



Vera C. Rubin Observatory

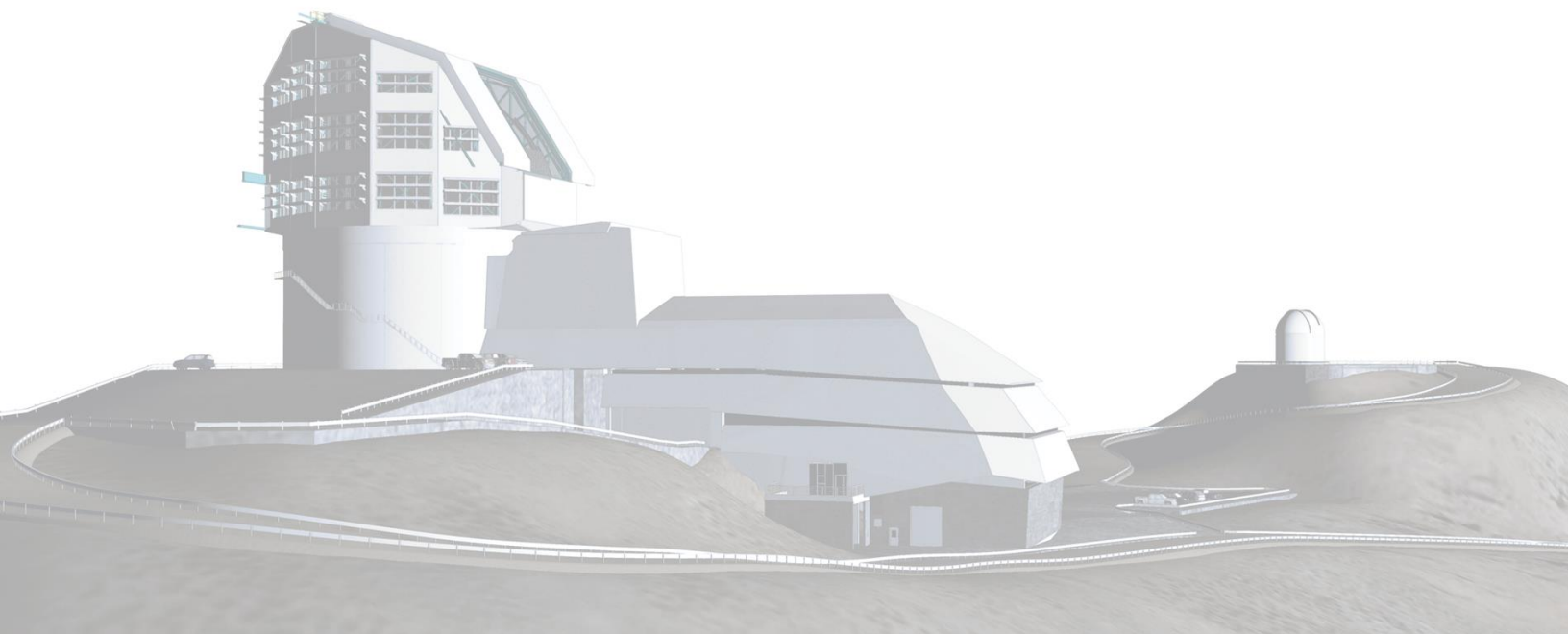
Travel Procedure

Erin L. Carlson

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Change Record

Release	Date	Description	Owner Name
	10/6/2010	Initial version of superseded Document-10056	Daniel Calabrese
	10/1/2012	Updated with Travel Summary Report requirement.	D. Calabrese
	7/15/2013	Changed from Rubin-LSSTC policy to Rubin-LSSTPO policy.	R. McKercher
	7/25/2013	Added taxi and shuttle service section. Added “alcohol” to section 2.7 Non-Allowable Expenses. Removed sentence “Also included are transportation costs between places of lodging or business to places where meals are taken.” From section 2.1 Meals and Incidentals.	R. McKercher
	1/22/2015	Substantial expansion following consultation with newly hired LSST Travel Administrator. Added section 1.1 RubinLSST Authorized Travelers. Added 1.2 Reasonable. Expanded explanation of required travel Authorization. Added section 2.3 Supplies and Materials. Expanded description of Fly America Act in section 2.5 Commercial Transportation. Added guidance in Section 2.7 Car Rentals regarding preference for using shuttle services, public transportation, and ride	D. Calabrese

