Procedure 4.0401

Travel Authorization Procedure

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These travel regulations apply to BCCC Board of Trustees members and all employees of the College. Travel policies, procedures, and prevailing rates are subject to change; therefore, employees should always reference the most recent version of regulations enacted by BCCC, Office of State Budget & Management (OSBM) and the State Board of Community Colleges (SBCC).

All travel requests, regardless of fund source, are contingent upon the availability of funds.

1.) Official College Business
Travel requests for official College business may be submitted when a board member or employee is traveling while performing work on behalf of, officially representing, or providing a service related to the College mission, or attending approved job-related training. Travel that would not directly benefit the College shall neither be approved nor reimbursed.

2.) Employee Responsibility
An employee traveling on official College business is expected to exercise the same care in incurring expenses that a prudent person would exercise if traveling on personal business and expending personal funds. Excess costs, circuitous routes, delays, or luxury accommodations and services unnecessary, unjustified, or for the convenience or personal preference of the employee in the performance of official College business are prohibited.

Failure by the employee to obtain proper approval may result in expenses incurred not being reimbursed.

BCCC may authorize credit cards and/or procurement cards (“p-cards”) for employees during travel on College business. (See College Credit Card Terms of Use at the end of this document.) Employees will be responsible for unauthorized costs. Employee misuse of College issued credit cards and/or p-cards is grounds for termination.

3.) Authorization
General Statute 115D-20(1) directs that the College President reports to the College’s Board of Trustees. As such, the Board shall determine the manner in which it approves the travel of the College President, consistent with policy and procedure, and subject to SBCC procedures. In addition, consistent with the Board’s fiduciary responsibility and in

the interest of fiscal responsibility, it is the Board's responsibility to examine the College President's travel at their discretion.

All other employee in- and out-of-state travel (except scheduled off-campus classes), must have prior approval from the Vice President responsible for the employee that is travelling and must be processed through the supervisory chain at least 7 days prior to departure. A separate Travel Authorization Form must be completed by each individual. All travel in excess of $1500 or involving out-of-state travel must also have prior approval from the College President.

Failure by the employee to obtain such approval may result in expenses incurred not being reimbursed.

The employee should submit a "Travel Authorization Form" for all travel not subject to a blanket authorization. (See Blanket Travel Authorization discussed later.)

All travel forms should be submitted to the Business Office after all necessary approvals received.

Blanket Travel Authorization

A blanket travel approval is required for all employees for routine travel and/or travel within the service area and surrounding counties utilizing a College Vehicle or to claim mileage reimbursement while conducting official College business, so long as the required travel has no other associated expense (ex: registration, lodging, etc). The blanket authorization must include:

a) Name of the person traveling;

b) Destination(s) and purpose for the travel as defined by the College;

c) Dates of the travel (Ex: July 1 20xx – June 30, 20xx);

d) Source of funding; and,

e) Any other information necessary to justify traveling on a routine basis.

A blanket authorization for travel must be completed and secured annually at the beginning of each fiscal year and updated as necessary to reflect new hires and any other applicable changes. The blanket travel authorization form must be approved prior to departure for all routine travel.

All Travel Not Covered by Blanket Authorization

An approval form is required for travel that is necessary to conduct College business and not on a routine basis. A travel authorization form must be completed and approved for all travel not covered under a blanket authorization (i.e. overnight trips, out-of-state travel, international travel, requests for excess expenses, etc.) and must contain the following:

a) Name of the person traveling;

b) Destination(s) and purpose for which the trip will be made;

c) Dates of the travel

d) Source of funding;

e) Mileage and/or air fare, hotel and/or registration fee costs, and any other information necessary to justify the trip must be attached/included with the authorization form;

f) Excess request (if needed) with justification.

The travel authorization form must secure approval of the College President or his/her designee for all trips prior to departure, regardless of method of travel. In addition, written authorization must be secured in advance from the College President or his/her designee for excess lodging and for registration fees.

4.) Transportation

Transportation includes use of College Fleet Vehicles, reimbursement paid for the use of private vehicles, public motor vehicles, fares paid on public conveyances, tolls, and parking fees.

