POLICY LIT.4.03
TRAVEL

SCOPE: Faculty and Staff

The purpose of the Travel Policy and related procedures is to establish guidelines for managing and reimbursing business-related travel expenses incurred by employees, students, and other authorized individuals on behalf of Lamar Institute of Technology (LIT). These policies and procedures ensure transparency, efficiency, and compliance with cost-control measures.

Lamar Institute of Technology travel procedures are guided by the Travel Regulations Act (Texas Government Code Chapter 660), provisions of the latest General Appropriations Act, official interpretations of the Travel Act by the State Comptroller of Public Accounts, and the Texas State University System (TSUS) Rules and Regulations.

This policy does not apply to individuals under contract with LIT who will be paid a lump sum reported as services.

1. Employees of LIT are entitled to receive the actual costs for lodging and a per diem for meals not to exceed the locality-based allowance provided by the Federal Travel Regulations for lodging and meals unless the State Comptroller determines in advance of the travel that local conditions warrant a change in the lodging rate for a particular location.

2. To qualify for travel reimbursements, the purpose of a trip must be official business of LIT.

3. No travel will be paid from appropriated funds.

4. Travelers for LIT shall utilize the most cost-effective manner of travel considering all relevant circumstances.

5. A prospective employee may be reimbursed for travel expenses incurred as a result of visiting LIT in the same manner as the individual who holds the position for which the prospective employee is being considered.

6. Lamar Institute of Technology will pay or reimburse a traveler for substantiated cancellation charges.

7. A traveler may not accept a reimbursement for a travel expense from more than one source or for travel expenses not incurred.

8. Travelers may personally retain frequent flyer miles, hotel points, vehicle rental points, or other affinity program rewards earned while traveling on official business.

9. Definitions

    9.1. "Appropriated funds" means funds appropriated under the General Appropriations Act.

    9.2. "Cancellation charge" means a fee, charge, or payment that a provider of travel services assesses or retains because of the cancellation of a travel reservation or other travel plan.

9.3. "Commercial lodging establishment" means:

- 9.3.1. a motel, hotel, inn, apartment, house, or similar establishment that provides lodging to the public for pay; or
- 9.3.2. a person or establishment that provides lodging for pay that the comptroller determines to have a sufficient number of the characteristics of a commercial lodging establishment for purposes of this chapter.

9.4. "Commercial transportation company" means a person that offers to the public to transport people or goods for pay.

9.5. "Designated headquarters" means:

- 9.5.1. the area within:
  - 9.5.1.1. the boundaries of the incorporated municipality in which the state employee's place of employment is located; or
  - 9.5.1.2. a five-mile radius of the state employee's place of employment, if the state employee's place of employment is located within an unincorporated area; and
- 9.5.2. any area completely surrounded by the incorporated municipality in which the state employee's place of employment is located.

9.6. "Disability" means a physical or mental impairment of an individual that substantially limits one or more major life activities of the individual.

9.7. "Duty point" means the destination, other than a place of employment, to which a state employee travels to conduct official state business. If the destination is outside the employee's designated headquarters, the duty point is:

- 9.7.1. the incorporated municipality in which the destination is located; or
- 9.7.2. the area within a five-mile radius of the destination if the destination is located in an unincorporated area.

9.8. "Incidental expense" means an expense incurred while traveling on official state business. The term includes a mandatory insurance or service charge and an applicable tax. The term does not include:

- 9.8.1. a meal, lodging, or transportation expense, including a tax on a meal;
- 9.8.2. a personal expense;
- 9.8.3. an expense that a person would incur regardless of whether the person is traveling on official state business; or
- 9.8.4. a tip or gratuity.

9.9. "Lease" means a contract with a term of at least one month that gives the lessee possession and use of property or equipment while the lessor retains ownership of the property or equipment.

9.10. "Place of employment" means the office or other location at which a state employee most frequently conducts official state business.

9.11. "Prospective state employee" means an individual that a state agency considers for employment with the agency. The term includes a state employee of a state agency who is considered for employment by another state agency.

9.12. "Receipt" means the tangible or electronically stored version of an invoice, ticket, bill, document, or other item that the comptroller accepts as proof that a travel expense has been incurred by a state employee.

9.13. "Rented or public conveyance" means a motor vehicle, train, aircraft, boat, or bicycle that a state employee rents or pays a fare to use for a period of less than one month.

9.14. "Travel expense" means a meal, lodging, transportation, or incidental expense.

Related Procedures:

Relevant Forms/Documents: Request to Travel; Travel Voucher; Request to Increase Maximum Lodging Rate; Hotel Occupancy Tax Exemption Certificate

Relevant TSUS Policies/Forms/Documents: TSUS Rules & Regulation Chapter III, Section 6.(10)

Relevant Statutes: Texas Government Code Chapter 660; Texas Education Code 51.009

Relevant SACSCOC Standards:

Document History:
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