



TRAVEL POLICY

SCOPE

This policy sets forth the California Institute of Technology's (Caltech) process for business travel to ensure compliance with state and federal regulations. All Principal Investigators, faculty, and staff involved in business travel should follow the policies outlined in this document.

DEFINITIONS

As used in this policy:

Approver

A Caltech administrator who is responsible for the fiscal affairs of an organizational unit. The approver is responsible for reviewing travel expense reports and either approving them or sending them back for corrections necessary before the report can be approved. The approver functions can be delegated to another individual in the same organizational unit.

Entertainment

The provision of meals or light refreshments, meeting space, or other miscellaneous expenses deemed reasonable by the division or department in order to conduct business to the benefit of Caltech.

Fly America Act

A law passed by Congress that requires the use of U.S. air carriers when using federal funds for travel; the law specifies limited situations when a non-U.S. air carrier may be used.

Preferred Travel Agency

A company that has a contract with Caltech to assist Caltech travelers by providing pre-negotiated airline discounts along with assistance for emergency situations.

Traveler

A Caltech employee or other individual who travels on behalf of Caltech for business purposes.

POLICY

Caltech will incur or reimburse expenses that are: 1) reasonable and necessary; 2) for Caltech business purpose; and 3) documented, approved and submitted properly. This policy applies to all expenses incurred for Caltech purpose regardless of the account to which the expenditures are budgeted or recorded, the type of funding supporting such expenses, or whether incurred locally or during Caltech travel.

The Procurement Card (P-Card) is the preferred method of payment for all travel related expenses. P-Card users are encouraged to use the card to pay for all expenses related to Caltech travel except where the card is not accepted. Please refer to the [P-Card policy](#) for P-Card use and guidelines. However, Appendices A and B include lists of specific examples of common allowable and unallowable expenses. Caltech employees should review these examples before incurring travel expenses, and should also determine if their department/division imposes any additional or more restrictive requirements for authorizing or approving travel, entertainment or business expense reimbursements.

Department travel coordinators may charge travel expenses for department travelers on one P-Card provided that separate transactions are used for each traveler to facilitate expense reporting and audit requirements.

Any exceptions to this policy may need to be approved in advance by the appropriate Division Administrator or Department head with concurrence from the Travel Department.

Areas Requiring Special Consideration

Travel on Sponsored Research

Since a significant portion of travel at Caltech is funded from external sources, primarily federal grants, Caltech has elected to use approved federal standards, including those of the Internal Revenue Service and the Office of Management and Budget, as a practical guide for its travelers. Before incurring expenses that may be charged to sponsored projects, review the general sponsored project travel expense requirements and limitations set forth on the [Office of Sponsored Research \(OSR\) website](#) and consult the appropriate Sponsored Project Administrator.

Reimbursement of Travel Expenses for Nonresident Aliens

Payments, including but not limited to gifts, honoraria, meals, entertainment and travel expenses, to nonresident aliens require special oversight. Before incurring any expenses that involve payments to nonresident aliens, Caltech employees should review the Vendor & Supplier Guide for IRS & FTB Withholding Guidelines for Foreign Payees by calling (626) 395-2674 or visiting <https://procurement.caltech.edu/guides-resources>

Trip Cancellation

Caltech allows for payment of cancellation or change fees if the trip is cancelled for a valid reason (illness, cancellation of conference or other unforeseen circumstances). This policy applies to all Caltech business travelers, regardless of the fund source that is paying for the trip.

Caltech advises travelers, regardless of how the travel was purchased, to request reimbursement directly from the airline or supplier from which the airfare, hotel or conference registration was

booked. In the event the supplier will not provide a refund –documentation will be required indicating the refusal to credit. If a traveler has a cancelled ticket paid on a personal credit card and is unable to re-use the ticket, please contact Travel Services.

Fly America Act

Per 49 USC 40118, known as the “Fly America Act”, issued January 1975, U.S. flag air carriers must be used for travel under federal funds.

The Act requires use of a U.S. flag carrier when: 1) the travel is paid for by federal funds; and 2a) a U.S. carrier is available for travel between the U.S. and a place outside the U.S.; or 2b) a U.S. carrier is reasonably available for travel between two places outside the U.S.

Some foreign air carriers have entered into agreements granting the right to U.S. carriers to purchase and sell blocks of tickets on a foreign carrier. These agreements are termed Code Sharing and comply with the Fly America Act, provided that the ticket, boarding pass, or receipt shows the two-letter designator code of the U.S. Airline in the area next to the flight number. Please visit Department of Transportation department [link](#) on code shares:
<https://www.gsa.gov/travel/plan-a-trip/transportation-airfare-rates-pov-rates-etc/airfare-rates-city-pair-program>

Exceptions to the Fly America Act

A) The Fly America Act describes specific situations where a non-U.S. carrier may be used because a U.S. carrier would be considered unavailable, for example:

- The use of a U.S. carrier would extend travel time (including delay at origin) by 24 hours or more.
- The costs of transportation are reimbursed in full by a third party, such as a foreign government, or an international agency.
- U.S. carriers do not offer nonstop or direct service between origin and destination (in which case a U.S. carrier must be used on each portion of the route where service is provided, unless such action increases the number of aircraft changes by two or more, extends travel time by six hours or more, or requires a connecting time of four hours or more at an overseas connecting point).

