



Navigating University Travel

Policy, Compliance, and Risk Management for Faculty & Staff

Legal Training Session
September 30, 2026

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Agenda: Navigating University Travel

- 1** **University Policy 602.7, Travel Authorization & Reimbursement:** Overview of guidelines and policy
- 2** **Concur:** Pre-travel authorization requests and reimbursement requests
- 3** **Employee International Travel:** New risk management protocols
- 4** **Research & Export Control:** Basic guidance and resources
- 5** **Domestic Field Trips:** Planning and compliance requirements

University Travel Policy 602.7: Purpose & Scope

University Policy 602.7, Travel Authorization & Reimbursement, ensures reimbursement of University business travel expenses and compliance with applicable laws and regulations related to travel.

Scope

Applicability

Applies to all UNC Charlotte faculty, staff, students, and organizations traveling at University expense.

Responsibilities

Roles Under Policy

Travelers and supervisors have defined responsibilities under the Travel Policy to ensure proper oversight and documentation.

Compliance

Regulations

Implements State of North Carolina travel regulations and satisfies all IRS Accountable Plan requirements.

Roles & Responsibilities in University Travel

Travelers

Expenditures & Booking

Travelers are responsible for ensuring costs are necessary, prudent, and booked in accordance with the Travel Manual. They must provide legitimate expenditure documentation.

Travelers are responsible for unauthorized costs and any additional expenses incurred for personal preference or convenience.

Supervisors & Cost-Object Approval

Fund Approval Authority

Supervisors should authorize travel in advance certifying that employee has permission to travel and that the travel is necessary.

A cost object approver's approval certifies that the the travel is authorized to be paid from the specific fund source.

Travel Office

Review & Verification

The Travel Office reviews Expense Reports to verify expenses are reasonable and supported by appropriate documentation prior to processing reimbursement.

Roles & Responsibilities in University Travel

Office of Sponsored Research Administration

Sponsored Grants or Contracts

Office of Sponsored Research Administration has procedures to provide an appropriate review of travel authorizations and reimbursements that charge sponsored grants or contracts for which it has oversight responsibility.

Financial Services

Policy Implementation

Financial Services is responsible for administering and overseeing the provisions of University Policy 602.7 and for providing guidance to travelers.

Athletic Business Office

Athletics Program Travel

Athletic Business Office is responsible for authorizing, reviewing and processing travel authorizations and reimbursement requests for the Athletics programs.

Travel Requests

Concur System Requirements

- ✓ **Employee Expense System**
Concur is the online expense reporting system for employees.
- ✓ **Required Authorization**
A Request must be submitted and approved in Concur for all overnight travel, regardless of funding source, even if there is no cost to the University.

P-Card Policies

- ✓ **Preferred Payment Method**
The P-Card is the preferred method for airfare, lodging, rental cars, and registration fees.
- ✓ **Approval Before Payment**
Business travel expenses should not be paid via P-Card until a Request is approved.

Travel Requests

Every effort should be made to complete a Travel Request thirty (30) days prior to travel whenever possible.

- **Expense Estimation & Approvals:** All anticipated travel expenses should be noted on the Concur Travel Request.
- **Date or Cost Estimate Changes:** Travel Request no longer required to be updated and resubmitted
- **Third Party Lodging and Travel Advance:** Both options must be included on your travel request and approved by Disbursements prior to incurring an expense or receiving a travel advance.

Expense Reimbursement & Submission Deadlines

Submission Deadline: Travelers should submit an expense report in Concur **within 30 days** after the travel period ends.

Documentation Requirements

Itemized Receipts

Itemized receipts showing the date of service are required for all expenditures except the travel allowance (meal per diems and incidental tips).

Business Purpose

Every request requires a statement of business purpose to substantiate the professional necessity of the expenditure.

Late Submission Tax Rules

60-Day Tax Liability Limit

Reports submitted more than **60 days** after the trip may be treated as taxable income under IRS guidelines. If the expense report is submitted more than 60 days late include the business reasoning for the delay when submitting the expense report.

Withholding Implications

Delayed submittals complicate processing and may lead to standard payroll tax withholdings applied directly to the reimbursed amount.

Non-Reimbursable & Prohibited Expenses

Excess & Luxury Costs

The University will not reimburse unauthorized excess costs, circuitous routes, or luxury accommodations.

Travel Booking Extras

Any ticket upgrades, early boarding fees, premium seat selection fees, and ticket cancellation insurance are also not allowable.

