



# *TRAVEL GUIDELINES & TRAINING*

# Chrome River

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Chrome River will replace Concur in 2025!

One Card System: We will no longer have separate cards for Purchasing (P Card) and Travel. Requests and expense reports will still be separated.

Dart Cards will still be available for non-employee travel, student travel and emergency situations.

We will no longer need to use Dart Cards for state account travel!

# Travel Contact

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## **Shared Services Contact Information:**

*Non-Travel Help:* For card administration (credit limit changes, MCC issues, etc.) or questions relating to non-travel expense reports [paymentcard@tamu.edu](mailto:paymentcard@tamu.edu).

*Helpdesk Phone Number:* 979-458-5731

*Travel Help:* For travel bookings, travel preapproval, travel expenses or guidance on guidelines email - [travel@tamu.edu](mailto:travel@tamu.edu).

*Helpdesk Phone Number:* 979-458-8734

# How to Order a Travel Credit Card

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## OneCard Resources

OneCards-Please check with K'Leeh Holt ([kholt@tamut.edu](mailto:kholt@tamut.edu)) to make sure you do not already have a card ordered.

- Need a OneCard? [New Card Application](#)
- [More Information about OneCard](#)
- Need to cancel you OneCard? [Cancel Card Application](#)
- [Emburse/Chrome River Resources](#)

## Updated Monthly Card Limits (excluding Athletics):

- Non-Travel Only (previously P Card): \$5,000 & single transaction \$3,000
- Travel Only: \$2,500 & single transaction \$3,000
- Both Travel and Non-Travel: \$7,500 & single transaction \$3,000

If your monthly travel will exceed \$2,500, please [submit a card increase request](#).

# How to Order a Travel Credit Card

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Non-frequent traveler/State Travel/Student Travel: Dart Card

Single use (trip) card that is preloaded with funds. Requires a separate application for each card needed.

Need a Dart Card? [New Card Application](#)

# PCI Compliance-Federal Trade Commission

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- Only the cardholder can physically store/have possession of the card.
- Administrators cannot under any circumstance have another's physical card, written card information, photos/scans, etc.
- Card information should never be shared via text, email, Teams, written/typed, etc.
- The cardholder can store their card information on Emburse Expense/Chrome River (which is secure) for an admin. to be able to use it to book travel reservations.

# Travel Process

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1. If you are staying overnight, search the GSA daily rates for the city you are traveling to.
2. In Emburse Expense/Chrome River, look up expected costs for rental car, hotel, and/or airfare for the trip.
3. Send these estimates plus any additional costs (meals, gas, parking) to supervisor for approval.
4. Once approved, create a travel request in Emburse Expense/Chrome River using these amounts.
5. Submit travel request.
6. Once you have received the email from Emburse Expense/Chrome River saying the request is approved, book reservations in Emburse Expense/Chrome River.
  - a. No reservations or purchases should be made before this step. Funds will not be available on your travel card until you have received this email. Airfare booked without approval will be denied.
  - b. Book car rentals, hotel and airfare in Emburse Expense/Chrome River to guarantee contracted rates and travel policy compliancy.
7. Go on trip! Save or take pictures of your receipts.
8. When you have returned, start the expense report. (You can start the expense report before your trip to continually add your receipts & expenses while on the trip.)
9. Upload receipts and import expenses. Input any out-of-pocket expenses.
10. Submit expense report.

# Some Important Travel Policies

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One Day Rule- The day before and after your event are considered reimbursable travel days if you need to use them.

Personal Travel- Personal travel expenses should never be paid for with your travel card or included on your expense report. Personal travel that coincides with business travel should be clearly identified on your request.

Non-Overnight Meals- If you are not staying overnight for the trip, the meals for the single day are not reimbursable.

Conservation of Funds- Texas Government Code Section 660.007 requires Conservation of State Funds by mandating that state travel be by the most cost-effective method, considering all relevant circumstances.

State vs. Local Funds- State accounts have more restrictions on what they can pay for when traveling.

Booking- Emburse Expense/Chrome River should be used to book unless there are special circumstances. Do not use Expedia or other sites like this. You must book using our contracted vendors.



