SC&I Procedures and Tips for Travel and Business Expense Reimbursements (TABERs)

Whenever possible, you should order supplies, equipment, travel, and other needs related to your position at Rutgers through our purchasing system by asking staff to create a purchase order. This will prevent you from ever having to pay for things from your own pocket and get reimbursed. But if you do need to make a purchase yourself, this memo offers you some basic information about the rules for reimbursements and processing a TABER at SC&I.

All requests for reimbursement for out-of-pocket travel and business expenses must comply with the Rutgers University Travel & Business Expense policy. The full policy is online at http://policies.rutgers.edu/PDF/Section40/40.4.1-current.pdf. In addition, the travel information website offers you details: http://www.rutravel.rutgers.edu/#travelpolicy.

SC&I Business Office and Faculty Support staff can help you with all of your purchasing and TABER questions.

Key Information about Reimbursements

Purchases/Out-of-Pocket Expenses
The limit for incidental purchases is $500, with travel as an exception. Anything over $500 should be ordered through the University’s purchasing system. The only exception is for a bona fide emergency.

Be aware that if you purchase and submit a TABER, you will not get reimbursed for the tax you pay, since a purchase made through Rutgers would not be charged tax.

Purchasing Technology
When purchasing technology:
1. Consult with SC&I IT staff to assure that equipment your purchase for work purposes can be supported by SC&I. This consultation should take place regardless of whether you ultimately purchase the equipment yourself and get reimbursed.
2. Making the purchase through SC&I may benefit you because we can sometimes get you a better price through our vendor relationships, and because there would be no tax involved.

Timeliness
It is important to submit your request for reimbursement within 60 days of your travel or expense. If for some reason you submit a TABER for expenses older than 60 days, there are extra approvals required in order for you to get reimbursed and you risk not being approved.

Receipts and Other Documentation To Submit with your TABER
- Original receipts are required.
- For air travel, please save and submit your boarding pass in addition to your purchase receipt.
- For expenses of $50 or less (other than meals), you do not need to submit a receipt, but you must list them on the TABER. Examples: taxis, road tolls. While not strictly required, it is always better to have a receipt to accurately document the expense.
• Hotels: “The original receipted hotel, motel, or other bill must substantiate lodging expenses. The bill must specify rate, date(s) of stay, and evidence of payment and must be attached to the TABER.”

• When you are sharing expenses with another person, indicate the name of the individual and organization sharing the expenses. If it is a hotel room that is being shared, we are still required to ask you for the name and organization of the individual. We are not trying to violate your privacy, this is required by Rutgers. In the case of shared expenses, a duplicate of the receipt is acceptable if the other person is submitting the original.

• If you have lost a receipt, you must try to obtain a duplicate. If this is not possible, you would fill out a Lost Receipt Certification Form and submit that with your TABER. (It is available online at http://www.rutravel.rutgers.edu/LostReceiptForm.doc.)

• For receipts in foreign languages, please provide a basic translation.

• For receipts in foreign currencies, reimbursement can be made in U.S. dollars by either of two methods:
  ➢ Amounts charged in dollars to your credit card statement: you must provide the credit card statement in order to use this method, in addition to the original receipt.
  ➢ Use the currency exchange rates on http://www.oanda.com/currency/converter/. This site can provide currency exchange rates for a specified day or range of dates. Please print out the results and attach that to your TABER.

• Conference registration fees: In addition to the receipt for conference fees, you must include a copy of the fee sheet detailing the conference itinerary (or brochure) in order to substantiate (a) the business purpose, (b) the time period of the trip, and (c) the amenities provided by the conference or meeting (for example, if the conference registration fee includes any meals). You must also attach your name badge from the conference to document your attendance.

Meals
There are two acceptable methods for reimbursement for meals during travel: receipted meal reimbursements and per diem reimbursements. Note that you must select one method for your entire trip, you cannot mix per diem with receipted meal reimbursements for the same trip.

• Itemized receipts for each meal: If you opt to submit itemized receipts, the cost cannot exceed $60 per day per person.

• Per diem – there are two options available:
  ➢ $30 per day except for cities listed on the RU Travel website as $50 per day. See http://www.rutravel.rutgers.edu/ for the list of these cities.
  ➢ IRS per diem rates. See the above link for the rate for specific locations. There are rates for both domestic and foreign destinations.
  ➢ PLEASE NOTE: These rates can be quite different. For example, Los Angeles and Washington D.C. are both listed in the $50 per day list, but the IRS rate for Los Angeles and Washington D.C. is $66 per day.

