



## Travel/Conference Guidelines

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## **Definitions**

# Introduction

This Travel Guide is intended to inform campus personnel of travel procedures and to guide users in the proper preparation of travel documents (BSF003/BSF004). The Travel Guide incorporates the State of California, Board Policies and Gavilan College Administrative Procedures and allowances for travel. The information provided in this document applies to all Gavilan College employees, students, and others traveling on official Gavilan College business where the District will be paying for the travel using District funds.

For specific information not addressed in this document please refer to AP/BP7400 Gavilan Travel Policy on BoardDocs.

## Authorized Travel

**ATTENTION: Domestic Out-of-State travel restrictions were repealed on September 13, 2023.**

Travel must be fully approved in advance of making non-cancellable travel arrangements.

Domestic **In-State Travel** requires approval by the traveler's Approving Official and Vice President.

Domestic **Out-of-State Travel** requires approval by the traveler's Approving Official, Vice President and President.

## Travel Agency

The District shall maintain a current and active business relationship with one or more travel agencies. Through an open and competitive process, travel services shall be arranged to serve individual travelers with reservations and ticketing capability. The quality of service will be reviewed annually. The District is currently partnered with the Travel Store through Concur.

[caltravel@ciazumano.com](mailto:caltravel@ciazumano.com)

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# Responsibilities

## Traveler

Individuals traveling on official District business must familiarize themselves with and adhere to the Gavilan College Travel Policy. Travelers must obtain documented authorization to travel prior to embarking on the trip and/or prior to making non-cancellable travel arrangements. This authorization is obtained by completing a Travel/Conference Request Form located on the Business Services website. Travelers should make certain that the business-related expenses they incur are ordinary, reasonable, not extravagant, and necessary to the purpose of the trip. The traveler must:

- Clearly state the business purpose and inclusive dates of each trip:
  - Attach the conference agenda or outline
  - For “business meetings” include who the meeting is with and for what purpose
  - Clearly identify any personal time added onto or included within the trip date range
- Submit a travel/conference reimbursement request form within 30 days from the return of the trip, including a statement of what was achieved by attending the training/conference, and certifying that:
  - They traveled on official college business
  - The actual amount due is accurate
  - They have provided detailed/itemized receipts for all travel/conference expenses (except food if requesting per diem)

## Approving Official

The Approving Official is responsible for approving travel reimbursements, ensuring all expenses are reasonable in terms of price, purpose, and necessity. The Approving Official is responsible for:

- Approving release time for travel
- Identifying the funding source, ensuring sufficient budget and appropriate use of funds
- Verifying expenses requested are ordinary, reasonable, not extravagant, necessary and supported by a business purpose or justification, as appropriate
- Validating, to the extent possible, that the expenses listed were actually incurred by the employee and that appropriate supporting documentation is included with the reimbursement request
- Reviewing and approving the business purpose and ensuring the request is in compliance with any applicable sponsored project/grant requirements
- Approving/denying payment of travel reimbursement request in a timely manner
- Denying expenses not directly related to official college business

## Emergencies

In case of emergencies while on travel status, the traveler should first contact emergency responders at their location. The traveler's appropriate administrator should be informed as soon as possible.

## Expenses

For purposes of determining the applicability of this section, an official college business trip begins when the traveler leaves their residence or normal work location, whichever occurs last, and ends when the traveler returns to their residence or normal work location, whichever occurs first. Expenses for travel within 25 miles of an employee's work location or residence shall not be reimbursed.

Expenses incurred while on travel status consist of charges for lodging, meals, and incidental expenses. Incidentals include transportation between places of lodging or business and places where meals are taken, if suitable meals cannot be obtained at the temporary duty site.

Expenses reimbursed must be ordinary, reasonable, not extravagant, and necessary to accomplish the official business purpose of the trip. Only expenses actually incurred and substantiated are reimbursable. To be eligible for reimbursement, actual expenses must be documented as outlined in the **Documentation Requirements** section of this guide.

If the traveler is unable to provide a required receipt, they must include a completed **Certification of Receipt of Goods form** with the Travel/conference Reimbursement explaining why a receipt is not available.

## Lodging

Travelers may secure lodging when traveling on business more than 45 miles (one way) from their normal work location or home, whichever is closer.

Travelers attending a conference should make the reservation early enough to take advantage of group rates. Travelers are expected to use lodging that is necessary and reasonable, selecting the lowest standard room rates available. An itemized hotel bill for lodging (hotel folio), which includes the employee's name on the hotel bill, along with receipt for payment, must be submitted with the Travel/Conference Reimbursement form.

## Meals while Traveling

Per diem allowances are reimbursable for in-state overnight travel that is 45 miles or more from the traveler's home or primary worksite. Per diem allowances are applicable for all out-of-state travel that is 45 miles or more from the traveler's home or primary worksite. Per diem rates are based on the U.S. General Services Administration Guidelines, which vary by city location. A searchable database of per diem rates can be found at the following link and are annually updated effective October 1.