		sharing when available. Added rationale behind Non-Allowable Expenses (Section 2.9) list and expanded the list. Added language in Section 2.10 Travel Reimbursement explicitly stating scanned receipt copies are acceptable. Expanded explanation of Travel Advance policies in Section 2.11. Added sections 3-8: Deviations for Personal Travel, Travel Insurance, Vendor Resources, TER Submission Deadlines, Contacting the Travel Administrator During Travel.	
	2/12/2015	Added a sentence to Summary stating the LSST Director may make policy exceptions on a case-by-case basis. Added reference to a Trip Calculator in Section 2.8 Personal Automobile Expense	D. Calabrese
	4/11/2016	Updated with name of new Travel Administrator.	R. McKercher
	4/25/2017	1.5 – Travel Points; 2.8 – International Currency Conversion; 2.11, Number 5 – Guidance on first and last days of travel; 2.13 – Temporary dependent care. Other minor edits and clarifications	E. Carlson
1.0	5/17/2017	Adoption as a change-controlled document LPM-119 per LCR-945 – previous Document-10056	R. McKercher
	5/22/2017	Corrected out-of-date references to the Omni Circular	V. Kinnison & R. McKercher

	11/29/2018	Periodic review with updates	D. Calabrese
2.0	06/19/2019	Implementation of LCR-1712 to include guidance on dependent care reimbursement and to add AURA's new requirement to submit M&IE rates for location travelled.	D. Calabrese
	05/14/2021	<p>Updated to coincide with AURA Reimbursement for Travel Expenses (B-XIX):</p> <p>2.1 Per Diem</p> <p>2.1.1 Meals and Incidentals</p> <p>2.1.2 Lodging</p> <p>2.5 Car Rental</p> <p>2.10.1 Travel Advance Payments to Traveler</p> <p>2.10.2 Repayment of Travel Advance to AURA</p> <p>2.11 Temporary Dependent Care</p> <p>Updated with Rubin template and changed all references to <i>LSST</i></p> <p>Updated all references to <i>policy</i> to <i>procedure</i> or <i>process</i></p>	E. Carlson
3.0	2021-09-07	Implementation of LCR-2738, which approved the changes listed for 2021-05-14	R. McKercher

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Vera C. Rubin Observatory (Rubin) Travel Procedure

Summary

The Rubin Travel Procedure describes policies and processes governing business-related travel paid for by Rubin. Rubin will only pay for travel expenses of Rubin-authorized travelers. All travelers, whose travel is being paid for by AURA must follow the same process; a Travel Requisition (TR) must be submitted online through REQLESS, and the traveler must submit a Travel Expense Report (TER). Online TR forms must be filled out and approved **before** any travel reservations are made. When determining allowable expenses, Rubin complies with the definition of “reasonableness” provided in the Executive Office of the President of the United States' Office of Management and Budget Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards (2 CFR Part 200, et al). Rubin reimburses approved business-related travel using the federal Per Diem rates.

Definitions of Terms

Glossary of Abbreviations ([Document-11921](#))

Glossary of Definitions ([Document-14412](#))

Reference Documents

Airlines Reporting Corporation (<https://www.arccorp.com/index.jsp>)

Federal Travel Regulations (<http://www.gsa.gov>)

Defense Travel Management Office (<http://www.defensetravel.dod.mil/site/perdiemCalc.cfm>)

Fly America Act (https://project.lsst.org/sites/default/files/Travel/fly_america_act.pdf)

Privately Owned Vehicle (POV) Mileage Reimbursement Rates

(<http://www.gsa.gov/portal/content/100715>)

Center for Disease Control (<http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/destinations/list>)

Travel Alerts and Warnings

(<http://travel.state.gov/content/passports/english/alertswarnings.html>)

“AURA Reimbursement for Travel Expenses” (<https://auracas.aura-astronomy.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/09/XIX-Reimbursement-for-Travel-Expenses.pdf>)

Rubin Travel website (<https://project.lsst.org/travel-home>)

Teplis/Concur (**1-800-367-1637**; identification code: **P61i**)

Vera C. Rubin Observatory Travel Procedure

1 Procedure

1.1 Authorized Travelers

Rubin is dedicated to promoting research and continually advancing in knowledge and expertise *through* active involvement that benefits the astronomical community. Rubin recognizes these contributions and is committed to supporting opportunities for professional development and participation from their employees and affiliates. Rubin has identified the individuals by their affiliation:

- AURA-Employees
- Rubin Partner Institution Employees
- Committee Members
- Invited Guests

NOTE: All travelers, whose travel is being paid for by AURA must follow the same process; a Travel Requisition (TR) must be submitted through REQLESS, and the traveler must submit a Travel Expense Report (TER) upon return. Online TR forms must be filled out and approved before any travel reservations are made.

