

TRAVEL POLICY



NLNAC

National League for Nursing Accrediting Commission, Inc.

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TRAVEL POLICY PURPOSE AND ENFORCEMENT

Purpose

This document provides guidelines and establishes procedures for individuals incurring business travel expenses on the organization's behalf.

Objectives:

- Ensure all travelers have a clear and consistent understanding of policies and procedures for business travel.
- Provide business travelers with a reasonable level of service, comfort, and safety at the lowest possible cost.
- Maximize the organization's ability to negotiate discounted rates with preferred suppliers and reduce travel expenses.

Responsibility

The traveler is responsible for complying with the travel policy. The approver is responsible for accurately reviewing expense reports for compliance.

The organization will reimburse travelers for all reasonable and necessary expenses while traveling on authorized organizational business.

The organization assumes no obligation to reimburse travelers for expenses that are not in compliance with this policy.

Enforcement

Travelers who do not comply with this travel policy may be subject to:

- Delay or withholding of reimbursement.
- Restricted privileges may be imposed for violating this policy.

(When a traveler does not book the lowest airfare, hotel rate and/or car rental rate offered, the travel program will note the policy exception and include that policy exception in a periodic exception report to be reviewed.)

Who to Call on Travel Policy Issues

Any questions, concerns and/or suggestions regarding this travel policy may be directed to:

Name: Sharon J. Tanner, EdD, RN
Executive Director
Phone: (800) 669-1656 ext. 451
Email: sltanner@nlac.org

TRAVEL AUTHORIZATION

Travel Authorization

All travel will be pre-approved by the organization prior to ticketing.

TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS

Reservation Procedures

- Travelers should make reservations at least 30 days prior to trip to take advantage of purchase discounts.
- All air travel, car rental, and rail travel reservations including en route changes must be booked through the *American Express Intelligent Online Marketplace (AXIOM)*.

Create an Account

To begin using AXIOM, you need to register on the site by following these easy steps:

1. Enter this URL into your Web browser: <https://nlactravel.axo20.com>
2. The first time you enter the site it will ask for a Security Code: **325434**
3. You will be prompted to enter your name and email address, and then asked to create a user name and password that you will use to initially access the site.
4. After supplying this information you will receive an email from American Express Business Travel with instructions on how to complete your registration.

Complete Registration and Add Profile Information

All necessary profile information must be entered into the system prior to using AXIOM for booking. To update or edit profile information:

1. Open the email from American Express, which is notated above, and press the “Get Started” button.
2. You will be prompted to enter profile information, security pin (you will create for your added security) including contact(s), preferences, etc.
3. Press “Continue” once you have entered this information.

Upon completion you will have full access to the AXIOM tool. Please remember, American Express Online Travel Specialists are available 24/7 for en route assistance by simply calling **800-327-2737**.

Ticket Delivery & Electronic Ticket Instructions

Tickets will be delivered no later than 48 hours before the trip.

Electronic Ticket Instructions

You will be flying on an electronic ticket; you will be sent a confirmation by AXIOM through your email. At the airport you will need to provide the confirmation number to a ticketing agent or kiosk to obtain a boarding pass.

If you have forgotten or misplaced the confirmation number, proper identification must be presented.

DOMESTIC AIR TRAVEL

Making Air Travel Reservations

Air travel reservations must be made through:

- American Express Intelligent Online Marketplace (AXIOM)
- Air travel reservations must **NOT** be made directly through the airlines.

Airline Class of Service

All domestic air travel must be coach class.

Travelers are expected to use the lowest logical airfare available. The travel program usually determines this based on certain parameters outlined in the “Lowest Airfare Definition” section of this policy.

Upgrades for Domestic Air Travel

Upgrades at the expense of the organization are NOT permitted.

Upgrades are allowed at the traveler’s personal expense. Upgrades must NOT be charged to NLNAC.

Lowest Airfare Definition

Travelers are expected to book the lowest logical airfare as determined by the travel counselor based on the following parameters:

Routing:

- Routing requires no more than two stops each way of a round trip.
- Routing does NOT increase the one-way total elapsed trip time (origin to destination) by more than 2 hours.

Time Window:

- Departure/arrival must be no more than 3 hours before or after requested time.

Savings:

- Savings must be at least \$100 of the round-trip fare.

