

Messiah College Travel Policy

General Comments. Travel is an essential and integral part of Messiah College's activities. The basic policy governing travel expense reimbursement at Messiah College is that an individual traveling for College-related purposes, assuming a reasonable level of comfort and convenience, should neither gain nor lose personal funds. The traveler should try to keep College expenses to a minimum and use departmental budgets as cost effectively as possible. Where itineraries are altered to accommodate personal affairs, the traveler is expected to pay any additional costs incurred. The College will reimburse individuals for actual and reasonable expenses incurred for transportation, domestic travel, international travel, meals, lodging and other necessary travel expenses. Original receipts must support these expenses.

Authorization. Account directors responsible for departments where employees will charge expenses must approve cash advances, travel reimbursements, and Visa Purchasing Card memo statements.

Travel Expenses. It is often necessary for College personnel to travel away from home for several days or sometimes weeks for College-related purposes. To cover anticipated out-of-pocket expenses while traveling, employees may charge expenses to his or her Messiah College Visa Purchasing Card or obtain a cash advance from the College before the trip. Travelers who have been issued a Visa Purchasing Card should use it for hotel, restaurant, rental car and other expenses whenever possible. If an employee must use personal funds, the College will reimburse the traveler for all reasonable expenses upon presentation of receipts, and a completed and approved "Claim for Reimbursement of Expenses" report.

When circumstances make it necessary to obtain a cash advance, the guidelines and procedures outlined below are intended to establish a minimum administrative procedure for documenting the use of funds advanced and spent in conducting College business. Please contact the Business Office for special instructions if unusual circumstances arise which may require exception to this policy.

Cash Advances. Employees of the College needing immediate cash for College-related purposes should fill out a "Cash Advance Request" which can be obtained from their respective supervisor or at the Business Office counter. The account director's signature will indicate approval of the advance. Requests without an approved signature will be denied. The individual will then take the signed, completed form to the Business Office counter for the cash advance. Repayment of cash advances can be made in cash at the counter or by taking credit on a "Claim for Reimbursement of Expenses" report. If not repaid within **30 days**, the balance will **automatically** be deducted from that individual's next pay deposit. The Business Office counter is open Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Cash advances are not processed more than one week before the travel expense is expected to be incurred.

All unused cash advances must be returned to the Business Office counter within **30 days** of the completion of a trip. The completed travel report and the appropriate accounting should accompany the funds.

New cash advances are not made to an employee for whom reports and unused funds are overdue. Any person who fails to settle a cash advance may not receive any future cash advances. Further, according to the Internal Revenue Code, the amount of any unsettled cash advance is considered taxable income to the employee, and will be added to his or her W-2 form at the end of the calendar year. The College reserves the right to deduct from the traveler's pay deposit all travel amounts owed which have not been reconciled on a "Claim for Reimbursement of Expenses" report.

Travel Reimbursement. Claim for Reimbursement of Expenses" reports, completed and properly authorized as described above, must be presented to Accounts Payable to receive reimbursement. Supporting documentation, e.g., receipts, must accompany the report. Receipts **must** be provided for all transactions.

The College reimburses the travel costs of students and non employees (such as job applicants, lecturers, consultants and other individuals) when required by authorized contractual agreement or where approval is given in advance by a account director or senior administrator.

Tips and gratuities should conform to normal standards and should not exceed 15 percent.

Employees whose travel is funded by a sponsored grant, contract, or faculty development monies must check before the trip with the Assistant to the Assistant Dean for Faculty Development to ensure that all College and granting agency procedures and restrictions are followed. Sponsors may impose procedures that are more restrictive.

All travel expense reimbursement requests are subject to audit.

The College does not provide reimbursements for the travel expenses of spouses or dependents who accompany College employees on official travel, except in unusual circumstances requiring their presence. The respective senior administrator must approve each such case in advance. If reimbursed by the College, the reimbursed amount will be taxable compensation to the employee and will be included in the employees W-2 as gross wages.