1.2 Authorization

All travel must be approved ***in advance*** by the supervisor or Project Manager. Once the travel request has been approved, the traveler shall coordinate their travel plans with the Travel Administrator.

NOTE: *Travelers should NOT make their own travel arrangements. The Travel Administrator will make all business related travel arrangements for all Rubin travelers. Travelers will have the opportunity to provide final approval of arrangements made on their behalf. See Section 1.4 below for details.*

All staff shall submit their online TR's for approval **at least 21 days** before their outward journey. This affords a small "cushion" for manager approval and the traveler's final acceptance of the itinerary generated by the Travel Administrator. In addition, the cost savings from this policy will be significant. While 21 days prior is the requirement, Rubin encourages even earlier TR submission when possible. To facilitate policy enforcement, the Travel Administrator will submit a report to the Compliance & Quality Administrator (CQA) listing those TR's submitted with less than 21 days' notice.

No later than 60 business days after the traveler's return, a Travel Expense Report (TER) shall be submitted to the Travel Administrator for review in order to ensure compliance with Rubin and AURA policy. Then, the Rubin CQA (or his/her designee) will approval all travel costs. TERs only will be submitted for reimbursement after Travel Administrator review and CQA approval.

1.3 Reasonableness

In order for Rubin to be able to reimburse travel expenses, they must be **reimbursable**, as explained below, and the amount must be **reasonable** under the circumstances. Rubin will reimburse approved reasonable business-related travel using the federal Per Diem rates.

Although the word **reasonable** has what most would call a common-sense definition, Rubin is bound to observe the specific definition provided in the OMB Uniform Administrative

Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards (2 CFR Part 200, et al). Any travel costs paid for by Rubin must be those that would be considered "normal" costs of Rubin's "regular operations," be "ordinary" and "necessary" for the performance of Rubin's work, and be "prudent" in the sense that:

"A cost is reasonable if, in its nature or amount, it does not exceed that which would be incurred by a prudent person under the circumstances prevailing at the time the decision was made to incur the costs."

Note that while some costs might be considered "reasonable" in a common-sense definition by many people, in order to be reimbursed by Rubin, the cost must be **allowable**. Therefore, Rubin is obligated by the same Uniform Guidance referred to above to treat costs such as "personal expenses, alcoholic beverages, entertainment, amusement, and diversion" as **unallowable**, i.e. non-reimbursable.

1.4 Making Travel Arrangements

Travelers should **NOT** make their own travel arrangements. The Travel Administrator will make travel arrangements for all Rubin travelers. The Travel Administrator will research flight options in order to secure the most reasonable and best route for the requested travel dates; hotel and local transportation options will be provided, and all will be forwarded to the traveler for initial acceptance. Upon the traveler's confirmation of the travel itinerary, the reservation will be held for ticketing. A final confirmation email will then be sent to the traveler with flights, hotel and local transportation for final acceptance. When final travel arrangements have been confirmed with the traveler, final flight reservations will be ticketed, and hotel and car rental confirmations will be mailed to the traveler.

1.5 Travel Points

The Center Director retains the authority to upgrade a traveler to business or first class at his/her discretion.

AURA earns airline points through various programs. These points are separate and distinct from the points an individual employee may earn under frequent flyer programs. These points may be exchanged by AURA with airlines for various travel benefits such as upgraded seating or free travel. When such points are available, the Directorate may approve the use of these airline points. AURA earned airline points through Rubin may be used to upgrade travelers from coach to the next class of service under the following circumstances:

- The employee is designated an international frequent flyer by their supervisor, and
- The flight segment has a scheduled in-air flying time in excess of six hours, or
- The total scheduled in-air flight time, including connecting legs, is in excess of eight hours, or
- A medical justification exists documented by a primary care provider and submitted to HR

A designated international frequent flyer is defined as an employee who is required to fly internationally more than four times in a calendar year. For any employee required to fly more than six times per year upgrades to an additional level of service may be considered when available.

