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Purpose

Bethel University and Bethel University Foundation (hereinafter referred to as "Bethel") recognize that employees may be required to travel or incur other expenses to conduct business on behalf of Bethel. The purpose of this Policy is to ensure compliance with IRS accountable plan rules and sound accounting practices --

- Expenses must have a business purpose;
- Expenses must be adequately reported and accounted for within a reasonable period of time; and
- Any excess or reimbursement or allowance must be returned within a reasonable period of time.

It is the policy of Bethel to reimburse only reasonable and necessary expenses actually incurred by employees.

It is the responsibility of the employee who originates an expense to comply with this Policy, including the completion of the proper forms in detail. When incurring business expenses Bethel expects employees to:

- Exercise discretion and good business judgment with respect to those expenses;
- Be cost conscious and spend money as carefully as the employee would spend his/her personal funds;
- Report expenses in a timely manner, supported by required documentation.

Bethel Issued Credit Cards

Bethel provides some employees with a corporate credit card for business related travel and expense. All employees with a Bethel issued credit card must use this card for all their business expenses paid by credit. Use of this card provides Bethel and the employee with additional liability insurance and other protections (see General Travel for more information on insurance coverage). Use of the Bethel issued credit card for personal use is prohibited.

All transactions must meet the requirements of this Business Expense Policy. Monthly credit card statements and receipts must be submitted for approval with a [Credit Card Activity Report](#) within 30 days of receipt of the credit card statement. For more details, please refer to the separate [Bethel Credit Card Policy](#).

Expense Reimbursement

To be reimbursed for business-related expenses not paid with a Bethel issued credit card, an employee must submit a [Business Expense Report](#). By signing and submitting the report, the employee is certifying that the charges are accurate, proper, and comply with the requirements of Bethel's business expense policy.

To receive reimbursement, the Business Expense Report must be:

- Approved by the employee's immediate supervisor;
- Submitted to the Business Office within 60 days of the expense being incurred.

Incomplete reports (not completely filled out or not including receipts) will be returned to the employee and will delay reimbursement.

Process for expense report approval:

1. Immediate supervisor will review and approve all direct report's expense reports;
2. The Chief Financial Officer will approve expense reports for all other Senior Vice Presidents and Executive Vice Presidents;
3. The Chief Financial Officer will submit his/her expense reports to the President for approval;
4. The President will submit his/her expense report to the Chief Financial Officer for approval and subject to periodic review by the Board of Trustees Audit Committee.

Receipts

Itemized receipts are required for all expenditures. In the rare occasion that a receipt is lost, an employee's supervisor may authorize reimbursement by including documentation of the instance in the Business Expense Report.

General Travel

Necessity of Travel

In determining the reasonableness and necessity of travel expenses, employees shall consider the ways in which Bethel will benefit from the travel and weigh those benefits against the anticipated costs of the travel. The same considerations shall be taken into account in deciding whether the benefits to Bethel outweigh the costs, less expensive alternatives, such as participation by telephone or video conferencing, or the availability of local programs or training opportunities.

Insurance, Loss, Theft, Damage

- Additional travel or baggage insurance is not a reimbursable expense.
- Damaged and lost baggage should be reported to the responsible airline within 24 hours of flight arrival. Check airline's website for specific coverage.
- Bethel is not responsible for the loss, theft, or damage of personal property, airline tickets, or cash. It is presumed that employees carry insurance on their personal property.
- Bethel maintains business travel insurance that provides coverage for accidental death or dismemberment to all benefits-eligible employees who travel on Bethel business.
- Worker's compensation is in force whenever employees travel for Bethel business.
- Employee health insurance benefits include out of network coverage when traveling. Employees receiving health insurance through another provider should consult that policy for coverage. Bethel does not provide any supplemental health insurance for employees who travel.
- Air travel purchased via a Bethel issued credit card is automatically covered by supplemental travel accidental death and dismemberment insurance (this does not include lost baggage insurance).
- See Rental Car section for additional information on rental car insurance.

