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| **Subcontractor Personnel Travel – Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)** |

*This FAQ is an informational supplement to the* [*Subcontractor Personnel Travel Policy*](https://acquisition.jpl.nasa.gov/terms-conditions/)*. If individual Subcontractor personnel seek any exception to any requirement in the Travel Policy, the Subcontractor is required obtain appropriate approval in accordance with 2.0 of the Travel Policy.*

*If the Subcontract already has incorporated an approved travel budget, then the Travel Policy and this FAQ may not apply. Contact the JPL Contracts Technical Manager (CTM) and the JPL Subcontracts Manager (SCM) for information.*

## Do I need approval before I travel on official JPL business?

Yes. Unless otherwise stated in the Subcontract, Subcontractor personnel are required to receive advanced approval for travel in accordance with 2.0 of the Travel Policy. This approval is documented in writing and included with the [Subcontractor Travel Expense Report](http://invoice.jpl.nasa.gov/Docs/TravelExpenseReport.xls). While advanced approval in writing is required, JPL recognizes there are certain unusual circumstances where it is impossible to obtain certain approvals in advance. In those rare situations, JPL may grant written approval after the travel has occurred for the allowable expenses in accordance with the Subcontractor Personnel Travel Policy. This approval includes an explanation as to why it was impossible to obtain advanced authorization and is submitted with the Subcontractor Travel Expense Report or accepted equivalent.

## What travel expenses will JPL reimburse?

JPL will reimburse the Subcontractor for reasonable and necessary travel expenses incurred by the Subcontractor's personnel in connection with JPL work travel. JPL will reimburse Subcontractor for allowable expenses; however, Subcontractor should note that unallowable expenses may not be reimbursed by JPL unless an exception has been approved.

| **Allowable Expenses -** **include, but are not limited to**  | **Unallowable Expenses -** **include, but are not limited to** |
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| * M&IE
* Lodging
* If traveling *within* the US, lodging tax
* Airfare
* Airport tax
* Limited baggage fees
* Public transportation
* Rental vehicle at destination
* Gas for rental car
* Taxi/Rideshare
* POV mileage (if authorized)
* Parking fees
* Tolls
* Internet access fees, if required for business
 | * Alcoholic beverages
* Entertainment
* Cost for meals above per diem rate
* Additional tips for porters, baggage carriers, bellhops, and hotel staff, that is not already paid out of M&IE
* If traveling *outside* the US, lodging tax
* Payment for lodging when staying with or renting from friends, relatives or co-workers
* Paper airline ticket (when an e-ticket is available, the additional cost for a paper ticket is unallowable)
* Airport lounge fee
* Airline seating upgrade fee
* Rental car insurance
* Operating and maintenance expenses of a POV, such as fuel and oil, mechanical failure, collision or physical damage, and traffic offenses
* Personal travel costs (including Global Entry or TSA pre-check)
* Personal phone calls
* Federal, State, or local income taxes resulting from travel reimbursement payments that are not considered tax deductible in accordance with IRS regulations.
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## When am I eligible for reimbursement for alternative transportation expenses such as Uber or Lyft?

In addition to the allowable expenses listed above, Subcontractor personnel may consider using ride-sharing or ride-hailing services (such as Uber or Lyft) so long as those expenses represent the most reasonable, cost-efficient, available transportation option in comparison with public transportation, taxi or other options.

## What is the per diem rate?

The per diem rate is the maximum amount JPL will reimburse the Subcontractor for lodging and meals and incidental expenses (M&IE). M&IE includes meals, tips for meals, and tips given to porters, baggage carriers, bellhops, and hotel staff., etc. The per diem rate is based on the city in which the Subcontractor personnel lodges. The General Services Administration (<http://gsa.gov/perdiem>) and the U.S. Department of State (<https://aoprals.state.gov/content.asp?content_id=184&>) update per diem rates frequently and Subcontractor personnel are required to check both websites for the current rates. On the day of return, the per diem rate is based upon the Subcontractor personnel’s last business location at midnight of the prior day. Subcontractor personnel do not need receipts for M&IE or mileage.

## What is the M&IE reimbursement rate during the first and last travel day?

On the first and last travel day, Subcontractor personnel are only eligible for 75% of the total M&IE rate for their travel location. So for example, the applicable rate for travel of 2 days is 75% percent for day 1 (as the first travel day) and 75% for day 2 (as the last travel day).

## When may I use first-class or business-class airline accommodations?

Airfare costs in excess of the required lowest price available to the Subcontractor during normal business hours may be allowed if they meet the conditions set forth in FAR 31.205-46(b). Exceptions are granted pursuant to 2.0 of the Travel Policy. Written authorization and rationale for excess airfare costs are submitted with the Subcontractor Travel Expense Report or accepted equivalent and receipts.

## Is refundable airfare required?

No. If a non-refundable airfare is the lowest price available, the Subcontractor personnel should select it for airline travel.  Refundable airfare is not required.

## What if airline travel for JPL includes a layover or stop over?

If travel includes a necessary layover or stopover, it may be taken at any intermediate point where the flight segments terminate, or at the final destination. For direct international flights (a single flight or multiple segments) that total ten (10) hours or more of elapsed flying time (actual time an airplane spends in the air, as opposed to time taxiing to and from the gate and during stopovers) one layover day is permitted each way.  A layover day cannot be taken in conjunction with personal time, and Subontractor personnel are not entitled to reimbursement for layover day expenses that are not related to a business purpose.

