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Parent Policy: [Supply of Goods and Services](#)

Expense Reimbursement Procedure

Office of Administrative Responsibility:	Finance, Procurement and Planning (Procurement and Contract Management)
Approver:	Associate Vice-President (Finance, Procurement and Planning)
Scope:	Compliance with this university policy/procedure extends to all academic, support and excluded staff, postdoctoral fellows, and academic colleagues as outlined and defined in the Recruitment Policy (Appendix A and Appendix B: Definitions and Categories); undergraduate, graduate and Faculty of Extension students; emeriti; members of the Board of Governors; visitors to campus, including visiting speakers and scholars; third party contractors; and volunteers.

Contact for questions about this procedure:	Finance, Procurement and Planning (FPP) Procurement and Contract Management (PCM) procure@ualberta.ca
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Overview

The Expense Reimbursement Procedure details the process for reimbursing out-of-pocket expenses for incidental charges incurred by employees in support of University of Alberta business, teaching or research. In all cases University resources for procurement of goods and services must be exhausted first, (SupplyNet Purchase Order, University issued Corporate Purchasing Card and petty cash) prior to the use of personal resources to complete these purchases.

In specific circumstances, the use of personal resources may be the only or the most practical method available. In those instances, expenses will be reimbursed. Any such purchases made with personal resources must be in support of University operations and must maintain appropriate controls and accountability. These circumstances include **remote locations, cash economies and emergency situations**. Written justification for the use of personal resources must be included with the claim. Personal payment methods are only available as outlined above and will not be reimbursed by the University.

The University has established procedures for ordering goods and services that must be adhered to at all times. Under no circumstances are personal resources to be used to purchase **restricted or controlled goods**, or to circumvent University purchasing policies and procedures. For further information, see: *Purchasing Methods and Dollar Limits on the Finance, Procurement and Planning – Procurement website*.

The total value of a single receipt for goods and services should not exceed \$500 per expense line, otherwise the purchase will be considered non-reimbursable and the expense claim denied. The exception to this would be if the purchase applies to remote locations, cash economies or emergency situations.

This reimbursement procedure applies to non-travel expenses only. For the reimbursement of eligible **travel** expenses, see the Travel Management website and the *Travel Processes & Expense Procedure*. The *Travel Processes & Expense Procedure Appendix A: Schedule of Allowable Travel Expenses* also provides eligibility information on some local expenses, such as parking and mileage.

Any expense to be claimed under the Professional Expense Reimbursement (PER) program should follow the process outlined on the Shared Services Website.

For eligibility information regarding hospitality and meeting expenses, see: *Hospitality, Working Sessions/Committee Meetings and University Employee Functions Procedure*.

For eligibility information regarding gift expenses, see: *Gift Expenditure Procedure*.

For further information, see RELATED LINKS on last page.

Purpose

The purpose of this procedure is to:

- Facilitate the reimbursement of personal expenses used for incidental charges that relate to the purchase of goods and services.
- Clarify that personal financial resources (cash or personal credit or debit cards) may be used to make a purchase only when other University purchasing solutions have been exhausted (SupplyNet purchase order, University issued Corporate Purchasing Card and petty cash).
- Ensure only properly documented, supported and eligible expenses are reimbursed.
- Ensure that restricted or controlled goods, regardless of value, are not purchased using personal financial resources.
- To ensure expenses exceeding \$500 per line item are not purchased on personal resources except in rare instances (remote locations, cash economies and emergency situations).

