

March 16, 2020

To the Oakland University community,

In follow up to the University announcement regarding [travel suspension](#) we have continued to receive many inquiries regarding cancellation of travel plans and the potential for refunds and reimbursements for out-of-pocket expenses already incurred.

To address the concerns surrounding travel cancellations we have remained in contact with several airlines, travel agencies and others resources in the travel industry to determine if there are any special options available. At this time Delta and others have enhanced their cancellation/change fee waivers to include both international and domestic travel due to the [coronavirus \(COVID19\)](#) .

Since the situation continues to evolve we will monitor and report on possible changes as the situation further develops. For now we are finding that each airline requires ticket holders to cancel their own tickets and go through their respective process to request consideration for fee waivers or full refunds, unless otherwise noted in the following links to their most recent updates.

Delta Airlines:

<https://news.delta.com/what-were-doing-delta-takes-action-customers-following-covid-19-outbreak>
Reservations: 1-800-221-1212 or visit delta.com for their [international reservation offices](#).

American Airlines:

<https://www.aa.com/i18n/travel-info/travel-alerts.jsp?anchorLocation=DirectURL&title=travelalerts>

Southwest Airlines:

<https://www.southwest.com/Coronavirus/>

United Airlines:

<https://www.united.com/ual/en/us/fly/travel/notices.html>

Spirit Airlines:

<https://customersupport.spirit.com/hc/en-us/articles/202097076-How-can-I-change-or-cancel-my-reservation->

Frontier Airlines:

<https://www.flyfrontier.com/travel/travel-info/new-change-policy/>

Conlin Travel: (The University's new travel agency)

<https://app.smartsheet.com/b/publish?EQBCT=ce8a9d75280c446e9884560ad6853467>

The following is a more detailed guide to address these questions and the steps to take regarding reimbursement for expenses incurred relating to travel cancellations.

- Since each airline, hotel, conference or other travel related provider may have their own cancellation rules to be followed, you will need to review those protocols individually to seek any potential refunds for expenses already incurred. *(We understand that the conference registrations and hotel accommodations made to the Ellucian Conference are in the process of being credited back to the original source of payments).*
- Per the [Travel Policy](#), approval for reimbursement of an unused airline ticket or other related travel expense due to cancellation of a business trip is up to the individual department/supervisor and must be justified on the TES ([Travel Expense Summary](#)). If a conference is cancelled, trip was scheduled in one of the suspended travel countries, or a traveler is concerned over contracting the coronavirus (COVID19), each is a sufficient justification to allow a trip to be cancelled and expenses to be reimbursed to the traveler.
- Generally, airfare tickets that are cancelled within the airline's approved cancellation window can be used within one year of the original *booking date* (not date of cancellation) and must be referenced for use by the traveler for any future bookings. Per a Delta Airlines representative, any fare class of ticket can be cancelled

and rebooked within the stated one-year timeframe for a future trip by the traveler and may be assessed a change fee depending on the rules governing the original ticket purchase or as updated by any policy change that may occur relating to that ticket. Most airlines follow a similar policy but each situation must be reviewed individually with that air carrier. If a ticket is rebooked later for a new trip, any change fees of additional expense would be recorded on the TES for that trip.

- To seek reimbursement approval for any current expenses, complete the TES with the non-refunded expenses and related receipts for any out-of-pocket reimbursements from the cancelled trip. TES is to be completed even if the expenses were paid on a PCard and there are no out-of-pocket reimbursements to be made.
- Denote in the "Purpose of Travel" section the intended trip location, purpose of travel and include the words "Trip Cancelled".
- Fund and account codes should be the same as if you actually traveled. There is no central funding source to accommodate expenses related to cancelled travel.
- Forward the TES to your supervisor for approval as you normally would with any other TES and then to Accounts Payable for processing.
- It is the responsibility of the traveler and department to track the unused ticket voucher and attempt to use it for another business purpose within the time period allowed by that carrier.

Travel FAQs:

- **How long is travel banned?** For those that have future travel events already booked or are attempting to make air travel plans we are advising that as instructed in the OU Advisory all University air travel is suspended until further notice. At this time we would recommend cancellation of these trips in the coming through the end of April. An update will be provided on this topic at a later date.
- **What should departments do with Travel Authorization Requests for future travel?** As noted in the OU Advisory all University air travel is suspended until further notice.
- **How should departments advise employees returning from business travel or personal travel situations from any locations?** You should advise those planning to return to campus they must first contact [Graham Health Center](#) (GHC) **before returning to campus**. GHC will evaluate each and advise on each situation.
- **What should departments do now regarding travelers that already have travel plans?** Departments should reach out to confirm that previously approved travelers have been notified to cancel planned air travel trips as noted above until further notice. Nonessential travel by other means (bus, van, car) is strongly discouraged.
- **How can we request a travel suspension waiver?** As noted in the advisory, a faculty or staff member who believes that they have an important business reason to travel by air can request a waiver. The process requires the traveler to complete their department's respective Travel Authorization document which should include a detailed discussion of the critical nature of the requested air travel and submit it to the supervisor which then should be forwarded to the respective Dean or divisional leadership person and then must be sent for approval by the appropriate Vice President.
- **Will Accounts Payable accept scanned receipts during the period of in-person instruction being suspended?** Yes, but only if the traveler to be reimbursed cannot come to campus to provide the original TES related documents. A scanned original signature will be acceptable in these instances on the TES during this time.

We will continue to monitor the situation for any industry updates relative to cancelled travel. As further information or changes in travel industry policies are announced we will update you accordingly.

Please contact Accounts Payable with any PCard or travel reimbursement questions.