

GRAYS HARBOR COLLEGE
Administrative Procedure

TRAVEL GUIDELINES

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Administrative Procedure Number: 502.01

Date adopted: 4/25/06; Revised 5/13/14, 3/20/20, 6/14/22

In accordance with Administrative Procedure 502.02, Grays Harbor College will reimburse approved travel expenses within the limits of the budget and good instructional practice or institutional purpose when those expenses are incurred by individuals in **preapproved** travel status. All travel on College business is subject to Washington State laws and regulations.

Refer to the GHC Business Office intranet page for current reimbursement rates and to the Office of Financial Management, State Administrative & Accounting Manual (SAAM) for state travel policy.

APPROVAL PROCESS

1. Employees are required to submit a completed online Travel Authorization (TA) form for all employee travel.

The only exception is a Blanket RAATs for a fiscal year can be submitted for mileage only. All TAs and RAATs must be approved by:

- Expense/Budget manager (if other than Supervisor)
- The President must approve all out of state and out of country travel.

2. TAs are required to be **submitted at least one week in advance of the planned travel and must contain all of the following relevant information.** Failure to submit a TA **PRIOR** to traveling may result in no reimbursement.

- Mileage
- Meals
- Lodging: (these rates are variable as determined by OFM for non-high-cost or high-cost locales. **You must obtain prior approval to incur extraordinary expenses**)
- Airfare
- Incidentals: The employee should estimate all other anticipated business expenses such as parking, taxi fare, registration, etc. Be specific.

If you have questions, contact the travel liaison in the business office.

TRAVEL EXPENSES YOU MAY INCUR

Agencies and travelers are required to select the travel that is most economical and advantageous to the state (SAAM10.10.10 and 10.10.20).

1. *Lodging*: Reservations may be made utilizing a purchase card (**only** if authorized) or a personal credit card. Lodging reimbursement is based on OFM per diem rates. When booking

lodging reservations, **ask for the state rate**. Lodging expenses are not reimbursable when the travel destination is within fifty miles of the employee's official residence or work station. Exceptions to the 50-mile rule are listed on the OFM website, policy 10.30.30b. High cost per diem rates vary by county but may be approved up to 150% of the applicable maximum per diem amount for the location **if approved in advance**. Advance approval can be made under the following conditions:

- A. The employee attends a meeting, conference, convention or training session that is being held exclusively at a single lodging facility and **both** of the following apply:
 - It is anticipated that 75% or more of the participants will be staying at the facility, **and**
 - The employee is expected to have official business interaction with other participants in addition to scheduled events and maximum benefit will be achieved by authorizing the employee to stay at the lodging facility where the meeting, conference, convention, or training session is held.
- or**
- B. To comply with provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act, or when the health and safety of the traveler is at risk.

2. *Meals*: A traveler is entitled to meal reimbursement for overnight travel assignments, or when in travel status of eleven (11) hours or more. Qualified travelers must be in travel status for the entire hour of GHC established meal periods for reimbursement (**as listed below**).

- A. The employee may be reimbursed for meals when in travel status for at least 11 hours during these GHC established meal periods:

Breakfast 6 a.m. to 7 a.m.

Lunch 12 p.m. to 1 p.m.

Dinner 6 p.m. to 7 p.m.

Meals reimbursed under this "eleven-hour rule" are considered income and will be subject to payroll withholding taxes and reported on the employee's W2.

- B. All eligible meals will be reimbursed according to the per diem rate established by OFM for the stated area of travel.

3. *Registration fees*. Registration fees in excess of \$50 should be invoiced, in advance, to the college if not paid on a college purchase card. Meals are often included in the registration fee. A copy of the registration form is required for reimbursement.

4. *Incidentals*. Receipts are required for all items.

Certain expenses are personal and are not reimbursable (Refer to OFM 10.20.20 for complete list). Non-reimbursable expenses include, but are not limited to:

- Laundry and valet service
- Entertainment expenses
- Personal trip insurance premiums
- Alcoholic beverages
- Personal telephone calls

5. *Travel by air*. All airline reservations must be paid for by the Grays Harbor College Travel Liaison. *Grays Harbor College cannot be responsible for payment of airline reservations*

made by an employee in conflict with this process. Employees must complete an approved Travel Authorization prior to booking any air travel through the travel liaison.

6. *Car rental.* Reservations may be made utilizing a purchasing card if **authorized** or on a Grays Harbor College account. Contact the Purchasing Office regarding rental car account(s).
7. *Vehicles and mileage.* For approved travel, an employee may use a state-owned vehicle, if one is available, or the employee may use their private vehicle.
 - The traveler must contact Campus Operations to arrange for a vehicle.
 - Use of GHC vehicles requires the completion of a vehicle safety class PRIOR to the trip. Contact the Safety & Security office for details.
 - Grays Harbor College Motor Pool will charge departments for the use of college vehicles. Contact Campus Operations for current rates.
 - Use of a privately owned vehicle (POV) on official state business will be reimbursed at the private vehicle mileage reimbursement rate specified by SAAM Policy 10.90.
8. *Travel Advances.* The college will not provide travel advances for any employee, including coaches. Travel advances will be provided for Grays Harbor College students traveling for student activities only based on current student government approved per diem rates.
 - An itemized Expense Report and student signature sheet is required to be submitted to the Cashier's Office within five business days after returning from the student activity.
 - Another advance will not be provided until documentation has been turned in and reconciled.
 - An itemized receipt is required for any group meal paid for with travel advance funds.

Per SAAM 10.80.70 and IRS regulations: Failure to submit proper documentation within 60 days or to repay the cash advance within 120 days will result in the college reporting the amount as income on the employee's W2 and will be subject to payroll withholding taxes.