A complete description of availability and unavailability of U.S.-flag carrier service can be found at 48 CFR 47.403-1 ([47.403-1 Availability and unavailability of U.S.-flag air carrier service. | Acquisition.GOV](#)).

The Fly America Act clearly states that a lower fare does not justify use of a foreign air carrier, nor do convenience or preference of the traveler. Rather, only the exceptions described in the Act constitute justified use of a foreign carrier when using federal funds.

Note that no individual at Caltech or within the federal government has the authority to approve exceptions to the Act. Travel on non-U.S. airlines may be charged to federal funds only under conditions stated within the Act.

B) *Open Skies* - The Fly America Act allows for air transportation agreements between the U.S. and other countries to constitute exceptions to the Act; these are known as “Open Skies Agreements”. There are currently 4 Open Skies Agreements recognized by the Department of Transportation as qualifying under the Act; they are with the European Union (including Iceland and Norway), Australia, Switzerland and Japan

Under Open Skies Agreements, a traveler may use an airline of a member country for travel between the U.S. and a member country *provided* there is no fare negotiated between the U.S. government and a U.S. flag carrier; this is known as a “City Pair” fare. If a City Pair fare exists between two cities, then the traveler must follow the Fly America Act and only the exceptions described in A) above are available (however, see below regarding changes to the U.S.-EU Agreement). To determine whether a City Pair fare exists, please go to the following website: [City Pair Program \(CPP\) | GSA](#)

Subsequent to its initial implementation, the U.S.-EU Open Skies Agreement was modified to add Iceland and Norway to the list of member countries, and an exception to the City Pair fare requirement was included. Specifically, if a traveler is ineligible to use City Pair fares, the traveler may use an airline of a member country for travel under the U.S.-EU Agreement without consideration of whether a City Pair fare exists (JPL campus employees are eligible for City Pair fares, Caltech campus employees are not).

Note that Open Skies Agreements do not apply to DoD funds (e.g., Army, Navy, Air Force), therefore all travel under DoD funds must follow the basic Fly America Act and only the exceptions described under A) above are applicable.

Certification

Any time travel on a non-U.S. airline is charged to federal funds, a justification citing an allowable exception is required. The traveler is required to sign Caltech’s Fly America Act (49 USC 40118) Exemption [Certification](#) (Waiver Form). If an allowable exception is unavailable, the cost may not be charged to federal funds.

Expense Types

In such cases, the charge should be to non-federal funds and the expenditure type “Travel Foreign – Unallocable” is used.

When non-Fly America Act compliant travel is charged to other funding sources, the costs are expensed to the expenditure type “Travel Foreign – Unallocable”. Using “unallocable” for all non-Fly America Act compliant travel ensures that such costs are not included in the calculation of Caltech’s Facilities & Administrative (F&A) rate.

“Travel-Non US Carrier” is used for unallowable airfares according to the federal guidelines, but should be used for airfares that are allowed by non-federal sponsors. This e-type should be used when, 1) the airfare did not comply with Fly America Act or country was not under the Open Skies Agreement, and 2) airfare to be charged to a non-federal sponsored account. For more information related to coding airfares please visit http://researchadministration.caltech.edu/documents/582-e-type_faqs.pdf

Please refer to Appendix C Use of Foreign-Flag Air Carriers on Travel.

Taxability

Caltech’s travel expense reimbursement program meets the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) Publication 463 definition of an accountable plan. As a result, expenses and reimbursements that conform to this policy are not reported as taxable income to the individual.

Under the accountable plan, travel advances and reimbursement of expenses must meet three requirements:

- Advances and reimbursements must be made for business expenses only and must be reasonably related to the expenses the employer is expected to incur.
- Travelers must provide an expense report substantiating the amount, dates, use, and business purpose of expenses within a reasonable time (NOT TO EXCEED 30 DAYS) after the expenses are incurred. Receipts must be attached to the expense report.
- Employees must return any advance amounts in excess of substantiated expenses within 30 days after completion of the trip. Employees who are cardholders not submitting an expense report in a timely manner may experience some or all of the following actions:
 - Notice to approver
 - Retraining
 - 30-day suspension of P-Card
 - P-Card revocation

Expenses which may be tax reportable may not be processed on a travel report, for example, medical insurance, tuition etc. For taxability related questions, please e-mail supplermgmtstaff@caltech.edu

Frequent Flyer Program

It is recommended that all Caltech travel is paid for using a Caltech issued credit card i.e., P-Card. However, if a traveler chooses to use personal funds, he/she may personally retain the rewards for frequent flyer plans or other bonuses that may accrue from business travel. However, in no case may the traveler choose a reservation at a higher cost in order to accumulate additional plan credits. Caltech will not purchase frequent flyer miles from travelers or reimburse them for tickets or upgrades purchased with frequent flyer miles, gift cards, coupons, vouchers, and other non-cash incentives. A free upgrade due to the application of frequent flyer miles must be noted on the expense report filed for the respective trip to demonstrate that Caltech did not pay for the upgrade.

