



Travel Policies & Procedures

MISSION & LOCATION

Mission: The function of the Travel Office is to serve and support ASU faculty and staff while providing assistance and guidance regarding all travel policies and procedures. We are responsible for ensuring strict adherence to all State of Texas and ASU operating guidelines. Our goal is to expedite all travel reimbursements as quickly and accurately as possible.

Location and contact: The Travel Office is located in the Administration Building, 2601 W. Avenue N, Room 110, San Angelo, Texas 76909. Hours of operation are 8:00a.m. to 12:00pm, 1:00pm to 5:00p.m., Monday through Friday, excluding University holidays. You may also reach us by phone at (325) 942-2725 or email TravelOffice@angelo.edu.

OVERVIEW

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SUCCESSFUL TRAVEL PLANNING

Required Forms

The approval process for official travel is activated by the submission of the **Travel Authorization Request (TAR)** form.

- Successful travel planning begins with the thorough completion of this form.
- The purpose of the TAR is to indicate to Purchasing the amount of expected travel expenses to be encumbered and from what funding source the expenses are to be paid.
- The TAR is also used to indicate which travel expenses are to be “pre-paid” using either the Business Travel Account (BTA for Airfare, Hotels, and Rental Cars) or an Online Purchase Requisition (for registration expenses).
- For student travel, the TAR is used to request travel advances.

Required Forms

In addition to the TAR, the following forms must be completed for employee travel:

- Travel Expense Log
- Travel Management Compliance Certification

For prospective employees, the following forms must be completed:

- Authorization Request for Payment of Travel Expenses for Prospective Employee
- Travel Management Compliance Certification
- Travel Expense Log

Required Forms

In addition to the TAR, the following forms must be completed for student travel:

- Student/Group Travel Form
- Student/Group Travel List
- Student Activity Release Form
- Student Travel Expense Report
- Driver Approval Request

For international travel, employees and students must also complete the following form:

- Affirmation, Waiver and Liability Release

Necessary Memos

The following memos should be submitted along with the TAR and received by the Travel Office prior to travel:

- Multiple Traveler Justification (if more than one employee within the same department is traveling to the same destination; must state the reason if they are unable to travel together). OP 70.02
- Hotel Overage (must list the maximum allowed rate, actual rate, Local account to pay the overage from, and reason the overage is necessary; requires VP approval). OP 70.04
- Advisor Not Accompanying Student Group (should state the reason the advisor is not able to accompany the student(s); requires VP approval). OP 70.09

Price Quotes and Per Diem Rates

When planning travel you can contact the Travel Office for price quotes or help with estimated expenses.

- Airfare – Please email the Travel Office your dates and times of travel as well as the destination city or preferred airport. Travelers can also visit the American Airlines website to receive a flight estimate. Please note that airfare cannot be purchased by the Travel Office until the approved TAR is received and a Traveler Profile has been completed.
- Per Diem Rates - Agencies must use the federal rates provided by the General Services Administration for both in-state and out-of-state travel within the contiguous United States. OP 70.04
 - For in-state travel, if a duty point is not specifically listed, a maximum rate of \$85 for lodging and \$36 for meals must be used.
 - For out-of-state travel, if a duty point is not specifically listed, the rate for the nearest city or county may be used.

BOOKING TRAVEL

Conserving Funds

The University shall minimize the amount of travel expenses paid or reimbursed by making sure that each travel arrangement, including meals, lodging, transportation, and incidental expenses, is the most cost-effective considering all relevant circumstances. To reduce travel costs, the university shall use interactive television, videoconference technology, and telephone conferences whenever possible. *Gov't Code Sec. 660.007 and OP 70.01*

To provide timely and efficient travel services and generate cost savings to state agencies, the State of Texas legislation requires that the Texas Procurement and Support Services (TPASS) contract with travel vendors.

Coordination of travel must occur when two, three, or four state employees employed by the same state agency travel on the same dates with the same itinerary to conduct the same official state business. *Gov't Code Sec. 660.044 and OP 70.04*

Planning Ahead

In an effort to assist in conservation of funds, it is important to plan your travel as far in advance as possible.

Also, be aware that Travel Authorization Request (TAR) forms that require additional levels of approval (i.e. out-of-state/international) may experience delays during the signature process.

When airfare is involved, the Travel Office will purchase your airfare once the approved TAR has been received and funds have been approved by Purchasing. Prices tend to increase closer to the departure date.

