

# ***Travel Authorization Calculating Travel Expense***

***Office of Disbursements***



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# 1 General Instruction

***Travel Expenses listed here may be reimbursed to the traveler, paid in advance by GSU (some exceptions apply), or billed directly to GSU by a 3<sup>rd</sup> party.***

**General Instruction:** The Travel Authorization is used to estimate travel expense for employees and students based on the State of Georgia Statewide Travel Regulations, and to provide pre-authorization for the estimated travel expense. The Travel Authorization is used for employee and student travel, only. The estimate travel expense is encumbered. Travel related registration expense is not encumbered, however, the cost of the registration should be “noted” on the Travel Authorization.

***Non-Employee travel is authorized by using the Payment Request Form.***

**Estimated travel expense should be included on the Travel Authorization regardless of how the expense is ultimately paid.**

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## 1.1 Travel Expenses May be Paid in Various Ways

- Paid by the traveler. Traveler seeks reimbursement later.
- AAA airfare direct billed to GSU.
- Airfare direct billed to GSU by a travel agent (other than AAA)
- Lodging Pre-paid by GSU on behalf of an employee or student (request for payment must be made 15 business days in advance of check-in).
- Lodging direct billed to GSU.
- Car rental direct billed to GSU by either Enterprise Rent A Car or National Car Rental (State contracted vendors).

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## 1.2 Travel Topics Summarized

The following Travel Topics are summarized below in details:

- 1 [PER DIEM MEAL EXPENSE](#)
- 2 [PER DIEM LODGING EXPENSE](#)
- 3 [LODGING PRE-PAYMENT](#)

- 4 [AIR TRAVEL - AAA \( CHARGED DIRECTLY TO GUS BY AAA\)](#)
- 5 [AIR TRAVEL - PURCHASED THROUGH TRAVEL AGENCY \( OTHER THAN AAA\)](#)
- 6 [AIR TRAVEL - PURCHASED BY TRAVELER](#)
- 7 [CAR RENTAL](#)
- 8 [MILEAGE](#)
- 9 [CONFERENCE REGISTRATION](#)
- 10 [RETURN FROM TRAVEL – TRAVEL EXPENSE STATEMENT](#)
- 11 [SIGNATURE APPROVAL ON THE TRAVEL EXPENSE STATEMENT](#)

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## 1.3 Additional Information

For more information regarding Travel, please see:

- State of Georgia Statewide Travel Regulations  
[http://sao.georgia.gov/00/channel\\_createdate/0,2095,39779022\\_138756283,00.html](http://sao.georgia.gov/00/channel_createdate/0,2095,39779022_138756283,00.html)
- Travel Services (GSU Travel Policy)  
<http://www2.gsu.edu/~wwwfas/FinancialOperation/TravelServices.pdf>
- Office of Disbursements. Email: [accountspayable.gsu.edu](mailto:accountspayable.gsu.edu)  
<http://www.gsu.edu/accounting/disbursements-accounts-payable-travel.html>

## 2 Travel Expenses

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### 2.1 Per Diem Meal Expense

Travelers may claim allowable amounts per day (per diem) for meals. Per Diem rates vary by location (traveler's destination). Travelers are not required to submit receipt when claiming per diem.

**In State Travel** (See pages 7 & 8)

[http://sao.georgia.gov/vgn/images/portal/cit\\_1210/62/49/164649488SAO%20Travel%20Policy%202011.pdf](http://sao.georgia.gov/vgn/images/portal/cit_1210/62/49/164649488SAO%20Travel%20Policy%202011.pdf)

**Travel Outside the State of Georgia** (See last column, Meals and Incidentals)

<http://www.gsa.gov/portal/category/100120>

**International Travel**

<http://oiaweb.gsu.edu/search/IntlTravel/IntlTravelForm.aspx>

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### 2.2 Per Diem Lodging Expense

Travelers may claim allowable amounts per day (per diem) for lodging. Rates vary by location (location of hotel).