1.6 Alcoholic Beverages

The use of federal funds for the purchase of alcoholic beverages is prohibited (2 CFR 200, §200.423). Reimbursement with unencumbered funds will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

2 Travel Expenses Reimbursement

2.1 Per Diem

Meals and incidental expenses (M&IE) and lodging will be reimbursed on basis in accordance with the US Federal Travel Regulation M&IE and lodging amount for the travel location. All M&IE and lodging reimbursement requests should be reported daily when completing the TER.

Meals are defined as expenses for breakfast, lunch, dinner and related tips and taxes. They exclude alcoholic beverages and entertainment expenses, as well as expenses incurred for another person.

Incidentals are fees and tips to porters, baggage carriers, hotel maids, or bellhops. Also included are tips for transportation between places of lodging or business to places where meals are taken.

Lodging is defined as an accommodation, not including taxes and fees.

For current GSA regulations please visit the Federal Travel Regulation site:

<http://www.gsa.gov>.

2.1.1 Meals and Incidental Expense (M&IE) Allowance

The Meals & Incidental daily allowance is a daily payment based on government calculated rates instead of reimbursement for actual expenses. It is separate from transportation (except as noted above, under “Incidentals”), lodging and other miscellaneous expenses, and it covers taxes and service charges where applicable.

For Continental US M&IE rates, see www.gsa.gov/perdiem or <http://www.defensetravel.dod.mil/site/perdiemCalc.cfm>. The breakdown of these rates for breakfast, lunch, dinner and incidentals is found at www.gsa.gov/mie.

Non-Continental US (e.g., Hawaii) and foreign meals expenses also will be reimbursed on M&IE basis. Rates may be found at: <http://www.defensetravel.dod.mil/site/perdiemCalc.cfm>.

Exceptions

1. Any meal provided by anyone other than the traveler, including meals provided by a host or included in conference/seminar fees, must be excluded from the daily M&IE request. The M&IE amount for that meal must be excluded from the travel reimbursement request. If medical dietary needs make it necessary to forego the provided meal, then the traveler may claim up to the maximum meals allowance. The exception must be documented and a Doctor’s attestation needs to be on file with HR.
2. Only 75% of the M&IE rate is allowed for the first and last day of travel. Except as noted in this section it is applied as follows:
 - **One day of travel** – more than 12 hours but less than 24 hours – the M&IE allowance is 75% of the applicable M&IE rate as long as no meals have been provided. If travel is less than 12 hours, no M&IE is reimbursable.

- **When travel is on an overnight flight:**
 - The day of the flight departure (from home or destination) is 75% of the applicable M&IE rate.
 - The day the flight landed (from home or destination) is 75% of the applicable M&IE rate.
- **Travel status (when travel is 24 hours or more):**
 - The day of departure is 75% of the applicable M&IE rate.
 - Full day of travel 100% of the applicable M&IE rate.
 - Last day of travel 75% of the applicable M&IE rate.

NOTE: *It does not matter what time you depart or return.*

3. Typically, meals will not be reimbursed for local travel [less than 50 miles from the employee's place of employment].
4. Upon Rubin approval, adjustments to M&IE rates may be allowable for specific locations. However, no M&IE rate may be adjusted higher than the current federally published GSA or federal rate.
5. Guidance and Specific Examples on First and Last Days of Travel:

For meals provided on the day of departure and the last day of travel, you must deduct the entire allocated meal cost from the reduced M&IE rate (see [§301-11.101](#)). The total amount of deductions made will not cause you to receive less than the amount allowed for incidental

expenses.

Example Only: Tucson, AZ (*Maximum amount reimbursable*)

	Total	Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner	IE	1 st /Last DOT
Full day of travel status	\$61.00	\$14.00	\$16.00	\$26.00	\$5.00	\$45.75

If meals are provided: (First day of travel is Tuesday; last day of travel is Thursday)

Day/Date	Meals Provided	Deductions
Tuesday	None	\$0.00
Wednesday	Breakfast and lunch	\$30.00
Thursday	Breakfast and lunch	\$30.00

TER depicts:

Day/Date	Max. Reimbursable	Deducted	Reimbursed
Tuesday	\$45.75	\$0.00	\$44.25
Wednesday	\$61.00	\$30.00	\$31.00

Thursday	\$45.75	\$30.00	\$15.25
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2.1.2 Lodging

Lodging expenses are an allowable cost, subject to the specific rules and regulations of the sponsoring agencies and deemed reasonable by Project Management (i.e. Government lodging rates per the GSA). Rubin allows a conference participant to stay in the “conference headquarters” hotel even if other, less expensive, hotels are available.

