Travel Document Tips, Hints & Reminders

- The Disbursements and Travel Services (DTS) Office has some helpful tips for travelers to complete their travel vouchers. These tips should help speed up the processing of travel reimbursements.

**Per Diem Rates:**

- The General Appropriations Act from the 81st Legislature changed the method for determining maximum meal and lodging rates. Meals and incidental expenses for the first and last calendar days of travel are reimbursed based on 75 percent of the total per diem rate for the travel destination. Read more details about these changes that became effective September 1, 2009, at the Texas State Comptroller's Official Website.

  **NOTE:** UT Austin stopped updating the meals/lodging rates in DEFINE when the State’s guidelines, which are consistent with GSA per diem rates, were adopted.

- When searching GSA per diem rates, ensure the correct fiscal year is selected in the drop-down located at the top right-hand corner.

- View the GSA’s Meals and Incidental Expenses (M&IE) Breakdown web page for meals and incidentals.

- Incidentals covered by the per diem rate total $5 and are intended to include tips given to porters, baggage carriers, bellhops, hotel maids, etc.

- **How much per diem are you allowed without receipts?**
  
  You must provide a receipt to substantiate your claimed travel expenses for lodging. However, meal per diems up to $75 during domestic travel are eligible for reimbursement without corresponding receipts.

  **NOTE:** Receipts for other expenses that are not included as part of the per diem reimbursement (i.e., parking, taxi, internet, airline baggage charges, etc.) should be included as supporting documentation. If you do not have a receipt, complete a Declaration of Missing Evidence Form.

**Lodging Details:**

- If the lodging per diem rate is exceeded, a Lodging Rate Increase Form must be submitted with the corresponding hotel receipt and a travel reimbursement form. If requesting a travel advance, you will need to submit a Lodging Rate Increase Form at that time.

  **Lodging Rate Increase Form:** Please enter the higher rate requested as well as the GSA per diem lodging rate. If you are traveling on state funds (14-account), you must also complete the State funds cost savings itemization section to justify the higher lodging rate.

**Mileage and Parking Reimbursement:**

- As of November 2010, reimbursements for mileage/parking are supported with a Mileage/Parking Log for Travel Reimbursement Form approved by the Account Administrator/Supervisor (unless the overall reimbursement is signed by the traveler’s supervisor). This form does not require submittal of MapQuest documentation to certify the mileage.

- If your mileage/parking reimbursement request is for local travel within Bexar County and not related to a travel authorization, you can submit your completed Mileage/Parking Log for Travel Reimbursement form at either Fiscal Services office for processing.

  **NOTE:** You are not required to also complete a Petty Cash Reimbursement form and the amount is not subject to the current petty cash limit.

- The standard mileage rate for business miles driven as of January 1, 2011, will be 51 cents per mile, up one cent from the 2010 rate. Read the IRS Press Release for more information.
• If a traveler is dropped off at the airport to avoid paying airport parking fees, the traveler can claim roundtrip mileage from home or the UTSA base (whichever is less) for both the date of departure and date of arrival.

**Travel Advances:**
• We ask that Travel Advance Requests are received at least 10 business days prior to your departure date. That provides adequate time given the current volume of travel activity. We will do everything possible to process advances that are submitted with fewer than 10 days for processing.
• If you are requesting an advance for other allowable expenses in addition to per diem and lodging, then you must describe those expenses — for example, rental car — in the Comments section of the Travel Advance Request.
• You must settle your travel advance within 30 days of your travel return date by completing the Local Funds Travel Voucher form and including all required documentation (including receipts, if applicable). Per IRS regulations, advances not cleared in a timely manner should be reported as income to the employee.

For more information, see the Travel Advances operational guideline.

**Grant Funded Travel:**
• Travel documents funded by Sponsored Programs (26 accounts) must be routed to the Office of Sponsored Programs (OSP) prior to being submitted to the DTS office.

**Helpful Reminders:**
• Please assure a Voucher Payable cover sheet is attached with appropriate signatures.
• A traveler cannot approve their own expenditures electronically OR on any of the written forms.
• Check your math before submitting requests for reimbursement. Unfortunately, the current DEFINE system does not allow us to make adjustments centrally. We are literally forced to return the documents to the creator/approver for changes before we can process reimbursements.

**DTS Welcomes its Newest Employee**

The Disbursements and Travel Services Office would like to extend a warm welcome to its newest employee, Ana Geigenmiller. Ana, who started with DTS on October 18, is the new Disbursements Specialist II, approving vouchers N through S, student stipend vouchers and VP3s. She joins UTSA’s Disbursements and Travel Services team after a successful career in the high school teaching ranks, where she taught Computer Science in the Southside Independent School District. The San Antonio native is a mother of three who enjoys spending time with her family and reading in her spare time. She is an avid sports fan, never forsaking her Dallas Cowboys (regardless of record) and is looking forward to the upcoming UTSA Roadrunners football season. Welcome Ana!

**January DTS Training Classes**

DTS will be holding training classes during the second semester. Please note the following class schedules below.

**Electronic Travel Process (DE0665)**

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**VP2- Local Funds Voucher (DE0658)**

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**Business Related Hospitality & Entertainment (AM0553)**

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If you have any questions regarding the above information, contact the DTS office at disbursements.travel@utsa.edu or 458-4833.