Entertainment

Entertainment is NOT reimbursable on Federal Projects.

Caltech will reimburse entertainment expenses incurred in connection with Caltech business, if charged to any non-federal project (unless prohibited by sponsor), that are appropriately documented by the employee. Entertainment expenses include costs for meals, amusement, diversion or social activities, including outings to night clubs, theaters, or sporting events, when a business discussion takes place during, immediately before, or immediately after the event.

It is imperative that these and any related alcohol costs be segregated using the Expenditure Type "Entertainment", so that they may be easily identified on the accounting records and excluded from any calculation of direct or indirect costs.

Documentation must include:

- Date of the entertainment
- Names of all individuals
- Business purpose or the business benefit gained or expected to be gained

Generally cannot request reimbursement for the cost of entertainment for their spouse or for the spouse of a customer. However, you may claim these costs if you can show that you had a clear business purpose, rather than a personal or social purpose, for providing the entertainment.

Example: IRS Publication 463, Chapter 2, Associated Test

You entertain a prospective new hire. The cost is an ordinary and necessary business expense and is allowed under the entertainment rules. The candidate's spouse joins you because it is impractical to entertain the prospect without the spouse. You can deduct the cost of the candidate's spouse as an ordinary and necessary business expense. If your spouse joins the party because the candidate's spouse is present, the cost of the entertainment for your spouse is also an ordinary and necessary business expense.

Personal Travel Component

At times a traveler may wish to combine personal activity in conjunction with a business trip. Caltech accommodates such activity provided that the related time and expenses are those of the individual, and the business objective for the travel is unaffected.

In submitting a trip's expense report, the traveler is responsible for identifying any activity of a personal nature that was included. The traveler should note the incremental costs resulting from personal activity and adjust for these costs accordingly.

Incremental costs are not always clear. A Saturday night stay over, for example, can result in airfare savings rather than add to a trip's cost. This savings can offset the additional lodging and meal expenses incurred. However, reimbursement of personal expenses is limited to those costs that would normally be reimbursed under business travel (e.g., lodging, meals, transportation) as long as the aggregate does not exceed the savings incurred by extending the original business travel increment. Please consult with the Travel Department on specific questions.

Spouse or Other Dependent Expense

Expenses incurred for accompanying spouse, family, or others are considered personal in nature, except on the infrequent occasions when attendance of a spouse at an event furthers the business interests of Caltech. In these cases, the Division Administrator or Vice President for Business and Finance should authorize the spouse's travel in writing in advance. This written approval must be submitted with the Travel Expense Report or Payment Request Form and must document the business purpose served by the spouse's attendance at the meeting or function.

IRS Publication 535 requires that amounts paid by an employer for spousal travel expenses are included in the employee's W-2 as taxable wages unless the spouse's presence on the trip serves a bona fide business purpose. Departments should consult Caltech Accounts Payable Manager – Supplier, Tax & Small Business Liaison prior to making commitments to reimburse for spousal travel, as the reimbursement may be taxable to the employee.

Guidance and Requirements Pertaining to Specific Types of Expenses

Use of CardQuest

CardQuest is Caltech's online travel and expense system from Concur Technologies Incorporated. Caltech recommends use of the travel booking portal within CardQuest to assist with air, rail, hotel, and car rental arrangements. Information regarding the travel booking portal and policies for making arrangements are available on the [Procurement Department's Travel website](#).

Prepayments

Prepayments to a supplier can be requested to cover such items as program registration and airfare ticketing. If the supplier accepts credit cards, P-Card should be used. A traveler without a P-Card should pursue prepayment through a division/department travel arranger's P-Card. Prepayments that are included on the Payment Request usage list may be submitted using a Payment Request Form if the supplier does not accept P-Card or a travel arranger's P-Card is not available for use. The Payment Request form and usage list are available at:

<https://procurement.caltech.edu/quick-links/quick-links-forms>

Cash Advances

Cash advances can only be obtained to cover official business expenses and as a rule are provided to Caltech employees and students only. Cash advances are used for meals, tips, taxis, and other incidental out of pocket expenses where a P-Card is not an available payment option. Cash Advances can be acquired using two methods:

1. ATM cash withdrawal (made by Cardholders only): Cash cannot be withdrawn for another traveler. With approval, a traveler with a P-Card may have a cash advance feature available on their card. To add this feature, please contact P-Card Services. Caltech will accept the cash advance fees assessed as a reasonable trip expense. Individuals that do not abide by these rules may have the cash option removed from their profile.
2. Per Diem request issued in [CardQuest](#) via a Per Diem (expense type):
3. -Advances must be requested by travelers (or their delegates), approved and routed to P-Card team for final approval and processing. A report for per diem (only) can be created in CardQuest and submitted before a trip takes place. Advances will be issued as a check made payable to the traveler via mail or Direct Deposit.

