

# Occidental College Expense and Reimbursement Policy Last Updated: August 2022

## Purpose

The Expense and Reimbursement Policy provides specific guidelines. This policy follows accountable plan rules as defined by the IRS. All expense reimbursements must meet the following three rules:

- Expenses must be related to activities of the College.
- The expenses must be substantiated with original documentation within a reasonable amount of time, which we define as 60 days.
- Advances or excess reimbursements must be returned to the College within a reasonable amount of time.

If these rules are met, expense reimbursements will be processed by Accounts Payable and therefore will not be included in an employee's taxable income.

## Scope

This policy applies to employees and anyone who uses personal funds to pay for College related expenses and wish to be reimbursed. This policy also applies to purchases made with Occidental College credit cards. Departmental policies, grants or other funding sources may impose additional restrictions, however they cannot supersede those required in this policy.

The guidelines in this policy go hand in hand with other College-issued policies that address specific types of transactions as follows:

## **Responsibility**

Employees should familiarize themselves with the types of expenses that are and are not eligible for reimbursement prior to incurring expenses. Employees may not authorize reimbursement of their own expenses or expenses of supervisors, department heads, etc.

Authorized signers must confirm that expenses and reimbursement

## Unallowable Expenses

Unallowable expenses are those that do not support College business or are in excess of what is normally considered reasonable (“ordinary and necessary”). Expenses that are customarily considered to be personal, even if the goods or services were purchased to support College business, are also unallowable.

Examples of generally unallowable expenses-

- Meals with College employees (or individual meals) that do not involve College business or that involve College business but that could have been discussed at a different (non-meal) time.
- Cell phones
- Per Diems (unless allowed by a grantor such as the National Science Foundation).
- First-class or business-class travel, priority check-in, travel insurance, seat upgrades or additional legroom fees without a pre-approval from a Vice President or the President.
- Car rental insurance coverage for travel in the US. (International rental insurance is reimbursable and should be purchased).
- Membership in airline/travel clubs.
- Charges for movie channels, airline headsets, personal toiletry or hotel spa/health club fees.
- Stolen, lost, or damaged personal property.
- Fees, late payment penalties, or interest charges on personal credit cards.
- Parking tickets or traffic violations.
- Personal services (any service to the college is not reimbursable and should follow policies and procedures on the Business Office Contracts webpage).
- Political or charitable contributions of any type.
- Sponsorship of external teams or other external organizations.
- Office furniture (lamp, desk, bookshelf, chairs, cabinet, etc.). All furniture must be requested through a [work order](#) to Facilities.
- Technology (e.g. computers, printers, software, hardware, etc.). All technology needs must be requested using an ITS HelpDesk Ticket by sending an email to [helpdesk@oxy.edu](mailto:helpdesk@oxy.edu).
- Alcohol purchased for consumption on College premises is unallowable unless it is purchased through [Campus Dining](#).

## Business Expenses

- Travel, including
  - (a) Travel considered to be Away from Home Overnight (as defined by IRS Guidelines);

Where? When? Why? Substantiating how you paid the expense (proof of payment) is explained under the supporting documentation below.

You must complete an [Expense Reimbursement Form or a Credit Card Expense Form](#), regardless if your expense is for travel or other items, and attach the appropriate supporting documentation as described in this policy. The form must be approved by your supervisor prior to submitting all documentation







either method must have the appropriate mileage verification attached. Oil changes, repairs, insurance, towing, motor club, parking tickets or other expenses related to operating your personal vehicle will not be reimbursed. Base mileage will not be included and will not be reimbursed.

***If the employee travels directly to or from an off-campus appointment from home, only the difference between base mileage and the appointment location is reimbursable. The IRS requires that the employee show total mileage for the day less base mileage. Base mileage is***

***miles from the College, the base mileage is 18 and reimbursement would be only for business mileage in excess of 18 miles for that day).***

Any mileage calculations must be included on the expense report with an online mileage calculator such as MapQuest or other electronic verification of miles driven. Please include a verification of your base mileage (home to Occidental).

Commuting from home to work is not reimbursable, even if the employee works on an unscheduled workday.

#### **4. Business Meals**

Business meals are defined by the IRS as the cost of food and beverage (including taxes and tips) consumed in-town or away from home with other business-affiliated individuals, or consumed alone while traveling on College business.

Most meals involving only College employees are not allowable business expenses as most College business should be able to be accomplished during normal business hours. Exceptions may be made if one of the following elements is true:

- (1) the meal is between em



Exceptions:

- Alcohol consumed off campus (outside events, meetings, meals).
- Alcohol for events held at a College property with an official mailing address other than 1600 Campus Road, ONLY at which a caterer with its own liquor license is hired.
- Alcohol purchased for gifts AND delivered by non-Oxy personnel (i.e a common carrier) to a mailing address other than 1600 Campus Road.

#### **Alcohol – Federally Sponsored Projects-**

A list of attendees MUST be on all expenses related to meals, events, tickets purchased, conferences and meetings. For expenses relating to entire classroom/athletic team, a list of attendees is not necessary. Please provide the course name/athletic team name in its place.