

General Travel Policy FAQ's

- 1. Where can I find VSCC's policy regarding travel?** VSCC currently has two travel policies in place, one for general travel and one for athletic and group travel. Copies of both policies can be found on the College's website located at the following link:
<http://www.volstate.edu/Policies/>.
- 2. Where can I find travel forms?** The only travel forms that should be used can be located on the Vol State website at the following link:
<http://www.volstate.edu/BusinessOffice/travel.html>. Please be advised that any old travel authorization and travel expense forms should be discarded and not used. If one of the old forms is submitted, it will be returned with a request that the information be submitted on the new form.
- 3. Who should complete a Travel Authorization?** Anyone who will be requesting reimbursement for travel related expenses must have an approved Travel Authorization on file prior to the date(s) of travel. A blanket authorization may be submitted for the entire fiscal year (July 1 through June 30) for frequent in-state travel (covers mileage and parking expenses only). However, a separate travel authorization is required for any travel that requires registration fees, airline tickets, or overnight stays in a hotel. The travel authorization must include all estimated expenses for each trip (See General Travel Policy-Section II). All out-of-state and out-of-country travel must be approved by the President of the College. The Travel Authorization Form (an interactive form) and the Travel Expense Form (an interactive form) can be found on the VSCC website under Business Office/Travel Forms (<http://www.volstate.edu/BusinessOffice/travel.html>).
- 4. What documentation should be included with the travel authorization form?** Documentation regarding all expected travel-related expenses should be attached to the back of the travel authorization, i.e., per diem rates, conference information, transportation costs, etc. Please remember that the authorization is an estimate of total expenses.

- 5. When is it permissible to drive instead of fly?** Air travel is recommended when time is a factor or when the cost of other methods of transportation is substantially higher or when the length of the trip is so long that it is the most practical means of transportation. Automobiles may be used when two or more are making the same trip and it is more economical, in cost and time, to travel by automobile (See General Travel Policy-Section III-B).
- 6. When is it permissible to rent a car?** Renting cars is allowed as long as it is more economical than other forms of transportation or it is the only practical form of transportation. Purchasing the insurance for the rental car is not allowed. Refueling before returning the car is strongly recommended. The estimated cost of a rental car, including the fill ups, should be included on the travel authorization (See General Travel Policy-Section III-G).
- 7. General Reimbursement Rates (Updated 7/1/2009):**

Standard mileage rate	\$ 0.51 per mile
Maximum parking fees without receipt	\$ 8.00 per day
Fees for handling of equipment or promotional materials	\$ 20.00 per hotel

- 8. When do I have to deduct commuting miles?**
 Commuting miles are the miles that an employee drives from their home to their normal place of work. Commuting miles must always be deducted when an employee travels from their home to a location other than their normal place of work for business purposes on a normally scheduled workday. *Please note that commuting miles should not be deducted for any travel to and from the airport when flying is included as a part of your business travel nor for any travel by automobile when an overnight stay is required.* No reimbursement for expenses shall be made for transportation in connection with an employee's commuting miles to and from their normal place of work. If the trip to the alternative location

is shorter than the normal commute then no mileage reimbursement is given (See General Travel Policy-Section III-A).

- 9. What expenses are included in the M&I rates?** The per diem rates for M&I (Meals & Incidental expenses) include all meals, tips, non-business phone calls, etc. These expenses will only be paid for travel that requires an over night stay. Please remember that only 75% of the per diem rate will be allocated for the first and last day of travel.
- 10. Where can I find the M&I (per diem) rates for in-state travel?** In-state M&I rates are included in the TBR's General Travel Policy (See General Travel Policy-Addendum) located at <http://www.tbr.edu/policies/default.aspx?id=1050>. Out-of-Country rates are also found in the TBR's General Travel Policy.
- 11. Where can I find the M&I (per diem) rates for out-of-state travel?** Out-of-state rates can be found on the GSA website: (copy and paste this link into your browser: http://www.gsa.gov/Portal/gsa/ep/contentView.do?contentId=17943&contentType=GSA_BASIC)
- 12. Do I have to stay in certain hotels when I travel over night?** No, you have the freedom to determine what hotel to stay in while you are traveling. However, you will only be reimbursed up to the maximum outlined in the Addendum to TBR's travel policy unless you are attending a conference/meeting and are staying in the conference-approved hotel indicated in the brochure. (See General Travel Policy-Section IV.)
- 13. Can travel expenses be placed on the Procard? If so, what can be charged?** Yes, some travel expenses can be charged on the Procard. They include the following:
 - a. Conference Registration Fees
 - b. Airline Tickets
 - c. The first night's hotel charges [This only applies if required by the hotel at the time the reservation is made (please do not ask the hotel if they require up-front payment of the first night's stay)].

Please be aware that the Travel Authorization Form must be completed and approved prior to placing any charges on the Procard. A copy of the approved Travel Authorization Form should be attached to the Procard along with the receipts and kept in the Procard Log that is maintained by the manager or his/her designee of the Procard in your department.

- 14. Are reimbursements for travel automatic?** No. In order for travel expenses to be reimbursed an approved Travel Expense Form with all attached receipts/supporting documents must be submitted within thirty days of travel and the policies for travel must be followed. (See General Travel Policy-Section VII.)

- 15. What documentation should be included with the Travel Expense Form to substantiate the mileage amounts and other expenses incurred?** Print outs from either Rand McNally or MapQuest documenting the route taken and the commuting route should be attached to the form. In addition, receipts or other documentation substantiating the amount should also be attached. (See General Travel Policy-Sections I-F and III-E.3.)

- 16. When will I be reimbursed for my travel expenses?**
Reimbursement of expenses will only take place after travel has taken place, and both a Travel Authorization Form and a Travel Expense Form have been submitted (Including the attachment of all outstanding receipts/documentation) and approved. Both the Travel Authorization Form and the Travel Expense Form can be found on the VSCC website at:
<http://www.volstate.edu/BusinessOffice/travel.html>. Do not forget to keep of copy of everything that you submit for your records. Please reference General Travel Policy Section VII.

17. Can I receive an advancement of any of the expense money prior to travel (Individual Travel)? Yes, up to 80% of the total travel expenses may be advanced prior to the date of travel (This includes the total of all expenses including those expenses paid with the Procard). No advance of less than \$100 will be made. Please reference General Travel Policy Section VIII.

18. What is the policy regarding the advancement of expense money for students and employees traveling with students? Students traveling under individual authorization and an employee traveling with a student or students who is responsible for disbursing all funds for the trip may be advanced 100% of the amount of the travel authorization prior to travel taking place. Please reference General Travel Policy Section VIII-B.