



School of Visual Arts

HUMAN RESOURCES
**Employee Travel,
Entertainment
and Business
Expense
Reimbursement
Policy and
Procedures**

2019

INDEX

I. Purpose	3
II. Policy and Authority	3
III. Applicability	3
IV. Account Classification of Expenses	3
V. Business Travel and Related Expenses	3
VI. Types of Travel Expenses	4
VII. Non-Employee Travel	6
VIII. Non-Travel Business Expenses	6
IX. Accepting Gifts, Meals, and Invitations	6
X. Other Non-Reimbursable Expenses	6
XI. Documentation and Reimbursement Procedures	6
Appendixes	7



I. PURPOSE

This policy defines the appropriate legal use of funds under Internal Revenue Code (IRS) guidelines ([irs.gov/publications/p463/index.html](https://www.irs.gov/publications/p463/index.html)) for employee travel, entertainment, and business expenses.

II. POLICY AND AUTHORITY

The IRS requires reimbursable expenditures to be supported by adequate records that clearly establish the expenditures are (1) ordinary and necessary, (2) reasonable in amount, and (3) incurred for a valid business purpose.

In order for you to be reimbursed by SVA, the expenses must be incurred for College business and meet the documentation standards set forth below.

III. APPLICABILITY

This policy and these procedures apply to every individual who incurs, reviews, or approves travel and business expenses on behalf of SVA. Departments may elect to impose stricter controls over travel and business expenditures than those required by this policy.

IV. ACCOUNT CLASSIFICATION OF EXPENSES

Reimbursable expenses should be charged to the appropriate expense account number according to your department's operating budget. A Chart of Accounts may be obtained from the Controller's Office.

V. BUSINESS TRAVEL AND RELATED EXPENSES

A. Overview

All employees traveling on SVA business must obtain approval by your Department Head/Chair and/or President or Controller prior to taking the trip via the completion of Travel Authorization and Business Advance Form (see attached). You may also locate this form on SVA's website: my.sva.edu (under Employee Services, Employee Expenses T&E Forms).

B. General Consideration

Before travel arrangements are made, the traveler should:

- Inform her/his supervisor that the benefits of the trip justify its time and expense after considering cost-effective alternatives, such as video or teleconferencing
- Obtain appropriate approval via the completion of a Travel Authorization and Business Advance Form

The Controller's Office is responsible for ensuring compliance with travel policies, procedures, and expenditures.

Reimbursements will be for the lowest reasonable cost of travel given the particular circumstances. No portion of costs associated with personal travel will be paid by SVA.

C. Business Advances

Business advances are for cash outlays only; not for charges, such as hotel accommodations that can be paid with a credit card. All advances will be disbursed to you from Accounts Payable by check or by ACH. Please contact Accounts Payable if you want the advance through ACH (electronic wire transfer)

- Employees may receive a maximum of \$100 per day for domestic travel and \$130 per day for international travel. Request for an advance should be made on a Travel Authorization and Business Advance Form. The GL (General Ledger) code for an advance is #1-000000-1753030. The form must be approved by your department head/chair prior to submission and submitted to Accounts Payable at least 10 business days in advance of your trip.
- Advances must be accounted for on the Travel, Entertainment, and Business Expense Report within 10 business days following a trip or from the time the expense was incurred. Advances exceeding balances are payable by check to SVA; expenses exceeding advances are accounted for on the expense report.

D. International Travel-SVA Global Assistance Program

SVA has partnered with International SOS, the world's leading medical and travel security risk services company, to provide access to a global network of 27 Assistance Centers available 24/7. This assistance program provides expanded protection to deal with travel, medical and security needs that might arise during your overseas travel. In order to receive these services, at no cost to you, international SVA travelers are required to enroll for these services by:

1. Registering their trip on the International SOS platform:

Each traveler should register with My Trips [here](#) using their SVA e-mail and then entering their itinerary details.

and

2. Completing the Travel Risk Awareness eLearning course:

- Launch the new [Training Hub](#)
- Select the "Register" link
- Complete course modules and save a copy of your Completion Certificate

VI. TYPES OF TRAVEL EXPENSES

A. Transportation

The following segments of this document outline SVA's expectation of prospective travelers regarding modes of travel.

1. AIR TRAVEL

Assuming reasonable accommodations for personal convenience and safety, travelers must book the lowest-priced fare available for both domestic and foreign travel. Typically, lowest-price fare is coach. If a traveler chooses an upgrade over the lowest-priced fare, it is the responsibility of that individual to pay the difference between the lowest-priced fare available and the upgrade amount. For flights over five (5) hours flying business-class is permissible, provided that such expense is covered by the department's budget, and is approved on the Travel Authorization and Business Advance Form.

