Frequently Asked Questions

INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL
For Faculty and Staff Traveling Independently

This FAQ is designed for faculty and staff who are not traveling with students on academic programs.

Q: Do I need pre-approval to travel?

A: Yes, pre-approval is required to travel internationally; the UVM Travel Policy (http://www.uvm.edu/policies/travel/travel.pdf) requires a faculty or staff member (“traveler”) traveling outside of the U.S. or Canada to complete a Travel Authorization Form in PeopleSoft. The Form requests the following information: Trip Description/Dates/Comments/Dollar Amount/Chart String. In addition, many federal and other sponsors must approve foreign travel before a trip takes place or expenses are incurred. Please contact Sponsored Project Administration if you have questions about the terms of your sponsored activities.

Q: For what purpose is the information on the PeopleSoft Form used?

A: The information assists UVM Disbursement Center in validating the expenses eligible for reimbursement in a manner consistent with the Travel Policy, and encumbers funds on the chart string budget. It also allows the University to know the location of travelers abroad in the event of an emergency so as to facilitate emergency assistance to, or evacuation of, the traveler.

Q: What policy governs allowable travel expenses?

A: The UVM Travel policy applies to persons engaged in UVM-related travel, regardless of funding source. UVM-related travel is travel undertaken while on assignment for, or at the direction of, the University on behalf of, or in furtherance of the business of, the University.

If travel is being charged to a sponsored project and the terms are more restrictive than those of the University, the terms of the grant or contract apply. Similarly, departments may elect to impose stricter controls over travel expenditures than those required by the Travel Policy. If the terms imposed by grants, contracts, or University departments are less restrictive than those of the University, the University policy applies.

Q: Are there special considerations if travel is funded by federal grant or contract monies?

A: Yes. These travelers are required by the "Fly America Act" to use United States air carrier service for all air travel and cargo transportation services, regardless of cost or convenience. There is an exception to this requirement if the transportation provided under a bilateral or multilateral air transport agreement to which the United States
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Government and the government of a foreign country are parties, and which the U.S. Department of Transportation has determined meets Fly America Act requirements. However, travelers funded by the U.S. Department of Defense may not utilize Open Skies Agreements unless they qualify for an exemption under the Federal Travel Regulations that the U.S. General Services Administration promulgates. For further information, please contact the UVM Associate Vice President for Research Administration, and see the Resources list below.

Q: Does UVM offer an emergency assistance and evacuation services program?
A: Yes. The University has a contract with International SOS (SOS) to provide worldwide assistance and evacuation services to persons engaged in UVM-related travel. Travelers are urged to obtain a “wallet card” from the UVM Department of Risk Management or the UVM Office of International Education. The wallet card contains the UVM group membership number, and the SOS alarm center numbers. SOS services range from telephone advice and referrals to full-scale evacuation by private air ambulance. The SOS network operates 24 hours a day.

The UVM membership number, 11BSGC000020, is the traveler’s member login. Pre-registration is not required, but a traveler may benefit from pre-registering because SOS provides medical, security and general travel advice, such as information on the standard of health care, how to pay for medical care, the availability of medications, safety of the blood supply, embassy/visa information, dialing code information, cultural etiquette and financial and voltage/plug information.

Q: Is SOS a health insurance coverage provider?
A: No; SOS is not a health insurer. Travelers should check with their health insurance carriers before leaving the country about coverage and claims when medical assistance is needed outside the U.S. See http://www.uvm.edu/~oies/?Page=info.html.

Q: May I travel to a location subject to a U.S. Department of State travel warning?
A: UVM does not prohibit travel to locations subject to a U.S. Department of State travel warning, but recommends that the traveler consult with the traveler’s supervisor and the UVM Department of Risk Management regarding risk mitigation strategies for the proposed travel.
Q: Do I need travel accident insurance?

A: UVM maintains an Accidental Death and Dismemberment policy covering “employees injured while riding as a passenger in, or boarding or alighting from any land or water conveyance, or riding in a passenger in, or boarding or alighting from any civil aircraft in connection with UVM-related travel.” Please contact the UVM Department of Risk Management if you have questions regarding this coverage.

Q: Am I covered by worker’s compensation if I am injured while traveling internationally on UVM business?

A: Yes. Medical expenses related to the treatment of a work-related injury or illness are covered under worker's compensation. These expenses include doctor, hospital, and physical therapy services, prescription medication, and medical equipment. Alternative treatments such as massage therapy and acupuncture must be pre-approved.

