

King County Travel Manual

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Contact Us

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King County

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INTRODUCTION

This Travel Manual describes King County’s travel rules and regulations. These general guidelines and procedures ensure accountability and fiscal responsibility. The Procurement and Payables Section (P&P) is responsible for administering and monitoring travel related expense reimbursements.

Transportation and hotel costs can be paid with:

1. Travel Cards (T-Cards) — *preferred*
2. Employee Reimbursements
3. Travel Advances

TRAVEL CARDS

Travel Cards are the preferred method of payment for transportation and lodging. T-Cards save approximately \$70 in processing costs for *each* purchase.

T-Cards are issued at the department or division level. Access to the card should be limited to the department’s Travel Card Coordinator. Charges are processed for payment in Oracle’s iExpense module by the Travel Card Coordinator.

EMPLOYEE REIMBURSEMENTS

King County employees may pay for hotels, meal costs, and other travel related expenses using personal funds while in travel status. After travel is complete, the employee may be reimbursed for allowable business expenses using iExpense. Original receipts are required for all expense reimbursements, except for meals.

TRAVEL ADVANCES

County employees may request a cash advance for anticipated expenses they will incur while traveling on King County business. All receipts are required to be turned in within 15 days upon return, except for meals.

If actual expenses exceed the amount of the advance, the County will reimburse the difference. If the advance exceeds the amount of travel expenses, the employee must reimburse the County within 15 days upon return or be subject to accruing interest to the traveler.

TYPES OF TRANSPORTATION

AIR TRAVEL



All air travel must be approved in advance. The King County Travel Card is the preferred method of payment. Use of personal funds is strongly discouraged for airfare.

Airfare may be purchased directly from the airlines, online third party vendors, or from a travel agent listed in the [state contract](#). Trip insurance is encouraged.

CANDIDATE TRAVEL

Candidate travel (airfare and lodging) may be paid using a travel card following the same travel rules as employees (PER 17-1-3, section 6.1.2).

Non-employee travel will not be reimbursed through iExpense; instead, please submit these directly to King County Accounts Payable 401 5th Ave, Room 323, Seattle, WA 98104 MS: CNK-ES-0323

MOTOR POOL

For local travel, a County car is preferred. Use the [King County Vehicle Reservation System](#).

MILEAGE REIMBURSEMENT

If you're driving your own vehicle, you may be reimbursed for mileage, toll charges, and reasonable parking charges. Receipts are required. See the IRS website for current mileage rates at <http://www.currentmileagerate.com/>

Mileage expense reports must indicate the starting and ending addresses, amount, and date. Submit your reimbursement request in iExpense. Anytime an expense report is only for mileage (where no receipts are required), a scanned copy of the expense report must be sent to iExpense.AP@kingcounty.gov to kick off the review and payment process.

Mileage cannot be claimed when renting vehicle or using a county Motor Pool vehicle.

LOCAL TRANSPORTATION

Local transportation (taxi, rental car, bus, train, etc.) must be pre-approved and include detailed receipts. Receipts must indicate the starting and ending addresses, amount, and date.

Note: Tips and gratuities are not reimbursable. (PER 17-1-2, 6.8.1K)

MEALS & INCIDENTALS



MEALS

Meal allowances are calculated using the [federal General Services Administration \(GSA\) per diem rates](#) (use the reimbursable limits for your location). Only the total daily meal rate is used from the GSA website. The individual meal breakdown is per King County PERS 17-1-3, which can be found here: [Per Diem Meal & Incidental Rates](#).

The meal reimbursement rates are built into the iExpense module using the "Per Diem" tab.

When meals are provided by the hotel or by the conference, they do *not* qualify for reimbursement.

NOTE: GSA includes incidentals with meals. However, incidental rates in iExpense are listed separately using the “cash and other expenses” screen. The rates in iExpense are correct – they are for the meal portion only.

INCIDENTALS

Incidentals are pro-rated at the same percentage as meals. If no meals are claimed that day, no incidentals are paid. Incidentals are not allowed when employee is *not* in travel status (local travel).

King County uses the GSA rates and prorates the incidentals at: 20% Breakfast, 30% Lunch, and 50% Dinner. For example, for a \$5 incidental:

If all 3 meals are claimed, you may claim the full \$5.

If breakfast and dinner is claimed you may claim \$3.50.

If only Breakfast is claimed, you can only claim \$1 (20%) of the incidental for the day.

The incidental rates should be processed as an expense based on receipts provide for each day.

LODGING

HOTELS



Always book hotels using the “Government Rate.”

Travel cards are the preferred method of payment. When using a T-Card, hotels often request a credit card authorization form provided in advance by the hotel. Advance deposits may be placed on a T-Card.

