



UNWLA Policies and Procedures

Part 3: National Policies and Procedures

Section 3: Financial Policies – Travel and Expense Reimbursement Policy

Introduction

It is the policy of the UNWLA to provide reimbursement to UNWLA employees and volunteer members of the National Board for pre-approved travel-related and other expenses (including transportation, hotels, food and other purchases, such as supplies) when traveling on national UNWLA related business. These UNWLA job-related expenses must be reasonable and necessary, and must be pre-approved in writing by the UNWLA President (see attached pre-approval form).

The UNWLA will only reimburse for pre-approved travel-related and other expenses when the employee or volunteer board member provides documentation of the expense with receipts for purchases or other verifiable documentation.

Policy Review Timing: Annually or when organizational changes warrant.

A. Policy Details:

1. Airfare

- The most effective way to control cost on travel is to avoid traveling when not necessary. We encourage the use of teleconferences, videoconferences, on-line tools and other alternatives to travel when possible and practical.
- Travelers are expected to obtain the lowest available airfare that reasonably meets business travel needs. Airfare may be prepaid by the UNWLA.
- Travelers are encouraged to book flights at least 14 days in advance whenever practical to avoid premium airfare pricing.

Additional guidelines:

- To decrease cost to the UNWLA, electronic tickets should be used whenever possible.
- In many cases unused tickets/portions of tickets may be applied to future travel.

Note: When attending an in-person National Board Meeting, airfare (if required), room and board will be covered by the UNWLA.

2. Rail Transportation

Rail transportation should be used if it is the lowest cost alternative or if there are special circumstances that are approved in advance. Total cost of rail travel should be compared to the total cost of driving and/or flying. All rail travel will be booked in coach class.

3. Per Diem Allowances

To include:

“Lodging” plus “Meals & Incidental Expenses” (M&IE) - defined by IRS

- The UNWLA will be using the “standard rates” method to allocate per diem allowances. This is defined as “different rates for each state and individual location.”
- Per diem reimbursements are based on departure and return times over the entire 24-hour day and are prorated accordingly. Receipts are not required for per diem allowances and are reimbursed after the trip is completed.
- In the continental United States (CONUS), per diem payments are set and regulated by the U.S. General Services Administration (GSA), which vary by city location. In addition to meals, these rates include incidental expenses such as dry cleaning, service tips and housekeeping or porter tips, Below is the link to the 2023 GSA per diem rates defined by state & city and which will be used when determining the CONUS per diem allowance:

<https://www.gsa.gov/travel/plan-book/per-diem-rates>

- For destinations outside of the continental United States, the U.S. Department of State defines foreign per diem rates in U.S. dollars. Below is the link to these rates.

https://aoprals.state.gov/web920/per_diem.asp

4. Parking

Long-term airport parking should be used whenever possible. Short-term parking is acceptable for one-day trips.

5. Car Rental (Domestic travel)

Cars should be rented only when local transportation is not available, is inconvenient or the cost of local transportation exceeds the cost of renting a car. Car rental guidelines:

- The UNWLA authorizes the most economic vehicle available. In certain circumstances, larger vehicles may be rented, with appropriate approval.
- UNWLA employees/volunteers must have a valid driver's license.
- When vehicle rentals are necessary, the UNWLA encourages travelers to purchase collision damage waiver and loss damage waiver coverage.
- UNWLA employees/volunteers are strongly encouraged to fill the gas tank before returning the vehicle to the rental agency to avoid service fees and more expensive fuel rates.
- Correct rental charges and rates should be verified upon returning the automobile.
- Tickets issued to UNWLA employees/volunteers for accidents, parking, or other driving infractions will not be reimbursed.
- GPS add on services will not be reimbursed.
- Hand-held cell phones and other electronic devices should not be used while driving. Hands free communication is acceptable if it is legal to do so in that jurisdiction. It is the employee's responsibility to comply with all state and federal laws.
- Tolls, parking and gas are reimbursable expenses.