Any “pre-paid” expenses will not be authorized for purchase until the approved TAR and necessary documentation is received (i.e. Registration, Hotel/Rental Car, Airfare).

Business Travel Account

The Business Travel Account (BTA) is designed to assist employees who wish to have airfare, hotel, and/or rental vehicle charged directly to the university. The BTA is available to employees, prospective employees, teaching assistants and graduate assistants. *OP 70.03*
Please indicate on the TAR which charges are to be “pre-paid”.

- Airfare – Acquire flight quote from Travel Office(request quote via email); complete Travel Profile.
- Hotel – Traveler will make initial hotel reservation using personal/ travel card and attach confirmation to TAR. BTA will only pay room charge and applicable taxes. All other incidentals should be put on personal card.
- Rental Car – Travel Office will make reservation with Enterprise for direct billing.

Students traveling with proper authorization may also use the BTA.
OP 70.09

SUMMARY OF OPERATING POLICIES/ PROCEDURES

ASU Travel Policies

Travelers and employees accountable for student travel are responsible for understanding the following:

- 70.01 Travel Guidelines
- 70.02 Authorization for Official Travel
- 70.03 Business Travel Account
- 70.04 Reimbursement of Travel Expenses
- 70.06 Travel by Prospective Employees
- 70.07 International Travel
- 70.08 Use of the State Corporate Travel Card
- 70.09 Student Travel

Travel must be in compliance with applicable state law, the travel allowance guide, and ASU operating policies.

OP 70.01-Travel Guidelines

- Travel expense logs should be submitted for reimbursement no later than 60 days after the ending date of travel;
- Due to IRS regulations and the Safe Harbor rules, travel expense logs that are submitted 60-90 days after the ending date of travel will require a memo explaining why they were submitted late. Will also require additional levels of approval and may even run the risk of being denied entirely or reported as taxable income to the payee;
- Travel expense logs submitted later than 90 days after the ending date of travel will not be processed and funds will be unencumbered.

OP 70.02 - Authorization for Official Travel

- Travelers must have an approved Travel Authorization Request (TAR) form;
- Prior approval for all travel is required for absences from the campus (or other designated headquarters) for business purposes for periods of half a day or more during the normal working period, whether or not there is a cost to the university;
- All international travel must be approved in advance by the appropriate vice president and the president, regardless of the funding source.

OP 70.03 - Business Travel Account

- If the trip is not entirely funded by the university or is extended for personal travel, the employee must provide a check payment to Citibank for the additional amount not charged to the BTA at the time of the reservation;
- The Travel Office recommends that an employee carry a credit card or cash in case a hotel refuses to allow prepaid charging for the full amount due;
- If an employee cannot travel, contact the Travel Office immediately. Only the Travel Office may cancel travel reservations made through the BTA.

OP 70.04 - Reimbursement of Travel Expenses

- An employee shall immediately reimburse the state for an overpayment. Future travel will be suspended until reimbursed;
- No reimbursement for meals if state business does not require an overnight stay, unless the expenses were mandatory and connected with training, a seminar or conference;
- The meal allowance represents the maximum charge allowed for a day of travel. The reimbursement should not exceed the actual expense for each meal;
- If an employee travels to more than one duty point on the same day, then the maximum meal or lodging reimbursement for the day is equal to the highest of the maximum rates for the duty points visited.

OP 70.04 - Reimbursement of Travel Expenses

- A state agency may pay or reimburse a state employee for a cancellation charge if:
 - The charge is incurred for a business related reason or because of illness, adverse weather conditions or a natural disaster;
 - The travel expense log must state the reason for the cancellation. Attach proof of the paid cancellation charge and if applicable, original airline ticket;
- However, a state agency is not liable for and may not reimburse an employee for a cancellation charge that a provider assesses because the employee should have, but failed to cancel in time to avoid the charge.

OP 70.04 - Reimbursement of Travel Expenses

- Commercial airlines:

- The reimbursement for commercial air transportation may not exceed the cost of the lowest airfare available;
- When an employee combines business and personal air travel, the reimbursement may not exceed the amount of airfare that would have been charged had they not included personal travel;
- Federal taxes on airfare are reimbursable;
- If an employee purchases airfare using personal funds, reimbursement will be made upon the completion of the trip and the submission of the travel expense log.

