

Employees are encouraged to keep abreast of the latest trends in education, to grow professionally, and to work cooperatively with other professionals both inside and outside the College District. Employees may take professional trips from time to time to attend workshops, professional conferences, training, and other job-related events.

Reimbursement for **local travel** will be entered into Workday as an **Expense** report. When creating the Expense Report, Local Travel should be selected as the Business Purpose. Complete the [local travel form](#) and attach to the report before submission. See instructions and procedures for claiming reimbursement for local travel - [Local travel procedures](#).

All employees are responsible for reviewing travel guidelines prior to travel. It is highly recommended employees attend a Workday Spend Authorization class prior to traveling and an Expense Report class subsequent to traveling.

Guiding principles

- a. Support the productivity and safety of those traveling on Collin College business.
- b. Ensure compliance with internal and external procedures and policies.
- c. Use Collin College resources wisely.

A. General travel considerations

1. Employees should neither gain nor lose personal funds as a result of business travel on behalf of Collin College. When a third party is paying for a portion of travel expenses, then it should be disclosed on the expense report.
2. **Necessary approvals** must be obtained **prior** to travel by submitting a Spend Authorization prior to incurring any travel expenses. Employee may be required to reimburse college for any unauthorized travel.
3. Book airline tickets a minimum of fourteen (14) days in advance in order to obtain reasonably priced tickets and optimal travel times.
4. Adequate budget must exist to cover travel expenses.
5. Trip Cancellation - In the event of inclement weather or other extenuating circumstances beyond the employee's control, it is the **employee's responsibility** to obtain credits and/or refunds for any advance purchases made for travel and to notify Accounts Payable at acctspaytravel@collin.edu of anticipated credits. This includes registration, hotel, and airfare.
6. Collin College encourages employees who travel to obtain a T-Card. This credit card is to be used for all travel expenses, including registration. If a T-Card is not desired, then a personal credit card may be used for travel expenses. Reimbursement for charges on a personal credit card will not occur until after travel has been completed and expense report fully approved. To apply for a T-Card click [here](#).

7. T-Cards should be used to book airfare and hotel accommodations **directly** through the airline or hotel. **Travel or Booking agencies, such as Expedia, Priceline, or Travelocity, are not permitted.**

B. Definitions

1. **Appropriate Expense**

An expense that is suitable or fitting for a particular valid business purpose.

2. **Allowable Expense**

A necessary, reasonable, and appropriate expense incurred for the primary benefit of Collin College and/or by the terms of federally or privately sponsored agreements.

3. **Reasonable Expense**

An expense that is ordinary and reflects a **prudent** decision to incur the expense on behalf of Collin College. It should be neither extreme nor excessive. It is important for the employee traveling on behalf of the college to be a responsible steward of public funds used for this purpose.

4. **Necessary Expense**

Minimum purchase and service required to achieve a particular business objective.

5. **Business Travel**

Travel on behalf of Collin College for the purpose of attending either professional development opportunities, training, meetings or to conduct business on behalf of and for the benefit of Collin College.

6. **Receipts**

These are detailed or itemized documents issued by the vendor or service provider to describe and substantiate the business transaction. Itemized receipts are required for all expenses except per diem when completing the expense report. Scanned or electronic receipts are acceptable forms of documentation on the Expense Report.

7. **Per Diem**

Per Diem is an allowance determined by the U.S. government to cover meals and incidentals while traveling for business purposes. Per Diem amounts are published by the General Services Administration (Domestic) and are specific to major cities. A deduction from the daily per diem is made for meals provided at a conference or business meeting. Seventy-five (75%) of the daily per diem allowance is provided on the first and last days of travel. Per Diem is reimbursed on the expense report AFTER the trip has occurred. **Do not use Business Meals expense for Per Diem.**

8. **Business Meals**

Business Meals expense item should only be used when an employee is expensing meals paid for the employee and non-employees during a business meeting. A valid business purpose for the meal, and names of non-employees (attendees) must be provided when submitting an Expense Report for this expense type. **Preapproval should be obtained prior to incurring this expense.**

9. **T-Card**

T-Cards are credit cards issued to a college employee to use when purchasing items or traveling for the college. T-Cards can be used by employees for all travel expenses – registration, airfare, hotel, car rental, and transportation.

Two types of reports are submitted with T-Card charges:

- **Non-travel reconciliation report** – Business Purpose is Non-Travel/T-Card. These reports are completed monthly, include non-travel charges only, and must include a copy of the JP Morgan credit card statement. Credit card statements are released on the 26th of each month. T-Card reconciliation reports should be created on/after the 1st of the following month and are to be submitted by the 10th.

EXCEPTION – The last JP Morgan statement of the fiscal year, dated August 26th, must have a report dated August 31st or before. If the report is not dated August 31st or before, then the credit card transactions will be charged to the wrong fiscal year.

- **Travel reports** – Business Purpose is Professional Development or COE. These reports are submitted only after travel has occurred, all credit card charges have feed into Workday, and does not require the JP Morgan credit card statement.

