

The Ledger

A Newsletter of the University Controller's Organization

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Changes in Travel Procedures

The following travel procedure changes are effective March 1, 2016.

- The 100 mile round trip limit when using a personal vehicle for business travel is increasing to 200 miles round trip to allow the traveler the higher reimbursement mileage rate (54 cents per mile).
- The dollar amount requiring receipts is increasing from \$25 to \$75 per instance. This applies to parking, tolls, taxis, shuttle vans, etc. Miscellaneous travel expenses which are \$75 or less per instance do not require a receipt to be submitted with the travel reimbursement request.
- Travelers will only receive 75% of the incidental allowance (\$5) which is included in the Meals and Incidental Travel Expense (M&IE) on the first and last day of travel. In the past, they received 100% of the incidental allowance on a travel day. This change is consistent with Federal per diem policies.

These changes will be reflected in the travel procedures on the Controller's Office website on March 1, 2016.

Coming Soon—TEM System Travel Advances (Loans)

The electronic travel advance (loan) functionality is available in the Banner Travel & Expense (TEM) system effective March 1, 2016. With the implementation of this electronic process, the paper travel loan form will no longer be accepted by the Controller's Office.

Please note that the university Procedure 20330: Travel Loans is not changing. Under special circumstances, travel advances are available to employees traveling on university business. Travel advances for employees traveling on official university business will be issued only to those staff members who are **not** eligible for the Bank of America (BOA) Visa Corporate Travel Card Program. Classified/university staff employees below pay band four (4) who travel infrequently or graduate assistants not approved by their department heads to obtain a travel card may be issued a travel advance. Classified/university staff employees in pay band three (3) who travel frequently are encouraged to apply for a BOA Visa travel card to reduce administrative tasks and outstanding advance balances. A travel advance may be made to a faculty or staff member who is otherwise eligible for the BOA Visa travel card if he/she will be taking an international trip or an extended business trip. An extended trip is defined as continuous travel of four or more weeks without returning to the University or home during that period. Travel advances are also available for the leaders of Study Abroad

Programs or leaders of athletic and academic team travel. The leader (advance recipient) must be a graduate-level employee or above (PhD-level employee, classified staff, faculty, etc.).

A couple of travel advance instructor led training sessions will be offered on campus. These sessions will be broadcast on the web for off campus locations. The sessions are being offered on February 26, 2016 (9-10:30am) and February 29, 2016 (10:30am to noon) in North End Center 2420/2430. To register for a session please contact casowers@vt.edu. Seating is limited and participants must register prior to the session to reserve a seat. Those wishing to participate in the web broadcast should also send a request to casowers@vt.edu indicating that you will be an online participant.

A [reference guide](#) for the TEM travel advances is available on the Controller's Office website which outlines the detail procedures for entering and approving travel advances.

Please contact Lynn Meadows, Travel Supervisor at dlynnm06@vt.edu with any questions regarding this topic

MicroStrategy Finance – Reporting Basics Training

The Controller's Office is now offering basic MicroStrategy training for finance users. MicroStrategy is the university's solution for current reporting analysis tools that are becoming obsolete, such as EPM 11 and web reports.

This training is intended for department finance analysts and business managers who perform data mining and analysis with finance data in the Banner data warehouse. Participants must have Banner Finance access and should be familiar with querying data from the Finance data warehouse.

Training is accomplished in a classroom setting including lecture, demos, and hands-on exercises. Scheduled learning time is four hours with two breaks. In this class you will learn what MicroStrategy is, how to navigate the web interface and run shared reports, create reports using the Finance data warehouse, and intuitively interact with your results using standard OLAP features like pivoting and paging. Participants who complete the course are awarded 4.0 CPE credits. Additional classes will be offered soon covering more advanced reporting features.

NOTE: Training for users who only run monthly distribution reports will be offered at a future date once the new reports are available in production.

For further information, email Nette Johnson at nettej@vt.edu.