

## **Travel News and Reminders for Fiscal 2009**

The following information is provided as part of Accounts Payable's ongoing efforts to provide more information in order to better communicate with our customers. In that regard, ISU is working on a new travel section for the Manual of Administrative Policies & Procedures (MAPP) that will be issued in the near future. With the implementation of TIGERi and the many changes taking place at ISU, some of the information in this memo is new. Other items are reminders and are meant to assist you in understanding and dealing with the travel process.

### **NEW FOR FISCAL YEAR 2009**

#### **Travel Reimbursements**

Two additional items will need to be included with the Travel Reimbursement Request in order for the reimbursement to be processed by Accounts Payable. These items will enable Accounts Payable to accurately determine reimbursement amounts.

1. If an employee attends a conference or workshop they must attach a conference/workshop agenda or brochure to the reimbursement. If the employee departs earlier than one day before or stays later than one day following the conference/workshop, justification should be provided for the additional expenses incurred.
2. Employees that choose to fly will need to provide enough information for Accounts Payable to determine if a purchased flight is a first class or coach/standard flight. The receipt or itinerary can be used if this information is provided. If not, then the boarding pass should be included with the reimbursement.

#### **Business Purpose of Travel**

As has always been the case, in the business purpose section of the Travel Authorization form the traveler should include a statement detailing the business purpose as to why they are traveling. New this year, and as part of this explanation, the traveler also needs to explain how this travel will benefit the department and the University. If there is insufficient space on the travel authorization form to explain the benefit, a supplemental travel benefit information form is available on the Finance and Administration web page.

### **EXISTING POLICY REMINDERS**

#### **Travel Authorizations**

A travel authorization is required for all travel away from an employee's "official workstation". Faculty and staff who teach classes or work at other campus locations in addition to their official workstation, will be required to file a travel authorization for their travel to and from the secondary location(s). This can be accomplished by completing a blanket travel authorization. The blanket travel authorization expires at the end of a fiscal year and must be resubmitted for the next fiscal year.

The traveler should complete a mileage and meal log (provided on Finance and Administration web page) to track their mileage. Reimbursements are not required to be submitted for each trip, but must be submitted at least monthly if any travel has taken place during the month. The mileage log should be attached to the reimbursement form and reference the blanket travel authorization number.

## **Travel Authorizations and Reimbursements**

Travel Authorization forms must be filed before the employee travels and not at the time of reimbursement. Employees should fill in all requested information on the Travel Authorization and Travel Reimbursement Request forms. Remember to include the travel authorization number on all travel reimbursements and complete the right hand corner of the reimbursement form with all travel advance information. All authorizations must be signed by the traveler and their supervisor. Whenever possible, the authorized signer should be the traveler's direct supervisor or their designee. (The designee cannot be someone supervised by the traveler.)

The travel process at ISU falls under what the Internal Revenue Service refers to as an "Accountable Plan". Processing travel under this type of plan permits ISU to classify the reimbursement to the employee as a non-taxable payment. However, there are certain criteria we must meet in order to maintain the accountable plan. The most important of these requires that all travel be reconciled and accounted for within a reasonable time frame. Therefore within ten (10) working days of returning from a trip, the traveler is expected to furnish the necessary documentation and receipts to support the travel and any travel advances. Original receipts must be attached for reimbursement; copies are not acceptable.

Repayment of travel advance funds to the University is the responsibility of the traveler. If not repaid in a timely manner, the traveler may not be allowed future advances and the University must incur additional resources to exercise its option to recover the advance through payroll deduction, as authorized by the traveler when signing the travel advance authorization.

## **Blanket Travel**

Blanket travel authorizations are designed to accommodate employee's assigned duties at an off-campus site that are frequent or continuous in nature and take place over an extended period of time. Reimbursement on blanket travel authorizations is limited to travel within the State of Idaho. On a case by case basis, vehicle travel to adjacent states will be considered but only when the frequency of such travel is documented and justifies a blanket travel authorization.

Reimbursements for travel under a blanket travel authorization should be filed in a timely manner. This means at least once a month if airfare and lodging are not involved or after each trip if expenses include airfare and lodging.

## **Bi-Campus Travel**

ISU employees are not reimbursed for their commute to their official workstation. It is the responsibility of each employee to get to and from work. When secondary work locations are involved, special circumstances apply. For example, if an employee lives in Idaho Falls (their home area) and commutes to the Pocatello campus (their official workstation) for regular work hours but teaches an evening course in their home area, ISU will reimburse the employee's mileage from the secondary campus location to their home if that added mileage exceeds the mileage of their normal commute. ISU will not reimburse mileage to and from the Pocatello Campus (their official workstation) or for meals in their home area.

**Travel Advances**

When requesting a travel advance please provide the date the advance is needed and clearly indicate if more than one advance is needed. All travel advance requests must be in Accounts Payable at least three (3) days before the advance is to be picked up. Whenever possible, it is helpful to have the requests earlier. Outreach centers should include a fax number with their request for a travel advance. Once advances are processed, an email will be sent to the traveler advising them that their advance is ready to be picked up. Advances requested 60 days prior to the departure date require proof that an expense has occurred. A copy of the paid receipt should be attached to the Travel Authorization Form submitted to Accounts Payable. Do not send proof of payment if your advance date is less than 60 days from the departure date.

**Automobile Rental**

Automobile rental may be authorized when the use of such conveyance is the most economical and practical means of transportation. In most cases, commercially rented vehicles for passenger use are limited to subcompact, compact, or intermediate sizes. The rental of larger units is acceptable with approval of the department chairperson/director. A written justification should accompany all requests to authorize vehicle rentals. ISU has a contract with Enterprise Car Rental that provides a discount to our employees. Whenever possible, this contract should be utilized for car rental needs.

**P-Card Usage for Travel**

P-Cards are not to be used for any type of travel unless prior approval has been granted by Finance and Administration. Using your P-Card for unauthorized travel expenses will jeopardize your P-Card privileges.

Thank you for your help and cooperation in facilitating the travel process at ISU. If you have travel questions or concerns, please contact Nancy Farrens at x2594 or Lisa Leyshon at x4207.