Discounted Airfares

The following types of low fare alternatives will be considered in determining the lowest logical airfare:

- Specially-negotiated fares
- Non-refundable fares
- Penalty fares
- Saturday night stay-over- SAVINGS MUST BE OVER \$250.00
- Advance purchase fares
- Connecting and one-stop flights
- Off-peak flights
- Alternate airports
- Promotional/bulk fares
- Consolidator tickets
- Lower cost non-preferred carriers

Airline Frequent Flyer Programs

Traveling individuals may retain frequent flyer program benefits. However, participation in these programs must not influence flight selection, which would result in incremental cost to the organization beyond the lowest available airfare as defined in this policy.

Lost or Excess Baggage

The ultimate responsibility for retrieving and compensating lost baggage lies with the airlines. The organization will not reimburse travelers for personal items lost while traveling on business. Measures that can be taken to minimize baggage losses include:

- Always carry valuables (e.g., jewelry, laptop computers, cameras, etc.) on board the aircraft.
- Always carry important and/or confidential documents on board the aircraft.
- Clearly tag luggage with name, address, and phone number.
- Retain baggage claim receipts for checked-in luggage.
- Purchase luggage insurance. (Costs vary and are the responsibility of the traveler.)

Follow these procedures if your bags are lost en route:

- Obtain a lost luggage report form from an airline representative in the baggage claim area.
- Itemize the contents of your bag including receipts wherever possible.
- Include a copy of your airline ticket and baggage claim stubs.
- Keep a copy of the report, airline ticket, and claim stubs.
- Inquire about reimbursement.

Travelers will be reimbursed for excess baggage charges only in the following circumstances:

- When traveling with heavy or bulky materials or equipment necessary for business.
- The excess baggage consists of organization records or property.

Denied Boarding Compensation

Airlines occasionally offer free tickets or cash allowances to compensate travelers for delays and inconveniences due to overbooking, flight cancellations, changes of equipment, etc.

Travelers must NOT volunteer for denied boarding compensation when on organizational business.

Overnight Delays

Should an airline delay necessitate an overnight stay, the traveler must first attempt to secure complimentary lodging from the airline. If unsuccessful, the traveler should contact American Express Online Travel Specialists for assistance. (See Emergency Travel Assistance for additional information)

Cancellations

When a trip is cancelled after the ticket has been issued, the traveler should inquire about using the same ticket for future travel.

Travelers can reuse airline tickets for NLNAC business if:

- Airfare eligibility requirements are met.

Travelers with an electronic ticket must call their travel counselor to cancel the reservation and initiate a refund if appropriate.

Unused/Voided Airline Tickets

Unused airline tickets or flight coupons must never be discarded or destroyed as these documents may have a cash value.

To expedite refunds, unused or partially used airline tickets must be returned immediately to:

- The NLNAC office.

Unused tickets must **NOT** be sent to the airlines.

Travelers must **NOT** include unused tickets with their reimbursement forms.

Travelers with an electronic ticket must call American Express Online Travel Specialists to initiate a refund.

Lost or Stolen Airline Tickets

Immediately upon discovery of a lost/stolen ticket, the traveler must:

- Report the loss to American Express who will file the lost ticket application.
- Fill out a lost ticket application at the airline ticket counter.
- Obtain a lost ticket application from the airline ticket counter or American Express.

The traveler is responsible for the value of lost tickets.

The organization will **NOT** absorb the cost of a lost ticket including fees charged by the airlines for processing the lost ticket application.

Travelers using an electronic ticket do not need to worry about lost or stolen tickets.

LODGING

Hotel Selection Guidelines

Travelers are required to use:

- Properties in the **Moderate, Economy, Budget** categories.

Room Guarantee

Unless otherwise instructed, all rooms will be guaranteed for late arrival with the traveler's **personal charge/credit card**.

Hotel Cancellation Procedures

Travelers are responsible for cancelling hotel rooms and must contact:

- The hotel if the booking was made directly with the hotel.

Travelers will be held responsible and will not be reimbursed for “no-show” charges unless there is sufficient proof that the billing is in error.

Travelers should request and record the cancellation number in case of billing disputes.

Travelers should note that cancellation deadlines are based on the local time of the property.

Hotel Payment Procedures

Hotel costs should be paid using:

- **personal charge card / personal credit card**

Hotel Frequent Guest Programs

Many hotels have frequent guest programs that reward travelers with free accommodations in exchange for a given number of paid room nights at the hotel. Awards from such programs may be retained by travelers for personal use. However, participation in these programs must not influence hotel selection that would result in incremental cost beyond the organization’s specially negotiated rate or American Express preferred rate.

