

TRAVEL REIMBURSEMENT POLICY & PROCEDURES

(Effective July 1, 2015)

POLICY

The National Bureau will reimburse persons traveling on its behalf for necessary and reasonable expenses consistent with Bureau guidelines.

PROCEDURES

1. Travel must be authorized in advance by the principal investigator or person who has authority to initiate expenditures.
2. The accounting department will make a timely reimbursement for travel expenses on receipt of a properly prepared travel expense report signed by the traveler and approved by the person who authorized the travel.
3. The cost of travel by air, rail, or automobile shall not exceed the least expensive unrestricted class of air fare rates except in unusual circumstances, subject to prior approval by an authorized person.
4. Travel costs may be charged on an actual cost basis, on a per diem or mileage basis in lieu of actual costs incurred, or on a combination of the two, provided the method used is applied to an entire trip and not to selected days of the trip, and results in charges consistent with those normally allowed in like circumstances in NBER's non-federally-funded activities and in accordance with the other guidelines listed here.
4. Domestic travel includes travel within and between the U.S., its territories and possessions. Travel outside the areas specified above is considered foreign travel.
5. U.S. – flag carriers must be used for foreign travel to be charged to a federal grant. There are very few circumstances under which you may fly a foreign carrier. Please review the federal guidelines on foreign travel prior to purchasing your airline tickets and discuss any plan to use a foreign carrier with the NBER staff prior to purchasing the ticket.
6. Expenses for transportation by personally owned automobiles are reimbursable at the current government established mileage rate, plus toll charges and necessary parking fees.
7. The use of rental cars may be authorized when other transportation is not available or when their use results in a savings. An inexpensive type of rental vehicle such as a compact or economy car is expected to be used.
8. Meals bought for others in connection with National Bureau business should be documented with names and business affiliations of the guests and the purpose of the meeting.
9. Unusual circumstances or expenses should also be explained in a note attached to the travel expense report.
10. All individual expense items must be supported by original receipts. Charges for airline travel have to be supported by an itinerary, proof of payment and travel. Hotel charges must be supported by an itemized bill with evidence of payment. Original documentation is requested in all cases. Expenses not properly documented will not be reimbursed.
11. All travel expenses must be submitted for reimbursement within 90 days of the return date.