Air Travel

Class of Travel. Coach class should be used unless exceptional circumstances exist. Travel Time Travel Agency has been instructed to provide fares consistent with this guideline. The cost of any deviation from the original itinerary for personal reasons is the traveler's personal responsibility. This includes student round-trip ticket exchanges while traveling abroad as discussed below.

Students who are traveling abroad must choose from two possible return dates. After the reservation is made and confirmed, any student-initiated change in the return date and associated costs are the student's responsibility.

Purchase of Domestic Tickets. All tickets for College domestic travel must be purchased through Messiah College's official travel agency, **Travel Time Travel Agency, Inc.**

Purchase of International Tickets. Tickets for College international travel may be purchased through either Travel Time Travel Agency, Inc. or MTS Travel, Inc.

Frequent Flier Program. Messiah College recognizes that the ownership of accumulated mileage in various frequent flier programs is important to travelers. Therefore, frequent flier miles that are earned while traveling on College-related travel are the property of the traveler, not the College.

Fares. The lowest applicable airfare to the destination should be purchased by the traveler regardless of the airline whenever possible. From time to time the College may decide that the safety of an airline, or its long-term financial viability may be such as to make it inadvisable for the College's travelers to be flying on that airline. Separate memos will be issued to the travelers suggesting that the airline not be used. The travel agencies used by the College will also be notified so that they may make sure that such an airline is not used for our travelers.

The above exception aside, if a flight schedule allows the arrival of a traveler at the destination within two hours of his original request, and a price advantage of at least \$50, the traveler is encouraged to accept that flight.

Fare savings are often available by making travel reservations at least seven days in advance (cheaper fares are often available 14 and even 21 days before departure), and/or staying at a destination over a Saturday night could cut airfare by more than 50 percent. The College encourages travelers to make flight arrangements when the need for a trip is known. Additionally, if a traveler decides to stay at a destination over a Saturday night, the College will reimburse the additional lodging and meal expenses not to exceed the airfare savings. Fares may frequently be lower at alternate airports serving the same city. Some examples of alternate airports are:

- a. Lancaster
- b. Baltimore
- c. Philadelphia

For example, the traveler could fly from Harrisburg International to Chicago for \$700, or the traveler can drive to Baltimore and fly Southwest Airlines to Chicago for \$200. Using alternate airports can achieve significant airfare savings.

Travel Time will investigate fares into alternate airports to determine if lower fares exist. Travelers are encouraged to consider and accept reasonable alternatives. Additional ground transportation cost should be considered when making air arrangements.

Other Considerations. Flight insurance purchased by employees is not a reimbursable expense. The College's standard life insurance policy provides double benefits for accidental death.

Travelers should report lost or stolen tickets to Travel Time Travel Agency or MTS Travel, Inc. If tickets are lost while on a trip, contact the next scheduled airline. Most airlines will refund the full amount less a minimal processing fee.

Hotels

Hotel Chains. Messiah College travelers are expected to stay at mid-priced hotel chains on their College-related trips. The following are examples of acceptable hotel chains: Hyatt, Sheraton, Marriott, Hilton, Holiday Inn, Ramada, Raddison, Best Western, Hampton Inn. Specific authorization is required from the traveler's account director when staying at any of the following chains, which tend to be more high priced: Westin, Four Seasons, Ritz Carlton, Le Meridian. Of course, any hotels priced at comparable rates to the acceptable chains may be used and when hotels are reserved for a particular conference.

Corporate Rates. Travel Time has negotiated rates for Messiah College with all the major chains. All hotel reservations can therefore be made through Travel Time to receive the best rates. Travelers are encouraged to use Travel Time for all hotel reservations. However, the College realizes that travelers may need to make reservations on a direct basis. Travel Time can make hotel reservations for most conferences at the conference rate.

Special Corporate Rates. Specific hotels will allow for even better rates than their normal corporate rates depending on the volume of business we can generate at that specific hotel. Travel Time will be kept aware of any such programs that either Messiah College or Travel Time negotiate.

