

Policy Name: Authorization of Travel

Policy Owner: Accounts Payable & Travel

Policy Contact: Laura Jamison, Director of Accounts Payable & Travel

Reviewed By: Accounts Payable & Travel, Executive Director of Procurement and Business Services, Interim Executive Vice President of Administration and Finance.

Policy Steering Committee Approval: May 2025

Policy Purpose: This policy outlines authorization of travel requirements for Georgia Tech employees traveling on official business. This policy update is in response to Department of Internal Audit findings.

Summary of Substantive Policy Changes:

- Page 1, Updates to requirements for spend authorization justification and documentation.
- Page 2, Outlines requirement for cost comparisons and supporting documentation when business travel is combined with personal travel.



Georgia Institute of Technology

Authorization of Travel

Policy No. 6.2

Type of Policy: Administrative

Last Revised: December 2020

Policy Owner: Accounts Payable

Policy Contact: Laura Jamison, Director of Accounts Payable & Travel,

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1. Reason for Policy

The purpose of this policy is to outline authorization of travel requirements for Georgia Tech employees traveling on official business in compliance with University System of Georgia, State Accounting Office, and Georgia Tech policies.

2. Policy Statement

All Travelers must have prior authorization to travel for the performance of official duties from their manager, department head or Dean (or their respective delegates).

Authorization of Travel

Employee Authorization of travel (Spend Authorization) is required for any travel outside the State of Georgia, including international travel, on behalf of Georgia Tech. -Employee Authorization is obtained by through the completion of a Spend Authorization request through Georgia Tech's financial management system and must be fully approved by the employee's manager, cost center manager (or their delegate), and driver worktag manager(s) prior to the first day of travel. The approval of a Spend Authorization serves as an attestation to the necessity of the travel and that the anticipated travel expenses are reasonable in nature and amount. In order to adhere to this requirement, Spend Authorizations must include sufficient detail to address the 'who, what, when, where, and why' of the travel request. Organizations should be identified by their full names; acronyms are not permitted. Spend Authorizations with insufficient detail(s) will be returned by the designated approvers.

In no case is a subordinate authorized to approve a Spend Authorization for travel for their superior. GTRI employees traveling on federal governmental business are required to adhere to [GTRI Policy 6200](#).

No-Cost-To-Tech Travel

In situations where there are no charges to Georgia Tech, but the purpose of the trip

is official business, a spend authorization should be submitted denoting a cost of 1 (one) cent to facilitate appropriate review of travel.

Itinerary Changes

If the itinerary of the trip fundamentally changes (location or business purpose) from what has been stated on the original spend authorization, and the original spend authorization has been approved, a new spend authorization should be completed and the original should be cancelled.

Declaration of External Professional Activities or Vacation

All Travelers traveling on behalf of Georgia Tech must declare any external professional activities or vacation associated with the business trip. Leave time for external professional activities, or vacation, which coincides with the business trip ~~should~~ must be approved in advance in Georgia Tech's time management system. ~~Travelers should indicate any leave time for external professional activities or vacation when completing the Spend Authorization in Georgia Tech's financial management system. For trips that combine Georgia Tech business travel with annual leave or personal travel, travelers must provide a detailed description, including the start and end dates for both business and personal travel within the Spend Authorization in Georgia Tech's financial management system. A cost comparison is required to ensure the most economical airfare, is utilized at the time of booking. Please refer to Policy 6.10 -for more information.~~

Travelers are required to report any external activities in the [Conflict of Interest system](#).

In-State Travel

~~Georgia Tech Procurement does not require a~~ Spend Authorization for in-state travel ~~is not required~~. However, Georgia Tech campus units may require that a Spend Authorization be completed for all in-state travel within their campus unit to meet campus unit's business needs. Approval to travel within the State of Georgia, or just beyond the state borders, on a regular or continual basis may be given as a blanket routine Spend Authorization. This blanket routine Spend Authorization may be maintained as an internal list in department files, or may be granted based on the employee's primary job duties that include a business need to travel in-state. Travelers whose primary work station is outside of the state of Georgia are not required to complete a spend authorization for routine travel within ~~the~~ at state of their primary work station.

International Travel

All Travelers must comply with U.S. laws and regulations when traveling internationally on Georgia Tech business. International travel being sponsored by the federal government must be ticketed by U.S. Flag carriers.

