

Chapter 7 – Human Resources

AP 7400 Conference and Travel

References:

Education Code Section 87032; 2 Code of Federal Regulations Part 200.474; Missing Itemized Receipt Affidavit; Senate Bill 447: BRIDGE Act

When funding is available, the College encourages members of the faculty, administration, classified, and confidential staff, and governing board to participate in off-campus conferences, meetings, and similar activities that will enhance the programs of the College. Nothing in this procedure shall be interpreted to require a College employee to travel to a state or states that have enacted a law that would discriminate on the basis of sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression, or that has the effect of prohibiting conduct or activities otherwise protected under the laws of this state.

Authorization to Attend

A Travel and Conference Request outlining the purpose of the trip must be submitted and approved exclusively through the College-approved system, even if the travel results in no cost. All travel and conference requests must receive prior approval of at least 10 business days by the appropriate Vice President or President/CEO and immediate manager through the College-approved Travel and Conference Request process. It is the employee's responsibility to ensure they are adhering to timelines related to specific funding source approval (e.g., POD and other funding sources). Approval of a funding source does not guarantee travel approval until signed by the immediate manager and appropriate Vice President or President/CEO. Approval by the appropriate Vice President or President/CEO is required for out-of-state/country travel.

Authorization to approve travel and conference requests within budget has been delegated by the Board of Trustees to the President/CEO or designee.

Travel and Conference Expenses Allowed

Reimbursable transportation expenses include all necessary official travel on railroads, airlines, buses, private vehicles, and other usual means of conveyance. All claims for reimbursement must be supported by itemized ticket stubs, itemized receipts, or e-mail receipts provided by the commercial carrier.

- The expense of traveling by commercial carrier will be allowed based on actual cost. All employees will be expected to use the most economical mode of transportation where practical and in the best interest of the College. Exceptions may be made with immediate manager approval.
- When attending a conference to which the employee has traveled by common carrier, the employee may rent an automobile for local transportation. The cost of the car rental shall be the most economical available. Employees should not add the additional insurance

coverage offered by car rental agencies. Collision and liability are covered by the College's insurance carrier.

- Reimbursement for travel by private vehicle shall not exceed the lowest comparable commercial airfare. Exceptions may be made with immediate manager approval. Other transportation-related expenses that are directly associated with the conference or meeting attendance and are reasonably incurred, shall be reimbursed. Allowable expenses include fees such as parking, toll, ferries, buses, taxis, rideshares, and subways. All claims for transportation-related expenses shall be authenticated by itemized receipts.
- Mileage reimbursement for business travel shall be at the prevailing IRS standard rate. Mileage shall be calculated as the distance from the employee's regular work location to their off-campus business destination and return to the regular work location.
- If the employee does not both leave and return to their regular work location, the total miles driven less the regular work commute miles shall be reimbursed.
- Mileage to and from an airport or train station in excess of the regular commute miles shall be reimbursed.
- If two or more employees share a personal vehicle, only one employee shall be reimbursed for mileage expenses.
- An employee using their personal vehicle on authorized College business is required to have personal automobile insurance, which shall be primary, and the College's coverage secondary. Traffic and/or parking citations received while driving on College business are the responsibility of the employee driving the vehicle.

Registration fees charged in connection with approved attendance at conferences are allowable at actual cost.

- The registration expense will be reimbursed to the employee if verified by a registration receipt.
- Given adequate notice, the registration fee may be paid directly to the vendor by submitting a Request for Payment/Reimbursement and a copy of the official conference application form.

Lodging will be reimbursed at a reasonable cost not to exceed the documented conference rate before taxes and fees. If no conference rate exists, lodging will be reimbursed at a reasonable cost recommended by President's Cabinet and approved by the President/CEO. Current rates may be found on the Fiscal Services website. Requests for exceptions must be reviewed and approved by the appropriate Vice President or President/CEO in advance of the travel date. An itemized receipt for lodging expenses must be submitted with the reimbursement claim to be allowable. A credit card receipt is not acceptable.

- Employees shall not share a room with another employee unless authorized by the appropriate Vice President or President/CEO.