Any membership fees associated with joining these programs are not reimbursable.

RENTAL CAR

Rental Car Guidelines

Travelers may only rent a car to their destination if pre-approval is obtained, and driving is more cost-effective than airline or rail travel.

Reimbursements will not be made for rental cars that are not pre-approved prior to travel.

Making Rental Car Reservations

Rental car reservations must be made through:

- American Express Intelligent Online Marketplace (AXIOM)
- Rental car reservations must **NOT** be made directly through the rental car company.

Rental Car Categories

Travelers should book the following rental car categories:

- Economy
- Compact

When picking up a rental car, travelers should check with the rental car agent for any promotional rates, last-minute specials, or free upgrades. Travelers should utilize any discount programs they belong to.

At the time of rental, the car should be inspected and any damage found should be noted on the contract **before** the vehicle is accepted.

Rental Car Insurance – Domestic

The organization has made provisions for insuring rental cars against damage.

Rental car insurance is included in the organizational-negotiated rate.

Therefore, travelers must decline all insurance coverage except:

- Collision Damage Waiver (CDW)/Loss Damage Waiver (LDW)

All travelers and employees traveling individually and/or in-groups must sign as a driver on the car rental agreement:

- Coverage for additional drivers (when applicable)

Rental Car Cancellation Procedures

Travelers are responsible for cancelling rental car reservations and must contact:

- American Express Online Travel Specialists

Travelers should request and record the cancellation number in case of billing disputes.

Returning Rental Cars

Every reasonable effort must be made to return the rental car:

- To the original rental city unless approved for a one-way rental
- Intact (i.e., no bumps, scratches or mechanical failures)
- On time, to avoid additional hourly charges
- With a full tank of gas or at the level at the time of pick-up

Rental Car Payment Procedures

Unless otherwise instructed, rental cars must be paid for with individual's American Express card, MasterCard and/or Visa card.

Rental Car Accidents

Should a rental car accident occur, travelers should immediately contact:

- the rental car company
- local authorities, as required

Name: Sharon J. Tanner, EdD, RN Executive Director

Phone: (800) 669-1656 ext. 451

Email: sjtanner@nlac.org

Rental Car Club Memberships

Travelers may participate in rental car club membership programs that are free of charge or at their own expense.

OTHER TRANSPORTATION

Personal Car Usage Guidelines

Travelers may use their personal car for business purposes only when pre-approval is obtained and:

- If it is less expensive than renting a car, taking a taxi, or alternate transportation.
- If it is more timely than taking public transportation.

It is the personal responsibility of the vehicle owner to carry adequate insurance coverage for their protection and for the protection of any passengers.

Reimbursement for Personal Car Usage

Travelers will be reimbursed for business usage of personal cars:

- On a fixed scale of \$.405 cents per mile.

NOTE: Effective January 1, 2009, the allowable mileage will be increased to \$.46/mile.

Travelers will not be reimbursed for any repairs to their personal car even if these costs result from business travel.

To be reimbursed for use of their personal car for business, travelers must provide on their expense report:

- Purpose of the trip
- Date and location
- Receipts for tolls and parking

Gas charges are not reimbursable.

Ground Transportation To and From Terminals

Travelers traveling to the same location should share ground transportation to and from the airport whenever possible.

The most economical mode of transportation should be used to and from airports, bus, and rail terminals. The following modes of transportation should be considered:

- buses, subways, taxis
- hotel and airport shuttle services
- personal car

Private limousines or car services should be used only when valid business reasons preclude the use of more economical modes of transportation.

The use of helicopters is not permitted unless provided free of charge by the airline from which air transportation is purchased.

Rail Travel

For rail and complex travel itineraries, call the American Express Online Travel Specialists at **800-327-2737**.

Class of Service - Rail Travel

Domestic rail travel will be in Coach class.

First class/reserved seating for domestic rail service may be utilized:

- When upgrade is at no extra cost
- At the traveler's expense

PERSONAL/VACATION TRAVEL**Combining Personal with Business Travel**

Personal/vacation travel may be combined with business travel:

- Provided there is no additional cost to the organization
- Only with pre-approval from the Executive Director

Miscellaneous Vacation Expenses

The organization will NOT pay for vacation expenses such as sightseeing, bus tours, souvenirs, and personal expenses such as movies, health club fees, and meals.

