Travel & Expenditure Policy

Purpose & Scope

Mount St. Joseph University is a not-for-profit educational institution funded primarily by students, parents, and donors. As employees of the University, it is our responsibility to be good stewards of these funds while furthering the University's mission. This Travel and Expenditure Reimbursement Policy, adopted by the President and Cabinet, defines good stewardship in conjunction with guidelines set by the IRS. Some policy statements included to promote good stewardship may allow for exceptions as approved by Line Officers while those included to comply with IRS regulations will not. Fiscal Operations maintains the official books and records of the University; accounting and documentation standards promulgated by Fiscal Operations are required for payment or reimbursement of any spending on behalf of the University.

This policy is written to comply with IRS regulations; the applicable text from the IRS code is copied below the policy for reference.

TRAVEL EXPENDITURES

This section provides guidance for University employees traveling on University business. All travel must be reasonable, cost-effective, and directly related to University activities. Travelers are expected to exercise prudent judgment and comply with all applicable procedures.

Airline 'miles' or bonus perks that do not cost additional money may be retained by the Traveler. Miles or perks which require a purchase and/or joining a club to attain preferred status are the personal cost of the traveler/employee.

I. Transportation

Air Travel

- Travelers should book the lowest logical fare (such as airport choice, number of stops, timing of departures and arrivals) available at the time of the booking that meets the business need.
- Travelers may select a standard seat in main cabin if an assigned seat is not included in the basic fare; however, the University will not reimburse seat upgrades or preferred seating options (such as extra leg room and priority boarding).
- The University will pay or reimburse the cost of 1 checked piece of luggage.
- The use of personal frequent flyer miles is not reimbursable.
- Trip insurance is not reimbursable as the University assumes the risk of travel disruptions.

- Airline change fees will be reimbursed when a change in travel plans is required for business reasons and must be documented in the expense report.

Ground Transportation

- Travelers should use the most economical and practical method of ground transportation.
- Reasonable expenses for rental cars, taxis, airport shuttles, Uber, Lyft, or public transportation will be reimbursed when supported by itemized, original receipts.

Personal Vehicle Use

- Employees using personal vehicles for business travel will be reimbursed at the University's mileage rate (posted on the Finances tab of myMount). This rate is reviewed periodically and covers fuel, insurance, maintenance, and wear and tear. Separate reimbursement for gas, oil, or maintenance is not allowed.
- Mileage reimbursement will not exceed equivalent economy/main cabin class air travel.
- Travelers must maintain a valid driver's license and appropriate insurance coverage.
- Mileage reimbursements for off-site work scheduled Monday–Friday will be reduced by the employee's normal daily commute, unless specifically addressed in a contract.

II. Lodging

Hotels

- The University will reimburse reasonable hotel expenses (room cost plus required taxes and fees) supported by itemized, original receipts.
- Travelers are expected to use standard hotel accommodations unless attending a conference at a full-service hotel with no other practical options.
- Non-reimbursable lodging expenses include:
  - In-room movies or entertainment
  - Room service exceeding meal allowances
  - Mini-bar items
  - Laundry or dry-cleaning services

Alternative Lodging (e.g., Airbnb, VRBO)

- Use of alternative lodging platforms such as Airbnb or VRBO is permitted if the lodging is cost-effective compared to standard hotel rates. Reimbursement requires:
  - A detailed, itemized receipt showing payment and travel dates
  - A private unit (not shared with unrelated third parties)
  - The traveler's acceptance of responsibility for cancellation fees or nonrefundable costs.
- The University reserves the right to deny reimbursement if these criteria are not met or if sufficient documentation is not provided.

III. Travel Meals

Meals eaten while traveling for a business purpose ("Travel Meals") include both overnight travel and day travel. Itemized receipts are required.

- Travel with an overnight stay: The University will reimburse the actual cost of meals and/or snacks up to a maximum of $75 per day.
- Travel without an overnight stay**:** For travel consisting of more than 100 miles or 4 hours of driving, the University will reimburse the actual cost of a meal or snack up to a maximum of $25.
- The University will not pay or reimburse for alcoholic beverages.
- Lunch provided as part of a one-day seminar or conference registration fee is not reimbursable separately.
- Employees traveling to high-cost locations may request additional allowances for meals or incidentals, subject to approval by the Controller.
- Employees who exceed the daily limits or purchase non-reimbursable items are personally responsible for those costs.

IV. Miscellaneous & Incidental Expenses

- Reasonable business-related expenses are reimbursable when directly related to University business, including:
  - Parking fees
  - Tolls
  - Internet access / Wi-Fi fees while traveling
  - Customary tips (e.g., hotel staff, baggage handling, housekeeping)
- If a receipt is not available (e.g., parking fees or tolls), it must be noted on the expense report.
- The University will not cover pet expenses.

