

TRAVEL REGULATIONS

Chapter 40000

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**COLLEAGUE FINANCE SYSTEM
DEPARTMENTAL MANUAL**

CHAPTER NO: 40000 TRAVEL REGULATIONS

40000 Introduction

Virginia Military Institute will reimburse individuals traveling on official Institute business for reasonable and necessary expenses incurred. The policies and procedures set forth herein regulate the travel activity of employees and, as appropriate, non-state employees affiliated with the Institute. VMI shall not make any reimbursement for expenses incurred by individuals unless he/she is on official business for the Institute.

40100 Authorization for Official Travel

Individuals traveling on official business for the Institute shall submit to the Comptroller's Office the original blue VMI Travel Authorization form (Rev 29 September 1999) at least five days before departure. If the traveler desires the Institute to pay registration fees in advance of the travel, then the individual must submit the Travel Authorization to the Comptroller's Office before the Institute can make said payment.

Only two employees can attend convention and conference travel that requires an overnight stay. Employees holding an executive office in the sponsoring organization or scheduled as presenters on the convention or conference program are exempt from this limitation. Exceptions to this policy may be granted by the Superintendent or his designee for in-state conventions & conferences and by the Secretary of Education upon presentation of justification by the Superintendent or his designee for out-of-state conventions and conferences.

When five or more employees plan to attend a seminar, workshop, or training program, the travel authorization shall include documentation that travel to the seminar, etc. is more cost effective than bringing the trainer on-site.

All out-of-country travel requires approval prior to departure. You must submit to the Comptroller the travel authorization request and a memorandum stating the reason for the trip and the benefits to the Commonwealth. You must contact the Comptrollers' Office for meal and lodging guidelines.

40110 **Completing the Travel Authorization**

You must complete the destination, departure and return times, and purpose of trip. If more than one person is traveling, then you must list the names of all persons traveling. You must mark the method of travel and circle whether a State vehicle is available or not. Your estimate of expenses shall include all expenses, including airfare, state vehicle, prepaid registration, etc. There are additional instructions on the reverse side of the authorization form. (See Exhibit 40-A)

40120 **Travel Advance**

VMI will give travel advances for special circumstances only, such as team travel. The travel advance amount shall not exceed the estimate of expenses. When determining the amount of advance, do not include expenses that are paid directly by the Institute (airfare, state vehicle or registration fees paid in advance).

If the entire advance is not used, then you must return to the Comptroller's Office the remaining balance upon your return from travel. VMI reserves the right to payroll deduct an advance amount that is not returned in a timely manner. VMI shall not issue travel advances under \$50.

40200 **When to Submit a Travel Reimbursement Voucher**

VMI employees traveling on official business shall submit the travel expense reimbursement voucher to seek reimbursement for expenses. Submit the travel expense reimbursement voucher to the supervisor within five working days after completion of the trip.

The traveler's supervisor shall review and, if appropriate, approve the voucher and submit the voucher to the Comptroller's Office within three working days of receipt from the employee.

In the case of a non-state employee, the department head shall approve the voucher and submit it to the Comptroller's Office within three working days of receipt from the non-state employee.

40300 **Checklist of Required Documentation**

- An approved travel authorization (completed and approved prior to trip)
- Documentation of approved exceptions (e.g. attendance at conventions by more than two employees, etc.)

- Receipts for lodging
- Receipts for group meals exceeding \$25 (list participants required)
- Receipts for registration
- Receipts for transportation (public transportation, rental car, gas receipts for rental cars and/or person vehicles and parking and toll receipts)
- Receipts for gasoline or other expenses related to State vehicles when using a personal credit card or cash, with an attached explanation

40400 Checklist of Required Information on the Travel Reimbursement Voucher

- Traveler's address
- Personal vehicle use statement (when applicable)
- Mark box for State employee or non-state employee
- Signed & dated by traveler and traveler's supervisor
- Date and time of departure and return
- Complete columns 2 through 8 as needed, carry over totals
- List purpose of trip
- If a travel advance was obtained, then enter amount received

Traveler seeking reimbursement of travel expense shall submit the above on the State Travel Expense Reimbursement Voucher (DA-02-041). If you need additional space, then you must use the State Travel Expense Reimbursement Voucher – Continuation Sheet (DA-02-041A). You may obtain these forms may from departmental secretaries or from the Comptroller's Office. (See Exhibit 40-B)

40510 Personal Vehicle Use

State employees shall check the appropriate block in the Personal Vehicle Use Statement of the Travel Voucher when using their own vehicle. The following policies pertain to personal vehicle use reimbursement:

- Personal vehicle cost beneficial to the State – personal mileage rate - \$.27 per mile
- State vehicle not available or accessible – personal mileage rate - \$.27 per mile
- State vehicle available or not requested – fleet rate - \$.19 per mile

You shall list the number of miles traveled in column three on the Travel Voucher. If a State car is used, then it is not necessary to enter miles traveled on the voucher.

