

COLLEGE of CHARLESTON

OFFICIAL POLICY

2.2.2.1.1

Student – Group Travel

7/25/16

Policy Statement

The College of Charleston (CofC) has the responsibility to enforce State purchasing, disbursement, and travel regulations as promulgated by the South Carolina Department of Administration; and to develop procedures that encourage safety, maximize educational value, manage risk, and minimize liability for all student-group travel activities.

Policy Manager and Responsible Department or Office

- A.** The CofC department, registered student organization, academic program, college employee, etc., that/who sponsors the organized student-group travel must ensure compliance with this policy and related procedures. If an individual student travels under these guidelines and policy, a college employee (sponsor) must ensure compliance with these practices.
 - B.** Departments that use any CofC owned, rented, borrowed, or leased vehicle are responsible for assuring that the drivers of the vehicle possess a valid driver's license, have attended all driver-training required by the College and have been approved to drive CofC owned, rented, borrowed, or leased vehicles.
 - C.** A traveler on official College business will exercise the same care in incurring expenses and accomplishing an assignment that a prudent person would exercise if traveling on personal business. Excess costs, circuitous routes, delays, or luxury accommodations unnecessary or unjustified in the performance of an assignment are not considered acceptable as exercising prudence.
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Departments/Offices Affected by the Policy

This policy primarily affects all student-group travel in conjunction with official college-sponsored activities, and registered student organizations.

Policy

A. Scope of Student-Group Travel – This policy applies to all student-group travel in conjunction with official college-sponsored activities, and registered student organizations, including but not limited to, instructional field trips, college recognized club or organization activities, athletic travel events, student-group travel to conferences, workshops, and programs sponsored or endorsed by CofC.

1. CofC will not be responsible for any unscheduled and/or unauthorized student-group travel.
2. CofC requires that all applicable campus travel forms be completed, approved, and received in the Controller's Office prior to the trip. Student travel waiver forms should be maintained in the department.

B. Methods of Payments – Generally, a combination of purchasing methods (direct payment to the vendor, the State Travel Purchasing Card if previously authorized, and travel cash advance) may be required to fund the trip and will provide for optimal financing conditions.

1. Direct Payment to Vendor – If at all possible, the first option for payment of lodging and transportation expenses such as air fare of student-group travel events should be to arrange for direct payment to the vendor by disbursement voucher using the regular Accounts Payable (A/P) process.
2. State Travel Purchasing Card (for departments with prior approvals-see c. below) – The use of the State Travel Purchasing Card is ***ONLY*** allowable for student travel expenses ***IF*** the direct payment method is not possible, or if previously authorized.
 - a. A copy of the approved Travel Authorization (TA) must be on file in the Controller's Office, in order to use the State Travel Purchasing Card. Items to be paid for with a purchasing card, must be noted on the approved TA.
 - b. The dollar limit on the travel procurement card may require an increase based on the budgeted amount of the trip. The dollar limit on each card will vary depending on the prepaid expenses (e.g. deposits paid for lodging expenses,

- airline tickets) that can be made through the regular A/P process and the amount of travel cash advance required.
- c. The Procurement Office requires 60 days processing time for approval of a new card and/or changes to authorized limits and types of purchases permitted. All requests for use of a Pcard for student travel expenses require approval from Procurement, an EVP, **and** the Board of Trustees.
 - d. The number of individuals who may have their travel restrictions lifted on their State Travel Purchasing Cards will be limited. Lifting the limits on travel will be time-restricted based on factors such as the duration of the trip, seasonal events, nature of the program, etc.
 - e. Allowable student group travel expenses may include lodging, airfare, meals, ground transportation, while they are in travel status, and activity costs such as entrance fees for museums.
3. Travel Cash Advance – A travel cash advance request may be made by a sponsor for the difference of the total expected travel expenses and the amounts paid prior to the trip using the travel purchasing card or direct payments to the vendor. Students **are not** eligible to receive cash advances.
 4. Personal Credit Cards – As mandated by the S. C. Comptroller General's Office and College policy, personal credit cards must not be used to cover student travel expenses in anticipation of receiving an advance reimbursement prior to taking the trip.