It is the intent of the College that employee travel shall be conducted in the most efficient manner and at the lowest and most reasonable cost to the College. BCCC will maximize utilization of the College Vehicle Fleet and reimburse for use of private vehicles on a limited basis.

Employees traveling to the same destination are encouraged to travel together whenever possible.

College Vehicles

College Vehicles may only be used for official college business. Only College employees may drive the College Vehicles. College Vehicles may be housed at Beaufort County Community College main campus, subsidiary campus locations, or other government locations approved by the College President or his/her designee.

College Vehicle scheduling is maintained by the Business Office. It is the responsibility of the employee to verify College Vehicle availability, and document that on both the Travel Authorization Form and the Travel Reimbursement Request Form.

College Vehicles are generally available for pick up the day of travel, but can be made available the day prior under extenuating circumstances. College Vehicles should be returned upon completion of travel, but may be returned the following morning at the opening of business under extenuating circumstances.

College Vehicles shall not be used for any part of a daily commute. Commuting miles are any miles between the employee's home and their regular place of work, regardless of whether that workplace is their primary duty station or other non-temporary duty

station an employee may be required to report to. The IRS defines a temporary duty station as a place where your work assignment is realistically expected to last (and does in fact last) one year or less. Stopping along the way between your home and workplace for a work-related purpose does not constitute business mileage and/or the use of a College Vehicle.

College Vehicles should be returned to campus with a full tank of fuel.

Employees who receive traffic tickets while driving a College Vehicle must report the ticket to either the College President or the Vice President of Administrative Services upon their return to campus. The college reserves the right to assess any charges and make determinations on the safety of the college employee operating college owned vehicles for future trips.

Non-Employee Riders

Other riders may accompany BCCC employees in College Vehicles when they have a business interest in the purpose of the trip and their presence is related to College business. Students of state universities, Colleges, and institutions may be passengers in College Vehicles to attend athletic events and other activities officially sanctioned by the institution, provided the proper account is reimbursed at the standard mileage cost rate by the student activity fund involved. Immediate family, as defined by the Immediate Family Member Procedure, of BCCC employees may accompany them in College Vehicles, if space is available. All travel is strictly for official state business. [(G.S. 143-341(8)(i)(7)) grants Department of Administration rule-making authority in this area]. Hitchhikers are not permitted to ride in College Vehicles.

Private Vehicle Mileage Reimbursement

The expectation is if a College Vehicle is available for use, the employee will drive a College Vehicle. There are limited instances in which mileage reimbursement for use of a private vehicle will be allowed.

If mileage reimbursement is being/will be requested, such mileage must be submitted on the Travel Authorization form and must be approved prior to travel. If mileage is not included on the Travel Authorization form, it will not be reimbursed upon submission of the Reimbursement form.

For transportation by privately owned automobiles on official College business, the reimbursement rate shall not exceed the maximum rate established by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) as the business standard mileage rate. BCCC, at its discretion, may establish a rate lower than the maximum.

Use of Private Vehicle for Convenience of the College – College employees may use their private vehicle and be reimbursed at the IRS standard mileage rate under the following circumstances:

a) When the employee has a physical disability requiring specialized equipment for operation of a motor vehicle that is not available on cars owned by the College.

b) When such use is to the College's advantage, due to particular requirements of the employee's duties.

c) When there is not a College Vehicle available. Employees must submit documentation from the Vice President of their division authorizing personal vehicle use and documentation from the Business Office stating a College Vehicle was not available for use when filling for travel reimbursement.

Use of Private Vehicle for Convenience of the Employee – College employees may use their private vehicle under the following circumstances:

a) Employees may elect to use their private vehicle without reimbursement when a College Vehicle is available for travel, but the employee prefers their own transportation for personal reasons.

b) Employees on College business may use their private vehicle for personal convenience at one half (1/2) of the IRS standard mileage rate when a College Vehicle is available for travel but the employee's home of record is further than 15 miles, as measured in highway miles (using the shortest mileage between points), from BCCC Washington campus and is closer to the travel destination. This mileage reimbursement option does not apply if the employee is departing from and returning to BCCC Campus.

