

**Purpose**

This guidance on travel and meals addresses concerns that frequently arise in the area of meal reimbursements. It will be incorporated into a comprehensive travel policy to be issued at a later date.

**Travel & Meals**

These guidelines are excerpted from the NY State Office of the State Comptroller's Travel Manual and apply to both domestic and international travel. Travel status occurs when you are more than 35 miles from both your official station (Old Westbury) or home. When traveling, meals can be reimbursed via form AC132 or paid by a Travel card in the following circumstances only:

1. Either per diem OR actual charges can be claimed. If the Travel card is used, the meal must be within the per diem for the meal according to [www.gsa.gov](http://www.gsa.gov). For international travel, upon entering the [www.gsa.gov](http://www.gsa.gov) website, click the Travel Tab, scroll down toward the middle of the screen and click the words "State Department" (in blue). This will take you to the screen for the U.S. Department of State Office of Allowances, then click "Foreign Per Diem Rate by Location" (in blue).
2. Breakfast: Can be claimed if:
  - a. Traveler is on the road 1 hour before their official starting time. For instance, if you start work at 10 AM, breakfast can be claimed if you are traveling, on official business, by 9 AM.
  - b. There is no breakfast supplied by the event.
3. Lunch: There is no reimbursement for lunch within NYS and all other states in the USA.
4. Dinner: Can be claimed if:
  - a. Traveler is traveling on official business 2 hours later than their official work end time.
  - b. There is no dinner supplied by the event.

**Additional Considerations**

1. Food for all meals for the day must be within the per diem of that country and city, no matter what time it is purchased.
2. If the event supplies a meal, breakfast is calculated at 20% and dinner at 80% of the per diem. So if you are at an event all day that supplies dinner but not breakfast, you can claim up to 20% of the per diem.
3. Lunch is not considered part of the per diem formula and is not reimbursed separately. However, consistent with guidance received from SUNY, although lunch is not a reimbursable expense, as long as the employee has not exceeded his (her) per diem allowance for meals, they can eat regardless of time of day. Special note – if overnight lodging is not required, meals will be reimbursed at \$5 for breakfast/\$12 for dinner UNLESS original meal receipts are obtained – then reimbursement will be made up to the per diem amount.
4. NYS per diem allowances arising from Travel Status are standard regardless of the day of the week (that is, if you work overtime on a weekend, the meal allowances are as stated above).

**Illustrative Example:**

An employee is traveling on official business to an event where overnight lodging is required and the Meals & Incidental Expense Per Diem for that location is \$77.00. The employee left at 7:00 am with a normal start time of 9:00 am and no meals (breakfast or dinner) were provided at the event. *In this case, the employee is entitled to be reimbursed the entire \$77.00 consisting of \$15.00, the stipulated amount for breakfast (since in a traveling status) and \$62.00 for dinner (80% of the \$77.00 stipulated amount [rounded]).*

For additional guidance on travel-related matters, please see the Frequently Asked Questions Section of the SUNY Old Westbury website: Business & Finance/Business Affairs/FAQ – Travel.

**Resources**

Please see the Resources Section of the SUNY Old Westbury website: Business & Finance/Business Affairs/Accounts Payable for the following travel related forms and instructions:

- 1) Request for Travel Approval
- 2) Employee Report of Travel Expenses and Claim for Payment (AC132)
- 3) Statement of Meals Claimed (AC3258)
- 4) Statement of Personal Automobile Travel (AC160)
- 5) Statement of Incidental and Transportation Expenses (AC3259)
- 6) Lodging Justification Over Per Diem