C. Travel Expenses

1. Approval and Deadlines

All travel requires approval, even when travel expenses are paid by a third party or there are no expenses incurred. Neither a Spend Authorization nor Expense Report are required if travel expenses are Zero (\$0.0) dollars. Approvals by the employee's supervisor and cost center manager should be completed in a timely manner (within 24-36 hours) since the price of airline tickets can fluctuate from one day to the next. Employees should complete and submit an expense report within 10 business days after returning from travel. In some cases, credit card charges/credits may take longer to feed into Workday. The expense report should not be submitted until all credit card charges and credits have fed into Workday and are added to report.

All travel reimbursements to employees are made with an EFT transaction to the employee's bank account selected by the employee for reimbursements. It is the employee's responsibility to ensure Business Administrative Services has correct bank routing and account information. Funds may be deducted from the traveler's salary due to over payment by the college or improper use of funds.

2. Registration

Conference registrations should be paid using the employee's assigned T-Card. The employee should select the lowest cost registration meeting their requirements at the conference. If an association membership is being offered for a lower registration fee, select the lowest cost option:

- registration fee for non-member, or
- member registration fee + association fee

In the event credit card payments are not accepted, a Supplier Invoice Request should be submitted for payment. A copy of the Spend Authorization will need to be attached to the Supplier Invoice Request.

3. Mode of Transportation

The mode of transportation (personal vehicle, rental car, airfare) used by the employee for professional travel should be the one which provides the **LOWEST TOTAL** cost to the District. Additional days of leave, lodging, meals and substitute pay resulting from additional time for travel by vehicle must be considered when computing cost estimates. The additional cost of airport parking, baggage fees, and transportation to and from the airport can be considered when computing the cost of flying. The exception to the rule is travel within Texas. It is at the traveler's discretion to fly or drive when traveling within Texas, since the total cost to fly versus drive are usually not significantly different.

a. Airfare

Airfare may be purchased with the employee's T-Card or personal credit card. The airfare selected must be the most economical for the District.

1. Advance Ticket Purchase: Every effort must be made to book airline tickets a minimum of fourteen (14) days prior to travel. Allow a reasonable amount of time for the Spend Authorization to be approved when determining the 14-day window. After receiving approval for travel, the employee should purchase their tickets as soon as possible to secure the lowest fare.
2. Lowest fare: Employees should select the lowest airfare meeting his/her scheduled requirements. Select the lowest fare that allows and includes seat assignments and one bag. The College does not pay for seat upgrades that have an additional charge. This includes, but is not limited to, Early Bird, Main Cabin Extra, Premium Cabin, and First Class. Travel insurance is not reimbursable.
3. Special Accommodations: Any special accommodation request must be authorized by HR prior to travel. The approval from HR needs to be attached to the Spend Authorization before submission.
4. Exchange Tickets: Once airfare has been issued and paid, the District does not allow changes to a ticket resulting in additional costs. Changes in flight arrangements made at the traveler's convenience which results in additional charges must be paid by the employee. (Exceptions are allowed in cases of inclement weather or medical emergency for the employee or the employee's immediate family.)
5. Trip Cancellation: In the event an employee has already booked travel and must cancel a trip due to circumstances outside the employee's control, the employee should notify Accounts Payable of the cancelled trip. An expense report must be submitted expensing charges made on the T-Card. It is the responsibility of the employee to cancel and obtain credits for all reservations made, including registration, airfare, hotel, etc. An advantage for booking Southwest Airlines, Wanna Get Away Plus tickets, is the amount of the ticket is credited back to the employee and the credit can be transferred to another Collin College employee.
6. Baggage – Collin College allows one checked bag charge for each travel direction.
7. WiFi- Reimbursement for WiFi while in flight is not permitted.
8. SWA Platform- Southwest Airlines Platform provides additional benefits for the college when booking travel. Some of these include discount flights, no booking fees for group travel, free cancellations, etc.

b. Driving

See Mode of Transportation above for criteria used in determining the most economical mode of travel. It is at the traveler's discretion to fly or drive when traveling **within Texas**, since the total cost to fly versus drive are typically not significantly different.

c. Ground Transportation

The type of transportation used should be selected based on the most economical to Collin College. Ground Transportation includes shuttle, taxi, Uber, Lift, bus, and rental car.

d. Car Rental

1. Car rental can be paid for with an employee's T-Card or personal credit card. Collin College will pay for a full-size or smaller rental vehicle. If an employee chooses to rent a larger vehicle, the additional cost beyond that of a full-size vehicle will be at the employee's expense.
2. If using a personal credit card, reimbursement will not occur until after travel is completed and the expense report has been fully approved.
3. When renting a car, **do not direct bill Collin College**. Pay with T-card or personal card.

4. **When renting a vehicle in Texas, a [Car Rental Tax Exempt Form](#) must be presented to the rental agency.**
5. Prior to returning the rental car, employees need to fill the gas tank.
6. Additional insurance should **not** be purchased.
7. The preferred car rental agency is **Enterprise/National**. Car rental agency information can be found in Workday under the Spend Authorization.
8. Cars may be rented through the Southwest Airlines Platform (SWAP). The Collin College discount code is imbedded into the platform and will display discounted rental prices for Enterprise and National. Airfare does not need to be booked to rental a car with SWAP.

