Salisbury University Travel Policy and Procedures

Purpose

This policy establishes the procedures and requirements governing official travel conducted by authorized representatives of Salisbury University. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all travel expenditures are necessary, reasonable, appropriately documented, and compliant with applicable federal regulations, State of Maryland requirements, University System of Maryland (USM) policies, and Salisbury University policies and procedures.

This policy applies to all travel funded in whole or in part by Salisbury University funds, grants, contracts, auxiliary funds, foundations, or other institutional resources.

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1. Governing Authority

Salisbury University travel shall be governed by the following authorities, listed in order of applicability:

1. Federal laws and regulations
2. State of Maryland regulations and travel policies
3. University System of Maryland (USM) policies
4. Salisbury University institutional policies and procedures
5. Grant or contract restrictions, when applicable

When policies conflict, the most restrictive policy shall apply.

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2. Definitions

2.1 Business Travel

Travel required to conduct official Salisbury University business, including conferences, meetings, instructional duties, recruitment, grant activities, student programs, athletics, and professional development.

2.2 In-State Travel

Travel within the State of Maryland and Washington, D.C.

2.3 Out-of-State Travel

Travel outside the State of Maryland and Washington, D.C., but within the United States and its territories.

2.4 Foreign Travel

Travel outside the United States and its territories.

2.5 Per Diem

A daily allowance established by the University System of Maryland or the U.S. Department of State for meals and incidental expenses.

2.6 Itemized Receipt

An original receipt showing:

- Vendor name
- Date of purchase
- Description of items/services
- Amount charged
- Method of payment

Non-itemized credit card slips alone are not acceptable documentation.

2.7 Commute Miles

Normal daily commute miles between an employee's residence and primary assigned work location. Commute miles are not reimbursable.

2.7 IRS Accountable Plan

Official reimbursement policy that allows businesses to pay employees back for legitimate, work-related expenses tax-free. Under the Accountable Plan:

- Expenses must be strictly work-related and incurred while performing services for the business.
- Employees must provide proof of the expense (receipts, mileage logs, or invoices) within a reasonable period, detailing the amount, date, place, and business purpose.
- Any advance received that exceeds the actual expense must be returned to the company within a reasonable timeframe.

3. General Policy

1. All travel must serve a legitimate Salisbury University business purpose.
2. Travelers are expected to exercise prudent judgment and minimize costs.
3. Travel expenses must be reasonable, necessary, and directly related to Salisbury University business.
4. Reimbursement is limited to allowable expenses supported by required documentation.
5. Travelers are responsible for ensuring compliance with this policy.
6. Reimbursement requests submitted beyond required deadlines may be denied or treated as taxable income under IRS accountable plan regulations.

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4. Travel Authorization Requirements

4.1 In-State Travel

In-state travel requires supervisor approval and a formal Spend Authorization is required.

4.2 Out-of-State Travel

All out-of-state travel requires:

- Approved Spend Authorization;
- Approval from the appropriate Supervisor, Dean, Director, Vice President, or designee;
- Submission prior to travel.

4.3 Foreign Travel

Foreign travel requires:

- Approved Spend Authorization;
- Approval from the appropriate Supervisor, Dean, Director, Vice President or designee;
- Compliance with federal regulations and international risk procedures;
- Submission prior to travel.

Travelers are encouraged to review U.S. State Department advisories prior to departure.

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5. Types of Official Travel

Official Salisbury University travel may include:

- Conferences and workshops
- Instructional and academic travel
- Student organization travel
- Athletic team travel
- Recruiting activities
- Research and grant-funded travel
- Administrative business meetings
- Professional development activities

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6. Payment Methods

6.1 Employee Reimbursement

Employees may be reimbursed for approved travel expenses upon submission of:

- Approved Spend Authorization;
- Required approvals;
- Reimbursement request submitted within 60 days of the completion of travel; and
- Original finalized itemized receipts (cannot be in pending, estimated or authorizing status).

Reimbursement requests older than 6 months of the expense date will no longer be honored. An exception may be made in extenuating circumstances by the AVP of Administration & Finance.

Reimbursement requests not submitted within 60 days are subject to taxation and will be processed through Payroll.

6.2 Salisbury University Procurement Card

Salisbury University-issued procurement cards may be used only for approved travel-related expenses in accordance with procurement card policies.