Any hotel expense in excess of the [GSA approved per diem rates](#) must include an explanation in the justify exception portion on the Travel Authorization & Reimbursement form. Include the name, telephone number and rate of three establishments contacted for government lodging rates.

The traveler is responsible for any charges in excess of pre-approved amounts and for personal expenses.

Per Diem rates are based on the hotel’s “per day” rate. If hotel rates fluctuate the employee may be responsible for out of pocket over per diem rates. Using a T-Card protects employees.

All hotel receipts, including internet bookings, must be itemized by day. When processing an expense report for a hotel stay, the stay must be itemized by day, or “per diem.”

EXPENSE TYPES

When creating your expense report, destinations depend on which expense type is selected.

CONUS — hotel rates within the continental United States. This code is for U.S. locations.

OCONUS — hotel rates *outside* the continental United States.

RECEIPTS



Reimbursement or Travel Advance Receipts

Original receipts must be submitted to your Office Coordinator.

Expenses will only be reimbursed, if the original receipts are attached. Brochures, itineraries, hotel bills, receipts, and prior authorizations must be attached to your expense reports. Please print your expense report cover sheet in *landscape*.

Meals and Mileage are the only expenses that do not require accompanying receipts.

Travel Card Receipts

Receipts for T-Card purchases are kept by your department T-Card Coordinator. All travel pre-approvals, brochures, itineraries, hotel bills and prior authorizations must be kept for six years.

OTHER EXPENSES

EXTENDED PERSONAL STAY

If you extend your business trip for personal reasons, any additional cost is your responsibility.

TRAVELING WITH A COMPANION

When travelling with a companion that is not an employee, additional costs for the companion must be paid using personal funds.

AIRLINE BAGGAGE FEES

Airline baggage fees are reimbursed with an itemized and dated receipt. No receipt? You may use a bank statement highlighting the baggage fee.

TELEPHONE CALLS OR INTERNET USE

Telephone calls or internet usage are not reimbursable unless they are related to County business. The traveler must initial each call or internet usage to be reimbursed on the hotel bill.

AIRPORT PARKING

Employees should use public transportation (using your ID badge/Orca card) to the airport to avoid airport parking fees whenever practical.

If you are unable to take public transit and airport parking is unavoidable, itemized receipts must indicate the amount, date, and location.

If a companion drops an employee off at the airport, the mileage is only reimbursed one way.

TRAVELERS' WAY OF DOING THINGS



Always ask yourself, **“What is cheapest for the County and our taxpayers?”**

- Instead of a cab or rental car, try to find an airport shuttle that will take you to your destination.
- Use your King County Orca card to get to and from the airport to avoid costly airport parking.
- Purchasing tickets directly from the airline or using a third party vendor can be cheaper than going through the state contract. Trip insurance is recommended.
- Keep all of your receipts (except for meals and mileage). Accounts Payable or your Travel Card Coordinator will need them to reconcile expense reports.



REQUESTING TRAVEL

Complete a Travel Packet and Submit all documents and receipts to your office Coordinator. For more information, visit the [Travel Resource Center](#).

YOUR TRAVEL PACKET:

- [Travel Authorization Form](#) (signed by your director)
- [GSA per diem rates](#) (print your destination rates)
- Your conference / event agenda
- Original receipts (due within 10 days after your trip)

Notes for Travel Coordinator:

Before Travel

- Get the complete Travel Packet from the traveler.
- Purchase airfare trip insurance when possible.
- Always request the government rates when booking hotels.
- **T- CARD TIP:** When you book hotels with a T-Card, get a Credit Card Authorization Form from the hotel. The traveler can use it at check-in instead of a credit card.

After Travel

- Get original receipts from the traveler. (For missing receipts, use a Director's memo.)
- Within 10 days after travel, enter the Oracle Expense Report and wait for the approval email notification.
- Within 15 days after travel, forward the approval email and attach an electronic copy of the Travel Packet (including receipts) to iExpense.AP@kingcounty.gov.
- Keep the original travel expense records on hand for the 6 year retention period.

TRAVEL CHECKLIST FOR TRAVEL CARD COORDINATOR

Yes	No	N/A	
			Is the preferred hotel refundable?
			If yes, is it booked?
			Government rate?
			3 rd Party Authorization form requested?
			Standard naming conventions followed?
			Travel dates at least 4 weeks out?
			Lodging Exceeds Per Diem Memo included?
			Travel Authorization Request Form included?
			Per Diem and rates included?
			Lodging and Meals
			Flights
			Hotel
			Rental Car
			Maps
			Agenda included?
			Extra leg of personal travel?
			Airfare estimate for regular travel days and planned travel days
			Do they know they pay the difference?
			POETA Provided?
			Personal information to book flight provided?
			Full name exactly as it appears on driver's license
			Birthdate
			Miles program number if applicable
			Flight preferences (dates, times, window/isle etc.)
			Price check flights?
			Government rate through travel agent comparable?
			Flight booked?
			Signatures?
			3 rd Party Authorization form faxed to Hotel? (Recommend calling the hotel to confirm)
			Conference Registration?
			Confirm flight with travel agent?
			Hotel reserved?
			Rental car reserved?
			All travel receipts, confirmations, itineraries etc. forwarded to traveler?
			Forward the approval email and attach an electronic copy of the travel packet (including receipts) to iExpense.AP@kingcounty.gov . Keep original travel expense records in hand for the 6yrs retention period. (do not share the 3 rd Party Authorization form)

