



## COVID-19 Travel Frequently Asked Questions – revised 9/15/20

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**At this time, only essential, domestic travel is allowable. Please see Travel Addendum.**

### 1. Do I need a travel authorization in advance of my trip?

Yes, **all domestic travel** requires the creation of a travel authorization in PeopleSoft. **International travel is not allowed at this time.**

- If you are a **self-service customer**, and create your own travel authorizations:
  - Review the [Travel Authorization user guide \(PDF\)](#)
  - Review the [Creating a Travel Authorization video](#)
  - Be sure to create your expense report using your travel authorization. See the video demonstrating the [creation of an expense report](#) and populating the new report from a Travel Authorization
- If you are a **full-service customer** of the Disbursement Center Travel team, email [travel@uvm.edu](mailto:travel@uvm.edu) the following information for the creation of a travel authorization:
  - Name of traveler
  - Empl ID
  - Clear business purpose of trip
  - Destination
  - Start and end dates
  - Dollar amount to be encumbered
  - Chartstring
- Local mileage and intra-state day trips (e.g. Extension trips to local farms) do not need a travel authorization. If you are staying overnight, and still within Vermont, you will need to complete a travel authorization.
- If no travel authorization is created, travel expenses may not be reimbursed, regardless of the source of payment (personal payment or purchasing card).
- If a trip is cancelled, please email [travel@uvm.edu](mailto:travel@uvm.edu) so that the travel authorization can be closed.

### 2. An outside organization is reimbursing for my travel expenses, so I don't want to enter a dollar amount in a travel authorization. What should I do?

You must complete a travel authorization. In addition to allowing the University to track travel for health and safety purposes, PeopleSoft will encumber any amount entered in a travel authorization, thereby reducing your budget balance available. The travel authorization requires a dollar amount; one can easily enter or request \$1 if no encumbrance is needed, so there is little effect on the budget.

### 3. How far in advance do I need to start my travel authorization?

An employee must complete and submit a travel authorization a minimum of 14 days in advance of any travel to allow time to obtain all approvals. Do not make any travel arrangements until your travel has been approved.

### 4. Who approves my travel authorization for essential travel?

Essential travel requires Dean or Vice President approval.

- If you are a [self-service customer](#), create your Travel Authorizations in PeopleSoft, indicating why the travel is essential. Notify your departmental approver. The departmental approver will approve the form in PeopleSoft and notify the appropriate Dean or Vice President.
- If you are a [full service customer](#) of the Disbursement Center Travel team, your departmental approver must email [travel@uvm.edu](mailto:travel@uvm.edu) the following information for the creation of a Travel Authorization:
  - Reason that the travel is essential
  - Name of traveler
  - Empl ID
  - Clear business purpose of trip
  - Destination
  - Start and end dates
  - Dollar amount to be encumbered
  - Chartstring

The Disbursement Center will create the travel authorization in PeopleSoft and notify the appropriate Dean/Vice President for approval.

#### 5. [If a group of UVM employees are traveling together, how many travel authorizations are required?](#)

A travel authorization is required for each UVM employee.

#### 6. [Do I need a travel authorization for my personal travel?](#)

- No, you don't need a travel authorization for personal travel. Please be aware of the possibility of quarantine measures being introduced while you are traveling. These measures could affect both outbound and return travel. Even on personal travel, you should regularly refer to [UVM's COVID-19 website](#) for the latest policy decisions and information. **See UVM's Travel Policy addendum as well.**
- The [State of Vermont Health Department](#) maintains information and data regarding domestic and international travel.
- You will need to complete the [Employee Health Check-In](#) before returning to a UVM work location.

#### 7. [I am planning a UVM business trip with a personal stop. When we are allowed to travel, how should this be reflected in the travel authorization?](#)

- In the Comments box on the Travel Authorization, indicate the UVM business destination, and add the location information for the personal travel, adding the dates in each location.

#### 8. [I am in the middle of my trip, how can I create a Travel Authorization?](#)

- One cannot create a travel authorization in PeopleSoft after the start of the trip. However, if your trip extends for several weeks, you need to create a Travel Authorization with a start date a few days in the future. Use the Comments box to indicate the actual trip start date.
- You should not be traveling until your travel has been approved. If you travel prior to obtaining the required approvals the University will not reimburse you for your travel expenses, and you are subject to the quarantine requirements upon your return.

9. I have a travel authorization and the trip has been cancelled. How do I cancel the travel authorization?

Email [travel@uvm.edu](mailto:travel@uvm.edu), and the Disbursement Center Travel team will cancel the travel authorization for you.

10. Should I purchase travel/trip insurance for domestic travel?

- No. Since the Coronavirus is now widely considered a foreseeable event, standard trip cancellation insurance is unlikely to cover cancellations due to Coronavirus complications.
  - No standard travel insurance policy will protect you from canceling a trip out of fear.
  - In order for a traveler to be eligible for the benefits on a travel insurance policy, the event that impacts their trip has to be specifically listed in their policy under covered events. Unfortunately, viral outbreaks, epidemics and pandemics are not typically listed in a policy.
  - In many instances, travel insurance plans stopped providing this coverage since the outbreak was named a Pandemic or Epidemic by the Centers for Disease Control.
  - Coronavirus is a public health emergency of international concern and many airlines and other travel suppliers are canceling service, refunding trips and waiving change fees for travel for the next many months. Seeing if your travel supplier can accommodate changes should be the first step.

