

Providing and Reconciling Travel Advances

University Standards: STN-U5348.10D

Effective Date: September 28, 2023

Authority

[POL-U5348.10](#) Traveling for University Business

See Also

[PRO-U5348.10A](#) Requesting Travel Authorization for Employees - Procedure
[PRO-U5348.10B](#) Reporting and Reconciling Travel Expenses and Advances - Procedure

Purpose of Standards

To describe Western's system of controls designed to appropriately review and approve travel in compliance with state rules.

Policy Owner

Policy Owner: Director of Business Services/Chief Procurement Officer
Responsible Office: Travel Services

Required Standards

1. Travel Advances May be Provided Under Certain Circumstances

Travel advances may be approved to defray reimbursable business travel costs and are:

- a) Limited to 80% of the estimated out of pocket amounts for lodging and meals. Exceptions for both the percentage and what advances can be used for may apply for group travel leaders.
- b) Distributed no more than 30 days before the start of travel, and
- c) Not considered as a loan to an employee.

Travel advances are prohibited for:

- a) Non-employees,
- b) Use of a privately-owned vehicle,
- c) Purchase of commercial air fares, and
- d) For a period that exceeds 90 days.

Any unauthorized use of a travel advance is to be considered as a misappropriation of state monies by the employee.

2. Traveler to Request Advance

The traveler is to request an advance through the University's official online travel system. After the advance is approved, the funds will be provided to the employee within 30 days of the travel departure date either via U.S. postal mail or direct deposit depending on how the employee is set up for Accounts Payable payments.

3. Traveler Must Follow Travel Advance Reporting Procedures After Trip Completed

By the 10th day of the month following the return date from traveling, the traveler must:

- a) Report expenses that were paid with the cash advance,
- b) Provide itemized receipts as required, and
- c) Repay any remaining amount of the travel advance that was not spent for University business.

These requirements must be done in accordance with the *Reporting and Reconciling Travel Expenses and Advances Procedure* ([PRO-U5348.10B](#)).

When a traveler fails to provide sufficient explanation for the spending of the cash advance and/or fails to repay any funds owed, the unpaid amount:

- a) Will become immediately due and payable with interest of 10% per annum for the date of default until paid in full, and
- b) Will be reported by the University as taxable income if traveler does not follow time requirements specified in the procedures.

4. Travel Services to Monitor Travel Advance Recovery Reports

Travel Services will monitor the Travel Advance Recovery Report on the first business day of the month to identify travelers with outstanding advances. Travel Services will contact:

- a) Each traveler to remind them to reconcile their advances before the tenth of the month, and
- b) The supervisor of any traveler with an unreconciled advances or unpaid balance past the tenth of the month.

5. Travelers to Promptly Respond to Travel Service Requests for Action

Travelers must promptly respond to and comply with instructions received from Travel Services in the effort to reconcile and collect unpaid advances. If unable to reconcile or pay any balance owed by the due date, travelers are to request an extension by notifying their supervisor and Travel Services in

writing before the tenth of the month following the return date from the trip. The written notice is to include the:

- a) Reason for not meeting the deadline,
- b) An action plan for completing the requirements, and
- c) Expected date of completion.

6. Financial Manager to Approve Extension Requests

Supervisors are to review the traveler's extension request with the appropriate Financial Manager. If an extension is not approved by the Financial Manager, Travel Services is to work with Payroll Services to calculate a payroll deduction in the amount of the unreconciled advance or unpaid balance with final approval by the AVP for Human Resources.

7. Traveler to Receive Notice of Adverse Action Prior to Processing Payroll Deduction

Travel Services will send the traveler and the traveler's supervisor notice of the pending payroll deduction. The traveler may consult with the supervisor and the AVP for Human Resources to appeal the pending action.