

# OGE Travel Training and Manual

This training manual provides information to you, an employee of the Office of Global Engagement, about UGA, USG (University System of Georgia), and State travel policy. It does NOT, however, replace the policies and procedures outlined for all UGA and USG employees. UGA/USG policy supersedes this manual and any mistakes or misstatements communicated by this manual. UGA employees are responsible for adhering to all UGA and USG policies and procedures. Follow the link below for more information:

<https://hr.uga.edu/employees/policies-procedures/>

**Responsibilities of the Traveler:** Travelers are expected to exercise good stewardship of funds when traveling on official business. While the OGE business and administrative staff may assist with travel, it is the responsibility of the traveler to understand and adhere to all [USG](#) and [UGA](#) policies. Therefore, any expenditure disallowed by UGA is the responsibility of the employee. Travelers must always obtain receipts except when meal per diem travel allowances are claimed. Not all receipts are required to be submitted with a Travel Expense Report but may later be requested for verification or audit. Travel Expense Reports may be selected for audit at any time, and, if not attached to the travel expense report, all required receipts must be retained by the traveler for three years after the travel date. In-state daily travel mileage only does not require a Travel Request Template or Travel Authorization. However, analysis of the most cost-effective mode of transportation is required when the Travel Expense Report is submitted.

## **Travel Timeline – Overview of what to expect**

1. Traveler discusses professional development travel opportunity with direct supervisor.
2. Traveler submits a Travel Request Template (TRT) to [ogetravel@uga.edu](mailto:ogetravel@uga.edu). This excel workbook is located on the [OGEHelp](#) webpage.
3. OGE business office reviews the TRT.
4. Traveler awaits accounting chartstring/Accounting Tag approval and further instructions.
5. If traveling out of state, traveler submits a [Travel Authorization](#) in [UGA's Financial Management System](#) and awaits approval email.
6. If traveling internationally, traveler submits itinerary to the [International Travel Registry](#).
7. After approvals are received, the traveler begins making reservations.
  - Conference lodging can be made **before** submitting the Travel Request Template/Travel Authorization to ensure the conference rate is secured. If a conference rate is not offered, the traveler must secure the least expensive option available taking into consideration proximity to the business destination and personal safety, as well as the allowable per diem. Justification will be required if lodging rate exceeds per diem allowance.
8. Traveler completes a safe and productive trip, following UGA travel policy.
9. Traveler submits a [Travel Expense Report](#) in [UGA's Financial Management System](#) for reimbursement including all required documentation. Upon review by the business office, additional documentation may be requested.

## **Conference Registration**

- Conference registration fees should be paid prior to the travel date. If lodging is not included in the costs, these can be charged to a P-card. If lodging is included in the costs, registration fees must be billed directly to UGA. Regardless of the payment method, OGE requires the Traveler to submit a Purchase Request form. The OGE business office will review the request and provide information to the Traveler on how to pay the registration fee.
- A Travel Request should be submitted at the same time as the purchase request for the conference registration. This allows the total cost of the trip to the conference to be evaluated before approval is given.
- Any meals that are included in registration fees and/or provided at the conference must be taken out of per diem meal calculations on the Travel Request Template. Per the State Accounting Office policy, the full rate of the meal will be deducted, even on the first or last days of travel when the daily rate is reduced to 75%.
- An agenda of the conference must be attached to the Travel Request Template when submitted for approval.