If any cash advance has not been accounted for within 30 days after the traveler has returned, Caltech may report the outstanding balance of any travel advance on his or her IRS Form W-2 (Wage and Tax Statement). No additional cash advances will be granted if there are outstanding advances in excess of 30 days, unless there is approval by a responsible Campus official above the reporting level of the traveler.

Allowable

- Advance of meals and incidentals per diem, and local transportation (taxis, shuttles, etc.)
- Payment to suppliers when the P-Card is **not** an accepted form of payment (conference registrations, some lodging)

NOT Allowable

- Payment to traveler for any reimbursements
- Payment to suppliers who do accept P-Card as form of payment

Air Travel

The preferred method for making a reservation for air travel is through the travel booking portal within CardQuest.

The Uniform Guidance (2 CFR 200, Subpart E Cost Principles and § 200.474 Travel Costs) prohibits the charging of business or first-class air travel to sponsored projects. When any travel relates to a Federal account (relating to the United States government and its agencies), the excess in cost over the coach fare must be charged to a non-sponsored account. It is imperative that the excess costs be segregated by using the Expenditure Type, "Travel-domestic-Unallocable" or "Travel-foreign-Unallocable," as applicable, so that they may be easily identified on the accounting records and excluded from Caltech's F&A rate calculation.

Domestic

Caltech allows economy and coach classes for domestic air travel. Air travel should be purchased at the lowest available standard coach/economy airfare. Economy Plus purchases or upgrades are unallowable on federal funded projects, except under very specific conditions. If an upgrade is purchased, the difference of the upgrade is to be charged to a non-federal account.

FAR (Federal Acquisition Regulation) 31.205-46, as it pertains to travel costs, states that airfare costs in excess of the lowest customary standard, coach, or equivalent priced airfare offered to the contractor during normal business hours are unallowable except when such accommodations require circuitous routing, require travel during unreasonable hours, excessively prolong travel, result in increased cost that would offset transportation savings, are not reasonably adequate for the physical or medical needs of the traveler, or are not reasonably available to meet mission requirements. However, in order for airfare costs in excess of the above standard airfare to be allowable, the applicable condition(s) set forth above must be documented and justified.

Business and first-class travel may be allowed only if charged to any non-federal project (unless prohibited by sponsor). Business and first-class airfare must use the Expenditure Type "Travel-Domestic-Unallocable." Exceptions for business and first-class travel require a written justification approved by a responsible campus official above the reporting level of the traveler. Business and first class are NOT allowed on federal funded projects, except under extremely rare conditions and require prior approval.

Foreign

Caltech allows business class for foreign travel if charged to any non-federal project (unless prohibited by sponsor). First class travel may be allowed with written justification approved by a responsible campus official above the reporting level of the traveler. Business and first-class airfare must use the Expenditure Type "Travel Foreign-Unallocable."

Business and first class are NOT allowed on federal funded projects, except under very specific conditions.

Exceptions

Exceptions to airfare class are accepted, if flight scheduling otherwise available would

- Require travel during unreasonable hours
- Excessively prolong travel
- Greatly increase the duration of the flight

- Not reasonably accommodate a traveler's medical needs

Private Aircraft

Caltech employees will not be permitted to use privately owned and licensed aircraft while traveling on Institute business. Travelers are required to book flights using a commercial aircraft while traveling on Institute business.

Ground Travel

Publicly available ground transportation such as shuttles, buses, and vans (including Caltech shuttle transport), taxis, car services, rail and public transit systems should be considered as a timely and cost efficient means of transportation, and used as an option to commercial car rental when appropriate.

Car Rentals and Automobiles

The preferred method for making a reservation for car rentals is through the travel booking portal within [CardQuest](#)

Rental vehicles are appropriate to meet the business needs of a trip as a cost or time effective alternative to publicly available ground transportation. In general, a compact or midsize vehicle is authorized except where three or more travelers are involved, in which case a full-size vehicle is authorized.

Travelers who deliberately abuse rental cars, through actions such as off-roading of vehicles and negligent or illegal activity may be held responsible for damages.

Car Rental and Automobile Insurance

Travelers are encouraged to use Caltech preferred car rental company and reference the agreement number found on the [Car Rental Agreement website](#). Using a preferred car rental company affords primary liability and comprehensive/collision (CDW/LDW) coverage at no cost to Caltech. Caltech's insurance covers the vehicle rented for business purposes for domestic travel on an excess basis.

