

South Georgia Institute Travel Policy

1. Purpose

This policy governs official travel for South Georgia Institute (SGI) employees, faculty, and staff. It outlines the procedures for authorization, reimbursement, and conduct to ensure consistency, fiscal responsibility, and compliance with institutional and regulatory guidelines.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all SGI employees, faculty, and staff engaging in travel for official institutional business, including conferences, training, recruitment, research, and sponsored activities.

3. General Provisions

- **Authorized Travel:** All travel must be approved by the appropriate supervisor and/or department head prior to departure.
 - **Travel Status:** An employee is in travel status only when traveling on official SGI business outside their designated work location.
 - **Documentation:** All travel requires proper documentation, including purpose, location, dates, estimated costs, and funding source.
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4. Travel Authorization

- All travel must be pre-approved using the SGI Travel Authorization Form.
 - Out-of-state or international travel must receive additional approval from the Vice President of Business Affairs or designee.
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5. Allowable Expenses

SGI will reimburse reasonable and necessary expenses incurred while in travel status, including:

- **Transportation** (airfare, mileage, car rental, taxis)
- **Lodging**
- **Meals and Incidentals**
- **Registration Fees**
- **Parking and Tolls**

Personal expenses (e.g., entertainment, alcohol, travel insurance, or personal souvenirs) are not reimbursable.

6. Transportation Guidelines

- **Air Travel:** Must be booked at the lowest available fare and in coach/economy class.
 - **Ground Transportation:** Employees should use the most cost-effective option. Personal vehicle use must be approved, and mileage reimbursement is based on the current IRS rate.
 - **Car Rental:** Only reimbursed if necessary and pre-approved.
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7. Lodging and Meals

- Lodging should be within the government or SGI per diem rates.
 - Meal reimbursement may be based on per diem or actual costs with itemized receipts, depending on the funding source and nature of the travel.
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8. Reimbursement Procedures

- Travelers must submit a **Travel Expense Report** within 10 business days of return.
 - Receipts are required for all reimbursable expenses, unless a per diem is used.
 - Reports must be signed by the traveler and approved by the appropriate authority.
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9. Non-Reimbursable Expenses

- Alcoholic beverages
 - Fines, penalties, or traffic violations
 - Personal phone calls and services
 - Laundry or dry-cleaning (except for travel over 5 days)
 - Travel expenses for family or friends
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10. Compliance and Audit

Travel expenses may be subject to audit by internal and external agencies. Misuse of funds may result in disciplinary action and repayment obligations.

11. Exceptions

Exceptions to this policy must be approved in writing by the Vice President of Business Affairs or the President of SGI.