

# AA BSC Policy Update

August 2019

## Travel Policy Changes: What you need to know

### Policy Challenges

Creating, updating, maintaining and communicating policy to a wide constituency such as the UNH community is always challenging. We hope this newsletter will facilitate these communication efforts. While policy is written by USNH in conjunction with representatives from each campus, and, in theory, applied ubiquitously across each campus, the reality is that much is left to interpretation. The BSC is the first in line to interpret and apply the policy. That provides an opportunity for us to apply the policies to our departments as equitably as possible. Your BSC representative works within those policies each day and have been tasked with the role of monitoring compliance in all these areas. Please take some time to thank them for their dedication to this sometimes-unrewarding role.

Christopher Clement's email dated 6/28/2019 titled "USNH Travel Administrative Procedure Changes" discussed some changes in policy. This newsletter highlights key changes and explains the impact these may have.

While reviewing these changes, please keep in mind that there are 2 basic principles that should be applied. First, and most important, is: ***"a traveler should not experience a financial gain or loss due to UNH business travel."*** Second: Departments, RC units or campus' ***can apply stricter guidelines than the policies, but not more liberal.*** In such instances, the units must monitor the policies for compliance.

Here are some highlighted changes:

#### Taxation Rule

In compliance with IRS regulations, business expense reimbursements that are not timely submitted for reimbursement are taxable to the employee. USNH and the Law school interpret this as follows: ***any reimbursement request must be completed and signed by appropriate parties and received by the BSC within 60 days from the last day of travel. Failure to submit forms and receipts within this time frame will result in the income being reported to the IRS as personal income to the traveler. All documentation must be submitted at this time.***

***"Failure to submit forms and receipts within this time frame will result in the income being reported to the IRS as personal income to the traveler"***

#### Business Purpose

The policy states that travelers provide a request "...appropriately documented with a distinct, compelling business purpose descriptive enough to clearly demonstrate a benefit to USNH". This should explain the purpose of the trip while keeping in mind that this information is reviewed by auditors and not just the BSC representative. Since auditors aren't aware of department's business operations or know department-specific acronyms, please include as much detail in the business purpose as possible. Please also be sure to explain how the travel benefits UNH and provide relevant documentation such as conference agendas, receipts, web snippets, etc. to justify the business purpose.

#### Mileage

Under the new policy, mileage is calculated from home on a work trip if you leave from home. This applies on both work and non-workdays. Please refer to the examples at the end of this section in the USNH travel policy: <https://www.usnh.edu/usnh-financial-services-policies-and-procedures/07-009-personal-automobile-expenses>

## Travel Policy Changes: What you need to know (cont'd)

### Convenient Cheat Sheet

For your convenience [here](#) is a link to a handy quick reference guide to travel policies. Keep a copy nearby or download onto your desktop for quick reference. It addressed many of the FAQ's regarding travel. Remember: Some departments/RC units apply stricter policies than those in the USNH policies and guidelines

#### Lodging

Airbnb, HomeAway and VRBO are now allowable forms of lodging if they are rented through an approved platform (e.g. Airbnb.com). Preapproval by VPFA office is no longer required for these options. (Note: Grandma's house is not an approved platform). In addition, lodging still needs to utilize the most cost-effective option as per USNH guidelines. You cannot pay additional for the convenience of an Airbnb.

#### Travel Meals

**First and last travel days:** The new travel policy now states that: *the first and last day of travel, a traveler is entitled to 75 percent of the appropriate M&IE rate regardless of what time the traveler departs or returns and there is no need to adjust for any provided meals on first or last day of travel.*

**Hotel and airline food** included in the base rate of the hotel price or the airline ticket no longer requires a reduction of per diem. For instance, if an employee is staying at a Hampton Inn and breakfast is offered as part of the room rate, the employee may request the per diem for breakfast. Please note this change only applies to hotel and airline meals. If a conference is providing breakfast, claiming per diem for breakfast is not permitted.

#### Travel Reimbursement Form Changes

The updated Travel Reimbursement form can be found [here](#). If experiencing trouble downloading or completing the form, employees should contact their BSC representative.

USNH Accounts Payable plans to adjust the form to add boxes to the first day of per diem, but the meantime, if adjustments are necessary, please use the "Per Diem Allowance" row which allows for editing. Employees can type over the amount listed to make it correct. Please be sure to include an explanation if making a per diem adjustment.

## Travel Policy Changes: What you need to know (cont'd)

### Travel on Campus

Intra-campus travel when a personal auto is used is not a reimbursable expense. The intra-campus locations include 1 Leavitt Lane and 121 Technology Drive. Free bus transportation is provided during the school year and is considered the lowest cost transportation for the traveler. Parking fees can be reimbursable if substantiated and approved by a supervisor.

**Domestic and Foreign per diem rates** are still found on the [gsa.gov](https://www.gsa.gov) website. Incidentals now calculate properly for any travel in the US. For foreign travel, use the [DOD site](#). (Note: when entering this site there may be errors and warnings that come up. If this happens, just click yes/accept/advanced to get to the website). From here, click the drop-down menu on the right side of the screen and pick a country (i.e. Argentina) which lists 3 locations. If travelling to Buenos Aires, use that city's "Local Meals" and "Local Incidental" columns for the reimbursement form (\$103 and \$26).

BSC representatives can help travelers navigate the travel reimbursement form and provide guidance on travel related questions and concerns should they arise.