- When an employee shares lodging facilities with a non-college employee (i.e., spouse, children), reimbursement to the employee is limited to the lowest rate regardless of occupancy or room type. All reimbursement claims for such instances must show the rate for single or double occupancy.
- Normally, lodging expenses are reimbursed for the actual dates of the approved conference. The night before and/or the night the conference ends may be reimbursed to accommodate travel arrangements. Any special circumstances that require a longer stay must be substantiated by a written statement from the employee and authorized by the appropriate Vice President or President/CEO.
- Given adequate notice, the lodging/hotel costs may be paid directly to the vendor by submitting a Request for Payment/Reimbursement and an invoice from the hotel. Pre-payment of hotel costs requires approval by the appropriate Vice President.
- Use of Airbnb or other similar third-party booking sites for conference and travel accommodations is not considered a reimbursable expense.

Reimbursement for meal expenses will be made on a per diem, per meal basis unless otherwise authorized. The per diem rates are reviewed by President's Cabinet and approved by the President/CEO.

- Employees may submit to receive per diem for meals. Per diem will not be paid for travel within the District service area. Per diem will be paid based on the rates published on the Fiscal Services website.
- When a meal is included as part of the conference or as part of the registration fee, per diem reimbursement requests for those meals will only be allowed with immediate manager approval for special circumstances, such as dietary restrictions.
- Reimbursement for alcoholic beverages is never allowed.

Miscellaneous travel expenses necessary for the transaction of official College business are reimbursable to the employee when reasonably incurred and evidenced by the submission of valid itemized receipts. Allowable expenses incurred in conducting College business are minor office supplies, postage, reproduction costs, telephone, and electronic communication expenses.

Travel and Conference Expenses Not Allowed

Certain travel expenses are considered personal expenses and not essential to College business. Such non-reimbursable expenditures include entertainment expenses, movies, leisure tours or personal side trips, personal telephone calls, traffic or parking citations (except for those related to malfunctioning equipment on College-owned/leased vehicles), individual membership dues or fees, and alcoholic beverages.

Work Day

Employees authorized and voluntarily attend a conference/meeting will continue to receive regular pay during the conference/meeting. Overtime pay and compensation are not

authorized for travel over and above the normal work day or days. Conferences, retreats, and travel that occur over the weekend and/or holidays are not subject to overtime pay without prior approval from the appropriate Vice President or President/CEO. Employees who travel and attend conferences and retreats shall abide by Mt. SAC's Board Policies, Administrative Procedures, and applicable collective bargaining and/or Meet-and-Confer agreements.

Travel for Convenience of Employee

No reimbursement for lodging or subsistence shall be paid to an employee for travel to a destination for their own convenience in advance of the necessary time of arrival or if they remain at the destination following a meeting/conference.

Reimbursement

Reimbursement claims must be submitted to the employee's immediate manager within 30 calendar days of incurring the expense. All reimbursement claims require approval by the employee's immediate manager.

Reimbursement for or payment of penalties incurred due to trip cancellation requires approval by the appropriate Vice President or President/CEO. Fees resulting from changes or cancellations not related to authorized business reasons may result in the denial of future conference and travel funding.

Travelers are discouraged from using personal miles or rewards points when paying for College-related travel expenses. The College will not reimburse any personal rewards credits (e.g., points, loyalty rewards, frequent flyer miles). Although rewards programs offered by airlines, hotels, and other travel providers are valuable benefits, they do not translate to a direct cash value for purposes of reimbursement.

Missing Itemized Receipts:

In the event that employees are unable to provide itemized receipts, the "Missing Itemized Receipt Affidavit" form must be completed. The use of this form, in lieu of receipts, should be rare and should only be used after every reasonable attempt to obtain an original or replacement receipt has been made.

The affidavit should include the description of the expense incurred, justification of the expense, reason for missing the receipt, and detailed description of steps taken to obtain an itemized receipt or replacement receipt. In addition, an alternative proof of payment must be submitted (e.g., a copy of a credit card statement, a front and back copy of a canceled check, a packing slip with a price list from the vendor, a copy of the vendor invoice).

The affidavit must include the claimant's signature and must be approved by the immediate manager, appropriate Vice President or President/CEO, and Chief Fiscal Services Officer, or designee.

Once all approvals have been obtained and proof of expense has been substantiated, the reimbursement will be processed.

Approved: March 25, 2015
Reviewed: August 17, 2016
Reviewed: October 2017
Revised: May 28, 2021
Revised: June 22, 2022
Revised: March 20, 2024