## **Travel Request Template**

- Located on the [OGE Help](#) webpage.
- The form is organized into several categories that are designed to assist the traveler in planning for all expenses.
- Items to submit with Travel Request Template:
  - A conference agenda with prices that includes information on provided meals.
  - A printout, pdf, or screenshot of the conference lodging rate information as provided on the conference website.
  - If driving, directions to and from the conference.
    - If commuter miles are required to be deducted, a printout showing the mileage should also be submitted.
  - Rental car comparison information captured from the [rental car comparison tool](#)
  - Airfare comparison documentation if any personal travel days will be taken

## **Travel Authorization (TA)**

- After the Travel Request Template is approved, if traveling out of state, the traveler will need to log in to <https://financials.onesource.uga.edu> (FMS (Financial Management System)) to create and submit an electronic travel authorization.
- Use the [Travel Authorization Guide](#) to assist you in completing a travel authorization.
  - Accounting chartstring/Accounting Tag information will be included in the approved Travel Request Template.
- Do not include registration fees in the travel authorization.
- Once a travel authorization is submitted, it is placed in the approval workflow.
- If you need to update or have questions about who your approvers are, please consult with the OGE business office for more information. Your supervisor is the first approver (HR approver),

and a member of the business office staff is the second (expense) approver. Your supervisor approves you to travel while the business office approves the estimated travel expenses.

- Once approved, travel authorizations cannot be changed. If anything changes with the dates, locations, or expenses related to your trip after the TA has been submitted and approved, you will need to create and submit a new, correct travel authorization for approval and cancel the original. Please consult the business office if this occurs.
- An employee can begin making appropriate travel reservations after the Travel Authorization is approved. You will receive an email notifying you the TA has been approved in FMS.
- Do not forget to register in the [International Travel Registry](#) if you are traveling internationally. Your TA will not be approved in FMS until the International Travel Registration has been completed.

### **Meal Per Diem**

- Travelers must be on travel overnight and travel more than 50 miles away from home and headquarters to be eligible for meals.
- Meal Per diem allowance refers to the maximum food allowance for which employees can be reimbursed.
  - Reimbursed 75% of the per diem for the day of departure and return and 100% of the per diem for each other day of overnight travel.
  - Incidentals are not included unless you travel internationally. Incidentals may not be approved at the 100% rate depending on budget allowed for the trip.
- Out of State Rate:
  - Use the Link to [GSA Per Diem Rates](#) to access per diem rates for Out of State travel.
- Current In-State Rates established by the state accounting office:

<b>Eligible Meals</b>	<b>Standard Per Diem Rate</b>
Breakfast	\$13
Lunch	\$14
Dinner	\$23

- **The per diem allowance must be adjusted for any meals provided to the traveler by the host.**
- If a traveler has medical restrictions and cannot eat a provided meal, the traveler does not have to deduct the amount. The traveler must include a note or other documentation with the Travel Request Template and the Travel Expense Report.
- Separate reimbursement for taxes and tips associated with meal expenses are not authorized as the meal per diem is intended to cover the total cost of the employee's meal including taxes and tips.
- Employees may only receive per diem for meals occurring while on official travel status.
- Employees who take annual leave while on travel status will not be reimbursed for meal expenses incurred during the leave period.

## Lodging

- Employees who travel more than 50 miles from their home, office, residence, or headquarters may be reimbursed for lodging expenses associated with overnight travel.
- Employees traveling overnight are responsible for obtaining the most reasonable lodging rates. Travelers should select the least expensive option available, considering proximity to the business destination and personal safety.
  - Reduced lodging rates are often made available for travelers attending large conferences. It is the traveler's responsibility to reserve lodging in a timely manner to secure the conference rate. In the event the conference rate is not received, lodging reimbursement will be capped at the conference rate even when lodging costs exceed that amount.
  - Employees traveling out-of-state should refer to the federal per diem rates to identify high-cost areas of the United States, and to determine whether higher expenses are "reasonable and customary." See [GSA Per Diem Rates](#).
  - Employees will not be reimbursed for lodging booked through services such as VRBO, HomeAway, and Airbnb, as these sites offer lodging at private residences. However, in some instances for international travel, exceptions can be made.
- Employees traveling in-state on official business are exempt from paying the county or municipal excise tax on lodging. Travelers must submit a copy of the [Hotel Occupancy Tax Exemption Certificate](#) to the hotel in order for these taxes to be removed from the billing invoice.
- [Hotels with UGA Direct Billing](#) In some rare cases, when traveling in-state only, OGE may be able to arrange for direct billing of the lodging expense on behalf of the traveler. If you are interested in this option, please email [ogetravel@uga.edu](mailto:ogetravel@uga.edu) for more information.

