



New Jersey's Public Liberal Arts College

TRAVEL POLICIES & PROCEDURES

Ramapo College of New Jersey

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Introduction

Travel is a necessary activity for College faculty and staff to:

1. Carry out official business (e.g., attending meetings, hearings, conferences; special delivery or pick up of material by College personnel).
2. Further training and professional development through attendance at off campus conferences, conventions and training sessions.
3. To provide for recruitment of faculty, staff and students.

It is the policy of Ramapo College to reimburse current and prospective employees for reasonable travel expenditures incidental to the fulfillment of official College business.

The College travel regulations provide the guidelines for the:

1. Authorization of travel.
2. Reimbursement for transportation, meals, lodging and other expenses associated with travel.
3. Methods of payment for travel.

All Exhibits/Forms can be found online at:

<http://www.ramapo.edu/administration/accountspayable/forms.html>

Policies

The regulations included in this policy cover all administrative employees, faculty, staff and others authorized to travel on behalf of Ramapo College. Compliance with these regulations is the responsibility of the staff member traveling on College business. **These procedures apply to all travel regardless of the source of the funds.**

If travel reimbursement is from a grant, the employee must receive prior approval from the Grants Accounting office in order to establish that all anticipated travel costs will be allowed for reimbursement in accordance with the terms of the grant or contract.

Staff members traveling on official College business are expected to exercise the same care in incurring expenses that a prudent person would exercise if traveling on personal business at their own expense. Expenditures for official travel are reimbursable in accordance with these College travel regulations.

In line with the College's goal of carbon neutrality, we are required to estimate the greenhouse gas emissions associated with travel paid for by the College on an annual basis. To that end, the number of miles traveled by each mode of transportation must be documented by the traveler.

Travel Approvals

As stated in the Procedures Section of this manual, all conferences, conventions, staff training, workshops and seminar travel require prior approval. Travel that occurs without prior approval may not be eligible for reimbursement.

Allowable Expenses

Reimbursable travel expenses are limited to those expenses which are essential to transacting the official business for the College. Only the actual and necessary expenses incidental to the ordinary comfort of the traveler in the performance of his/her official duties will be reimbursed. Ramapo College of New Jersey is a tax-exempt institution. Any expenses incurred within the State of NJ will not be reimbursed for tax. A tax-exempt form can be obtained from the Purchasing department.

Reimbursement for incidentals is set at a daily maximum of \$5. Incidentals are intended to include miscellaneous costs associated with travel such as tips given to baggage carriers, bellhops, taxi drivers or hotel maids.

Telephone charges and internet hook-up charges incurred while traveling will be reimbursed only when such costs relate directly to College business. Personal calls will not be reimbursed.

Moving expenses are not reimbursable.

Extraordinary Expenses

Requests for reimbursement of extraordinary expenses that either could not have been anticipated prior to travel or that exceed the maximum allowable rates are subject to approval before reimbursement. A letter explaining the circumstances and containing the appropriate supporting documents should be sent directly to the Division Vice President for approval.

Special Conditions

Employees who have special travel needs not specifically addressed by these policies, should submit their travel plan through the normal process as described in the Procedures Section of this manual. Reimbursement will be made if prior approval has been obtained through this process.

Procedures

Non-Faculty Approval Process

1. For all travel Unit Head approval is required. The Unit Head must ensure the funds are available to meet the cost of travel, and the Unit budget is not exceeded.
2. For all overnight travel and for rented vehicles, regardless of price, a "Travel Authorization Request" and "Request for Approval for Attendance at Events" (Exhibit A) must be completed by the staff member for approval by the Unit Head and Provost/Division Vice President.
3. The Travel Authorization Request and Request for Approval for Attendance at Events forms must be submitted to Employee Relations no less than two weeks prior to travel so that the approved forms will be in Accounts Payable not less than one week prior to the anticipated travel.
4. No expenditures will be reimbursed where the Travel Authorization Request or the Request for Approval for Attendance at Events request forms have been rejected.
5. Where two or more staff members are expected to travel for the same purpose, each individual must submit a separate Travel Authorization Request and Request for Approval for Attendance at Events form referencing the other staff members' travel.
6. The sum approved for reimbursement may be limited to a fixed amount at the discretion of the approving authority.