- When possible, reservations should be made as far in advance as needed to take advantage of advance purchase discounts. This is often at least one month in advance.
- SVA will not reimburse for the value of frequent flyer miles used for travel.
- SVA will not pay for travel interrupted by convenience or vacation.
- If a trip is canceled for reasons beyond the control of the traveler, SVA will pay for costs expended to date.

2. AIRPORT BUSES, SHUTTLES, CAR SERVICE AND TAXIS

Travelers should use the most cost-efficient means of travel to and from airports, with due consideration for reasonable personal convenience and safety.

Travelers should use complimentary shuttle service to and from the airport if provided by hotels or conferences. Lacking such service, travelers should use regularly scheduled buses or taxis between airports and hotels. Auto rentals should be considered only in the absence of less expensive modes of transportation providing reasonable convenience.

3. AUTOMOBILE EXPENSES

Personal Automobile Expenses

- Employees may use their personal car for business purposes if it is less expensive than renting a car, taking a taxi or bus, using alternate transportation, or to save time.
- Employee will be reimbursed at the federal government mileage rate in effect at the time of travel. The current rates are available from the IRS website: www.irs.gov/tax-professionals/standard-mileage-rates

- SVA reimburses for actual mileage using the most direct route. Adequate records must be maintained to document mileage claimed, e.g., Google Maps, google.com/maps.
- Tolls, ferries, and parking expenses incurred while on business travel are reimbursable in addition to the mileage allowance. Personal use, parking tickets, traffic fines and penalties, towing charges, accidents and theft losses are not reimbursable as they are covered by the IRS mileage reimbursement formula.
- Personal vehicles used for SVA business should be adequately insured for public liability insurance protection. Travelers are responsible for insuring their own vehicles. Travelers will not be reimbursed by SVA for collision losses that occur during business use of a personal vehicle. In the event of an accident, the owner's personal insurance provides coverage and the owner is personally responsible for any deductible payable. SVA does not provide any coverage for comprehensive or collision for personal vehicles used on business.
- Carpooling is encouraged.
- SVA does not reimburse for regular commuting to and from work.

Automobile Rental Contract Expenses

Travelers requiring a rental car should obtain the most cost-efficient rental agreement. In general, subcompact or compact automobiles are considered appropriate and reasonable for SVA travelers. Some travelers with memberships in professional organizations may receive discounts and are encouraged to use those discounts.

Insurance Coverage: Liability Insurance

- All travelers must check the car rental contract to verify the inclusion of liability insurance, comprehensive (fire and theft) and collision.
- The liability insurance must be purchased if it is not automatically included in the car rental contract.

Other

- Non-employees (spouses, domestic partners, or other travel companions) are not permitted to drive vehicles rented by College.
- Non-employees (spouses, domestic partners, or other travel companions) whether traveling on SVA business or not, are not covered under other SVA insurance policies.

Receipts for air travel/car rental

- Travelers must submit itemized receipts to support air travel and car rental expenses.

- Original receipts, copies, or credit card statements are acceptable.

B. Hotels/Lodging

HOTEL ACCOMMODATIONS

- Allowable lodging cost is generally based on the least expensive available rate for occupancy in moderately priced, safe accommodations given reasonable personal convenience.
- An employee may stay at a place where lodging costs exceed the cost of a room at another hotel in the area (a) in the case of a meeting or conference and if staying at the meeting site enables the employee to gain professional benefits due to interaction with other attendees, or (b) if it results in a lower overall trip cost to SVA as a result of reduced transportation or other costs.
- Under IRS regulations the cost of lodging for overnight travel within 50 miles of the traveler's place of business is not an allowable cost unless the circumstances necessitating such overnight travel are fully documented as to the compelling business purpose and approved in writing by the department head responsible for authorizing the travel. Potential criteria for approval may include extremely late night or early morning job responsibilities or excessive travel time due to extreme traffic or weather conditions.
- When possible, reservations should be made as far in advance as needed to take advantage of advance purchase discounts or a special conference rate. This is often one month in advance.
- Travelers are encouraged to use their memberships in specific groups or organizations to obtain discounts that exceed those otherwise available.

CANCELLATION OF ACCOMMODATIONS

- SVA is not responsible for any charges or penalties resulting from the traveler's failure to give proper notice of cancellation.
- SVA will pay for costs resulting from cancellations due to circumstances beyond the control of the traveler.