Personal/Vacation Travel Billing Procedures

Personal/vacation travel billing must NOT be combined with business travel billing under any circumstances.

TELEPHONE USAGE**Business Phone Calls**

Travelers will be reimbursed when using their personal telephone calling cards or home phone for business phone calls:

- Which are reasonable and necessary for conducting business.
- With an original copy of the bill attached to the expense report form.

Personal Phone Calls While Traveling

Travelers will NOT be reimbursed for any personal telephone calls made from:

- air-phones
- rail-phones
- cellular car phones
- hotels with telephone surcharges

Air-phone Usage

Travelers must NOT use air-phones due to the high cost.

Rail-phone Usage

Travelers must NOT use rail-phones due to the high cost.

Hotel Telephone Usage

When staying at a hotel, travelers should find out the property's local and long distance phone rates. Travelers should avoid making phone calls that have an added surcharge.

To avoid substantial charges added by hotels to telephone bills, travelers should:

- Use a charge/credit card, calling card, public phone or call collect whenever possible.
- Travelers must use 1-800-669-1656 when calling NLNAC.

Rental Car Cellular Phone Usage

Travelers are NOT allowed to rent cellular car phones.

TRAVEL INSURANCE

Travel Insurance Coverage

In addition, full-time employees traveling on organizational business are covered by the following insurance policies at no cost to the traveler:

- Worker's compensation
- Life insurance provided by the organization (if applicable)

Additional Travel Insurance Purchased by Travelers

The organization will NOT reimburse expenses for additional travel insurance coverage.

MEALS

Personal Meal Expenses

Personal meals are defined as meal expenses incurred by the traveler when dining alone on an out-of-town business trip.

Travelers will be reimbursed for personal meal expenses:

- According to actual and reasonable cost

Actual copies of detailed receipts must be submitted for reimbursement.

Alcohol or alcoholic beverages will not be reimbursed for any traveler.

Spending Guidelines

Travelers will be reimbursed for actual and reasonable meal expenses accompanied by proper and original receipts up to the \$38.00 per day allowed expense for meals.

If attending a meeting where meals are provided, the following amounts should be subtracted from the \$38.00 per day allowed expense for meals:

- Breakfast- \$7.00
- Lunch- \$10.00
- Dinner- \$21.00

NOTE: Effective January 1, 2009, the allowable expense will be increased to \$44.00/day.

Spending Limits

Travelers will be reimbursed for actual documented meal expenses (i.e., with proper and original receipts) up to the maximum daily allowances as mentioned above.

Copies of credit card receipts should be accompanied by the original itemized bill from the restaurant for reimbursement.

Business Meal Expenses

Business meals are taken with clients, or associates during which a specific business discussion takes place. This does not include site visits.

Travelers will be reimbursed for business meal expenses:

- According to actual and reasonable cost up to the maximum allowed

Tipping for Meals

Tips included on meal receipts will be reimbursed.

Tips should be no more than 15% of the bill. Tips will be reimbursed up to \$5.70 per day.

Any tips considered excessive will not be reimbursed.

Payment for Meals

Whenever feasible, meal expenses should be paid for using the traveler's **personal credit card**.

Documentation and IRS Requirements

An original receipt must be submitted with the expense report for any individual meal or expense of \$5.00 or more.

In addition, for business meals, the following documentation is required by the IRS, and must be recorded on the expense report:

- Names of individuals present, their titles, and company name
- Name and location of where the meal took place
- Exact amount and date of the expense
- Specific business topic discussed

EXPENSE REPORTING

Timing for Expense Report Completion and Submission

Travelers must file expense reports:

- No later than 10 days after completion of each trip

Approval/Authorization Process

Each employee expense report will be reviewed for:

- Approval signatures
- Business purpose
- Supporting documentation and receipts
- Policy compliance

Documentation Requirements

Travelers must provide the following information in order to be reimbursed for expenditures:

- names of individuals present, their titles, and company name
- name and location of where the meal took place
- exact amount and date of the expense
- specific business topic discussed

Travelers must submit the following documentation along with their expense report form:

- Air/Rail – original passenger coupon if issued itinerary from AXIOM
- Hotel – hotel folio plus charge/credit card receipt or other proof of payment
- Car Rental – rental car agreement plus charge/credit card receipt or other proof of payment
- Meals– charge/credit card or cash receipt

When a receipt is not available, a full explanation of the expense and the reason for the missing receipt are required.

Receipts must include the name of the vendor, location, date, and dollar amount.

