

Travel and Expense Reimbursement

Overview – Employees and independent contractors (“Personnel”) of Sacred Heart Major Seminary (“the Seminary”) may be required to travel or incur business expenditures in completion of their job responsibilities. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that (a) adequate costs controls are in place, (b) travel and other expenditures are appropriate, and (c) to provide a uniform and consistent approach for the timely reimbursement of authorized expenses incurred by Personnel.

General

When incurring business expenses, the Seminary expects Personnel to:

- Exercise discretion and good business judgment with respect to those expenses.
- Be cost conscious and spend seminary money as carefully and judiciously as the Personnel would spend his or her own funds.
- Accurately report expenses supported by required documentation.

Expense Report

Expenses will not be reimbursed unless the Personnel requesting reimbursement submits a complete written Expense Report. The Expense Report, which shall be submitted at least monthly or within two weeks of the completion of travel if travel expense reimbursement is requested must include:

- The Personnel’s name.
- If reimbursement for travel is requested, the date, origin, destination and purpose of the trip, including a description of each organization-related activity during the trip.
- The name and affiliation of all people for whom expenses are claimed (i.e., people on whom money is spent (e.g., gifts, meals) in order to conduct the Seminary’s business.
- An itemized list of all expenses for which reimbursement is requested.

Receipts

The original receipt showing the vendor’s name, a description of the goods or services provided, the date, and the total expenses, including tips (if applicable). Receipts are to be submitted with the Expense Report at the time of request for reimbursement.

General Travel Requirements

Necessity of Travel: In determining the reasonableness and necessity of travel expenses, Personnel and the Dean or Department Director approving the travel shall consider the ways in which the Seminary will benefit from the travel and weigh those benefits against the anticipated costs of the travel. The same considerations shall be taken into account in deciding whether the benefits to the Seminary outweigh the costs, less expensive alternatives, such as participation by telephone or video conferencing, or the availability of local programs or training programs or training opportunities, shall be considered. All out-of-state travel must be approved by the Dean or Department Director prior to the travel.

Personal or Spousal Travel Expenses: With the advance approval of the Personnel's Dean or Department Director, Personnel traveling on behalf of the Seminary may incorporate personal travel or business with their business-related trips; however, Personnel shall not arrange business travel at a time that is less advantageous to the Seminary or involving greater expenses to the Seminary in order to accommodate personal travel plans. Any additional expense incurred as a result of personal travel, including but not limited to extra hotel nights, additional stopovers, meals or transportation, are the sole responsibility of the Personnel and will not be reimbursed by the Seminary. Expenses associated with travel of the Personnel's spouse, family or friends will not be reimbursed by the Seminary.

Air Travel

Air travel reservations should be made as far in advance as possible in order to take advantage of reduced fares. Personnel traveling on behalf of the Seminary may accept and retain frequent flyer miles for their personal use. Personnel may not deliberately patronize a single airline to accumulate frequent flyer miles if less expensive comparable tickets are available on another airline. Air travel must be approved by the Personnel's Dean or Department Director of the Seminary in advance of making air travel reservations. In the event of an emergency, air travel should be approved as soon as practical. Costs associated with lost baggage are the responsibility of the airline and will not be reimbursed.

Ground Transportation

Personnel are expected to use the most economical ground transportation appropriate under the circumstances (sharing with others when practical) and should generally use the following, in this order of desirability:

Courtesy Cars: Many hotels have courtesy cars, which will take you to and from the airport at no charge. Personnel should take advantage of this free service whenever possible. Another alternative may be a shuttle or bus.

Public Transportation: Many cities have affordable, safe and efficient public transportation such as subways or buses.

Taxis: When courtesy cars, airport shuttles, or public transportation are not available, a taxi is often the next most economical and convenient form of transportation when the trip is for a limited time and minimal mileage is involved.

Rental Cars: Car rentals are expensive so other forms of transportation should be considered when practical. Personnel will be allowed to rent a car while out of town provided that the cost is less than alternative methods of transportation. Personnel will be reimbursed only for economy class vehicles unless prior approval for another class has been provided in advance of the car rental by the Personnel's Dean or Department Director of the Seminary.

Personal Cars

When the personal car of Personnel is used for approved official business of the Seminary, he or she will be reimbursed for mileage at the prevailing standard mileage rate allowed by the IRS. For 2014 and 2015, the standard mileage rates are 56 and 57.5 cents per mile, respectively.

Mileage reimbursements are meant to cover only those miles incurred above and beyond the Personnel's normal round trip commute to and from the Seminary. For example, if the normal commuting round trip is 20 miles, and the Personnel goes on a trip that covers 90 miles, only the incremental 70 miles are reimbursable.

For overnight travel, the Personnel's normal round trip commute to and from the Seminary is subtracted from the total first and last day of travel. However, miles driven while out-of-town on business are fully reimbursable. For example, assume the Personnel's normal commuting round trip is 20 miles and he or she goes on an overnight trip to a destination that is 200 miles from home. While at the out-of-town location, the Personnel drives an additional 50 business miles. The incremental 360 miles and the 50 miles driven while at the out-of-town location are reimbursable.

Expense Reports should indicate the points of travel and the miles eligible for reimbursement.

Parking/Tolls

Parking and toll expense, including charges for hotel parking, incurred by Personnel traveling on Seminary business will be reimbursed. The costs of parking tickets, fines, car washes, valet services, etc., are the responsibility of the Personnel and will not be reimbursed.

At-airport parking is permitted for short business trips. For extended trips, Personnel should use off-airport facilities.

Entertainment and Business Meetings

Reasonable expenses incurred for business meetings or other types of business-related entertainment will be reimbursed only if the expenditures are approved in advance by the Personnel's Dean or Department Director of the Seminary and qualify as tax deductible expenses. Detailed documentation for any such expense must be provided, including:

- Date and place of entertainment
- Nature of expense
- Name, titles, and Seminary affiliation of those entertained
- A complete description of the business purpose for the activity including the specific business matter discussed
- Vendor receipts (not credit card receipts or statements) showing the vendor's name, a description of the services provided, the date, and the total expense, including tips (if applicable).

Out-Of-Town Meals

Personnel traveling on behalf of the Seminary are reimbursed at the General Services Administration (GSA) rate on a per meal basis when they actually incur the cost of a meal. Reimbursement will be made according to the state rate in which the meals were purchased. They will not be reimbursed for meals paid for or provided by others. The rates by state may be found at <http://www.gsa.gov/portal/category/21287>. Amounts listed below include tips, which will be reimbursed only if reasonable. In 2015, for the state of Michigan (other states will vary) these rates are:

Breakfast:	\$ 9.00
Lunch:	\$ 13.00
Dinner:	\$ 29.00
Incidentals	\$ 5.00
Total meals and incidentals:	\$ 56.00

Non-reimbursable Expenditures

The Seminary maintains a strict policy that expenses that could be perceived as lavish or excessive will not be reimbursed. Expenses that are not reimbursable include, but are not limited to:

- First class tickets or upgrades.
- Limousine travel.
- Movie or theatre tickets.
- Membership dues at any country club, private club, athletic club, golf club, tennis club or similar recreational organization, unless approved by the Rector/President.
- Participation in or attendance at golf or tennis tournaments, or other sporting events, without the advance approval of the Rector/President.

- Fees, penalties or other charges for cancellations, missed reservations or other similar occurrences in which the amount is related to failure to use goods or services.