Unless lodging is authorized by Rubin in advance, all lodging expenses must be substantiated with an original receipt from the lodging establishment. The receipt must provide sufficient detail to allow Rubin to determine the cost of the room and any other charges included on the bill.

2.2 Conferences and Registration Fees

Conference and registration fees must be approved by the employee’s supervisor and demonstrated to be necessary and relevant to attendee’s position. For all conferences, workshops, etc., the agenda and/or brochure must be attached as part of the original TR. Social receptions where food is provided are unallowable and purchased at the sole discretion of the traveler. The traveler is only entitled to the allotted M&IE for this meal on his/her TER.

Supplies and Materials

Reimbursement for supplies or materials purchased by the traveler for Rubin activities should **NOT** be claimed on the TER. Depending on the amount, either a petty cash fund or a Reimbursement Request via REQLESS should be used for claiming reimbursement. The

traveler should have receipts for all such purchases.

2.3 Commercial Transportation

All Rubin travel should be procured at the lowest coach or tourist class services available to meet the specific needs of the travelers. The airfare chosen does not necessarily have to be the lowest cost but should show the flight chosen was reasonable and logical. The Travel Administrator's use of Rubin's Concur Travel Platform will ensure travelers fulfil this requirement.

The difference in cost between first-class air accommodations and less than first-class air accommodations is unallowable except when less than first-class air accommodations are not reasonably available to meet necessary mission requirements, such as where less than first-class accommodations would a) require circuitous routing, b) require travel during unreasonable hours, c) greatly increase the duration of the flight, or d) result in additional cost that would offset those reasonably adequate for the medical needs of the travelers. First or business class rail or air service must be pre-approved by Project Management.

The US government has regulations in place for federally funded International Travel, referred to as the Fly America Act. The Fly America Act has implemented certain rules, regulations and exceptions by which all travelers traveling outside of the United States must comply, including the use of US Flag Air Carriers – otherwise known as American-owned airline carriers – who hold a certificate under section 401 of the Federal Aviation Act of 1958 (49 USC. App.1371). All travelers should be advised that some online travel websites may not comply with the Fly America Act and should purchase airfare with companies that abide by these regulations whenever possible. There are however, some exceptions that allow the traveler to use non-compliant airline vendors.

For detailed information regarding the Fly America Act and exceptions, refer to the Rubin Travel Website: [Fly America Act](#).

2.4 Rideshare Services, Shuttle Services or Other Ground Transportation

Expenses in the performance of official travel are reimbursable for the usual fare plus tip for use of a rideshare services, shuttle service, or other ground transportation (if charges result) in the following circumstances:

1. Local work location
 - a. From your residence or other authorized point of departure, e.g. residence to airport; or
 - b. To your residence or other authorized point of return, e.g. airport to residence
2. At your Temporary Work Location (TWL)
 - a. From the TWL transit system station to your place of lodging or place of official business and return;
 - b. To, from, and between your places of lodging and official business;
 - c. Between places of official business.

2.5 Car Rental

Car rental must be approved in advance as part of the travel request and will be justified on the basis of need to conduct business and not as a convenience to the employee. A cost assessment will be conducted to determine whether the request is reasonable given the

circumstances of travel. Documentation must be included in the TER to show the rental was approved in advance and necessary for the purpose of the trip.

Making the best use of local transport, shuttle services and car-pooling:

- If you are lodging at or close to a training, conference or other work location where inexpensive but reasonable transport options are available, your use of a rental car might not be considered "necessary" or "prudent" under the guidance that governs the use of federal funds. The Travel Administrator will discuss such cases with you.
- When rental cars are going to be used, consider whether you'll need one for your entire trip.
- Where several members of staff are attending the same event on travel, the expectation is that car-pooling will take place if the circumstances suggest it will be practical to do so. The Travel Administrator will mention this to the travelers and managers involved. A prompt response, taking into account the business need, will be requested in order to establish the necessary arrangements.
- Free, or inexpensive but convenient, shuttles between airports and hotels should be used whenever it is practical. Likewise, airport to downtown/hotel rail or rideshare services (Uber, Lyft, etc.), should be used wherever taxi expenses would be significantly higher. Again, the Travel Administrator will provide advise, but if you are traveling and can research these options beforehand that will be appreciated.