PROCEDURE

Summary:

Expenses incurred for University business, teaching and research by University employees are reimbursable. University purchasing methods must be exhausted first (this includes SupplyNet, Corporate Purchasing Card and Petty Cash). The total value of a single receipt cannot exceed \$500; single receipts exceeding this amount will be returned and unpaid. All expenses for reimbursement require the completion of a PeopleSoft Expense claim with attached receipt(s) (unless paid by petty cash). All expense claims are reviewed by Central Compliance Review and Approval (CCCRA) for appropriateness and eligibility. Purchases from outside of Canada should be limited and must comply with the Customs Act of Canada. Restricted or controlled goods cannot be purchased with personal resources at any time and require a Purchase Requisition within SupplyNet. Records are retained within the PeopleSoft expense module and additional retention of original receipts is not required. Expense claims receive additional review by Finance, Procurement & Planning Compliance monitoring, Internal Audit, Granting Agencies and External Auditors. The claimant is required to ensure the appropriateness and accuracy of the claim and understand the Consequence of Error identified in this procedure.

EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENT

The Expense Reimbursement Procedure facilitates the reimbursement of out-of-pocket expenses for incidental charges for goods and services required to conduct business, teaching or research at the University.

When purchasing goods and services, business units should follow processes established for using *SupplyNet* and *Corporate Purchasing Cards* before resorting to the use of personal resources. (For further information, see RELATED LINKS on last page).

1. Complete a PeopleSoft Expense Claim

- All claims must be **reasonable** and reflect prudence, good judgment, due diligence to reasonable economy and be defensible to a reasonable and impartial observer. Reimbursement of eligible expenses can only occur once the goods or services have been received; there is no reimbursement of expenses in advance of a purchase.
- The total value of a single receipt for goods or services cannot exceed \$500 CAD. Multiple receipts may be submitted on a single claim.
- Any receipt(s) over \$100 CAD should be submitted within 90 days from the date the expense was incurred or by the fiscal year-end, whichever comes first or the expense will not be reimbursed.
- Small dollar receipts and incidental charges should be compiled until a minimum threshold of \$100 CAD, or a time period of 90 days, is met. All receipts should be processed in the fiscal year in which the expense was incurred. Because of this, exceptions to the minimum dollar total and time period will be made for any receipts submitted in March to ensure processing by year-end.
- For timely and cost-efficient reimbursement of small dollar receipts including parking, meal and kilometer allowances, business units are encouraged to maintain a petty cash fund and use it as an alternative to other payment and reimbursement processes. Further details can be found in the *Petty Cash Procedure* (see RELATED LINKS on last page).

2. Attach Supporting Documentation

- **Original Receipts** must be attached to support expense claim items within PeopleSoft. Unsupported expenses, where original itemized receipts are required, will not be reimbursed. If the original receipt has been lost, the claimant must request the vendor reissue the receipt. If a vendor invoice is attached to the claim and it reflects a balance owing, proof of payment is also required (e.g. a credit card statement).

3. Central Compliance Review and Approval (CCRA)

- Central Compliance Review and Approval is performed for all research and operating expenses. These roles provide support to the unit and budget owner, ensuring the expenses are:
 - In accordance with appropriate policies and procedures, and that the expenses were incurred for university business, teaching or research purposes only.
 - In accordance with donor/sponsor terms and conditions. It is the responsibility of the individual seeking reimbursement to ensure compliance with all terms and conditions. In cases where donor/sponsor regulations do not address a particular situation, university policy and procedures will apply.
 - Coded to the appropriate expense types within PeopleSoft.
 - Supported by original receipts.
 - All expense claims are reviewed by the CCRA. Operating claims receive final approval by the CCRA and route to the budget owner if they exceed \$2000/claim.
 - Research dollar claims are reviewed by the CCRA and route to the budget owner for final approval for all values.
 - Where the budget owner is the claimant, approval is by one-over-one.

- Upon approval, the claim is processed.
- Both the CCRA and the Budget owner can return for correction or deny claims; if they do not meet the criteria outlined in this procedure.

4. Purchases from Outside of Canada

- While strongly discouraged, there are rare occasions when using personal resources to purchase goods outside of Canada is the only viable option. The claimant must ensure that the importation of the goods and services is compliant with the university's obligations under the *Customs Act* of Canada.