Room Types. A single room should be booked for all hotel stays. When two or more travelers are traveling together, each will be entitled to his or her own room.

College Vehicles. **NOTE:** All College activities should be accomplished in College-owned vehicles. However, the use of a personal vehicle is permitted if the traveling distance is within a 30-mile radius of the College. **Because of insurance restrictions, only Messiah College employees are permitted to drive College vehicles.**

The College maintains a fleet of cars and vans for official College use. Cost for use of these vehicles is back charged to appropriate departments. Vehicles will not be released without an account number for charge of the expenses. These vehicles are not available for personal use. Due

to insurance requirements, use of the vehicles is restricted to approved activities and College travel.

The person scheduling the vehicle is responsible for pickup and return of the vehicle in good condition and free from trash, debris, and personal belongings. Maintenance problems are to be reported immediately to the College receptionist. Vehicles should be returned with a no less than half a tank of gasoline.

A mileage report must be obtained from the College Receptionist at the start of a trip. Complete the "Driver Requirements" section, note the beginning mileage, and a signature by the driver is necessary in the designated area. It is the responsibility of the driver to pay directly for any driving and/or parking violations received from a law enforcement agency. At the conclusion of the trip, the form shall be completed and returned, along with the keys to the vehicle and any credit cards/slips, to the Receptionist Office. If a vehicle is returned at a time when the Receptionist is not on duty, the keys, mileage slip, and credit cards should be deposited in the drop-slot provided.

If reckless driving by the employee, as determined by the Department of Public Safety, results in an accident, the employee will be required to pay the deductible toward the repair costs of the vehicle. All vehicle accidents both on and off campus must be reported immediately to the Department of Public Safety, along with a completed accident report form located in the glove compartment of the respective vehicle.

The use of the College's fleet vehicles can be scheduled through the Receptionist (ext.3770 or 717-766-2511).

Car Rentals

Corporate Rates. Special car rental rates have been negotiated by Messiah College for Avis, Budget, Enterprise Rent-A-Car, Hertz, and National Car Rental Company.

College Rentals. All reservations for College-related car rentals can be made through Travel Time. They are familiar with our program, car rental companies and our policies. Additionally, Travel Time may have special rates with car rental companies. Messiah College travelers are encouraged to use Travel Time for all car rentals. However, the College realizes that travelers may need to make car rental arrangements on a direct basis. Car rental discount cards may be obtained from General Services if you intend to make car rental arrangements on a direct basis.

Personal Rentals. Automobile rental discount cards, for personal car rental purposes, may be obtained from Purchasing and Support Systems.

Rates. Despite all efforts to find the lowest rates at the time of making reservations, it is possible that lower rates may be available when you arrive at the airport. This may be due to specials a car rental company may have in effect due to an overabundance of cars at that location at that time. When renting a car, therefore, always ask the question, “Do you have a rate lower than the one quoted to me?” If they do, ask them to switch your rental to that rate.

Car Size. Travel Time has been instructed to reserve a mid-size/intermediate size car for you unless you tell them otherwise. Occasionally, rental companies offer special rates on luxury cars, making a luxury car less expensive than a mid-size/intermediate size car. In such cases, rental of the luxury car is permitted.

Rental Car Insurance. Only an authorized renter may drive rental vehicles. An authorized renter is the person signing the rental agreement, the traveler’s spouse or a person who has appeared at the time of the rental and has signed the vehicle rental agreement. All authorized renters and drivers warrant that they are at least 21 years of age or the minimum age required by the rental agency, and that they have a valid driver’s license.

a. Personal accident insurance (P.A.I.) is **not** reimbursable. Employees are covered under Workers’ Compensation and other Messiah College insurance when renting automobiles for business purposes.

b. Collision Damage Waiver

- Domestic Travel - Do not accept Collision Damage Waiver
- International Travel - Accept Collision Damage Waiver

Reimbursement. Gasoline tanks on rental cars should be full before the rental car is returned to the rental agency. The car rental agency will likely add a premium charge for filling the gas tank that is not returned full. Filling the rental car is a reimbursable expense. Reimbursement for vehicle rental expenses must be claimed on the “Claim for Reimbursement of Expenses” report. A copy of the receipt must be submitted with the expense report. If a Visa Purchasing Card has been issued to the traveler, it should be used.