Preparation and Distribution of the Non-Faculty Travel Request

1. Both the Travel Authorization Request **and** the Request for Approval for Attendance at Events forms must be approved before travel may commence.
2. Employee prepares Travel Authorization Request **and** Request for Approval for Attendance at Events forms and submits to Unit Head for approval.

3. Unit Head approves both requests, and forwards the forms to the Provost/Division Vice President or Grants accountant, as applicable, for approval who then forwards both documents to the Office of Employee Relations.
4. Employee Relations approves the Request for Approval for Attendance at Events and retains the Request for Approval for Attendance at Events for their files.
5. Employee Relations initials the Travel Authorization Request, indicating the Request for Attendance at Events form has been received and approved, and then forwards the corresponding Travel Authorization Request to Accounts Payable.
6. Accounts Payable assigns a travel authorization number and retains the original Travel Authorization Request.

Note: If there is a problem with either request, the employee will be notified. You can check for the approved travel number by using the Banner form FGIOENC.

Faculty Approval Process

1. Unit Head approval is required for all faculty travel. The Unit Head must ensure the funds are available to meet the cost of travel, and the Unit budget is not exceeded.
2. For all overnight travel and for rented vehicles, regardless of price, a "Travel Authorization Request" and "Request for Approval for Attendance at Events" (Exhibit A) must be completed by the faculty member.
3. The Travel Authorization Request form must be submitted to the Division Vice President or Grants accountant no less than two weeks prior to travel so that the approved forms will be in Accounts Payable not less than one week prior to the anticipated travel.
4. No expenditures will be reimbursed where the Travel Authorization Request form has been rejected.
5. Where two or more faculty members are expected to travel for the same purpose, each individual must submit a separate Travel Authorization Request and Request for Approval for Attendance at Events form referencing the other faculty members' travel.
6. The sum approved for reimbursement may be limited to a fixed amount at the discretion of the approving authority.

Preparation and Distribution of the Faculty Travel Request

1. The Travel Authorization Request form must be approved before travel may commence.
2. Employee prepares Travel Authorization Request and Request for Approval for Attendance at Events forms and submits to Dean.
3. Dean approves the Travel Authorization request, and forwards the form to the Provost or Grants accountant.

4. The Unit retains the Request for Approval for Attendance at Events for their files.
5. The Provost or Grants accountant approves the Travel Authorization Request and sends it to Accounts Payable where a travel authorization number is assigned. The original Travel Authorization Request is retained in Accounts Payable.

Note: If there is a problem with either request, the employee will be notified. You can check for the approved travel number by using the Banner form FGIOENC.

Staff Training

Staff training request to enhance an employee's skills, maintain currency in technological developments, or currency of information requires approval of the staff member's supervisor.

A "Staff Training Request" form (Exhibit B) must be prepared and submitted for approval of the Unit Head, Human Resources and Business Services. If travel is involved, a Travel Authorization Request must also be prepared and submitted for approval.

Prepayment of Travel Expenses

Prepayment of Transportation, Registration or Lodging Fees

Where registration fees or airfare payments must be paid in advance, a purchase order or P Card may be used for prepayment. The P Card is the College's preferred method for prepayments. When prepaying any travel expenses, be sure not to exceed your approved travel authorization amount.

P Card – must be itemized on the Travel Authorization Request under the 'P Card Charge / Purchase Order' column. The amount of the P Card charges must be included in the Total Cost of Trip, but not included in the Reimbursement Amount.

Purchase Order – must be itemized on the Travel Authorization Request under the 'P Card Charge / Purchase Order' column. The amount of the Purchase order payments must be included in the Total Cost of Trip, but not included in the Reimbursement Amount. The Purchase Order must be prepared and signed by the Unit Head authorizing a prepayment. The payee on the purchase order should be the name of the sponsoring organization NOT the staff member. A purchase order issued to prepay registration, hotel or other fees, must show the Travel Authorization approval number and be received by Accounts Payable a minimum of two weeks prior to the date of registration.

Travel Advances

For travel costs greater than \$5,000, a cash advance may be approved for up to 90% of the total anticipated expenditures. Travel advances will only be granted for extended travel for trips lasting longer than 2 weeks. Any exceptions must be requested in writing and approved by the Vice President of Administration & Finance.