6. Rental car accidents

In the event of an accident in a rental car, an accident report must be prepared and filed with the local police as well as the car rental agency. Copies of the accident report must be turned in to the UNWLA as soon as possible. In addition, the employee/volunteer should immediately contact:

- The rental car company (fill out the accident report form).
- Local authorities for a police report.
- The UNWLA Office Manager

If an accident in a rented or leased vehicle should occur and the employee/volunteer is convicted of a violation involving alcohol or drug impairment, the employee/volunteer will be personally responsible for damages and possible disciplinary actions.

7. Personal car use

When applicable the use of a personal car instead of public transportation can be approved while traveling on UNWLA business. The following expenses are reimbursable:

- Parking expense

- Tolls
- Mileage reimbursement at current IRS reimbursement rates for miles driven on UNWLA business above and beyond normal commuting miles.
- Reimbursement for any repairs or maintenance to your personal automobile even if these costs result from business travel are not allowed. Towing charges, parking tickets, vehicle maintenance, and gasoline are your responsibility.

8. Ground Transportation

Ground transportation to and from airport/rail station for taxis, ride shares and public transportation for business purposes are reimbursable with receipts.

Additional guidelines:

- The most economical mode of transportation should be used whenever possible. The following modes of transportation should be considered: public transportation, ride sharing, hotel and airport shuttle services and personal cars.

9. Miscellaneous Expenses

The purchase of miscellaneous articles (books, office products, etc.) must be UNWLA business related and cannot exceed a total of \$100 without prior approval. All receipts must be retained for reimbursement.

10. Vacation in conjunction with business travel

In cases in which vacation time is added to a business trip, any cost variance in airfare, car rental or lodging must be clearly identified on the travel request form. The UNWLA will not reimburse any personal expenses.

11. Travel for Non-Employees/Non-Volunteers

Additional costs for travel, lodging, meal or other travel expenses for spouses or other family members will not be reimbursed unless the individual has a bona fide company purpose for engaging in the travel or attending the event and is pre-approved.

12. Non-reimbursable Travel Expenses

The following items that may be associated with business travel will not be reimbursed by the UNWLA:

- Airline club memberships
- Airline upgrades

- Commuting between home and the primary work location
- Costs incurred by traveler's failure to cancel travel or hotel reservations in a timely fashion
- Passports, vaccinations and visas when not required as a specific and necessary condition of the travel assignment
- Personal entertainment expenses, including in-flight movies, headsets, health club facilities, hotel pay-per-view movies, in-theater movies, social activities
- Travel accident insurance premiums or purchase of additional travel insurance
- Other expenses not directly related to the business travel

13. Exceptions

Occasionally it may be necessary for travelers to request exceptions to this travel policy. Requests for exceptions to the policy must be made in writing and approved by the President of the UNWLA

14. Expense Reporting & Reimbursement

Expense reports should be completed within two weeks of incurring the expense and at a minimum by the end of each month.

All expense reports must have receipts, invoices, bills, and statements supporting the reimbursable expenses. Only properly documented and submitted out of pocket expenses will be reimbursed. Lost receipts for reimbursable expenses will need a missing receipt affidavit provided in-place of the missing receipt.

All submitted expense reports are subject to random internal audits.

B. Branch and Regional Council Members:

Although the policy above applies to UNWLA employees and volunteer members of the National Board, Branches and Regional Councils may choose to adapt a similar policy for its Branch/Regional Council members.

The UNWLA authorizes the Branch and Regional Council Presidents to provide reimbursement to volunteer members of the Branch/Regional Council for pre-approved travel-related and other expenses, including transportation, hotels, food and other purchases, such as supplies. These UNWLA job-related expenses must be reasonable and necessary, and must be pre-approved in writing by the UNWLA Branch/Regional Council President (see attached pre-approval form).

Those seeking reimbursement must complete the "Travel and Expense Reimbursement Request" form. The form must be fully and accurately completed, and submitted to the

Branch/Regional Council Treasurer within 30 days of travel/expense. All receipts should be scanned/attached and submitted with the form.