

## Guidance for Travel – Coronavirus

**All university-related international travel is actively discouraged until further notice and all international travel to [CDC Level 3 and 4 countries](#) is prohibited for all faculty, staff, and students. Exceptions for faculty, staff or student travel will require a recommendation from the dean and approval from the provost. Guidance can be found at <https://www.umass.edu/coronavirus/travel-information>.**

### Travel Expense Exception Process and Reimbursement Guidelines

#### **Cancelled Travel due to COVID-19:**

Travelers should reach out to the travel agency/airline for a refund or credit toward future travel whenever possible. Travel expenses incurred for cancelled University travel related to COVID-19 may be reimbursed with the appropriate college, department, or administrative unit approvals. This includes travel to events which were canceled or when the traveler chose not to travel due to health concerns. For approval of COVID-19 travel cancellation expenses, email [Ray Rex](#) in the Controller's Office.

The expense report should provide documentation and details which adequately explain the extenuating circumstances:

- The expense report description should indicate that the request is for a cancelled trip due to COVID-19.
- Documentation which shows that the conference/event was cancelled (letter, email, etc.) if pertinent.
- Proof of reservation/booking cancellation and detailed receipts showing proof of payment.
- Travelers should document any credits received towards future travel and attach that documentation to the expense report. Travelers and their supervisors are responsible for tracking/managing employee credit vouchers. Future use of these credits are to be coordinated between the traveler and the traveler's supervisor. Travel credit vouchers issued may **NOT** be used for personal use if the University reimburses the traveler for the expense.
- **If your exception request is approved, include a copy of the email approval when submitting the expense for reimbursement to UPST.**

#### **Sponsored Grant Reimbursement Guidelines:**

For cancelled University related travel expenses due to COVID-19 on sponsored grants, please review these COVID-19 specific resources at: <https://www.umass.edu/employee-center/covid-19-resources-sponsored-programs>, agency responses to COVID-19 are included. Please seek out your agencies specific guidance. If your agency has not provided specific guidance, contact your program officer at the agency. Maintain any specific guidance received from the agency with the expense report. If you need assistance in interpreting Agency guidance or response, you may contact your Research Accountant.

*Per OMB Guidance:* Awarding agencies may allow recipients who incur costs related to the cancellation of events, travel, or other activities necessary and reasonable for the performance of the award, or the pausing and restarting of grant funded activities due to the public health emergency, to charge these costs to their award without regard to 2 CFR § 200.403, Factors affecting allowability of costs, 2 CFR § 200.404, Reasonable costs, and 2 CFR § 200.405, Allocable costs. If a traveler has charged (e.g., through prepayment or a travel advance) an airline ticket or other travel cost to a sponsored project and that trip is later cancelled, the credit must accrue to the sponsored project (see 2 CFR 200.406). Some airlines are offering full refunds for trips that need to be cancelled due to COVID-19; in these instances, the refund should accrue to the grant, either directly through the institution's travel system or via reimbursement from the traveler. If a traveler cancels a trip and accrues a credit on their personal account, the traveler should follow institutional policy for how to track and manage the credit. Per NIH FAQs on NOT-OD-20-086: If vouchers have been granted for any of the travel expenses affected by COVID-19, recipients are required to use the vouchers and may not request additional support. Institutions must document that costs charged to a grant are non-refundable and maintain documentation, in accordance with record retention requirements, and make them available to NIH upon request. See the [COGR COVID -19 Resource Page](#) and the [COGR Agency Guidance Matrix](#) for sponsor specific information.

Awarding agencies may allow recipients to charge full cost of cancellation when the event, travel, or other activities are conducted under the auspices of the grant. If the cancelled travel or any associated fee(s) are not allowable on the sponsored grant, the expense may be reimbursed from a non-sponsored fund if the exception is approved by the department and Controller's Office as noted above.

#### **Tracking COVID-19 expenses:**

For tracking of travel cancellation "fees only" related to COVID-19, use account code 726160. Additional guidance is forthcoming for the tracking of COVID-19 related expenditures including unrealized travel.