Personal and Spousal/Family Travel Expenses

With advance approval from the President, Executive Vice President, a Senior Vice President, or Vice President, employees traveling on behalf of Bethel may include personal travel with their business-related trips. However, employees should not arrange business travel at a time that is less advantageous to Bethel or involves greater expense to Bethel in order to accommodate personal travel plans. Any additional expenses incurred as a result of personal travel, including but not limited to extra hotel nights, additional stopovers, meals or transportation, are the sole responsibility of the employee and will not be reimbursed by Bethel. Expenses associated with travel of an employee's spouse, family or friends will not be reimbursed by Bethel unless authorized for business purpose by the President, Executive Vice President or a Senior Vice President before the trip commences.

If a spouse, family member, or friend accompanies employees on a trip, it is the responsibility of the employees to determine any added cost for double occupancy and related expenses and to make the appropriate adjustment in the reimbursement request.

Air Travel

Air travel reservations should be made as far in advance as possible in order to take advantage of reduced fares. Employees traveling on behalf of Bethel are not required to stay over a Saturday night in order to reduce the price of an airline ticket. An employee who chooses to stay over a Saturday night shall be reimbursed for reasonable lodging and meal expenses incurred over the weekend so long as the additional costs do not exceed the documented airfare savings. First-class tickets or other upgraded tickets are not permissible.

Frequent Flyer Miles and Compensation for Denied Boarding

Employees traveling on behalf of Bethel may accept and retain frequent flyer miles and compensation for denied boarding for their personal use. Employees may not deliberately patronize a single airline to accumulate frequent flyer miles if less expensive comparable tickets are available on another airline. If the airline offers to place the employee on a later flight in exchange for monetary compensation or free airline travel, the employee should not do so at the detriment of attendance at scheduled Bethel events or work obligations.

Baggage Fees

Reasonable airline baggage fees are reimbursable. Be sure to check your airline's policies and weight limits before travel.

Hotels and Lodging

Employees traveling on behalf of Bethel may be reimbursed at the single room rate for the reasonable cost of hotel accommodations. Convenience, the cost of staying in the city in which the hotel is located, and proximity to other venues on the employee's itinerary shall be considered in determining reasonableness. Employees shall make use of available conference and discount rates for hotels. Bethel recommends the use of hotels with complimentary ground transportation, eliminating the need for a rental car.

Meals

Ordinary and necessary meals incurred while conducting Bethel business are reimbursable. Employees are encouraged to have meals in reasonably priced restaurants and, where possible, to take advantage of complimentary meals at conferences or hotels.

Ground Transportation

Employees are expected to use the most economical ground transportation appropriate under the circumstances and should generally use the following, in this order of desirability:

Courtesy Cars

Employees should use hotel courtesy transportation or shuttle services whenever available.

Taxis

When courtesy cars and airport shuttles are not available, a taxi is often the next most economical and convenient form of transportation when the trip is for a limited time and minimal mileage is involved. A receipt must be submitted for reimbursement.

Rental Cars

Car rentals should be used only when other forms of transportation are not practical. Car rentals should be placed on a Bethel corporate credit card if possible and rental insurance should be declined when traveling within the United States; if elected, such insurance is not reimbursable (Bethel is insured for this coverage separately). However, when traveling outside the United States, this coverage should be selected and is reimbursable. Car rental receipts, as well as gas receipts, must be provided.

Use of Personal Vehicle

Mileage Reimbursement

When using a personal vehicle for Bethel business, employees will be reimbursed at the approved IRS rate per mile.

Actual mileage incurred should be reported in the Mileage Activity section of the Expense Reimbursement Form and should be based on the shortest or most convenient route directly to and from the business destination. Bethel has established set mileage for travel between Bethel locations surrounding the Arden Hills campus.

From/To	Main Campus	Anderson Center
Main Campus	-	1.7
Anderson Center	1.7	-

Travel expenses incurred between an employee's home and work location are considered to be commuting expense and will not be reimbursed.

Travel expenses incurred between an employee's home and a temporary work location (e.g., business conference) may be reimbursed. This includes travel from an employee's home to/from the airport.

In the case of employees using their personal vehicles to take a trip that would normally be made by air, mileage will be allowed at the currently approved rate; however, the total mileage reimbursement may not exceed the sum of the lowest available round trip coach airfare.