Limitations & Prohibited Costs

Prohibited Expenditures

University funds **cannot be used** to reimburse personal or unallowable items:

- **Alcoholic beverages** of any kind
- **Personal travel expenses** incurred during a trip
- **Lost keys** and associated replacement charges
- **Application fees** for trusted traveler programs such as TSA Pre-Check or Global Entry

International Travel Protocols

New protocols (projected to start mid-November) for University-related* international travel by faculty and staff will include additional risk management benefits, recommendations, and requirements.

1

Insurance

2

Safety & Security

3

Travel Advisories

**University-related travel is travel associated with employment or funded by the University or a grant and does not include personal travel.*

International Travel Health Insurance

All international travelers on University business will be automatically enrolled in the State of North Carolina Business Traveler Plan – affordable international travel health insurance – administered through Charlotte Global and paid for by the University.



Strictly limited to University business. Does not cover personal or leisure travel days added before, during, or after business trips.

International Safety & Security Resources

The University encourages faculty and staff traveling internationally to register with critical safety programs and to monitor health notices.

1

Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP)

Smart Traveler Program

Faculty and staff traveling internationally are encouraged to register in the U.S. Department of State [Smart Traveler Enrollment Program \(STEP\)](#).

2

Alert Traveler Program (through Charlotte Global)

GPS Tracking & Alerts

The University also encourages enrollment in the Alert Traveler Program and downloading the [Alert Traveler app](#) to ensure travelers receive critical safety alerts and maintain communication during emergencies.

3

CDC Travel Health Notices & WHO Travel Advice

Advisories & Updates

Faculty and staff traveling internationally are encouraged to consult [CDC Travel Health Notices](#) and [WHO Travel Advice](#) to monitor current health updates in destination countries/regions.

U.S. State Department Travel Advisory Levels

1 Exercise normal precautions

This is the lowest advisory level for safety and security risks. There is some risk in any international travel, and conditions in other countries may differ from those in the United States.

2 Exercise increased caution

Be aware of increased risks to safety and security. Specific risks are described in the Travel Advisory.

3 Reconsider travel

Reconsider your travel to the destination due to serious risks to safety and security. Specific risks are described in the Travel Advisory.

4 Do not travel

This is the highest advisory level due to life-threatening risks. Specific risks are described in the Travel Advisory. The U.S. government may have very limited or no ability to help, including during an emergency. We advise that U.S. citizens do not travel to the country, or leave as soon as it is safe to do so.

U.S. State Department Travel Advisory Levels

Bookmark this page to find your destination country Travel Advisory Level:

travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/international-travel/International-Travel-Country-Information-Pages.html#765

	Level 1 - Exercise normal precautions
	Level 1 - Contains areas with higher security risk
	Level 2 - Exercise increased caution
	Level 2 - Contains areas with higher security risk
	Level 3 - Reconsider travel
	Level 3 - Contains areas with higher security risk
	Level 4 - Do not travel

U.S. State Department Travel Advisory Levels

TRAVEL ADVISORY - REPUBLIC OF ECUADOR

Level 2 - Exercise increased caution

Also includes areas at levels **3** and **4**

🕒 Date issued: August 18, 2026 - [advisory history](#)

CRIME (C)

TERRORISM (T)

UNREST (U)

KIDNAPPING OR HOSTAGE TAKING (K)

Exercise increased caution in Ecuador due to risk of crime, terrorism, unrest, and kidnapping. Some areas have increased risk. Read the entire Travel Advisory.

Travel Advisory Levels 3 & 4: Additional Steps

Level 3 Destinations

Risk Agreement Required

Travel to countries designated by the U.S. Department of State as Travel Advisory Level 3 (or containing regions designated as Level 3 or 4) requires an **Acknowledgement of Risk and Release Agreement** and a formal approval process.

Level 4 Destinations

Provost Approval Required

Travel to **Level 4 destinations** requires:

- **Acknowledgement of Risk and Release Agreement,**
- **Risk mitigation plans,**
- **Statement of how the travel advances the educational mission, and**
- **Formal approval by the Provost.**

Research-Related International Travel

Research-Related Travel Information



International travelers should review important export control and other information on the [International Travel page](#).

Digital/Electronic Devices (personal and University-owned)



Acquaint yourself with the risks of carrying electronic/digital devices when traveling outside the U.S. by reviewing the [FBI Travel Security Guide](#).

Export Control & University Equipment

Export Officer Notification

- ✓ International travelers must notify the University's Export Control Officer before traveling. The Office of Export Control can be reached at exportcontrol@charlotte.edu and they are located within the [Division of Research](#).