There are situations in which travel by some mode of transportation is more cost effective than by automobile. When travel is by automobile, the total transportation expenses that VMI will reimburse, including meals and lodging, shall not exceed the cost of the most economical public air transportation fare available.

Mileage Between Employee Residence and Base Point (VMI). Such mileage incurred on a scheduled workday is commuting mileage. Commuting mileage and other commuting costs incurred on normal workdays are a personal expense and are not reimbursable. If an employee incurs such mileage when required to work on a Saturday, Sunday, or holiday that is not a scheduled work day, then VMI may reimburse this expense.

Mileage Between Employee Residence and common Carrier Terminal. When round-trip mileage is incurred in connection with one-way transportation to (or from) a terminal, mileage incurred is reimbursable to the extent it does not exceed the usual one-way taxi fare. When mileage is incurred for two one-way trips in connection with travel to and from a terminal, mileage and parking fees are reimbursable to the extent they do not exceed the cost of two one-way taxi fares.

40520 State Vehicle Use

If the traveler uses a State vehicle, then the traveler shall obtain all fuel and maintenance of vehicles at State Facilities whenever possible; if this is not possible, then the traveler must use the State charge card provided in each vehicle. If State facilities are unavailable or the State card is not accepted, then the traveler may use

his/her personal credit card or cash; however, the traveler must attach a justification along with the receipt to the Travel Voucher.

The following information shall be on all gasoline receipts:

- The traveler's signature
- License number of State vehicle
- Total number of gallons of gasoline purchased
- Units of oil purchased and cost for same
- Brief but adequate description of any other maintenance performed on the vehicle and the related costs

The traveler shall use self-service pumps and regular unleaded fuel.

40530 Vehicle Rentals

Using one of the contracted travel agencies is highly recommended when planning the use of a rental car; however, if another source is used, travelers shall select the most economical rental car contractor available. When submitting the Travel Voucher, you must list the type of car rented (Economy, Compact, etc.) in the description column and list any gasoline purchases under "other expenses" (column 8). You must attach car rental receipts and gasoline receipts. You must refuel rental vehicles prior to returning the same to the vendor because refueling charges by the rental vendor are usually very expensive. VMI will not reimburse travelers for rental vendor refueling charges.

Travelers shall decline the option to purchase insurance offered by rental car contractors. If you elected to take this option, then VMI will not reimburse you for this expense. The Department of General Services, Division of Risk Management, provides a Statewide Self-Insured Automobile plan for State employees. If you travel outside of the territorial United States (including Canada, Puerto Rico) and rent a vehicle, then you are required to purchase insurance and VMI will reimburse you for this expense.

40540 Parking and Tolls

You must list the name of the facility (bridge, tunnel or turnpike) on the travel voucher and the amount(s) itemized under "Other Expense". VMI requires re-

ceipts when the cost exceeds \$5; in these cases, VMI will not make a reimbursement without a receipt.

40550 Public Transportation

In order for you to receive reimbursement for public transportation (bus, taxi, shuttle, etc.) from VMI, you must attach receipts to the Travel Voucher.

40560 Airline and Amtrak

When airline or Amtrak train tickets are required, you shall make these arrangements through the Comptroller's Office. The state government requires all state agencies and institutions to acquire airline and Amtrak train tickets by using the Universal Air Travel Plan (UATP). Under no circumstances shall the traveler pay for airfare or train tickets. The Comptroller's Office will make arrangements for the billing of these costs directly to VMI. VMI's travel agencies are:

Travel Unlimited – Lexington – 463-7174
Toll Free – 800-787-1778

Enterprise Travel – Toll Free – 800-847-0242
Martin Travel – Toll Free – 800-358-1270

These agencies provide 24 hour emergency service. Under no circumstances shall the traveler make reservations directly with the airline. Airline tickets are delivered to the Comptroller's Office. If the traveler's trip is cancelled, the traveler shall immediately contact the travel agency.

VMI employees working with prospective employees or students shall encourage them to use the UATP.

40570 Travel Credits

Many airlines offer incentives to encourage individuals to utilize their services, such as "frequent flyer miles." It is unlawful for employees to accrue such credits from VMI funded flights and to use the same for personal travel.

In order to take advantage of this benefit, employees that frequently travel by air shall establish a "business" frequent flyer account to accrue these credits for use on future business related flights. Employees shall contact one of the Institute travel agencies to establish such an account. Employee shall create the account in the

name of the employee using a VMI business address. The employee shall only use the credits for official VMI business travel.

