

What Are Travel Costs

Travel costs are expenses incurred by entity employees and volunteers on official recipient or subrecipient business travel. Costs, which include transportation, lodging, and subsistence, must comply with the established federal travel policy or the recipient's or subrecipient's established written travel policy.

Grant Financial Management Requirement

The Department of Justice requires processes and policies that ensure travel costs are appropriately incurred and expensed. Specific requirements are found in the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) under 200.475—Travel Costs.

Important Information to Know

All travel should be approved, prior to its execution, by an authorized supervisor or representative of the entity or be part of an established expense reimbursement plan. All travel authorization must specify the purpose of the trip, travel dates, relation to the program, and budgeted amounts. The employee should keep receipts of all related travel expenses per their organization's travel policy or as recommended in the Federal Travel Regulation (FTR). Travel vouchers should be submitted in a timely manner.

Costs can be based on actual amounts; charged on a per diem or mileage rate; or a combination of the two. The combination method must be applied to all travel days. Summary information and per diem rates for lodging and meals can be found on the U.S. General Services Administration's website. Remember, foreign travel is not permitted unless specifically approved by the awarding agency.

How This Applies to Your Grant

Grantees should establish a travel policy that is written and compliant with CFR requirements. If the entity does not have a travel policy in place, it must follow the FTR. This is not recommended, though, since the FTR is subject to frequent change and is based on state per diem. The entity's travel policy should clearly address the topics in this section.

Transportation

Airfare

Premium commercial airfare is not allowable. Use the least expensive fares unless:

- ▶ Excessive circuitous routes would be taken
- ▶ Travel would occur during unreasonable hours
- ▶ Doing so would unreasonably prolong the trip
- ▶ Doing so would incur additional transportation costs that would negate any savings.
- ▶ Medically necessary

Ground Transportation

Ground transportation (e.g., trains, buses, taxis, ride hailing services) should be reasonable and appropriate. Luxury/premium vehicles, seating, and accommodations should not be permitted. Local city/region fares should be considered when setting limits; some areas may offer significantly more costly fees.

Privately Owned Vehicle

Privately owned vehicle reimbursement is allowable if it is in line with 2 CFR 300–304. Reimbursable expenses, in addition to mileage allowance, include parking fees; ferry fees; bridge, road, and tunnel fees; and aircraft or airplane parking, landing, and tie-down fees. When reimbursing the parking fee, the expense cannot exceed the cost of one of the following to and from the terminal:

- ▶ Cost of a taxi
- ▶ Cost of transportation network company
- ▶ Cost of using an innovative mobility technology company

The FTR offers standardized reimbursement rates for use of privately owned vehicles. The FTR reimbursement rates as of January 1, 2023, are shown in table 1. If the entity chooses to offer rates higher than the FTR reimbursement rates, those rates should be reasonable and not incur excessive premiums.

TABLE 1. FTR PRIVATELY OWNED VEHICLE MILEAGE REIMBURSEMENT RATES* (JANUARY 1, 2023)

Modes of Transportation	Rate per Mile
Airplane [†]	\$1.74
If use of privately owned automobile is authorized or if no government-furnished automobile is available	\$0.655
If government-furnished automobile is available	\$0.22
Motorcycle	\$0.635

*Source: gsa.gov/travel/plan-book/transportation-airfare-pov-etc/privately-owned-vehicle-pov-mileage-reimbursement-rates

[†]See note from the General Services Administration on converting airplane nautical miles into statute miles.

Lodging and Subsistence

Lodging and subsistence costs must be reasonable and not surpass the entity's written acceptable travel policy limitations. Documentation must be kept demonstrating that costs are reasonable and aligned with the entity's travel policy. Grantees should also have a set policy for treatment of travel advances and incidental expenses.

Resources

- ▶ [2 CFR 200.301-10—Transportation Expense](#)
- ▶ [2 CFR 200.475—Travel Costs](#)
- ▶ U.S. Department of Justice. (2022). *Grants Financial Guide*. ojp.gov/funding/financialguidedojo/overview
- ▶ U.S. General Services Administration. (2023). *Federal Travel Regulation*. gsa.gov/policy-regulations/regulations/federal-travel-regulation
- ▶ U.S. General Services Administration. (2023). *Privately Owned Vehicle Mileage Reimbursement Rates*. gsa.gov/travel/plan-book/transportation-airfare-pov-etc/privately-owned-vehicle-pov-mileage-reimbursement-rates
- ▶ U.S. General Services Administrations. (2023). *Travel Resources*. gsa.gov/travel-resources

About OJP TFSC

The **Office of Justice Programs Territories Financial Support Center (OJP TFSC)** offers free resources, training, and technical assistance for grantees in the U.S. territories. OJP TFSC services focus on building financial management capacity and can be accessed by emailing OJPTFSC@usdoj.gov via our Virtual Support Center.



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