Please note, GSU will allow up to 20% in excess of the allowable per diem. (Questions may be referred to Disbursements).

**In State Travel** (See Lodging Expense – Page 10) Lodgers must be at least 50 miles from GSU to claim lodging per diem.

[http://sao.georgia.gov/vgn/images/portal/cit\\_1210/62/49/164649488SAO%20Travel%20Policy%202011.pdf](http://sao.georgia.gov/vgn/images/portal/cit_1210/62/49/164649488SAO%20Travel%20Policy%202011.pdf)

### Travel outside the State of Georgia

<http://www.gsa.gov/portal/category/100120>

### International Travel

<http://oiaweb.gsu.edu/search/IntlTravel/IntlTravelForm.aspx>

*Travelers (employees and students, only) may arrange for GSU to pay for lodging directly to the hotel. Pre-payments must be requested no less than 15 business days in advance of check-in. See Lodging Pre-Payment, below, for instructions on how to request payment to the hotel.*

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## 2.3 Lodging Pre-Payment

When possible, department business managers or designated representative may arrange for prepayment and direct billing of lodging on behalf of the traveler.

- 1) Travelers should contact the hotel, make lodging arrangements and request that a confirmation be sent by fax or e-mail. The confirmation must include the name of the traveler, dates of stay, and amount due.
- 2) Using the confirmation, a designated representative will enter a Payment Request Form (PRF) payable to the hotel. (Use account code 640100 for employee travel and 650100 for student travel).
- 4) (Very Important) Note the name of the traveler on the PRF.
- 5) Submit the reservation confirmation along with the PRF **at least 15 business days prior to check-in.**

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## 2.4 Air Travel - AAA (charged directly to GSU by AAA)

Currently, there is an arrangement between Georgia State University and AAA which allows for direct billing of air travel.

- 1) Contact AAA Travel at (404) 413-9696 or 1(800) 284-1222 to obtain a quote for travel by air.

- 2) Submit a Travel Authorization form through PantherMart (enter the AAA quoted amount for the airfare).
- 3) Contact AAA to make the reservation. Provide AAA with the PantherMart P O number.
- 4) AAA will charge airfare expenses to the university travel P-Card. (Disbursements will prepare a journal entry to record the expense against the department's budget).

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## 2.5 Air Travel - Purchased through Travel Agency ( Other Than AAA)

Travelers may purchase airfare through a Travel Agency (other than AAA). **The travel agency should submit an invoice directly to GSU.** (Note: for a single purchase of \$5,000 or more, contact Purchasing).

**The PantherMart Travel PO number must be noted on the Travel Agent's invoice. The invoice should be submitted along with (attached to) the traveler's Travel Expense Statement.**

**If a Travel Agency invoice is received prior to travel (or after the Travel Expense Statement is submitted), indicate the travel PO number on the invoice and submit the invoice to Disbursements (do not make an entry into the system).**

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## 2.6 Air Travel - Purchased by Traveler

Travelers may purchase airfare and seek reimbursement later. Airfare expense must be pre-authorized via the Travel Authorization prior to reimbursement.

Travelers who purchase airline tickets with personal resources are encouraged to seek reimbursement when submitting the Travel Expense Statement (on return).

## 2.7 Car Rental

The Georgia Statewide Travel Regulation requires that all travel be planned according to the **least cost and what is most advantageous** for the university.

**Contact one of the following State contracted vendors.**

- **Enterprise Rent-A-Car**  
(404) 463-6384 (Capitol Hill Location)  
(800) Rent-A-Car  
[www.enterprise.com/stateofgeorgia](http://www.enterprise.com/stateofgeorgia)
- **National Car Rental**  
(800) Car-Rent

**Auto Insurance Provision:** <http://doas.ga.gov/StateLocal/Risk/Pages/RiskInsurance.aspx>

Travelers may choose to pay for car rental with personal resources and be reimbursed later.