# Detailed Itineraries

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**The state of Texas is now requiring that all travel involving a state account has a detailed itinerary attached before being approved. All Texas A&M University members must now use the link below to create the itinerary. Itineraries must be attached to every Emburse Expense/Chrome River travel expense report that is funded by a state account (1XXXXXX). Failure to do so will result in the report being returned to the traveler for corrections.**

<https://it-lf-ecmf.tamu.edu/Forms/TravelItinerary>

# Travel Per Diems

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Travel per diems can be found on the [GSA website](#).

Grant/Contract travel follow these guidelines unless grant/contract states otherwise. (Verify with Grant Specialist)

If traveling on state funds, employee's travel card CANNOT be used for meals. Must be charged to a Dart card or paid out-of-pocket.

# One Day Rule

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The day before official state business begins and the day after official state business ends are travel days reimbursable by state policy unless:

- The travel distance requires more than 1 day, or;
- The extra day(s) are incurred to qualify for a discount in airfare.

Additional days are considered personal business and are not reimbursable.

# Combining State and Personal Business

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If a traveler combines personal travel with official state business travel, the traveler is only allowed reimbursement amounts that fall under the Textravel Chapter 660 of the Texas Government Code. Meals, lodging, or car rental that was incurred on personal days cannot be reimbursed.

A state employee may not be reimbursed for the rental of a motor vehicle if the rental was necessary only because the employee combined personal business with state business.

The travel card should not be used for personal business.

# Conservation of Funds

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Texas Government Code Section 660.007 requires Conservation of State Funds by mandating that state travel be by the most cost-effective method, considering all relevant circumstances.

# Booking Hotels, Flights and Car Rentals

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**Once trip is approved in Emburse Expense/Chrome River, traveler may:**

Book local and international flights

Make car rental reservations

Reserve hotels

Using our contracted Emburse Expense/Chrome River travel agent, Corporate Travel Planners is recommended. Once all reservations are complete, traveler is ready to go on trip.

Using Expedia, Travelocity, and other online booking agents is highly discouraged.

# Airfare

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Only book airfare after receiving the Travel Request approval notice.

After Travel Request is approved, airfare booked via Emburse Expense/Chrome River must be charged to a state travel credit card.

Change fees of \$250 apply after the airfare is booked.

If using state funds, the university travel card must be used. Also, the airfare must be purchased on the [STMP Airline Contract](#).

# Lodging

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Hotel charges must be itemized in Emburse Expense/Chrome River by date to show the full breakdown of room rate, tax and additional charges.

Receipts are required. Lodging receipts must be original and complete.

Receipt must include:

- Hotel name & address
- Employee's name
- Full itemization per day include room rate
- Final balance of \$0.00.

If lodging is in the State of Texas, we are exempt from the state occupancy tax. Tax exemption form can be found on the travel website.



# Higher Lodging

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Any lodging expense claimed above the standard or per diem rate, if applicable, will NOT be reimbursed unless you fall under one of the following exceptions.

If traveling on state funds, must use the lodging rates listed on the previous Travel Per Diems slide.

**Exception 1: Staying at conference hotel.** If you are attending a conference and you are staying at the conference hotel at the conference rate, you are allowed additional reimbursement for your lodging if you meet all of the following conditions:

- Your accommodation is one of the hotel's standard rooms, and
- You must attach documentation provided by the conference stating the conference hotel and room rate allowed for your stay.

**Exception 2: Reducing meals to increase lodging.** A state employee may claim less than the maximum meal reimbursement rate for a duty point and use the amount of the reduction to increase the maximum lodging reimbursement rate for the duty point. This is allowable for in-state and out-of-state travel.

# Rental Vehicles

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Travelers should purchase under contract whenever possible. Contract rates are usually much less than market rates and the contract rates include the required coverage. Contract rental cars include CDW/LDW and liability insurances, so no additional coverage is necessary when picking up the car. So please refuse any additional coverage offered.

If using state funds, it is required that the purchase of the rental car be made using the STMP – Car Rental Contract

State agencies are exempt from the Motor Vehicle Rental Tax. When renting a car in Texas, present the Motor Vehicle Rental Exemption Certificate to the vendor when picking up the car.

# Rental Vehicles

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Receipts are required for rental vehicles.

Receipts must show:

- Employee's name
- Rental company name & address
- Full itemization of rates and any additional fees

If renting in the State of Texas, we are exempt from the state motor vehicle rental tax. Tax exemption form can be found on the travel website.

# Rental Vehicles

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Enterprise/National and Hertz are our current contracted rental companies. When all possible these companies need to be first priority.