As guidance, here are some real examples of the decision-making process that has been used

previously to decide whether or not rental car use was “necessary” and “prudent” (i.e. “allowable”):

- Rental car not approved - An employee was to attend a two-day conference at a downtown Dallas hotel, where he would be lodged. The Travel Administrator researched the options and informed him that no courtesy (free) shuttle was available to the downtown hotel. The car rental cost for two days was \$92 plus approximately \$25 in gas and tolls; in addition, there was a \$21/day hotel car-parking fee. Unless he was going to spend more than \$160 in taxi fares during the two days, there would be little justification for the use of a rental car. He agreed he would use taxis, as it would be more cost efficient.
- Rental car not approved - An employee was to attend a meeting with Rubin and other AURA Center personnel in Tucson and was staying at a hotel within walking distance of the Rubin offices. The total rental car cost would have been \$165.47 plus an \$11/day hotel car- parking fee (\$187.47). The cost of a taxi each way from the airport was \$35. It was decided that a rental car wasn’t required on this trip.

NOTE: Insurance on cars rented in the US is NOT allowable. Coverage should always be declined unless the traveler intends to pay out-of-pocket. Insurance coverage on cars rented outside the US must be accepted.

2.6 International Currency Conversion

The traveler is to provide the conversion rate and amount for the date international transactions occurred. It is recommended to use www.Oanda.com. TERs submitted without the conversions already calculated will be rejected and sent back to the employee to

complete.

2.7 Personal Automobile Expense

Rubin will reimburse the traveler for actual miles travelled in his/her personal automobile, provided that it is associated with a pre-approved travel request and the actual cost does not exceed the lowest economy commercial airfare or exceed the cost of a rental vehicle.

The Rubin Trip Calculator (located on the Rubin Travel Page) allows the traveler to determine the cost of personal mileage reimbursement vs. the cost of a rental vehicle. This documentation needs to be included when processing a TR if the use of a personal vehicle is being requested.

Mileage will be reimbursed from the point of origin at the federally approved rate that can be found at <http://www.gsa.gov/portal/content/100715>.

If mileage is being claimed (such as from home to the airport), a Google Maps or similar printout showing the miles travelled must be attached as part of the claim. Roundtrip mileage may be claimed for airport drop-off and/or pick-up by family, friend, etc.

2.8 Non-Allowable Expenses

The Federal Government has clearly defined rules concerning allowable and unallowable costs when using federal funds to cover M&IE, conference/registration fees, and personal mileage expenses. Although hotel and auto rental expenses are allowable under M&IE, there are restrictions for items that cannot be claimed for reimbursement that fall under “unallowable” expenses, these include:

- 1) Personal expenses not related to official business, to include personal legs of

travel

- 2) Travel insurance
- 3) Rental car insurance (except for international travel)
- 4) Rental car upgrades
 - GPS (unless pre-approved in the TR with manager approval and justification)
 - Satellite Radio
- 5) Towing for circumstances of the traveler's negligence
- 6) Personal telephone calls and non-business Internet service
- 7) Travel costs between the home and the official place of work
- 8) Fines for parking or traffic violations
- 9) Fees incurred to cover property damage
- 10) Loss of personal property
- 11) Ticket changes/exchanges for non-emergency personal reasons
- 12) Seat upgrade (The Travel Administrator will reserve special seats if there is a medical record on file with Human Resources)
- 13) Airline/Airport clubs and/or club expenses
- 14) Hotel incidentals to include:

- Movie rentals
- Mini bar charges
- Room service (employees will only be reimbursed the M&IE rate for the meal)

NOTE: All questions regarding allowable vs. unallowable purchases should be directed to the Travel Administrator or to the Compliance & Quality Administrator prior to submitting a TER.

2.9 Other Documentation Required for Travel Reimbursement

Receipts must be submitted for all travel expenses incurred out-of-pocket. These include, but are not limited to: airfare, car rental, lodging, parking fees, conference registration fees, and ground transportation to and from the airport. Additionally, if claiming mileage for the use of a personal vehicle, the travelers must provide to/from locations, purpose of trip, rate and total number of miles travelled. An online printout from Google Maps, or a similar source, showing the distance travelled is required. As stated above, M&IE are reimbursed based upon M&IE and do not require receipt submission.

Scanned copies of receipts are accepted for reimbursements; however, the original receipt must be available for audit purposes. The traveler is required to keep a record of the original receipt for a period of three (3) years.