V. Candidate Searches

When conducting candidate searches, it is important to present the University as mission-focused, fiscally responsible, and welcoming to guests.

All standard University travel rules and reimbursement policies described above apply to candidates invited for on-campus interviews, except as noted below. Candidate travel must be pre-approved by the hiring department and coordinated through the appropriate schools or departments.

The University has an official moving policy in the employee handbook. Refer to the policy when discussing moving arrangements with non-local candidates.

Local travel less than 35 miles

- The University does not reimburse or pay mileage for candidates residing within a 35-mile radius

Air Travel

- Candidates should book main cabin class tickets at the lowest logical fare.
- Upgrades, trip insurance, and change fees are not reimbursable unless specifically authorized in advance.

Ground Transportation / Car Rental

- Travelers should use the most economical and practical method of ground transportation.
- Reasonable expenses for airport shuttles, taxis, Uber, Lyft, or rental cars may be reimbursed.
- Mileage for personal vehicle use will be reimbursed at the current University rate.
- Car rentals may be reimbursed for the actual number of days the candidate is expected to be on campus.
- Parking expenses directly related to the interview trip are reimbursable.

Lodging

- Reimbursement is limited to a standard single-room rate.
- Candidates are encouraged to stay at University-preferred hotels when available.

Meals

- Meal costs for candidates during the interview process are expected to be kept to a reasonable amount.
- Alcoholic beverages are not reimbursable.

Reimbursement Process

- Candidates must submit all itemized, original receipts.
- Reimbursements will be issued directly to the candidate by the University.
- Reservations may be made by either the candidate or the University, but must be coordinated by the hiring manager.

HOSPITALITY EXPENDITURES

Hospitality funds are to be spent for the sole purpose of furthering the mission of the University and must have a clear business purpose documented with the receipt. Documentation must include a list of any employees or outside individuals receiving benefits, the date, and the reason the expenditure furthers the mission of the University. Many different activities flow through this budget line item. Below are guidelines for making decisions about spending these allocated funds while remaining good stewards of the University's resources.

I. Meals

- In general, employee meals are not a business expense and are not paid by the University. Exceptions apply when meals are connected to a business purpose as outlined below.
- Documentation must include itemized, original receipts and the business purpose of the meal.
- For purposes of justifying the business purpose, meals are categorized as follows:

Meals eaten while traveling ("Travel Meals")

- With overnight stay: MSJ will reimburse the actual cost of meals and/or snacks up to $75 per day.
- Without overnight stay: For travel more than 100 miles or 4 hours of driving, MSJ will reimburse the actual cost of a meal or snack up to $25.

Meals during group business meetings or events

- The University may pay for meals at University events (e.g., Convocation, Strategic Retreat, Education Session).
- On-campus events must use AVI Catering unless AVI declines service.
- Costs of the meal will vary but should be appropriate in relation to the event. (*e.g.,* box lunch, buffet, single meal dining hall pass might be provided for business meeting. A served 3 course meal might be provided for a Board of Trustees or donor-sponsored fundraising event.)
- For meetings held over the lunch hour, lunches paid by MSJ are permitted. This practice should be occasional and be approved in advance by the Dean or Line Officer.

Meals with external vendors or partners

- The University may pay for meals with non-MSJ participants.
- Extravagant restaurants should be avoided.

- Meals with only MSJ employees are not reimbursable unless occasionally approved by a Dean or Line Officer.

Meals provided without a business purpose

- The IRS deems these meals taxable to the employee unless considered *de minimis* (occasional, small in value and quantity).

Other requirements

- The University will not pay or reimburse for alcoholic beverages. Exceptions require documented advance approval by a Cabinet member.
- The University may pay for or reimburse a service gratuity up to 20%. Monetary limits on meals are inclusive of gratuities.
- Documentation requirements apply to all meals, whether on-campus (including the dining hall, Starbucks, & Joe Lion's Grille) or off-campus, and regardless of payment method.
- Expenses lacking documentation or a clear business purpose will not be reimbursed.
- Overall meal costs may be limited by the available budget.

II. Gifts to Employees / Students

- Gifts to employees, students, or third parties using University resources are not permitted.
- Gifts to third-party organizations in honor of employees are not permitted.
- This policy includes expenses incurred to show appreciation for an employee's performance, flowers, lunches, Christmas or birthday presents and Administrative Professionals' Day recognition.

Honoraria

- Honoraria may occasionally be provided to a speaker, performer, or community member, at the discretion of the President, Dean, or Line Officer.
- Honoraria should be de minimis, with the value of the recognition being the honor itself.
- Honoria above a de minimis amount is to be treated as a payment for services and processed through a professional services contract.

