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

## Expense Reimbursement Procedure

<b>Office of Administrative Responsibility:</b>	Supply Management Services (Business Services)
<b>Approver:</b>	Associate Vice-President (Finance and Supply Management Services)
<b>Scope:</b>	Compliance with this university policy/procedure extends to all Academic Staff and Colleagues and Support Staff as outlined and defined in Recruitment Policy (Appendix A and Appendix B: Definitions and Categories).

<b>Questions? Contact:</b>	<b>SMS Customer Service</b> 780-492-4668 <a href="mailto:customerservice@sms.ualberta.ca">customerservice@sms.ualberta.ca</a>
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### Overview

The Expense Reimbursement Procedure details the process for reimbursing of out-of-pocket expenses for incidental charges incurred by employees in support of University of Alberta business, teaching or research.

It is recognized that, in certain 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 the University's operations and must maintain appropriate controls and accountability.

The University has established procedures for ordering goods and services with processes based on the nature and the value of the goods and services ordered. Employees must follow these procedures when purchasing goods and services. All goods and services must be purchased using the University's preferred method of procurement. 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 – SMS Website](#).

The total value of a single receipt for goods and services cannot exceed \$500 CAD.

This reimbursement procedure applies to local, non-travel expenses. 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 some 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 found on the: [Human Resource Services Web Page: Professional Expense Reimbursement](#). For clarification or further information on PER, email: [per@hrs.ualberta.ca](mailto:per@hrs.ualberta.ca).

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](#).

### Purpose

The purpose of this procedure is to:

- Facilitate the reimbursement of personal resources, when warranted, used for incidental charges (not exceeding \$500 CAD) related 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 processes are not an option.
- Ensure only properly documented, supported and eligible costs are reimbursed.
- Ensure that restricted or controlled goods, regardless of value, are not purchased using personal financial resources.

## PROCEDURE

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

#### a. Complete a PeopleSoft Expense Claim

- i. For information on how to create and submit an expense claim, see: [IST Training - Expense Claims](#).
  - 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.
  - 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.
    - o For timely and cost-efficient reimbursement of small dollar receipts, 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).

#### b. Attach Supporting Documentation

- i. **Original Receipts** must be attached to support expense claim items. 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. Photocopies of receipts and credit card receipts are not acceptable supporting documentation.

- c. Approval of Expenses
- i. Both the claimant and the approver are accountable for ensuring that claims for expenses are in accordance with appropriate policies and procedures, and that the expenses were incurred for University business, teaching or research purposes only.
  - ii. To be reimbursable, purchases made using personal resources must comply with the applicable policy, procedure, legislation, and 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.
  - iii. Prior to approval, expenses for goods and services charged to research and special purpose funding are required to undergo independent review for compliance and eligibility with donor/sponsor restrictions.
- d. Purchases from Outside of Canada
- i. While strongly discouraged, there are rare instances 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.
  - ii. 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 home department 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).
- e. Restricted or Controlled Goods
- i. Restricted or controlled goods must be purchased using a Request through SupplyNet.
  - ii. 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).
- f. Records Retention
- i. Units are required to maintain orderly and secure records for six prior years, plus the current fiscal year.
- 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).
- g. Subsequent Audit and Adjustment
- i. Expenses claims are subject to subsequent review and audit procedures. This may result in adjustments, including the possible repayment by the claimant to the University.

## **DEFINITIONS**

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

<b>Restricted or controlled goods</b>	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.
<b>Reasonable</b>	Expenses that are moderate, defensible, practical, fair, tolerable and inexpensive.
<b>Original Receipts</b>	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.
<b>Travel</b>	<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>

## **FORMS**

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## **RELATED LINKS**

Should a link fail, please contact [uappol@ualberta.ca](mailto:uappol@ualberta.ca). [[▲Top](#)]

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

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

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

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

[Gift Expenditure Procedure](#) (UAPPOL)

[SMS Web Page: SupplyNet](#)

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

[Petty Cash Procedure](#) (UAPPOL)

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

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

[Retention and Filing of Source Documents](#) (Guide to Financial Management)