Allowable procurement card charges may include:

- Subscriptions
- Books and Classroom Supplies

- Retail Store Purchases
- State and USM Contract Purchases
- Registration Fees (Non-travel)

Procurement cards may not be used for:

- Travel
- Alcohol
- Food/Meals
- Gifts and Cards
- Personal Purchases
- Entertainment Costs
- Unauthorized upgrades

6.3 Salisbury University Travel Card (Diners Card)

The Travel Card (Diners Card) is issued by a third-party. Diners Cards may be used only for approved travel-related expenses in accordance with Diners Card policies. There is a six-month waiting period for new employees and introductory training is required.

Allowable Diners charges may include:

- Conference registration (Only when required with associated with travel)
- Transportation
- Lodging
- Rental vehicles
- Parking and tolls
- Meals (Only for student travel. Meal costs for employees must be submitted via Expense Reimbursement.)
- Educational supplies related to pre-approved Study Abroad travel.

Diners Cards may not be used for:

- Alcohol
- Books, periodicals, subscriptions, etc.
- Personal expenses
- Retail purchases
- Unauthorized upgrades
- Meals unless specifically permitted by Salisbury University policy
- Individual Meals
- Expenses for spouses, partners, children and others not involved with SU business
- Airline seat upgrades

- Gift cards
- Gifts of sentiment (i.e. flowers, candy, birthday/retirement/shower gifts, etc.)
- Payment for travel secured with an agreement or contract not approved by SU.

Refer to the Diners Club Policies & Procedures section on the SU website for additional information.

6.4 Travel Advances (for Student-involved travel)

Travel advances may be issued when necessary for:

- Student group travel
- Athletic travel
- Extended out-of-state travel
- International travel

Travel advances must:

- Be approved in advance;
- Be reconciled within seven (7) days after travel concludes; and
- Be supported by receipts and documentation.

Failure to reconcile advances may result in payroll deduction or collection procedures.

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7. Transportation

7.1 Personal Vehicle Use

Employees may choose to use personal vehicles for official travel when appropriate and will be reimbursed at the current IRS or USM-approved reduced personal use mileage rate.

Employees will be reimbursed at the full current mileage rate if a Salisbury University vehicle is unavailable during the scheduled travel.

Request for the vehicle must be made according to Salisbury University Motor Pool policies and formal written documentation from Salisbury University Motor Pool of unavailability is required.

Mileage reimbursement shall be based on the current IRS or USM-approved mileage reimbursement rate.

Mileage reimbursement:

- Covers fuel, charging costs (EVs), maintenance, insurance, and operating costs;
- Does not include commuting mileage;

- Requires documentation of destinations and mileage;
- Starting address should always be the closer of the two to the destination between the traveler's primary work location (1101 Camden Avenue, Salisbury, MD 21801) or their home address; and
- Include and provide the full destination address (street number, street name, city, state & zip code) used in calculations.

7.2 Salisbury University Vehicles

Salisbury University-owned vehicles should be used when practical and available.

Drivers must:

- Be authorized by Salisbury University;
- Possess a valid driver's license; and
- Comply with Salisbury University motor vehicle policies.

7.3 Rental Vehicles

Rental vehicles may be used when cost effective or operationally necessary.

Requirements include:

- Economy or standard class vehicle unless justified;
- Rental in the name of Salisbury University;
- Declining optional insurance coverage for domestic travel unless required; and
- Use of Salisbury University contract vendors whenever possible.

In situations of insufficient fleet inventory, Salisbury University may acquire a rental on behalf of the traveler. Please contact the Salisbury University Motor Pool directly for assistance.

7.4 Ride Share Service (i.e., Uber and Lyft)

Ride share services such as Uber and Lyft may be used as an alternative to car rental, taxi, and shuttle services while traveling on Salisbury University related business. Tips are limited to:

- 15% for transportation services.

7.5 Airfare and Common Carrier Travel

Travelers must select the lowest logical airfare or transportation option.

Air travel will only be reimbursed when the driving time from the traveler's primary work location to the destination exceeds four (4) hours one way.

For destinations within a four-hour driving distance, travelers are expected to use:

- Personal vehicles,
- Salisbury University vehicles, or
- Other ground transportation methods when practical.

Exceptions may be approved when flying is determined to be:

- More economical,
- Operationally necessary, or
- Required due to scheduling, medical, safety, or business considerations.

All exceptions require prior written approval from the AVP of Finance & Administration.

Salisbury University will reimburse:

- Coach/economy class airfare only;
- One checked bag when necessary for business purposes.

Salisbury University will not reimburse:

- First-class or business-class upgrades unless approved in advance for documented medical or business necessity;
- Seat upgrades or priority boarding fees;
- Travel insurance;
- Additional baggage unrelated to Salisbury University business; and
- Personal travel expenses.