*Travelers may choose to contact one of the State contracted vendors (see above) and arrange for GSU to be billed, directly, for the auto rental.*

**The PantherMart Travel PO number must be noted on the Car Rental invoice. The invoice should be submitted along with (attached to) the traveler's Travel Expense Statement.**

**If a Car Rental invoice is received prior to travel (or after the Travel Expense Statement is submitted), indicate the travel PO number on the invoice and submit the invoice to Disbursements (do not make an entry into Disbursements).**

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## 2.8 Mileage

The State of Georgia's current standard mileage reimbursement rate will **remain at 51 cents** until further notice. The IRS recently announced an increase to the standard automobile mileage rate from .51 cents to 55.5 cents effective July 1, 2011, **however**, the General Services Administration (GSA) has chosen **not** to adopt this rate at this time based on further evaluation.

The Official Code of Georgia Annotated (OCGA) Section 50-19-7 requires the State of Georgia to follow the GSA rates for mileage when **State employees are reimbursed for use of a privately owned vehicle on official travel.**



The following rates remain applicable to travel that occurs on or after January 1, 2011:

**Tier 1 Rates:**

**Automobile \$ 0.51 per mile**

Motorcycle \$ 0.48 per mile

Aircraft \$ 1.29 per mile

**Tier 2 Rate:** \$0.19 per mile

**- Please Attach MapQuest Print-out to Travel Expense Statement, on return -**

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## 2.9 Conference Registration (Notation for total cost of Travel)

Most travel is related to conference attendance. Conference registration expense, although not included on the Travel Expense Statement, is included in the over-all cost of travel. **Include registration in the Non-PO section of the Travel Authorization (*expenses listed in this section do not create an encumbrance, just a recording*). In order to initiate payment for Registrations, use the Payment Request Form for direct payments or reimbursement.**

(Note: for a single purchase of \$5,000 or more, contact Purchasing).

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## 2.10 RETURN FROM TRAVEL - TRAVEL EXPENSE STATEMENT

CLAIMING ACTUAL EXPENSES and RELEASE OF ENCUMBRANCE

Returning travelers must complete a Travel Expense Statement ([Travel Expense Statement](#) (Updated-01/01/2011).

The **Travel Expense Statement** should be completed within 30 days of the return from travel. It must contain:

- proper signature approval
- appropriate receipts (including method of payment)
- Invoice from a Travel Agent, when applicable (indicate PO number on invoice)
- Invoice from Car Rental agency, when applicable( indicate PO number on invoice)

- Agenda's (meetings, conferences, events, travel) where applicable
- Memos, etc., when applicable

Disbursements will process the Travel Expense statement against the PO. Disbursements will also pay all invoices related to encumbered expenses, against the PO, when possible.

The completed Travel Expense Statement is delivered to the Office of Disbursements, Sparks Hall, Suite 400A, for processing against the Travel Purchase Order.

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## 2.11 SIGNATURE APPROVAL on the TRAVEL EXPENSE STATEMENT

***The Travel Expense Statement must be signature approved (signature approvals required).***

**LEVEL 1:** A department's Business Manager (and others having access to workflow approval) can provide **electronic workflow approval** (for a Travel Authorization (PO)). Electronic workflow approval ensures there is sufficient budget available to fund the travel engagement.

**LEVEL 2:** A traveler's supervisor can provide **signature approval**.

Signature approval on the Travel Expense Statement ensures:

- the travel is mission based
- the travel is necessary
- (Level 2 signature approval of the Travel Authorization provides pre-approval for the travel engagement and the estimated expense).
- (Travel charged to a sponsored project must (also) be approved by the Project's Administrator).

### Some "Examples" of Level 2 Approval

<b><u>If the Traveler Is:</u></b>	<b><u>Their Supervisor (Approver) Will Be:</u></b>
Staff	Staff's Manager/Director
Business Manager	Unit Manager/Director, CAO, Chair

Professor	Department Chair, Dean, CAO
Dean	Asst Provost, Provost, VP -Fin and Admin
Chair	Dean or CAO
VP	Sr VP for F & A
Provost	President
President	Sr VP for F & A