Travelers are required to cite Caltech agreement number when making a reservation and be prepared to provide a Driver's License and Caltech identification at vehicle pickup. These agreements are limited to faculty, staff, students (over 21 years), and volunteers registered through Human Resources traveling on Caltech business. Caltech consultants and contractors must rent independently to avoid implied department or Caltech liability.

When using a preferred car rental company:

- Travelers should decline any optional insurance coverage offered; and
- The cost of optional insurance coverage taken is not a reimbursable travel expense.

When using a non-preferred rental car company, travelers are required to:

- Provide an explanation on the expense report stating the business reason a non-preferred rental car company was used;
- Accept insurance coverage for liability and comprehensive/collision damage (LDW);
- Decline any other coverage for personal effects in the car (PAI). Excess coverage such as PAI is not a reimbursable travel expense; and
- When using rental car companies for business purposes, travelers are required to add all drivers to the insurance.

Foreign Rental Vehicles

On Caltech business, only established, well known car rentals companies should be used. Drivers should be familiar with prevailing license and driving rules in electing to rent a vehicle.

If not automatically included, the traveler should accept optional liability and CDW/LDW insurance coverage at the minimum limits offered. The cost of this coverage is a reimbursable travel expense. Theft Protection on foreign rentals will only be reimbursed if it is mandated by the country.

Personal Vehicles

Travelers may use a privately owned vehicle (POV) for local business transportation where it is time and cost effective when compared to publicly available ground transportation. Travelers may not use their POV to transport or deliver any equipment. Reimbursement is provided at the prevailing IRS standard mileage rate, which can be found at:

<https://procurement.caltech.edu/guides-resources>

This reimbursement applies to the cost of fuel, maintenance, and insurance. Parking charges and tolls are reimbursable. A POV can be used in instances where scheduled rail or airline service is not a practical option or where use of a POV is approved by the traveler's department. Reimbursement may not exceed the cost of economy airfare and reasonable ground transportation otherwise available.

Mileage to and from an individual's regular place of work and residence is not reimbursable. Round trip mileage is reimbursable to an airport, for example, where a traveler drives him/herself or is delivered or picked up by a family member in connection with business travel, as this offsets the cost of ground transportation charges otherwise incurred.

Caltech does not provide automobile liability and comprehensive/collision insurance protection for loss or damage to a privately owned vehicle used for business travel. It is the responsibility of a traveler using a privately owned vehicle to carry adequate insurance coverage as required by California Vehicle Code Section 16020, which requires that every driver and every owner shall at all times be able to establish financial responsibility and shall at all times carry in the vehicle evidence of the form of financial responsibility in effect for the vehicle. When driving a privately owned vehicle on Caltech business, the individual's insurance coverage for that vehicle is primary in the case of damage to property and/or injury to persons.

Accidents

Caltech employees involved in an accident while driving on official Caltech business must report the accident immediately to the local police department and notify the rental car company immediately.

Passenger vans, van rentals and charter buses

Use and/or rental of 12 and 15 passenger vans driven by a Caltech employee for Caltech business is prohibited. An insured, third-party chauffeur service provider must be used. Rentals of buses for group events and chauffeur services must have a Purchase Order. Van rentals, for the purpose of transportation of equipment, are prohibited; such expenses need to be arranged with a bonded transport company.

Lodging

The preferred method for making a reservation for hotel rooms is through the travel booking portal within [CardQuest](#).

Lodging is reimbursed based on the actual cost of the lodging. Where lodging is not hosted, accommodations in a standard hotel room are authorized. Travelers are encouraged to utilize Caltech preferred Travel Agency to avail themselves of any pre-negotiated lodging discounts. Reservations are often guaranteed to assure lodging for late arrivals, and travelers are required to cancel reservations in a timely manner to prevent “no show” charges. An itemized receipt for charges must accompany any request for reimbursement of expenses.

For taxability reasons ‘long term rentals’ to third parties cannot be processed on a Payment Request; they must be processed on a Purchase Order.

In order to avoid tax implications, travelers who are staying in a private residence should seek prepayment through Purchasing rather than paying the private residence directly.

Hosted Lodging

On occasion, a non-federal sponsor, colleague or relative may host a traveler. In these instances, the traveler may compensate the host with a gift as appropriate, provided that the cost of such gift is within sponsor guidelines. Under IRS regulations, a receipt must be submitted for any such gift over \$25. Only one gift per stay may be provided. In no circumstances may cash payment be made to the host for lodging.

Meal Expenses

Meal and incidental expenses (M&IE) are reported using either actual expenses or per diem. A traveler may not be reimbursed both actual expense and per diem during a single trip.

