

MINOT STATE UNIVERSITY

Important Travel Information

The following items are taken directly from State Board of Higher Ed and Office of Management and Budget travel policy, along with Business Office policies and procedures. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact accounts payable in the Business Office at 858-3320.

- **Out-of-state travel authorization forms must be completed prior to travel. Pre-approval from the President or Vice President of Administration and Finance is required for all international travel, excluding the bordering Canadian provinces of Manitoba and Saskatchewan. Approved authorizations must be attached within an expense report, and the original filed with the original receipts. All originals must be kept within the department for at least one year from reimbursement.**

MEALS:

- (NDCC 44-08-04 & SBHE 806.1) If meals are included in a registration fee, reimbursement for that meal **cannot** be claimed in an expense report. Please always attach conference/meeting agenda within the expense report. If meals are provided, please indicate which meals were provided in the description box of the expense line.
- If an employee **is not** claiming reimbursement for lodging and meals, please indicate such within the expense report to ensure the fields were not overlooked when completing the reimbursement form.
- State rate for meal reimbursement is \$45.00 a day. Employees will not be reimbursed for the first quarter if travel began after 7:00 a.m. In order to claim expenses for the second and third quarters, the employee must have been in travel status one hour before the start of the quarter being claimed, and travel status must extend at least one hour into the quarter being claimed. The expense allowance for each quarter of any 24-hour period effective **August 1, 2023**, is as follows:

Meal Allowance	In-State	Out-of-State
1. First quarter, 6 a.m. to 12 noon	\$9.00	20% of GSA daily rate
2. Second quarter, 12 noon to 6 p.m.	\$14.00	30% of GSA daily rate
3. Third quarter, 6 p.m. to 12 midnight	\$22.00	50% of GSA daily rate

- If an employee is claiming reimbursement for meals when no overnight stay is involved, the meal reimbursement is taxable and will be included on the employee's next taxable gross income paycheck, subject to withholding and reported on the W-2. Meal reimbursements **are not taxable** if there **is** an overnight stay.

- Reimbursement for employee expenses may be made only for overnight travel or other travel which takes the employee away from his/her normal place of employment for **four hours or more.**
- Employees are entitled to reimbursement for meals attended in the city where they normally work if attendance is required or requested in connection with their duties. Documentation of required attendance signed by supervisor must be attached within the expense report.

LODGING:

- (NDCC 44-08-04) A maximum of \$99.00 (effective 10-1-24) plus percentage of taxes charged will be reimbursed for in-state lodging. This maximum applies even if the in-state conference is held at a motel that charges more than the state rate. The formula for figuring applicable taxes on charges exceeding \$99.00 for in-state lodging is:
 - (taxes divided by actual room rate equals percentage times \$99.00) plus \$99.00
- Actual lodging expense for out-of-state travel will be reimbursed.
- Lodging invoice **must show paid** with a \$0 balance. Typically, the invoices placed under the motel room door on the morning of checkout do not show paid. An invoice showing paid must be requested from the front desk.
- Only receipts from bona fide lodging establishments will be accepted for reimbursement. Receipts from relatives for the provision of lodging services will not be acceptable. The receipt **must be** the official receipt from the lodging establishment and **not a charge slip** from a credit card system. Bona fide lodging establishments include:
 - Hotels, motels, college dormitories, hospitals, military facilities, and similar institutions
- **Lodging charges –two employees sharing lodging:** If two state employees are sharing lodging accommodations, the actual cost of the room must be split evenly and each employee must have a separate receipt in his/her own name.
- **Lodging charges when accompanied by an individual not eligible for reimbursement:** when accompanied on a state authorized trip by a spouse or traveling companion, the state employee must have the lodging establishment clearly certify the room rate for single person and only that amount may be claimed. The receipt must be in the employee's name.
- (SBHE 806.1.10) In the unlikely situation an employee cannot find lodging at 90% of the GSA rate, the following process **needs** to be followed:
 - Prior** approval by Business Office designated approver must be obtained.

- The request must document the name of employee; name of city travelling to, dates of lodging, name and local phone number of the lodging facility, the rates quoted for the dates of travel or if there were no available rooms. A **minimum of 3 facilities** should be contacted. If traveling to a North Dakota community that does not have 3 lodging facilities, indicate on documentation.
- This documentation **must be attached** to the expense report.
- Occasionally, additional documentation will be requested to ensure the most cost-effective rates possible were obtained.