When there is a direct bill to AURA, a receipt may not be available. In this case, the travelers must note this on the TER so Accounting is aware that a bill will follow for the expense.

For all conferences, workshops, meetings, etc., a **PDF** of the agenda and/or brochure must be included for reimbursement. **Do not attach web links of the Agenda as these may expire.**

The traveler is required to submit a copy of the M&IE rate for the location of which he/she travelled for the business event. Rubin Travelers can submit this information by using the “Itinerary Summary Email”, received from the Travel Administrator at the time of final trip booking, in PDF format when submitting a TER.

A **Travel Summary Report**, found on the Travel page of the Rubin Project website, must be completed and submitted in order for reimbursement to be issued. This report will highlight the purpose and justification of the trip.

The traveler is required to submit all TERs in US dollars (Chilean employees may submit their TERs in pesos).

2.10 Travel Advance

Travel Advances are for AURA employees at the daily M&IE scheduled rate. All travel advances must be requested no earlier than 30 days prior to the expected travel date. An agenda should be included when requesting a travel advance. Travel advances should not exceed expected M&IE expenses.

2.10.1 Travel Advance Payments to Traveler

- Domestic travel advances are paid one (1) week prior to departure date.
- Foreign travel advances are paid two (2) weeks prior to the departure date.

2.10.2 Repayment of Travel Advances to AURA

If a Travel Advance is received, a TER must be submitted within 10 days of the traveler’s return date. If the travel advance amount exceeds the traveler’s actual expense, the amount

due back to AURA should be paid upon submission of the TER. If for any reason the travel is canceled or postponed, the Travel Advance should be reimbursed to AURA immediately.

2.11 Temporary Dependent Care

In certain circumstances, staff may incur additional, temporary dependent care costs because of travel that is required of the employee. These additional costs may occur at a home location or at the official travel destination. Center Directors or the AURA Chief Financial Officer (CFO) may authorize employee reimbursement for the difference between the additional dependent care costs incurred and the employee's regular dependent care costs.

In some circumstances, a dependent may need to travel with an employee because care cannot otherwise be reasonably provided. Reimbursement of the related travel costs (airfare, lodging, M&IE) of the dependent may be authorized by the Center Director or the CFO and, if authorized, would be reimbursed with unencumbered funds. Dependent is defined by Internal Revenue Code 26 USC. 152. AURA staff requesting this support should make every effort to minimize cost. Reimbursement for Dependent Care expenses under this policy is considered a taxable fringe benefit and will be reported as such.

To qualify for reimbursement: (a) the employee must be required to travel and stay overnight at a location at least 50 miles from their home; and (b) the temporary dependent care costs must be (i) in excess of regular dependent care costs, (ii) incurred during the travel required of the employee, and (iii) approved in advance. Documentation that details the calculation of the additional costs incurred must be provided in order to be eligible for reimbursement.

3 Travel Safety

Travel safety is a concern for all travelers, regardless of the method of travel. Important precautions and considerations should be taken while traveling abroad. Awareness of enhanced national security screening measures related to air travel and heightened security can be helpful in trip preparation and can save time and frustration at airport checkpoints and screening stations.

Prior to traveling, travelers should be aware of health precautions and travel alerts. For detailed information, click on the links below:

- Center for Disease Control: <http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/destinations/list>
- Travel alerts and warnings:
<http://travel.state.gov/content/passports/english/alertswarnings.html>

4 Deviations for Personal Travel

Occasionally, the traveler (employee) may deviate from the business-authorized location or add personal days to his or her trip. All personal travel deviations require authorization from the employee's supervisor. The traveler must complete the TR in REQLESS and follow the same procedures to get authorization for the trip. Once the trip is approved, the traveler is required to disclose all of the details related to the trip in the Travel Summary Report for insurance and time keeping purposes. The following steps must be followed in order to receive proper reimbursement of travel expenses:

- The **traveler** is responsible for providing comparable airfare and/or hotel rates.

- The **traveler** must calculate the costs that are comparable and must include the documented cost difference for the deviation of the trip.
- The **traveler** is required to deduct the difference for the deviation and provide an explanation and documentation prior to submitting the TER to the Travel Administrator.

5 Travel Insurance

All project members whose travel is funded by federal funds and who travel on behalf of AURA are covered under various travel insurance and auto insurance policies while traveling domestically or internationally.