Q: In general, what do I need to know about travel and export controls?

A: Export controls govern the shipment, transmission, or transfer of certain sensitive items, information or software to foreign persons or entities. The rules may require pre-authorization from the U.S. Government in the form of an export license. Non-compliance can subject both the traveler and UVM to serious financial penalties; the traveler may also be at risk of imprisonment. The Office of the UVM Associate Vice President for Research Administration can provide pre-trip assistance by reviewing the specific requirements with the traveler.

Q: Do export control restrictions govern what I may bring with me when traveling?

A: Yes. When traveling abroad, any physical items or technical data in your possession are considered to be “exported” from the U.S. to your destination(s). However, in most situations, commercially available University-owned electronic devices and software (e.g., laptops, data storage devices) qualify for the “tools of the trade” exception; similarly, personally owned items (e.g., cell phone) qualify for an exception and, as such, would not require a license for most countries. All data must qualify as public domain.

The following restrictions also apply where exceptions otherwise exist:

- Travel must be for less than one year’s duration
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- Equipment must be reasonable and qualify as equipment that people in your discipline would generally recognize as a “tool of the trade” provided other restrictions do not apply
- You must maintain effective control of the item(s) at all times by retaining physical possession or securing the item in a hotel safe or locked or guarded facility
- Travel cannot be to an embargoed country
- Certain research equipment, software/source code, select agents, and toxins may not qualify
- The exemptions do not cover any hardware controlled under the United States Munitions List (USML) and high-tech encryption products (generally over 64 bit)

If you have questions regarding what items you may bring on your trip, please contact the Associate Vice President for Research Administration before your trip.

In addition to export control considerations, other countries have their own laws and practices regarding what equipment may be brought into their country and a right to inspect or seize such equipment. It is best practice to limit the equipment and data that are brought to a minimum and to sanitize (wipe) any data devices before leaving and upon returning.

Q: What restrictions, if any, apply to UVM-related activities in a country that is subject to economic and trade sanctions?

A: Any proposed activities of this kind must be reviewed and authorized in advance by the UVM Associate Vice President for Research Administration. This includes UVM-related travel to countries subject to sanctions by the Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) of the U.S. Department of the Treasury, which must be reviewed and approved by the UVM Associate Vice President for Research Administration (Export Controls Officer) before funds are expended and before travel occurs to ensure that all travel-related activities are covered by a general license or that, if mandated, a specific license is obtained before travel starts. Failure to obtain prior approval may result in significant personal liability for the traveler if a review shows export violations. It may also result in disallowance of expense reimbursement.

Related Policies

- Export Controls – Regulations and Resources: http://www.uvm.edu/~export/
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Additional Resources

- U.S. Department of State travel website: http://www.state.gov/travel/
- U.S. Department of State Office of American Citizen Services and Crisis Management: http://travel.state.gov/content/passports/english/country.html
- U.S. Department of State Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP): https://step.state.gov/step/
- U.S. Department of the Treasury Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) Sanctions List: http://www.treasury.gov/resource-center/sanctions/Programs/Programs.aspx
- Centers for Disease Control- Traveler’s Health website: http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/
- UVM Medical Center International Travel Clinic: (802) 847-4594
  https://www.uvmhealth.org/medcenter/Pages/Departments-and-Programs/International-Travel-Clinic.aspx
- Fly America Act: http://www.gsa.gov/portal/content/103191
  - Open Skies Partners: http://www.state.gov/eb/rls/othr/ata/114805.htm

For assistance:

- **Travel approval and reimbursement issues**

- **Insurance Issues Other than Health Insurance**
  UVM Department of Risk Management & Safety: http://www.uvm.edu/~riskmgmt/

- **Health Care Coverage**
  UVM Benefits Office: http://www.uvm.edu/hrs/?Page=contactus.html;
  http://www.uvm.edu/hrs/?Page=info/benefits/benefitsinfo.html
  UVM Office of International Education: http://www.uvm.edu/oie

- **Travel Funded by Federal Grants or Contracts**
  UVM Sponsored Project Administration: http://www.uvm.edu/spa/?Page=contact.html&SM=contact_submenu.html

- **Export Controls**
  UVM Sponsored Project Administration: http://www.uvm.edu/spa/?Page=contact.html&SM=contact_submenu.html
  UVM Compliance Office: http://www.uvm.edu/~complian/?Page=contact.html