Mileage is measured from the closer of the employee's assigned duty station or the employee's point of departure/return (i.e., employee's home of record).

Reimbursement is limited to direct mileage between approved stops on the employee's itinerary (ie, travel destination, place of lodging).

Vehicle use, either college or personal, will not be authorized when railroad, airplane, or other alternate transportation is feasible and would be more economical, considering transportation, subsistence, and salary costs.

Nothing in this procedure shall be interpreted to mean that BCCC intends to reimburse normal commuting expenses to and/or from the duty station.

Transportation at Destination

At the employee's approved travel destination, College Vehicles may be used for official state business as required. College vehicles may be used prudently for de-minimis personal purposes. Examples of de-minimis personal travel would include travel to obtain meals, picking up a prescription at a pharmacy and similar type errands. No transportation fares are reimbursable on a trip in which an employee uses a College Vehicle.

If a private vehicle was approved in accordance with the aforementioned mileage reimbursement guidelines, then mileage incurred at the approved destination for official

state business may be reimbursed at that same reimbursement rate. An example of this would be traveling from the hotel location to the conference location.

If no vehicle was utilized for travel to the approved destination (i.e., arrived via air), the actual costs of taxi, shuttle service, ride sharing service, bus or use of other public transportation are reimbursable and must be documented with a receipt. Transportation tips are allowed, not to exceed 15% with a $5.00 maximum, and must be documented with a receipt. This would include travel to and from the arriving terminal location.

Reimbursement for personal related travel at the destination is not allowed.

Transportation by Common Carrier

Air, rail, or bus fare is limited to actual coach fare, substantiated by receipt. Check-in fees are limited to actual costs substantiated by receipt. Tickets for commercial air travel may be purchased by the College or by the authorized traveler and claimed on his/her expense report with a valid receipt. Travel by coach class must be utilized. No first-class travel shall be reimbursed.

Reimbursement for travel between the employee's duty station or home (whichever is less) and the place of departure (airline terminal, train or bus station) and for appropriate parking may be made under the following circumstances:

a) Private vehicle – IRS business standard mileage rate, or rate as set forth by BCCC, for one round trip and airport parking with a valid receipt;

b) Taxi, airport shuttle, ride sharing service, bus or other public transportation – actual cost supported by a valid receipt. Transportation tips are allowed, not to exceed 15% with a $5.00 maximum, and must be documented with a receipt.

Travel by air

Travel by air is allowed for destinations outside of North Carolina only, unless the President of the College makes an exception because of an employee's medical condition.

Parking and Tolls

Parking and toll (road, bridge, ferry) expenses are reimbursable, with valid receipt, while in the course of conducting official College business as long as such expenses are determined reasonable and clearly show that there was care taken to keep the costs to the College as low as possible. Any parking and toll rates considered excessive and only for the convenience of the authorized traveler will not be reimbursable.

5.) Subsistence

Subsistence consists of lodging, meals, registration, and all other items, which are not defined as transportation.

The established subsistence rates are subject to change by the OSBM, often on an annual basis. The rates are established for meals and lodging, on an In-State and Out-of-State travel basis.

For the purposes of determining eligibility for allowances, travel status means being away from the employee's normal duty station or home and, while traveling, the employee must be acting in his/her official capacity as required by his/her work activities.

The maximum rates payable for meals and lodging for In-State and Out-of-State travel from state, county or institutional funds shall be consistent with the rates established by the OSBM and the SBCC.

Written authorization must be secured in advance from the College President or his/her designee for estimated travel costs in excess for lodging, meals and registration fees established by the OSBM or SBCC.

Lodging:

Overnight lodging may only be authorized and paid to support business needs and final travel destinations that equal or exceed 35 miles, calculated from the employee's home or duty station, whichever is less, to the final travel destination. Lodging, whether In-State or Out-of-State, must be documented by an itemized receipt of actual lodging expenses from a commercial lodging establishment or third-party lodging establishment.

