Pre- and Final Approvers’ User Guide

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Introduction

• This user guide outlines the responsibilities of Pre- and Final Approvers and the step-by-step procedures involved in approving a Travel Expense Report in iTavel.
• Since control units and departments may implement iTavel differently, this User Guide may need to be referenced along with other, unit-specific, guidelines.

Initially…

• All travel should be authorized in advance by a Traveler's supervisor before any financial obligations are incurred by the potential Traveler and before travel commences. This initial approval of the trip is not the responsibility of either the Pre- or Final Approver (unless they are the traveler's supervisor).
Pre-Approvers

- iTavel does not require that a Pre-Approver be assigned as part of the iTavel routing structure, because this role is strictly optional. However, when such an assignment has been made (by the Systems Access Administrator), the Pre-Approver must approve each Travel Expense Report after the Traveler has approved it and before the Final Approver receives it for review.
- Pre-Approvers are typically assigned to review the travel of the Department Chair/Head before forwarding the trip to the Dean/Vice Chancellor’s office for final approval.
- Final Approvers may not approve their supervisors' Travel Expense Reports.

Final Approvers

- iTavel requires that a Final Approver review and approve each Travel Expense Report before it can be submitted to the Accounting Office for reimbursement.
- Before a Final Approver can review a Travel Expense Report, that report must have first been approved by a Travel Coordinator and Traveler.
- If a Pre-Approver has been assigned to the traveler's routing structure, s/he must have first approved each Travel Expense Report before it can be reviewed by the Final Approver.
- The Final Approver is the last step in the routing sequence before a Travel Expense Report routes to the Accounting Office.
What an Approver Should Know & Do

• Approvers should have knowledge about the appropriateness of the trip (e.g. purpose, destination, and duration) in accordance with University policy.
• Approvers should review the expenditures and fund source for allowability, allocability and reasonableness.
• When travel is being paid by another department, the approver’s primary role is not to authorize the Full Accounting Unit (FAU) to which the trip is being charged, but rather to authorize the travel element. In this situation, the FAU should be authorized by another mechanism (e-mail approval, PAN, etc.).

What an Approver Should Not Do

• Approvers may not approve their own travel.
• Approvers may not approve the travel expenses of individuals to whom they report either directly or indirectly.
• Approvers may not approve the travel of near relatives, e.g., spouses or equivalent, children, parents, etc.
Who Should an Approver Be?

- Approvers of travel should be either department heads, persons to whom the Chancellor has delegated such authority, or those to whom such authority has been officially re-delegated. Re-delegations should be made at the appropriate organizational level. Those re-delegating the authority must ensure that internal controls are adequate.

Step-by-Step:
Approving (or Rejecting) a Travel Expense Report
• After a Travel Coordinator has finished working on a Travel Expense Report and pressed the “Submit” button, it will be automatically routed to the Traveler.
• After the Traveler approves it, you will be notified by an email with a header similar to the one above.

The first step in approving a Travel Expense Report is to log in to Views, and select “Travel” from the available applications.
• You should see that you have a “Travel Expense Approval” awaiting your action from either the “Pre Approver Options” or the “Final Approver Options” menu.

• To see the list of Travel Expense Vouchers awaiting action, click on “Travel Expense Pre (or Final) Approval”.

• Select the appropriate Travel Expense Report to review (if there is more than one).
• First view the upper portion of the “Expense Summary” tab, which summarizes information from the “General” tab.
• You may view any documents that have been attached by your Travel Coordinator by clicking on the “Attach Documents” button at the top.

• Scroll down and review the summary information for Transportation, Lodging, and Other Expenses, as well as the FAU Information. You can find details for each of the expense categories by scrolling up and clicking on the corresponding tab at the top of the screen.
• At the bottom is the Expense Summary and Trip Approvals log, which you should also review.

• When finished with the “Expense Summary” review, scroll to the top and review any of the remaining tabs if you want more detailed information.
• Add your comments, if desired, by clicking on the “Comments” tab. Comments are optional unless you intend to reject the Travel Expense Report, when a comment becomes mandatory.
• If you click the “Reject” button, the Travel Expense Report will be routed back the Travel Coordinator, who will make corrections and then re-submit it to the Traveler, and ultimately back to the Pre- and Final Approvers.
• If you are the Pre-Approver, when you click the “Approve” button, the Travel Expense Report will be routed to the Final Approver.
• As Final Approver, when you click the “Approve” button, the Travel Expense Report will be routed to the Accounting Office staff for reimbursement.
Helpful Links

- UCR’s comprehensive iTravel website: http://www.cnc.ucr.edu/travel/
- UCR’s Travel Office website: http://www.accounting.ucr.edu/travel.htm
- Email thoughts and comments to: TravelFeedback@ucr.edu
- Login to iViews (to use iTravel): http://iviews.ucr.edu/iviews/iviews_eacs.main