

# The Ledger

A Newsletter of the University Controller's Organization

Website: <http://www.controller.vt.edu>

Vol. E, No. 149

April 19, 2019

## Implementing Chrome River Travel Expense System

Virginia Tech will begin rollout of the new Chrome River Travel Expense System in July to replace the current Banner Travel Expense Management (TEM) system.

In addition to covering the full scope of travel expense reimbursement activities, Chrome River also provides functionality for the automation of the P-card approval and reconciliation processes.

The Controller's Office will begin the rollout in July with a pilot group of participants that includes representation from across Virginia Tech's many colleges and departments. Other senior management areas will gradually transition to Chrome River during August, September, and October, with a goal of full implementation by the end of October. The automation of P-card approval and reconciliation processes will occur only after all departments fully convert to Chrome River.

More specifics about Chrome River and the transition plan are below.

### What is Chrome River?

Chrome River is a comprehensive travel reimbursement tool that allows employees to manage pre-approvals, request cash advances, track expense reports, use reporting features, and submit and receive reimbursements in a cost-effective, timely, and efficient manner. Chrome River also allows users to allocate and approve P-card transactions.

### Why is Virginia Tech making this change?

There are a number of benefits with the change to Chrome River. Chrome River will offer real-time integration with the Banner system and provide a more modern and intuitive user interface. It offers a consistent user experience across all devices – including smartphones, laptops, desktops and tablets – and enables mobile access and approvals.

With Chrome River, P-card reconciliations and approvals will now move from manual to automated processes. Making this transition will significantly accelerate the completion time for these processes. Chrome River's integration with Banner will also allow for more sophisticated reporting and analytics.

### How will I know when to start using Chrome River?

Senior management areas will be grouped and transitioned to Chrome River over several phases. This transition will begin with the pilot group in July, and then over a series of three phases, the rest of the senior management areas will transition. The Controller's Office is still considering the composition of each implementation group and will share that breakdown and timeline once it is finalized. The Controller's Office will be proactive in reaching out to each senior management area with more details well in advance of its scheduled implementation date.

### What happens to the travel authorizations that have already been created in the TEM system when my department transitions to Chrome River?

If you already have a travel authorization in the TEM system at the time you transition to Chrome River, you will create the related expense report in the TEM system. TEM will remain open during the transition phase for these type of transactions. If you are creating a new travel authorization or a new expense report that does not have an existing TEM authorization, create the transaction in Chrome River.

## **What are the key differences between Chrome River and the current TEM system?**

- Chrome River has more compliance rules built into the system on the front end, which should reduce the number of returned expense reports. For example, the new system will immediately notify users if their business meals are above the allowable per diem rates and offer a dropdown menu for hotel justifications. Chrome River has more advanced reporting and analytic capabilities.
- Chrome River offers the ability to email electronic receipts to the traveler's profile.
- Virginia Tech's Individual Liability Travel Card transactions will automatically feed into the Chrome River System.
- Offers a modern user-interface.
- Provides a mobile platform which allows the same user experience across all devices.
- Provides Google Maps for mileage reimbursements.
- Account code logic will be built in behind the expense types. Also, the account code will be based on the actual type of the expense and no longer default to the conference account code (12890).

## **When will the training be available? What types of training will be available?**

Multiple forms of training and guides are under development. These will be available to users well in advance of their senior management area's time of transition to Chrome River.

In-person training sessions will be offered to groupings as they transition. The Controller's Office will also offer learning opportunities through Zoom for individuals who cannot attend the face-to-face sessions, as well as training handouts, Frequently Asked Questions documents, and online training videos and job aids.

The training materials will be shared on the Chrome River Implementation project site when completed - <https://www.controller.vt.edu/resources/travel/chrome-river.html>

## **Whom should I contact with questions?**

Lynn Meadows | 540-231-8551 | [dlynnm06@vt.edu](mailto:dlynnm06@vt.edu)

Brandon Webb | 540-231-8554 | [bwebb13@vt.edu](mailto:bwebb13@vt.edu)