C. Types of Expenses:

1. Meals – Meals will be reimbursed at actual costs not to exceed per diem rates, except athletics team travel. Domestic per diem meal allowances can be found in the CofC Travel policy, located on the Controller's web site. Foreign per diem meal allowances can be found at:

https://aoprals.state.gov/content.asp?content_id=114&menu_id=78

- a. A faculty/staff member who pays for meals for the entire group must present itemized receipts to get reimbursed for actual costs.
- b. When a faculty/staff member gives per diem money to each participant, every participant must sign indicating receipt of funds. Recommended documentation would include participants' names, CWID numbers, signatures, and amounts received. No other receipts are required.
- c. A student traveling and paying his/her own costs may claim actual expenses up to the per diem. Itemized receipts are required.

2. Transportation – Transportation may be provided in several different modes:
 - a. Rental vehicle through State Motor Vehicle Management Fleet, College contract or leasing agent;
 - b. Air travel;
 - c. Mileage reimbursement at the approved rate; and/or
 - d. Public transportation.
3. Lodging
 - a. If each student pays his/her own expenses, actual lodging expenses may be reimbursed. Reimbursement should be submitted on a travel reimbursement form with a copy of the paid receipt for lodging attached.
 - b. Paid itemized receipts are required for lodging. An itemized invoice with a detailed listing of the individuals who received lodging is required regardless of the method of purchase.
4. Travel costs related to an employee traveling as an advisor/chaperone may be treated as student-group travel costs. All expenses may be submitted on one Travel Reimbursement Form. Travel costs for chaperones who are not College employees (i.e. volunteers) should be included as student-group travel.
5. Gratuities are not an allowable reimbursement expense except when paid as part of a billing for a banquet, luncheon, etc. The amount of the gratuity cannot exceed 20% of the cost of the charges for **food**.

D. Settlement of Travel Cash Advances

1. All travel cash advance payments must be settled with the Controller's Office **within ten days** upon returning from the trip or the first **five** working days of July (the beginning of the new fiscal year), whichever comes first. The expenses must be documented using paid receipts from vendors, student logs of signatures and amounts of money received. Students **are not** eligible to receive cash advances.
 - a. If the total dollar amount of the receipts exceeds the travel cash advance, a reimbursement will be made to the individual incurring the out-of pocket expenses.
 - b. If the total dollar amount of the receipts is less than the travel cash advance, the difference owed should be deposited with the CofC Treasurer's Office and a copy of the cash receipt should be included with the expense receipts.

2. Foreign Currency – The traveler should make every effort to exchange foreign currency for U. S. dollars prior to returning to the U. S. However, should the traveler possess foreign currency, it should be deposited with the CofC Treasurer's Office, who will notify the Controller's Office of the U.S. dollar (USD) amount.

3. Non-compliance with this procedure will jeopardize the privilege to receive future travel cash advances.

E. Advance Payments of Airfare and Registration Fees – The College will honor vouchers in the current fiscal year for advance payments of airfare and registration fees for official travel in July and August (of the new fiscal year) if the advance payment results in a savings and funds are available in the requesting department's budget. The transaction will be recognized as a prepaid item in the fiscal year in which it was paid; and will be recognized as an expense in the department's budget in the new fiscal year to which the payment relates. Please see the Controller's Office procedures for Prepaid Expenses.

Related Policies, Documents or Forms

S. C. Code of Laws Sections Section 11-3-21 (Advance payment of airfares and registration fees for official travel.)

S. C. General Appropriations Act Section 117.8 (State Institutions – Revenues & Income)

S. C. Comptroller General's Disbursement Regulations

S. C. State Procurement Code

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POLICY APPROVAL

(For use by the Office of the Board of Trustees or the Office of the President)

Policy Number: 2.2.2.1.1 (Student – Group Travel)

President or

Chairman, Board of Trustees



Date: 7/25/16