40600 Lodging

Lodging expenses vary with the area traveled, but all expenditures shall be necessary and reasonable. All travelers shall always request government rates at the time reservations are made and confirm the same during check-in. Travelers may use the services of the travel agency to ensure the most economical lodging accommodations are obtained.

All travelers seeking reimbursement from VMI for lodging expenses shall submit supporting original hotel receipts (which are itemized and show a zero balance at check-out) covering lodging accommodations with the travel voucher and any unusual charges explained fully.

VMI may pay higher lodging amounts for stays in hotels serving as conference sites; however, the Superintendent or his designee shall approve such exceptions in advance of the travel. To obtain such an exception, the traveler must submit a written justification along with the travel authorization form. Such exceptions are limited to 50 percent in excess of the applicable guideline amount.

The traveler must list each day's lodging amounts separately in column 7 on the Travel Expense Reimbursement Voucher; other hotel charges, e.g. business phone calls, parking, restaurant charges, the traveler must list these expenses in the appropriate columns.

40710 Meal Reimbursement Policy for Overnight Business Travel

VMI shall reimburse meal and certain other incidental travel expenses for overnight travel. VMI will reimburse the traveler for such expenses (including all related taxes and tips) based on a fixed allowance. The fixed allowance is referred to as the *meals and incidental expense* (M&IE) per diem. Employees may request reimbursement based on actual meal expenses incurred, provided the amounts do not exceed the daily M&IE per diem amounts. VMI does not permit the traveler to directly bill VMI for meal expenses incurred during overnight travel including charging meals to direct-billed hotel rooms. VMI pays the M&IE per diem directly to the traveler, even when one traveler incurred the expenses on behalf of another. The M&IE per diem used by VMI shall correspond to the location of the traveler's related overnight lodging. The applicable M&IE per diem, or fraction thereof, is payable to the traveler without itemization of meal expense or receipts.

Prorating the M&IE for Partial days. For departure and return travel days, VMI will reimburse 75% of the appropriate per diem rate.

No Cost Meals. When meals are provided at no cost in conjunction with travel events, VMI shall reduce the applicable M&IE per diem by the dollar amount shown for the applicable meal in the M&IE Rate Table. When meals are included with registration or lodging expense as part of a package plan, you must record the number and type of meals (breakfast, lunch, dinner) on the travel voucher.

Incidental Travel Expenses Covered by the M&IE Per Diem. VMI will reimburse all service fees or tips (including but not limited to bellhops, skycaps, maids, waiters/waitresses, taxi and limousine drivers), laundry expense, personal telephone calls, and transportation between places of lodging or business and places where meals are taken through the incidental expense portion of the M&IE per diem. VMI will not reimburse the traveler for those expenses incurred during overnight travel and that are within expense categories that are not permitted.

40720 Reimbursement Policy For Overtime and Official Business Meals

VMI generally does not reimburse individuals for meal expenses not involving an overnight stay. VMI may make such reimbursement if the traveler submits to the Comptroller documentation that clearly establishes that the meal was for official business reasons or taken during official overtime work. With the Board of Visitors adoption of this Manual, the Board of Visitors hereby delegates to the Comptroller the authority to make such determinations. To be eligible for reimbursement of this expense, the individual seeking reimbursement must demonstrate that such meals are essential to the Institute's mission and are a business necessity. Employees shall pay for the meal and submit to the Comptroller a Travel Expense Reimbursement Voucher. The traveler or VMI employee shall not direct the restaurant to directly bill VMI for meals.

Overtime Meals. In addition to the general requirements established above for non-overnight meals, the overtime work periods in which meals are purchased shall be required by VMI. Overtime work periods may include extended work hours due to non-overnight travel. To be eligible for overtime meals required in conjunction with non-overnight travel, the traveler shall, out of business necessity, leave home before 6:00 a.m. (for breakfast) and be unable to return home before 7:00 p.m. (for dinner). Lunch meal expenses are not reimbursable under the provisions of the overtime meal reimbursement policy. Authorized overtime meals may be reimbursed up to the amount shown on Exhibit 40-D.

Official Business Meals. In addition to the general requirements established above for non-overnight meals, official business meals shall also involve substantive and bona fide business discussion and shall be approved by the Superintendent or his designee. Authorized official business meals may be reimbursed based on actual costs incurred up to the amount shown for the applicable meal in the M&IE Rate Table. The M&IE rate used shall correspond to the location in which the official business meal was taken.

IRS Reporting Requirements. Meal reimbursements made in accordance with the above regulations are not considered taxable meals reportable to the IRS. However, when a meal is purchased for more than one individual and the cost exceeds \$25, the individual seeking reimbursement shall attach a receipt to the travel voucher, otherwise VMI will consider it a taxable meal. This situation will normally occur only for official business meals where several individuals are involved. VMI will make meal reimbursements while in travel status in accordance with applicable per diem regulations.