Acceptable Receipts

The following receipts are acceptable:

- Original receipt completed by the vendor
- Original phone bill

Unacceptable Receipts

The following receipts are NOT acceptable:

- Photocopies, unless accompanied by a full explanation

Guidelines for Tips and Gratuities

Tipping a porter, bellman, chambermaid or waiter should be based on the quality of service rendered. The organization will reimburse reasonable gratuities based on the following guidelines:

- Airport porters \$1.00 per bag
- Hotel bell man \$1.00 per bag
- Restaurant waiters 15 percent (15%)

Please check local customs for appropriate tipping when traveling abroad. Some hotels and restaurants include a gratuity, in which case a tip is not necessary unless the service has been exceptional.

Lavish or unreasonable gratuities will not be reimbursed.

Incorrect or Incomplete Expense Reports

Expense reports that are incorrect or incomplete:

- Will be returned to the approver for corrective action.
- May result in delay or non-reimbursement of specific items.
- Disregard for organizational policy or altering of receipts can result in disciplinary action or termination.

General Travel Safety Tips

The following suggestions will provide a more safe and pleasurable trip for travelers:

Air Travel

- Plan to arrive at the airport at least one hour before domestic flights and two hours before international flights.
- Do not leave luggage unattended or with someone you do not know.
- Never agree to carry anything on board or in your luggage for someone else.
- Put your name and address on your luggage. For added security, use tags that conceal your name and address.
- Remove all old destination tags to avoid misdirection by baggage handlers.
- Carry all medication, important business papers, and a change of clothing in carry-on luggage in case the checked luggage is misplaced.

Upon Arrival at your Destination

- Leave the airport as soon as possible after deplaning. Disturbances are more likely to occur in public airport lobbies.
- Beware of people claiming to be cab drivers in unmarked cars. Use licensed taxi or limousine services only.
- If renting a car, get maps in advance or from the rental car counter and clearly write out the directions from the airport to the hotel. Stop to ask for directions only in well-lit public areas. Keep the phone number of your destination with you.
- If unfamiliar with the local language, carry a card or matchbook with the hotel's name and address. This can be shown to a cab driver or police officer should you become lost.
- In developing countries, try to reserve rooms on the third through the sixth floor of the hotel. Disturbances and burglaries are most likely to affect ground and second story levels. In some countries, fire rescue equipment does not reach above the sixth floor.
- Do not leave a sign on the hotel room door for maid service as it announces an empty room for would-be thieves.
- Be sure to carry your credit/charge card company's telephone number in case the card is lost or stolen. Always report losses immediately.

Hotel Fire Safety Tips

While major hotels are equipped with smoke alarms, sprinkler systems, and emergency evacuation instructions, fire safety awareness will increase a traveler's chance of survival in the unlikely event of a hotel fire.

When staying at a hotel...

- Check fire exits. Find the two nearest exits to your room and count the doorways so you can feel your way in the dark and smoke.
- Place your key on the nightstand and your shoes by the bed so you can find them easily.

In case of fire or smoke...

- Put on your shoes; grab your room key and head for the door. If there's any smoke in your room, get on your hands and knees and crawl. The fresh air you need to survive is near the floor.
- Feel the door and the knob. If they are cool open the door and check the hall. If they are hot, do not open the door. Stay in your room and fight the fire.
- If the hallway is clear, close the door behind you and walk to the nearest exit. Never take an elevator in case of fire! Keep your room key with you in case the hallway becomes blocked and you need to return to your room.
- If the hall has smoke in it, close the door and crawl to the nearest exit. Stay against the wall so that you can count the doorways.
- When walking down the stairwell, hold the handrail to keep your balance.

If you must stay in your room to fight the fire...

- Open your window to vent smoke. If your window doesn't open, do not break it unless absolutely necessary. You may have to close it later if smoke is outside. Never jump from the third floor or above, chances are that you won't survive the fall.
- Call the desk to tell them you're in your room. Hang a sheet out the window to signal firemen.
- Fill the tub with water and turn on the bathroom vent fan.
- Wet some sheets or towels and stuff cracks of your door to keep out smoke. Use your ice bucket to bail water on the door. If the walls are hot, bail water on them. Keep everything wet.
- If there is a fire outside, get everything combustible away from the window.
- A wet towel tied around your nose and mouth is an effective filter if you fold it in a triangle and put the bottom corner in your mouth.
- Don't panic! Keep fighting the fire until rescue arrives.