• Prorating Per Diem Rates:
  ➢ When you are traveling, depending on the time of day you depart and you return on your trip, you may have to prorate the amounts for meals on those days. Your itinerary or receipt from travel tickets will show those times. In general, of the daily meal rate, 20% is for breakfast, 20% is for lunch, and 60% is for dinner. See page 7 of the travel policy (cited in the second paragraph on the first page) for specifics.
  ➢ If you are attending a conference and one or more meals are provided as part of the conference registration, you will have to prorate your per diem for those days. For example, if breakfast OR
lunch is provided, you would request only 80% of the per diem rate; if dinner is provided, you would request only 40% of the per diem rate. See page 6 of the travel policy for more details.

Travel via Automobile
- Mileage rate for use of your own automobile: As of July 1, 2013, the mileage rate is 56 cents per mile. Attach a copy of a MapQuest or other map to substantiate the amount of mileage being requested.
- If you want to drive to a destination to which public transportation is available, you need to show that mileage reimbursement is cheaper than the cost of the flight would have been, or else you need other very clear business justification for driving.
- Car Rental: The university will reimburse for a rental car when there is a business justification, when there is no other means of comparable transportation, or when the overall cost of the rental is less than the cost of other means of transportation (e.g., car service or airfare).
- Reimbursement for car rental is limited up to intermediate size classifications for individual travelers.
- Attach the original receipt and the rental contract to your TABER.

Travel that includes both work and personal expenses
- If a part of an expense is for work and a part is personal, please indicate on the receipt which expenses you are asking Rutgers to reimburse.
- If you are traveling for work but will be adding time or a flight that is personal onto the trip, the university asks that you produce information about comparable expenses. For example, if you are attending a conference from August 1 to August 3, but you book a flight that does not return until August 13 so you can travel personally after the conference ends, please print out comparable air fare to show that the two flights you are taking cost the same or less than the flight you would have taken if you just traveled for work.

Ethics
In accordance with university policies, please do not ask for reimbursement for items such as
- personal travel added onto a business trip,
- travel for your family when they accompany you on business trips,
- travel or purchases whose business purpose cannot be substantiated with documentation.
The university policy states that “Employees who improperly submit and approvers who improperly authorize the use of university funds are subject to disciplinary action.”

A Note About International Travel
Whenever you travel outside of the U.S., you should register with the university so you will be able to access emergency medical care if you need it. The Faculty and Staff International Travel Registration Form is at http://www.rutravel.rutgers.edu/emergencyasst.html.

Getting your TABER Processed at SC&I
Every request for reimbursement must be documented on the official Travel and Business Expense Report (TABER) form. This form is available as a Word document at http://rias.rutgers.edu/Forms/Travel/expense.doc. It is a fillable form that does the arithmetic for you. Use the tab key to move around the form.

Faculty and staff will have the reimbursement added directly to your paycheck. (More details below.) Checks for students who are not employees will be sent to SC&I.

The main area of the form is where you will provide the details of your reimbursable expenses. Please fill this out yourself; make a best guess if your transactions were complex or you do not know how to list certain items, and then staff can help you correct those items. As noted above, you should have receipts for your expenses and you should outline the reason or purpose for the business expense.

The area at the bottom of the form is where the account to be charged is specified. If you know the account to charge, please fill that area in. If you are not sure, please leave a note on the TABER as to how the expenses should be charged, e.g., “this should be covered by my faculty support allotment” or “this travel was part of my NSF grant.” Please consult with an appropriate staff member if you have any questions.

Don’t forget to sign the form. We cannot submit it without your signature.

When you have completed the form:

- **Faculty** should submit TABERs to the appropriate faculty support staff member (Diana Bell or Kamini Chopra) and it will get processed in the Dean’s Office. Once an account has been assigned and it has been approved, the original TABER will be sent via campus mail to Disbursement Control and a copy of the approved TABER will be put in your mailbox.
- **Staff** should submit TABERs to Vicki White in the Business Office.
- **Students** should submit TABERs to the appropriate staff member in the Office of Student Services. For doctoral students, this is Joan Chabrak.

Reimbursement usually takes between two and four weeks to be processed by Disbursement Control.

If you are an employee receiving a paycheck, **your reimbursement will be included in your paycheck/direct deposit**. To verify that you received the reimbursement, go to Self-Service in RIAS: http://rias.rutgers.edu and click on Log In; once logged in, select Self-Service/View Paycheck from the menu on the left. On your paystub, listed under Hours and Earnings, you will see an item for Travel and Expense Reimbursement so you can verify the amount.

If you are a student or visitor, a check will be sent to SC&I from Disbursement Control for you.