## What is my “tax home” for purposes of Internal Revenue Services (IRS) regulations?

In accordance with IRS regulations, assignments greater than one year may result in a change to the individual’s “tax home”. The Subcontractor personnel is individually responsible for compliance with all applicable state and Federal tax laws and regulations of the United States, and of any other country having jurisdiction over the individual. The Subcontractor personnel are advised to seek professional individual tax advice.

## When am I eligible for reimbursement higher than the maximum lodging rate?

Reimbursement above the maximum lodging rate may apply when (1) exception is obtained under 2.0 of the Travel Policy; and (2) one of the following conditions exist during the travel date(s):

* A special function or event is occurring.
* Seasonal rates are in effect.
* An assignment to perform a special duty necessitates unusually high expenses, e.g., attending certain conferences, accompanying a JPL employee on travel etc.
* Rooms are not available at such rates within a reasonable commuting distance from traveler’s duty point and transportation costs to commute would consume all or most of the saving from occupying less expensive lodging.

## What if I need to combine my personal travel with my business travel?

JPL will not reimburse Subcontractor personnel for personal travel. Per diem will be allowed only for that time required for travel and the conduct of business relating to the performance of work under the Subcontract or SWO, if applicable.

## Aside from the check-in baggage fee some airlines charge, will JPL reimburse me for excess baggage fees?

On trips of 60 continuous days or more, Subcontractor personnel are eligible for shipment of up to 1,000 pounds of personal goods. On assignments of one year or more, shipment of up to 3,000 pounds will be allowed. Except for minor weights, shipment of excess baggage on commercial airlines should be avoided when possible and more economical shipping methods utilized. However, no pickup, crating, or packing charges are allowed.

## What do I need to do if JPL requests that I travel to a foreign country?

In accordance with the Travel Policy, any foreign travel is authorized in advance and incorporated into the Subcontract by modification or into the SWO if applicable. Foreign travel is reimbursed in accordance with FAR 31.205-46 at the rates for foreign travel in accordance with the Standardized Regulations (Government Civilians, Foreign Areas), Section 925, "Maximum Travel Per Diem Allowances for Foreign Areas”, effective during the period of travel.

## What do I need to do if JPL requests that I travel to a remote location?

For a remote location where long-term lodging availability is affected by seasonal rates, the actual cost of lodging, the subcontractor personnel may seek up to 100% of the lodging portion of the maximum per diem rate, for the affected term of the assignment, with advance approval. The M&IE portion of the per diem remains at 65% from the 31st day of the assignment until completion.

Due to year-round demand in the Kennedy Space Center (KSC) area, the actual cost of lodging, up to 100% of the lodging portion of the maximum per diem rate, may be paid for the duration of the assignment, to the extent the subcontract reflects subcontractor personnel assignment to KSC.

Exceptions are granted pursuant to 2.0 of the Travel Policy. Written authorization and rationale are submitted with the Subcontractor Travel Expense Report or accepted equivalent and receipts.

## What do I need to do if JPL requests that I attend a Symposium or Workshop?

The JPL written authorization is incorporated into the Subcontract or SWO, if applicable. When any meal (breakfast, lunch or dinner) is included in the symposium or workshop fee, the applicable meal cost will be deducted from the M&IE rate. Registration documents and receipts are submitted with the Subcontractor Travel Expense Report or accepted equivalent.

## What do I need to do if I have a medical exception that affects JPL work travel?

Airlines may offer accommodations at no additional expense. Exceptions are granted pursuant to 2.0 of the Travel Policy, on a case-by-case basis, and prior to travel being booked. The individual Subcontractor personnel may be requested to provide additional documentation to JPL through the Subcontractor. Documentation may be requested on an annual basis for ongoing exceptions. Written authorization and rationale are submitted with the Subcontractor Travel Expense Report or accepted equivalent and receipts.

## Where can I find additional information?

Contact the JPL Contract Technical Manager (CTM) and the JPL Subcontracts Manager (SCM) for information. Additional resources are:

* [JPL Acquisition and Supplier Resources](https://acquisition.jpl.nasa.gov/terms-conditions/) (<https://acquisition.jpl.nasa.gov/terms-conditions/>); see Supporting Documents
* [JPL Invoice and Payment Services](https://acquisitions.jpl.nasa.gov/invoice-services/) (<http://invoice.jpl.nasa.gov/>); see Forms and Instructions

### [FAR 31.205-46](https://www.acquisition.gov/far/31.205-46) – Travel Costs

### [FTR Chapter 301](https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-41/subtitle-F) – Temporary Duty (TDY) Travel Allowances

* [GSA Per Diem Rates](https://www.gsa.gov/travel/plan-book/per-diem-rates?gsaredirect=perdiem) (<http://gsa.gov/perdiem>)

### [GSA POV](https://www.gsa.gov/travel/plan-book/transportation-airfare-pov-etc/privately-owned-vehicle-pov-mileage-reimbursement-rates) – Privately Owned Vehicle (POV) Mileage Reimbursement Rates

* [Dept. of State Foreign Per Diem Rates](https://aoprals.state.gov/content.asp?content_id=184&&menu_id=101&menu_id=101) (<https://aoprals.state.gov/content.asp?content_id=184&>)