## Lodging Continued

- When a state employee on travel status is accompanied by someone who is not a state employee on travel status, the employee is entitled to reimbursement at a **single-room rate**.
- Employees may be reimbursed for work-related internet usage charges if approved in advance on the Travel Request Template. These charges should be separately identified on the itemized hotel/motel bill but should not be listed on the travel expense report as "lodging." These charges should be coded as miscellaneous expenses.
- Travelers should not book non-refundable rates or rates that require deposits unless required by conference lodging. It is the employee's responsibility to understand cancellation rules. Non-refundable rates cannot be changed or canceled; therefore, the employee accepts the risk of a non-reimbursable cancellation fee.

## Travel – Air

- Airfare can be direct billed to UGA if booked through an [authorized travel agency](#).
- If airfare is deemed the best mode of transportation, then luggage, airport shuttles, and airport parking are also reimbursable expenses for travelers. Be sure to include these on the Travel Request Template and save all receipts for reimbursement.

- Employees should utilize commercial air transportation when it is more cost-effective and efficient to travel by air than by vehicle. Under such circumstances, state agencies may reimburse employees for air travel expenses, provided these expenses were approved before the travel date.
  - Air travel may only be booked 60 days or less in advance. If there are busy travel times when flights might book quickly, exception requests can be made via the supervisory chain. International flights often require booking in advance of the 60 days.
- Employees who require air travel are strongly encouraged to obtain the **lowest** logical airfare to the specified destination, which may include the use of the Internet, a travel agency, or airline services. Employees should use electronic ticketing to avoid any surcharges associated with hard copy tickets.
- Travelers should use penalty or nonrefundable fares whenever feasible.
- If there is a charge for checking luggage, the state will reimburse for a maximum of one piece of checked luggage. If additional baggage is required, requests for reimbursement must include an associated explanation.

### **Travel – Groome Transportation Shuttle**

- [Groome Transportation](#) is an option when traveling to and from Athens to Hartsfield-Jackson Airport in Atlanta.
- It is the traveler's responsibility to make the reservation. The fee can be direct billed to the department. OGE's direct bill code is **UGAOIE**.
- Per SAO policy, tipping is limited to 20% of the total fare cost for shuttle, taxi, or rideshare services. OGE recommends 15-20%.
- This expense must be included in your Travel Request Template.
- Steps:
  1. Choose Athens as your location.
  2. Scroll down the page and enter your Group ID and click submit (do not input travel dates on this page. If you do, you will not be able to put in the department code).
  3. On the next page is where you will put in your flight information and dates (you should see **UGAOIE-OFFICE OF INTERNATIONAL E** on the screen)
  4. On the next page, input number of passengers, number of bags, and return trip information (if applicable).
    - If a return trip is selected, the next page will ask for a return trip date and time.
  5. You will need to fill out the flight information, pickup and drop-off time, gratuity, passenger information, and agree to the terms and conditions.
  6. Then click the green box "Book Your Trip."

### **Travel – Ground Transportation**

- Traveler will provide proof that the most cost-effective option has been selected. ***You must evaluate and retain documentation of the analysis of the most cost-effective choice.***
- There are three options for driving, in order of UGA preference:
  - Rental car [from Hertz or Enterprise](#)
  - Rental car from [UGA motor pool](#)
  - Using a personal vehicle