1. Travel advance requests will be processed in accordance with the guidelines detailed in this manual. A "Faculty/Staff Loan Request" form (Exhibit C) must be completed by the employee and approved by the Vice President of Administration & Finance. Travel advances are to be processed in the next accounts payable cycle.
2. The voucher is entered into Banner using the advance account number, signifying that it is money due to the college.

Transportation

Wherever practical, travelers are to use the most economical means of transportation. Administrative travel may involve the use of a College owned, private or rented vehicle, a public carrier, taxi or car service.

College Vehicles

College vehicles may only be used for College related travel, not for personal use. The operator must be a College employee. Operators must observe all traffic laws and regulations, have a valid driver's license, and are personally responsible for fines for vehicle infractions and moving violations while vehicle is in their possession.

Arrangements for reserving and picking-up vehicles are to be made with the College Facilities Office form "Request for College Vehicle" (Exhibit D).

Gas and oil are supplied by the College Facilities garage, or can be purchased. Extraordinary expenses (i.e. tire repair, repair of vehicular parts) while using the College vehicle are reimbursable provided an adequate written explanation and receipts are submitted.

Privately Owned Vehicles

Staff members using privately owned vehicles for official business will be reimbursed for mileage at the rate specified in Appendix A. Expenses for tolls and parking fees will be reimbursed at the cost incurred. A prerequisite for reimbursement of travel expenses using a privately owned vehicle requires the insurance information be provided on the Travel Expenses Report. Mileage reimbursement for business trips will be calculated from home to destination, less the usual commute. (See Travel Expenses Report Page 2)

Rental Vehicles

Normally, vehicles rented for travel are not reimbursable. However, certain unusual circumstances, such as the unavailability of public transportation or the non-feasibility of other modes of travel, may require the rental of a vehicle. In such cases, regardless of cost, the employee shall provide written justification on the Travel Authorization Request form to the Provost/Division Vice President at least two weeks in advance of the travel date. Justification shall cite the need for rental, provide reasons why other transportation is not available or feasible to use, and give the estimated total rental cost. Approval, if granted, shall be limited to the rental of an economy or mid-size vehicle. Original copies of the rental agreement, odometer readings at the point of origin and point of return, and proof of payment must be attached to the Travel Voucher for this expense to be reimbursed.

Collision and liability damage coverage insurance **MUST** be purchased from the rental company, since the College does not provide this coverage.

Public Carriers

Travel to-and-from the destination should be by the most direct and economical route. Reimbursement is based on the actual cost of travel by public carrier (rail, bus, airplane). Original receipts are required for rail, bus, or airplane travel. Only coach class will be reimbursed for airplane and train travel.

Airport Service

Home/Ramapo Leg of Trip

For trips involving air travel, Avistar, off-site airport parking, is the recommended vendor for the College. In the event that a traveler decides to use a vendor/service other than Avistar, the maximum allowable reimbursement will be for mileage (less normal commute) plus the Avistar rate, provided original receipts are submitted. (See Appendix A for Avistar details). Car service may be used only when it is the most economical way of traveling to the airport (e.g. multiple employees share car service to the airport).

Destination Leg of Trip

Travel to-and-from the destination should be by the most direct and economical route. Taxicab charges are permitted, but only where public transportation is not readily available, practical, or in the case of an emergency. In the event where public transit is not available or practical, a regularly scheduled car service may be used between airport and trip destination.

Conventions, Conferences, Staff Training, Workshops

Definition

Conference and convention travel is defined as travel not directly related to one's duties and responsibilities but which is undertaken for:

1. The enhancement of professional skills.
2. The exchange of information, ideas and methodology.
3. Promotion of the College's image.

Travel outside the United States, regardless of the cost, shall have approval of the Provost/Division Vice President.

Expenses

For conventions, conferences, staff training, workshops, training seminars and for trips in excess of 24-hour periods requiring overnight lodging (including situations in which a package arrangement includes lodging and meals as an integral part of scheduled activities), the allowable per-diem reimbursements is limited to actual reasonable expenditures. The maximum allowable reimbursements are stated in Appendix A.

Day Trips

Meals for one-day trips that do not involve overnight lodging are not reimbursed except under circumstances where the total time exceeds a ten (10) hour day.

- Meals cannot exceed 50% of the current per-diem rate.
- MUST be submitted with an itemized food/service receipt to be reimbursed.

