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Travel and Expense Reimbursement

The Vanderbilt Divinity School (VDS) Travel and Expense Reimbursement Policy outlines reimbursements that may be funded by other sources, pre-travel authorization requests, and reimbursement expense filing and reporting.

VDS faculty and staff, before committing funds or finalizing reimbursement, must review the VDS Travel and Expense Reimbursement Policy below as well as the [Vanderbilt University Reimbursement Policy](#). In cases where school guidelines differ from university policy, it is expected that the more restrictive policy takes precedence. Any exceptions must be approved in advance by the Divinity School Chief Business Officer and Dean.

Allowable Reimbursement Expenses

The Divinity School adheres to university policy in regard to allowable reimbursement expenses. It is the responsibility of the individual to determine if expenses are allowed in accordance with applicable funding source, agency, sponsor, or other external group paying for reimbursement. VDS faculty and staff are required to use procedures outlined in university policy when making travel arrangements.

Travel Pre-Authorization

Written travel pre-authorizations are required for official VDS business. Faculty are expected to consult with the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs in advance about travel that may conflict with classes or interfere with other university obligations. Staff are expected to consult with their primary supervisor in advance about travel that may interfere with other university obligations. The pre-authorization of travel form must be submitted through the [webform portal](#) and approved by the VDS Dean and the Chief Business Officer prior to committing to arrangements or incurring expenses.

Reimbursement Expense Filing and Reporting

University policy requires that reimbursement expense reports be submitted using Oracle Cloud within 60 days of incurring the expense. Any reimbursement submitted outside of the 60-day window will be reported by the Expense & Payment Cards team to Payroll as taxable income. Expenses not incurred within the previous 90 days are not reimbursable.

Non-travel related business expenses may be reimbursed if an individual paid the expense from personal funds and no other acceptable methods of buying and paying are available (i.e. good(s) available via the Oracle online marketplace Aquire, goods requiring a purchase order as defined in the general purchasing policy, or goods purchased using a Vanderbilt One Card). The purchase of equipment and payment for services require a purchase order, implemented prior to goods received and/or services rendered, and should not be paid from personal funds for reimbursement.

Vanderbilt offers two options in terms of travel expense reimbursement: actual expenses or a per diem rate. When filing the expense report the traveler must choose either to file with actual expenses or per diem for each trip. Using both forms of reimbursement for the same trip is not allowed. There are further restrictions on the use of per diem as outlined below:

- When utilizing sponsored or restricted funds, the individual must submit receipts for actual, incurred expenses.
- When utilizing non-sponsored or unrestricted funds, the individual can choose either to submit receipts for actual, incurred expenses or use the per diem rate. The per diem rate is \$59 per day as of FY24.
 - The per diem rate includes all meals, snacks, room service, and tips for an entire day while traveling for Vanderbilt business purposes. The per diem rate requires a minimum overnight stay outside of Davidson or surrounding counties.
 - The rate cannot be used on trips that include group meals, business meals, entertainment, One Card expenses, or if meals were included as part of a registration fee.

Itemized receipts are required for all expenses equal to or greater than \$75.

Consequences of Non-Compliance

- Expenses submitted for reimbursement that are deemed in violation of this policy may not be reimbursed to the employee/traveler. These violation(s) are governed by the appointed Chief Business Officer and/or Vice Chancellor in coordination of Travel and Payment Cards and Expense Reports team.
 - Additionally, employee/traveler may owe Vanderbilt University an amount equal to the total of discrepancies or unallowable expenses.
- Individuals who do not follow air booking policy, may not have access to duty of care resources made available by Vanderbilt and the university's domestic/international security provider system.
- A personal expense paid with a One Card is strictly prohibited. The cardholder is responsible for reporting transactions to the Payment Cards and Expense Report team immediately. Please reference Vanderbilt University's One Card Policy for additional details and contact your Financial Unit Manager (FUM).

Exceptions to this policy must be approved by the VDS Dean or designee.