To receive reimbursement for airfare, travelers must:

- Obtain required travel approvals prior to booking;
- Select the lowest logical coach/economy airfare;
- Submit itemized receipts and proof of payment; and
- Comply with all Salisbury University travel procedures.

Salisbury University reserves the right to limit reimbursement to the lower-cost transportation option when airfare exceeds the reasonable cost of driving and related travel expenses.

All federally funded travel must comply with the Fly America Act.

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8. Lodging

1. Lodging expenses must be reasonable and necessary.
2. Travelers should use standard single-room accommodation.
3. Additional costs for spouses, guests, or upgraded accommodation are personal expenses.
4. Itemized hotel receipts are required.
5. Lodging reservations should be made directly with the hotel whenever possible.
6. Travelers are responsible for cancellation fees unless cancellation results from official Salisbury University business or emergencies.

8.1 Hotels

Local

Local hotel accommodation for Salisbury University guest(s) must be arranged through one of Salisbury University's approved local direct-bill establishments. Prior to making the reservation, contact Accounts Payable with the guest(s)' name and dates of stay to obtain a Purchase Order number, which must be provided to the hotel at the time of booking.

Out-of-State

When reservations are to be made by Accounts Payable, a credit card pre-authorization form must be requested and forwarded to Accounts Payable no less than one (1) week before the stay begins. If a credit card authorization form is not completed, the traveler will be responsible for covering the cost of the stay and submitting an Expense Reimbursement request upon completion of travel.

8.2 Alternative Lodging

Salisbury University permits the use of alternative lodging for official Salisbury University travel only when it is cost-effective or necessary. Use of alternative lodging is generally discouraged due to liability and insurance concerns.

Airbnb is the only approved third-party lodging platform currently permitted without additional legal review.

Other lodging platforms require prior approval from the Office of General Counsel (OGC).

All alternative lodging arrangements require prior approval before booking.

Travelers must:

- Submit required travel approval documentation;

- Demonstrate that the lodging is cost-effective compared to standard hotels; and
- Obtain approval before making reservations.

Alternative lodging is allowed on a reimbursement basis only. Salisbury University-issued Diners Cards may not be used for any alternative lodging due to liability and risk issues.

- Travelers must use personal payment methods and request reimbursement after travel.
- Itemized receipts are required for reimbursement.
- Reimbursement requests older than 6 months of the expense date will no longer be honored. An exception may be made in extenuating circumstances by the AVP of Administration & Finance.
- Reimbursement requests must be submitted within 60 days of the completion of travel otherwise the reimbursement is subject to taxation and will be processed through Payroll.

Salisbury University will not reimburse the following:

- Damage or repair charges
- Entertainment or incidental fees
- Unauthorized cancellation fees
- Excessive cleaning or service fees

Travelers assume personal responsibility when using alternative lodging.

Salisbury University is not responsible for:

- Injuries, damages, losses, or disputes;
- Property conditions or safety concerns; or
- Cancellation penalties or fees.

Shared alternative lodging accommodations involving multiple travelers are discouraged and may require additional review and approval. Additional costs for spouses, guests or upgraded accommodation are personal expenses and not reimbursable.

All travelers must comply with Salisbury University policies, including conduct, discrimination, harassment, and Title IX policies while on official travel.

Exceptions to this policy must be pre-approved in writing by the AVP of Administration and Finance.

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9. Meals and Per Diem

9.1 Domestic Travel Meals

Meal reimbursements for domestic travel shall follow current USM-approved per diem rates.

Meal eligibility is determined by:

- Departure and return times;
- Length of travel status; and
- Whether meals are provided by a conference, hotel, or event.

Conference/Meeting Agendas or travel itineraries are required and should be submitted with all other backup documentation when requesting reimbursement for meals. Meals included with registration fees or lodging are not reimbursable.

A partial day's travel is eligible for the appropriate meal (s) consumed when travel time encompasses a period of two hours before and/or two hours after one's normal workday. **Under no circumstance will lunch be reimbursed on a one-day trip unless the employee travels two hours before and 2 hours after one's normal workday.** An employee would need to work a minimum of 12 hours plus a lunch period of at least 30 minutes to be eligible for lunch reimbursement. *For example, assuming an hour lunch break and a normal 8am-5pm workday, an employee must start the travel by 6am and return no earlier than 7pm.*

Maximum gratuity is 20% of the subtotal before all taxes.

