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DATE: February 8, 2011

TO: Deans, Directors, Department Chairs, Unit Business Officers, and Travel Coordinators

FROM: Jeffrey J. West, Associate Vice President for Financial & Business Services 

SUBJECT: Travel Per Diem (meals & incidentals) – New Administrative Rule associated with Policy 3-030

RULE: Beginning March 1, 2011, per diem reimbursements will be provided for only those meals for which a University traveler actually incurred out-of-pocket costs.

This Rule serves as clarification of the intent of University Travel Policy 3-030 regarding reimbursement of meal expenses while on travel status - specifically where the University may have been paying for an expense that was not incurred. University travelers should deduct, according to the tables available on the Travel Services web site, the estimated value of meals provided by any other party while on travel status. Examples of meals to be deducted from a per diem claim include meals provided while participating in a publicized event, such as a conference, workshop, seminar, etc.; and would also include any meals provided by other parties associated with the business purpose of the trip. Incremental costs incurred for personal reasons (for example, vacation time added to the business trip) should not be included in your reimbursement request.

BACKGROUND/DOCUMENTATION: Per Policy 3-030, business travelers may be reimbursed for the cost of meals while on travel status using one of two methods:

- (1) actual expense incurred; or
- (2) a per diem allowance

Actual meal costs will continue to be reimbursed when documented with original receipts as described in Policy 3-030, not to exceed \$50 or 120% of the federal per diem rate (whichever is greater). Alternatively, the per diem method of reimbursement allows travelers to claim a published per diem rate while on travel status without retaining receipts. Per Diem rates used for this purpose are established and maintained by the U.S. Government, and may be accessed through the University Travel Services web site. These published per diem rates vary by destination and date, and include an allowance for both specific meal values as well as incidental expenses.

IMPLEMENTATION: Departmental leadership is primarily responsible for compliance with this Rule and for scrutinizing a reimbursement request to ensure proper deductions have been made. Travel Services will provide training and support to departments in how this Rule can best be effectively administered.

Questions regarding this Rule may be directed to the Travel Services Manager. See the “contact us” link at www.travel.utah.edu.