

POLICY

Ocean County College sponsors employee travel based on employee adherence to the following regulations:

1. All overnight travel must be approved in advance by the employee's supervisor, area Vice President, Vice President of Finance, and the President via the Travel Authorization form (TA). The form should be completed at least 3 weeks in advance of the trip.
2. The trip is approved when the traveler receives a TA number on a copy of the form with all the above signatures in place.
3. Local travel (no overnight stay) must be approved in advance at the department level and does not require authorization from the Vice President of Finance or President.
4. Reimbursement for expenses incurred for overnight and local travel and expenses incurred while conducting official College business will be made in accordance with the procedure to this policy.
5. Those seeking reimbursement for business/travel expenses are expected to exercise prudent judgment in incurring expenses. The College may disallow or reduce expenses deemed unnecessary or excessive, any expenses not properly approved in advance, and any expenses not in compliance with the Travel and Expense Reimbursement Procedures.

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PROCEDURE

The College will reimburse reasonable and necessary business and travel expenses for employees, Board Members, and others who incur expenses on behalf of Ocean County College. Expenses incurred by the President will be reimbursed according to a separate procedure specific to the President's unique responsibilities. Those seeking reimbursement for business/travel expenses are expected to exercise prudent judgment when incurring expenses. The College may disallow or reduce expenses deemed unnecessary or excessive.

1. Compliance

Compliance with this regulation is the responsibility of the individual and his/her supervisor. The College reserves the right to deny any expenses submitted for reimbursement that are not in compliance with this regulation. Expenses funded by restricted grant programs may be subject to alternate guidelines.

2. Non-College Employees

Non-College personnel, including volunteers, are not authorized to travel on College business and are not covered by the College insurance policy. Members of the Board of Trustees are authorized to travel on College business.

3. Overnight Travel & Request for Travel Authorization

All overnight travel must be approved in advance via a Travel Authorization form (TA). TA forms should be prepared as far in advance as practical but no later than three weeks prior to the trip. The employee's Supervisor, Division Vice President, Vice President of Finance, and the President must approve the TA prior to the trip. The account number(s) to be charged and the total cost of the trip must be estimated on the form. A separate TA is required for each College traveler and must include documentation justifying the travel (i.e. conference agenda, workshop descriptions). Employees traveling to the same conference or event are expected to travel together when practical to avoid duplicating mileage and parking fees.

If an employee chooses to travel alone for personal reasons, the expenses may not be fully reimbursed. The TA must be completed prior to the trip for all overnight travel even if no travel arrangements are needed. TA forms are not to be used for local and non-overnight trips.

The Accounting Office will keep a TA log and assign a number to each approved TA. This number along with a copy of the fully executed form will be provided to the traveler upon final approval. No non-refundable travel arrangements should be made prior to the traveler's receipt of the approved TA. The trip is approved only upon receipt of the fully executed form. The employee will be responsible for any expenses incurred for unauthorized travel or reservations.

4. Sponsored or Employee Paid Travel

If employees voluntarily travel on College business at their own expense, using Benefit Option Plan (BOP) funds, or are sponsored by a 3rd party agency, an approved TA is required. This confirms that the employee is on College business for attendance and insurance purposes. If employees are traveling partially or completely at their own expense, this must be noted on the TA form.

Sponsorships from vendors with whom the College does actual or potential business will not be accepted. Sponsorships from non-profit, professional, or educational organizations may be accepted with the approval of the area Vice President and must be disclosed on the TA.

5. Conference Registration Fees

Registration fees will be paid directly by the College via a properly approved Memo Invoice form. The traveler may submit the memo invoice and completed registration form to the Accounting Office for payment at the same time the Travel Authorization is submitted.

6. Transportation

Airline travel will be reimbursed at coach fares only. Reservations must be made by the traveler at least two weeks in advance in order to secure a reasonable fare. If the traveler chooses to travel by private automobile or train for personal reasons, the reimbursement may not exceed the cost of an airline ticket for the same trip. Travel by private automobile will be reimbursed at the mileage allowance rate prescribed by Internal Revenue Service regulations. Mileage claimed should be the actual mileage traveled on the most direct route. If the traveler chooses an alternative route for personal convenience, reimbursement will be based on the shorter route. A rental automobile may only be used if justified and authorized in advance on the TA. Airline reservations may be made by the College using the College credit card or travelers may make their own arrangements using their personal credit card and be reimbursed for the trip. The College will reimburse fees for one checked bag per flight.

