

USM'S GUIDELINE FOR TRAVEL REIMBURSEMENT OF MEALS

The following information is meant to be used as a quick guide regarding reimbursements of meals while traveling. Each traveler should review Administrative Practice Letter (APL) Section IV-B for more detailed information prior to any trip. Travelers should consult Business Services with questions about particular campus procedures or requirements prior to any travel.

Reimbursement for meals while traveling can be expensed in two ways:

1a) Meals at Actual Cost

Travelers can submit itemized receipts from meals and be reimbursed at cost. Restaurant tear slips are not considered valid receipts. Actual meal costs are expected to be reasonable and for the traveler only. Per APL Section IV-B, meals should not exceed \$48 per day. When more than one University employee is present, each should pay for his/her own meal. If impractical, all names of other employees should be noted on the appropriate Travel Expense Voucher (TEV). Meal costs for non-employees, if included on the TEV form, must be fully explained (i.e., names, affiliations, purpose).

All actual cost reimbursements require an itemized receipt. If, however, a receipt is not issued or is lost, you may use the Lost/Missing Receipt Form as sufficient documentation of the actual cost. The University expects that a good faith effort will be made by travelers to collect and retain all receipts. A traveler should avoid using the Lost/Missing Receipt Form unless absolutely necessary.

1b) Meals at Actual for High Cost Local

If a traveler is planning a trip to a high cost location and believes that meals at the Actual Cost rate of \$48 per day will not be sufficient to cover reasonable meal expenses they may request, in advance, a higher Actual Cost meal rate. This request should be included on a Travel Request/Advance Form, <http://usm.maine.edu/bus/trvladv.xls>, and be submitted to Business Services after all department approvals have been granted. See current CONUS (Continental US) rates for a determination of high cost locations.

Once Business Services has reviewed the traveler's data and trip destination included on the Travel Request/Advance Form, a determination will be made to approve the High Cost Location meal expense. Business Services will then communicate their decision to the traveler prior to the trip.

It is important to note that Meals at Actual for High Cost Locals follow all the same guidelines as the Meals at Actual Cost, as stated in #1 above.

2) Meals at Per Diem, in Lieu of Receipts for Meals

Travelers can be reimbursed for the current CONUS Per Diem rate of \$39 per day for meals and incidental expenses. Incidental expenses include laundry expenses and gratuities for meals. If the traveler selects this option, he/she must use this option for the entire trip (i.e., traveler will not be reimbursed for any specific meal in which a receipt is presented). Departments may set Per Diem rates or meal allowances lower than those set forth in this policy. Please review APL Section IV-B for additional information about Per Diems. In addition, for partial days please check Partial Per Diem Rates at: <http://usm.maine.edu/bus/perdiem2.html>

Helpful links:

Travel Request/Advance Form: <http://usm.maine.edu/bus/trvladv.xls>

Current CONUS rates:

<https://secureapp2.hqda.pentagon.mil/perdiem/perdiemrates.html>

Administrative Practice Letter (APL) Section IV-B : <http://www.maine.edu/pdf/apl26.pdf>