OP 70.04 - Reimbursement of Travel Expenses

- Registration fees:

- An employee may be reimbursed for registration fees for official business conferences and seminars. Receipt required;
- Cancellation charges for “no shows” because of personal reasons are not reimbursable;
- One state employee may replace another employee at a conference if the attending employee attaches a statement outlining the circumstances with the receipt;
- Registration fee payments may not be made more than six (6) weeks in advance, unless the cost savings is considerable to the University or if there is a limited capacity for attendance.

OP 70.04 - Reimbursement of Travel Expenses

- Special Provisions:

Reimbursable incidental expenses:

- Phone calls, hotel internet usage fees, postage, facsimile, and notary fees for official business;
- Copies made by the employee that are required by the agency;
- Charges to exchange U.S. currency for foreign currency and vice versa.

Non-reimbursable incidental expenses:

- Any expense that does not relate to official state business;
- Excess baggage charges for personal belongings and locker rental;
- Alcoholic beverages, dry cleaning or laundry, or kennel expenses for a pet;
- Internet service fees associated with reserving airfare or hotel.

See OP for more examples of reimbursable and non-reimbursable expenses.

OP 70.06 -Travel by Prospective Employees

- Reimbursement for travel expenses:
 - Prospective state employees are to be reimbursed in the same manner as ASU employees, except that they may not receive a travel advance;
 - Prospective employees are not exempt from hotel occupancy taxes;
 - Must follow the same travel guidelines and operating policies as ASU employees;
 - Reimbursement for travel expenses will be mailed to the prospective employee's address after visiting ASU.

OP 70.07 - International Travel

- Approval and reimbursement of expenses:
 - The TAR must be submitted to the President's Office at least six (6) weeks prior to departure;
 - International travel is not typically funded with state appropriated funds, however where it is appropriated, a memo justifying the use of state funds is required;
 - Contracts and Grants – May require additional approval;
 - Passports are required for international air travel;
 - Reimbursement for travel expenditures should follow the same guidelines set forth in OP 70.04.

OP 70.08 - Use of the State Corporate Travel Card

- Only charges for State of Texas business related expenses;
- Upon termination of employment, the state travel card should be returned to the Travel Office;
- Retail charges should be made only in connection with travel on state business – limit of \$500;
- If any charges appear to be unrelated to official “State of Texas” travel business, the employee will be notified by letter from the Travel Office. After three letters to employee, the Travel Office will notify the Vice President of Finance and Administration.

OP 70.09 - Student Travel

- An employee must be accountable for out-of-town trips for students and ensure all travel documents are completed prior to travel;
- Students traveling to professional conferences to present their research are not required to have an employee accompany them;
- Cash advances will be given only to the employee accountable for the student travel and expenses;
- After the trip, the accountable employee must complete a Student Travel Expense Report within fifteen (15) days and attach all required documentation;
- If an accountable employee fails to submit the Student Travel Expense Report and unused funds within fifteen (15) days for two trips, the employee will be denied any future advances.

HELPFUL TRAVEL TOOLS

TEXTRAVEL WEBSITE

<https://fmx.cpa.state.tx.us/fmx/travel/texttravel/>

The Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts created Textravel to provide information on state travel laws and rules to state agencies and institutions of higher education. Textravel is based on Texas Government Code Chapter 660, General Appropriations Act, Article IX, Part 5 , and Texas Administrative Code, Title 34, Part 1, Chapter 5, Subchapter C, Section 5.22.

This web resource is designed to be an easy reference for state agencies and their employees. Links to applicable laws and rules are included.

~VERY User-friendly - Helpful with all aspects of travel~

ASU TRAVEL WEBSITE

http://www.angelo.edu/services/travel_office/

This website is a relatively new development for the Travel Office. Our intention was to create a source for travelers (employees and students) to help with the planning and payment of travel-related services.

The Travel Office also has a Travel Channel on Ram Port located within the Work Life tab.

Your input is welcome, so please let us know if you are having trouble using one of the sites or if there is information you cannot find or would like added to the site.

~Helpful tool for ASU travelers~

TEXAS COMPTROLLER WEBSITE

<http://www.window.state.tx.us/procurement/prog/stmp/>

The State Travel Management Program (STMP) at the Comptroller's office ensures that state agencies use taxpayer dollars more efficiently by helping them manage their travel expenditures by providing discounted travel services through vendor contracts and monitoring state travel activity.

Whether you are the traveler or a travel coordinator, this web site will provide you with valuable resources and information to make the most effective use of your travel budget.

~Provides helpful information regarding vendor contracts~