GLOSSARY

Approver

An individual designated by a Department or Division Director as responsible for reviewing and approving the Cardholder's transaction charges. Approvers are linked to Organizations codes within POETA assigned to Expense Reports by Cardholders.

Billing Cycle

The period between billings, the T-Card billings “cycle” on or around the 15th of each month.

Cardholder Single-Purchase Limit

This limit restricts the amount of any single purchase made by a cardholder. It can be comprised of single or multiple items purchased at one time at a single supplier.

Delegate

A delegate is another P-Card holder who has been delegated responsibilities to create Expense Reports on behalf of a Proxy who is out of the office for an extended period of time.

Travel Card Coordinator

The individual assigned as the focal point at the designated department level that is responsible for coordinating travel, ensuring travel are complete.

Accounts Payable

King County Accounts Payable (A/P) is the Designated Finance Office.

Expense Report

A report detailing Cardholder’s weekly transactions.

iExpense

iExpense is a module within Oracle where all employees process reimbursements by submitting an electronic Expense Report. P-Card and Travel Card transactions are uploaded from US Bank to iExpense and are processed on “Expense Reports.”

Travel Card

The official Agency credit card that is used for hotel and airfare. The cards are issued at the Department or Division level and managed by the Travel Card (T-Card) Coordinator.

Oracle®

This is King County's centralized accounts receivable software system.

Partially Paid

iExpense is an employee reimbursement module within Oracle, so in order to process payments to US Bank, it issues 2 “checks”; one is issued to the iExpense user for \$0, and one is issued to the bank for the actual Expense Report amount

Pending Payables Approval

When an incorrect template is chosen for Travel Card transactions or policy violations exist in the Expense Report reports fall into a review process. The P-Card team will audit reports that fall into this status.

Pending System Administrator

Approval status that reflects the POETA (account coding) that was used does not have an approver tied to the ORG, or cost center. Contact your SPOC to get the approver linked to the P-Card template in iExpense.

Proxy

Proxy is a P-Card holder who delegates their responsibilities for creating Expense Reports to a Delegate if they are going on an extended leave.

POETA

Project, Organization, Expenditure Type, Task, Award (POETA), is the acronym for King County’s centralized, project centric method of accounting. Project is the project number. Organization number has dual purposes, it denotes the “cost center” and is also number the Approver is tied to. Expenditure type indicates the type of expenditure (furniture, office supplies, etc.). Task is the part of a project where the expenditure is associated. Award is used only if an award or grant is associated with the project.

P-Card Program Manager

The individual who occupies a position in the King County Procurement and Contracts Services Section. The P-Card Program Manager acts as a designee of the Director of Finance and Business Operations Division and is the official point of contact for the King County P-Card Program who is responsible for all aspects of the program administration and implementation. The P-Card Program Manager also serves as a Coordinator in communication with the Card Provider.

P-Card Program Administrator

The individual(s) who serves as a resource for Cardholders, Approvers, and SPOC's.

Single Point of Contact (SPOC)

Single Point of Contact (SPOC) is designated at the Department or Division level. SPOCs are the Approving Manager for Cardholders and Approvers with a County agency (business unit). The SPOC determines who will receive cards, Oracle user responsibilities, who will be Approvers, and which POETA they are linked to.

Travel Card Accounts

Travel Card Accounts (Ghost Cards) are accounts used specifically for transportation related expenses. These card accounts are issued to departments and managed by a Travel Card Coordinator. The King County P-Card will not be used for this purpose.

Unauthorized Purchase

Purchases that exceed preset dollar limits or velocity limits, or are made to vendors outside preset Merchant Category Code(s) (MCCs), or are otherwise indicated in this manual.

Unauthorized Use

The use of a King County P-Card by a person other than the Cardholder, who has no actual, implied, or apparent authority for such use.

US Bank

US Bank has the current contract with the State of Washington to provide P-Card and payment services.

US Bank Access Online

Online banking portal.

User Productivity Kit

[User Productivity Kit \(UPK\)](#) - Step-by-step direction on "How to use iExpense".

Velocity Limit

Number of transactions allowed, usually 8 per day and 30 per month, set by US Bank.