Lodging Costs

- Expenditures are fully reimbursable for lodging that is an integral part of the scheduled activities of an event. When lodging is not an integral component of the event, employees are entitled to reimbursement for a single standard room at the event site, or a lesser priced hotel. Itemized hotel check-out bills must be submitted for hotel cost reimbursement.

Registration Fees

Registration fees for conventions or workshops are reimbursable. Original paid receipts must be submitted for the registration fee.

Excludable Expenditures

1. First class air travel will not be reimbursed. Such accommodations are permitted only where less expensive accommodations are unavailable or not feasible. Written justification and approval by the Division Vice President must be obtained for reimbursement.
2. Personal telephone calls are not reimbursable.
3. Business telephone calls are reimbursed for calls that are reasonable and necessary for conduction of College business.
4. Travelers will not be reimbursed for use of air-phones installed on airlines.
5. Travelers will not be reimbursed for the cost of Web connectivity charges, unless necessary for conducting College business.
6. Travelers will not be reimbursed for reverse or third party telephone calls.
7. Expenditures of a personal nature such as valet service, entertainment, alcoholic beverages and other charges of a similar nature are not reimbursable.
8. Fines incurred for parking or moving violations while driving a personal, state-owned, or rental vehicle are not reimbursable.
9. Luxury hotel accommodations are permitted only where other accommodations are unavailable or impractical considering the employee's travel itinerary. Written justification and approval by the Provost/Division Vice President must be obtained for reimbursement.
10. Overweight baggage fees are not reimbursable.
11. Baggage check fees for more than one bag is not reimbursable.
12. Flight/travel insurance is not reimbursable.
13. Childcare expenses are not reimbursable.
14. Kennel/boarding expenses for pets are not reimbursable.

Prospective Employees

Generally, travel expenses for full-time faculty and professional positions at the range of D-28 and up are reimbursable. Check with your Provost/Division Vice President for reimbursement confirmation, prior to offering reimbursement to prospective employees. Travel expenses of prospective employees are reimbursed under the same conditions, limitations and requirements of staff members traveling on College business. A W-9 form, obtainable from purchasing, is required for reimbursement.

The Unit Head or Search Committee Chair is responsible to inform the candidate(s) of the policies regulating travel, especially as they pertain to covered and excluded expenditures, and the procedures to follow to obtain reimbursement of travel costs.

- A. As soon as the interview has been scheduled, the Unit Head or Search Committee Chair should prepare a travel request form to obtain approval of the Provost/Division Vice President. The travel request form must indicate the title of the position being searched.

- B. All hotel reservations must be made through the office of the Provost.
- C. Expenses incurred at home location are not reimbursable. (Parking at home airport, food at home airport, tolls to airport)
- D. The Unit Head or Search Committee Chair shall advise the candidate(s) to request any vendor providing transportation or food service, to bill the candidate(s) directly. College staff should not pay for services connected to his/her stay. Reimbursement will be made to the candidate.
- E. The Unit Head or Chair shall provide the candidate with a College invoice during or after the interview, and obtain an itemized listing of all travel costs bearing the candidate's signature. The Search Committee Chair is responsible for the collection of all receipts. Submission of this form is to be made promptly to Accounts Payable.
- F. A separate invoice form must be prepared for each candidate.

Reimbursement of Travel Expenses

A "Travel Expense Voucher" (Exhibit E) and "Program/Conference Assessment Report" (Exhibit F) is to be completed within 14 business days of the completion of the travel. Travel Expense Vouchers and Program/Assessment Reports should be submitted for approval to your unit head. The unit head is to maintain the copy of Program/Conference Assessment Report and forward the Travel Expenses Voucher to Accounts Payable together with original receipts for all expense requests for reimbursement.

Failure of the employee to submit materials for reimbursement within 14 business days of the return date of travel may be treated as forfeiture of reimbursement.

- A. The travel expense voucher must contain the following information:
 - 1. The FOAP (Fund, Organization, Account, and Program).
 - 2. The name and address of the traveler.
 - 3. Approved Travel Request Number, if applicable.
 - 4. The date(s) of travel, destination, mileage, tolls and other costs incurred.
 - 5. Where a personal car was used, the insurance company and coverage of the traveler should be indicated.
 - 6. Where lodging costs are shared with others, this fact should be stated on the voucher. In such cases, the reimbursement is limited to the traveler's proportionate share of the costs.
 - 7. The lower right portion of the voucher should indicate:
 - a. Normal calculation – (the round trip mileage between the requestor's home and the College).
 - b. Cost – Normal commutation multiplied by the mileage/reimbursement rate in effect per mile.
 - 8. The cost of the staff member's normal commutation must be deducted from the total mileage traveled during the day's trip except:
 - a. For travel on weekends and holidays to destinations other than the College or for overnight trips.

