

EOL Travel Guidelines and Procedures

The purpose of this document is to provide EOL staff with clear and easily understood guidelines and procedures to follow when arranging travel for EOL business. There is also an EOL Travel FAQ available at <http://www.eol.ucar.edu/generalinfo/travel/faq.pdf>

All staff that travel should be familiar with UCAR's policies and procedures. EOL's guidelines and procedures are supplemental to and are fully consistent with UCAR policy. You should read the UCAR policy at <http://www.fin.ucar.edu/procedures/sec3/proc316.html> so that you are aware of its rules as well.

Any exceptions to policy must be approved in advance of the travel. After-the-fact requests for exceptions will not be granted unless there are genuinely extenuating circumstances. If you do not adhere to the UCAR and EOL policies and procedures, you might not get reimbursed for your travel.

There are no exceptions to the Fly America Act – it applies to all foreign travel. All Fly America terms are contained in the UCAR policy

All travel in the Laboratory must be planned with the advice and assistance of the appropriate Administrative Assistant, and with management's authorization. Travel assistance must be requested using the admin_req system (<http://www.eol.ucar.edu/cds/help.html>). Requests must include but are not limited to the following:

- * name of traveler;
- * destination(s);
- * dates of travel;
- * services requested – i.e., air/train, hotel, rental car, etc.;
- * clear and complete purpose of trip;
- * visas required;
- * account key(s) to be charged and/or how costs are to be reimbursed; and
- * permission of appropriate person authorized to approve travel.

The 'permission' can be verbal but must be included in the admin_req request. Signatures will be obtained at the appropriate time. It is important, however, that the authorizing person gives permission for the travel before time or money is spent making arrangements.

Requests for travel should be made at least three to four weeks before the intended departure date whenever possible. For complex or foreign trips, longer notice is desirable and may be necessary – particularly if passports or visas are needed. Also, authorization for foreign travel must be approved by the NCAR Director's Office, which takes additional time. It is also frequently possible to get less expensive tickets with longer lead times for dates of travel.

EOL's philosophy for supporting travel is to be as economic as possible while providing the traveler safe and appropriate transport and accommodation. At this time, unless there are documented medical exigencies, the Laboratory is unable to fund business class travel. However, when overseas travel is undertaken, we will authorize the least expensive, upgradeable ticket for travelers who wish to use airline mileage accounts to upgrade. Of course, personal miles are used at individual discretion.

Airline travel

Flight times, routing, and carriers will be determined by the most direct route and lowest price. If a passenger has a favorite carrier, every effort will be made to accommodate that preference as long as the ticket cost is comparable to other airlines. Do not purchase your own airline ticket unless you have submitted the admin_req request and discussed it with your administrative assistant.

Flight changes will not be made casually since they increase the cost of travel, so make your plans as carefully as possible. Requests for flight changes will be considered on a case-by-case basis, and reasonable requests will be approved.

Rental Cars

The use of public transportation and shuttles rather than rental cars is strongly encouraged.

Whenever possible, please share rental cars among travelers.

Hotels

Hotel costs should be reasonably consistent with federal per diem guidelines. Please note if there are extenuating circumstances requiring a more expensive hotel – i.e., meeting venue, personal safety, only hotel in town or available, etc. – in your admin_req request.

When traveling in the US, please use the UCAR tax-exempt status whenever possible to avoid paying local taxes on lodging. Copies of state certificates can be obtained from your Administrative Assistant.

Airport Parking

Reimbursement for parking at DIA is restricted to low cost options or offsite parking only.

Travel Advances

If you have a UCAR personal travel card, please use it for travel advances. The card is accepted in both domestic and foreign ATMs. EOL will reimburse any surcharges for ATM use for cash advances. If you do not have a UCAR travel card and want an advance, please note the advance amount and the date required in your admin_req request and a check or direct deposit will be generated by UCAR travel via your travel authorization.

Please note that the UCAR Eco-pass provides free travel to and from DIA using the Skyride service. Schedules are available online at <http://www.rtd-denver.com/> . We encourage use of the Skyride.

Personal travel arrangements will not be paid for by EOL. If personal travel costs are mixed in with official travel, the traveler will reimburse the Laboratory for personal expenses – either before the trip or at the time of reimbursement. If you intend to combine personal and official travel on a trip, you must include that information when you submit your admin_req request.