Terms are defined as:

- Meals - expenses for breakfast, lunch, dinner and related tips and taxes;
- Incidental expenses - fees and tips given to porters, baggage carriers, bellhops, hotel maids, stewards, etc.;
- Actual expenses - payment of authorized actual expenses incurred; and
- Per diem – a daily payment in lieu of reimbursement for actual expenses.

Per Diem

For a trip to qualify for per diem, a trip must have an overnight stay. Day of departure and last day of trip per diem amounts are calculated utilizing a clock with the applicable M&IE rate.

If meals are provided as part of the registration for a conference, Federal Travel Regulation (FTR) requires the traveler to deduct those meals from their per diem. These adjustments can be made in [CardQuest](#) via Travel Allowance Expense and Adjustments tab. The per diem webpage provides links to the daily per diem rates and appropriate deductions that are applicable to all Continental US destinations.

To view M&IE per diem adjustments if breakfast, lunch and dinner is provided please visit the Meals and Incidental Expenses (M&IE) Breakdown chart on the following website:

<https://www.gsa.gov/travel-resources>

To view adjustments for foreign and outside the continental United States (OCONUS) visit:
<http://www.gsa.gov/portal/ext/public/site/FTR/file/Chapter301pAppB.html/category/21868/#wp1102166>

Caltech uses FTR to calculate per diem. Federal per diem rates are calculated by three different organizations: Department of State, Department of Defense, and the General Services Administration. Current approved rates can be found at:

Domestic Per Diem link

http://www.gsa.gov/portal/content/104877?utm_source=OGP&utm_medium=print-radio&utm_term=perdiem&utm_campaign=shortcuts

Foreign Per Diem link

http://aoprals.state.gov/content.asp?content_id=184&menu_id=78

Currency Exchange Conversion

<http://www.oanda.com/currency/converter/>

Telephone and Internet

Telephone

Travelers will be reimbursed for business phone calls that are reasonable and necessary for conducting business.

Internet

Travelers will be reimbursed for internet connections or Wi-Fi for the purpose of managing work-related e-mail or logging on to Caltech servers to work.

Required Documentation, Approval and Submission of Expenses

Receipts

Electronic receipts may be emailed to your Receipt Store in [CardQuest](#). If electronic receipts are not available, all receipts will need to be scanned and attached to the expense report. Receipts, preferably in detail format, such as an itemized hotel folio or an airline passenger ticket coupon, are required regardless of dollar amount in support of incurred expense activity for the following items: airfare, car rental, lodging and registration. Receipts are required for other individual miscellaneous expense of \$75 or more.

Approval

The grant manager or approving administrator (as defined by each department/division) for the organizational unit to which expenses will be charged has primary responsibility for reviewing and approving all such expense and ensuring that only appropriate expenses are paid from Caltech funds in accordance with this policy. No one may authorize reimbursement of his/her own expenses or approve expenses for Caltech employees to whom they report. No employee can approve the travel of the employee's spouse or family member.

Submission

Expense reports must be submitted in U.S. dollars with an explanation of foreign receipts and their conversion pursuant to the following:

- For those transactions that are paid for by credit card, use the rate of exchange

- and USD equivalent that appear on your credit card statement
- For those transactions in which currencies are exchanged, use the actual rate of exchange that occurred (keep a copy of the receipt)
- It is recommended travelers request to be billed in the local currency at point of purchase, where reasonably possible

A TRAVELER IS REQUIRED TO SUBMIT AN EXPENSE REPORT WITHIN 30 BUSINESS DAYS FOLLOWING A TRIP. [An expense report resulting in an amount due Caltech must include a personal check and/or sponsor reimbursement. Please include the trip name and traveler name when sending in the check.]

Non-Employees

Please visit the following site for [non-employee travel](#).

Relocation

Relocations are processed by the Specialty Team via a [Payment Request form](#).

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Caltech

It is the responsibility of Caltech to provide a travel policy that has been reviewed and approved by Academic and Administrative executive leadership and supported by legal review of the Office of General Counsel (OGC). Caltech also has the responsibility to ensure that sponsored project travel meets all contractual requirements.

Traveler

The traveler should use Caltech funds only to the extent to which he/she can complete the purpose of their travel. Caltech will pay business travel expenses only if they are reasonable, supportive of Caltech activities and in accordance with this policy. Individuals who incur business expenses should neither gain nor lose personal funds as a result of their travel.

The traveler is responsible for the submission of all forms related to his/her travel. The traveler may delegate responsibility for preparation of the forms to an associate (delegate) but will always retain accountability for travel expenses.

Traveler without P-Card

If a traveler chooses not to obtain the P-Card for Travel, they will need to travel at their own expense and then be reimbursed after the trip. Advances may be granted only for meals and incidental expenses via [CardQuest](#) under the expense type of per diem.