**[Per Diem Rates | US GSA Website](#)**

If claiming per diem rates, a copy of the location rates should be included on the per diem calculation sheet, which should be included when submitting for reimbursement. Per diem reimbursements are based on departure and return times over the entire 24-hour day and are prorated accordingly. If a free meal is served on the plane, included in a conference registration fee, built into the standard, single hotel room rate or replaced by a legitimate business meal, the per diem allowance for that meal may not be claimed. A copy of the conference agenda or program should be included with the reimbursement form. Exceptions for dietary restrictions on meals already included while in travel status can be made. Receipts are not required for per diem allowances. Per diem allowances are reimbursed after the trip is completed.

## Incidental Expenses

Incidental expenses for travel within the United States will be based on actual amounts incurred up to a maximum of \$5 per 24-hour period. Examples of incidental expenses include business-related telephone charges, Internet charges, taxi, parking, etc.

## Documentation Requirements

Original detailed/itemized receipts must be submitted for all travel related expenses listed below when requesting reimbursement. If an original receipt is lost, a duplicate and/or proof of payment (e.g., copy of check, bank, or credit card statement) along with the **Certification of Receipt of Goods form** must be completed in order to process the reimbursement.

- Airfare
- Lodging
- Rental Car
- Conference registration
- Meals (when applicable)
- All other travel related expenses

## Transportation

Transportation expenses consist of charges for commercial carriers, private car mileage allowances, overnight and day parking of privately-owned cars, rental cars, gas for rental cars, necessary taxi/Uber/Lyft, bus, rapid transit fares, bridge and road tolls, and other charges essential to the transport to and from Gavilan.

Reimbursement of transportation expenses will be based on the most economical method of transportation and the most commonly traveled route consistent with the authorized purpose of the trip. If an employee chooses a more expensive mode of transportation that is not necessary, they will only be reimbursed for the cost of the least expensive option that meets the campus's needs. Both modes of transportation must be shown on the travel reimbursement request.

Expenses arising from travel between an employee's home and the college will not be allowed. Mileage reimbursement shall be computed and paid from either the employee's designated place of employment or residence, whichever is less. Exceptions to the above are:

- Where such expenses are incurred by call back for overtime work necessitating more than one trip to the work location on a normal workday or by any call back on an employee's normal day off.
- When travel to or from a common carrier commences or terminates before or after the regularly scheduled workday or on a regularly scheduled day off, the distance may be computed from the traveler's residence.

## Airline Travel

Transportation by scheduled airlines shall be allowed at the lowest fare available at time of booking.

### Purchasing Tickets

Provide a receipt for travel to and from your destination. This will normally be an itinerary receipt for airfare, showing proof of payment from a travel agency, airline, or online booking tool.

Travelers are responsible for the cost of unapproved upgrades. If the purchase was made via a District Credit Card, the traveler will be asked to reimburse the District.

Travelers may elect to upgrade their seats using personal resources. If not handled as a separate transaction, the reimbursement request should include only the base fare amount.

## Rental Cars

A compact vehicle may be rented when renting would be more advantageous to the district than other means of commercial transportation. Business justification is required for any rental vehicle upgrades. Employees are encouraged to purchase the optional rental agency additional insurance coverage, also known as Loss-Damage Waiver (LDW).

## Transportation by Privately Owned Vehicles

Mileage will be reimbursed based on the current [IRS mileage rate](#). Print a route from an online tool, such as Google Maps™, which shows the total miles driven. Mileage other than to and from the conference destination may be included if it is for business purposes. See Transportation section above for mileage policy. Driving in lieu of flying cannot exceed the cost of airfare plus ground transportation.

# Travel/Conference Reimbursement Request

## Processing and Reimbursement Time Frames

Once the traveler has submitted the Travel/Conference Reimbursement request with all correct and verifiable supporting documentation and appropriate approvals, the Business Office will audit it for compliance with District and Board policies. Complete Travel Reimbursement requests are generally processed within ten (10) business days of receipt.

## Direct Payment Requests

Lodging, registration and airfare fees can be paid directly to vendors in advance via a Direct Payment Request. Before submitting a Direct Payment Request, employees must have an approved Travel/Conference Request.

If a vendor profile does not already exist in Banner, employees will have to submit the vendor's IRS W-9 form to [purchasing@gavilan.edu](mailto:purchasing@gavilan.edu).

Direct Payment Requests must be submitted to the District Accounts Payable Department with the approved Travel Authorization(s) at least three (3) weeks in advance of travel. The Direct Payment Request must be referenced by the Conference registration #.

## Travel/Conference Reimbursement Request Instructions

Within 30 days of trip completion, the traveler must submit a Travel/Conference Reimbursement request form, along with all the required backup documentation/receipts. A Reimbursement request is required for all trips in which an expense was incurred in connection with college business travel, whether the expense was paid directly by the District or the traveler.

