

Research Foundation for Mental Hygiene, Inc. Travel Policy

The Research Foundation for Mental Hygiene, Inc. reimburses most, but not necessarily all, the costs of official travel on Research Foundation business. The Foundation will reimburse ordinary and necessary travel expenses up to the upper limits listed below when the traveler provides adequate supporting documentation and explanations. All requests for reimbursement must contain a clear statement concerning the business purpose of the travel and how the travel relates to the funding source to which the expense is being charged. While the intent of the travel policy is to reimburse all the traveler's expenses in most cases, it is recognized that from time to time travelers will incur expenses which cannot be reimbursed, either because of sponsor policy or Foundation limits. If these excess expenses are business expenses, the traveler is advised to seek counsel from a personal income tax advisor on how these unreimbursed expenses may be claimed as an itemized tax deduction.

The following reimbursements apply to all State or Research Foundation employees for travel expenses incurred while engaged in Foundation activities. These reimbursements apply to all travel regardless of the source of funds or account to be charged. This policy supersedes all previous Foundation travel policies.

Expense reimbursement is only given for actual and allowable expenses incurred by the traveler. If the traveler's actual expenses are less than the maximum allowed, only the lesser figure will be reimbursed.

Travel vouchers should be submitted within two weeks after return from a trip.

Travel Status

When you are on assignment at a work location more than 35 miles from both your home and Official Station you are considered to be in travel status. This determines that you are eligible for reimbursement of travel expenses such as meals and lodging. When travel is to a work location within 35 miles of your residence or official station, you are not considered to be in travel status and are not covered by this Travel Policy. For trips of less than 35 miles, you may qualify for the reimbursement of some transportation costs. Please consult your local RFMH Business Office.

Official Station

Your Official Station is your usual work location. The Official Station is designated by your supervisor and must be based on the best interest of carrying out the objectives of the grant or project you are currently assigned to. The purpose of an Official Station is to establish when you are eligible for travel expenses. Travel between your home and Official Station is considered commuting and is not a reimbursable travel expense.

Lodging and Meals

Lodging Reimbursement

Lodging will be reimbursed based on actual expense as follows: (1) up to \$153.00 (excluding tax) in Washington, DC and contiguous areas, (2) up to \$198.00 in the Boroughs of New York City and the Counties of Nassau, Suffolk, Rockland and Westchester, (3) up to \$100.00 (excluding tax outside NY & NJ) for all other locations, or (4) up to the maximum allowable Per Diem Rates issued by the U.S. General Services Administration if they exceed the amounts in items (1), (2), and (3). Visit (<http://www.gsa.gov>) for the reimbursement rates. Conventions, conferences, meetings of associations or organizations and foreign travel have special travel reimbursement rules. See the Convention section below.

Travel on official Foundation business is exempt from New York and New Jersey taxes on occupancy of hotel rooms. Exemption certificates are available from the Foundation business office. Reimbursement is allowed only for room occupancy taxes paid outside New York and New Jersey.

State travel requests or State lodging requests may not be used when travel reimbursement is requested on a Foundation travel voucher. When state travel requests or lodging requests are used, all travel expenses must be submitted on State vouchers as State expenses.

Meal Reimbursement

Reimbursement for meals will be allowed if the time of departure or return, without regard for time taken for meals, is as follows:

	<u>DEPARTURE BY</u>	<u>RETURN AFTER</u>	<u>MAXIMUM REIMBURSEMENT **</u>
Breakfast	7:00 AM	8:00 AM	\$ 8.00
Dinner	6:00 PM	7:00 PM	\$30.00

Meals are reimbursable only when in travel status as defined above. Lunch is NOT a reimbursable meal. Receipts are not required to be reimbursed for meals.

** Or per diem rate issued by the US General Services Administration, internet address referenced above.

Conventions, Conferences and Meetings of Associations or Organizations

Lodging, meals and other reimbursements are limited to the minimum number of days required for attendance at the Conference or Convention. The day of departure to and the day of return from meetings and conventions are to be established in relation to

activities published on the program and reasonable transportation arrangements and airline schedules. In certain circumstances, earlier departure and/or return will be reimbursed when the total cost of airfare, hotel, and meals is clearly demonstrated to be lower (such as a stay over Saturday night). Trip extensions for personal pleasure are not justifiable business expenses and cannot be reimbursed by the Foundation. Such extensions should be clearly identified in the supporting documentation and all associated charges (e.g. hotel charges) should be deducted from the amount for which the traveler is seeking reimbursement.

Lodging reimbursement will be the actual room expenses up to the single room rate of the site hotel as published in the conference announcement. Tax exempt certificates should be used for lodging in New York and New Jersey. Where the room is occupied by two or more travelers, and each are requesting reimbursement, the reimbursement for each traveler will be allowed at pro rata share of the multiple room rate in the same manner as described above. If there is no site hotel and/or no published rates in the announcement then the traveler will be reimbursed up to the federal per diem for that area, internet address referenced above.