4. Hotel / AirBnB / Room rentals / Apartment rentals

When traveling within Texas, A [Texas Hotel Occupancy Tax Exemption Certificate](#) must be given to the hotel. Employees will not be reimbursed for state hotel occupancy taxes within Texas.

- a. Room and taxes will be paid by employee's T-Card or personal credit card. (This excludes Texas hotel occupancy tax.)
- b. Employees should select the conference hotel or the most economically priced lodging closest to the conference/meeting location. Discounted rooms may be found at Fedrooms.com once a profile has been set up.
 1. AirB&B or other room/apartment rentals are only reimbursable if it makes financial sense. Before booking, request quote from nearby hotel and compare pricing. Be aware of cleaning and service fees. These add up quickly and can exceed the cost of a hotel.
 2. To be reimbursed for AirB&Bs or other room rentals, a receipt with the rate per night and other fees need to be on the receipt. The booking confirmation is NOT sufficient.
 3. If a rental is chosen over a hotel room, even though it is not less expensive, the college will reimburse up to the hotel rate with a quote from nearby hotel.
- c. Allowable incidental charges incurred as part of a hotel bill may include parking and internet when used for business purposes.
- d. Personal expenses will not be reimbursed by Collin College and should not be charged to the T-Card. Personal expenses may include room service, movie rentals, and alcohol. If a personal expense is charged to the traveler's T-Card, the employee will be required to reimburse the College by marking the expense as personal on the expense report. The amount will be deducted from any amount due to the employee once travel is completed and the Expense Report fully approved. If the amount for personal expenses is greater than the amount owed to the employee, the amount owed to the College will be deducted from the employee's next paycheck.
- e. Lodging will not be provided for employees attending seminars in the Dallas/Ft. Worth metroplex **without prior VP approval**. Justification for staying at a local hotel must be provided.
- f. Utilize internet (Wi-Fi) typically provided during conference. Avoid paying for internet service unless required for performing job remotely.

5. Meals

- a. Local travel: Employees attending conferences or meetings in the DFW metroplex are eligible to receive per diem for lunch, provided it is not included as part of the meeting or conference. Reimbursements for breakfast and dinner are not allowed for local conferences, unless the employee is staying overnight.

- b. Out-of-Town travel: Per diem is automatically calculated in WorkDay based on the dates of travel and destination city. Eligible meals on days of travel are based upon the US GSA rates. 75% of the daily rate is eligible on the first and last day of travel.

- **EFFECTIVE 9/1/2023 – DO NOT use T-Cards for meal purchases.**
- Meals will be reimbursed on the expense report AFTER the trip has occurred.

6. Personal Mileage

Reimbursement for mileage is based on the current IRS mileage rates. When claiming personal mileage for out of town travel, the employee's home campus address will be utilized for the beginning and ending addresses. (**Do not use personal home address.**) Select Travel – Mileage as the Business Purpose. Two entries will be made on the report – one for miles **TO** the conference and one for miles **FROM** the conference. iCollin Virtual College employees should use the CHEC Campus as home campus address.

- a. **Gasoline:** The price of gasoline is factored into the mileage reimbursement rate and is therefore not an allowable expense when traveling by personal vehicle.
- b. **Tolls:** All tolls incurred while traveling for business are allowable expenses. Receipts are required when requesting reimbursement. An employee can access their North Texas Tollway Authority account online, download toll charges to a PDF, and attach the documentation to the expense report.
- c. **Parking:** Parking expenses incurred for business purposes are allowable expenses to be reimbursed with proper documentation.

D. Council on Excellence (COE)

Council on Excellence is a group of elected full-time faculty. One of COE's responsibilities is to oversee the distribution of professional development and travel funds for full-time faculty. Faculty should follow the professional travel procedures described in this document, as well as procedures unique to COE. Requirements for COE are described below.

1. Faculty should be familiar with [COE guidelines](#).
2. A completed [COE Justification for Travel Form](#) is required and must be attached to the employee's Spend Authorization.
3. The Spend Authorization should contain **all estimated** expenses for the trip. As part of the approval, a budget will be provided to the traveler by COE.
4. Approval for COE travel routes through the following approval path:
 - Employee's manager/direct supervisor
 - COE President
 - COE Treasurer
 - Senior Vice President of Campus Operations
5. Any expense amount exceeding the COE approved budget, will need to be covered by the Department or the traveler. A comment needs to be added to the Spend Authorization regarding who accepts

responsibility. The overage will be itemized to the employee's cost center or marked personal.

E. External Grants and Innovation Challenge Grants

Travel funded by external grants should follow the strictest guidelines.

1. Faculty using Grant funds should be familiar with [Grant Guidelines](#).
2. Professional travel approved to be charged to an external grant or an innovation challenge grant, will follow the travel policies for Collin College or the Grant Agency, whichever is more stringent.

**Send all travel questions
to:**

acctspaytravel@collin.edu

Updated 3/4/24