Approver

The supervisor fiscally responsible for the organizational unit to which expenses will be charged, has primary responsibility for reviewing and approving all such expenses so that only appropriate expenses are paid from Caltech funds in accordance with this policy. All approvers will be expected to review attached receipts for accuracy. Approvers may, at their discretion, approve,

reject or return the report to the traveler/preparer for correction or additional information. It is the responsibility of the traveler, preparer and approver to ensure that all costs are appropriate, comply with Caltech and sponsored policies prior submission for payment. No one may authorize reimbursement of his/her own expenses or approve expenses for Caltech employees to whom they report. No employee can approve the travel of the employee's spouse or family member.

Preferred Travel Agency

Travelers are encouraged to utilize the current [Caltech Preferred Travel Agency](#), *Christopherson Business Travel*, to avail themselves of any pre-negotiated airline discounts and to assist in emergency situations. Travelers who book trips either directly with airlines or online websites are responsible for working with those suppliers to resolve open issues.

RELATED REFERENCES

Forms

<http://procurement.caltech.edu/quick-links/quick-links-forms>

Website Addresses for This Policy

<http://procurement.caltech.edu/quick-links/quick-links-policies-and-procedures>

Contacts

| For Questions Regarding | e-mail address | Phone number |
|--------------------------------|--|---------------------|
| Sponsored funds | sponsoredresearch@caltech.edu | 626-395-2882 |
| Payment Services | paymentservices_all@caltech.edu | 626-395-8900 |
| P-Card | pcardservices@caltech.edu | 626-395-8900 |
| Tax | suppliermgmtstaff@caltech.edu | 626-395-2674 |
| Travel | travelstaff@caltech.edu | 626-395-8900 |

P-CAT Contacts

<http://procurement.caltech.edu/contacts>

Appendices

- Appendix A Examples of Allowable Travel and Entertainment Expenses
- Appendix B Examples of Generally Unallowable Travel and Entertainment Expenses
- Appendix C Use of Foreign-Flag Air Carriers on Travel

POLICY ISSUED BY

This policy is issued and approved by Procurement Services. Any exceptions that require a deviation from this policy shall be reviewed and approved by the Director of Procurement Services and coordinated with the Procurement and Payment Services business units.

EFFECTIVE DATES AND UPDATES

| Action | Effective Date | Description of Action |
|-----------------|----------------|--|
| Original Policy | 10/30/2002 | Original Travel Policy |
| Revised Policy | 09/01/2015 | <i>Revised with implementation of CardQuest</i> Reviewed and revised by <i>Procurement Services</i> . |
| Revised Policy | 06/09/2016 | <i>Revised for consistency with Uniform Guidance and to put the document into new policy format.</i> Reviewed and revised by <i>Procurement Services & Uniform Guidance Working Group</i> |
| Revised Policy | 5/1/2018 | <i>Revised for consistency with Fly America and Open Skies Agreement</i> <i>Reviewed and revised by Office of Sponsored Research</i> |
| Revised Policy | 3/12/2020 | <i>Revised to include Caltech's new preferred travel agency and update website links</i> |
| Revised Policy | 5/12/2023 | <i>Revised for consistency with Federal Aviation Administration</i> <i>Reviewed by OGC</i> |
| Revised Policy | 5/31/2024 | <i>Updated Fly America website links</i> |

APPENDIX A

EXAMPLES OF ALLOWABLE TRAVEL AND ENTERTAINMENT EXPENSES

| Item | Explanation |
|---|--|
| Business office expenses | Fax, copy services, telegrams/telexes, etc. |
| Car rental insurance (domestic) | Purchased for domestic travel (only if our contracted vendors (Hertz, Enterprise, National) are not available). LDW only. |
| Car rental insurance (foreign) | CDW/LDW insurance coverage should be accepted at the minimum limits offered. |
| Gasoline | If mileage allowance is not claimed (for car rental or CIT vehicles only) |
| GPS | Allowed for rental cars on foreign travel. On Domestic travel a GPS system will only be allowable if it is the traveler's first trip to that location. |
| Ground transportation | Including taxi and public transportation fares, mileage for personal vehicles (calculated at the rate per mile established by the IRS), parking fees, and tolls |
| Hotel health club fees | Excluding massages or other spa services |
| Laundry/dry cleaning | During trips longer than four calendar days |
| Meals and entertainment | While on university business |
| Miscellaneous | Room service, luggage storage fees, and valet parking fees |
| Overnight delivery/postage | If required as part of the project and trip |
| Parking and tolls | |
| Theft Protection for foreign rentals | Will only be reimbursed if it is mandated by a country to accept. |
| Tips | When actual costs are used |
| Visa/passport consulate fees | Please note costs for immigration visas (those with no end date) are not allowable costs to federal awards. Only costs for short term visas (with end dates) may be charged to federal awards. |
| Vaccination | Includes other medical costs when required for travel to specific destinations (if not covered by traveler's health plan). |