- 1) AURA's AIG Travel Guard insurance coverage applies when the traveler travels more than 100 miles from their home. It covers unexpected expenses and also provides many services during a travel emergency. Please see the Travel website for more policy information.

NOTE: *AURA employees who purchase Cigna's Accidental Death and Dismemberment Insurance Plan are covered for additional services—see below.*

- 2) Cigna coverage is available to employees who are covered under Cigna's Accidental Death and Dismemberment Plan. Program services are available when traveling 100 miles away from home on company business or vacation.
 - a) Transportation to a hospital or medical facility
 - b) Emergency medical evacuation

- c) Repatriation of remains
 - d) Referrals to physicians, dentists and medical facilities
 - e) Prescription refill services – two (2)
 - f) New travel plans for a companion who lost existing arrangements due to delays caused by your emergency
 - g) Travel of a dependent child (under age 16) who is left unattended as a result of your illness or injury
 - h) Round-trip (economy class) transportation for a family member in the event that you are to be hospitalized for more than 10 days
- 3) Auto Rental Coverage

AURA carries separate policies with Hartford Casualty Insurance Company, which covers travelers who travel in the United States (except for Hawaii) and those who travel internationally. Please see the Travel webpage for more policy information.

For more information and links to insurance documentation, please visit the [Rubin Travel website](#).

6 Vendor Resources

Rubin and AURA have established relationships with certain airline and hotel vendors for the benefit of obtaining the best pricing, value and service. Using these vendors also will allow the traveler easier access to account and insurance information. Booking travel through the Travel Administrator ensures these cost savings are secured.

7 Travel Expense Report (TER) Submission Deadlines

Travel expenses should be carefully documented upon return from the trip using the Travel Expense Report (TER) in REQLESS. The Travel Administrator will carefully review travel expenses to ensure that costs were reasonable and allowable. Only after Travel Administrator review and the CQA's costs approval will the TER be submitted for reimbursement. The traveler should be aware of deadlines for TERs and remittance to accounting of excess travel advance amounts, if applicable.

a) Deadlines

Upon return from the trip, there are certain deadlines the traveler should know in order to receive reimbursement of expenses in a timely manner.

- 10 Day Deadline: If the traveler received a Travel Advance, return of unused funds.
- 60 Day Deadline: Reporting out-of-pocket expenses for which the traveler is expensing. Expenses recorded after the 60-day deadline will be treated as taxable income. After the 60 days, the TR will be closed; if the traveler wishes to be reimbursed, please contact the Travel Administrator for assistance.

b) Travel Notice

- A Travel Notice is a report generated by AURA CAS Business Services pending Travel Expense Reports. After 20 days from the trip return date (5 days if an advance was issued), CAS will generate a weekly email reminder for missing or incomplete TERs for up to 60 days in order to remind the traveler of the TER deadline.

- At 20 days (5 days if and advance was issued), the first email is generated to notify the traveler that CAS has not received their final TER for a specific TR. This email will be sent each week thereafter until the TER has been received and paid.
- At 60 days, CAS initiates another email that notifies the traveler that their expenses are subject to being reported as taxable income and the TR will be closed.

c) Reimbursements

- Deadlines for reimbursements are every Tuesday by 12:00 PM to receive a reimbursement on Thursday. Please be aware that these deadlines may be affected during holidays.
- The traveler can receive a paper check or he/she can receive the funds through payroll by requesting this when arranging travel through the Travel Administrator.

8 Contacting the Travel Administrator during Travel

The traveler's first point of contact for assistance at airports should be an airline representative. All commercial airlines have published customer service programs that explain what they will do to help in different situations. If the traveler experiences difficulties with the airline's representative and needs help, or would like a second opinion, or believes he or she is likely to begin incurring significant additional travel charges, he or she should call Slack, text, and/or WhatsApp the Travel Administrator, Erin Carlson, 520.490.9831, as soon as possible. Please provide a telephone number and or email, and the travelers name, if no immediate response. The Travel Administrator is likely to need some time to consult the travel booking software, contact the agency, etc., before calling back.

Rubin's Travel Office is open from 8:30 AM to 4:30 PM MST for routine business during each business day. The Travel Administrator can quickly check the status of employee's tickets and flights wherever they have been issued provided your flight has been booked through the Rubin Concur Travel Platform.

For a travel emergency outside of routine business hours contact Teplis (Concur) at **1-800-367-1637** and provide the identification code of **P61i** when calling. Teplis (Concur) provides around the clock support.