

900. Travel Policy

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For any comments, feedback, or query, please contact: aubpolicies@aub.edu.lb.

Section 1 - Introduction

The University will pay for, or reimburse, the costs of travel incurred by university personnel and university visitors (whose related travel expenses are covered by the University), wholly and necessarily in the course of the University's business, subject to the following policy, and in accordance with the procedures that have been established by the University. Expenses of a personal nature such as phone calls, dry cleaning, etc., as well as the cost of entertainment, alcohol, and tobacco are not reimbursable under this policy.

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Section 2 - Policy

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As a general rule, the most economic means of travel shall be selected, having regard to schedules and the availability of acceptable means of transportation and standards of accommodation.

1. International Travel

- a. **Authorization:** international travel shall be approved in advance by the provost, a vice president, or dean of the faculty concerned, as stipulated in the Manual of Authorities, and supported by a completed Request and Authorization for Official University Travel (RAOUT), form No. 10.7.1 (revised), which must be submitted together with an approved Leave Request and Approval, form No. 14-2 (revised) to the Personnel Office who will forward the RAOUT to the University Travel Office (UTO), at least three weeks before the date of departure. Unjustified late submissions may result in the travel request being denied.
- b. **Class of Travel:** the University will pay for the cost of travel in economy class in accordance with the terms of the [Airline Ticketing Procedures](#). Members of the Board of Trustees and members of the Board of Deans may elect to travel in business class, except that all travel within the US, or any internal flight in any other country, shall be limited to economy class. Exceptions to the class of travel must be approved by the vice president for finance.
- c. **Excess Costs:** when, for reasons of personal convenience, travelers elect to deviate from the most direct routing, they shall bear the additional expense, if any, over and above the cost that would normally be borne by the University. The University will not, normally, reimburse the costs of excess baggage or other surcharges that are not directly related to the performance of official university duties.
- d. **Accommodation, Meals, and Incidental Expenses:** reimbursement of expenses for authorized travel will be made in accordance with the [Maximum Daily Allowance Rates](#) established by the Comptroller's Office. The maximum daily allowance rates have been set to defray daily expenses incurred while travelling, (e.g., room, food, laundry, tips, etc.). These rates are subject to change at the discretion of the University.

The maximum daily allowance is equal to the maximum amount that is reimbursable for daily living expenses. All employees are required to submit appropriate receipts to justify any reimbursement, including the maximum daily allowance. Reimbursement will be limited to the lesser of actual receipted expenses, or the maximum daily allowance. Items individually less than \$25, excluding hotel accommodations (e.g., taxi, tips, etc.), do not require receipts, but must be itemized in the employee's expense report.

Note: Employees travelling on university business to Europe or North America are recommended to carry a letter from the University (Human Resources Departments) certifying that they are going on university business and returning back to the University at the conclusion of their business (conference, training, workshop, etc.). As such a letter may be requested by the immigration authorities, employees should carry it with their tickets/passports. Employees having connecting flights immediately on arrival in the United States should be aware that immigration formalities, including luggage claims, take place at the airport of arrival, which may at certain times result in lengthy delays that could cause passengers to miss their connecting flight. Travelers are, therefore, cautioned to allow sufficient time for the immigration formalities and/or to have a back up itinerary (please refer to [Appendix V – Certification Letter](#)).

2. Travel Within Lebanon

- a. **Motor Pool:** personnel required to travel on university business within Lebanon may use the services of the Motor Pool by submitting an on-line Transportation Requisition at least 48 hours in advance.
- b. **Personal Transportation:** private vehicles used in connection with official university business must have third party insurance in an amount not less than \$50,000. Personnel, who, with their supervisor's prior approval, use their private vehicles, will be reimbursed at the rate established by the comptroller and shown on the [Maximum Daily Allowance Rates](#) published by the Comptroller's Office.
- c. **Accommodation, Meals, and Incidental Expenses:** accommodation expenses must be pre-approved by the traveler's supervisor. Except by prior approval, reimbursement for meals shall not exceed the amounts established by the comptroller and shown on the [Maximum Daily Allowance Rates](#) published by the Comptroller's Office. Receipts shall support all claims for reimbursement.

Section 3 - Procedures

1. [Prior Approval for Travel](#)
 2. [Purchase of Airline Tickets](#)
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 4. [Maximum Daily Allowances](#)
 5. [Reimbursement of Expenses](#)
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1. Prior Approval for Travel

Personnel travelling on official university business, whether to attend conferences or other meetings, are required to complete a [Request and Authorization for Official University Travel](#) form (RAOUT) and a [Leave Request and Approval](#) form (form No. 14-2 - revised).

