TRAVEL

Overview of the Employee and Student Travel Expense Reporting / Reimbursement Process

1. Review the State of Georgia Statewide Travel Regulations to determine what travel related expenses are allowed and what the allowable per diem reimbursements are based on destination.
2. Obtain pre-approval for the travel engagement.
3. Access PANTHERMART. Enter a Travel Authorization. (A Travel Authorization ultimately creates a PO (encumbrance). The encumbrance represents an estimate of what the travel engagement will likely cost. The actual cost may be less than or greater than the encumbrance).
4. The Employee or Student Traveler conducts business travel, for Georgia State University.
5. As soon as the Employee or Student returns from the travel engagement, they access the TRAVEL EXPENSE STATEMENT (TES) (Located on Disbursements webpage – under Forms). The TES is completed, and original receipts are attached (receipts are to be taped down, individually, onto an 8 ½” x 11” piece of paper).
6. The TES is to be completed within 30 days of the date of return. If not, a memo must be attached to the TES, explaining the late submission. A TES submitted more than 60 days after the return from travel may also be reported to Payroll (by the Office of Disbursements), so that Payroll may report the reimbursement amount on the employee’s W-2 form as taxable income, based on IRS regulation.
7. The Employee or Student also attaches an authorized memo to explain and provide approval for any expenditure that may exceed the allowable per diem. The memo should be signed by the Unit’s Chair.
8. The Employee or Student affixes their original signature (along with their printed name) to the TES. They also seek and secure the original signature (and the printed name) of the individual who is authorized to approve their TES.
9. The Employee or Student submits the completed TES to the unit’s Business Manager for review.
10. The Unit’s Business Manager checks the TES against the provisions outlined in the State of GA Statewide Travel Regulations. He / She ensures that the proper per diem amount is used, checks for receipts (where required), audits the TES to ensure that all reimbursements/expenditures are valid, checks the mileage reimbursement, ensures necessary memos are attached, indicates if the TES is the Final report, and marks the TES accordingly, ensures proper signature approval on the Form, and ensures that the PO number is listed on the top/front of the TES.
11. The TES is copied in full. The copy is retained in the department (important - note on the copy the date that the TES was sent to Disbursements). The Original TES with attachments is delivered to the Office of Disbursements, Suite 400A Sparks Hall.
12. Disbursements will process the TES for payment/reimbursement within 7-10 business days from the date the TES is stamped received by Disbursements.
Issues that Delay the Payment Process

- Failing to submit a Travel Authorization Form in PantherMart (to encumber the funds on a PO)
- Not including the PO number on the actual expense report
- Failing to submit Employee / Student Travel on a Travel Expense Statement (Do not submit Employee / Student Travel on a Payment Request Form)
- Attaching receipts that do not match up to the Travel Expense Report
- Failure to attach itemized receipts for airfare, car rentals and lodging
- Failure to attach a credit card or bank statement (to show proof of payment)
- Reporting Lodging Expense which exceeds the allowable per diem without also attaching a memo to explain/approve
- Failure to attach a memo to explain a TES which is submitted more than 30 days after the travel engagement
- Failing to abide by the GA Per Diem meal allowance (travelers often confuse this with the GSA per diem meal allowance)
- Scanning receipts and a TES into the Panther Mart system (this must never be done)
- Failure to attach a MapQuest Printout or to indicate an Odometer reading to support mileage
- Failing to secure necessary signature approval on the TES (Traveler’s signature and approver’s signature/s (and printed names) are mandatory)
- Failure to list the current address on the TES
- Inclusion of a registration or membership fee on TES (these expenses are to be reported on a Payment Request Form)
- Closing a PO in the system, prematurely
- Failure to record per diems and other expenses, by date

Issues that “further” delay the Payment Process

- When departments submit a “copy” of a TES statement (after sending the original TES)
- When travelers fail to allow for proper processing time before inquiring regarding payment (7-10 business days (after receipt) is required for payment processing)
- When departments call Disbursements to check on payments instead of using the accountspayable@gsu.edu email, which was set-up to receive such inquiries
- Failure to provide complete information when making an inquiry (i.e. PO #)
- When travelers claim business miles from the “home base” on a regular business day
- Failing to staple all receipts down onto 8 ½” x 11” paper so that Disbursements can quickly calculate charges

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