

Standard Operating Procedure TVAREF SOP- 04 - Travel Policy Revised - June 22, 2010 - Original Date - November 3, 2008

Tampa VA Research and Education Foundation, Inc. (TVAREF) may support expenses for the domestic or foreign travel of authorized individuals to bona fide scientific meetings or for other research or research-related educational purposes. The travel support will be consistent with TVAREF policies and the stipulations of any relevant funding source(s).

The Executive Director must approve travel related to educational or training activities. If the travel reimbursement is for a visiting fellow or scholar, the visa status of the individual must allow such reimbursement. TVAREF Board must pre-approve travel for foreign fellows or scientists.

Travelers should purchase their own tickets, pay for their costs, and apply for reimbursement after the travel is completed. Cash advances and pre-paid airfare are generally not provided to members or other non-TVAREF employees. Cash advances and pre-paid airfare may be available to employees.

The request should be submitted on the Travel Reimbursement Form [[PDF](#) or [DOC](#)]. Requests for reimbursement should be submitted within 60 days after travel has been completed.

If another organization is providing partial reimbursement for a trip, sufficient information must be provided to TVAREF to show that we are reimbursing appropriately. For example, the VA travel documents showing which items have been reimbursed and the amount.

Documentation of the meeting dates, location, and topic or theme must be provided. A program guide or brochure (a copy of the cover is sufficient if all the information is stated on it); an invitation letter; or other written documentation that includes the dates, location and purpose must be submitted with the reimbursement request.

Individual items \$25 or greater in cost must be accompanied by receipts. Items costing less than \$25 need only be itemized.

NOTE: Original receipts are required for reimbursement.

Registration: Meeting registrations can be pre-paid through TVAREF directly to the meeting organizer. Alternatively, the registration cost will be reimbursed after the meeting along with other travel expenses.

Lodging: Full reimbursement of reasonable hotel expenses with appropriate documentation will be made. The original itemized hotel bill must be submitted with the reimbursement request.

Per Diem: The per diem reimbursement (meal and incidental expenses) will be at the federal per diem rate. These rates are posted on our website. Travel days will be paid at full day per diem rate for TVAREF employees, regardless of the time of departure. Travel that begins and ends within the same day (e.g., 7 AM to 7 PM) will not include per diem reimbursement. [Click here for Per Diem Rates.](#)

If a member plans to host a special dinner meeting with research collaborators, these costs must comply with the policy "[Meeting and Conference Support](#)". Such events should be pre-approved with the Executive Director or designee to ensure that reimbursement will be allowable.

Transportation: Reimbursement for travel costs will be based on the most reasonable method of travel to the location, generally coach airfare.

If the traveler chooses to take an indirect route, interrupt the business travel or utilize a mode of travel that requires additional accommodations en route, any resulting expense will be borne by the traveler.

The cost of a rental automobile may be allowable under certain circumstances. For example, if rooms are unavailable at the conference hotel, a shuttle service is not available, or cab fare is prohibitively expensive.

However, car rental is allowable only as an exception. Specialty vehicles such as convertibles and SUVs are not allowable.

Please note:

- Reimbursement for ground transport is limited to travel between the home or place of business and the airport; the airport and meeting site and return.
- Mileage expenses for private automobile use will be at published government rates. Reimbursements for travel using a private automobile will not exceed the cost of roundtrip coach airfare or the most reasonable travel method.
- Coach airfare will be reimbursed. Any exceptions require prior approval from the Executive Director or designated authority.
- TVAREF recognizes the particular requirements of persons with disabilities and will make every effort to accommodate those needs. Please contact the TVAREF administrative office for further information.

VA Requirements: If you are a VA employee seeking reimbursement from TVAREF for travel related to your research or education programs, there are additional procedures you must follow. As a government employee going on domestic or foreign travel, you are responsible for complying with the requirements of your employer.

**Addendum to Travel Policy -12/18/08
ADVANCE REVIEW OF OFFER TO DONATE SUPPORT FOR OFFICIAL
TRAVEL VA FORM 0893**

The purpose of this memorandum is to clarify the requirements for travel paid for by non-VA sources.

TO WHOM DOES IT APPLY:

- To all VA employees.
- To VA Foundation employees.

WHEN DOES IT APPLY:

- When a non-VA source (including universities or VA non-profits) offers travel support for a VA employee.

PROCEDURE:

1) RESPONSIBILITIES OF VA EMPLOYEES:

Prior to travel:

- Fill out VA Form 0893.
- Have supervisor sign. This is an acknowledgment that s/he agrees with purpose of travel.
- Submit to VA Foundation when applicable or to Regional Counsel if Foundation not involved.
- Return executed Form 0893 to Foundation after approval by Regional Counsel and Director.

2) RESPONSIBILITIES OF FOUNDATION:

- **INDIRECT FUNDS:** Assure that travel is in support of an approved VA research.
- **CRADA FUNDS:** Assure that travel is permissible under terms of CRADA. Investigators should be reminded that funds belong to the Foundation; they do not belong to the Investigator.
- Foundation should not take responsibility for filling out Form 0893.
- Review for conflict of interest issues.

3) RESPONSIBILITIES OF REGIONAL COUNSEL:

- Review and provide legal approval of Form 0893.
- Submit signed Form 0893 to Director.

4) DIRECTOR'S ROLE:

- Final approval after review of Form 0893.
- If questions, contact Regional Counsel, Foundation or Traveler.
- Return approved Form 0893 to Traveler.

COMMENTS:

1. **NON-PROFIT DONATIONS:** If the donor is a non-profit organization, the traveler may be reimbursed directly. S/he can submit an "estimate" prior to travel and receive this sum from the non-profit.
2. **FOR-PROFIT DONATIONS:** If the donor is a for-profit corporation, the gift must be made to the VA and the traveler must be paid "in-kind" for expenses.
3. **RECEIPTS:** In both cases, the traveler must submit receipts within 60 days. **NO EXCESS RULE:** If donated funds are in excess of estimated needs, they must be returned to the donor. If there are uncovered expenses, the traveler may recoup them, if there are receipts. If there are no receipts, the traveler must pay for expenses associated with travel.

4. **OFFICIAL TRAVEL STATUS:** The traveler must be on official travel status.
5. **FOREIGN TRAVEL:** May need government passport. Must have approval of CO that the foreign country is not on restricted list.

William R. Gower, Jr., Ph.D.

TVAREF, Acting Chairman of the Board