

LOUISIANA STATE UNIVERSITY AGRICULTURAL CENTER

Effective Date: November 1, 2003

AG CENTER PS-28
Version: 5

INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL: REIMBURSEMENT, OFFICIAL LEAVE, AND TRAVEL TIME

Purpose

To establish a policy which outlines the procedures for travel reimbursement, official leave, and travel time for faculty and staff for international travel.

International travel is defined as travel to destinations outside the 50 United States, District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands.

Official leave is defined as approved travel for official Ag Center business. The purpose of the travel should be thoroughly explained and justified by the traveler and approved by the unit head before submitting the request through channels to the Chancellor's Office. A day-by-day itinerary showing travel dates, meeting dates, conferences with scientists, annual leave, etc., should be submitted with the request to travel.

Travel time starts from the hour of departure from home or office to departure airport to the hour of return to home or office from the arrival airport, including weekends.

Background

This policy establishes LSU Agricultural Center procedures for reimbursement for

international travel. **The Ag Center does not permit the use of state general funds for international travel.**

Appropriated federal funds (Hatch, Regional, Smith-Lever, McIntire-Stennis, Animal Health) can be used for international travel only when the travel will directly benefit the research or extension program, or report results of the project on which the scientist is working. A thorough and detailed justification for the use of appropriated federal funds for international travel is required.

Policy

The procedure for reimbursement of international travel requires the traveler to select one of the options shown below on the Advance Travel Authorization form:

- 1) Out-of-state reimbursement rates.
- 2) U.S. Department of State per diem reimbursement rates.

When the first option is selected, out-of-state high cost (tier III) reimbursement rates will be used.

When the second option is selected, the following procedures apply.

- 1) **Accommodations (Lodging):** Travelers will use the established rates by countries as provided by the U.S. Department of State published information. Reimbursement cannot exceed the U. S. Department of State current published per diem hotel rates for the country/countries involved. Hotel receipts are required.
- 2) **Meals and Incidental Expenses (M&IE):** Travelers will be reimbursed according to the listed M&IE by the U.S. Department of State for the country and location within the country. Receipts are not required for M&IE. An airline travel itinerary must accompany the international travel reimbursement request. Incidental expenses do not include telephone and taxi expenses. Baggage tips, laundry, etc., are considered as incidental expenses.
- 3) **Airfare:** Reimbursement for airfare will be limited to coach rates except for very extenuating circumstances (i.e., business class rates will not normally be allowed.). The difference between state contract or "coach/economy" class rates and "business class" or "first class" rates will be paid by the traveler.
- 4) **Twenty Five Percent Over Allowances** will not be allowed when using the U.S. Department of State per diem reimbursement rates.

Official Leave

This policy also requires that no official time off will be provided for reasons such as "jet lag" unless trans-Atlantic or trans-Pacific travel is involved and if the traveler returns to

the arrival airport after 10:00 p.m. In these cases, "recovery" time will be permitted until 1:00 p.m. the following day. If any time off is needed after 1:00 p.m., an annual leave request must be submitted.

The travel authorization form should indicate the hour and date of departure and return for "Leave Requested" and the actual meeting times and dates under "Meeting Dates."

Pre/post-conferences or meeting tours must be clearly justified and approval requested on the travel authorization form.

If annual leave is requested in conjunction with the proposed travel annual leave forms must accompany the official leave request. It is the responsibility of both the traveler and the unit head to carefully review the actual time of the conference/meeting and to submit a request for official leave that reflects official travel and meeting times.

Procedure for Approval and Reimbursement

Advance Travel Authorization - Out of State and Foreign forms are available in all administrative units. Any person requesting international travel must use the Advance Travel Authorization form. Requests must be submitted in a timely manner, but no less than two weeks in advance of the requested travel, except in rare circumstances where international travel is not known that far in advance. Chancellor's approval is required on international travel.

Administrative approval must be granted prior to obtaining tickets from the official state travel agency. The same policy and procedure applies when "no cost to the university" is involved. **Failure to submit travel requests through channels for approval in**

adequate advance of travel may result in disapproval.

Preparation of the reimbursement forms will be the responsibility of the traveler and traveler's administrative unit which manages the budget.

Attachment: "Advance Travel Authorization - Out of State and Foreign" form.

Travelers must submit their travel reimbursement claims to the appropriate budget units **no later than seven work days from date of return**. Documentation of exchange rate used must be attached to travel voucher.

All reimbursement vouchers using U.S. Department of State per diem rates must be checked by International Programs to verify that the reimbursement has been calculated in accordance with Ag Center PS-28, Version 4. International Programs will maintain a log book to record the following:

- 1) date the claim is received,
- 2) date the travel voucher is audited, and
- 3) date the travel voucher is sent to Ag Center Accounting Services.

