

TRAVEL FOR RCUH EMPLOYEES (see [Policy 2.601](#))

TRAVEL REQUEST FORM

All official travel requires an employee to file a Travel Request, and to obtain the approval of their Principal Investigator (PI)/supervisor and Fiscal Administrator (FA). A Travel Request must be completed even if no travel expenses will be paid directly to the traveler (e.g., when third-party POs are issued to vendors on behalf of the traveler, or if travel is supported by an outside source and there is no cost to RCUH). The Travel Request should include the total estimated cost of the trip (e.g., airfare, lodging, per diem, baggage fees, and miscellaneous expenses) including third-party payments. As the PI, you are responsible for determining that the trip is allowable, reasonable, and allocable to your sponsored award.

TRAVEL COMPLETION FORM

A Travel Completion must be completed online within 21 calendar days upon completion of a trip, even if the traveler does not have any out-of-pocket expenses to claim. Original receipts for all travel expenses (except for the M&IE allowance) must be provided.

Travelers are encouraged to contact their FA if they are unsure whether certain reimbursements (e.g., internet and telephone charges, currency exchange fees) will be allowed, or need clarification on the type of receipt documentation that will be required.

MEALS AND INCIDENTAL EXPENSES (M&IE) ALLOWANCE

The M&IE allowance is a daily allowance provided to a traveler to cover the cost of meals and incidental expenses without separately accounting for meals, tips, and other expenses incidental to travel. RCUH employees are provided an allowance not to exceed the Federal Allowable Rate (FAR) for M&IE of the business destination city as established by the U.S. General Services Administration (for the Continental U.S. (CONUS)), the U.S. Department of Defense (for non-foreign locations overseas (OCONUS)), and the U.S. Department of State (for foreign locations). The Quarter-Day Method is used to calculate allowances for a fractional day of travel that may occur on travel departure and arrival days, and in-transit days between multiple destination cities:

QUARTER	TIME PERIOD	DEPARTURE DAY	ARRIVAL DAY	IN-TRANSIT DAY
1	12:01 AM – 6:00 AM	1 day	¼ day	¼ day
2	6:01 AM – Noon	¾ day	½ day	½ day
3	12:01 PM – 6:00 PM	½ day	¾ day	¾ day
4	6:01 PM – Midnight	¼ day	1 day	1 day

LODGING

Commercial lodging must be used to claim lodging as a business travel expense. Lodging expenses are claimed on a Travel Completion and require a commercial lodging receipt, which must display the daily room rate, period of stay, and total amount paid. If the daily room rate is less than the Federal Allowable Rate (FAR) for lodging, the traveler may only claim up to the cost incurred. If the daily room rate is more than the FAR, the traveler must obtain approval for any amount in excess of the FAR on the Travel Request, and provide a cost analysis to document the price reasonableness of the room rate being requested. No analysis is required if the traveler is attending a conference, and the excess lodging allowance is for the conference hotel.

AIRFARE

Transportation shall be by regularly scheduled air carrier by the most economical means, with routes selected to minimize travel costs when reasonable. It is preferred that airline tickets be procured via Purchase Order (PO) or reimbursement to the traveler upon completion of the trip. If the cost of the ticket is advanced as part of the "Travel Request and Advance Form", it should be done no earlier than 30 days prior to the date of departure.

Employees may be reimbursed for one checked bag, based on an airline's standard weight and measurements. Any additional fees are the traveler's responsibilities, unless appropriate justification is provided to claim it as an official business expense. If a baggage fee receipt for same-day travel is submitted, the traveler must state the business reason on the Travel Completion.

OTHER MODES OF TRANSPORTATION

Travel via other modes of transportation (e.g., ship, train, bus, or private automobile) is only allowed if the total cost of the trip, including other expenses resulting from the alternate mode of transportation (e.g., lodging, meals, incidental expenses) is less than the cost of air travel.