- b. Where the staff member regularly uses mass transit on weekly or monthly commutation tickets, car pools to work as a daily mode of commutation, or is reporting to a temporary work site or assignment at the request of his/her supervisor.
 - c. If the cost of the travel is equal to or less than the employee's normal commutation costs, no reimbursement will be made except for parking, tolls, or other costs not normally incurred in the employee's travel to-and-from work.
9. The voucher must contain the miles traveled for every mode of transportation used. This information goes on page three of the voucher.
 10. The voucher must be signed by the Unit Head on the line indicated "Approved Expenditure – Unit Head".
 11. Partial reimbursement of travel expenses – In some instances, staff members request reimbursement for only a portion of the expenses incurred for travel. In such cases, the total expenses incurred should be itemized on the voucher but only the actual amount requested entered in the "Total" block and the phrase "Requesting Reimbursement for Only" typed in the body of the voucher.
 12. Vouchers submitted to Accounts Payable that are improperly completed will be returned to the requestor's unit for correction.
 13. Only travel expenses submitted with original receipts are reimbursable. Travel vouchers submitted without receipts or with copies of receipts will be returned to the originator to complete the required documentation.
 14. Unspent travel advances are to be repaid to Accounts Payable in cash or check within 30 days of completion of the travel. Any unexpended advance not returned within this time period will be treated as taxable income reportable on Forms 941 and W-2 in accordance with the Internal Revenue Service Reg. Sec.31.312(a) -2T, 31.3306(b) – 2T, 31.340(a) – 2T.

Appendix A – Authorized Reimbursement Rates

Transportation

Any College related transportation must be done in the most economical means possible.

Mileage Rate

The current allowable reimbursement rate for mileage incurred in the use of a private automobile in connection with official College business is \$.50 per mile. This amount covers gas, oil, maintenance, insurance and other vehicular operating costs.

Lodging

For conventions, conference, staff training, workshops, training seminars and other trips in excess of 24-hour periods requiring overnight lodging (including situations in which a package arrangement includes lodging and meals as an integral part of the scheduled activities), the allowable per-diem reimbursement is limited to actual reasonable expenditures. Where lodging is shared with others, reimbursement will be limited to the staff member's share of the cost.

- Itemized hotel check-out bills must be submitted for hotel cost reimbursement.

Meals

- Trips with no overnight stay qualify for partial per-diem. (See **Day Trips** in the **Conventions, Conference, Staff Training, Workshops** section).
- Reimbursement for alcohol is not permitted.
- The actual allowable reimbursement for full-day meal per-diem is \$36 per day.
- Per-diem amount includes all expenses for breakfast, lunch, dinner and all related tips and taxes.
- The amount allowable for the day of departure is 75% of the full-day per-diem rate.
- The amount allowable for the last day of trip (return day) is 75% of the full-day per-diem rate.
- The Unit Director or Dean may choose to specify rates that are lower than those in the policy for budgetary control purposes.
- Business meals are not subject to individual meal limits
 - MUST be for non-College employees.
 - MUST be cleared with supervisor in advance.
 - MUST be submitted with an itemized food/service receipt to be reimbursed.

Avistar

Ramapo College has a corporate account with Avistar for airport parking. The daily rate allotment for the area airports are:

Newark: \$15.72 + tax

JFK: \$16.96 + tax

LGA: \$18.66 + tax

Visit www.airportcorporateparking.com/ram or call (800) 621-PARK to make a reservation. Just present a Ramapo College business card or employee ID to the cashier upon exit to get the discounted rate.

Exhibits

All Exhibits/Forms can be found in electronic format online at:
<http://www.ramapo.edu/administration/accounts payable/forms.html>

Exhibit A – Travel Authorization Request



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Exhibit B – Staff Training Request



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Exhibit C – Faculty/Staff Loan Request



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Exhibit D – Request for College Vehicle



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Exhibit E – Travel Expense Voucher



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Exhibit F – Program/Conference Assessment Report



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