Rentals CAN be booked via Emburse Expense/Chrome River.

- Enterprise/National—UTS711 or TAMUS764-TAM
- Hertz-91500

As of 2023, Avis is no longer has a contract with the State of Texas. They will continue to honor the contract rates and provisions. They CANNOT be used for state funded travel though.

## 4 Per Car Policy

When two or more employees are traveling with the same itinerary on the same dates, they are required to coordinate their travel and ride together.

Rental reimbursement can only be claimed for one car for every four people, unless sufficient documentation is provided to justify payment for more than one vehicle.

# Rental Vehicles

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Enterprise is no longer offering PAI coverage (Personal Accident Insurance). This would cover drivers and passengers for their medical costs, emergency card and accidental death during your rental trip, up to a certain limit.

As a reminder, please follow the Comptroller's instructions below if renting a vehicle not on a state contract:

## **Non-Contract Rental Car Vendors**

If you rent a vehicle from a non-contract rental car vendor, insurance may or may not be included in the base rental rate. Inquire at the time of rental if the contract insurance coverage is included. If it is not, you must purchase the LDW and Liability insurance. If you need to use a non-contract rental car vendor under an allowable exception, LDW and Liability insurance charges will be reimbursed by the Comptroller. Liability insurance supplements, Personal Accident Insurance, Safe Trip insurance, or Personal Effects insurance are not reimbursable. (Please refer to Textravel, a Web resource published by the Comptroller of Public Accounts.)

# Personal Mileage

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Current mileage reimbursement rates-

<https://fmx.cpa.texas.gov/fmx/travel/texttravel/rates/current.php>

The university selected GoogleMaps as its mileage guide for employees to use to determine the mileage reimbursement if not using odometer readings.

If you choose to use odometer readings you **MUST** complete a mileage log documenting miles from point A to B, B to C, C to D, etc. The mileage log can be found on the [travel website](#).

**If using state funds, the reimbursement will be limited to the most cost-effective method.**

**When two or more employees are traveling with the same itinerary on the same dates, they are required to coordinate their travel and ride together.**

**Mileage can only be claimed for one car for every four people, unless sufficient documentation is provided to justify payment for more than one vehicle.**

# Meals

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Meals are not reimbursable within designated headquarters.

- **Designated Headquarters**--The area within the boundaries of the city in which a state employee's place of employment is located.

**NON-OVERNIGHT meals are NOT allowed.**

**Receipts are not required unless charge is over \$75.**

A state agency may not reimburse a state employee for the purchase of an alcoholic beverage unless the employee is a peace officer who purchased the beverage as evidence for an administrative or criminal case. Texas Government Code Section 660.113

Reimbursement for tips or gratuities of any amount or any kind from state funds (accounts beginning with a 1) are not allowed unless the gratuity is a mandatory charge.

**Reasonable** (15% up to 20%) tips and gratuities are reimbursable from institutional funds (accounts beginning with a 2 or 3). Also, restricted and grant accounts beginning with a 4.

# Student Travel

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Any travel involving students must be categorized as Student-Domestic Travel in Emburse Expense/Chrome River.

All receipts must be kept and included on the expense report.

State funds cannot be used to fund student travel; only local funds can be used.

A list of students traveling must be included on the trip request and expense report.

Dart Cards can be provided to students that are traveling.

Student Travel Procedures:

<https://www.tamut.edu/compliance/rules-procedures.html>



# State Travel

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All receipts must be kept and included on the expense report in Emburse Expense/Chrome River.

Tips are not allowed on a state account. Any GSA overages or tips must be allocated to a local account.

Any amount over the GSA rate for hotel (conference hotel rates) must be allocated to a local account. The state will only pay the GSA portion of the hotel and hotel tax.

Cost comparison's must be completed and attached the request and expense report.

[Texas Comptroller Rental Vehicle vs Personal Mileage Cost Comparison](#)

# Prospective Employee/Non-Employee/Contract

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We can arrange/book travel for prospective employees/non-employees w/contract.

A W9 must be submitted to Accounts Payable so the traveler can be reimbursed.

Hotels for prospective employees/non-employees are direct billed to the university.

Requests and expense reports are required for prospective employees/non-employees. The department admin. will submit the request and expense report.

Airfare should be booked in Emburse Expense/Chrome River and paid for by the administrator.