11. Should I purchase travel/trip insurance for international travel?

**No international travel is allowed until further notice. Please see the Travel Policy Addendum.**

- Travel insurance for international travel is allowable under the current Travel Policy. This would accommodate weather emergencies, plane delays, etc.
- Travelers are strongly encouraged to read the description of coverage or insurance policy for details regarding their available coverage. The Coronavirus outbreak event is considered a foreseeable event under any plans purchased on or after January 29, 2020.
- If a traveler meets the requirements for coverage due to sickness, you may be covered for trip cancellation.
- Coverage depends on when the plan was purchased.

12. I registered for a conference, but it was cancelled.

- If the conference host cancelled the event, they should give a full refund of the registration cost.
- Check with any hotel to confirm cancellation of the reservation. (Often, a no-show at a hotel when a room is reserved will result in being charged one night's room rate.) Check the hotel cancellation policy. Most hotels have no cancellation fee if cancelled 24 - 48 hours before arrival.
- Check with any car rental to confirm cancellation of the reservation.

13. I registered for a conference and paid for it personally. It is rescheduled months from now. When can I get reimbursed?

- Per the UVM Travel policy, no travel expenses will be reimbursed before the trip has occurred.

**14. I paid for airfare with my UVM purchasing card, and the conference/event was cancelled.**

- Confirm with the airline that you will not be flying, and that the credit amount is available for use for the next 12 months.
- Any change fee will be covered by UVM. Documentation will include the original airfare purchase, conference outline, etc.
- Airlines are changing their cancellation/re-booking policies by the day. Check the airline website for updates. Airlines are considering when airfare was booked, travel dates, and future travel dates.

**15. I paid for airfare personally because I don't have a UVM purchasing card.**

- Confirm with the airline that you will not be flying, and that the credit amount is available for use for the next 12 months.
- The credit is available for personal use.
- Reimbursement will occur only after the travel credit is used for UVM business, and the proper documentation is submitted.
- Any change fee will be covered by UVM if the credit is used for UVM business. Documentation must include the original airfare purchase, conference outline, etc.
- Airlines are frequently updating their cancellation/re-booking policies. Check the airline website for updates. Airlines are considering when airfare was booked, travel dates, and future travel dates.

**16. I paid for airfare personally even though I have a UVM purchasing card.**

- Confirm with the airline that you will not be flying, and that the credit amount is available for use for the next 12 months.
- The credit is available for personal use.
- Reimbursement will occur only after the travel credit is used for UVM business, and the proper documentation is submitted.
- Any change fee will be covered by your department if the credit is used for UVM business. Documentation must include the original airfare purchase, conference outline, etc.
- Airlines are frequently updating their cancellation/re-booking policies. Check the airline website for updates. Airlines are considering when airfare was booked, travel dates, and future travel dates.

**17. I am scheduled to attend a conference, but I don't want to attend due to the current situation with COVID-19.**

- Check with your conference regarding a registration refund.
- Confirm cancellation of hotel and car rental reservations. Check the hotel cancellation policy. Most hotels have no cancellation fee if cancelled 24 - 48 hours before arrival.
- Confirm with the airline that you will not be flying, and that the credit amount is available for use for the next 12 months.
- Airlines are frequently updating their cancellation/re-booking policies. Check the airline website for updates. Airlines are considering when airfare was booked, travel dates, and future travel dates.

18. Can I use an alternative transportation method, besides airfare, even though it's more expensive?

- Personal vehicles or rental vehicles are allowable for use in lieu of air travel, during the height of the COVID-19 outbreak.
- Yes, especially if other modes of transportation have left you stranded.

19. I had planned to attend a future conference but have not yet made travel arrangements. Should I?

- Only essential travel is allowable at this time. In addition, one should consider personal preference, risk tolerance, and general overall health.
- A travel authorization is required before any travel arrangements are made.
- Check the cancellation policy for your conference, hotel, and the airlines you may use. Airlines are frequently updating their cancellation policies.

20. My conference is cancelled, and it was charged to sponsored funds. Will my grant cover any change fees?

- You will need to check with your SPA analyst and sponsoring agency regarding various cancellation fees and coverage by those funds.

21. I'm returning from a trip (UVM business-related or personal), and I was in/passed through one of the [Centers for Disease Control \(CDC\) level 2 \(moderate risk\)/level 3 \(high risk\) areas](#). What should I do?

- You must complete the Employee Health Check-in before returning to a UVM work location.
- Currently, most regions of the world are considered level 3 by the CDC. Individuals must **stay home** and monitor their health for 14 days. Call Health Department epidemiology and infectious disease staff at **802-863-7240** for monitoring information. If you have symptoms of fever, cough or difficulty breathing call your health care provider.
- For travel within the United States, a 14-day quarantine may be required upon return, depending on the destination. See the [Vermont Department of Health US northeast regional map by county](#). More information about quarantine can be found at the [Department of Health COVID Response page](#).
- Please call the [Vermont Department of Health](#) at 802-863-7240 and let them know that you have returned from an affected area. The Health Department will be in regular contact with you for 14 days since the day you left the affected area to monitor you for symptoms of shortness of breath, cough or fever.

The University is updating its [COVID-19 webpage](#) regularly.