



University of Pittsburgh Policy Travel Card

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Section: Business Expenses
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Policy Number: FN 26 (formerly 05-07-04)
Effective date: March 1, 2017
Responsible University Officer:

- Senior Vice Chancellor and Chief Financial Officer

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POLICY STATEMENT

A Travel Card is an institutional credit card designed to simplify and streamline the process of paying for travel and business entertainment expenses for the individual cardholder. Travel charges on the card are billed to and paid by the University. Travel cards are available to all faculty, staff and student employees who travel on University business or who book travel for other University travelers.

The Travel Card works like a personal credit card, but with commodity restrictions and monthly, daily, and single transaction limits. Allowable University travel and business entertainment charges on the travel card are paid by the University, not the card holder. Travel Card holders are personally responsible for their assigned Travel Cards, must not allow others to use their Travel Cards, and should diligently secure the Travel Card at all times (i.e. guard against fraud and unauthorized use of the Travel Card).

This policy has been established in order to:

- Document the purpose and function of the Travel Card.
- Reduce the risk of misuse or fraud by defining the responsibilities of the Travel Card holder and the oversight responsibilities of the Travel Card holder's supervisor and approver.
- Highlight the approved use and the prohibited purchases on the Travel Card.



ROLES

Travel Card holder - A departmental role that includes any University of Pittsburgh faculty or staff who is properly authorized as described below in the Responsibilities section of this Policy.

Delegate - A department role that can book travel and create an expense report for a Travel Card holder.

Supervisor/travel card application approver - A department role that approves the travel card application. The supervisor for staff should be the card holder's direct supervisor. The approver for faculty should be the RC business administrator.

Approver - A department role that must be at least one organizational level above the Travel Card holder who will approve all expense reports submitted by the card holder.

Travel Card administrator - A role within the Payment Processing Department that manages the administration duties of the University's Travel Card Program such as increasing/decreasing limits, ordering new cards, and terminating cards.

Travel Card auditor - A role within the Payment Processing Department that conducts regular audits of departmental Travel Cards for compliance with University Policies and Procedures.

WHO SHOULD READ THIS POLICY

All University responsibility centers.

KEY STAKEHOLDERS

- University Departments
- Regional Campuses
- Records Management
- Office of the Chief Financial Officer

RESPONSIBILITIES

Authorization

Travel Cards are requested by completing a [Travel Card Application](#) in DocuSign. The application guides applicants in the process of obtaining proper authorizations. The Travel Card Application requires the applicant's supervisor/department chair to approve card issuance, a default general ledger account in which to post the transactions, and preset transaction, daily, and monthly limits for each cardholder.



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Transaction limit increase requests or requests to open disabled Merchant Category Codes (MCCs) will require additional central administration approvals.

Each cardholder must receive training on use of the Travel Card and his or her responsibilities for oversight and accountability prior to Travel Card issuance.

Accountability

Only the Travel Card holder named in the application may use the Travel Card. Travel Cards may not be used by another individual, unless a delegate books travel through the online booking tool or the University's preferred travel agent. Under no circumstances is the Travel Card to be used for personal purchases or for any other person's expenses.

Individual cardholders are personally responsible for the use and security of the Travel Card. Misuse of the Travel Card or oversight failures by supervisors (staff) or business administrators (faculty) will result in sanctions such as Travel Card termination and disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

Any Travel Card that is lost or stolen must be reported immediately to the Travel Card administrator and to Citizens Bank.

Reconciliation

All purchases made with the Travel Card must be reconciled to the supporting detailed receipts, statement and to the monthly level reports in a timely manner.

All Travel Card purchases are posted within a few days to a general University account number. Card holders or their delegates must initiate timely expense reports (within 30 days of return from travel) in the approved University Travel Management system to move the charges to a department account and to document the business purpose of the expense.