Current standard per diem rates:

Breakfast	$15.00
Lunch	$18.00
Dinner	$30.00
Total	$63.00

9.3 Domestic High-Cost Metropolitan Areas

Current per diem reimbursement rates for high-cost metropolitan areas can be viewed here. A printed copy of the current rates should be included with all other backup documentation.

9.3 Foreign Travel Meals

Foreign meal reimbursements shall follow U.S. Department of State per diem rates referenced here. Include a printed copy of the current rates with backup documentation. Use 'other' for any city not listed.

Reimbursement rates shall be based on the rates in effect at the time of travel.

Travelers must identify:

- Dates of travel;
- Foreign destination; and
- Applicable exchange rates.

9.4 Alcohol

Alcoholic beverages are not reimbursable under Salisbury University and state of Maryland policies.

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10. Miscellaneous Travel Expenses

Allowable expenses may include:

- Parking fees
- Tolls
- Taxi and rideshare services
- Public transit
- Internet charges required for business
- Baggage handling
- Passport and visa fees for approved international travel
- Conference registration confirmations (should also be included with all backup documentation and clearly show the attendee name, conference name, date and location, amount paid and proof of payment by attendee).

Receipts are required except where otherwise permitted by Salisbury University procedures.

Tips are limited to:

- 20% for meals reimbursed by receipt;
- 15% for transportation services;
- $1 per bag for baggage handling charges.

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11. Non-Reimbursable Expenses

The following expenses are not reimbursable:

- Personal entertainment

- Traffic violations or parking tickets
- Airline upgrades
- Travel insurance
- Personal grooming items
- Companion or spouse expenses
- Hotel movies or personal services
- Excess baggage unrelated to business purposes
- Late payment fees
- Personal sightseeing expenses
- Any amount not spent

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12. Travel with Spouses or Guests

Expenses for spouses, family members, or guests are considered personal expenses and are not reimbursable. Travel records must clearly separate personal and Salisbury University expenses.

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13. Documentation Requirements

Travel reimbursement requests must include:

- Mileage documentation
- Expense Report Signature Page (as needed)
- Expense reimbursement form (as needed)
- Approved Spend Authorization as required
- Conference agenda or itinerary when applicable
- Credit Card or Bank Statement for all foreign currency transactions
- Proof of payment (authorized or pending transactions are not admissible)
- Original itemized receipts or missing receipt affidavit for missing Diners Card transaction receipts.

Electronic receipts are acceptable when they contain all required information.

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14. Submission Guidelines & Deadlines

1. Expense reimbursement forms should be submitted within seven (7) business days after travel completion when a travel advance or Salisbury University travel card is involved.
2. All reimbursement requests must be submitted no later than sixty (60) calendar days after travel concludes.
3. Expenses submitted beyond IRS accountable plan deadlines may become taxable income.
4. All travel expenses must be submitted within the applicable fiscal year. They cannot overlap fiscal years.
5. Early bird conference registration is not permitted more than 3 months in advance of the conference and should be in the current fiscal year.
6. Requests for prepayment of conference registrations should be submitted 3-4 weeks in advance of any deadline.

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15. Grant-Funded Travel

Travel funded by grants or contracts must comply with:

- Sponsor restrictions;
- Federal Uniform Guidance, if applicable;
- Salisbury University grant administration procedures.

When grant requirements are more restrictive than Salisbury University policy, the grant restrictions shall apply.

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16. Compliance and Enforcement

Failure to comply with this policy may result in:

- Denial of reimbursement;
- Repayment obligations;
- Suspension of travel privileges;
- Disciplinary action;
- Taxable treatment of reimbursements.

Intentional falsification of travel records may constitute fraud and may result in disciplinary or legal action.

17. Roles and Responsibilities

Travelers

Travelers are responsible for:

- Obtaining required approvals;
- Maintaining receipts and documentation;
- Submitting reimbursement requests timely;
- Complying with policy requirements.

Supervisors

Supervisors are responsible for:

- Reviewing and approving travel requests;
- Ensuring expenses are appropriate and necessary;
- Verifying budget availability.

Accounts Payable

Accounts Payable is responsible for:

- Reviewing travel documentation;
- Processing reimbursements;
- Ensuring compliance with Salisbury University and State policies.

18. Related Policies and References

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- University System of Maryland Travel Regulations
- State of Maryland Travel Regulations
- Salisbury University Procurement Card Policy
- Salisbury University Accounts Payable Procedures
- IRS Accountable Plan Regulations
- Fly America Act
- U.S. Department of State Foreign Per Diem Rates

19. Effective Date

This policy becomes effective upon approval by Salisbury University administration and supersedes any prior travel guidance inconsistent with this document.