## Rental of Motor Vehicles Policy

- Reimbursement will only be made for official use.
- Proper methodology for calculating reimbursable business miles versus normal commuting miles: Commuting miles are the miles traveled regularly from an employee's residence to the primary workstation. This should be a standard distance that does not change from one reimbursement request to the next. The primary workstation is the location to which an employee regularly reports for work.
  - A printout of a Google Map showing the official business miles traveled must be attached to the estimate.
- Keep all receipts for rental car gas purchases as these are submitted with expense reports.
  - Travelers must decline optional fuel offerings offered by the car rental vendor.
- Approved car rental sizes are economy, compact, or intermediate (midsize). Vans may be rented when there are more than four travelers.
- Employees traveling on state business in a rented motor vehicle are covered by the state's liability policy, therefore, **liability coverage should be declined** when renting a motor vehicle.
- In the event of an accident while driving a rental vehicle, contact the Risk Management Office at 1-877-656-7475 and the appropriate car rental vendor for claims handling.
- NOTE: The state liability policy is only in effect while the employee is using the rented vehicle for official state business. For this reason, personal use of the vehicle, including allowing friends or family members to ride in a state-rented vehicle, is prohibited.

## The traveler should complete the DOAS Cost Comparison Tool to determine the lowest cost option

1. Go to <http://ssl.doas.state.ga.us/vehcostcomp/>.
2. Select "compare all locations." *The Hertz Capitol Hill location is not available to UGA staff (if renting at an airport, Hertz must be used).*
3. Enter the number of business miles you will be traveling.
4. Enter your roundtrip commuting miles
5. Enter the number of days (24-hour period) for which you plan to rent the vehicle.
6. Select "no" for the question regarding access to a departmental vehicle.
7. Select up to two types of vehicles for the comparison.
  - **NOTE:** Do not purchase additional insurance if renting a car.

# Rental Vehicle Cost Comparison

1. Select pick up location for cost comparison purposes:

- Hertz Capitol Hill Location \*\*\*\*  Enterprise (In-state)  Hertz (In-State)  Compare all locations

2. Enter the number of miles:

**Business miles** you plan to drive:

Miles you commute daily (round trip):

3. Enter the number of days (24 hour period) for which you plan to rent the vehicle:

4. Do you have access to a vehicle provided by your organization?\*\*\*

- Yes  No

5. Select up to two types of vehicles for comparison by clicking on the pictures below:



**Capitol Hill Fuel Calculation.**

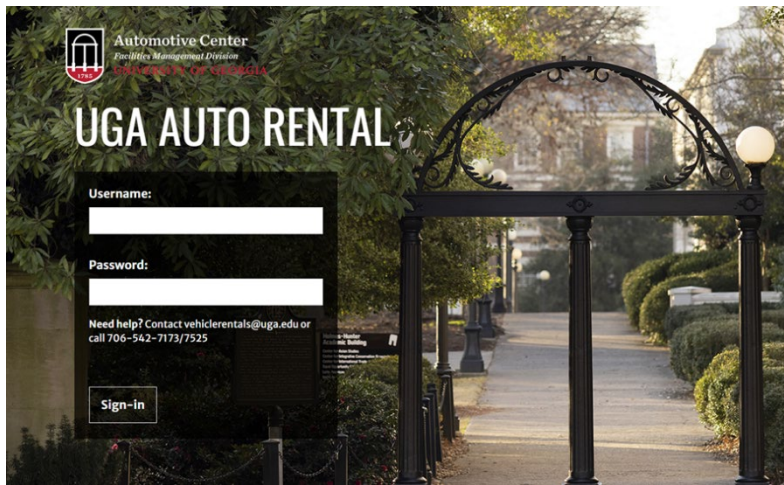
- \* **Capitol Hill** mileage rates with Hertz Fuel Card (Place cursor over the words "Capitol Hill" printed in blue)

- A screenshot of this analysis should be submitted with the Travel Request Template for review by the Business Office along with a written statement/justification of the traveler's selected choice.