7. Travel To & From the Airport

The use of shuttle services to and from the airport is encouraged. The use of private passenger limousine/car service is not permitted. Should a traveler need to park a personal vehicle at the airport, parking will be reimbursed at long term parking rates only. In most cases the traveler will be expected to use public transportation or taxicabs (receipt required) for local transportation at the point of destination.

8. Lodging

The traveler will make lodging arrangements using a personal credit card in advance. The College credit card may be used under certain circumstances to make lodging arrangements if authorized by the Vice President of Finance. Employees are expected to use prudent judgment when selecting lodging and rates/expenses deemed unreasonable will not be reimbursed. An itemized hotel receipt must be included with the Travel Expense Voucher for any reimbursement.

The College will pay only necessary lodging expenses and the traveler is responsible for any additional charges. Employees are expected to use internet services provided by the hotel or conference in public areas and internet fees charged to individual rooms will be reimbursed only if authorized in advance by the President. When a traveler shares lodging with a non-College traveler (spouse, family member, etc.) the traveler will be reimbursed at the single rate of occupancy. The College will not pay extra nights spent at the hotel at the employee's personal preference. However, if an extra night's stay reduces the overall cost of the travel (e.g. Saturday night) it will be reimbursed.

9. Meals & Gratuities While Traveling

The cost of meals including gratuities while traveling overnight on OCC business will be reimbursed at no more than \$40 per full day of travel. In order to simplify the reimbursement process, the traveler will receive \$40 for each full day of travel and \$25 for each partial day of travel. A full day of travel is defined as travel commencing prior to noon and ending after 6:00 pm. A partial day is defined as travel commencing after noon or ending before 6:00 pm. Receipts are not required for meals while on overnight trips.

When meals are included in the conference fee, no meal allowance will be provided. If a conference provides one or two meals, the traveler will receive \$25 per day.

Travelers will not be reimbursed for meals paid on behalf of business associates who are not College employees unless approved by the President. Reimbursement for travel companions who are not OCC employees is not permitted.

10. Miscellaneous Expenses

Expenses will be allowed for toll roads and toll bridges without receipts. Receipts will be requested if the reimbursement request appears inaccurate or excessive. Parking expenses will be reimbursed upon submission of receipt and will not be paid in advance by the College.

11. Travel Expense Voucher

The expenses incurred for overnight travel must be reported and claimed upon completion of the trip via the Travel Expense Voucher. The traveler and the traveler's supervisor must sign this voucher. These signatures certify accuracy and legitimacy of all claims on the voucher and indicate compliance with the procedure. Original documentation with proof of payment for reimbursable expenses must accompany the submission. The Accounting Department will return non-compliant vouchers to the area Vice President for revision.

Only one traveler's expenses will be accepted per form. A Travel Expense Report must be completed for each trip and submitted no later than thirty (30) days after the return date. No new TA will be approved for a traveler who has not submitted a travel expense report for a past trip.

12. Mileage and Local Travel

Travel authorization forms are not required for local and non-overnight travel. The employee's supervisor must approve local and non-overnight travel in advance and the process for obtaining authorization to travel locally is determined by the Division Vice President. Authorization from the Vice President of Finance and President is not required.

All one-day travel on official College business, where the staff member uses his/her personal automobile, must be reported on the Monthly Mileage and Expense Voucher. The mileage rate for the use of a privately owned automobile while on College business will be equivalent to the Internal Revenue Service mileage rates. The report should include the address of the destination as well as the justification for travel. The report must be approved by the traveler's supervisor and received by the Accounting Department within 30 days after the end of the month in which the expense occurred. Expenses incurred during the month of June must be submitted for reimbursement no later than July 7.