RECEIPTS FOR HOTEL/LODGING

- Travelers must submit itemized receipts to support lodging expenses.
- Original receipts, copies, or credit card statements are acceptable.

C. Meals and Incidentals

MEALS

The traveler will be reimbursed for his/her actual cost of meals and gratuities. Meals may not be either lavish or extravagant. Original receipts are required for all meal

expenses, regardless of amount. If a group of colleagues splits a bill and original receipts are not readily available, the traveler should document the cost of their individual portion of the bill as well as the circumstances.

Business and Entertainment Meal Expense: IRS regulations pertaining to entertainment meals require original receipts for meals, the name(s) of the guest(s), title(s), or other designation(s) as well as the business relationship to the employee. In addition, the business purpose, place, date, and amount of the expenditure must be documented.

SVA does not reimburse for the following costs:

- Meals in lieu of those included in conference registration fees
- Tips in excess of 20% of meal cost
- Meals for spouse or other personal travel companion without a valid business purpose

ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES

Employees should not consume alcoholic beverages during business hours. This applies particularly to business lunches. In the event an employee consumes alcoholic beverages in connection with a business function where SVA management has approved the serving of alcohol, SVA expects that employees will act responsibly and avoid excess. If an employee has any concerns that he/she is not capable of safely driving after such events, SVA will reimburse the cost of alternative transportation to ensure that the employee does not place themselves or others in danger. An employee who is arrested and convicted for Driving Under the Influence while in the performance of company business, or when returning from a business function, is subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

STUDENTS AND ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES

Undergraduate Students

- No alcoholic beverages may be served at events hosted by an undergraduate department or by any department whose event is intended primarily for undergraduate students who are not yet 21.
- Under no circumstances may alcoholic beverages be offered to undergraduate students at bars, restaurants, or other similar settings.

Graduate Students

Care and thought should go into deciding if alcoholic beverages are served to graduate students. The following rules apply:

- Wine or beer (not hard alcohol) may be served for events hosted by a graduate department.
- The department must retain at least one licensed bartender for each bar setup.

- Written permission must be received from the Provost prior to the event.
- IDs are checked by the bartender.
- Non-alcoholic beverages are also available.

D. Spouse/Companion/Family Travel

In general, SVA will not reimburse travel expenses incurred by an employee's spouse/companion accompanying the employee on a business trip.

E. Telephone and Internet Usage

- The traveler will be reimbursed for personal phone calls of reasonable length, which allows them to stay in touch with their family.
- SVA expects that the traveler use the most economical or efficient means of accessing the Internet when traveling.

F. Reimbursable miscellaneous travel expenses

Miscellaneous travel expenses are generally reimbursable to the extent they are reasonable and necessary business expenditures. A list of such expenses can be found in Appendix A.

VII. NON-EMPLOYEE TRAVEL

Overview

Non-employees of SVA incurring SVA business-related travel expenses include, but not limited to job applicants, guest lecturers, and speakers. Such an expense is permissible, provided that such expense is covered by the department's budget and approved on the Travel Authorization and Business Advance Form.

Specific procedures

- Non-employees may make their own travel arrangements at the discretion of the SVA department authorizing travel, provided they adhere fully to the SVA Travel Policy.
- Non-employees traveling on College-related business may not rent vehicles in SVA's name.

VIII. NON-TRAVEL BUSINESS EXPENSES

Overview

SVA will generally reimburse expenditures incurred for ordinary and reasonable business-related expenses that support the education, research, and public service missions of SVA. There are some specific non-travel expenses worth noting, and SVA's treatment of those expenses.

Special Occasion Parties and Associated Gifts

SVA will reimburse for special occasion gift expenses (e.g., flowers) to faculty, staff, or students. SVA will also reimburse such gift expenses for a faculty or staff member's immediate family to include a spouse,

domestic partner, child, stepchild, sibling, parent, stepparent, grandparent, grandchild, father-in-law, mother-in-law, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, brother-in-law, or sister-in-law. The cost of the gift can be no more than \$100. Examples are weddings, birth of a child, get-well wishes, and passings.

Professional Memberships

- Every effort must be made to ensure that institutional memberships are associated with College positions or departments rather than with individuals. Payment for allowable institutional memberships should be made by SVA directly to the association.
- The expenditure for individual association membership fees, dues, or licenses that are not directly related to the individual's position or academic discipline will not be paid for by SVA.

IX. ACCEPTING GIFTS, MEALS, AND INVITATIONS

Employees may accept gifts, meals, or invitations to events from vendors of nominal value (generally \$100 or less) that are not perceived as influencing or obligating employees to conduct business with that vendor; over \$100 requires the approval of senior management prior to acceptance.