## Non-Reimbursable Expenses

This section identifies various expenses not addressed elsewhere in this policy that are not permitted using District funds. Non-reimbursable expenditures can be characterized as those with a personal purpose and will not be reimbursed by the District. Per California Government Code § 8314 (b)(1), "'Personal purpose' means those activities the purpose of which is for personal enjoyment, private gain or advantage, or an outside endeavor not related to state business."

The following non-reimbursable expenditures are only meant to provide examples of expenses that will not be reimbursed by the District. Such expenses include but are not limited to personal domestic ATM/credit card fees; fines/citations; clothing and accessories; frequent traveler program participation; account fees or deposits for FastTrack (or equivalent) that are not related to individual toll charges; club membership fees; luggage (lost luggage may be covered); personal entertainment; personal care; and dependent/pet care.



## Group Travel

A Travel/Conference Request Form may be submitted for a group of travelers under the following circumstances:

- They must travel together to the same destination as a group.
- All members of the group must belong to the same department.
- Air travel is not involved.
- A leader, who is responsible for reporting and claiming all travel expenses, must be designated by the group. (Leader must coordinate all travel expenses such as transportation, meals, registration/ticketing).
- All expenses being claimed must be incurred as a group with no members of the group claiming any separate cash advance, direct payment or expense reimbursement.
- Only one travel/conference request form will be submitted for the entire group. The group's Travel Request will have the name of the leader with the phrase, "ET.AL.". A separate sheet must be attached to the travel request indicating the names and the student or employee G#s of all the members of the group.
- If individual members of the group prefer to submit their own separate travel request, each request will be treated as separate and independent of each other.

A group travel request may also be used for one or more persons where one of them is a District employee hosting or accompanying an official guest or acting as the advisor and chaperone of a District student to a conference, meeting, or workshop. All allowable travel expenses must be reported and accounted for by the employee. If an official guest is unaccompanied by a District employee, or a student travels alone as a representative of the District, their travel expenses may be paid or reimbursed by submitting their own Travel/conference Request Form and Reimbursement Request in accordance with these travel procedures. The use of a group travel request must be restricted to travel where the priority of need over internal control may be justified as being in the best interest of the District.

## Student Travel and Off-Campus Student Activities

Administrative Procedure (AP) 7400 applies to students who are invited to conferences and approved to travel as representatives of the District.

AP 7400 does not apply to students attending field trips, excursions, classes convened off-campus and co-curricular activities. These activities are covered under District Policy/Procedures 4300.

## Cancellations

If an employee cancels conference attendance, every effort should be made to acquire a refund for prepaid expenses. Any unrecovered conference registration fees or cancellation fees may be reimbursable depending upon the circumstances. Flight cancellations are generally not reimbursable as they are specific to the traveler. Exceptions must be approved by the respective Vice-President/Dean.

## Other

The district does not reimburse expenses for spouses or companion travelers.

All costs associated with the conference should be included in the Travel/Conference Reimbursement Request, even if paid from another source. For example, if conference registration is paid with a Gavilan Credit Card, the conference expense must be included as an expense on the form and then the same amount is included as a deduction on the "Less Prepaid" line of the Request form.

Any exceptions to this procedure must be approved by the Director of Business Services.

Use the Receipt of Goods Form for any receipt that is missing. This form must be signed by the Director of Business Services.

Original, itemized receipts must be submitted. A credit card statement is proof of payment but does not qualify as an itemized receipt.

All expenses must be for business purposes. No reimbursement will be made for personal travel.

*Please email [Travel@gavilan.edu](mailto:Travel@gavilan.edu) if you have questions regarding Travel and Conferences*

# Definitions

For the purpose of these procedures, the following definitions will apply:

**Approving Official:** staff consisting of Management level employees who have been delegated authority for the approval of financial expenditures.

**Employee:** Refers to all officers, administrators, faculty, and staff of Gavilan College, both full and part-time.

**Lodging:** Expenses for overnight sleeping facilities. Does not include accommodations on airplanes, trains, buses, or ships which are included in the cost of transportation.

**Official College Business Travel:** To be considered Official College Business Travel at least one of the following criteria must apply:

- A trip is certified by the President or designees to be essential to college operations;
- The trip relates directly to college programs including professional development activities and objectives;
- The trip is to a meeting of a professional association or society to deliver a paper, to serve as moderator or group leader, to serve on a panel, or to fulfill obligations as an association or society officer; or
- The trip has as its primary purpose recruitment of faculty or administrative personnel.

**Receipt:** A detailed/itemized written acknowledgment of money received, obtained from the place of purchase. For substantiation of an expense, a receipt indicates what was purchased, the amount due, the form of payment and preferably a zero balance. Credit card slips and credit card statements are not considered receipts.