CAR RENTAL AND MISCELLANEOUS GROUND TRANSPORTATION

A car rental may be allowable in certain circumstances. Reimbursement is limited to the use of a subcompact/compact car, unless otherwise justified. Ground transportation between business destinations is allowable, including transportation to/from airports to lodging establishments. This includes taxis, shuttles, fixed rail and buses. Travelers should ensure that the most reasonable and practical form of transportation is utilized.

MILEAGE REIMBURSEMENT

Mileage reimbursement is allowed for RCUH employees using their personal vehicles for an official business purpose. To qualify for this allowance, each RCUH employee is required to carry their own liability insurance as required by the Hawai'i No-Fault Law. To claim mileage and parking expenses, employees must fill out a Personal Automobile Mileage Voucher. RCUH currently uses the IRS established business mileage rate for employees. See [Policy 2.602](#) for current mileage rates. Mileage incurred from an employee's residence to their principal work location is a commuting expense. Commuting expenses are nondeductible and not allowed.

OTHER THINGS TO KNOW

- It is presumed that all official travel will commence and end in the state of Hawai'i; if this is not the case, the traveler must provide an explanation on the travel forms.
- RCUH employees may receive an allowance of up to \$20/day for same-day inter-island travel, which is reported as taxable income.
- Employees may receive a travel allowance for expenses incurred on the same island of their residence, only if an overnight stay is required; for example, traveling on the Big Island between Hilo and Kona, conference-related duties requiring an employee to remain at the work site, and backcountry travel in mountainous or remote areas.
- An employee can only claim their own business travel expenses on a Travel Completion. Employees are not allowed to pay for another employee's business travel expense unless it is a shared expense (e.g., shared hotel room, shared taxi, etc.). Employees are not allowed to pay for a nonemployee's travel expenses.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS REGARDING TRAVEL

Can I use the RCUH Travel Request and Travel Completion forms for a UH employee?

Yes. However, all required information, documentation, and approvals must meet the UH requirements for official travel. Refer to [Policy 2.603](#).

Can I use Employee Travel forms for professional consultants, independent contractors, and other visiting non-employees?

No. Travel forms are for RCUH and UH employee travel only. Travel expenses for professional consultants and independent contractors should be included in the agreement for services and processed on the purchase order with their service fee. Business travel expenses for a non-employee that is not charging a fee for services, may be claimed on the Non-Employee Expense Payment Form.

I received a travel advance for an upcoming trip. How do I amend a Travel Request online to request additional advance funds?

A second travel advance payment cannot be requested using the same travel document. The employee must return the original travel advance check, or refund the advance payment with a personal check made payable to RCUH. The project must process a "zero" travel completion online which will close the travel document. After the initial travel document is closed, the project may process a new Travel Request online with the revised advance amount.

If a traveler wants to take personal time prior to or after the business destination, how is M&IE calculated?

RCUH recommends that the trip expenses be estimated using an itinerary where personal time is excluded and only business destinations are accounted for. Any transportation, M&IE, or other travel cost above this estimate is the responsibility of the traveler.

I sent my volunteer to Kauai for a day to collect samples for me. Is the volunteer entitled to the employee same day \$20 allowance?

No, volunteers may only be reimbursed for actual meal costs with an original receipt. If a reimbursement is provided, it may not exceed the \$20 same day rate. The expense can be claimed on the Non-Employee Expense Payment Form.

I traveled to the mainland for a three-day conference and chose to stay at the home of a relative. May I still receive a lodging allowance?

No. In order to receive a lodging reimbursement, a traveler must have obtained lodging at a commercial establishment such as a hotel, and provide RCUH with an original receipt.

An employee has filed their Travel Completion and has unused advance funds that must be returned to RCUH. Where do I send the refund payment?

Submit the refund (e.g., cash or personal check made payable to RCUH) for the unused advance amount along with a copy of the approved Travel Completion, to RCUH Accounting.

For more detailed information regarding Travel for RCUH employees, please visit www.rcuh.com or email rcuh@rcuh.com or call 808.956.3608.