## How to Reserve a Vehicle in the UGA Motor Pool

- WEX fuel card acknowledgement is required of drivers before renting motor pool vehicles. Instructions to complete this are [here](#).
  - **NOTE:** Account creation is required if not previously done.
- To access the UGA Automotive Center Rental website to reserve a UGA fleet vehicle, you will have to be registered as a driver. To register, send an email to [OGETravel@uga.edu](mailto:OGETravel@uga.edu) as follows:
  - Subject Line: UGA Fleet Driver Access Request
  - Include your full name, your UGA MyID, and your phone number
- UGA Auto Rental Website: <https://ugaportal.wheelsys.io/sign-in/>
- Once you have logged in using your MyID and the default password provided to you, you may change your password.
- Click the Book Online link at the top and follow the prompts and options to make your booking.
- **NOTE:** State-owned vehicles may not be used to drive to and from an employee's residence or parked overnight at an employee's residence.





### Personal Vehicle - Business Miles Traveled Examples

- **NOTE:** If an employee leaves from or returns to their residence, commute miles must be deducted. There are exceptions when travel occurs on a weekend or holiday and if the traveler leaves or returns to campus.
- The employee resides in Duluth and works in Athens. Normal commute mileage is 60 miles roundtrip. The employee leaves in the morning from her house to go to a meeting in Gwinnett and returns to her residence after the meeting. The total distance traveled is 30 miles.
  - *Since the employee would normally travel 60 miles in their daily commute, the state does not reimburse for mileage since the business traveled miles are less than her normal commute miles.*
- Employee drives from home in Jefferson to her UGA office in Athens. At 10 a.m., the employee leaves campus and drives to a meeting at Georgia Tech. After the meeting concludes at Tech, the employee returns to the residence.
  - *The trip between Jefferson and UGA is personal commuting and not reimbursed. The travel from UGA to Tech and the return trip to the residence is reimbursed, less the amount equal to the normal one-way commute miles (what the employee normally would have traveled from UGA to Jefferson for the return trip home).*

### When You Return from Travel

- It is preferred that employees submit Travel Expense Reports within 30 calendar days after completion of the trip or event; 45 days is the OGE internal deadline. This provides the business office staff with time to review, request corrections, and approve your Travel Expense Report before the UGA deadline. Expenses submitted more than 60 calendar days after completion of the trip or event, if reimbursed, are taxable income per the IRS (Internal Revenue Service).
  - Submission after **30 days will require a justification letter.**
- Traveler to provide:
  - A recap of all expenditures on the actuals tab of the Travel Request Template emailed to [ogetravel@uga.edu](mailto:ogetravel@uga.edu).
  - Receipts for all expenses except meals and mileage when driving a personal vehicle.
    - Receipts should be in PDF format



- Receipts should be emailed to [ogetravel@uga.edu](mailto:ogetravel@uga.edu)
- A description of the expense and the purpose for the charge if these are not evident on the receipt.
- Receipts must show the method of payment used and either a zero balance or the amount paid; if they do not, please provide a redacted credit card statement as proof of payment.
- Paper receipts should be scanned to pdf (for receipts smaller than a full page, tape the receipt to 8.5" x 11" copy paper and scan).
- Receipts from the traveler's email (Uber receipts, for example) should be converted to pdf format.
- Travel Expense Report [Video Walkthrough Example](#)
- In the event an employee covers travel expenditures for another, the request for reimbursement must be treated as group travel.
- Reimbursement should be anticipated within 10 business days after supervisor and business office approval. If the reimbursement is not direct deposited into the traveler's bank account within this period, please contact the business office.

#### **No-Cost Travel**

- If travel is offered at no cost to the employee, a no-cost Travel Request Template and subsequently a no-cost Travel Authorization must be processed and routed through the appropriate approval paths.
  - *Per UGA policy: An authorization to travel is required to be submitted by employees traveling more than fifty miles outside of Georgia. Travel Authorizations must be approved internally by the HR Supervisor of the Employee and by the Distributed Expense Manager for the funding source.*
- This policy exists for both in-state and out-of-state travel. This does not apply to in-town travel. TA's are not required for in-state travel.
- No cost travel should be reviewed to ensure compliance with the University's policy on Gratuities found at <https://policies.uga.edu/pdf/gratuities.pdf>.