Personal Automobile. NOTE: All College activities should be accomplished in College-owned vehicles, however, the use of a personal vehicle is permitted if the traveling distance is within a 30-mile radius of the college. The use of a personal vehicle is also permitted if no College vehicles are available. Before a personal automobile can be used, the traveler must contact the Receptionist to confirm the unavailability of College vehicles.

Parking. The following guidelines should be used to decide where you park your personal car at the airport. (NOTE: No College-owned vehicles should be left at the airport overnight.)

- a. Stay of less than a day: Short term parking
- b. Stay of up to three days: Long term parking
- c. Longer stays: Satellite parking

- d. When staying longer than seven days, the cost of an airport shuttle should be compared with the cost of driving and parking to decide the most economical means of transfers.

Reimbursement. Reimbursement for use of a personal car for College travel is at the mileage rate announced periodically by the Business Office, provided the total reimbursement does not exceed equivalent air coach fare or costs associated with other available transportation. Necessary extra costs for food and lodging while en route are not reimbursable if the traveler is reimbursed on a mileage basis in preference to air travel or other available transportation. This is consistent with IRS standards for an accountable travel plan. The mileage rate includes reimbursement for use of the vehicle including gas, depreciation, insurance, and other expenses of ownership and operation. Additional reimbursement is made for tolls and parking fees. The College **does not** reimburse employees for parking tickets, fines for moving violations, vehicle towing charges, or damages to the personal auto for any reason.

Frequent use of personal vehicles is not encouraged. No reimbursement is made for the cost of repairs to personal vehicles used for College travel. Further, it is the personal obligation of the owner of a vehicle being used for College travel to carry insurance for his or her protection and for the protection of any passengers. If the traveler is involved in an accident while using their personal vehicle for College-related purposes and is deemed not at fault, the College may reimburse the employee for the amount of their deductible.

Other Transportation

Airport Transfers. Transportation between the airport and your hotel should be by the most economical means available. The following is the order of preference in most cases:

- a. Complimentary hotel limo
- b. Public Transportation (e.g., bus, taxi)
- c. Public shared limo service

Rail Travel. Coach accommodations must be used for trips shorter than 150 miles. First-class accommodations may be used for longer trips or for overnight travel when necessary.

Telephone

College-Related Calls. Employees will be reimbursed for any reasonable College-related calls made while on a trip.

Personal Calls. When on a College-related trip, employees will be reimbursed for one long-distance personal call per day for a reasonable length of time. When calling long-distance numbers, use your College provided MCI calling card. If you do not have one, and travel for College-related purposes, request a card from purchasing & support Systems. *The Visa Purchasing Card should **not** be used for College-related or personal calls.

Miscellaneous Expenses. The following expenses will be reimbursed by the college to the traveler:

Gratuities. Tips and gratuities should be calculated at 15 percent and will be reimbursed by the College. Tips and gratuities for buffet style meals should be calculated at 10 percent and will be reimbursed by the College.

Dry Cleaning. Dry cleaning and other laundry expenses when the traveler is out of the office for more than seven consecutive days, or when travel days are added in emergencies while the traveler is already on the road.

Lost/Stolen Items

VISA Purchasing Card. Employees are required to immediately notify PNC BANK Client Services at **1-800-685-4039** and contact the Program Administrator or Secondary Program Administrator when a College credit card is lost or stolen.

Personal Items. Loss of luggage, clothing or other personal items is not the responsibility of the College. Each traveler is personally responsible for such items. Recovery of personal losses may be possible through homeowners' insurance. The College is not responsible for any of these items.