Overview

The purpose of this document is to provide guidelines for the procurement of airline and rail tickets when traveling on behalf of the University.

Applicability

The Travel Policies apply to faculty, staff, students, and non-employees traveling on behalf of the University and seeking reimbursement or payment for travel-related expenses from Emory University funds, regardless of the funding source.

Policy Details

2.95.1 Traveler Responsibility

It is the responsibility of travelers to book the most economical air/rail fare with Emory’s travel providers. Travelers should be flexible regarding their travel dates and times and to make their plans as early as possible to take advantage of advance purchase fares.

2.95.2 Responsibility of Higher Level Approvers

Higher Level Approver must ensure that:
- the traveler is aware of the Emory Travel Policy in advance of the travel;
- travel expenses were incurred while conducting authorized University business;
- travel expenses were necessary, reasonable and consistent with University policies and the stated business purpose;
- an expense report includes the required documentation; and
- travel expenses meet any and all Sponsored Program guidelines, if applicable.

2.95.3 Air Travel

Air travel shall be arranged by using Emory’s air travel providers (with the exception of incoming guests/visitors). Use of Emory’s travel agencies for air travel provides a balance between overall cost-effectiveness and the traveler’s need for
reliable services and support, and ensures that we are able to take full advantage of our corporate emergency travel services for the benefit of our faculty and staff.

Simple, single destination domestic trips should be arranged through Emory’s online travel providers. Complex, multi-destination, or international trips should be arranged directly with Emory’s agent-assisted travel providers.

Exceptions to the use of Emory’s travel providers for airfare must be pre-approved by submitting details and business reason to the Associate VP for Financial Operations and will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. Final pre-approval will be granted by the Executive Vice President, Finance and Administration. Any pre-approval for an exception must be in writing and accompany the Expense Report.

1) Coach Class travel should be purchased for all domestic travel.

2) Business Class travel is allowed for international travel at least six hours in duration.

3) First Class travel is not allowed for domestic or international travel. Exceptions require written pre-approval by President, one of the three Executive Vice Presidents or a Senior Vice President; said approval must be included with the Expense Report.

4) “Full Coach Fares” or “Upgradeable Fares” that allow for upgrade opportunities are not allowable when a lower fare is available for domestic travel. Additionally, upgrades are not reimbursable or payable.

5) Travelers who elect to fly in Business Class or First Class for domestic travel will only be reimbursed for, or payment made for, the least expensive fare available based on a 21-day advance purchase estimation for that same route. If documentation is not provided reflecting that cost estimate, Payment Services will not reimburse or pay.

6) Tickets or upgrades purchased with frequent flyer miles are not reimbursable.

7) Travel on charter or private planes is not reimbursable or payable, unless a specific exception exists as pre-approved by President, one of the three Executive Vice Presidents or a Senior Vice President. Air transportation is restricted to commercial flights.

8) Senior Administrators traveling to the same destination should weigh the following guidelines against the business needs of the parties and the practicalities of the situation:

   I. No more than three department chairs should fly together.
   II. No more than five faculty and staff from the same department should fly together.
   III. The Chair of the Board and the President should fly separately.
   IV. No more than two cabinet members or deans should fly together.
   V. A senior administrator should not fly with more than two direct reports.

9) When already paid for by Emory, a non-refundable ticket for a cancelled trip can be applied to a future trip when taken by the same traveler on the same airline, subject to a change or cancellation fee. The traveler must notify the agency or airline in advance if he or she must cancel the trip. If the original airfare was directly billed to a department or charged to an AMEX Corporate Card, the value of an unused ticket must be applied towards a future business trip to mitigate any financial loss to the funding source. It cannot be applied towards a personal trip. In most cases, the traveler has a year in which to apply the unused ticket to future Emory business travel only.

10) When already paid for by Emory, a refundable ticket for a cancelled trip must be returned to the travel agency or airline for a refund. The traveler must notify the agency or airline in advance if he or she must cancel the trip.

2.95.4 Rail Travel

Airline travel is usually faster and less expensive than travel by rail and should be used whenever possible.

1) First Class rail travel is not reimbursable or payable. Exceptions require written pre-approval by the President, one of the three Executive Vice Presidents or a Senior Vice President; said approval must be included with the Expense Report.

2) Roomette accommodations may be used for overnight travel.
Revision History

*Emory University policies are subject to change at any time. If you are reading this policy in paper or PDF format, you are strongly encouraged to visit policies.emory.edu to ensure that you are relying on the current version.*