Oversight

Each Travel Card holder's approver is responsible for reviewing charges on the expense report to certify that the Travel Card purchases are legitimate University travel and business expenses. This is critical for the prevention of Travel Card fraud. This includes but is not limited to:

- Reviewing the business purpose of each Travel Card purchase and any supporting receipts or documentation when approving an expense report.
- Reporting any suspected Travel Card misuse or fraud to the Travel Card administrator immediately.
- Reporting any transferred or terminated Travel Card holders or changes in supervisory assignments to the [Travel Card administrator immediately](#).
- Reviewing transactions for compliance with the Travel, Business Entertainment, Honoraria, and Miscellaneous Reimbursable Expenses policy (05-07-01).



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Prohibited commodities and services

The Travel Card should never be used for personal purchases.

Generally, non-reimbursable Travel Card expenditures are not reimbursed unless there is an approved exception. All Travel Card expenditures are subject to review by the Payment Processing Department.

Non-reimbursable expenses on the Travel Card include but are not limited to:

- Alcohol charged to research grants
- Animals
- Biological materials
- Controlled substances
- Drugs, prescriptions
- Flowers or balloons
- Gases
- Gifts and contributions, including gift cards
- Hotel room ancillary charges, such as movies, mini-bar, and in travel laundry
- Job advertisements / postings
- Motion picture-video creation
- Radioactive materials
- Social clubs
- Testing laboratories
- Weapons/ammunition

Policy exceptions

Exception to the receipt, reimbursement, and other requirements of this policy require approval that moves upward through each level of the traveler's reporting hierarchy until approved by one of the following:

- Officer of the University
- Vice Chancellor, or higher
- Dean or Academic Director
- Responsibility Center Head

Sanctions

Sanctions will be imposed on a cardholder on a case-by-case basis after a review of policy violations. The Office of the Chief Financial Officer, after notifying department and responsibility center management, may impose any of the following sanctions:

- The cardholder will receive a formal written reprimand. The cardholder's supervisor and department administrator will be copied on the reprimand.
- The Travel Card may be revoked if continued misuse occurs.
- Cases of fraud could result in employment termination and/or prosecution. If a card has been revoked for cause, it is unlikely that it will be reinstated.



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- In addition to the above sanctions, the improper use of the Travel Card for personal purchases will require immediate repayment to the University.
- The Office of the Chief Financial Officer will assist with the arrangements for repayment. Untimely repayment will result in collection efforts by the University that will include penalties and interest. Unreimbursed personal charges are considered fraudulent.

Records and receipt management

All local original or imaged receipts should be retained until the expense report has been reconciled to the department’s level reports, then they may be destroyed. The University will retain receipt images attached to the electronic expense report as required by the [University’s Financial Records Retention Schedule](#). If the Travel Card has been used to pay for expenses charged to a grant, the department should consult its funding agency to determine if original receipts must be retained for longer periods of time for audit purposes.

ALLOWABLE TRAVEL CARD PURCHASES

The Travel Card can be used to pay for all types of travel and business purchases as described in this table. Please see [Travel, Business Entertainment, Honoraria, and Miscellaneous Reimbursable Expenses \(05-07-01\)](#) for more details on allowable travel and business purchases:

Airfare, baggage fees	Business meals
Lodging	Car rental and ground transportation
In-travel postage and other transmittals such as facsimiles and telegrams	Telephone charges
Conference registration fees	Share services such as Uber, Lyft, and Airbnb
Group travel arrangements	Wi-Fi costs while inflight or during lodging
Emergency goods and services while in travel	

CONTACTS

All inquiries related to the Travel Card program are to be made at [PantherExpress Customer Service](#).



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RELATED UNIVERSITY POLICIES

Policies

Travel, Business Entertainment, Honoraria, and Miscellaneous Reimbursable Expenses	FN 28
Travel Card	FN 26
Travel Advance	FN 27
Level Report Review and Reconciliation	FN 13

HISTORY

- 1/20/17 - SFJ
- 1/10/17 - Audit Review
- 8/19/16 – EMD and SFJ