Excess Lodging

Excess lodging authorization for In-state, Out-of-State, and international travel (including Alaska and Hawaii) must be obtained in advance from the College President or his/her designee. Excess lodging is allowed when the employee is in a high cost area and unable to secure lodging within the current allowance, or when the employee submits in writing an opinion that his/her personal safety or security is unattainable within the current allowance. Excess lodging authorization is not allowed for reason of convenience or personal preference for the employee.

Third Party Lodging

Reimbursement for lodging in an establishment that is being rented out by a third party or an establishment treated as an apartment building by state or local law or regulation is allowed only if the agency can document that per day lodging rates will cost less than standard In-State or Out-of-State lodging rates. Approved third party lodging requests and payments must include documentation that provide evidence of savings. Third party lodging agreements are not allowed among family members or where such agreements or payments create a financial conflict of interest to the traveling employee or other agency managers or employees. Third party lodging may include, yet is not limited to, online website house or room rental services.

Meals

An authorized traveler may be reimbursed for meals while on official College business when the authorized traveler is in overnight travel status. The travel must involve a travel

destination located at least 35 miles from the employee's regularly assigned duty station (vicinity) or home, whichever is less.

Each meal reimbursement rate must be listed on the travel authorization form and the subsequent reimbursement request.

Reimbursement for meals shall not exceed the established rates for a maximum of three meals whether traveling either In-State or Out-of-State. Tips for meals are included in the meal allowance. Departure and arrival times must also be listed on the reimbursement request. The costs of meals included in other related activities (registration fees, conference costs, hotel registration, etc.) may not be duplicated in reimbursement requests.

Employees may receive meal allowances for full days in overnight travel status, as well as partial days of travel when the partial day is the day of departure or the day of return. To be eligible, the employee must:

a) Breakfast – depart duty station prior to 6:00 a.m.

b) Lunch – depart duty station prior to noon (day of departure) or return to the duty station after 2:00 p.m. (day of return)

c) Dinner – depart duty station prior to 5:00 p.m. (day of departure) or return to duty station after 8:00 p.m. (day of return)

Meal reimbursement for daily travel (when an employee is not in overnight travel status) is not allowed.

Meals for Conferences or Events Requiring Employee Attendance

A College employee may be reimbursed for meals, including lunches, when the employee's job requires his attendance at the meeting of a board, commission, committee, or council in his official capacity and the meal is preplanned as part of the meeting for the entire board, commission, committee or council. Such board, commission, committee, or council must include persons other than the employees of a single College, state department, institution, or agency. This provision does not apply to conferences, seminars or workshops unless the lunch is a preplanned part of the formal agenda, and/or is included as part of the registration fee.

Registration Fees

All registration fees must be approved in advance by the College President or his/her designee. Convention or conference registration fees must be included on the travel authorization prior to departure. Registration fees may be paid either by the employee or the College. For the employee to be reimbursed for personal payment of a registration fee, they must provide documentation of the expense by a valid receipt. Employees may not claim reimbursement for meals included in registration fees.

6.) Other Transportation and Subsistence Expenses
Tips for handling baggage at common carrier terminals and/or when arriving at or departing from the place of lodging are allowed, with a maximum of $2.00 per bag, and must be documented with a receipt.

Tips for room service, valet, and other hotel services are not reimbursable.

The costs of laundry, entertainment, alcoholic beverages, additional snacks or refreshments, and other personal expenses are not reimbursable.

7.) Penalties and Charges Resulting from Cancellations
Penalties and Charges resulting from the cancellation of travel (including airline, ground transportation, hotel reservations, and/or conference registrations) shall be the College's obligation if the employee's travel has been approved in advance and the cancellation or change is made at the direction of and/or for the convenience of the College, or due to cancellation of the event which was requiring approved travel. If the cancellation or change is made for the personal convenience or benefit of the employee, it shall be the employee's obligation to pay the penalties and charges. However, in the event of accidents, serious illness, or death within the employee's immediate family, or other critical circumstances beyond the control of the employee, the College may pay the penalties and charges upon written approval of the College President.

