

SMU Tax Policies

Subject: Travel Reimbursement – Meals and Lodging

Effective Date: 08/22/07

Revision Date: 08/23/17

Tax Policy: 3.2

The University will reimburse for reasonable and necessary expenses when traveling on business for actual meals and lodging. Each department has established approval processes and reimbursement will **not** be made unless the appropriate approval is on the request. Substantiation for business expenses (original receipts, logs, etc.) for lodging, meals, and incidental expenses incurred while traveling is required for reimbursement. (See [University Policy 3.7](#))

All employees and students must substantiate their business travel with department approval, receipts, logs, etc. through Concur. (See [SMU Travel](#) page)

Employees must return any excess reimbursements (such as travel advances) within 30 days after travel has ended. Advance allowances that are not settled within 120 days after business travel will be subject to being reported as income.

The University is exempt from Texas state hotel occupancy tax. The University's hotel occupancy tax exemption can only be used for SMU business travel, and not for personal purposes. (See [Tax Compliance Forms](#) page for the certificate)

The University reimburses employees for actual expenses incurred during travel unless some other reimbursement alternative such as per diem allowances has been approved by the President, vice-president, athletic director, dean, or their designees.

An employee can elect to be reimbursed a per diem allowance instead of actual expenses for business travel. The University has adopted the per diem allowances in accordance with the IRS guidelines and the per diem method must be used for the entire trip. (See [University Policy 3.7](#))

Personal travel

When business travel is combined with personal travel, the University will only reimburse the business portion of the travel.