III. Flowers

- The Office of Mission & Belonging coordinates the Pastoral Response Plan, which provides for the delivery of one memorial floral arrangement in the event of the death

of a faculty or staff member's family member. Contact the office of Mission & Belonging to learn more about this response plan.
- Additional flowers or memorial gifts are personal expenses of an employee(s) and not reimbursable from any additional department or University budgets.

IV. Recognition of Employee Retirement

- This policy applies only to retirements, not to other separations. For the University's definition of retirement, see the Employee Handbook.
- Retirement celebrations may be funded by the employee's home department, up to $500, subject to available budget.
- Refreshments for retirement celebrations may be reimbursed at the department's discretion.
- Alcoholic beverages at any retirement event require advance approval from the appropriate Line Officer.
- The University provides an official retirement gift through Human Resources; any additional gifts are personal expenses.

V. Division / Department Banquets, Events, and Meetings

- The University may reimburse a department for an end-of-year awards and related events that celebrates student accomplishments, subject to a reasonable per-attendee limit.
- Graduation gifts and other gifts are personal expenses and not payable from any University budgets.
- Meals or snacks may be reimbursed for infrequent events with a clear business purpose (e.g., University-wide, cross-departmental, special assignment committees, Divisional/Department annual retreats, or task force meetings.
- Such events require advance approval from the appropriate Line Officer.

VI. Other Expenses

- Incidental expenses for facial tissue, hand sanitizer, cutlery, candy, personal care items, and food for personal consumption are not a business expense.
- Expenses that primarily benefit a student's personal education are considered scholarships or fellowships and are not a business expense under this policy.
- Personal Use: Activities that do not further the mission or purpose of the University. An item is considered personal in nature or for personal use when it is purchased for use to benefit a single individual. Example: Purchasing coffee/coffee pods, hand sanitizer or facial tissue for use in a highly populated student area would not be considered personal

use. However, the purchase of those same items for a private individual office would be considered personal use and not a business expense.

VII. Prohibited Expenses

The following expenses are not payable from any University budget:

- Gambling, lottery tickets, or raffles
- Illegal substances or services
- Cigars, cigarettes, vaping or any tobacco products
- Marijuana, CBD, and THC products
- Spa treatments, salon, or nail services
- Firearms, weapons and ammunition unless under the authority of the University Chief of Police
- Purchases that benefit the employee and not the University

ADVERTISING & PROMOTIONAL ITEMS

Spending in the area of advertising and promotional items includes additional considerations for coordination with the Marketing Department to ensure spending is on brand and coordinated with overall University marketing efforts.

Advertising Spending

All advertising at Mount St. Joseph University is coordinated through the Marketing & Communications Department to ensure consistency of message and brand. All advertising expenses must be approved and processed through this office. Budgets for advertising are consolidated within the Marketing cost centers; budget dollars may be allocated to other operating budgets after consultation with the Marketing department and the appropriate line officer.

Promotional Items

The University's budget may pay for or reimburse MSJ-branded promotional items such as pens, key chains, water bottles, mugs, and similar products. Departments must consult with Marketing in advance before ordering promotional items. All expenses must be documented with a clear business purpose. Promotional purchases should be charged to account number 6237 ("premiums/Promotions").

Compliance and Exceptions

The President and Cabinet have adopted this policy and assigned responsibility to the Fiscal Operations Department to ensure compliance with all expenditure guidelines. The policy is informed by regulatory bodies such as the IRS and NCAA, as well as principles of sound financial stewardship.

Employees are expected to exercise sound judgment and fiscal responsibility when incurring expenses, ensuring that all expenditures are reasonable, necessary, and directly related to University business.

Budgets may not always be sufficient to cover all expenses outlined in this policy. Budget managers have the discretion to reduce spending as needed to meet budgetary goals and may disallow spending on otherwise permitted expenses if such costs do not align with available budgets or financial priorities.

Expense reports must be submitted within 60 days of incurring an expense. Reports submitted after this deadline may result in the reimbursement being treated as taxable income to the employee. Employees are required to provide itemized, original receipts with their reports, and Fiscal Operations recommends retaining copies for personal records.

Requests for exceptions to this policy must be submitted in writing using the “Exceptions to the Policy Form” and approved in advance by the Controller or their designee. This policy is not exhaustive, and any scenarios not addressed in this or other official University policies must also be pre-approved by the Controller. Exceptions will not be granted if doing so would conflict with IRS, NCAA, or other regulatory requirements.

Questions regarding this policy should be directed to Fiscal Operations.