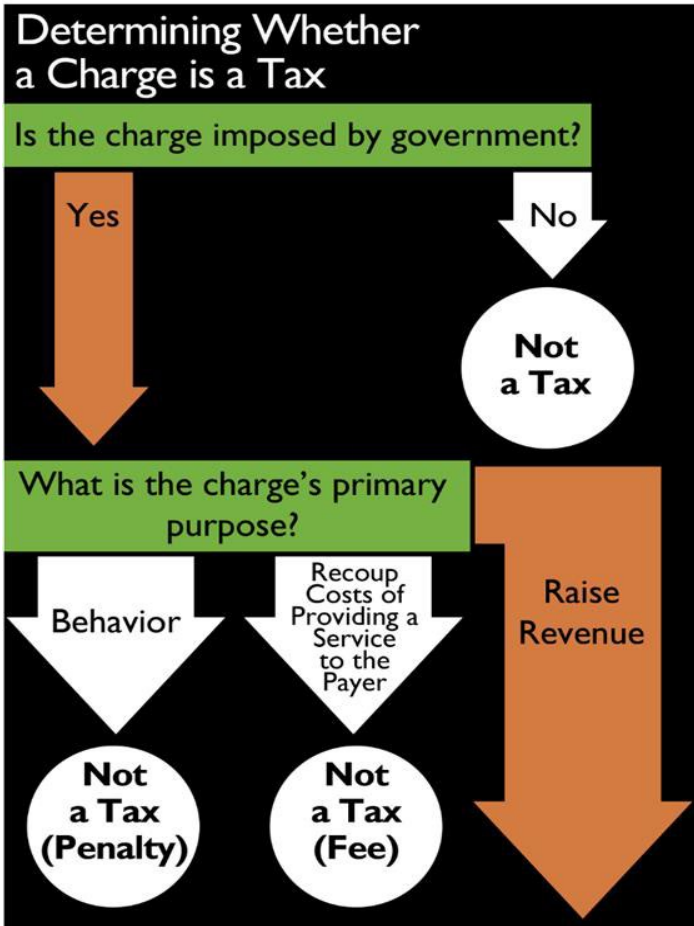
Use of a recreational vehicle (trailer/camper) is allowable lodging provided that the cost of parking fees, connection, use and disconnection fees for utilities, electricity, gas, water, sewer and dumping fees do not exceed the lodging costs listed in the Federal Travel Directory for the travel destination for the same length of stay.

For all charges listed on a hotel folio or Airbnb statement that are not specifically related to a tax (resort fee, cleaning fee, etc.), should be considered as part of the room rate. If the room rate is above the GSA federal per-diem allowance, please enter a justification for the additional costs. Justifications would include:

- Conference Hotel
- Safety
- Location to meetings/events
- Limited availability because of sporting events, graduation, concert, etc.

How to Determine if it is a Tax or Fee

- **Taxes** are imposed for the primary purpose of raising revenue, with the resultant funds spent on general government services.
- **Fees** are imposed for the primary purpose of covering the cost of providing a service, with the funds raised directly from those benefitting from a particular provided service.



Transportation

Agencies may pay or reimburse the traveler for basic flight (trip) insurance offered by the airline on round trip commercial airline tickets of \$1,000 or more. The insurance should cover the cost of the ticket in the event of flight cancellations or delays caused by weather conditions, mid-flight diversions that force arrival at a different airport, or unexpected injury or illness that prohibits travel.

Travel may be achieved by plane, train, bus, taxi, private vehicle/aircraft, rented or state-owned automobile; whichever method serves the requirements of the university most economically and advantageously. **If renting a vehicle, please provide justification for renting a vehicle larger than a full-size sedan.**

If choosing to drive rather than fly for distances greater than 800 miles round trip, the University of Arkansas will reimburse at the lower rate of flying versus driving. The comparison will include any additional fees associated with the type of travel (i.e., airport parking, gas, lodging costs due to extended travel, etc.). All comparisons must be made prior to travel and provided with the Expense Report documentation.

Items Not Reimbursable

Expenses for personal entertainment, **tips (i.e., taxi, porters, housekeeping staff)**, flowers, valet service, laundry, alcoholic beverages, cleaning, movies, or other similar services are not reimbursable. **Communication expenses** shall be allowed only when necessary for the transaction of official business and properly receipted.

Reimbursement for Use of Privately Owned Vehicle

Private vehicle mileage shall be reimbursed and computed, using map mileage (whether paper-based or electronic), between the travel site destination and the employee's official station or residence, if leaving directly from the residence, whichever is less. Mileage reimbursement for official use of a private motor vehicle may be claimed, listed separately on the TR-1, within the vicinity of any locale.

When privately owned motor vehicles are used for travel on official business, the traveler may claim reimbursement at the rate per mile established by the Chief Fiscal Officer of the State in effect during the time the travel occurred. Appendix C. The shortest major highway route (map mileage whether paper based or electronic), will determine the maximum mileage allowed. **The source for map mileage used by the agency personnel shall be designated by the administrative head of the agency and shall be used exclusively on all mileage claims.**

Reimbursement for Use of Privately Owned Vehicle –The source for map mileage used by the agency personnel shall be **used exclusively on all mileage claims.**

The exclusive source has been determined to be the Item Details feature using Google Maps to calculate an estimated driving route distance between the addresses you submit in the address fields provided in the Item Details of the Expense Report.

Item Details	
Origin Address	* <input type="text" value="1001 East Sain Street, Fayetteville, AR, USA"/>
Destination Address	* <input type="text" value="UALR Bookstore, South University Avenue, Little Rock, AR, USA"/>
Unit of Measure for Distance	Miles
Estimated Distance of Driving Route	* 196.7
Trip Distance Including Diversions	* <input type="text" value="196.7"/>
Round Trip	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Distance to Expense	* 393.4
Group Travel	<input type="checkbox"/>
Receipt Included	<input type="checkbox"/>

The Round Trip should be marked for round trips. If multiple legs within a trip, each line must be individually input with each different destination by day.

As of **March 16, 2024**, the Travel Office will no longer accept mileage logs, map attachments or any other type of documentation for mileage on an Expense Report. Each mileage reimbursement must be an individual expense item.