APPENDIX B

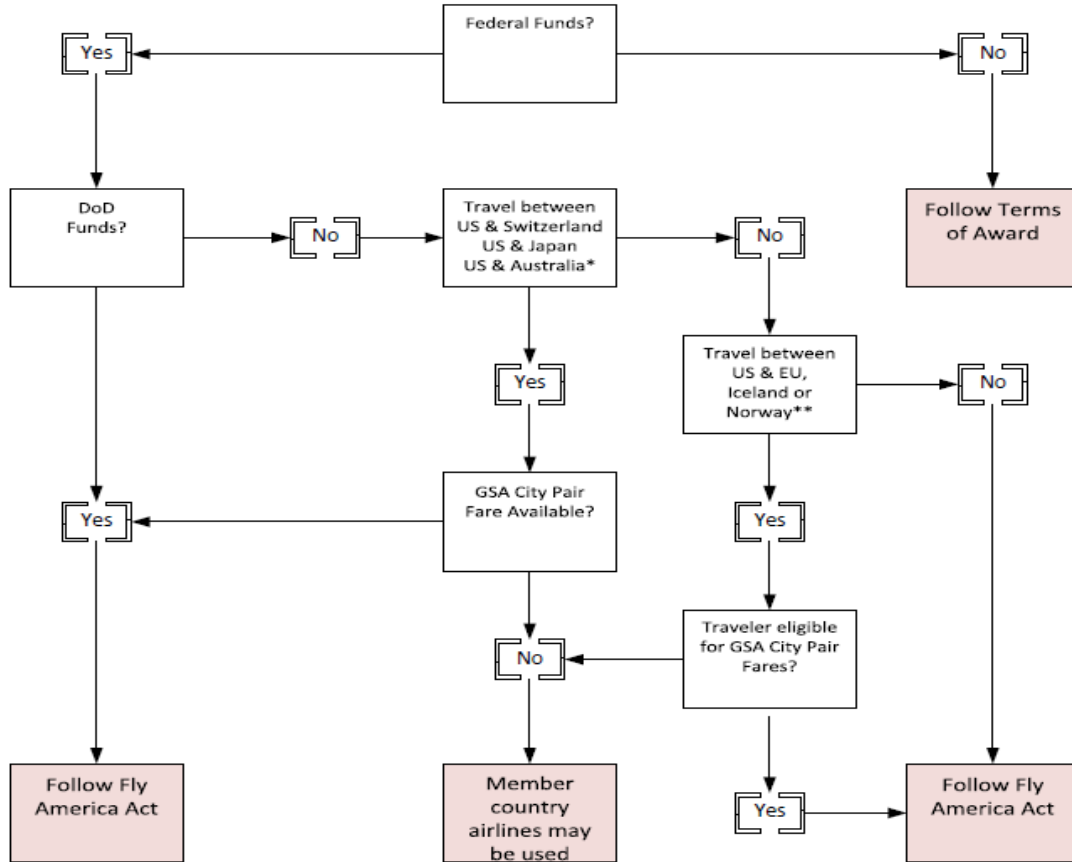
EXAMPLES OF GENERALLY UNALLOWABLE TRAVEL AND ENTERTAINMENT EXPENSES

| Item | Explanation |
|--|--|
| Airline club membership fees | |
| Alcohol | Under federal grants and contracts |
| Baggage | Lost baggage or damaged baggage |
| Child Care | |
| Dues in private clubs | At the discretion of the division |
| Gas | For personal vehicle |
| In room-movie and mini-bar charges | |
| Insurance costs, including baggage, flight and life insurance | Medical insurance will be reimbursed to a traveler if the country they are flying to requires or recommends it this information can be found on the State Department website |
| Laundry service | For travel of fewer than four days |
| Living allowance | Should be processed on Payment Request form |
| Loss or theft | Of advance funds, personal funds or property |
| Massage, saunas, spa services | |
| Medical Services | Medical services such as vaccinations should be processed on a Payment Request form |
| Parking tickets/traffic violations | |
| Personal automobile repairs | |
| Personal credit card annual fees | |
| Personal grooming services | Such as barbers, hairdressers and shoe shines |
| Pet care | |
| Penalties and fees | Incurred because a traveler violated airline, rail, and transportation ticketing, hotel or reservation rules |
| Recreational Activities/Entertainment | Amusement, diversion, social activities including tickets to shows or sports events, rentals. Should be processed on a Payment Request form |

APPENDIX C

USE OF FOREIGN-FLAG AIR CARRIERS ON TRAVEL

Relationship of Fly America Act to Open Skies Agreements



*When use of airlines of Australia, Switzerland or Japan is allowable, travel may only occur between the U.S. and one of those countries on an airline of that country.

**When use of airlines of the EU, Iceland or Norway is allowable, travel may occur between the U.S. and any country those airlines are authorized to serve under the Open Skies Agreement (even those outside the EU, Iceland and Norway), provided the routing includes a stop in the EU, Iceland or Norway.