40730 In-state and Out-of-State Guideline Tables

The guideline table (Exhibit 40-C) provides the daily M&IE per diems and the maximum amount for one night's lodging excluding taxes. Standard amounts are provided for both in-state and out-of-state travel destinations. Additional guidelines are provided for selected cities. The standard guidelines apply to any city not listed. Certain foreign travel destinations may justify higher amounts. You may contact the Comptroller's Office to obtain travel information concerning the reimbursable cost of foreign travel. (See Exhibit 40-C)

40740 M&IE Rate Table

The table provides the individual meal guideline amounts for each respective daily meal guideline amount presented in the guideline tables. These individual meal amounts are pertinent for the determination of maximum meal reimbursement amounts for overtime and official business meals and/or the M&IE reduction, which shall occur where meals are provided at no cost during an overnight travel period. (See Exhibit 40-C)

40810 Gratuities (Tips)

Gratuities are not reimbursable because they are included in the M&IE per diem. Where VMI reimburses the actual meal costs under the non-overnight travel meal reimbursement policy, meal tips are reimbursable within the applicable meal rate, but shall not exceed 15% of the cost of the meal.

40820 Registration Fees

VMI may reimburse individuals for attendance at functions related to Institute business the individual is expected to attend due to the nature of his/her position. Receipts are required for reimbursement. If registration was paid in advance by VMI, then do not list it on the Travel Voucher.

40830 Telephone Calls, Telegrams and Facsimiles

The traveler can claim business-related calls on the Travel Voucher. If they are long distance, then the traveler shall submit the location, person and reason for the call with the Travel Voucher.

40900 Nonreimbursable Expenses

VMI shall not reimburse individuals for the following:

- Lost or Stolen Articles
- Alcoholic beverages
- Excessive meals and lodging
- Damage to personal vehicles, clothing, or other items
- Services to gain entry to a locked vehicle
- Movies or cable television shows charged to hotel bills
- All expenses related to the personal negligence of the traveler, such as fines
- Entertainment expenses
- Towing charges for personal vehicles
- Expenses for children, spouses, companions, and friends of state employees

The above is not intended to be all inclusive. *Exceptions to the policies described above may be granted by the Chief Financial Officer. Justification must be provided and authorization obtained beforehand.*

41000 Travel Charge Cards

VMI offers the American Express Corporate Travel Card (AMEX Card) to all full-time academic and administrative faculty. VMI offers classified employees the card based on frequency of travel. The card is provided at no cost to VMI or the cardmembers.

The card provides a convenient means for travelers to charge most travel related expenses including meals, car rentals, and lodging. [VMI may provide cash advances to those employees that are not offered the opportunity to participate in the AMEX card program.](#)

41010 Billing

The AMEX card is issued in the cardmember's name. The spending limit for the AMEX card is \$3,000. American Express will send the cardmember a monthly statement. The American Express billing cut-off date is approximately the 26th of each month. American Express requires the cardmember to make payment within 30 days of the billing cut-off date. If the statement is not paid by that date, then American Express will send the cardmember a second billing marked "*Past Due*". If the cardmember does not satisfy his/her financial obligations to American Express within 60 days of the billing cut-off date, then American Express will revoke the charge card privileges and may assess the cardmember late fees and finance charges. [VMI is not responsible for these late fees and finance charges. If a card is revoked, American Express may refuse to re-issue a new corporate card, even after a waiting period. Employees whose cards have been revoked will not be eligible for travel advances.](#)

American Express will suspend charge privileges or cancel a cardmember's account when any one of the following general conditions develop:

- Employment of a cardmember is terminated
- There is a consistent delinquent payment history
- The cardmember files bankruptcy

41020 Using the AMEX Card

[VMI employees may use the charge card only for reimbursable expenses incurred while conducting official Institute business. Personal expenses that cannot be reasonably separated from reimbursable expenses may be charged on the card. Examples include a personal phone call included in a lodging bill or a spouse's dinner included in a restaurant bill. Although such personal expenses may be](#)

.charged, it is the cardmember's responsibility to pay for these charges from personal funds within the payment terms specified by the charge card vendor. Employees shall not use the AMEX card to purchase airline tickets.

41030 Reimbursement

The traveler must submit his/her travel expense reimbursement voucher in a timely manner to ensure that card members receive reimbursement in time to pay charge card bills within the time frame prescribed above. This timely submission is the responsibility of the traveler and not VMI's. VMI shall not make travel expense reimbursements from charge card statements or charge receipts. The traveler shall comply with the regulations described herein when submitting the travel expense reimbursement voucher.