



# RESEARCH CORPORATION OF THE UNIVERSITY OF GUAM

## **TRAVEL POLICY**

It is the declared policy of RCUOG that all travel must be performed either for the direct benefit of UOG and/ or RCUOG or to fulfill a real and legitimate obligation of UOG and/ or RCUOG.

University of Guam employees traveling on funds service-ordered through RCUOG will follow the RCUOG travel policy.

### **1. General**

Travel expenses must be reasonable and in line with prudent management of funds. The per diem allowance will be paid using federal GSA rates or Department of State (for international travel) rates in effect at the time the travel occurs.

All persons traveling shall exercise the same care in incurring expenses that a prudent person would if traveling on personal business. Travel costs are the expenses for transportation, lodging, subsistence, and related items incurred while on official business.

### **2. Definitions**

- The term “traveler” means the person who is traveling for the RCUOG.
- The term “business days” means days during which the RCUOG is open for business.
- The term “baggage” means RCUOG property, private property to be used exclusively for official business, and apparel needed by the traveler for the journey.
- The term “per diem allowance” means a daily flat rate of payment in lieu of actual lodging and meal expenses.

### **3. Cost Sharing**

The traveler and person authorizing the travel may make a cost sharing agreement as to the travel cost. RCUOG may make cost-sharing agreements with other institutions. If a cost-sharing agreement is made, the traveler must submit documentation of the cost to be paid by RCUOG.

### **4. Allowable Expenditures**

#### **a. Lodging & Subsistence**

- Actual expenses or per diem may be used for trips lasting seven days or less provided the method used is applied to the entire trip and not to selected days of the trip.
- Traveler may request the per diem rate times the travel days without submitting receipts to document meal and lodging costs during the travel period if the travel period is seven days or less.
- All travel lasting more than seven days must use the actual expenses method for lodging from the first day of travel. Travelers must submit lodging receipts with their travel



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clearance. Travelers can receive the daily rate for Meals and Incidentals as published by GSA for each day of travel.

- Actual lodging expenses may not exceed 200% of the maximum per diem lodging allowance. Receipts for meals (if needed) and lodging costs must be submitted to document allowable expenditures. See #10 Travel Clearance for details.

## b. Air Travel

- Travelers will select the most reasonable, lowest cost economy airfare for travel, which does not subject the traveler to undue delays in connections or layovers, and includes one checked bag and one carry-on bag in the ticket price. Upgrades to premium economy or business/first are not allowed unless the traveler can provide written justification due to a documented health reason. Travelers are not allowed to use NAF/Discretionary accounts to upgrade seats.
- If the ticket is less than \$10,000 one quote will suffice. Upon receipt of approved Travel Authorization, travelers may purchase their ticket (See Travel Advance 8 a below).
- Travelers may use their own funds to purchase their airfare and will be reimbursed for the most reasonable, lowest economy airfare (inclusive of one carry-on and one checked bag) only. Any upgrades to seats must be paid for by the traveler's own funds and must be booked by the traveler.
- Travelers may be reimbursed for an additional checked luggage if used to transport print collateral for use at a conference or meeting.

## c. Ground Transportation

- Rental of automobiles, taxicabs, and other special conveyances are allowable if authorized prior to the first day of travel. Reimbursement is allowed if supported by receipts for dates of authorized travel only.

## d. Miscellaneous

- Airport Parking Fees – Allowable not to exceed the cost of taxi fare to/from terminal.
- Lodging taxes – Reimbursement as a miscellaneous expense limited to taxes on reimbursable lodging costs (for non-foreign areas).
- Laundry & Dry Cleaning – Allowable if travel is four consecutive days or more.
- \$35 in Internet charges, sim card, or calling card per day for a maximum of 7 days or \$245 is allowed.
- Reasonable and customary tips (waiters, porters, hotel maids) not to exceed 15%.
- Excess baggage charges – Excess baggage is allowed for official business purposes such as transporting equipment or specimens. Claims for excess baggage charges will be allowed if approved at the time the travel was authorized.



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- Entertainment Expense - Meals may be covered under this category if the purpose of the meeting, the names of individuals who attend the meal at which official RCUOG/UOG business was discussed, and receipts are attached to the Travel Clearance form. Prior approval is required on the TA. Alcohol is not an allowable expense. Traveler using federal funds will not be able to charge entertainment expenses to the grant unless there is prior approval from the grantor. A traveler cannot claim both M&IE (meals and incidental expenses) and an entertainment meal for himself/herself on the same day. The person who hosts the entertainment expense will have his/her meal deducted from his/her M&I on that day. The amount must be indicated on the travel clearance.
- Other expenses – Miscellaneous expenditures, when necessarily incurred by the traveler in connection with the transaction of official business, and not to exceed 10% of the approved Travel Authorization amount, are allowable when approved by the official who authorized the travel.

## 5. Travel day

- a. The traveler will be entitled to the per diem rate for each day of official travel. No more than one day of per diem or expenses for traveling may be claimed before the beginning of official business. To determine the number of travel days in a trip, the number of conference/meeting/purpose days are counted plus one day of travel time outbound from Guam and one day of travel time inbound to Guam.
- b. However, travel outside the Pacific corridor that requires more than 8 hours of flying time are allowed one additional day of outbound travel per diem if their flight arrives 6PM or later and their conference or activity begins before noon the following day. Supporting documentation must be attached to the TA requesting an additional travel day.
- c. Trips less than a day - If a trip is less than one day, the traveler is entitled to all allowable expenditures. However, the traveler is not entitled to per diem.
- d. Airline Delays - Flights are sometimes delayed by the airlines for a variety of weather, mechanical, or other reasons and travelers are not able to return as planned. In cases where the airline cancels or delays a flight, travelers may request an extension of their travel time upon their return.
- e. Extension of Travel Time - The extension of official travel requires prior approval in writing by the person authorizing the travel.

