

Using Peer-to-Peer Property Rentals

University Standards: STN-U5348.10F

Effective: September 23, 2023

Authority

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

See Also

[PRO-U5348.10A](#) Requesting Travel Authorization for Employees - Procedures

Policy Owner and Responsible Department

Policy Owner: Director of Business Services/Chief Procurement Officer

Responsible Dept: Travel Services

Purpose of Standards

Western recognizes a need for University travelers to have the option to stay at peer-to-peer property rentals. Per [SAAM 10.30.10.b](#), state agencies are required to have policy with controls to mitigate risks associated with such lodging.

Definitions

Peer-to-Peer Property Rental

The process whereby a homeowner makes their home or a room within their home available for others to rent for short periods of time as an alternative form of accommodation. Such property rentals are commonly reserved through companies such as, but not limited to, Airbnb and VRBO.

Commercial Lodging Facility

A business, non-profit, or governmental entity that provides lodging accommodations for a fee. A commercial lodging facility other than a hotel must be supported by a tax ID number and must be available to the general public to qualify as commercial lodging. Peer-to-Peer Property Rentals such as Airbnb and VRBO are considered commercial lodging facilities. Reimbursement for lodging at a private residence not meeting the criteria above is not allowed.

Required Standards

1. Travelers Must Obtain a Travel Authorization Prior to Reserving a Peer-to-Peer Rental

Travel authorizations must be obtained by following the procedures for *Requesting Travel Authorization for Employees or Group Travel* (PRO-U5348.10A).

2. Travelers Must Research and Consider Potential Risks of the Property

Each traveler is responsible for reviewing and considering the property information for safety, accessibility, and fiscal risks prior to reserving a peer-to-peer rental for University business travel. The following, at a minimum, are questions that should be researched:

Potential Traveler Safety and Accessibility Risks

- a) Are there smoke detectors, carbon monoxide detectors, and is there fire escape access?
- b) Are there shared spaces with other guests and/or the hosts?
- c) Is there secure parking?
- d) Are there stairs and other accessibility barriers?
- e) Is there a pool and/or hot tub?
- f) Are there animals on the premises?

Potential Fiscal Risks

- a) Strict cancellation policies
- b) Mandatory/non-refundable fees

3. A University (WWU) Email Address Should be Used

Employees should use their wwuh.edu email address for the peer-to-peer rental reservations and all communications with the property manager.

3. All Travelers to be Included in Reservation

All University travelers must be included in the reservation when asked how many individuals (and names depending on the platform) will be occupying the space. Travelers' wwuh.edu email addresses shall be used when requested through reservations.

4. Lodging Per Diem Rates Include Fees

All travelers and budget authorities are to ensure compliance with per diem requirements which include all fees associated with peer-to-peer rentals such as, but not limited to, cleaning fees, additional guest fees, and resort fees. Exceptions may apply according to SAAM 10.30.20.

5. Travelers Responsible for Loss and Damage Charges

All travelers renting a peer-to-peer property are personally liable for any loss and/or damage to the rental property and its contents.