Reimbursement for tolls is allowable without receipts. Receipts will be requested only if the reimbursement request appears inaccurate or excessive. Receipts are required for parking reimbursement. Mileage claimed for travel from the traveler's regular work location should be the actual mileage traveled on the most direct route. If the traveler chooses an alternative route for personal convenience, the mileage submitted should be based on an Official Highway Map or internet map service. Unreasonable mileage claims will be reduced accordingly. Employees scheduled to work/teach at off-campus site(s) will not be eligible for reimbursement of their commuting costs.

At times it is more convenient for the employee to travel from home rather than begin travel at his/her regular work location. Reimbursement will be provided for the total mileage less the mileage normally incurred for commutation. If total mileage traveled is less than the mileage normally traveled from home to his/her regular work location, no request for mileage reimbursement should be submitted.

The College has established standard mileage for round-trip travel to several frequent destinations from the main campus as follows:

Main Campus to/from:

Southern Education Center (SEC)	52 miles
Brookdale Community College	60 miles
Georgian Court College	21 miles
Mercer Community College	82 miles
Middlesex County College	98 miles
Newark Liberty International Airport	120 miles
Philadelphia International Airport	164 miles
Rutgers, State University (New Brunswick)	100 miles

Employees on official College business driving personally owned automobiles must be properly licensed and adequately protected by personal liability and property damage insurance at their own expense. The College will not reimburse fines incurred for parking or traffic violations for personal or College vehicles.

13. College Owned Vehicles

When available, College owned vehicles may be used for official College business. Personal use of College vehicles is not permitted.

14. Meals Outside the Overnight Trip

Reimbursement or allowances for meals or refreshments incurred during daily travel and on-campus meetings are not normally permitted unless in accordance with the rules and rates set forth by collective bargaining agreements. Receipts must support expenses. If a meal is provided directly by the College to the employee, the employee is not entitled to an allowance for that meal.

Reimbursement or direct payment by the College for meals or refreshments, including on-campus food service catering, not incurred in connection with overnight travel or a collective bargaining agreement are generally not permitted. Exceptions must be approved by the Division Vice President and President prior to the expenditure. Receipts must be submitted.

Certain employees designated by the President may incur reimbursable meal expenses while promoting the College, meeting with potential donors and other activities related to institutional development. These expenses will be submitted with receipts on a Monthly Mileage and Expense Voucher along with documentation detailing the attendees and the nature of the business discussed. The area Vice President and President must approve the reimbursement prior to submission to the Accounting Office.

15. Other Expenses

Employees are not permitted to use personal funds to procure items or services on behalf of the College. Unauthorized purchases will not be reimbursed. Exceptions may be made only when authorized in advance by the area Vice President and the Vice President of Finance. Fees for attendance at luncheons, dinners, and other events associated with outside organizations are not normally reimbursable. Other expenses not enumerated above will be considered for reimbursement on a case by case basis. Appropriate justification, receipts and approval by the area Vice President and Vice President of Finance are required for all such reimbursements.

16. NON-REIMBURSABLE EXPENSES

Following is a list of expenses considered to be personal in nature and, therefore, not reimbursable as business expenses. This list is not all-inclusive; other, similar expenses may be deemed non-reimbursable.

- Any expenses incurred on behalf of a spouse or travel companion.
- Credit card fees or interest charges.
- Various items such as gum, snacks, newspapers, and beverages not associated with a meal.
- Personal care items/services such as hair cuts, laundry, toiletries, medicines, health spa fees, etc.
- Entertainment such as movies or sightseeing tours (tours directly applicable to the purpose of the trip may be reimbursed if documentation is provided).
- Gifts for employees or business associates.
- Alcoholic beverages
- Traffic and parking tickets.
- Unnecessary additional nights of accommodation.
- Theft, loss or damage to personal effects.
- Cost of unauthorized travel or cancellation fees.
- Refreshments for employee meetings or office parties.
- Travel expenses related to collective-bargaining unit activities.
- The cost of attending celebratory events such as retirement parties for fellow employees or other business associates.

Note: All referenced forms are available for download from the OCC website.

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