

General Rules

- All travel arrangements for trainees and lab staff must be approved by the PI prior to the trip.
- Conference registrations and society memberships should be paid for by PALCard. If your lab does not have a PALCard holder, you may ask Cece Szarnyasi to use her PALCard.
- Do not pay for another person's travel – including airfare, lodging, registration, meals, etc.
- Do not use package deals. These are generally ineligible for reimbursement, and trip insurance fees. Package deals often do not separate the cost of the hotel, air and car costs.
- The full policies governing travel and reimbursement are described in detail here: <https://policy.ucop.edu/doc/3420365/BFB-G-28> and more specific information on different types of travel are here: <https://www.accounting.uci.edu/ap/travel/book/index.php>
- Alcoholic beverages in general are not reimbursable, as federal and state funds cannot be used to purchase alcohol. Please separate alcohol or mark clearly on receipts.
- All travel reimbursement requests are to be submitted through the [CNLM Travel Reimbursement Form](#).

Booking with ConnexUC

- ConnexUC (formerly Connexus) is the UC managed travel program, a secure web portal for arranging business related travel. It automatically gives active employees access to UC-negotiated prices for airfare, hotels, and car rentals. ConnexUC also provides a UC employee discount on select California rail travel.
- Benefits include access to a comprehensive airfare inventory, single source booking for air, car and hotel reservations, automatic Business Travel Accident Insurance coverage included (except Southwest airlines - SWABIZ), and built-in compliance with UC travel policies,
- Follow the instructions here to login and access ConnexUC (UCInetID required) <https://www.accounting.uci.edu/ap/travel/book/connexuc-booking.php>

Receipt Policies

- **Do not submit receipts for meals and incidentals expenses that are less than \$75.**
- Individual meals and incidentals expenses above \$75 require a receipt. Examples below:
 - **Example 1:** A traveler claims reimbursement for \$64.00 for their dinner and \$11.00 for their breakfast on the same day. While the total reimbursement of meals for this day would be \$75.00, receipts would not be required for either meal since each expense is under \$75.00.

- o **Example 2:** A traveler claims reimbursement for \$75.00 for their dinner on one day. The receipt for this meal would be required by policy.
- o **Example 3:** A traveler claims reimbursement for \$56 for their dinner, \$18 for their breakfast, and \$24 for lunch. The total reimbursement would be \$79 (the daily max) even though the costs incurred exceed that. No receipts would be required.
- In general, you should always save your receipts (digitally) in case of an audit. You can use a scanner app on your phone (e.g. Turboscan) to digitize and save them as PDF.
- All receipts need to show proof of purchase (credit card number or cash payment noted). If the receipt does not show a form of payment, submit a copy of the charge on your redacted credit card statement.
- If you submit a credit card statement, please remember to redact all personal information such as home address, credit card number, SSN, employee ID number, and non-travel related transactions.

Meals and Incidentals (M&I)

- Meals and incidentals (M&I) maximum per day in the U.S. is \$79
 - o This includes, water, coffee, groceries, meals, as well as tips.
 - o If you go over the max, we can only reimburse up to \$79.
- Unused funds CANNOT be carried over to the next day.
- Meal costs can be claimed only for travel longer than 24 hours and with overnight lodging.
- Report your daily expenses on the **Meals and Incidentals Log** included in the travel reimbursement form. You may only claim the actual amount spent.
- M&I Receipts only need to be submitted for expenses that are more than \$75. **Do not submit receipts for expenses that are less than \$75.**
- Do not treat the max amount per day as a *per diem* and report the max every day. Doing the latter will trigger an audit.