Meeting and convention meals included as part of the program will be reimbursed at the amount charged for those meals. The traveler may not be separately reimbursed for any meal included in registration fee.

Documentation to support travel expenses must include an agenda, conference flyer, registration form, or similar document indicating the meeting date(s) and times associated with the travel voucher.

A Foundation or State employee attending a convention or meeting, who would not be considered in a travel status solely because the convention or meeting site is within thirty-five miles of his/her official work location, may be reimbursed for meal allowances as if he/she were in a travel status. Lodging costs may also be reimbursed if justification is attached, and if meeting and convention activities required attendance, and late hours of the function made return home impractical. Prior approval from the Foundation is recommended to prevent disallowances.

Foreign Travel

Foreign Travel, excluding Canada, may require advance written approval from the sponsor of the funding project, grant or contract. Always check with your Institute business office before making arrangements for foreign travel, so that the business officer may advise you of any restrictions on your project.

Travel expense reimbursement is subject to the federal per diem rates issued by the U.S. General Services Administration, internet address referenced above. Further, travelers must comply with the Federal requirement that U.S. flag carriers be used when the commercial air transportation is the means of travel between the U.S. and a foreign country or between foreign countries. This requirement is not influenced by factors of

cost, convenience, or personal travel preference. Documentation must be on file to indicate that the traveler obtained the required clearances for foreign travel before leaving.

Transportation

Air, Rail and Bus

- a. Travel should be limited to coach or economy class wherever available. Receipts are required. Explanations of exceptions must be attached to the travel expense voucher. Travel life and disability insurance is not reimbursable.
- b. Transportation to and from airports should be by airport limousine (shuttle), rather than taxi, if such service is available. Reimbursement is at the published limousine rates. Taxis to and from airports will be reimbursed up to \$12.00 without a receipt. Reimbursement in excess of \$12.00 requires a receipt and written explanation. Use of taxis solely for the convenience of the traveler is not an adequate explanation.

Personal Cars

- a. The Foundation recognizes the occasional advantage of using personally owned vehicles. Use of personal cars solely for the convenience of the traveler is not appropriate without explanation. Mileage between your residence and work location is considered commuting mileage and is not reimbursable.
- b. Reimbursement for use of personal cars, when appropriate, will be at the maximum allowed by the Internal Revenue Service plus tolls and parking. Tolls and parking will be reimbursed only when accompanied by receipts (except for meter parking). Gas, oil, maintenance, repairs, insurance, and traffic fines are not reimbursable.

Rental Cars

- a. Reimbursement will be made for use of rental cars when accompanied by a receipt and a written justification for their use. Justification should include a brief comparison with alternate modes of transportation that establishes a clear benefit for the use of rental cars. Car rentals must be approved by the DDIA or Business Officer. Charge for collision damage waiver is an allowable charge as part of car rental. Charge for personal accident insurance is a personal expense and is not allowable. Sales tax is reimbursable on car rentals outside of New York State only.
- b. A vehicle log on which mileage and other information is recorded must be maintained when RFMH owned or vehicles on long-term leases are used.

Local Transportation

Local transportation expenses appropriate to the circumstances will be reimbursed, i.e., subways, bus, or taxi. Receipts must be attached for taxi fares in excess of \$7.00, including tip. When taxis are used, an explanation must be attached indicating origin and destination of trip. For taxi service to and from airports please see above.

Telephone, Tips & Miscellaneous Charges

Telephone and Internet

Local and long distance telephone charges and internet connection charges incurred in connection with Foundation business while in travel status are reimbursable expenditures. Documentation must include the date, place and the name of the party called, the nature of the call, and the amount charged. If not charged on the hotel bill, copy of other billing must be attached.

Tips and Miscellaneous Charges

Tips and other miscellaneous charges will not be reimbursed except for tips included in taxi and limousine charges.

Vouchers & Exceptions

To receive travel expense reimbursement the travel voucher and supporting documentation should be submitted within two weeks of return from travel and must be received by the earlier of the end of the grant or six (6) months. Vouchers received outside of this specified time frame will not be reimbursed.

Travel Expense Vouchers

Claims for reimbursement of travel expenses must be made on the Research Foundation for Mental Hygiene travel expense voucher completed in accord with the instructions for its use.

Receipts for lodging, transportation, tolls, parking, taxis, and other charges for which receipts are required must be attached.

The purpose of the trip must be stated in sufficient detail to establish that the travel expenditures incurred are direct business expenditures of the account to be charged. Notations such as "to attend conference" are not sufficient to explain the relevance of the trip to the funding source. Sponsor policy and the budget of each grant, contract or account to be charged determine if the travel expenditure may be reimbursed. **NB:** Sponsor policies for a specific project may be more restrictive than the Foundation travel policy.

Exceptions

Requested exceptions to the Foundation travel policy must be in writing and preferably in advance of the trip. These are reviewed by the Foundation Central Office. Exceptions are only approved in highly unusual situations outside the traveler's control.

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