Temporary License Exception (TMP) Certification Requirements

- ✓ If traveling internationally with University-owned laptops, mobile phones, or digital storage devices, the traveler must complete the [International Travel With University-Owned Equipment form](#) and file an Export License Exception TMP certification prior to departure to ensure proper protocols are followed. For additional forms and checklists, please see the [Export Control: Forms and Checklists](#) page.

International Travel on Sponsored Funds

Sponsor Requirements



Sponsor Approvals

Before using federal contract or grant funds for international travel, employees must verify sponsor requirements for prior approvals.

[Click here](#) to submit a question to Award Management via SmartSheet.

Additional information:

- [Ticket Submission and Tracking](#)
- [Ticketing System User Guide](#)

Federal Travel Regulations



Fly America Act Compliance

Federally sponsored travel outside the continental U.S. must comply with the Fly America Act, which requires the use of a U.S. air carrier unless specific exception criteria from the Federal Travel Regulation are met.

Defining a 'Field Trip' at UNC Charlotte

DEFINITION

*"A **field trip** is a University-sponsored course-related, off-campus activity led by a faculty member and designed to serve educational purposes."*

Included Activities

- Gathering research data
- Museum visits
- Conference or competition participation
- Other course-related off-campus activities

Exclusions

This definition does not apply to:

- Education abroad or international activities
- Clinical placements, internships, or independent study
- Intercollegiate sports
- Student organization travel

Field Trip Planning & Compliance Procedure

legal.charlotte.edu/legal-topics/field-trip-planning/field-trip-planning-compliance-procedure/

Risk & Insurance

- Manage risk
- Consider optional supplemental accident insurance for participants **[NOTE: INSURANCE NOT AVAILABLE AFTER 11/1/2026]**

Participant Info

- Obtain Field Trip Acknowledgement of Risk, Release, and Behavioral Agreement
- Collect emergency contact information

External Approvals

- Secure any authorizations that might be needed from post-secondary education regulators in the jurisdictions through which trip participants may pass

Domestic Field Trip Planning Compliance

Faculty planning domestic field trips must complete the Field Trip Planning Form as early as possible.

1

Planning Form & Compliance

Creates record of University-sponsored field trips.

Helps ensure that the University is authorized to offer learning opportunities in the jurisdiction(s) where you travel.

See [Out-of-State Academic Activity Coordinating Council \(OoSAACC\), State Authorization Manager/SARA Liaison](#)

2

Supplemental Accident Insurance

Provides the option to purchase affordable supplemental accident insurance providing medical benefits up to \$5,000 per insured participant/chaperone for injuries sustained on University-sponsored field trips.

[NOTE: INSURANCE NOT AVAILABLE AFTER 11/1/2026]

Risk Release Forms & Alternative Arrangements

Release Requirement

- ✓ **Voluntary Signature**
All students participating in field trips must voluntarily sign the **Field Trip Acknowledgement of Risk, Release, and Behavioral Agreement**.
- ✓ **Non-Participation**
If a participant is **unwilling to sign**, they cannot participate. Signature must be voluntary or it is not valid.

Academic Alternatives

- ✓ **Alternative Coursework**
If the field trip is for credit or a required course element, **alternative projects or activities** must be offered to those who choose not to sign the Field Trip Acknowledgement of Risk, Release, and Behavioral Agreement.

Risk Release Checklist & Signature Requirements

✓ Pre-Trip Collection

The Acknowledgement of Risk, Release, and Behavioral Agreement must be collected from each participant before the trip.

✓ Agreement Modifications

If **modifications** to the standard agreement are needed for a specific program, planners must contact Legal Affairs for review.

✓ Electronic Signatures

Acceptable formats include **DocuSign** or checkboxes on an online form accessed exclusively via **NinerNet credentials**.

✓ Retention Standards

Keep all signed agreements on file for **5 years**.

For more information, see Field Trip Planning guidance or full slide deck on Field Trips from 2023 Legal Symposium.

Key Resources & Contacts

For questions regarding policy exceptions or unusual items, contact the [Travel Office](#).

All Travel

Concur: Travel Authorization & Reimbursement

Submit [Concur requests](#) prior to overnight travel and **expense reports** within 30 days of return.

For travel information, contact the [Travel Office](#).

International Travel

International Travel Requirements

For international travel information, consult [Charlotte Global](#).

For export control information, consult the [Export Control Office](#).

Domestic Field Trips

Student Field Trip Travel & Risk Management

- Review [Field Trip Planning & Compliance Procedure](#),
- Complete all [Field Trip Planning Forms](#), and
- Obtain **risk releases** from students.

For additional Field Trip information, contact the [Office of Legal Affairs](#).