As part of the Spend Authorization process for international travel, the Traveler must complete a questionnaire in Georgia Tech's financial management system. This questionnaire should be submitted no later than thirty (30) days prior to the desired departure date for travel to a foreign country and 45 days for travel to countries under travel advisories or involving the shipment of equipment or biological materials.

Georgia Tech strongly recommends against, but does not prohibit, travel for the performance of official duties to countries where the U.S. Department of State has issued an official Travel Warning (a Travel Warning is distinct from a State Department issued Public Announcement), or where there is other reliable information of significant health or safety risks. The final decision about making a trip to such a country is up to the Traveler; however, Georgia Tech reserves the right to require the execution of an appropriate release or waiver before permitting such travel. This recommendation is directed toward individual Travelers in the following categories: faculty, staff and graduate students. Faculty and staff taking students on international travel will require prior approval from the Office of International Education.

Prior to international travel, [facultyTravelers](#) should become aware of applicable export laws, regulations and risks associated with international travel. Several key reference sources include:

- [GT Export Web site](#)
- [U.S. State Department](#)
- [U.S. Department of Homeland Security](#)
- [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#)
- [World Health Organization](#)
- [U.S. Department of Agriculture](#)

3. Scope

All Georgia Tech employees (faculty, staff, and students).

4. Definitions

Traveler	Employees (students, faculty, and staff) traveling on behalf of Georgia Tech.
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5. Responsibilities

Traveler

The Traveler is responsible for ensuring the travel is to perform business duties on behalf of Georgia Tech, the appropriate spend authorization is accurately completed,

supporting documentation is submitted, and appropriate approval is obtained prior to the first day of travel. The Traveler is also responsible for ensuring the appropriate travel class is reserved and for ensuring any personal or external professional activities have been excluded from the request for reimbursement. The Traveler is responsible for declaring any external professional activities or vacation associated with a business trip, and reporting all external activities in the Conflict of Interest System.

Expense Preparer

An expense preparer may book travel reservations on behalf of the Traveler and is responsible for ensuring an appropriate Spend authorization and all required supporting documentation is obtained prior to the first day of travel. The expense preparer is also responsible for ensuring appropriate travel class is reserved and for verifying the Traveler excludes any personal or external professional activities from the reimbursement. ~~The expense preparer should also verify the Traveler has declared any external professional activities or vacation associated with such travel, and has reported all external activities in the Conflict of Interest System.~~

Approvers

Managers and supervisors, or their delegates, are responsible for:

- Verifying the business purpose of the trip;
- Verifying the trip is allowable;
- Verifying the reasonableness of the cost of the trip;
- Verifying the travel class is compliant with Georgia Tech and USG policies;
- Verifying all required supporting documentation is submitted;
- Verifying any personal or external professional activities are excluded;
- Verifying any external professional activities declared by traveler are reported in the Conflict of Interest System.

6. Enforcement

Travelers who are in violation of this Policy are at risk of not receiving reimbursement for travel expenses.

7. Related Information

Resource	Link
Georgia Tech Meals and Incidental Travel Expenses Policy	http://policylibrary.gatech.edu/business-finance/meals-and-incidental-travel-expenses
Georgia Tech Air Transportation Policy	https://policylibrary.gatech.edu/business-finance/air-transportation

Georgia Tech Lodging Policy	https://policylibrary.gatech.edu/business-finance/lodging
Georgia Tech Foreign Travel Policy	https://policylibrary.gatech.edu/business-finance/foreign-travel
Georgia Tech Updated Foreign Travel Information	https://research.gatech.edu/updated-foreign-travel-requirements
GT Conflict of Interest Reporting	https://gatech.servicenow.com/home?id=sc_category&sys_id=8fcc2da51b727c5829eba8e2b24bcb77&catalog_id=4a2d2870b39313007a6de81816a8dc29
USG Policy: Travel	https://www.usg.edu/policymanual/section7/C466
USG Business Procedures Manual	https://www.usg.edu/business_procedures_manual/section4/
State Accounting Office State Travel Policy	https://sao.georgia.gov/travel/state-travel-policy

8. Policy History

Revision Date	Author	Description
TBD	Accounts Payable	Updated spend authorization documentation and justification
May 2025	Accounts Payable	Interim policy updates
December 2020	Accounts Payable	Updated to comply with WorkDay transition.
April 2017	Accounts Payable	Policy updates.