All other charges should be paid by the traveler. They will then be reimbursed by creating an expense report in Emburse Expense/Chrome River and selecting their name under FAMIS External VID.

**Expenses related to travel should ONLY be submitted in Emburse Expense/Chrome River, NEVER as L Docs to AP.**

# Prospective Employee/Non-Employee/Contract- Local Lodging

Effective 03/07/24, all reservations made at the Hilton Garden Inn should be made through Kristie Bradshaw at (903) 255-4649 or [Kristie.bradshaw@hilton.com](mailto:Kristie.bradshaw@hilton.com). Kristie works Monday through Friday 8 to 5. Please provide:

- \* Name of the hotel guest,
  - \* Your name & email
  - \* Department that will be paying for the room
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- The Hilton Garden Inn will require a credit card or debit card for all hotel guests. This is a Hilton Corporate Policy.
  - They will **direct bill** TAMUT for room and local taxes (no Texas state taxes) only.
  - Guests will be required to pay for meals and alcohol.
  - If the university is covering the cost of meals, the guest can submit receipts to the department for reimbursement.
  - If the traveler's card is charged for the room by mistake, contact Kristie to have the hotel refund the traveler's credit card and direct bill us as intended.

When a hotel guest cannot make the reservation (travel delays, weather, etc.) please call or email Kristie as soon as possible. The hotel cancellation policy is 24-hour notice. If cancellation is on Saturday or Sunday, call front desk. They will need guest's name, your name and department. Follow up with an email to Kristie as soon as possible.

If you have any questions, please contact Russell Ryan at (903) 223-3056 or [rryan@tamut.edu](mailto:rryan@tamut.edu).

# Receipt Requirements

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All expense items over \$75.00 will require a receipt regardless of expense type.

**All receipts are still required when traveling on grant funds or with students.**

Receipts must show proof of travel and proof of payment as well as include the travelers name when applicable.

# Receipt Requirements

EXPENSE TYPE	RECEIPTS REQUIRED?		*Comment Required
	Yes	No	
Phone		X	X
Business Meals	X		
Meals		X	
Hotel	X		
Hotel Tax	X		
Rent-Apartment/House	X		
Conference Registration	X		
Incidentals		X	X
Internet		X	
Travel Agent Fees		X	
Supplies	X		
Airfare	X		
Airfare Ticket Tax	X		
Airline Fees	X		
Boat	X		
Bus/Shuttle	X		
Car Rental	X		
Gasoline		X	
Limousine		X	X
Mileage Single Engine Aircraft		X	
Mileage Turbo Aircraft		X	
Mileage Twin Engine Aircraft		X	
Personal Car Mileage		X	
Subway		X	X
Taxi		X	X
Train	X		
Parking		X	X
Tolls		X	X
*Description required in Comments field. Example "parking at airport 3 days X \$10/day" or "Taxi from airport to hotel"			

# Claiming Your Out-of-Pocket Expenses

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Charges that were paid by the traveler with their own funds for the trip should also be added to the report.

To add an out-of-pocket expense:

- Click on New Expense
- Select the expense you are claiming
- Fill out all required fields denoted in red
- On Payment Type choose “Out of Pocket”

The total itemization must balance to the amount being claimed.

# IRS Accountability Plan

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The IRS has issued publication 463; Travel, Entertainment, Gift, and Car Expenses. This document requires accountable plans, such as TAMUT's to have employees account for their expenses in a reasonable period of time.

Submission of expense report within 90 days of travel end date:

- Best practice is to submit within 30 days
- Applies to out of pocket and travel card transactions
- If not submitted within 90 days of travel end date:

Travel card immediately suspended until expense report is submitted and approved.

Expenses become tax reportable income to the employee and a tax withholding form must be attached to the expense report.

# IRS Accountability Plan

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Unassigned travel card transactions assigned to an expense report within 90 days of post date:

- Documents travel end date, which allows for aging/tracking of expenses

- Best practice is to assign transactions within 30 days

- After 60 days lose dispute rights with the bank

- If not assigned within 90 days of post date:

Travel card immediately suspended until transactions are assigned to an expense report and the travel end date can be evaluated.

If the travel end date is less than 90 days, the card suspension will be removed.

If travel end date is older than 90 days, the expenses become tax reportable income to the employee and card will remain suspended until expense report is submitted and approved.