X. OTHER NON-REIMBURSABLE EXPENSES

Expenditures with any of the following characteristics are considered by SVA to be non-reimbursable:

- It is extreme, excessive, illegal, or is not a normal and ordinary cost incurred in the conduct of official College activities
- It represents a personal expense that is neither business-related nor required in carrying out an individual's job responsibilities
- The expenditure was (or will be) reimbursed from another source
- Meal expenses with other employees that do not have a business purpose, including "working lunches"
- A list of other non-reimbursable expenses can be found in Appendix B

XI. DOCUMENTATION AND REIMBURSEMENT PROCEDURES

A. Substantiation of Expenses

Under IRS requirements, the following documentation criteria must be met to qualify for reimbursement:

- The business purpose for the expenditure must be stated.
- The identity and business relationship of others participating in the event (e.g., entertainment, business meal, etc.) covered by the expenditure must be stated.

- Expense documentation must include the name and title of employee who incurred the expense.
- Itemized receipts must be attached (e.g., itemized hotel bills, airline passenger receipt coupons, automobile rental invoices, etc.). Photocopies and credit card statements are also acceptable.

B. Reimbursement Procedures

Requests for reimbursement should be submitted within 30 days of when the expense occurred or associated travel was completed.

All travel, entertainment, and business expenses personally paid for by an employee must be accounted for on an expense reimbursement report. These reports (one for domestic travel and one for international travel) are located on my.sva.edu (under Employee Services, Employee Expenses T&E Forms). As a matter of policy, expenses must be substantiated with bona fide proof of payment, regardless of the amount. This includes originals of credit card receipts/statements; hotel bill with each charge listed separately; parking, gas or toll receipts; invoices; etc. Receipts should be affixed to the back of the form in the same order as they appear on the completed reimbursement report. The purpose must be indicated on the Travel, Entertainment, and Business Expense Reimbursement Report.

- Staple all receipts to one or more sheets of standard 8½ x 11" paper and include explanations in the margins.
- In all cases, there must be a clear trail from the receipted amounts to the amounts claimed on the expense report.
- All receipts should be numbered so that it coincides with each number line on the expense form.
- For online purchases made with an employee's individual credit card, a printed web-page receipt may be submitted, or a credit card statement with an explanation of the item charged.
- If there is a currency conversion associated with the expense, the conversion rate should be included next to the expense description. If you do not know the currency rate, an assumption will be accepted by using the currency converter on the Travel, Entertainment, and Business Expense Form. The average rate for your stay is acceptable.
- The employee and the employee's supervisor or department head must sign the report.
- Chair/department heads must review and approve the expense report, including checking for adequate documentation and the availability of funding before submitting to Accounts Payable.
- Submit the completed and signed report with all attachments to Accounts Payable for processing.

APPENDIX A. REIMBURSABLE MISCELLANEOUS TRAVEL EXPENSES

The following items are generally reimbursable to the extent they are reasonable and necessary business expenditures:

- Business office expenses (fax, copy services, Internet charges, laptop computer rentals, in-room safe, etc.), business phone calls
- Conference fees
- Currency conversion fees
- Gasoline for refueling a rented car
- Ground transportation (train, taxi, bus, subway, etc.)
- Laundry and dry cleaning charges for trips exceeding three calendar days
- Parking and tolls
- Reasonable personal phone calls that allow the traveler to stay in touch with his/her family
- Tips up to 20% of meal cost
- Immunizations and international driving permits
- Visa fees and cost of obtaining passport for business travel

APPENDIX B. NON-REIMBURSABLE EXPENSES

The following items are generally not reimbursable. Note: This list of non-reimbursable expenses is intended to be representative, not all-inclusive.

- Amusement, entertainment, or social activities that are not directly connected to College functions and purposes
- Memberships and other purchases that lend themselves to personal use, such as Automobile Association of America, airline clubs, Sam's Club, newspaper home delivery
- Trip/flight insurance
- Parking tickets and fines for traffic violations
- Personal expenses such as personal grooming items
- Personal-use segments of airfare while on SVA business
- Personal-use portion of a car rented for SVA business (i.e. when a vacation or other personal travel is combined with business travel)
- Laundry service for trips of three days or less
- Childcare or pet care costs
- Loss of cash advance money or airline tickets
- Personal gifts and souvenirs
- Extra-cost services such as barber, beautician, manicurist, shoeshine, and massage
- Additional charges for room upgrades, poolside rooms, or special floors, exclusive of any ADA accommodations
- Special room services, such as in-room movies and mini-bar