

**University of Rhode Island  
Office of the Controller**

**Combination of Personal Travel with Business Travel**

University funds cannot be used to reimburse personal expenses or prepay items that include personal expenses. When a traveler decides to combine personal travel with business travel, regardless of the type of transportation, the amount reimbursed will be **only** for the costs directly related to the point(s) of business. Cost comparisons obtained prior to business trip must be provided. These cost comparisons must be generated at the same time and clearly documented.

Occasionally an employee may take a trip that includes both personal and business travel or the trip may originate from another location because of personal reasons. A combination trip does benefit the traveler to some extent; therefore, travelers should exercise special care not to seek reimbursement for expenses that could be construed as personal.

When combined personal and business occurs, the following rules apply:

**Air Travel:**

When this occurs, the traveler must provide a written quote/comparison that was obtained prior to travel. See Cost Comparison Requirements.

The following rules apply:

1. If your stay at a business location is extended 1 day or more either prior to or after the business mission, you are required to document the cost comparison of air travel for just business trip versus cost of the actual travel with the extended time. If there is no additional cost the entire ticket will be reimbursed.
2. If any other destination is included on the ticket that does not pertain to the business purpose or there is an extended layover for personal trip (other than normal connecting airports to get to business destination), the amount reimbursed will be the fare directly related to the point(s) of business based on the economy/coach fare.

**Ground Transportation:**

The traveler must pro-rate the rental based on the number of personal days versus business days.

University of Rhode Island has negotiated rental car agreements with National and Enterprise car rental companies. These agreements include the insurance, so there is no liability to the University for the Business portion of the trip only. You are not covered by this insurance if you are using the rental car for personal travel.

**Lodging:**

Lodging expense will be reimbursed based on the business location of travel, upon presentation of an original receipt from a commercial lodging establishment. The receipt should show dates of occupancy and the name and address of the place of lodging. An itemized lodging receipt is **always** required. If you are using your PCard to pay for hotel, check out for the "business portion" using your PCard and pay the personal portion on your own credit card.

Individual travelers are limited to reimbursement of the single/standard room rate. If a family member or other non-business related person stays in the room with the traveler, it is the traveler's responsibility

to have the hotel document the single room rate on the receipt at the time of check-out.

Any additional days of lodging beyond the business dates is considered personal and is not reimbursable. (see URI Travel Procedures)

**Per Diem:**

Per Diem is paid to staff while traveling on official business. Per diem is not paid for personal days.

Generally travel status can begin up to the day prior to business and ends the day of or day after the end of business, if the business ends late at night and flight or travel arrangements cannot be met.

The department head may authorize an additional rest period at the beginning of business (not greater than 24 hours) if the flight plus stopovers is greater than 14 hours, the destination is foreign travel, airfare is coach/economy, and follows a direct usually travelled route (no personal destinations).

**Miscellaneous:**

Parking expense at the airport and hotels must be reduced by personal day expenses.

Taxi and shuttle expenses during personal days are not reimbursable. The to/from information is always required for taxi and shuttle expenses for business.

## Cost Comparison Requirements

### WHAT DOCUMENTATION CAN BE USED AS A QUOTE/COST COMPARISON?

1. A written statement from Approved Travel Agency, with a quote obtained at the same time the booking flight was made. If you are not required to utilize Approved Travel Agency (see [URI Travel Policy](#)) then a printout from an online vendor, i.e., Southwest Airlines, Expedia or Orbitz must be obtained at the same time the booking flight was made.
2. Acceptable cost comparison printouts should be the first page of search results to the business destination for dates and times needed to complete the business mission. Some websites may show the search results on the left side of the page. In this case, please print the first two pages to be sure entire search range is provided.
3. A cost comparison is a comparison of all available flights and airlines generally with one stopover.

### WHAT QUALIFIES AS COMPARISON 'PRIOR' TO TRAVEL:

1. Comparison must show the lowest available commercial coach airfare for one individual traveling to and from the business destination for the days of business only.
2. Comparisons should not be limited to only one airline (except Southwest Airlines), such as preferred carrier or reward program carrier.
3. Comparison should be obtained at the same time the tickets are purchased.
4. One-way tickets should not be used as a cost comparison.

### WHAT IF TRAVELER DOESN'T PROVIDE QUOTE/COST COMPARISON?

In the event a traveler has not provided a required comparison prior to the trip, the expense report will need to be reviewed by the Controller for determination of reimbursement. Reimbursement cost may be prorated based on personal versus business if not clearly documented.

### WHEN A COST COMPARISON IS REQUIRED:

Any cost comparisons should be made 'prior' to the trip and for the same dates as the actual business trip. The amount that is reimbursed is the lesser of the cost comparison or actual expense amount.

1. Driving vs. Flying:
  - The mileage reimbursement cannot exceed the best available airfare prior to travel. The comparison must show the lowest available commercial coach airfare for one individual traveling to and from the business destination for the days of business. To qualify for reimbursement when driving longer distances (Rule of Thumb: Greater than 800 miles roundtrip) normally accomplished by flying, the expense under the "Drive vs Fly" rule must be the lesser of the actual mileage expense or total of:
    - Lowest available coach airfare prior to travel for dates of business only
    - Roundtrip mileage to airport
    - Airport parking (estimate of \$9.00 per day)
    - Shuttle expense to/from airport to business location
2. When leaving from a location other than "official station" or place of business:
  - Travel expense reimbursement is limited to the lesser of expenses incurred from the departure point or from the "official station". The official station is defined as the location of the permanent office or home address.
  - If the traveler is departing from some place other than their permanent office or home address, a comparison/quote obtained prior to travel must be attached.

- When a traveler returns from a location other than the business location, a comparison must be provided.
3. Discounted Fare Due to Additional Overnight Stay (generally a Saturday night):
- Discount air travel arrangements that require an additional night(s) lodging and/or subsistence are reimbursable under the following conditions:
    - Additional lodging and subsistence must not exceed regular economy/coach fare at the time the trip is taken.
    - The comparison should include a quote for coach fare (prior to travel) without the additional stay, amount of discounted fare, additional lodging, subsistence, rental car days, airport parking, and any other expenses incurred on behalf of the extra day(s) stay.
    - The total of the discounted fare, days of additional lodging, subsistence, rental car, airport parking, and any other expenses incurred because of additional stay should be less than quote without additional stay.
    - Airfare reimbursement will not be made for non-university business travel even though the total discounted airfare is less than regular coach fare.
  - A combination trip does benefit the traveler to some extent; therefore, travelers should exercise special care not to seek reimbursement for expenses that could be construed as personal.