

Important Information About Travel Expense Statement Reporting, Including Roles and Responsibilities



– Office of Disbursements

This document includes important information about travel expense statements including roles and responsibilities.

The following is a listing of topics that tend to delay the processing of a Travel Expense Statement (TES):

- Submit TES within 30 days of the return from travel. If not, attach a brief memo to explain the late submission.
- Attach a memo of justification to explain and provide justification for any expenditure that may exceed the allowable per diem. The memo should be signed by the Unit's Chair, CAO, or CFO. (Note: Memo not required if, 1) amount that exceeds per diem is less than or equal to 20% of the per diem, or 2) conference lodging (indicate Conference lodging rate on documentation).
- In addition to signatures of approval, be sure to include the printed names of each approver.
- Attach original receipts (when available) to the TES.
- Tape down all receipts onto an 8 ½" x 11" piece of paper. Attach this sheet to the TES.

Prior to submission of the TES to Disbursements for processing, designated departmental staff shall do the following:

- check the TES against the provisions outlined in the Statewide Travel Regulations
- ensure the proper per diem amount is used in the calculation
 - Meal Allowances for State of Georgia differ from Meal allowances for other states (see Per Diem Rates, Step 1, Plan Travel).
- ensure proper receipts are attached to the TES, including proof of payment (method of payment)
- ensure all receipts and reimbursements are valid
- check mileage reimbursement
- ensure memo of justification is attached, where needed. Memo must contain appropriate signature/s of approval.

- ensure TES is submitted within 30 days of the return from travel. If submitted after 30 days, ensures that memo explaining the late submission is attached to the TES.
- ensure appropriate signatures of approval, including printed names, are affixed, and legible
- indicate if the TES is the “final” TES to be submitted against the Travel PO
- ensures the PO number is listed on top of the TES, and that the PO number is valid
- retain a complete copy of the TES
- **Manages all Travel Purchase Orders** with respect to
 - Travel occurring as planned
 - Unused POs get closed, funds returned to departmental budget in a timely manner
 - Travel POs closed as expected
 - Open Travel POs relate only to current year travel activity

The Statewide Travel Regulations (Page 6) states the following as the Role of the Approver

(Note: The approver is the individual providing signature approval on the TES):

B. Role of the Approver

By approving travel expenses, the approver is attesting that he/she has thoroughly reviewed each transaction and the supporting documentation, and has verified that all transactions are allowable expenses. The approver is the “check” in the expense reporting process to identify potential or actual errors in expense reporting and is equally accountable for all expenditures. The approver role should be assigned to an individual who can judge the business appropriateness of each expenditure. It is recommended, but not required, that approvers have the responsibility of approving expenses for no more than 25 expense submitters.

Each transaction must be consistent with departmental budgetary and project/grant guidelines. The approver must be sure the correct funding sources are charged, in keeping with proper fiscal stewardship.

Should expenses not meet approval guidelines, the expense approver may deny the expense. Denied expenses will be considered a personal expense to the employee and will be processed in accordance with the policies, herein, as either a reduction in the traveler’s reimbursement due, an amount due the agency, or a future payroll deduction. Upon granting approval of expense submissions, approvers are certifying:

- *Appropriateness of the expenditure and reasonableness of the amount;*
- *Availability of funds;*
- *Compliance with funding agency regulations and State reimbursement policies;*
- *Completeness and accuracy of documentation.*