

OUT-OF-STATE TRAVEL PRE-APPROVAL POLICY

POLICY BACKGROUND

Accountable Department or Unit:

All faculty and staff in all units, departments, and schools of the University of Washington Tacoma are accountable for complying with this policy. Administrative Services administers this policy.

Citation of relevant local, state, or federal laws:

Directive by the Governor 08-15
Chancellor's Memo, August 6, 2008
Provost's Letter, December 17, 2008
ESSB 5460, February 18, 2009

Statement of authority within the University:

Authority to approve spending and contracts has been delegated from the Board of Regents to the President to the Executive Vice President to the Chancellor to the Vice Chancellor of Administrative Services.
RCW 28B.10.528; Standing Orders Chapter 1
Faculty Handbook, Volume 2, Part 1, Chapter 12, Section 12-23.I.

ABSTRACT

Policy Abstract:

Policy requires pre-approval of any out of state travel. Non-emergent travel will not be approved.

POLICY

Policy Statement:

All travel regardless of fund source must be pre-approved by the Chancellor for reimbursement of travel expenses to occur.

Until July 1, 2009, expenditures and reimbursement for out-of-state travel or out-of-state training are prohibited except for those where the costs are:

- related to an emergency or other catastrophic event that requires government action to protect life or public safety;
- related to direct service delivery
- funded exclusively from private or federal grants;
- tax and fee collection, revenue generation, and auditing activities;
- necessary to receive or maintain federal funds by the state;
- for institutions of higher education, not funded from state funds or tuition (see: Define "State Funds or Tuition" above)
- for the unemployment insurance program of the Employment Security Department.

Introduction and Background Information:

This policy was developed in response to Governor Christine Gregoire's Directive 08-15 dated August 4, 2008. The directive called for all state agencies including institutions of higher education to impose a freeze on non-emergency out-of-state travel, among other budget savings efforts, in light of rising fuel costs and a continued softening of the nation's economy. To comply with this directive, this pre-approval policy along with subsequent procedures and form were put in place. This is to ensure written approval is granted in advance of any travel to facilitate reimbursement of approved expenses and to curtail unnecessary out of state travel. This policy was subsequently amended to comply with Engrossed Substitute Senate Bill 5460.

Definition of Terms:

Out-of-State Travel means travel that involves airfare and per diem (hotel, meals, etc.)

Restrictions on out-of-state travel, out-of-state training, equipment purchases and personal services agreements apply only to funds explicitly deemed to be “state or tuition funds.” Internally within the University of Washington, these funds are General Operating Funds or GOF, the Medical Aid Account and Accident Account (for the School of Public Health), and the building fee portion of tuition. Also covered by the state spending restrictions are capital funds in fund codes 057 (State Building Construction Account) and 064 (UW Building Account). These funds support the bulk of the UW Minor Works Allocations, and are typically managed through the Capital Projects Office.

State restrictions on spending do **NOT** apply to the following fund sources (please do NOT complete an exemption request if using any of the following fund sources):

- Designated operating fund sources (DOF) including Local Fund Allocations (LFA) which includes 74- budgets, and Research Cost Recovery (RCR) funds, 75- budgets
- Self-sustaining budgets
- Endowment, gift, grant or contract funds
- Student Activity Fees (SAF)
- Technology fees

Responsibilities:

Supervisors, Deans, Directors, Associate Vice Chancellors, and Vice Chancellors are responsible for reviewing and evaluating each out-of-state travel pre-approval request in light of the guidelines for allowable travel. They are responsible for forwarding any requests for exception to the travel freeze to the Chancellor. The Chancellor is responsible for final approval of any out-of-state travel to be paid for by any fund source.

Limitations:

This policy does not apply to local mileage reimbursement. However, the Governor’s directive does request a 5% reduction in gasoline consumption from last year. Other efforts to reduce mileage are in place.

Consequences of Violating Policy:

Unapproved travel expenses will not be reimbursed and will remain the financial responsibility of the faculty or staff member who incurred the unapproved travel expenses. Any abuse of pro-card to circumvent this approval process may result in the suspension or revocation of the pro-card privileges and/or in corrective action.

DESCRIPTION OF PROCEDURES

Procedures:

1. A faculty or staff member identifies a need to travel out of state/overnight that he/she believes will meet the criteria for allowable travel.
2. Faculty or staff member fills out Travel Pre-Approval Form and the OFM Freeze Request Form and submits it to their supervisor.
3. Supervisor reviews. If approves, sends the approval to the Dean or Director. If not approved, returns to the faculty or staff with explanation of why not approved.
4. Dean or Director reviews. If approved, sends the approval to the Vice Chancellor. If not approved, returns to the Supervisor with explanation of why not approved.
5. Vice Chancellor reviews. If a Vice Chancellor determines a travel request meets the policy criteria, then that request is forwarded to the Chancellor for final approval.

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6. Chancellor reviews and makes final determination on approval of out-of-state travel and forwards to UW Seattle Planning & Budget and Finance Offices.
7. Once response is received from OFM, the Chancellor's Office returns approval or denial to the Vice Chancellor who then will notify the Dean or Director with explanation to be communicated to faculty or staff member.
8. Vice Chancellor sends copy of approved request to Finance Department.
9. Faculty or Staff member receiving approval is then free to move forward with registration and travel arrangements.
10. Finance Office will use first copy of Out of State Travel Pre-Approval Request Form to reimburse any registration submitted. (This is often done much earlier and separate from the travel itself.)
11. After travel is completed, faculty or staff member submits Travel Expense Voucher with a copy of Travel Pre-Approval Form to the Finance Office for reimbursement.
12. No reimbursements will be made for over-night/out-of-state travel that is not pre-approved through this process.

Forms

Travel Pre-Approval Form:

[Out of State Travel Pre-Approval Request Form](#) 

OFM Freeze Request Form:

<http://www.ofm.wa.gov/ExemptionRequests/default.asp>

Travel Expense Voucher:

[UoW Form 1171](#)  (shared budget)

[UoW Form 1171](#)  (single budget)

POLICY APPROVAL

Policy Approved by:

Name	Signature	Date

Policy Approved by:

Name	Signature	Date

POLICY REVIEW

Next review of policy to be conducted by:

Major review of policy to be conducted when Governor's out-of-state travel freeze is lifted after June 30, 2009.