- Failure to comply with the *Customs Act* may result in a penalty ranging from \$100 to \$25,000 CAD. The payment of these penalties is the responsibility of the employee who has purchased the goods or services.

Detailed information can be found in the *Customs Import, Export and Permit Procedure* (see RELATED LINKS on last page).

5. Restricted or Controlled Goods

- Restricted or controlled goods must be purchased using a purchase requisition through SupplyNet.

- Under no circumstances may restricted or controlled goods be purchased with personal financial resources.

For further details, refer to the *Purchase of Restricted Items Procedure* (see RELATED LINKS on last page).

6. Records Retention

- Receipts must be attached to the expense claim within PeopleSoft expense module.

- Detailed information regarding records retention can be found in the *Guide to Financial Management* under *Retention and Filing of Source Documents* (see RELATED LINKS on last page).

- Once the receipt is attached in PeopleSoft, the original receipt is no longer required and does not need to be retained.

7. Subsequent Audit and Adjustment

- Expense claims are subject to subsequent review and audit procedures. This may result in adjustments, including the possible repayment by the claimant to the university.

8. Consequence of Error

- The claimant is accountable to ensure all expenses are adequately documented, supported, eligible and in support of UofA business, teaching and research.

- Expenses that have been previously reimbursed through UofA credit card, PER program, SupplyNet, centrally paid, Petty Cash or any other payment method are non-reimbursable and will be escalated through the University escalation process and treated as a potential fraud against the university.

- Employees who commit an act of fraud or irregularity may be subject to disciplinary action pursuant to any applicable collective or other agreements up to and including termination of employment and prosecution if appropriate.

DEFINITIONS

Any definitions listed in the following table apply to this document only with no implied or intended institution-wide use. [\[▲Top\]](#)

Remote Locations	A location where access to financial and IT infrastructure is not available. This may include banks, WiFi, cellular and internet access.
Cash Economy	An economic system, or part of one, in which financial transactions are carried out in cash rather than via direct debit, standing order, purchase order, bank transfer or credit card.
Emergency Situation	A situation where claimant does not have access to any university purchasing methods and the purchase is immediately required.
Restricted or controlled goods	Any substance or equipment which is controlled by any Act of Parliament in Canada or the Province of Alberta through the issuance of permits, licenses or user registrations. Examples include, but are not limited to, radioisotopes, commercial alcohols, live animals, drugs and precursor chemicals.
Travel	<p>When in the normal course of business, an individual must leave their <i>work area</i> to fulfill an academic, research or general job duty or to attend a conference, seminar, meeting, workshop or field research relating to the individual's employment or to the fulfillment of an academic obligation.</p> <p><i>Work area</i> is defined as any point within and up to 25 km outside the municipal area in which the claimant's office or primary place of work is located. For any claimant who does not have an office or primary place of work, the geographic area in which the employee is required by the terms of their employment to carry out their assigned duties.</p>
Reasonable	Expenses that are moderate, defensible, practical, fair and tolerable.
Original Receipts	The detailed receipt provided by the merchant/supplier. An online receipt or internet invoice is considered an original receipt in the case of an online payment. An original VISA/MasterCard chit is not considered the original receipt because it does not contain information on what was specifically purchased.

FORMS

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RELATED LINKS

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[Corporate Purchasing Card Procedure](#) (UAPPOL)

[Customs Import, Export and Permit Procedure](#) (UAPPOL)

[Gift Expenditure Procedure](#) (UAPPOL)

[Hospitality, Working Sessions/Meetings and University Employee Functions Procedure](#) (UAPPOL)

[Purchase of Restricted Items Procedure](#) (UAPPOL)

[FPP Web Page: Retention & Filing of Source Documents](#)

[FPP Web Page: Purchasing Methods and Dollar Limits](#)

[FPP Web Page: SupplyNet](#)

[Travel Processes & Expense Procedure](#) (UAPPOL)

[Travel Processes & Expense Procedure Appendix A: Schedule of Allowable Travel Expenses](#) (UAPPOL)