The forms must be completed and approvals secured and submitted to the Personnel Office who forward the RAOUT to the UTO, at least three weeks in advance of the proposed travel. This advance notice will enable the UTO to secure competitive travel offers.

2. Purchase of Airline Tickets

Tickets that are purchased with university funds will be normally procured through the UTO. Personnel wishing to make their own travel arrangement may do so in accordance with the procedures described in the [Airline Ticketing Procedures](#).

3. Travel Advances

Personnel travelling on official university business may request a travel advance from the Comptroller's Office to cover anticipated daily allowance expenses. The request shall be in the form of a payment voucher accompanied by a copy of the RAOUT form. Advances will be cleared by submitting an approved [Expense Report](#) which indicates how the advance was spent and/or by returning the unused funds to the University. Advances not accounted for within 14 days of completion of travel may be deducted directly through payroll deduction. Outstanding advances must be settled before any new advance can be granted.

4. Maximum Daily Allowances

The maximum daily allowance shall be calculated on the basis of the number of complete 24-hour periods that the claimant is travelling abroad and in accordance to the [Maximum Daily Allowance Rates](#) published by the Comptroller's Office. The maximum daily allowance is a guideline, not a right. Where justified, the maximum daily allowance may be reduced at the discretion of the supervisor approving the RAOUT.

5. Reimbursement of Expenses

An [Expense Report](#) form should be submitted to the Comptroller's Office within 14 days of completion of travel. The following documentation shall accompany the expense report:

- a. Supporting receipts for all items of \$25 or more.
- b. The airline ticket counterfoil (or stub). For persons who were authorized to purchase their own tickets, the ticket invoice must be submitted as well.
- c. Hotel guest folio(s).
- d. An itemized list and appropriate receipts for expenses claimed up to the value of the maximum daily allowance.

It is the responsibility of the traveler to settle any travel advance within the above-specified period.

6. Motor Pool

Requests for Motor Pool transportation must be submitted 48 hours in advance using the on-line transportation requisition. Eligible users are assigned by the vice presidents, chairpersons, and heads of administrative departments. For more details, please check the Auxiliary Services - Motor Pool Manual .

7. Airline Ticketing Procedures

After securing proper approvals, the following methods may be used:

a. Using the University Travel Office

Travelers may contact the UTO to make their travel arrangements. The UTO will purchase and pay for the tickets which should be collected by travelers at least two days prior to travel.

b. Booking Own Ticket

- i. **Through an Approved Travel Agent or Airline:** the UTO has a list of approved airlines and travel agents. Travelers may make their travel arrangements directly with them, in which case they should indicate their intentions on the RAOUT. The UTO will purchase and pay for the tickets which should be collected by travelers at least two days prior to travel.
- ii. **Any Other Means:** travelers may purchase their own tickets directly and must indicate their intentions to do so on the RAOUT. Persons doing so are advised to check with the UTO for the fare that is eligible for reimbursement.

Note that under this method travelers will be responsible for the purchase and collection of the airline tickets, as well as all related airline services. Travelers will be reimbursed only after their travel and upon completion of the expense report and submission of ticket stubs, and original invoice from the issuing agent to the Comptroller's Office.

Travelers will be advised of any additional amounts they are responsible for before the tickets are purchased. Any excess charges may be reimbursed immediately or charged to the traveler's personal account.

Any changes to the original reservations made with the airline, without involving the UTO, will be the traveler's personal responsibility.

No matter which method is used, travelers must present the ticket receipt, together with all the ticket stubs, to receive travel reimbursement.

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APPENDIX I MAXIMUM DAILY ALLOWANCES

1. [Maximum Daily Allowances- USA](#)
2. [Maximum Daily Allowances- Others](#)
3. **Use of Personal Motor Vehicles**

Personnel, who, with their supervisor's prior approval, use their private vehicles for university business, will be reimbursed at the rate of LL500 per kilometer.

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**APPENDIX V
CERTIFICATION LETTER**

(To download this form in Word format, [click here](#))

To Whom It May Concern:

This is to certify that Mr./Ms. _____ is an employee of the American University of Beirut and is travelling on university business to attend _____ from _____ to _____ and will be returning to full time employment on _____.

Signed:

(Name Human Resources Director) _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

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