Indirect or Extended Stays

Occasionally, there may be a reason for the stay to be longer than the conference days (plus one day before for arrival and one day after for departure), e.g. visiting family or vacation. In these cases, please follow these rules:

- Obtain advance approval from the PI
- Reimbursement of expenses is limited to the actual costs incurred or the charges that would have been incurred via a usually traveled route, whichever is less.
- Take a screenshot of flight rates for the dates of the conference and include for price comparison in reimbursement. Comparison should be same airline and same days of travel

Airfare

- Federal Travel Regulations require that U.S. flag air carriers are used for travel that is to be reimbursed from federal grants and contracts. This policy is called the [Fly America Act](#).

Before making travel arrangements for air travel for university business, find out about the funding type and, if applicable, ensure the booking is in accordance with the Act.

- Book only coach or economy-class tickets. Business, first-class or other higher-cost services (priority or early boarding, extra leg space, exit row seat, Plus seating) are typically ineligible for reimbursement.

Lodging

- In the US, the maximum room rate per night is \$333 before taxes and fees. The international rates depend on the location of travel. Please look up the country you are traveling to ahead of time and ensure that your lodging is under the nightly maximum. Rates can be found [here](#).
- When the traveler is unable to secure lodging at max room rate per night, the traveler must submit additional documentation such as price comparisons within the proximity of the meeting location. The price comparisons should be performed at the time of booking, not at the time of reimbursement.
- If the conference rate at a contracted conference hotel is higher than the max room rate per night, indicate this and provide proof of the contracted rate in the reimbursement. You will be reimbursed at the full amount.
- In general, you should use UCI contracted rates for major hotel chains including Marriott (Corporate Code: UC0) and Wyndham (Corporate Code: 1000005337). [Use ConnexUC to book](#) special UC rates.
- If you are sharing a room with one or more other travelers, one of you may put the room expense on their credit card as long as you note clearly that the expenses are to be split among travelers.

Car Rental

- Rent a car when it's more cost effective than other means, such as a taxi/Uber. Limit is intermediate size, unless an upgrade is provided at no-cost or paid for by the traveler out of pocket.
- [Use ConnexUC to book](#) special UC rates available from Enterprise, Hertz, and National.
- **Insurance.** Car bookings made with the three car rental companies mentioned above include insurance coverage, so turn down any additional insurance offered.
- Additional upgrades such as GPS are not reimbursable expenses unless the traveler is unfamiliar with the location of travel.
- **Refueling.** In general, you should return the rental car with the specified amount of gas in the tank so that refueling by the agency is not required. If necessary, an expense for refueling may be eligible for reimbursement when using a rental agency with a UC agreement. Not to exceed \$1.50 per gallon plus the location's average retail gas price per gallon at the time of rental.
- Receipt requirement. Itemized receipt.
- For full policies and regulations see <https://accounting.uci.edu/ap/travel/book/renting.php>

UC Business Travel Insurance

When traveling for UC business, UC provides [Business Travel Accident Insurance](#) coverage for accidents and incidents when away from campus or primary workplace. Please see travel insurance FAQs [HERE](#).

- For trips less than 100 miles from campus or residence, coverage is automatic
- For trips more than 100 miles from campus or residence, you must register for accident coverage for each trip you take.
- If you book travel with [ConnexUC](#) travel agencies, registration for business travel insurance is automatically included, with the exception of Swabiz (for Southwest Airline flights).
- Do **NOT** sign up for separate travel insurance. This is not a reimbursable expense.

Travel outside CONUS and Domestic travel >30 days

- Per diems are authorized in these situations; for all foreign travel, travel within Alaska, Hawaii and United States possessions (OCONUS) and domestic assignments of 30 or more.
- The [Per diem](#) is based on a published rate for a specific location for meals, lodging and service tips. Travelers should be reimbursed for their actual expenses up to the per diem rate.
- For specific per diem rates, refer to these calculators:
 - [International Per Diem Calculator](#)
 - [Continental United States Per Diem Calculator](#)
 - [Alaska, Hawaii, U.S. Territories and Possessions Calculator](#)

Any questions or concerns should be directed to Ms. Cecilia Szarnyasi, CNLM Administrator (cszarnya@uci.edu | 949-824-5193).