## 6. Travel Days Between Official Business

It may be wise for RCUOG to send a traveler to multiple business-related activities or events. If there are open days between the meetings, the traveler and the person authorizing the travel should discuss whether the days in between will be considered annual leave or workdays, and whether they will be considered travel days for the purpose of per diem. The decisions on such a matter should be recorded on the travel authorization or a separate memo.

If travel includes multiple locations and lasts longer than 7 days:



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- a. Traveler can claim reimbursement based on actual lodging costs
- b. If annual leave is taken between, per diem is allowed for official conference days only at each conference location. Travel days at each conference location must be 7 days or less.
- c. If no annual leave is taken in between conferences and traveler claims per-diem, then a memo is needed to document why two back-to-back conferences should be treated as two separate trips. The traveler's supervisor must approve memo. Travel days at each conference location should be 7 days or less.

## **7. Salary and Use of Leave While traveling**

- a. Salary while on travel status - The traveler shall be on administrative leave and receive regular salary during the authorized travel time. Traveler must submit supervisor approved leave form to unit timekeeper prior to travel.
- b. Reporting Leave Use - If the traveler becomes sick during the trip or uses other types of leave while on travel status, the traveler must submit leave forms to unit supervisor for approval as soon as possible upon return.
- c. Leave as a result of illness or injury - Whenever a traveler takes sick leave because of illness or injury not due to his or her own misconduct, the prescribed per diem shall continue for periods not to exceed ten days. The traveler must submit leave form to unit supervisor for approval.

## **8. Travel Advance**

- a. Advance of Funds - The traveler may request an advance of 80% of the authorized per diem and 100% of the conference fees and other miscellaneous allowances. Advances to travelers are considered by RCUOG as a receivable until the account is settled in a Travel Clearance. The RCUOG will arrange with the travel agency to pay for the airline ticket. If the traveler wishes to buy his or her own ticket, they should indicate this on the travel authorization and request reimbursement in the travel clearance upon presentation of documentation of a paid itinerary up to the amount of the allowed airfare. Reimbursement to the RCUOG is required if the traveler does not submit appropriate airfare receipts. See #10 Travel Clearance for details.
- b. Release of check - Unless otherwise notified by the executive director, the traveler may pick up the check five days before the travel begins. In some circumstances, the executive director may release the check earlier.

## **9. Travel Authorization**

- a. To allow for timely processing and travel advances, the travel authorization form should be prepared by the traveler and sent to RCUOG office ten business days prior to the travel date. RCUOG can accommodate processing the travel authorization in a shorter timeframe but may not be able to issue travel advances before date of travel. Travelers who want to process travel authorizations in a condensed timeframe should expect to pay their travel and per diem costs up front and request reimbursement upon return. See #10 Travel Clearance for details.



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- b. The Principal Investigator's signature approving travel and funding source must be on the travel authorization form. If the PI is the traveler, then the PI's supervisor must sign the travel authorization form. No person can approve their own travel.
- c. A statement justifying purpose of travel as it relates to grant objectives must be included on the travel authorization form. The purpose of the travel should provide details of the trip including location by city, dates of business activity, and name of conference or seminar. The travel should be allocable and beneficial to the account.
- d. If the travel is to a conference or professional meeting, a conference agenda or letter of invitation should be attached.
- e. The traveler shall attach a flight itinerary to his/her travel authorization form. This will be used to calculate travel days.
- f. RCUOG will certify that funds are available and allowable from the grant source funding the travel. If funds are not available, the travel authorization will not be approved by RCUOG.

## 10. Travel Clearance

In order to clear their travel Travelers must submit the following:

- a. Proof of travel (e.g., receipts printed at airline kiosk, frequent flier statement indicating travel dates, or boarding passes) is required to document travel days and calculate proper per diem reimbursement.
- b. Receipts to support all expenditures which exceed fifteen (\$15) dollars except for food and lodging if per diem is claimed.
- c. Receipts for conference registration, membership and other fees associated with the purpose of travel.
- d. All claims for the reimbursement of travel expenses shall be submitted on the travel clearance form and must be itemized and stated in accordance with travel policy.
- e. In order to satisfy federal compliance requirements, all travelers must submit a trip report which includes the purpose of the trip and how it contributed to satisfying grant outcomes along with a receipt of registration payment or other documentation that indicates attendance at the conference.
- f. Suspension of Charges - Items in a travel clearance not stated in accordance with the travel regulations, or not properly supported by receipts where required, will not be reimbursed
- g. Foreign Currency - Persons traveling in foreign countries should report their expenditure by item in the foreign currency. The total expenditure in foreign currency must be converted into US dollars at current rates.
- h. Clearance - The travel clearance must be submitted to the RCUOG office within twenty (20) calendar days after the traveler returns home.
  - i. Any payments for amounts due to RCUOG from the traveler must be made at this time.
  - ii. Receipts must be submitted to document allowable expenditures.



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- iii. Travelers will not receive future travel advances while they have an open travel clearance.

## **Summary**

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that the traveler will neither make nor lose money while traveling. In order to travel and ensure proper reimbursement, a person should request permission to travel by submitting a travel authorization form. When the travel is complete, the traveler should report his/her travel expenses on the travel clearance form, attach all necessary documentation and submit within 20 days of returning home. Required forms are available on the RCUOG website.