VEHICLE/MILEAGE:

- (NDCC 54-06-09) When travel by motor vehicle or truck is required for employee travel, a state-owned vehicle (Motor Pool) should be used whenever possible.
- When an employee drives a state fleet vehicle, the State's liability coverage is primary should an accident occur. If an employee drives a personal vehicle on state business, the employee's personal insurance is primary. If an employee must drive a personal vehicle because no state fleet vehicles are available, then the State would have primary responsibility.
- If a personal vehicle is used in lieu of air for out-of-state travel, for the employee's convenience; meals and motel expenses will be allowed for a maximum of one day each way. To support mileage claim not included in the mileage information on the Business Office website, print the route driven via map quest and if applicable divide the miles between in state miles and out of state miles. Attach this document to your expense report.
- It is unallowable to transport a non-state employee in state fleet vehicles.
- Rental cars **will not be reimbursed** unless prior approval is received from the Business Office in writing.

MISCELLANEOUS:

- Employees must choose the most prudent and economical means of travel, considering factors such as travel expense, time away from the office and the needs of the University.
- Statements such as 'to attend a meeting' etc., will not be accepted as sufficient description for purpose of travel. Please fill in name of meeting/conference and purpose of training.
- Any charge being entered with the Expense Type of "Miscellaneous Travel", **requires** a detailed explanation and a receipt must be attached if the charge is greater than \$10. Only allowable charges will be reimbursed. Charges such as taxi

fares to and from meals not included in the conference, are unallowable and will not be reimbursed. However, taxi fare to and from a hotel/motel when you are unable to stay at the conference hotel or if the conference is held at a convention center without access to a hotel, is allowed at one roundtrip fare per day (convention center to/from hotel only). Confirmation documentation is required to prove the unavailability of the conference hotel in order to reimburse taxi fares. Also, **taxi fares require receipts** to be reimbursed and will not be reimbursed from credit card statements.

- When booking a business trip, if you choose to extend your time a few days for personal leave, you must attach airfare quotes showing actual flight costs had you flown according to the conference dates. MSU will **only** pay whichever is less.
- If you choose to make travel reservations online and you select a package deal, please provide detailed receipts on separate costs for the hotel and airfare. Also, please break out all charges within the expense report for lodging and airfare purchased on the package deal that correspond to the correct account codes.
- No travel protection insurance will be reimbursed if you should choose to purchase the protection. If the employee can prove that travel protection insurance is mandatory to travel (i.e. out of the country), it will be reimbursed.
- Luggage charge will be reimbursed for one piece each way. An extra luggage or overweight charge **will not** be reimbursed **unless justifiable and approved**. If the baggage receipt is lost or misplaced, please go online or telephone the airline or travel agent to request a duplicate invoice prior to submitting an expense report. Credit card statements are not an acceptable method for proof of payment. Baggage should be coded to “Out-of-State Airfare”—521070.
- Detailed itemized receipts **must always** be provided with the exception of reimbursement for mileage and/or per diem. In these circumstances, the days and times of travel are the determining factors along with the destination miles.
- MSU employed graduate assistants who travel will be reimbursed via expense report. Students whose travel is related to their employment as a student employee will also be reimbursed via expense report. All other students who travel will be reimbursed on an A/P voucher.
- Airfare – MSU **only** pays for Economy class airfare tickets. First Class/Business Class and Choice Paid Seats are considered personal preferences and are not reimbursed.
- MSU will pay registration fees in advance to the agency but such fees must not include lodging.
- Expense reports **must include** applicable detailed and paid receipts ***within 15 working days of the end of each month***. Expense reports should be submitted only

once per month per employee. If travel begins in one month and ends in another, it can be submitted within one report. At fiscal year-end (May, June, July), please contact the Business Office.

- (NDCC 44-08-04.2) Travel Advances – MSU shall advance to an University official or employee, at the request of the agency head, funds to be used for payment of meal and lodging expenses incurred while the official or employee is traveling on official business of the University, provided that such travel is planned to be in excess of five days per month, whether or not consecutive, and provided that the funds advanced do not exceed eighty percent of estimated expenses for the period. This advance must be paid back to MSU and be shown in the expense report.
- When an MSU employee is away from his/her residence for official university business and long distance tolls would apply to call home, the employee is entitled to make at least one long distance call per day at the university's expense. Reimbursement will be limited to \$10 per day. Allowance for calls not made on one day cannot be carried forward and used on another day. An overnight stay is required to claim this expense. A claim for this expense may not be made for "free minutes" used on a personal cellular phone. In order to claim this expense, the charge must appear on the receipt submitted for lodging, or on a separate receipt.
- Certain expenses may be non-reimbursable. Some examples are:
 - Alcoholic beverages
 - Entertainment
 - Late check-out, no show fee, and room guarantee charges
 - Laundry
 - Parking tickets or other traffic violations
 - Spouse/Traveling companion(s) expenses
 - Personal expenses such as personal care items, etc.