8.) Travel Advances
A travel advance may be requested if the total advance amount exceeds $100. The travel advance will be calculated at a maximum of 90 percent of the total estimated costs (excluding transportation costs, any expenses pre-paid by the College and/or hotel expenses paid by the College)

The request must be presented to the Business Office a minimum of 14 business days before the advance is required and may be picked up the day before departure. If the estimated cost is less than $100, the employee is responsible for their travel costs, unless an exception is granted by the College President or his/her designee.

Travel Advances will be deducted from the employee's Travel Reimbursement Request. Travel advances require a completed travel reimbursement form to be filed in a timely manner (see *Timely Filing and Reimbursement* discussed later) or the advance amount will be deducted from the employee's paycheck.

An employee may not have more than one open travel advance at any given time.

9.) Student travel

Any and all student activity policies and procedures for student travel should be followed. Any travel requiring student meals and/or lodging should be submitted via the supervising employee's travel authorization form. A list of attending students should be included with the supervising employee's travel authorization form. Student meals are

reimbursed at the State approved rates and may be advanced in full. Student meal advances and/or reimbursements are paid to the supervising employee for distribution to the students.

10.) Timely Filing and Reimbursement
Each authorized traveler is responsible for his or her own request for reimbursement.

"Travel period" is defined as the calendar month during which the travel occurred.

Upon completion of approved travel, the employee should complete a Travel Reimbursement Form for reimbursement of allowable expenses and have it approved through the supervisory chain and filed with the Business Office within thirty (30) days after the travel period has ended as reflected on the approved travel authorization, or June 30, whichever comes first. Requests for reimbursement submitted after July 30 of any new fiscal year for prior fiscal year reimbursements will be addressed on a case-by-case basis.

All travel reimbursements will be made via direct deposit to the employee's payroll direct deposit account. If the employee has multiple payroll direct deposit accounts, the travel reimbursement will be deposited to the account indicated for "remainder" funds. Properly completed and approved Travel Reimbursement Forms received between the 1st and 15th will be deposited by the end of the month received. Properly completed and approved Travel Reimbursement Forms received between the 16th and 31st will be deposited by the 15th of the following month. All reimbursements are subject to funds availability.

11.) College Credit Card Terms of Use
By agreeing to use the Beaufort County Community College Credit and/or Purchase Card for travel purposes, employees agree to the following:

a) A travel authorization form must be completed and signed by the traveler's supervisor and the College President, as applicable, prior to issuance of the purchase card to the traveler. The authorization form must detail all estimated travel expenses.

b) Allowable expenses for purchase card use are limited to the actual cost of hotel, registration, parking fees, and airfare. Any other expected expenses require specific approval prior to payment with the college credit card.

c) All other expenses, including meals, are not to be charged on the purchase card. Meals are reimbursed on a per diem basis, not actual meal expenses, and will be reimbursed to the traveler after the traveler returns.

d) Traveler is responsible for completing a travel reimbursement form after the traveler returns and submitting the form and all supporting documentation/receipts to the business office.

e) Traveler is responsible for any unapproved/ineligible charges incurred on the purchase card.

f) Traveler is responsible for notifying the business office immediately if the traveler's plans change. Any charges incurred for uncancelled hotel reservations will be the responsibility of the traveler.

g) It is the traveler's responsibility to understand that they are being entrusted with a valuable tool and should make the utmost effort to protect the card from being lost or stolen.

h) If the purchase card is lost or stolen, the traveler agrees to notify the Beaufort County Community College Purchasing Office at 252-940-6321 or the Payroll Office at 252-940-6225. If unable to reach the Purchasing or Payroll Offices, it is the Card User's responsibility to notify the issuing bank.

References

Legal References: *1C SBCCC 200.94, NC G.S. 138-5 through 138-7, NC G.S. 115D-20(1)*

Cross References: Travel Policy

History

Leadership Council Review/Approval Dates: *10/14/22; 10/18/2024; 10/10/2025; 4/10/2026*

Senior Staff Review/Approval Dates: *11/06/2013, 08/04/2015, 8/28/2018, 9/6/2022; 4/29/2024; 5/8/2025; 3/4/2026*

Board of Trustees Review/Approval Dates: *08/04/15*

Implementation Dates: *Enter date(s) here*