When using a personal vehicle for university business, the employee's own insurance policy serves as the primary insurance policy for liability and physical damage to your vehicle. The IRS mileage reimbursement rate is designed to fully compensate for all typical expenses related to ownership, operation, maintenance, repair, and insurance as well as loss or destruction of the vehicle, related insurance deductibles, loss of use and diminution of value. It is the obligation of the employee/owner of the personal vehicle to carry adequate insurance for his/her protection and for the protection of any passengers.

Parking Fees and Tolls

Parking and toll expenses, including charges for hotel parking, incurred by employees traveling on organization business will be reimbursed when supported by a receipt. Travelers should use offsite airport parking whenever possible. The costs of parking tickets, fines, car washes, valet service, etc., are the responsibility of the employee and will not be reimbursed.

Business Related Entertainment

Entertainment expenses for business may be reimbursed if necessary and reasonable and approved by a Vice President, Senior Vice President, Executive Vice President or President. Such expenses must be incurred under circumstances conducive to a business discussion and business must actually be conducted. Expense strictly for goodwill entertaining without a business purpose will not be reimbursed. Documentation must include:

- Date and place of entertainment,
- Nature of expense,
- Name, titles, and business affiliation of those entertained,
- Description of the business purpose for the activity including the specific business matter discussed, and
- Receipts showing the vendor's name, a description of the services provided, the date, and the total expenses, including tips.

Other Expenses

Retirement Parties

Reasonable expenses associated with recognizing an employee's retirement or farewell will be reimbursed in accordance with the [Farewell](#) and [Retirement Guidelines](#).

Employee Flowers

Bethel will cover reasonable expenses for flowers for the death of an employee or immediate family member (parent, spouse or child), the hospitalization of an employee, or the birth of a child. All flowers should be ordered by the individual department and the expense will be allocated to that department's operating budget.

Gift Certificates/Gift Cards

The IRS considers a gift card, gift certificate or a prepaid Visa/MC to be cash or cash equivalent compensation whether given to an employee, non-employee, student, or research participant. In order to comply with IRS requirements for reporting of taxable income, see separate [Gift Certificate Policy](#) for information on when Gift Cards may and may not be purchased with university funds.

Non-reimbursable Expenditures

Bethel maintains a strict policy that expenses that could be perceived as lavish or excessive will not be reimbursed. Expenses that are not reimbursable include, but are not limited to:

- Additional travel or baggage insurance
- Loss, theft or damage of personal property including baggage and briefcases
- Domestic travel insurance
- Domestic rental car insurance
- Gasoline for personal vehicles (see Use of Personal Vehicle)
- First-class tickets or upgrades (unless authorized by the President)
- When lodging accommodations have been arranged by Bethel and the employee elects to stay elsewhere, reimbursement is made at an amount no higher than the Bethel arranged rate. Reimbursement shall not be made for transportation between the alternate lodging and the meeting site
- Traffic tickets, fines or violations
- Limousine travel
- Movies
- Alcohol
- Participation in voluntary employee events (e.g. Christmas Open House)
- Spa or exercise charges
- Home internet service
- Participation in or attendance at golf or tennis tournaments, or other sporting events, without the advance approval of the President, an Executive Vice President, a Senior Vice President, or a Vice President
- Employee membership dues or fees at any country club, private club, athletic club, airline club or similar organization
- Valet service
- Personal items and services (e.g., shoe shines, haircuts, toiletry articles, pet care costs, childcare costs, car washes, etc.)
- Political or charitable contributions
- Purchase of capital office equipment, office furniture, and equipment (including computers, cell phones and other electronics), software or other items normally procured through the Purchasing Department.

NOTE: If grant funding is used for reimbursement of expenses, the employee is responsible to ensure that such request is in compliance with any additional restrictions that may apply as outlined in the grant.

Vice Presidents, Senior Vice Presidents, Executive Vice Presidents and the President may use reasonable discretion in applying this Business Expense Policy.

This policy supersedes and replaces in its entirety any prior policy. Bethel University and Bethel University Foundation reserve the right to modify or amend this policy at any time.